

# Independent

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Ph: 2841470/2841473 Vol: XIX No. 222, Rabi-us-Sani 07, 1446 AH Friday October 11, Pages 04, Price Rs.15



A delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia led by Investment Minister H. E. Mr Khalid Bin Abdul Aziz Al Falih called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad.

## Pakistan, Saudi Arabia sign MoUs valuing \$2.2bln in multiple sectors

PM terms Saudi delegation's visit as key milestone in strengthening ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Saudi Arabia on Thursday signed 27 Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) valuing US \$2.2 billion in various sectors including industry, agriculture, Information Technology (IT), food, education, mine & minerals, health, petroleum, energy and other areas of mutual cooperation.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. He hoped that today's ceremony would lead to many more such events in times to come.

He expressed the government's resolve to implement these MoUs and to transform them into agreements in future through "hard work and untiring efforts".

"Our Saudi brothers lead by Khalid Bin Abdul

## COAS, Saudi delegation discuss bilateral ties

General Asim underscores deep respect & affection that people of Pakistan hold for the KSA

RAWALPINDI (APP): from King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and the Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman." Manifestation of one of the largest business delegations' visit to Pakistan reaffirms the enduring and fraternal ties between Pakistan and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," he said.

The meeting focused on matters of mutual interest, particularly initiatives to strengthen ever growing brotherly bilateral cooperation in a variety of sectors, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

The COAS expressed his profound appreciation and gratitude for unflinching support for Pakistan

## SC suspends order for re-polling in PB-45

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Thursday suspended a decision regarding re-polling in 15 polling stations of the PB-45 Balochistan. The court reinstated the victory of PPP's candidate Ali Madad Jatak and served notices to respondents for comments.

A three-member bench headed by Justice Amin ud Din Khan heard the appeal against the decision of election tribunal for re-counting in aforesaid constituency. The appeal was filed by PPP's candidate Ali Madad Jatak. During hearing, the petitioner's lawyer contended that the election tribunal has ordered for re-polling on contradiction in forms 45 of candidates.

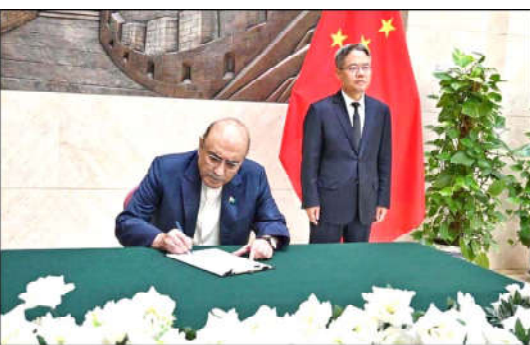
The 15 candidates claimed for changing in form 45 but only four presented this before tribunal.

## President visits China embassy to condole killing of Chinese citizens

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Thursday visited the Embassy of China here and offered his heartfelt condolences on behalf of the Government and people of Pakistan over the tragic killing of Chinese citizens in a terrorist attack in Karachi that took place on October 7, 2024.

Strongly condemning the terrorist attack, the president reiterated the resolve to bring the perpetrators of this heinous crime to justice.

He expressed Pakistan's solidarity with Chinese people in this hour of grief, according to a President House press release.



the growing bilateral partnership.

He stated that such cowardly acts by the hostile elements could not weaken the bonds of friendship between the two time-tested friends.

The president reiterated Pakistan's commitment to ensure the safety and security of the Chinese nationals residing in Pakistan.

## Nawaz, Bilawal meet to explore solutions for Pak current situation

Bilawal confident on approval of constitutional amendments by all parties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan People's Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, met with former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on Thursday to discuss the country's current situation and explore solutions to the challenges it faces.

The meeting took place at Punjab House, Islamabad, where Pakistan Muslim League-N President Nawaz Sharif warmly welcomed Bilawal Bhutto upon his arrival. The two leaders expressed satisfaction over the inflation rate drop from 32% to 6.9%, the reduction in the policy rate, overall economic progress, and the continuous improvement in economic indicators, including the record \$8.8 billion sent by overseas Pakistanis.

The two leaders expressed optimism about the swift relief for Pakistan and its people, calling it an auspicious sign, while also welcoming the arrival of the Saudi investor delegation and the hosting of the the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in the federal capital.

The two leaders agreed that these activities mark a highly positive development for Pakistan's international standing and economic progress.

Nawaz Sharif stated that time has proven the 2006 Charter of Democracy (CoD) to be a historic and timely decision. He credited the charter with stabilizing democracy, allowing Parliament to complete its term, and uniting political parties against non-democratic forces that promoted sit-ins and unrest.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan People's Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari along with senior party leaders meet with President PML-N, Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and senior party leaders at Punjab House.

## Faith in Khatam-e-Nabuwat integral part of Muslim's definition: SC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan has stated in Mubarak Sani's detailed judgment that complete faith in 'Khatam-e-Nabuwat' is an integral part of the definition of a Muslim.

A three-member bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa and comprising Justice Amin ud Din Khan and Justice Naem Akhtar Afghan issued the order.

The order said that accepting the appeal of the federal government, this court declared that faith in Khatam-e-Nabuwat is completed with accepting Prophet Muhammad Peace Be Upon him as the last Prophet in its meaning.

## Kundi emphasizes peace in provincial jirga

Interior Minister represents Federal Govt at Grand Jirga in CM House

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, on Thursday highlighted the significance of peace in the province during a jirga held at the Chief Minister's House.

Addressing the gathering, he expressed gratitude to the provincial government for organizing the event and to Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi for his presence.

Governor Kundi acknowledged existing political differences and stressed that the safety and prosperity of the province remain the top priorities.

He asserted that negotiations are essential for resolving issues, particularly in light of ongoing challenges, including the situation in Afghanistan.

Referring to a recent tragic incident in district Khyber, he underscored the urgency of addressing security concerns, saying that



PESHAWAR: Federal Interior Minister, Mohsin Naqvi participating in Grand Jirga organised by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government.

## Reconstruction of Dozan bridge done: Train service to be restored from Quetta to rest of country after one and half month today

Independent Report  
QUETTA: The train service is due to be restored from Quetta to rest of the country today (Friday) as the reconstruction of Dozan railway bridge completed in Bolan area.

The Pakistan Railway authorities confirmed that the Jaffar Express is scheduled to depart from Quetta Railway Station for Peshawar at 09:00 AM today.

Similarly, the Bolan Mail is scheduled to depart for Karachi from Quetta on October 13.

Meanwhile, the trial of engine and train was done by crossing the same from Dozan railway bridge.

The Divisional Superintendent of Pakistan Railways Quetta, Imran Hayat personally monitored the trial of train at the bridge.

As the trial remained successful, it was decided to restore the train service from Quetta to other parts of the country.

It may be recalled that the Dozan railway bridge was destroyed by some unknown miscreants in subversive act on August 26, 2024.

After destruction of the railway bridge, the train service was suspended from Quetta for rest of the country.



RAWALPINDI: Minister of Investment, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Khalid Bin Abdulaziz Al Falih, accompanied by a high-level government cum business delegation, meet with General Syed Asim Munir, NI(M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS).

## Five IPPs contracts terminated to save Rs411 bln: Shehbaz

ISLAMABAD (APP): The government on Thursday announced the termination of the power purchase agreement with five Independent Power Producers (IPPs) which Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said it would provide Rs60 billion annual relief to the electricity consumers and cumulatively save Rs411 billion to the national exchequer. The prime minister, in his remarks at the meeting of the federal cabinet he chaired, said the termination of agreements, signed between the Task Force on

## 4 khwarij killed in two separate IBOs in KP

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Security Forces on Thursday killed four Khwarij terrorists in two separate intelligence-based operations (IBOs) conducted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). On October 9, the Forces conducted an IBO in general area Janikhel, Bannu District on reported presence of khwarij, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

During the conduct of the operation, after an intense exchange of fire, two khwarij were killed. In another operation, conducted in general area Hassan Khel, North Waziristan District on October 10, the Army troops effectively engaged khwarij location and in ensuing fire exchange, two more khwarij were killed. Weapons and ammunition were also recovered from killed khwarij, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities against the security forces as well as abductions and target killing of innocent civilians. "Sanitization of the area is being carried out to eliminate any other kharij found in the area.



QUETTA: A delegation led by Forum for Dignity Initiatives (FDI)'s Uzma Yaqoob called on Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

## Comprehensive planning and coordinated strategy direly needed for sustainable development of any city, says CS

Independent Report  
QUETTA: The Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan has stated that comprehensive planning and coordinated strategy is disparately needed for sustainable development and construction of any city so as to fulfill all needs of the citizens.

The Chief Secretary exhorted to all concerned institutions to play their role for providing basic needs and facilities to the new generations by preparing comprehensive planning and coordinated strategy keeping in view the future requirements.

The Chief Secretary was chairing meeting on Quetta Master Plan here on Thursday.

The meeting was attended by the Secretary Transport, Hayat Kakar,

## Public-private partnership essential to cope with challenges of global warming, emphasizes Governor

Independent Report  
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has emphasized that public-partnership is essential to move ahead the public friendly policies and cope with the challenges of global warming.

Speaking on the occasion, the Governor said that the negative impacts of climate change can be reduced with cooperation of the international institutions.

He insisted that the message can be reached to every homeboy including the subject of environment in curriculum.

The Governor was speaking to a delegation



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan presides over the meeting regarding Quetta Master Plan.

## Daily Voice of Masses Independent

### Mental wellness

World Mental Health Day, observed on Oct 10 each year, is an opportunity to focus on an oft-neglected aspect of one's well-being. The theme for 2024, 'Mental Health at Work', highlights the urgent need to address mental well-being within professional environments. With a significant portion of adult life spent at work, creating healthy workplaces becomes not just an ethical responsibility but also an economic necessity. Workplaces that fail to prioritise mental health can contribute to burnout, anxiety, depression, and other serious issues, while those that do foster mental well-being help employees thrive both professionally and personally. Workplace stress and mental health issues have gained increasing attention in recent years across the globe, but the situation is concerning in Pakistan. The prevalence of mental disorders in Pakistan is estimated to be as high as 10pc, affecting approximately 20m people. Despite such staggering numbers, mental health remains a stigmatised topic, particularly in professional settings where discussing mental well-being is often viewed as a sign of weakness. The challenges of job insecurity, excessive workloads, and limited access to mental health resources exacerbate the problem, leaving many employees to struggle in silence.

For a developing country like ours, where the workforce is already strained due to economic pressures, addressing mental health at work is critical. Low wages and poor working conditions, especially in sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture, and even the burgeoning digital economy, only intensify the crisis. In many cases, employees hesitate to seek help for fear of being judged or seen as incompetent. This reinforces the cycle of untreated mental health issues that can lead to reduced productivity, absenteeism, and high turnover rates, all of which affect the national economy.

Pakistan suffers from a lack of institutional support and policies that address mental health in the workplace. Unlike many developed nations, where employee assistance programmes, flexible work arrangements, and mental health awareness training are becoming standard, such initiatives are rare in our corporate and industrial sectors. This gap underscores the need for both a cultural shift and legislative reforms to promote mental well-being at work. The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of mental health in every aspect of life, including the workplace. As remote work becomes more common, especially in the IT and services sectors, the boundaries between work and personal life have blurred, leading to heightened stress. The emphasis on mental health at work could not be more timely, urging employers to rethink how they support their employees. On this World Mental Health Day, the message is clear: mental health at work must become a priority. There must be a concerted effort in Pakistan to initiate conversations about mental health in the workplace. It is only by addressing these issues that we can create an inclusive, productive, and healthier workforce.

### Stressed hospitality

F.S. Aijazuddin

In Pakistan we plan with finesse, and then execute in distress. Some still recall the obstacles placed by the then chief minister Punjab in the way of the Lahore LitFest in earlier years. Annoyed at the criticism of his Orange Line (a permanent unsightly scar across the face of once lovely Lahore), he withdrew permission at the penultimate minute for the LLF to be held at the Lahore Arts Council.

Hurriedly, the LLF had to relocate to a local hotel. To the chagrin of the audience, attractions like the Indian film star Shar-mila Tagore could be barely heard over the noise of generators in makeshift auditoria.

This year, the opening of the Lahore Biennale 2024, which by its definition takes more than a year to plan, fell victim to politics. What should have been a momentous, joyous event for our country was crippled by a dharna by a disgruntled party.

Everyone with an opinion has a right to express their views. We might, however, learn a lesson from the Japanese. A visitor there once noticed a trio of Japanese factory workers standing outside the gate. They held placards listing their demands. When asked, they explained that they were on strike on behalf of all their colleagues. There was no need for the rest of the workers to strike. They would continue working so that production would not be interrupted.

With us, protest is synonymous with disruption. We cannot complain without causing chaos.

A prequel to the Lahore Biennale compressed Lahore's past into its present. It was an art exhibition held in the house off Temple Road where the author Ved

Mehta grew up in the 1940s.

Ved's family lived in a mohalla known then as Mehta gali. He made his father's house famous (the gate still has the marble plaque bearing the name 'Dr. Amolak Ram Mehta') in his autobiography Face to Face (1957). The house remains as his family left it in 1947, sans contents and sans its soul.

Each room had been converted into a mini gallery, showcasing the talent of individual artists. The inner courtyard where Ved played became a theatre. For an hour, Lahore's past was recalled by a film — Life in the Walled City of Lahore — made by Shireen Pasha in 1991.

Shireen studied at the National College of Arts, Lahore where her talent as a painter glinted like gold in a class of dark lignite. She leaped from the limitation of a canvas to the big screen, and from there to the welcoming arms of the West.

Her film on Lahore is Kiplingesque. It shows the daily routine of wrestlers, the round of milkmen, the gleeful, competitive abandon of kite-flying, the rhythm of workers hammering silver into wafer-thin slivers, the monotony of baking endless moons of naans, and the heavy breakfasts on cold Lahori mornings.

Shireen interspersed these images with recollections by elderly residents of the old city — geriatrics to whom the havelis were home and anything beyond a foreign, inhospitable land. The film concluded with shots of a younger Nusrat Fateh Ali before fame gripped his throat.

The Lahore Biennale 2024 criss-crossed Lahore's geography, including events at Sha-llimar Gardens, the Lahore Fort, and Brad--laugh Hall which history has forgotten.

Because of the po-

litical dharna, the meticulously crafted schedule had to be rearranged at short notice. That it was held at all is a tribute to the tenacity of the organisers. They saw Lahore as an artistic tapestry, a historical continuum, not the stunted span of an elected or selected government.

Participants at another moot — the SCO gathering of biggies in Islamabad — have their own problems, their own variants of dissent. They will though be treated here with liberal hospitality.

Flush with the prospect of \$7 billion from the IMF, our Foreign Office has asked the Punjab government for "15 VVIP vehicles, including bulletproof cars, for deployment with the 12 prime ministers attending the SCO conference". In response, the Punjab government announced plans to purchase "79 new luxury vehicles for provincial ministers, parliamentary secretaries ... and VVIP protocol duties". The cost? A paltry Rs612 million.

Wasn't it Thomas Jefferson who advised paupers like us: "Never spend your money before you have it?"

One recalls the 1974 Islamic Summit in Lahore when Mr Bhutto commandeered the residences of the rich and their luxury cars for visiting VIPs. These included Saudi King Faisal and Libya's Col Qadhafi. They made no complaints. In 2008, before the SCO meeting in Dushanbe, the Chinese gifted the host Tajikistan 105 vehicles, including 80 buses and 20 luxury cars for the visiting heads of state. We still owe the Chinese \$3bn deposited to window-dress our reserves. We did not need to rice-paper our poverty with conceit. -- Courtesy Dawn

### Gaza's children

Aamnah Arshad Kamal

As we mark one year since the onset of the conflict in Gaza, the devastating toll on children's mental health there continues to unfold. More than 42,000 people have been killed in Gaza since the start of the conflict, according to the Gaza health ministry, with the majority of identified victims being women and children. This prolonged conflict, marked by air strikes, displacement, and the loss of family and homes, has left deep psychological wounds on children and the youth.

World Mental Health Day, observed each year on Oct 10, is a crucial time to raise awareness about the mental health crisis being faced by children living in war zones. The children of Gaza have been confined to a narrow strip of land, which has been blockaded for 15 years, and, along with the rest of the inhabitants, have faced a number of intense periods of assault by Israel, from 2008 to 2024. The current attacks have so far proved to be the most devastating for Gaza's 2.3 million people. Besides the huge death toll, thousands of people are missing, many of them perhaps dead under the rubble. Keeping in mind the demography, we can assume that a little under half the casualties are children. However, it is quite clear that all children in Gaza have experienced the trauma of war and it is no wonder that the Gaza Strip has been called the "most dangerous place in the world to be a child" by Unicef spokesperson James Elder.

Large numbers of children in Gaza are injured; they have been

left without parents and shelter, without vital medical aid, and without sufficient food and water. Before they can recover from their previous scars, they are re-traumatised — on a daily basis — and are left with no sense of security. They are in a state of toxic stress, as they live under the constant terror of bombardment and firing.

There are many studies to support the evidence of mental health disorders including post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety and depression among the children. One such study, conducted after past conflicts in Gaza, is the 'Consequences of war-related traumatic stress among Palestinian young people in the Gaza Strip: a scoping review', published in Science Direct. It concludes that the majority of children in Gaza exhibited symptoms of PTSD: "The mental health of children and young people in the Gaza Strip is a pressing public health concern, particularly PTSD, depression and anxiety."

Psychologist Iman Farajallah has conducted a number of studies on childhood trauma focused on Palestinian children. For her 2016 doctoral dissertation titled Children of War: Psychological Impacts of War and Post-war Trauma on the Palestinian Children in the Gaza Strip, Dr Farajallah interviewed children and their families in the area. She found that anger and aggression were common among them as a result of witnessing Israeli bombings take the lives of close family members. Among the signs of mental trauma and PTSD displayed by children were: depression, anxiety, continuous traumatic stress

disorder, hyperactivity, a preference for being alone, aggression, screaming, nightmares and bed-wetting, frightening thoughts and flashbacks of traumatic events.

Watching people around them die, especially parents and close family members and friends, makes the children in Gaza very afraid, lonely and depressed. They do not receive the emotional support or psychological care needed, thus these negative feelings exacerbate their mental health issues. The lack of security resulting from losing family members, homes and safe places to live, prolongs the stress they suffer.

Intense conflict has destroyed schools and recreational structures in Gaza, disrupting children's education, which in turn impacts their cognitive development and learning. Besides not being able to go to school, children also lose out on discovering their talent, interests and skills.

As a result, their future progress is hampered, adding to their feelings of depression and hopelessness.

Interventions that focus on reducing the effect of war on children's mental health are crucial to helping the affected youngsters manage the adverse psychological effects in the long term. However, effective intervention and treatment of the mental health problems of Gaza's children is only possible when there is peace in the region and the infrastructure is restored. Since the healthcare system has collapsed, no treatment is even partially possible until the war completely stops and reconstruction of infrastructure is carried out. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Commerce News

### Saudi Minister highlights Pakistan as "prime investment destination" at Business Forum

ISLAMABAD (APP): Saudi Minister for Investment, Sheikh Khalid Bin Abdul Aziz Al Faleh, on Thursday said that Pakistan has the potential to become a high-return, low-risk investment destination, making it highly attractive for Saudi investors.

Speaking at the Pakistan-Saudi Arabia Business Forum, the minister commended Pakistan's initiatives and reforms, highlighting the

establishment of a special one-stop shop, a single-window system, and the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) as pivotal factors in streamlining investment processes. He expressed optimism about the 27 agreements, amounting to \$2 billion, expected to be signed during the ongoing forum, with many more currently under negotiation. He emphasized that these agreements emerged

organically, reflecting the strong facilitation efforts underway. The minister acknowledged the Ministry of Commerce's commitment to enhancing trade relations between the two countries, noting that bilateral trade has already surged by approximately 80 percent, rising from \$3 billion in 2019 to \$5.4 billion today. He also highlighted the significant increase in Pakistani investment licenses, which have more than doubled,

demonstrating the Saudi government's encouragement.

Sheikh Khalid expressed enthusiasm about the announcement from the Saudi Crown Prince regarding a \$5 billion investment in Pakistan, revealed during Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's recent visit shortly after he took office. "I'm delighted to have the Public Investment Fund (PIF) represented among us," he remarked.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Ministers and private sector leaders in meeting with Saudi Investment Minister H.E. Eng. Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al-Falih to discuss enhancing trade and investment.



Federal Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal meeting with delegation from the China Asia Economic Development Association (CAEDA) here in Islamabad.

### Provision of affordable electricity to consumers govt's top priorities: Awais

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Power Division Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari on Thursday said that reduction in power tariff and provision of electricity to the people at affordable price were government's top priorities. Addressing at press conference here, the minister said that various pragmatic measures were being taken to slash electricity prices in order to provide maximum relief to the masses.

He said the electricity price should reduce Rs 10

per unit for which agreements with Independent Power Producers (IPPs) were mutually revised and reassessed.

He said the prime minister set up a National Task Force to bring reforms in the power sector. Five IPPs were identified and negotiation were started with them, he added.

He said every section of the agreements were thoroughly studied and then mutually reached an agreement to terminate the power purchase agreements with 5 IPPs.

### PSX loses 216 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bearish trend, losing 216.06 points on Thursday, a negative change of 0.25 percent, closing at 85,453.22 points against 85,669.28 points on the last trading day. A total of 503,750,595 shares were traded during the day as compared to 596,052,076 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 27,912 billion against Rs. 31,341 billion on the last trading day. As many as 313 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 115 of them recorded gains and 189 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 9 companies remained unchanged.

### Reforms to encourage more investments into Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Investment, Privatization and Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan, said here on Thursday that the institutional and policy reforms introduced by the incumbent government would further encourage more Saudi investor to invest in Pakistan.

"I am confident that with institutional and policy reforms, we have introduced, more Saudi

investors will be encouraged to invest in Pakistan," the federal minister said while addressing Pakistan-Saudi Arabia Business Forum. He said, the business forum provides unique opportunity to build deeper commercial ties between the two brotherly countries and invited Saudi Businessmen to explore wide range investment opportunities Pakistan has to offer.

### CM Maryam focusing to ensure agriculture development: Kirmani

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Agriculture Minister Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani said on Thursday that till now 1.25 million farmers had got their registration done for obtaining Punjab Chief Minister's Kisan Card. He said this while presiding over the meeting held in Deputy Commissioner's Toba Tek Singh office, said a press release. The meeting reviewed arrangements regarding Punjab Chief Minister's visit to Toba Tek Singh and kisan card activation ceremony. The

minister said that after printing of kisan card its provision was ongoing. He further said that Punjab Chief Minister was taking all possible measures to ensure agriculture development.

He said that Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz would be chief guest of Kisan Card launching ceremony in Toba Tek Singh. Kirmani said that under the scheme, a subsidy of Rs 1 million would be provided to farmers for getting tractor under green tractor scheme.

### Pakistan at good place on economic front, open for business, Finance Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb here on Thursday expressed optimism about Pakistan's prospects, stating the country was at a good place on economic front and open to business.

Addressing the Pakistan Saudi Arabia Business Forum,

Aurangzeb highlighted government policies aimed at strengthening the private sector to lead the country's business and economy. The minister emphasized that the government's role was not to do business but to facilitate the private sector. He welcomed Saudi Arabian delegates to promote trade and investment through a

Business-to-Business (B2B) model.

Aurangzeb cited significant progress in macroeconomic stability over the past 12-14 months. Pakistan achieved a primary surplus, reduced its current account deficit to less than \$1 billion, stabilized its currency, and increased foreign exchange reserves to cover two months of imports.

### ANF seizes 65 kg drugs in four operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting four operations managed to recover 65 kg drugs worth Rs 5.2 million and arrested six accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Thursday.

He said, in an operation, 13.2 kg hashish was recovered from a rickshaw intercepted near Sangiani toll plaza and two accused were arrested. 308 grams hashish was recovered from an accused netted near a major educational institution in Karachi.

### Chinese PM's visit to boost economic prospects: LCCI

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) has expressed the optimism that the Chinese Prime Minister's visit will boost economic prospects of Pakistan.

In a statement issued here on Thursday, LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad, Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman and Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry said, "The visit signifies a critical opportunity to boost Pakistan's economic prospects by attracting

more Chinese investment." They said that the relationship between Pakistan and China had been marked by strong economic ties but this visit takes it a step further.

They added that the business community expect to see a wave of investment in critical sectors such as energy, technology, infrastructure and manufacturing.

They further said that the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) had already laid a solid foundation.

## Empowered women play vital role in development of any society: Governor

### Independent Report

LAHORE: A delegation of HER Market Place Leaders Club led by Founder President Leaders Club, Sana Khan, called on Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House Lahore. During the meeting, Sana Khan informed the Governor of Punjab about the initiatives taken by the Leaders Club regarding women's financial independence and business development.

Talking on this occasion, Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that empowered women play an important role in the development of any society. He said that women are not only take care of their families, but

they are also contributing to the society by working shoulder to shoulder with men in various fields. Governor Punjab said that women are proving their mettle in various fields.

He appreciated the vision of Leaders Club to empower women by providing business opportunities to them. He said that Leaders Club is playing a positive role in the development of the country by providing business opportunities to women.

On this occasion, the delegation briefed the Governor Punjab about HER Marketplace and Second Emerging Women Awards 2024. The delegation also invited the Governor of Punjab as a special guest at the Women

Emerging Awards ceremony of the Leaders Club to be held at Aiwan-i-Iqbal Complex, Lahore on 16 November.

Dr. Amir Khan, Founder Leaders Club, Anam Tariq Khan, Dr. Humayun Iftikhar, Dr. Ijaz Sindhu and Irfan Khan were also present on this occasion. In addition, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan attended the Chehlum ceremony of his mother in law in Malal, Attock District and prayed for the higher ranks of the of the deceased. On this occasion, former Federal Interior Minister, Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, Sardar Muhammad Ali, Sardar Faizan Haider, Sardar Hasan Ali and a large number of local dignitaries were present.



LAHORE: A delegation of HER Market Place Leaders Club led by Founder President Leaders Club, Sana Khan, in a group photo with Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House.

## Senior minister meets WB carbon consultant

LAHORE (APP): Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb met with World Bank Carbon Consultant Mr. Morton, on Thursday.

On this occasion, bilateral discussions were held regarding important measures regarding green carbon credit, industrial emission control system, development domestic carbon credit and anti-smog program.

Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb said that Chief

Minister Maryam Nawaz has been taking steps for six months to protect her people from the negative effects of smog. Punjab is currently going through a transition phase. CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif wants to invest in the development of energy, transport and forests, she added. She said that with the support of Australian firm, discussions are also going on about bio-refinery for environmentally friendly destruction of crop residues. The senior

## Three shot dead over enmity

FAISALABAD (APP): Three people were killed over enmity near Tandlianwala on Thursday. According to Rescue-1122, Haq Nawaz s/o Sakhawat, Maqsood s/o Alam Sher and Waqar s/o Muhammad Azam (rickshaw driver) were on their way to the court to appear in a case when armed rivals opened fire on them. As a result, they all died on the spot. Rescue team moved the bodies to Tandlianwala city police.

## Two dead bodies found in Karak

PESHAWAR (APP): Two dead bodies were found in the Sirajkhel area of tehsil Takht Nusrati in district Karak on Thursday.

Local police said some unknown accused dumped the bodies of the girl and a boy after killing them somewhere else. Police said the incident was likely to be the result of an honor killing.

## Motorcyclist killed in road accident

CHICHAWATNI (APP): A motorcyclist died in a road mishap on GT Road here on Thursday. According to a police spokesman, a 50-year-old man, namely Rustam, was riding a bike on GT Road when a truck hit his bike. A result, he died on the spot.

## CM KP authorized to hold jirga for solution of all matters with peaceful negotiations

PESHAWAR (APP): The provincial peace jirga attended by the leadership and representatives of all religious and political parties here Thursday authorized the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to hold a Jirga for resolution of all matters through peaceful negotiations.

The Spokesman of KP Government in a statement here said the grand provincial jirga was attended by Federal Minister for Interior Syed Mohsin Naqvi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, CM KP Ali Ameen Gandapur Federal Minister Engr Amir Muqam, Speaker KP assembly Babar Salim Swati, leaders and representatives of religious

and political leaders including Aimal Wali Khan of ANP, Professor Ibrahim Khan of Jumat e Islami, Mohsin Hussain, Mian Iftikhar Dassar, ANP, Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha of PPP, Sikandr Hayat Sherpao QWP, Dr Ebad Khan of PMLN and others here at Chief Minister House.

The Provincial Assembly including leadership of all religious-political parties assigned CM KP the responsibility of conducting a peace jirga with concerned for solution of all matters through consultation and peaceful means. The CM KP has accepted the responsibility of conducting a peace jirga and thanked the participants for reposing trust in him.



LAHORE: Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique watching the stalls on the eve of World Mental Health Day ceremony at Punjab Institute of Mental Health.

## KMU hosts ceremony for MDCAT 2024 toppers

PESHAWAR (APP): The Adviser to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Finance, Muzammil Aslam on Thursday emphasized that health and education are the highest priorities of the government. He was addressing the inaugural ceremony of a five-week training program for provincial nurses in collaboration with the provincial health department and a consortium of British universities and an event

honoring the top position holders of MDCAT 2024 organized by Khyber Medical University (KMU) Peshawar. He remarked that today's event is a clear testament to the provincial government's commitment to elevating the health sector to international standards. The introduction of British-level nursing training will significantly enhance the quality of nursing, fostering overall growth in this vital profession.



LAHORE: Members of All Pakistan Clerks Association (APCA) are holding protest demonstration against massive unemployment, increasing price of daily use products and inflation price hiking, at Civil Secretariat in Lahore.

## KPCVE organizes seminar on prevention of drug abuse

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Centre of Excellence on Countering Violent Extremism (KPCVE) on Thursday organized a one-day seminar at Government College Peshawar on the issue of drug abuse and the social problems arising from it. The seminar was to develop strategies to prevent drug addiction and raise awareness among

students and the broader community about its dangers and consequences.

Prominent experts from various fields, including Deputy Director HED Zakaria Khan, Professor Dr Nadia Khan Betani, KPCVE Principal Research Officer Muhammad Uzair, Chairman of the Islamic Studies Department at Government College Peshawar.

## Police arrest 21 outlaws in Dikhan

DERA ISMAIL KHAN

(APP): Dera police during the successful operations against the criminal elements arrested at least 21 outlaws and recovered weapon, and drugs from their possession in the limits of Paharpur and Shorkot police stations here on Thursday. According to the police spokesman, on the direction of District Police Officer, Dera Nasir Mahmood, operations against criminal elements are going on indiscriminately throughout the district.

Shorkot police station led by SDPO Imranullah Khattak along with SHO Manzoor Khan conducted a search and strike operation in different localities. During the raid the police team arrested the accused Muhammad Salim son of Falakshir resident of Mandran Kalan, who was wanted in the murder case. The police recovered 9mm bore pistol with ammunition from the possession of Nimatullah.

## MRS responded to over 2.6 mln emergencies in 7 years in punjab

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Emergency Services Khawaja Salman Rafique congratulated all District Emergency Officers and the staff of the Motorbike Rescue Service (MRS) on completing seven successful years of service.

Speaking at the cake-cutting ceremony for the 7th anniversary of the Motorbike Rescue Service, the minister praised Rescue 1122 as one of the most disciplined organizations. He commended the Rescue 1122 team, under the leadership of Dr. Rizwan Naseer, for swiftly launching the Air Ambulance Service and the Pak Life Saver Program, both of

which beneficial for the people of Punjab. He further said that Rescue 1122 not only provides a sense of safety to the people of Punjab but also extends its expertise through the Emergency Services Academy, which has trained over 26,000 emergency professionals from across the country, to establish the emergency system in neighboring provinces.

On the completion of 7 years of Motorbike Rescue Service, a ceremony was held at the Command and Control Centre, Lahore in which Provincial Minister for Emergency Services, Khawaja Salman Rafique was the chief guest.

## International News

## US calls out Israel at UN for 'catastrophic conditions' in Gaza

### Monitoring Desk

UNITED NATIONS: Israel needs to address urgently "catastrophic conditions" among Palestinian civilians in the besieged Gaza Strip and stop "intensifying suffering" by limiting aid deliveries, its ally the United States told the UN Security Council on Wednesday.

Referring to reports of squalid conditions in south and central Gaza, US Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield said: "These catastrophic conditions were predicted months ago, and yet, have still not been addressed. That must change, and now." "We call on Israel to take urgent steps to do so," she said in a blunt statement.

The 15-member Security Council met over the humanitarian crisis a year after a deadly attack by

Palestinian militants Hamas on southern Israel sparked the war in Gaza. Israel has since laid to waste much of the enclave and almost the entire population of 2.3 million has been displaced.

Israel says Hamas killed some 1,200 people on Oct. 7, 2023, while health authorities in Gaza say nearly 42,000 people have been killed so far during Israel's retaliation.

Thomas-Greenfield also addressed a recent Israeli order for civilians in Gaza's north to evacuate again, saying they must be able to return to communities to rebuild.

"There must be no demographic or territorial change in the Gaza Strip, including any actions that reduce the territory of Gaza," Thomas-Greenfield said.

Philippe Lazzarini,

the head of the UN Palestinian refugee agency UNRWA, told the Security Council: "Hundreds of thousands of people are again being pushed to move to the south, where living conditions are intolerable."

"Yet again, Gazans are teetering on the edge of a man-made famine," he said.

The UN has long complained of obstacles to getting aid into Gaza and distributing it during the war.

Reuters reported last week that food supplies to Gaza have fallen sharply in recent weeks because Israeli authorities have introduced a new customs rule on some humanitarian aid and are separately scaling down deliveries organized by businesses.

"We need to see fewer barriers to the delivery of aid, not more of them," Thomas-Greenfield said.



Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer and Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy shake hands on the day of a bilateral meeting inside 10 Downing Street in London, Britain.

## At least 192 killed in wave of violence between drug gangs in northwest Mexico

### Monitoring Desk

CULIACAN: At least 192 people have been killed in a wave of violence that began last month between warring drug gangs in Mexico's northwestern state of Sinaloa, the State Public Security Council, a local civilian-led watchdog, said.

The council, which consists of members of Sinaloa society such as academics, business representatives and nonprofits, said that to date, nearly 200 mur-

ders and 226 disappearances have been reported since the onset of the violence on September 9. Around 200 families have fled the violence, with 180 businesses closing and 2,000 jobs lost amid the armed conflict between the leading factions of the Sinaloa Cartel.

Following the arrest of notorious drug kingpin and Sinaloa Cartel co-founder Ismael "El Mayo" Zambada on July 25, a violent shift in the power dynamics of the cartel founded by Zambada.

## One in eight girls and women raped or sexually assaulted before age 18, UNICEF says

### Monitoring Desk

UNITED NATIONS: More than 370 million girls and women alive today, or one in every eight worldwide, experienced rape or sexual assault before the age of 18, the United Nations children's agency said on Wednesday. The number rises to 650 million, or one in five, when taking into account "non-contact" forms of sexual violence, such as online or verbal abuse, UNICEF reported, in what it called the first global survey of the problem.

The report said that

while girls and women were worst affected, 240 to 310 million boys and men, or around 1 in 11, have experienced rape or sexual assault during childhood.

"The scale of this human rights violation is overwhelming, and it's been hard to fully grasp because of stigma, challenges in measurement, and limited investment in data collection," UNICEF said in releasing the report. It comes ahead of an inaugural Global Ministerial Conference on Ending Violence Against Children.

## EU must unite entire continent, says Zelensky

### Monitoring Desk

DUBROVNIK: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Wednesday called on the European Union to "unite the whole continent" as he pushes for more military aid to repel Russian forces. But a key meeting with international allies planned for Saturday was postponed after US President Joe Biden called off a planned European visit to focus on the threat from Hurricane Milton to Florida.

The EU must "unite the whole continent, all of Europe's democratic nations including your countries", Zelensky told the start of the summit in Dubrovnik.

"If Europe is not united today it won't be

peaceful, so that integration processes that have begun must reach their result," he said pleading the case for his country and several Balkan states to be allowed into the bloc.

Heads of state, premiers and foreign ministers from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Turkey joined Zelensky and Croatia's Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic at the talks. Only Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Romania and Slovenia are EU members.

Zelensky said earlier the summit "will discuss international efforts to bring peace closer."

## Biden, Netanyahu speak, Israel vows lethal retaliation against Iran

### Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had a call on Wednesday (Oct 9) amid tensions with Iran, while Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant promised an Israeli strike against Iran will be "lethal, precise and surprising".

The 30-minute call was the first known chat for Biden and Netanyahu since August and coincides with a sharp escalation of Israel's conflict with Iran and the Iran-backed Lebanese Hezbollah, but with no sign of an imminent ceasefire to end the conflict with Iran-backed Hamas in Gaza.

The call was "direct and very productive", White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre told reporters while acknowledging the two leaders have disagreements and are open about them. The Middle East has been on edge awaiting Israel's response to a missile attack last week that Tehran

carried out in retaliation for Israel's military escalation in Lebanon. The Iranian attack ultimately killed no one in Israel. After describing Iran's Oct 1 missile attack as a failure, Gallant said in a video issued by his office after the Biden-Netanyahu call had ended: "Whoever attacks us will be hurt and will pay a price. Our attack will be deadly, precise and above all surprising, they will not understand what happened, and how it happened, they will see the results."

Netanyahu has promised that arch-foe Iran will pay for its missile attack, while Tehran has said any retaliation would be met with vast destruction, raising fears of a wider war in the oil-producing region which could draw in the United States.

The United States has said it supports Israel going after Iran-backed targets like Hezbollah and Hamas but has tried, unsuccessfully, to stem rising conflict, to broker a ceasefire in Gaza.

## US warns Israel not to repeat Gaza ruination

### Monitoring Desk

JERUSALEM: The United States warned Israel on Wednesday against any Gaza-like military action in Lebanon after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu threatened it with "destruction" like that in the Palestinian territory.

But armed forces chief Herzi Halevi vowed to keep up Israel's intensive bombing of Hezbollah targets, "without allowing them any respite or recovery".

The comments came after a much anticipated phone call between Netanyahu and US President Joe Biden, which had been expected to focus on Israel's response to last week's missile barrage by Iran.

The White House said the 30-minute call was "direct", "honest" and "productive".

"We're going to continue to have those discus-

sions with Israel on how they're going to respond," Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said.

Defence Minister Yoav Gallant, who had been due to discuss Israel's response in US before the last-minute postponement of his visit, pledged: "Our attack on Iran will be deadly, precise and surprising."

Iran fired some 200 missiles at Israel in retaliation for the killing of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh.

Biden has cautioned Israel against attempting to target Iran's nuclear programme and is also against striking the country's oil installations.

Hezbollah said its fighters were locked in clashes with Israeli troops in southern Lebanon, using rocket-propelled weapons to repel Israeli attempts to breach the border.

## Han Kang of South Korea wins Nobel literature prize 2024

### Monitoring Desk

STOCKHOLM: South Korean author Han Kang won the 2024 Nobel Prize in Literature for "her intense poetic prose that confronts historical traumas and exposes the fragility of human life", the award-giving body said on Thursday.

The prize is awarded by the Swedish Academy and is worth 11 million Swedish crowns (\$1.1 million).

"She has a unique awareness of the connections between body and soul, the living and the dead, and in her poetic and experimental style has become an innovator in contemporary prose," Anders Olsson, chairman of the Academy's Nobel Committee, said in a statement.



ISLAMABAD: A Saudi delegation led by Minister for Investment, Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al-Falih called on the President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## Pakistan, Saudi Arabia reaffirm deepening economic cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Saudi Arabia on Thursday reaffirmed their commitment to enhancing cooperation in key areas including economy, agriculture, mining and information technology.

In the meeting between President Asif Ali Zardari and the visiting Saudi delegation led by Saudi Minister for Investment Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al-Falih here at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, both sides underlined the need to work together to build a prosperous and peaceful future for the region as well as for the Islamic World, according to a President House press release.

Welcoming the delegation, the president emphasized the longstanding and time-tested relationship between Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA).

He expressed Pakistan's desire to elevate the bilateral ties into a long-term strategic and economic partnership, underscoring that such collaboration would bring the two brotherly nations further closer.

President Zardari reaffirmed Pakistan's deep respect for the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and reiterated Pakistan's unwavering commitment to stand in solidarity with Saudi Arabia.

He also praised the visionary leadership of Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud.

The president also highly commended the remarkable progress Saudi Arabia was making under Vision 2030 and expressed gratitude for the Kingdom's continued support to Pakistan during challenging times.

The president said that he was happy to witness the progress and prosperity of Saudi Arabia.

Engr. Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al-Falih said that Saudi Arabia recognised the strategic geographical significance of Pakistan and its potential for natural resources and renewable energy.

He informed that Saudi Arabia had planned to invest in the infrastructure and mining sectors of Pakistan and, in this regard, his delegation would sign 25 agreements in different sectors to boost economic cooperation between the two brotherly nations.

He expressed the hope that the signing of the agreements would mark a new era of economic cooperation between the two countries. Both sides emphasized to increase collaboration in the areas of agriculture and information technology.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Petroleum Senator Masood Malik, Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan, Minister for Privatization Abdul Aleem Khan, Minister for Interior Senator Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi, Minister for Religious Affairs & Interfaith Harmony Chaudhry Salik Hussain and Senator Saleem Mandviwalla. Saudi Ambassador in Islamabad Nawaf Saeed Al Malki was also present in the meeting.



QUETTA: A delegation meeting with Provincial Minister for Communication and Works Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa.

## CM, Dy Speaker BA grieved over death of Elahi Bakhsh Soomro

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti and Deputy Speaker Provincial Assembly, Ms. Ghazala Gola have expressed deep grief and sorrow over death of the senior politician and former Speaker National Assembly, Elahi Bakhsh Soomro.

In their separate condolence statements issued here on Thursday, the Chief Minister and Deputy Speaker Provincial Assembly paid rich tributes to Elahi Bakhsh Soomro on his political services in the country.

The Chief Minister said that he is grieved over

demise of former Speaker National Assembly.

He said that we share grief and sorrow of death of late Soomro with his bereaved family.

Similarly, Deputy Speaker of provincial assembly also paid tributes to the late senior parliamentarian.

She said that services of late Elahi Bakhsh Soomro would always be remembered. They also prayed that may Allah Almighty rest the departed soul into Its eternal peace and give enough strength and patience to the bereaved family to bear the tragic loss of his death.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Planning & Development Zahoor Ahmed Buledi meeting with Provincial Minister for Health Bakht Muhammad Kakar.

## Foolproof security to be provided to teams: 5-day anti-polio campaign to begin from October 28 in Quetta district

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: Five-day anti-polio campaign is scheduled to begin from October 28 in Quetta district. Over 424,000 children below five years of age would be administered anti-polio vaccine in the campaign.

Foolproof security arrangements would be made for the immunization campaign for around 1600 police personnels would perform the security duties.

These details were shared during a meeting chaired by the Deputy Commissioner Quetta, Lt. (Retd) Saad bin Asad about the upcoming anti-polio campaign in Quetta on Thursday. The District Health Officer Quetta, Dr Farhan, Dr Saifdar, Assistant Commissioners as well as the concerned officials and representatives of the WHO and Unicef participated in the meeting.

The religious leaders especially participated in the meeting. The meeting was briefed about performance of the teams in previous polio immunisation campaign and coverage.

Addressing the meeting, Deputy Commissioner said that foolproof security arrangements would be made in the areas where there are the issues of security.

He said that the strength of police would be increased for security of the sensitive areas.

He said that show cause notices would be issued to the polio teams which didn't perform well.

He issued directives to take every possible steps for complete eradication of the polio virus.

He said that stern action would be taken against the personnels committing negligence in the campaign.

## At UN, Pakistan demands probe into 'theft and illicit sale' of nuclear materials in India

**UNITED NATIONS (APP):** Pakistan has called on the UN Security Council to thoroughly investigate the "recurring" incidents of theft and illicit sale of nuclear and other radioactive materials in neighbouring India.

A recent Indian media report said that police had arrested three smugglers in the western Gopalganj district of Bihar with a rare Californium stone which is highly radioactive and fetches a high price in the international market.

"The Security Council should be deeply concerned at the recurring incidents of theft and illicit sale of nuclear and other radioactive materials in our Eastern neighbour," Ambassador Munir Akram, permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN, told a committee established by the 15-member Council pursuant to its resolution 1540 that requires UN

member states to take specific steps to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

"In the latest incident last August 2024, a group was found in illegal possession of a large quantity of highly radioactive and toxic substance Californium, worth US\$ 100 million," he said, adding that three incidents of theft of Californium were reported also in India in 2021.

These incidents, Ambassador Akram suggested the existence of a black market for sensitive materials.

At the same time, the Pakistani envoy said, "While preventing non-state actors from acquiring sensitive materials, rights of States to peaceful use of dual-use technologies must be safeguarded. Export-control regimes should not serve as tools of coercion and discrimination."

Under the terms of resolution 1540, the Security Council demands that all States refrain from providing any form of support to non-state actors that attempt to develop, acquire, manufacture, possess, transport, transfer, or use nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons and their means of delivery, in particular for terrorist purposes.

The resolution requires all States to adopt and enforce appropriate laws to this effect as well as other effective measures to prevent the proliferation of these weapons and their means of delivery to non-state actors, in particular for terrorist purposes.

In his remarks, Ambassador Akram told the committee that Pakistan, as a responsible nuclear weapons state, had participated actively in the formulation and negotiation of UNSC's Resolution 1540, and implemented its obligations under it.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, along with Chairman FBR, Mr. Rashid Mahmood Langrial, addressing a press conference to brief about the study conducted by FBR regarding sales tax evasion across different sectors of the economy.

## Old manual arms licenses to be computerized: Second phase of computerized arms license begins in Quetta, says Deputy Commissioner

**Saad bin Asad maintains manual arms licenses to be computerized in two months; DG NADRA says Authority to extend full cooperation in computerization of arms licenses**

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Deputy Commissioner Quetta, Saad bin Asad has announced that the second phase of computerized arms licenses has been started in Quetta. In second phase, the old manual arms licenses would be computerized in two months, therefore, all the same arms license holders should get them computerized.

He said that the fraudulent practice would be ended with issuance of the computerized arms licenses.

He said that he is creating awareness about general public about computerized arms licenses. In

Thursday, the Deputy Commissioner said that the old manual arms licenses are being computerized from today. He said that the system would not be ended, however, all the arms license holders should get their licenses computerized, adding he stressed.

He said that the fraudulent practice would be ended with issuance of the computerized arms licenses.

He said that he is creating awareness about general public about computerized arms licenses. In

this regard, the Computerized Arms License Act has also been made, he added.

Speaking on the occasion, DG NADRA, Muhammad Kashif Iqbal said that NADRA is extending full cooperation to the administration regarding computerized arms licenses.

He said that the NADRA would also provide guidance to the people at every forum. Afterwards, an Application would also be introduced in this regard, the DG NADRA maintained.

## Health Minister directs to provide medical facilities to sick girl

**QUETTA (APP):** Provincial Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar took immediate notice on the special directive of Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti to virally on social media 4-year-old Rehana Bibi who is suffering from congenital intestinal malignancy. According to press release issued here,



QUETTA: Deputy Commissioner Quetta, Saad Bin Asad and Muhammad Kashif Iqbal, DG NADRA addressing a press conference, at DC Office in Quetta.

Rihanna Bibi has already had one operation and now another is required but the girl's father could not afford to pay for it. On the appeal of the girl's father, Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar issued a directive that complete treatment of Rehana Bibi would be done at the government's expense.

In her condolence message, she paid tribute to the late Soomro's national services, stating that his demise is a great loss to Pakistan's parliamentary history.

Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi further extended heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family during this time of grief and prayed that Allah grants the deceased forgiveness and a high place in Jannatul-Firdous.

## Dr Rubaba expresses grief over death of Soomro

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Advisor to Chief Minister for Women Development, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi, expressed deep sorrow and grief over the passing of senior parliamentarian and former Speaker of the National Assembly, Elahi Bakhsh Soomro.

In her condolence message, she paid tribute to the late Soomro's national services, stating that his demise is a great loss to Pakistan's parliamentary history.

Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi further extended heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family during this time of grief and prayed that Allah grants the deceased forgiveness and a high place in Jannatul-Firdous.

## 3.4 trillion Sales Tax evasion uncovered

**ISLAMABAD (APP):** Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb said here Thursday that there was about Rs 3.4 trillion Sales Tax evasion out of a total Rs 7 trillion tax theft in different sectors of the economy.

The minister was addressing a press conference along with the Chairman Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), Rashid Mahmood Langrial, to discuss a study conducted by FBR on sales tax evasion. The study found that only 14% out of 300,000 manufacturers liable to register have done so, and many registered entities misreport turnover, claim excess input tax, and use fake invoices.

Sales Tax in Pakistan is collected through VAT mode, relying on businesses to collect tax from buyers. However, this trust has been breached on a massive scale, the minister said and

shared findings from five sectors including Iron and Steel, Cement, Beverages, Batteries, and Textiles.

He said, malpractices were widespread, with most entities claiming excess input tax. In iron and steel sector, 33 large businesses, representing over 50% of total sales, evaded sales tax by claiming Rs 29 billion in excess input tax, mainly through scrap metal and coal purchases.

Likewise, in battery sector, six active cases, representing 99% of total sales, claimed Rs 11 billion in excess input tax, primarily through lead purchases while in cement sector, 19 active cases claimed Rs 18 billion in excess input tax in FY23-24, mainly through coal purchases. In addition, beverages sector with 16 active cases, representing 99% of aerated water sales, claimed Rs 15 billion in excess input tax, mainly through sugar, plastics.

## Timely completion of uplift projects top priority: Lal Jan

**QUETTA (APP):** Balochistan Secretary Communications and Works (C&W) Lal Jan Jafar on Thursday said that the timely completion of all ongoing development projects in the province and transparency of them are the first priority. He expressed these views while chairing a meeting related to the ongoing development projects of the building sector included in the convergence of B Areas into A Areas schemes. The meeting was attended by Chief Engineer Roads Quetta, Faiz Mohsin, Chief Engineer Building Khuzdar, Sibi, Quetta AIG Development Ahmed Sultan and other concerned officials. Giving a detailed briefing to the meeting on the ongoing schemes in the province, the

concerned official said that the total number of schemes is 358 in which 230 schemes have been handed over to the concerned department after completion and the rest of the projects are in progress.

Addressing the meeting, Secretary C&W Lal Jan Jafar gave clear instructions that quality and transparency should be the first priority for all ongoing development projects in the province. He said that effective and strong infrastructure is the guarantee of development of Balochistan. He said that the committee should submit its report to the Secretary's office within two weeks to clear any obstacles regarding the remaining schemes and solve them and complete the projects.



QUETTA: Chairman PAC and MPA Asghar Ali Tareen meeting with Provincial Minister for Finance Mir Shoab Noshervani.

## Birth registration would ensure legal status to rights of children, says Secretary LG&RD

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Secretary Local Government and Rural Development, Abdul Rauf Baloch has stated that protection of rights of children as well as their well being and their safe childhood is their basic right, and their rights would have legal status with their birth registration.

He said that the provincial government is ensuring provision of birth registration in Basic Health Units (BHUs) at the lower level and in the educational institutions.

He said that the government considers registration of birth of the children and acquirement of the legal documents its responsibility. In this regard, the strategy is being prepared

for entry of the complete digital data with cooperation of NADRA.

He said that it is impossible to acquire national identity cards and other legal documents without birth registration. He said that birth registration is the basic and legal identity and right of every child, so parents must register their children well in time, adding he stressed.

The Secretary Local Government was presiding over important meeting about increasing registration of births of children here on Thursday.

The Secretary Board Local Government and Rural Development, Shujaat Ali, Admin Officer, Abbas Agha and other concerned high ups were in attendance.



QUETTA: Parliamentary Secretary Dr. Rubaba Buledi addressing on ceremony to mark World Mental Health Day organized by Balochistahn Psychologist Association.

## Crackdown starts against illegal rickshaws plying on roads of Quetta city: Commissioner

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The crackdown has been started against the illegal and unauthorized auto rickshaws plying on roads of Quetta city.

According to the Commissioner Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shafaqat, around 40,000 rickshaws are plying in Quetta city. However, licenses have been issued to only 8,000 out of these rickshaws.

This means that remaining 32,000

rickshaws are not having licenses and thus illegal.

He said that in view of the situation, the action has been started against the unlicensed rickshaws in Quetta.

The Commission also mentioned that Green Buses are the best transport facility for the commuters, however, there is a need to increase number of Green Buses for Quetta so that maximum people may benefit from it.