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Saudi investment in Pakistan to reach \$2.8bln as MoUs count enhanced to 34: Saudi minister

PM Shehbaz calls for keeping momentum to develop strong Pak-Saudi Arabia economic partnership

RIYADH (APP): The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on Wednesday announced to add another \$600 million to its recently announced \$2.2 billion investment in Pakistan what the Saudi Investment Minister called "only the beginning of something very special." The announcement was made in a joint press stakeout by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Saudi Investment Minister Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al-Falih, following their "very productive" meeting encompassing the bilateral cooperation in multiple sectors including trade, finance, agriculture, technology and skilled manpower. At the invitation of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the prime minister is currently on a two-day official visit to Saudi Arabia where he addressed the 8th edition of the Future Investment Initiative (FII) on 'Infinite Horizons: Investing Today, Shaping Tomorrow,' held in Riyadh and joined by the global leaders to discuss how investment could

serve as a catalyst for a prosperous and sustainable future. Accompanied by Advisor at the Royal Court Mohammad Mazaid Al-Tuwaijri, Saudi Minister Al Falih told the media that during his recent visit to Pakistan, both sides had signed 27 MoUs for investment worth \$2.2 in Pakistan. He announced that following Prime Minister Shehbaz's meeting with Crown Prince and their discussion, the number of MoUs has been increased from 27 to 34 to add \$600 million in investment.



RIYADH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Minister for Investment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Engineer Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al-Falih and Advisor at the Saudi Royal Court Mohammad Bin Mazaid Al-Tuwaijri in a joint press conference on the sidelines of the 8th Future Investment Initiative Conference.

CM Bugti says: Children of Balochistan be taught research-based curriculum enabling to compete with major cities students

Directs high ups of Education Department to ensure timely supply of books in the schools

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti has emphasized that children of the province should be taught the curriculum based on the research so as to enable them to compete with the students of Islamabad and Lahore.

The Chief Minister said we have to come out of the Alif-Anaar and Be-Bakri as he referred to the children of nursery students in schools to make them familiar with the Urdu alphabets.

He said that we would encourage good officers and would provide protection to them in their tenure atleast during the era of

present government.

He exhorted the officers to maintain continuity in the positive reforms and not come in any blackmailing.

The Chief Minister was chairing review meeting regarding performance of the Balochistan Text Book Board here at the Chief Minister's Secretariat on Wednesday.

The meeting was attended by the Provincial Minister for Education, Ms Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister, Imran Zarkoon, Secretary Education, Muhammad Saleh Nasar, Additional Secretary, Chief Minister Secretariat, Muhammad Fareedon, Chairman Text

Book Board, Gulab Khan Khilji, besides other concerned high ups.

The meeting was informed that the academic curriculum in Balochistan is being made compatible with the national curriculum. The scanning bar code is also being printed on every page of the newly printed book so that teachers may approach the online portal for any kind of guidance, it was further briefed adding that government academic books would be printed by the end of current year.

It was mentioned that this year the contract of printing of books has been given to the credible firms through call attention notices.

Army Major among three martyred, eight khwarij killed in Bannu IBO

CM Bugti praises security forces for successful operation against terrorists

Independent Report RAWALPINDI: Security Forces conducted an intelligence based operation in general area Bakka Khel, Bannu District on reported presence of khwarij.

During conduct of operation, own troops effectively engaged khwarij's location, as a result of which eight khwarij were sent to hell, while seven khwarij got injured.

However, during intense exchange of fire, Major Atif Khalil (age: 31 years, resident of District Sudhanoti, AJ&K, a brave officer, who was leading his troops from front, fought gallantly and embraced Shahadat along with his two men. The two soldiers who paid the ultimate sacrifice include Naik Azad

Ullah (age: 36 years, resident of District Karak) and Lance Naik Ghazanfar Abbas (age: 35 years, resident of District Layyah).

Sanitization operation is being carried out to eliminate any other Kharji found in the area, as security forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe-out the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve.

Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, has commended the security forces for their successful operation against extremist terrorists in the Bakka Khel area of Bannu, paying tribute to the brave soldiers for their courage and sacrifice.

Enforcement measures Pakistan urges UNSC to 'decisively' push Israel to ceasefire in Gaza

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Pakistan has called on the UN Security Council to act "decisively" to enforce a ceasefire in Gaza, unleashing punitive measures against Israel, such as an arms embargo, for its aggression against the enclave and the wider Middle East to usher in peace and security.

"Pleading with Israel has done no good," Ambassador Munir Akram, Pakistan's permanent representative to the UN, told the 15-member Council, which held a day-long debate on the Situation in the Middle East on Tuesday.

He added, "We must mobilize the political consensus to enforce an immediate and unconditional ceasefire under Chapter VII of the UN Charter," which allows the Security Council to take enforcement action to maintain international peace and security.

The Pakistani envoy said that Israel's ongoing aggression was not only destabilizing the region.

PM arrives in Qatar amid trade, investment push by Islamabad

DOHA (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif arrived in Doha on an official visit from Oct. 30-31 to discuss bilateral ties with a special focus on trade and investment, the premier's office said in Islamabad on Wednesday.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif landed in Qatar on Wednesday on the two-day visit. At the airport, the prime minister was received by Qatari Minister of State Mohammed bin Abdulaziz Al-Khulaifi, Pakistan's ambassador and other diplomatic staff. Federal ministers Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Jam Kamal Khan and Attallah Tarar also accompanied the prime minister.

"During this visit, I look forward to productive exchange of views with the Qatari leadership to further enhance our brotherly relations," Sharif said on X after arriving in Doha. "I will also inaugurate a special exhibition at Qatar Museum highlighting the cultural heritage of Pakistan." During his visit, the prime minister will hold bilateral meetings with Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar and Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, Prime Minister.



DOHA: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif arrives at Doha International Airport for his 2 day official visit of Qatar. He is being received by Qatar's Minister of State, Muhammad bin Abdulaziz Al-Khulaifi.

Athar Minallah says: No govt can deprive citizen of right to access to information

ISLAMABAD (INP): Supreme Court of Pakistan judge Justice Athar Minallah has said that although Article 19 A of the constitution guarantees citizens the right to access to information, but the right is subject to certain limitations. In his additional note on the petition, seeking access to information about the SC employees, the judge has said that despite some restrictions, however, the parliament does not have the power to limit the scope of this constitutional right. The judge, while saying he completely agrees with the decision pronounced by ex-chief justice

of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Qazi Faez Isa in the case, has said that neither the government nor any of its departments can deprive a citizen of the right to access to information.

"Article 8 of the constitution bars the state from doing any such legislation that either infringes upon fundamental human rights or restricts them," he has said, adding neither the apex court could place limitations on individual liberties. "It is simply unimaginable."

Justice Minallah has observed that if people think that those institutions, which are instituted to protect their rights.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti presides over the review meeting on the performance of the textbook board at the Chief Minister's Secretariat.

President signs bill to establish special courts for overseas Pakistanis

ISLAMABAD (INP): President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari has signed a bill establishing special courts for property matters concerning overseas Pakistanis.

Under the new law, special courts will be set up to address property disputes for overseas Pakistanis, ensuring their cases are resolved within 90 days. President Zardari also approved the Deposit Protection Corporation Amendment Bill 2024, granting both approvals under Article 75 of the Constitution.

On October 17, the Senate passed the bill for establishing special courts to safeguard the property rights of overseas Pakistanis.

Federal Minister Chaudhry Salik presented the bill, which was unani-

mously approved, though PTI's Ali Zafar requested it be referred to a committee, citing concerns about potential false cases.

The special court will have jurisdiction over the entire Islamabad Capital Territory.

Overseas Pakistanis can file petitions through modern devices, including e-filing.

The special court will allow evidence to be presented through video links or other legally acceptable modes, supervised by officials from Pakistan's High Commission, embassy, or consulate.

Cases filed in the special court will be disposed of within 90 days, thereby providing a speedy remedy, preventing delays in justice, and ultimately safeguarding the interests of overseas.

CJCSC calls on President of Azerbaijan, Military-Civil leadership

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC), General Sahir Shamshad Mirza on an official visit to the Republic of Azerbaijan called on President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, Minister of Defence Colonel General Hasanov Zakir Asgar, Foreign Minister, Jeyhun Aziz Oghlu Bayramov, 1st Deputy Defence Minister and Chief of General Staff Colonel General Karim Tofiq Oghlu Valiyev and Minister of Defence Industry, Vugar Mustafayev. During the interaction, both sides appreciated deep and historic relations between the two countries and discussed matters of mutual interest including evolving security dynamics of the region and enhancement of existing defence ties in multiple domains.



RAWALPINDI: Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC) General Sahir Shamshad Mirza called on Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev.

Govt, opposition 'finalise names' for judicial body on judges appointment

Monitoring Desk ISLAMABAD: The government and opposition have finalised names for members of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP), which was re-constituted to include parliamentarians in light of the recently enacted 26th Constitutional Amendment.

Sources told that Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari from National Assembly (NA) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senator Irfan Siddiqui would represent the ruling coalition in the key body — which is responsible for nominating judges for constitutional benches in the Supreme

Court and high courts.

Meanwhile, the main opposition party — Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) — has named Senator Shibli Faraz and Leader of Opposition in the National Assembly Omar Ayub for the judicial commission.

Speaking to, Ayub confirmed the development, saying that his name for the key panel was forwarded by PTI founder Imran Khan.

"Barrister Gohar Ali Khan and PTI General Secretary Salman Akram Raja informed us about the decision," he said.

The opposition leader noted that the PTI leadership consulted the incarcerated former premier before finalising the names.

PTI workers attack Qazi Isa's car in London

LONDON (INP): Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers have attacked vehicle of former chief justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Qazi Faez Isa and his wife Sarina in London, media reports said on Wednesday.

Dozens of PTI supporters had gathered at Chancery Lane to stage a protest against Isa, who was attending a prestigious event held at the Middle Temple, after relinquishing charge as the country's top judge. Qazi Isa was going to attend the ceremony for constituting benches at the Middle Temple. The PTI supporters, led by former prime minister Imran Khan's ex-special assistant Sayed Zulfi Bukhari and former member of National Assembly MNA Maleeka Bokhari.

More efficient, honest & professional experts needed in health & education sectors, stresses Jaffar Mandokhail

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that education and health sectors are the twin pillars of the social development, which form a bright future. The Governor stressed that more efficient, honest and professional experts are needed in these sectors. We have to pay attention on increasing capacity instead of quantity.

The Governor was addressing the ceremony held under the auspices of Voice of Balochistan here on Wednesday.

The Governor said

that teachers are held in high esteem in every civilized society as they play role in spreading the light of knowledge and wisdom. This is why, teachers have very respectable status in every society, he maintained.

The Governor appreciated the move of imparting modern training to the teachers serving in the remote areas. In this regard, it is responsibility of the government to provide all necessary facilities to the teachers, he said.

The Governor was especially appreciative of the female teachers who are

performing their duties despite lack of necessary facilities and financial constraints.

He said that the present government is focusing on the education sector and as such is taking measures to decorate the students with ornament of education. The Governor exhorted the teachers and parents to pay attention on their upbringing and morality along with their education. He also stressed that the process of capacity building of the teachers should remain continued in the educational institutions.

ISPR says: One Khwarij terrorist killed other apprehended injured in Zhob operation

3 khawarij killed during the security forces' action in Orakzai

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Security Forces on Wednesday killed a Khwarij terrorist while injured the other during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) conducted in general area Sambaza, Zhob District. During conduct of the operation, intense fire exchange took

place between the Army troops and Khwarij, an Inter Services Public Relations news release said. The weapons and ammunition were also recovered from them. Sanitization operation is being conducted to neutralize any other Kharji present in the area.

Imran, Qureshi others to be indicted on Nov 8 in GHQ attack case

RAWALPINDI (Online): Judge Amjid Ali Shah of Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Rawalpindi has fixed November 8 to indict PTI founder Imran Khan, former foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi and other accused in GHQ attack case. The court also issued notices to the respondents on acquittal plea of former minister Sheikh Rashid.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan presides over the meeting of Secretaries Committee.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Court business

It has been quite encouraging to note that the new chief justice has wasted no time putting his house in order.

After promptly reconstituting the Supreme Court Practice and Procedure Committee to include the next two senior-most justices after himself, Chief Justice Yahya Afridi had summoned a full court meeting this Monday to review business. By all accounts, the meeting — attended by all judges of the Supreme Court, including senior puisne judge Justice Mansoor Ali Shah via video link — was a successful one.

Held in a collegial atmosphere, it focused on the ways and means through which the Supreme Court can fulfil its core responsibility: delivering timely justice. Though many had speculated that various prickly issues would be brought up when the Supreme Court judges would first meet after the tumultuous end of justice Qazi Faez Isa's tenure, the court seemed more immediately concerned with the case backlog and how it could be reduced expeditiously.

Some may have been expecting bitterness from Justice Shah for being passed over for the chief justice's position. Instead, he displayed grace and magnanimity by placing his detailed plan for cutting down the case backlog before the court, thereby symbolically handing over the baton to the new chief justice. It seems worth mentioning here that this plan had been much anticipated within the legal community, and one of the main regrets cited when Justice Shah was passed over was that it may never see the light of day.

However, it was a much-changed Supreme Court on Monday that reviewed and eventually adopted the Case Management Plan 2023. It appears that not only was the new chief justice keen on restoring the respect previously denied to other senior justices but also on reorienting the court's priorities towards improving institutional performance rather than on external troubles and intrigues. As it faces relentless assaults from multiple flanks, the unity and commonality of purpose on display in the Monday meeting are what will help the Supreme Court endure. Successive tenures marked by polarisation and internal frictions have eroded the institution's powers and left it vulnerable to the other pillars of the state. It must reclaim its space and fulfil its duty to protect the constitutional order.

It is hoped that the institution will not take too long to find its feet again, and once it does, will set about correcting the many imbalances in the tripartite distribution of power that have crept in over the past few years. It is refreshing to see that, after a long time, the judges of the superior judiciary do not seem to be harbouring personal grudges against each other. It is hoped that this spirit will prevail and that the institution will heal quickly in the days to come.

Trump or Harris?

Mahir Ali

A week from today, nervous tension will be spiking within and beyond the US as the results roll in from what has been hyped up as the most consequential election in American history. The choice, essentially, is between the reinforcement of a deeply unsatisfying status quo and a return to the depressingly entertaining self-immolation of a Trump presidency.

Writing in the context of Nazism and its impact on Germany, Hannah Arendt noted long ago that "those who choose the lesser evil forget very quickly that they chose evil". In recent decades, it has more or less become the norm for the electorate in many democracies faced with a choice between two varieties of what voters might be inclined to detest or distrust. The US easily falls into that category, notwithstanding its posturing as an exemplar, or, more absurdly, an enforcer of liberal democracy, given the number of dictatorships its interventions have spawned.

Criticism of Donald Trump's Madison Square Garden rally on Sunday has tended to focus on a warm-up comedian's obnoxious description of Puerto Rico as a garbage dump. Even the Trump campaign has disavowed his stance — but, at the same time, distracted attention from echoes of a notorious gathering at the same venue 85 years ago arranged by the German American Bund where an image of George Washington was flanked by Nazi insignia, and the keynote speaker's anti-Semitic, white-supremacist message was greeted with 'sieg heils' by the 20,000-strong multitude.

The f-word — fascism — had been flung at Trump even before a number of disenchanted colleagues from his previous White House stint

endorsed it. After all, the ex-president had doubled down on his traditional pet hate — which involved denigrating all immigrants who entered via Mexico as rapists and murderers — by claiming that Haitian arrivals in Springfield, Ohio, were devouring cats and dogs. The lack of evidence for even a single instance of such behaviour did not matter to him or his acolytes.

The accompanying threat to violently deport millions of 'illegal immigrants' was almost a predictable corollary. It has stirred precious little alarm in the US which had in its initial stages relied on invaders and their slaves plus genocidal assaults against North America's native inhabitants that it should still be unwelcoming to outsiders keen on rebuilding lives that have been shattered all too often because of America-first mentality in Washington.

There is more alarm over Trump's vow to deploy the military against 'enemies from within', a designation that encompasses pretty much all of his domestic opponents, who are obviously being unpatriotic in disdaining his MAGA agenda, which in part reflects the white-supremacist efforts of predecessors that were interrupted by Hitler's transgressions. Trump is hardly a pioneer, though. Richard Nixon, too, had his list of enemies — and he came a cropper within two years of winning an undeserved landslide in 1972.

American voters have picked many obnoxious presidents within living memory, and there has never been any reckoning for their international crimes — from Vietnam and Korea to Chile, El Salvador, Afghanistan and Iraq, among a far longer list. Trump, to his credit, failed to spark any new wars. The claims that he

would have pre-empted both the Russian invasion of Ukraine and Oct 7 alongside its genocidal aftermath in Israel, Gaza and beyond, are easy to denigrate as absurd. But these are hardly defining issues for most voters.

In the case of Israel's genocidal impulses, they matter more on the Democratic side. Kamala Harris has failed to distance herself from the Biden administration's demonstrably fake efforts for a ceasefire, even while its influence has been paramount in forestalling the kind of reversion to Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant had in mind for Iran. Meanwhile, the Kahanist 'ethnic cleansing' in the Palestinian territories proceeds apace. Would a reincarnated President Trump somehow halt it? Dream on. The Arab/Muslim 'community leaders' who latched on to him in Michigan recently are either unwise or ignorant in glossing over his efforts to bury the question of Palestine under the mendacious Abraham Accords.

Would Harris be any better? Yes, marginally, at least on domestic concerns. It matters, for instance, that she defends women's autonomy over their bodies, and on the economic front is slightly less enthusiastic than her rival about redistributing wealth to the rich. But then, false promises are the lifeblood of US elections.

On the global front, the choice perhaps is between a rapid apocalypse or the gradual decline and fall of an empire that has for too long surreptitiously prolonged the age of imperialism. Either way, but especially with Trump, the risk is that the rest of the world will pay the price for decades to come. — Courtesy Dawn

Take school to the child

Gulmina Bilal Ahmad

Pakistan is in the midst of a critical education crisis, with over 22.8 million children aged five to 16 years out of school, placing it second only to Nigeria in this context. The situation is especially dire for girls, with 53 per cent out of school as compared to 43pc of boys. Declaring a national education emergency, Pakistan identifies poverty, lack of infrastructure, cultural barriers, child labour, and early marriages as core obstacles.

Innovative solutions are required. Traditional efforts focus on bringing children to schools, yet many children living near these institutes of learning don't attend, often perceiving education as irrelevant. This signals a need to (a) connect education with job opportunities and (b) customise schooling to meet children's needs. To date, all conversations have focused on bringing the child to school. We need to now think of the reverse.

A promising model is hybrid technical and vocational education and training, which equips children with job skills alongside basic literacy. Hybrid TVET bridges the gap between education and work readiness, focusing on out-of-school children. It merges academic learning with vocational skills such as carpentry, tailoring, IT, plumbing, and agriculture, enabling children to acquire lifelong learning skills and employment options.

A significant education barrier in rural Pakistan is the lack of accessible schools and training centres. Mobile vocational training units address this by bringing education directly to remote communities. These mobile units,

equipped with training materials and technology, can deliver both academic and vocational education. A few years back, a pilot project was conducted by an international funding agency. Lessons learnt from it need to be mainstreamed and its success amplified.

The mobile model proves especially valuable in conflict zones, where establishing permanent schools is difficult. Flexible schedules allow children to work part-time if essential, and baseline assessments can lead to formal certification.

For girls, community-based learning centres with local women educators can provide safe, culturally appropriate spaces. These centres can offer literacy, numeracy, and skills like sewing, embroidery, and food preparation. Integrating these skills into local economic activities enables girls to contribute through community projects in sustainable agriculture or small-scale businesses.

Expanding internet access, with over 116m mobile broadband users as of 2021, can make online and blended learning transformative, especially in the urban areas. Hybrid TVET can leverage these platforms, using online courses and in-person practical sessions to teach vocational skills. For instance, children can learn IT online and gain hands-on experience in local vocational centres. These online platforms can connect with existing TVET institutions, allowing remote learners access to the same curricula and certifications as in-person students.

Pakistan also hosts a significant refugee population, including over 1.4m registered Afghan refugees, many of

whom face disrupted education. Integrating hybrid TVET into refugee programmes can provide essential skills and education, fostering resilience and rebuilding communities. TVET in refugee camps could offer vocational training in fields like carpentry or tailoring, alongside basic literacy and numeracy to support self-sufficiency.

To further encourage school attendance, conditional cash transfers or stipends can aid low-income families. Expanding the Bena-zir Income Support Programme to include hybrid TVET would incentivise families to enrol children in vocational training.

Programme to include hybrid TVET would incentivise families to enrol children in vocational training, providing financial support where child labour is common. Such financial incentives could be especially effective in rural areas, where families often rely on children's earnings. By offering stipends for participation in hybrid TVET, families' economic burden can be sustainably eased.

Pakistan's out-of-school children represent both a challenge and an opportunity. By adopting innovative solutions like hybrid TVET, Pakistan can educate marginalised children and equip them with the essential job skills. From mobile training units to online platforms and community-based centres, several strategies exist to bring education directly to underserved children.

Hybrid TVET is a flexible, practical answer to Pakistan's education crisis, providing a path to literacy, life skills, and employment.

The time to act is now: Pakistan's children deserve an education that prepares them for a brighter future, and hybrid TVET can unlock that potential. —Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Economy to go forward with sustainable recovery: Report

ISLAMABAD (APP): In the wake of positive developments, the country's economy will continue to observe sustainable recovery in the coming months as it has demonstrated sustained recovery during the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2024-25, the finance ministry said in a report released here Wednesday. According to the monthly Economic Update and Outlook for October 2024, the economy showed constant recovery during first quarter and stability in both, the fiscal and external sectors, has been maintained, supported by significant financial inflows.

Pakistan has received first tranche of US\$ 1.03 billion under International Monetary Fund (IMF) Extended Fund Facility (EFF) programme, reinforcing macroeconomic stability. Moreover,

successful hosting of SCO summit 2024 in Pakistan are paving the way for business and market confidence, it says.

According to report, the agricultural sector is benefiting from mechanization-based productivity. During FY2025 (Jul-Sep), imports of agricultural machinery increased by 115.9 per cent to \$29.7 million. Urea offtake during Kharif 2024 recorded at 2,746 thousand tonnes while DAP offtake stood at 642 thousand tonnes. Overall fertilizer production during Jul-Sep FY2025 increased by 3.7 per cent to 2.45 million tons compared to last year. During Kharif-2024, water availability remained satisfactory. During Jul-Aug FY2025, the production of wheat threshers increased by 22.8 per cent compared to last year. All these factors will positively impact the

growth of agriculture sector.

Meanwhile, Large-Scale Manufacturing (LSM) on MoM basis observed a substantial growth of 4.7 per cent in August 2024, reflecting the revival of economic activities. However, it has observed a slight dip of 0.2 per cent during Jul-Aug FY2025, compared to 2.5 per cent contraction in last year. On the other hand, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) based inflation has been on a consistent decline, reaching 44 months low in September. During Jul-September FY2025, CPI Inflation stood at 9.2% while it was 29.0% in the same period last year. YoY CPI Inflation in September 2024 was recorded at 6.9% - lowest level in 44 months, compared to 9.6% percent in the previous month and 31.4 per cent in September 2023.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Five ships, Navios Tempo, MSC Positano, Doris, Sc Hong Kong and Milaha Ras Laffan scheduled to load/offload Container, Rice, Chemicals and LNG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Engro Vopak Terminal and Pakistan Gas Port Terminal respectively on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, a 'Green Genie' scheduled to load/offload Rice also arrived at outer anchorage during last 24 hours.

Ten ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them a hydrocarbons carrier 'South Port' left the port on today morning while five more ships, Navios Tempo, MSC Positano, Scarlet Rosella, Sc Hong Kong and Zarrar Hanif are expected to sail on today.



QUETTA: A delegation led by Vice President Quetta Chamber of Commerce Mirwise Khan meeting with Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

Maritime Minister for boosting blue economy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Shaikh on Wednesday visited the National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA), where he emphasized a coordinated approach to developing key maritime sectors like aquaculture, green shipping, and tourism in a bid to revitalize Pakistan's maritime economy.

During his visit, Minister Shaikh was briefed on NIMA's work in shaping maritime policies and promoting research.

NIMA officials presented an overview of Pakistan's maritime sector, pointing out that it currently contributes less than 0.2% of the nation's GDP, far below the global standard of 8-10%. This discrepancy, they argued, underscored the need for strategic reforms and investments.

Minister discusses issues related to CM Kisan Card

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Syed Ashaq Hussain Kirmani on Wednesday chaired a meeting at Bank of Punjab Head Office Lahore in which present status and issues related to Chief Minister Punjab Kisan Card were reviewed.

Secretary Agriculture, Punjab Ifikhar Ali Sahoo and Bank of Punjab President Zafar Masood also attended the meeting.

NIMA's partnerships with local, national, and international stakeholders were also discussed as crucial for growth in Pakistan's maritime sector. The institute highlighted how these collaborations are working to create new opportunities and expand Pakistan's maritime footprint. In a series of discussions, Shaikh and NIMA representatives explored various areas within the Blue Economy, underscoring the need for a cohesive national action plan to fully utilize the country's ocean resources. Both sides agreed on the importance of coordinated efforts among MoMA, NIMA, and other maritime stakeholders to ensure sustainable growth across all maritime sectors. Minister Shaikh reiterated his commitment to supporting NIMA's mission.

Pakistan, Maldives agree to form joint working groups on various sectors

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Maldives here on Wednesday agreed to form joint working groups on various sectors under the framework of the Pakistan-Maldives Joint Commission.

According to press release issued by Economic Affairs Division (EAD), High Commissioner of Maldives to Pakistan, Muhammad Thoha called on Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Ahsan Ali Khan Cheema.

During the meeting both sides agreed to extend their bilateral ties in key sectors.

Minister Ahsan Ali Khan Cheema proposed the creation of sector-specific

Joint Working Groups (JWGs) on Tourism, Trade, Labour, Investment & Aviation under the framework of the Pakistan-Maldives Joint Commission.

The High Commissioner welcomed the proposal and assured that Maldives will send their official representation for these Working Groups in the near future. Both sides agreed to hold the Inaugural Session of the Pakistan-Maldives Joint Commission in early 2025.

The Minister informed that Pakistan was keen to explore new avenues for cooperation with Maldives in key priority areas.

He welcomed the Maldivian side to explore the industries of Halal meat, Agricultural Products, Fruits and Surgical Instruments in Pakistan.

The High Commissioner, while emphasizing the physical proximity between Karachi and Maldivian Port, assured of his efforts to enhance bilateral trade between both countries.

The Minister also highlighted the significant role both countries can play in regional and international forums including SAARC and OIC on significant issues such as stronger climate action.

Rupee sheds 05 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee on Wednesday depreciated by 05 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.79 against the previous day's closing of Rs 277.74.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 277.35 and Rs 278.85 respectively.

The price of Euro increased by 49 paise to close at Rs 300.72 against the last day's closing of Rs 300.23, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

SECP engages to advance "Insured Pakistan" initiative

ISLAMABAD (APP): Reporting Service. This outreach is meant to promote insurance and associated benefits in Pakistan, as outlined in SECP's five-year strategic plan—Journey to an Insured Pakistan, concluded first round of its provincial outreach in Punjab and Sindh.

High-level meetings were held with Excise and Taxation, Transport and Mass Transit, and Labour and Human Resource Department in Sindh.

In Punjab, meetings were held with General Excise and Taxation department, and Crop



FAISALABAD: A worker busy in his work in a local Garments factory in the city.

Pervaiz pledges support to strengthen CCP

ISLAMABAD (APP): State Minister for Finance and Revenue, Ali Pervaiz Malik here on Wednesday visited the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP), underscoring the role of the Commission in checking market failure and protecting consumers from anti-competitive practices.

During his visit, Malik conveyed the Ministry's commitment to bolstering CCP's capacity to increase its effectiveness, whether through legislative reforms, follow-up on court cases or

capacity-building initiatives.

Addressing CCP's officials, he emphasized the need for a comprehensive review of the Competition Act to ensure it remains modern, effective, and relevant as well as to address the challenges being faced by the Commission.

"Competitiveness in markets is vital for protecting consumer interests. It also encourages new startups and attracts investments," said Malik.

CM Punjab celebrates Diwali, announces welfare initiatives for minorities

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif announced several initiatives to support minority communities during the Diwali celebrations held at 90-Shahrah-e-Quaid-e-Azam, here on Wednesday. The CM announced writing a letter to the chief minister of Indian Punjab to undertake joint efforts to eliminate smog. During the ceremony, CM Maryam Nawaz announced issuance of special cards for minority communities, an increase in the number of cards, and the establishment of a Minority Virtual Police Station. She also highlighted plans to enhance development in minority areas. As part of the celebrations, the Chief Minister lit a traditional Diwali lamp and participated in virtual fireworks, creating a festive atmosphere adorned with traditional Rangoli. In a heartfelt gesture, she interacted closely with Hindu women and took a young girl into her lap, distributing cheques of Rs. 15,000 to 1,400 Hindu families. Addressing the gathering, she assured the minority communities, "If anyone commits atrocities against minorities, I will stand with the victim. We are all Pakistanis, and Diwali symbolizes peace, harmony, and love." She urged citizens to view smog as a humanitarian issue, not a political one, and expressed her determination to protect minority rights. The CM remarked on the importance of inclusivity, saying, "I felt immense happiness lighting the Diwali lamp. It symbolizes our unity as Pakistanis." She shared her childhood teachings from Nawaz Sharif about treating minorities as a source of pride, stating that all religious celebrations would be honored collectively.



BUNER: Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions and President PML-N KP, Engr Amir Muqam addressing Jirga Members in Buner.

CM KP forms commission to resolve matters of discovery of petroleum, gas in NW

PESHAWAR (APP): An introductory meeting of the Provincial Joint Commission constituted by the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to resolve the matters with regard to the recently discovered petroleum and gas resources in North Waziristan, was held here at Chief Minister's Secretariat on Wednesday with Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur in the Chair. Elected members of National and Provincial Assemblies from North Waziristan, high ups of energy department and relevant divisional administration, representatives from 11 Corps, SNGPL, Mari Petroleum Company and other concerned institutions attended the meeting. Senior officials of Federal Ministry of Petroleum also attended the meeting via video link. It is pertinent to mention here that the aforementioned Provincial Joint Commission was constituted to protect the rights of the local population with regard to the revenue/royalty of the recently discovered natural resources in North Waziristan by ensuring fair and just disbursement/ utilization of that development funds. The Commission will also formulate long-term policies/strategies to ensure that the recently discovered natural resources are utilized in the best interests of the country, region, and local population, acting as a liaison amongst committees at district and tehsil level, provincial and federal governments and other stakeholders.

If federation does not play its role then security problems will not be resolved: PHC

PESHAWAR (Online): Peshawar High Court (PHC) has remarked if federation does not play its role then security problems will not be resolved. "Will federation wait for letter from province. It has no responsibility of its own. Army officers and jawans are embracing shahadat daily. Does federation not see it, court further remarked. The case related to miserable law and order situation in KP came up for hearing in PHC Wednesday. The court directed additional chief secretary interior to appear in person. A division bench of PHC comprising Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice Syed Arshid Ali took up the case for hearing Wednesday. Vice chairman KP Bar Council, Additional Advocate General (AAG), DIG and Assistant Attorney General appeared in the court. Justice Ijaz Anwar inquired what is security situation of courts and judges in southern districts. DIG legal told the court security of courts, judges and their residences has been enhanced.



LAHORE: Speaker of the Provincial Assembly of Punjab, Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan, addressing during meet the press at press club, in the Provincial Capital.

Govt striving to combat smog, says Marriyum

LAHORE (APP): Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb has said that the Punjab government has implemented crucial measures to reduce the rising smog and air pollution in Lahore. Addressing in the Punjab Assembly, she announced that 11 areas in Lahore have been designated as smog hot-spots, with Shimla Hill being the most affected. A "Green Lockdown" will be enforced in these areas starting tomorrow, with an official notification issued, she added. She said that under the Green Lockdown, all construction activities within one-kilometer radius of Shimla Hill and surrounding areas will be strictly prohibited, and the use of commercial generators will be banned. Chingchi rickshaws will be restricted from these zones, and open barbecue activities will be prohibited after 8 p.m. Heavy transport vehicles will also be restricted, and 50 percent of office employees will work from home.

Two sons, nephew of Ex-Nazim shot dead in Pabbi

PESHAWAR (APP): At least three people including two sons of former Nazim, Wazir Garhi and his nephew were killed when their car was fired at in Pabbi tehsil here on Wednesday. Pabbi police said the incident took place in Dag Behsud area of Pabbi where armed men fired multiple shots on a car, killing three people. The dead included two sons of Malik Jamal Shah, the former Nazim of Wazir Garhi and his nephew.

Muqam holds meeting with Nazriati Group

BUNER (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and President PML-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Engr Amir Muqam held a meeting with Nazriati Group leaders on Wednesday. During the meeting, held at residence of Ishfaq Chhattan, the Leaders of Nazriati Group announced to abolish the Group and express full confidence on the leadership of PML-N, president Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Engr Amir Muqam and Murtaza Javed Abbasi, received a press release. Extending full support to provincial president Engr Amir Muqam, the leaders vowed to work together for strengthening the party. The Nazriati Group leader Abdul Subhan Khan, Malik Imran, group president from Peshawar Arbab Ghulam Haider Khan, group leader from Abbottabad Sardar Abdur Rashid also spoke on this occasion. Provincial President Engr Amir Muqam hailed their decision and termed the decision of abolishment of group as "better late than never". He expressed the resolve to work under the dynamic leadership of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif.

Tank police foil arms smuggling bid

TANK (APP): The district police foiled an attempt to smuggle arms during an ongoing crackdown against anti-social elements here on Wednesday. According to police spokesman District Police Officer (DPO) Aslam Nawaz Khan has issued directives to take stringent actions against crimes and these operations had started yielding results. As part of ongoing operations under the supervision of DSP City Circle Saleem Khan, SHO Shahid Mureed Akbar police station, Sher Afzal Khan successfully conducted a significant operation.

PDWP approves 5 developmental schemes

LAHORE (APP): The Provincial Development Working Party (PDWP), in its 41st meeting of the fiscal year 2024-25, Wednesday approved five development schemes amounting to Rs 12.042 billion. Chaired by P&D Board Chairman Barrister Nabeel Ahmad Awan, the meeting approved the following schemes: 1. Central Punjab Non-Formal Education Project at a cost of Rs 3,256,401 million. 2. South Punjab Non-Formal Education Project at a cost of Rs 5,153,816 million. 3. North Punjab Non-Formal Education Project at a cost of Rs 3,603,508 million. 4. Feasibility Study for the Construction of a Sky Walk Glass Bridge at Murree (PC-II) at a cost of Rs 13,240 million. 5. Preparation of Dossiers for Tentative World Heritage Sites of Harappa and Hiran Minar at a cost of Rs 15,300 million. The meeting was attended by Secretary P&D Board Dr. Asif Tufail, Chief Economist Masood Anwar, members of the P&D Board and other senior officials.

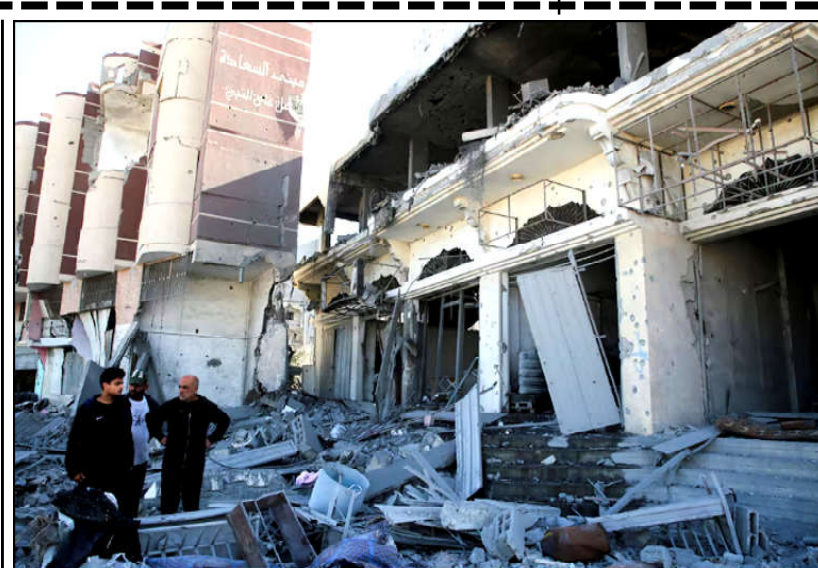


LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Local Government Zeeshan Rafique presides over the meeting regarding Lahore Development Plan. Punjab Minister for Information Azma Bukhari, SACM Zeeshan Malik and Rashid Iqbal are also present.

International News

North Korea sends foreign minister to Russia as its troops train to fight against Ukraine

Monitoring Desk SEOUL: North Korea said Tuesday its top diplomat is visiting Russia, in another sign of their deepening relations as rival South Korea and Western nations say the North has sent thousands of troops to support Russia's war in Ukraine. North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said a delegation led by Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui departed for Russia on Monday, but didn't specify the purpose of the visit. In a closed-door hearing at South Korea's parliament, the South's spy agency said Choe may be involved in high-level discussions on sending additional troops to Russia and negotiating what the North would get in return, according to Lee Seong-kweon, a lawmaker who attended the meeting. The announcement of Choe's visit came hours after the Pentagon said North Korea has sent to Russia about 10,000 troops, who are likely to fight against Ukraine within "the next several weeks." South Korean and Western leaders have expressed concern that North Korean involvement could help prolong Russia's aggression in Ukraine, and that Russia may offer technology in return that could advance the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile program. Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder, the Pentagon press secretary, said a "relatively small number" of North Korean troops are now in the Kursk region, where Russia has struggled to push back a Ukrainian incursion. He declined to provide a more precise number. A couple thousand more troops are heading in that direction, he told reporters Tuesday. "As of right now, you know, it remains to be seen exactly how the Russians and the North Koreans will employ these forces," Ryder said, adding that he expects the deployment to be discussed by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, Secretary of State Antony Blinken and their South Korean counterparts when they meet in Washington this week. South Korea's National Intelligence Service told lawmakers it's examining the possibility that some groups of North Korea's military personnel in Russia, including generals or other high-ranking officials, may have already moved to frontline areas. The spy agency said the two sides appear to be struggling to resolve communication issues, although the Russian military is



Palestinians inspect the site of an Israeli strike on a house, amid the Israel-Hamas conflict, in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip.

Gaza rescuers dig for survivors after Israeli strike kills 93

Monitoring Desk GAZA STRIP: Rescuers pulled bodies from the rubble in Beit Lahia on Tuesday after an overnight Israeli strike that Gaza's civil defence said killed 93 people in a residential building. Bodies wrapped in shrouds lay in rows as mourners gathered, with witnesses saying many of those killed were women and children. Around 40 people remained missing under the debris, the civil defence agency said. Its spokesman, Mahmud Bassal, described the complete destruction of a five-storey home, adding that the area lacked medical facilities to treat the wounded. "The number of martyrs in the massacre of the Abu Nasr family home in Beit Lahia has risen to 93 martyrs, and about 40 are still missing under the rubble," he told AFP.

CIA director, other officials to visit Middle East for talks

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: US officials including CIA Director William Burns and envoys Brett McGurk and Amos Hochstein will visit Egypt and Israel on Thursday to discuss issues involving Iran, Lebanon, and the release of hostages in Gaza, a US official said as Washington seeks to de-escalate tensions in the region. CENTCOM Commander General Erik Kurilla also is in the region and will visit Israel, the official said on Wednesday.

US presses ahead with modest Mideast plans despite election uncertainty

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: With the U.S. presidential election just a week away, the Biden administration is not giving up hope for short-term deals for cease-fires between Israel and Hamas in Gaza and Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon. But U.S. officials are mindful that political uncertainty in the United States has made the sides reluctant to commit to any significant agreements before it is clear who has won the White House. In the meantime, the Middle East is uneasy about what happens next after Israel struck Iranian military targets over the weekend in retaliation for Iran's barrage of ballistic missile attacks on Oct. 1. U.S. officials said they believe Israel's attack — whose targets were coordinated with Washington — will not draw an escalatory reaction from Iran. But the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity to share sensitive diplomatic discussions, caution that nothing is certain. The Biden administration was able to persuade Israel to keep its response limited — gaining assurances it wouldn't hit nuclear or oil sites in Iran that would have escalated the conflict — despite limited U.S. influence as Biden's term wraps up. As Israel's closest ally and a key mediator in the Middle East, the U.S. still is pressing for any movement on a truce despite setbacks in the past and little expectation of immediate breakthroughs.

Investors take cover in Asia ahead of US election

Monitoring Desk PENNSYLVANIA: Investors are selling yen and taking shelter in cash, India, pockets of China's markets and Singapore dollars ahead of a US election that could shake out global money and trade flows. Asia's financial markets stand on the front line of what could be a wild ride when votes are tallied and in the months ahead since the region is an export powerhouse and shares and currencies are sensitive to changes in US trade policies. That has money managers shying away from outright wagers on the outcome and looking instead to reduce exposure to vulnerabilities from Japanese manufacturers to Hong Kong stocks and make bets in India or China that stand to gain regardless of the US leader. "We actually view China as a decent place to

Yemen's Houthis launched drones towards Israel's Ashkelon, spokesperson says

Monitoring Desk DUBAI: Yemen's Houthis launched drones towards an industrial zone in the Israeli city of Ashkelon, the group's military spokesperson said on Tuesday. The Yemeni fighters, who have been attacking ships crossing the Red Sea since November of last year, say they are acting in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza and in support of Lebanon against Israeli strikes. The Israeli military said on Tuesday morning that sirens sounded in Ashkelon after a drone crossed into Israeli territory but fell in an open space in the area. Israel condemns the Houthis as terrorists following the instructions of its arch-foe Iran.

Austria says eight of its UNIFIL troops in Lebanon injured in rocket attack

Monitoring Desk VIENNA: Eight Austrian soldiers belonging to the UN peacekeeping force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) sustained superficial injuries in a rocket strike on Camp Naqoura near Israel, Austria's Defence Ministry said on Tuesday. UNIFIL is stationed in southern Lebanon to monitor hostilities along the demarcation line with Israel, an area that has seen fierce clashes this month between Israeli troops and Iran-backed Hezbollah fighters. "We condemn this attack in the strongest possible terms and demand that it be investigated immediately," the ministry said in a statement, adding that it was not clear where the attack came from and none of the soldiers needed urgent medical care. Austria contributes about 180 soldiers to the 10,000-strong force. They are part of a "Multi Role Logistic Unit" that performs roles like transporting goods and personnel, repairing vehicles, supplying fuel and firefighting.

Iran appoints first Baluch governor in restive Sistan Baluchistan province

Monitoring Desk TEHRAN: Iran's government on Wednesday appointed the first governor from the Baluch minority in the country's restive southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchistan. "Mansour Bijar was chosen as the governor of Sistan-Baluchistan," government spokeswoman Fatemeh Mohajerani said after a cabinet meeting. Bijar, 50, hails from the Baluch community, a mainly Sunni Muslim ethnic group in a Shia-majority country.

Harris warns of dangers of another Trump presidency in speech at Jan 6 riots site

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: Democrat Kamala Harris warned tens of thousands of people gathered in Washington at her biggest rally that her Republican opponent Donald Trump was seeking unchecked power as their tightening race for the presidency entered its final week. Harris spoke on Tuesday evening to an outdoor rally estimated by her campaign to number more than 75,000 people at the spot near the White House where on January 6, 2021, Trump addressed his supporters before they attacked the US Capitol. "We know who Donald Trump is," Harris said. She said the then-president sent an "armed mob" to the US Capitol to try to overturn his loss in the 2020 presidential election. "This is someone who is unstable, obsessed with revenge, consumed with grievance and out for unchecked power," Harris said during what her campaign called her closing argument before a tightly contested November 5 election. More than 53 million Americans have already voted in the election, according to Election Hub at the University of Florida, in a battle that will decide who runs the world's richest and most powerful country for four years. Harris was flanked by American flags on stage and surrounded by blue and white banners that said "FREEDOM" with a well-lit White House behind her. The crowd included older people and college students, people from overseas, from New York and from nearby Virginia. Many women came in groups with other female friends. "It's important that we do not go back to the horrible past policies under President Trump," said Saul Schwartz, a former

PM meets Vietnamese counterpart; suggests exchange of trade

RIYADH (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday met with his Vietnamese counterpart Pham Minh Chinh and expressed Pakistan's desire to enhance its ties with Vietnam, while highlighting the immense potential of the two countries to enhance trade and investment cooperation.

In the meeting held on the sidelines of the 8th Future Investment Initiative (FII) Conference, the two leaders discussed ways to strengthen bilateral relations, particularly in trade and investment.

Prime Minister Shehbaz proposed an exchange of trade and business delegations between both countries to further explore these opportunities. The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening people-to-people ties and promoting tourism between the two countries.

Appreciating Vietnam's role in the ASEAN region, Prime Minister Shehbaz sought support for Pakistan's efforts to become a full dialogue partner of ASEAN.

He also extended an invitation to the Vietnamese prime minister to undertake an official visit to Pakistan.



RIYADH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh of Vietnam on the sidelines of the 8th Future Investment Initiative (FII) Conference.

Fazlur Rehman says: Improving national economy vital for country's stability

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Jamiat Ulema Islam (JUI-F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Wednesday said that strengthening national economy was vital for country's stability.

He stated this while addressing a ceremony by JUI-F district leadership in his honor.

He underlined the need of forming an effective policy to tackle the menace of terrorism in the country to ensure economic stability.

Fazl said his party would support the government in its all the steps taken for the betterment of the national economy.

He mentioned that the recent Shanghai Cooperation Conference (SCC) meeting held in Pakistan which was a matter of pride for the whole nation.

The JUI-F Chief said that after the passage of 26th constitutional amendment, the Parliament was bound to discuss the recommendations of Islamic Ideology Council (IIC) for making any legislation, which he termed a big achievement.

He said that earlier the agreement of 40 percent legislators was mandatory for sending any matter to the IIC and this ratio was decreased to 25 percent under the 26th constitutional amendment.

Commenting on Palestine issue, he said the Pakistan was standing with Palestinian Muslims where the occupying forces have martyred about 50,000 to 60,000 innocent civilians.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Health Bkhat Muhammad Kakar checking the attendance register during his visit to Basic Health Unit at Killi Nasaran Nawa Killi.

Forced shutter down not to be allowed, asserts Quetta administration

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Quetta district administration has announced that forced shutter down strike would not be observed in the city.

According to an official handout issued here Wednesday, the Assistant Commissioner Quetta city and other Assistant Commissioners visited Liaquat bazar, Prince road, Gordat Singh road and Jinnah road and they got opened the shops closed in the city.

Assistant Commissioner said that the people who were forcefully closing the shops were arrested.

He also said that patrolling of police has been increased in different parts. He said that no one can be forced to observe shutter down.

Surge in cases of polio in Balochistan continues Another child reported with crippling disease from Chaghai

Independent Report
QUETTA: Another polio case has been reported from Balochistan increasing tally of cases of crippling disease to 22.

The Emergency Operation Center for polio eradication sources said that the new polio case has been reported from Chaghai, which is the first one of the district during the current year.

The sources said that the polio virus has been detected in a child belonging to Chaghai.

It may be mentioned here that in all 21 cases of polio had already been reported in the province during current year.

Out of the total polio cases, six were reported from Killa Abdullah and three from Quetta district.



QUETTA: A view of closed shop during a shutter down strike call by Balochistan National Party.

Govt. focusses on economic uplift of masses: DPM Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday highlighted that the incumbent government focused on efforts to uplift the economic conditions of the masses.

Now, the country was on road to sustainable growth as all the macro-economic indicators were doing well with food inflation nosediving and the GDP on the rise, the deputy prime minister and foreign minister expressed his views during the launching ceremony of BOGO LIV, a financial mobile application.

He further said that Pakistan Stock Market had been the best performing market in the Asia while the credible global institutions were all projecting Pakistan's economy on road to recovery.

Dar stressed that they needed to introspect on their past and reflect as to how correct the course and stay on the right course.

He said that government's strategy revolved around encouraging productivity through private sector, adding it was not the government's job to do businesses, rather it acted as facilitator to encourage the private sector.

The DPM further said that the airports were to be outsourced in the country. When the UK could do it why it could not be done here for the purpose of provision of better services, he added.

He said that the government was also focusing on downsizing its size and curtailing its spending, adding that immense potential still existed in the country, though they had lost a lot yet the vast opportunities existed.

Dar underscored the need of maintaining the economic stability and called for unity, hard work and moving in the right direction.

PM expresses sympathies, solidarity with Spain over loss of lives in floods

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday extended deepest sympathies and solidarity to the people of Spain and Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez over loss of lives due to floods.

"On behalf of the people and government of Pakistan, I extend our deepest sympathies and solidarity to the people of Spain and Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez following the tragic floods and loss of life. Our thoughts and prayers are with all those affected," the prime minister posted on X handle.

He further said that Pakistan stood in solidarity with the friendly people of Spain at this challenging time.

Plastic bags banned in Quetta

QUETTA (APP): The Commissioner Quetta Division on Wednesday imposed a ban on the sale and purchase of plastic bags.

Metropolitan Corporation is pleased to impose a ban on the sale/purchase/storage and use of plastic bags, said an order issued by the Commissioner's office.

The shops and malls violating the order would be sealed in coordination with the Environmental Protection Agency besides arresting those who were involved in the sale and purchase of bags.

Naqvi condemns attack on Ex-CJP Qazi Faez's vehicle in London

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has strongly condemned the attack on former Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa and the Pakistani High Commission's vehicle in London.

The Interior Minister ordered NADRA to take immediate action to identify the attackers through video footage.

He said that legal action would be taken against the assailants and an FIR would be registered in Pakistan for further action.

Mohsin Naqvi stated that the attackers' ID cards and passports will be blocked.

Balochistan agriculture dept showcases agri product in international conference

Independent Report
QUETTA: The government of Balochistan, Department of Agriculture participated in the International Sustainable Agriculture Conference 2024 held in Karachi under the leadership of Special Secretary of Agriculture Jahangir Kakar.

A statement issued by the Agriculture Department Balochistan said that the two-day conference was organized under the auspices of Pakistan Media Development Foundation, Ripple Concept and Exhibitor TV, which was also supported by the Green Pakistan Initiative.

On this occasion, the Research Wing, Water Management and Extension Wing of Balochistan Department of Agriculture with the support of WWF also set up wonderful stalls which were well appreciated by the participants.

In the conference, a panel discussion was also organized on sustainable agriculture, organic agriculture, water management and various topics.



QUETTA: MPA Dr. Nawaz Kibzai meeting with Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

Chairman PAC dismayed over untimely completion of projects of Irrigation Department

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chairman, Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Asghar Khan Tareen has expressed dismay over untimely completion of the development projects of Irrigation Department.

The Chairman PAC said that the projects are not completing due to incompetence of the Irrigation Department.

He said that overrun payment of billions of rupees has been made for the projects and inquired as who would pay the losses?

The Chairman PAC was presiding over the meeting in the committee room of Balochistan Assembly on Wednesday. The meeting reviewed the aud paras of Irrigation Department for the financial year 2021-22 and 2022-23 and other related matters.

The members of PAC Zabid Ali Reki and Fazal Qadir Mandokhail, Director General Audit, Shuja Ali, Accountant General, Nasrullah Jan, Secretary Irrigation, Hafiz Abdul Majid, Additional Secretary PAC, Sirajuddin Lehri, Additional Secretary Law, Saeed Iqbal, Additional Secretary Finance, Muhammad Arif, Chief Accounts Officer, PAC, Syed Muhammad Idris, Project Directors of Irrigation Department, and other concerned officials were in attendance at the meeting.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Livestock Sardarzada Faisal Khan Jamali meeting with Speaker Balochistan Assembly Captain (ret'd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai.

October 31 is last date for filing income tax returns

ISLAMABAD (INP): Only one-day left for filing income tax returns for fiscal year 2024 which already approaching fast.

Prior to this Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) extended last date of filing income tax returns for fiscal year 2024 twice due to slow and unavailability of internet, technical faults in IRIS Portal and on appeals from tax bar associations.

Now the final date for filing income tax returns for fiscal year 2024 is October 31, 2024.

Regional Tax Office established awareness camps for taxpayers under the supervision of Chief Commissioner Ahmad Shuja Khan.

At UN, Pakistan calls for steps to offset threats to regional, Intl security

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Reaffirming that international peace and security depended on stability at the regional levels, Pakistan has called for the preservation of balance in the defence capabilities of states at the lowest level of armaments and military forces.

Speaking at a key U.N. panel, Pakistani delegate Atif Raza also underscored the special responsibility of militarily significant states in promoting regional security.

"Several regions have reaped the benefits of applying these principles: Conventional arms control,

risk reduction, and confidence-building measures (CBMs) have laid the groundwork for peace in many regions of the world," Raza, a Counsellor at the Pakistan Mission to the UN, told the General Assembly's First Committee, which deals with disarmament and international security issues.

"However, when a state spurs these regional approaches because it perceives its global ambitions as incompatible, it obstructs the path to peace," he said in the debate on 'Regional Disarmament and Security'.

"Such denial isn't just

a regional issue; it destabilizes the entire global order," the Pakistani delegate added.

Confidence-building measures could lead to favourable measures for the peaceful settlement of existing disputes, he said, adding they should not become an end in themselves.

"They (CBMs) also cannot act as a substitute nor a precondition for steps towards peaceful settlement of disputes," Raza said. "Without progress towards eliminating underlying disputes and causes of mistrust between states, the utility of CBMs diminishes."



QUETTA: Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly Ghzala Gola in a group photo with Secretary Women Parliamentary Caucus Islamabad Dr. Shahida Rehmani and Women MPAs.

GoB announces closed holiday from Oct 31 to Nov 2 for Hindu employees on Diwali

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Government of Balochistan has announced the closed holiday for three days from October 31 to November 2, 2024 for the government employees belonging to Hindu community on account of Diwali.

This was announced in an official notification issued here by the Services and General Administration Department on Wednesday. According to the notification, the salaries of government employees from the Hindu community have already been paid on October 24 for the month of October.

Planning minister calls for global action on climate disaster funding

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal emphasized on Wednesday Pakistan's unwavering commitment to resilience in the face of climate change and natural disasters.

Speaking at the Accreditation Award ceremony organized by the National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF), the minister lauded the rigorous efforts of the NDRMF and its partners, including representatives from federal ministries, provincial authorities, disaster management bodies, and international organizations, all of whom played a pivotal role in advancing Pakistan's climate resilience efforts.

Prof. Iqbal highlighted Pakistan's unique position as a nation that, while contributing less than 1% to global emissions, ranks among the countries most severely affected by climate disasters.

He pointed out that despite widespread verbal support for Pakistan's climate resilience efforts, substantial international funding has been lacking, leaving Pakistan to navigate the consequences of climate change with limited global support.



QUETTA: Newly Elected President National Party Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch and member of central cabinet being administer oath by Akram Dashti.

Partial shutter down strike observed in Quetta city

Independent Report
QUETTA: The partial shutter down strike was observed in different parts of Quetta on Wednesday.

The call for shutter down strike was given by Balochistan National Party (BNP) against registration of FIR against the central leader of Party, Sardar Akhtar Mengal and other party leaders in Islamabad as well as inclusion of name of party workers and others in the 4th schedule list, alleged enforced disappearances of the people from province, passage of 26th constitutional amendment, and other issues.

While the shops and businesses concerns remain closed in different parts of the metropolis, the same remain opened in some parts thus showing a mix response to the shutter down strike call. The movement of traffic also plied below the normal on the streets and roads in the city.

Meanwhile, reports reaching here from interior parts suggested that the shutter down strike was observed in Kharan, Panjgur, Mastung, Kalat, Noshki and some other areas of the province.

BA Body expresses concerns over non-functioning of 30 libraries in Balochistan

QUETTA (APP): The Balochistan Assembly's standing committee on Culture, Tourism and Archeology expressed grief and concerns over the non-functioning of 30 libraries in various districts of the province.

The committee was informed that there are 90 libraries in 25 districts of the province, out of which 60 are functional and 30 are inactive due to insufficient staff and other issues.

The meeting of the Standing Committee on Culture, Archives, Tourism and Archeology was held under the chairmanship of Rahmat Ali Baloch who was informed that the department has formulated the Balochistan Artist Welfare Fund policy to provide financial support to well-known artists.

Under the policy, artists would be awarded financial support of Rs 40,000, 30,000 and 20,000 per month respectively.

Chairman Rehmat Ali Baloch emphasized the need to support the artists who are real ambassadors and the committee pledged to resolve the issues being faced by the artists.

The committee stressed to ensure the protection and promotion of the rich cultural heritage of Balochistan.

The committee expressed its concern that the Balochi, Pashto and Brahui Academies supervised by the Education Department instead of the Culture Department.



QUETTA: Additional Secretary Home Khalid Khan presides over the meeting regarding illegal activities in the province.