

Independent

dailyindisb@gmail.com Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah www.dailyindependent.com.pk Islamabad

Vol. XIV No. 228 Reg. mails-B/ID-445 Wednesday October 02, 2024, Rabi-ul-Awwal 27 1446 A.H. Ph: 2158688, 2158997 Pages 4: Rs. 12

Iran launches ballistic missiles at Tel Aviv, warns of crushing response to any Israeli retaliation

Says attack in retaliation to killing of Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah as well as that of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh.

Monitoring Desk
TEHRAN: Iran fired a salvo of ballistic missiles at Tel Aviv on Tuesday in retaliation to the Israeli campaign against Tehran's Hezbollah allies in Lebanon and the killing of its chief and that of Hamas.

Alarms sounded across Israel and explosions could be heard in Jerusalem and the Jordan River valley after Israel's piled into bomb shelters. Reporters on state television lay flat on the ground during live broadcasts. Reuters journalists saw missiles intercepted in the airspace of neighbouring Jordan. Israeli media reports said as many as 100 missiles had

been launched. Iran's Revolutionary Guards said the missile attack under way was in response to the killing of Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah last week as well as that of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh. "In response to the martyrdom of [Hamas leader] Ismail Haniyeh, Hassan Nasrallah and [Guards commander] Nilforoshan, we targeted the heart of the occupied territories (Israel)," the Guards said in a statement reported by the Fars news agency.

The Guards threatened to carry out "crushing attacks" against regional Israel if it retaliated after the mis-

sile attack. "If the Zionist regime reacts to Iranian operations, it will face crushing attacks," the Guard said.

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei gave the order to launch missiles at Israel, a senior Iranian official told Reuters, adding that Tehran "is fully ready for any retaliation".

Iran's mission to the United Nations in New York posted on X that the attack on Israel is a "legal, rational, and legitimate response to the terrorist acts." "Should the Zionist regime dare to respond or commit further acts of malevolence, a subsequent and crushing response will ensue.



ISLAMABAD: The Head of Mission of World Health Organisation in Pakistan Dr. Lou Dapeng presenting a certificate of elimination of TRACHOMA as a public health problem from Pakistan to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Pakistan needs reforms in judicial system: Our struggle for constitutional amendment not for current CJ, asserts Bilawal Bhutto Zardari

Chairman PPP pledges to fulfil mission of martyr Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto regarding judicial reforms and constitutional courts; says have no problem about who sits in constitutional court

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chairman Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP), Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has categorically stated that so far, his party had agreed to the government's proposal for the formation of a federal constitutional court.

The Chairman PPP said that he has to fulfil the mission of his martyr mother, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto regarding the judicial reforms and constitutional courts that otherwise part of the charter of democracy (CoD) signed then.

He said that we restored the constitution

through CoD and it was the objective behind the struggle waged by his martyr mother.

He said that we just want implementation on the CoD. He said that we would accept what the constitution says. He said that it is responsibility of the judiciary to follow the constitution and law. He said that over the time and experience, he learnt that how difficult is to get justice in the country. He said that the country needs reforms in its judicial system.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari was addressing the Balochistan High Court (BHC) Bar in Quetta on

Tuesday. Also present on the occasion was the Chief Minister, Mir Sarfraz Bugti and other senior leaders of the party besides a large number of lawyers.

The Chairman PPP maintained that his party had no problem if anyone of the top two judges of the country chaired the constitutional court.

"After the struggle of 30 years, we have decided to form a constitutional court," he said, adding his struggle for the constitutional amendment was not for the current chief justice, Qazi Faez Isa. "Your agenda could be a person-specific, not mine," he added.

Core inflation decreases to 6.9% PM vows further relief as inflation slows at lowest in last four years in Sept

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday expressed his satisfaction at the slowing down of price-hike which now clocked in at the lowest 6.9 percent when compared with runaway digits in the last 44 months. The prime minister lauded the government's economic team for capping the headline inflation which now clocked in at 6.9 percent on a year-on-year basis in September 2024.

The price hike had nosedived in the month of August this year at one digit 9.6pc for the first time in the last 34 months, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) index reading remained at the lowest in

PM Shehbaz effectively pleaded Palestinians case as leader of Ummah: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Tuesday that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif effectively pleaded the case of Palestinians during his historic speech at the United Nations General Assembly as the leader of Muslim Ummah.

Addressing a press conference, the minister said that PM Shehbaz's address to the UNGA was highly appreciated all over the world, which was an honour for Pakistan.

The prime minister championed the causes of Muslim Ummah, including Palestine and Kashmir, he added.

His bilateral meetings with heads of state and gov-



ernment of other countries on the sidelines of the UNGA session also proved very fruitful and constructive in that regard, the minister said.

Tarar said that the PM's speech also proved that Pakistan's foreign policy was successful and that Islamabad was an important player both at the international level and in the region.

Justice Naem Afghan replaces Justice Munib in Article 63-A case

ISLAMABAD (INP): Supreme Court (SC) Tuesday formed a "new larger bench" to hear review petition regarding interpretation of Article 63-A of the Constitution of Pakistan.

The decision was reportedly taken during a meeting of Practice and Procedure Committee headed by CJP Justice Qazi Faez Isa.

The new bench will be led by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa and it

Pakistan, Oman agree on MoU to facilitate enhancement of workforce

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Oman agreed on the early finalization of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on labor and manpower exchange which would facilitate the enhancement of Pakistan's workforce and its smooth movement from Pakistan to Oman.

This was decided in a recent meeting held in Muscat between Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Chaudhry Salik Hussain and Minister of Labour of the Sultanate of Oman Dr. Mahad bin Said bin Ali Baowain, said a press release issued here.

Chaudhry Salik Hussain is on a three-day visit to the Sultanate where he will meet several ministers of Oman and will inaugurate a new branch of Pakistan International School in Muscat.

During the meeting, Chaudhry Salik Hussain apprised the Omani side of the major reforms the government was undertaking to improve the emigration process of Pakistani workers, their professional capacity enhancement, and the marketing of the Pakistani workforce abroad.



Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development, Chaudhry Salik Hussain, at the inauguration ceremony of Pakistan School International Branch in Oman.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi meets with JUI-F Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman in Federal Capital.

Naqvi meets Maulana Fazlur, seeks cooperation on constitutional amendment

ISLAMABAD (Online): Inside story of meeting between Maulana Fazlur Rehman and interior minister Mohsin Naqvi has come to open.

Maulana Fazlur Rehman has sought time on the matter of constitutional amendments.

According to sources interior minister appealed to Maulana Fazlur Rehman to cooperate with government. Mohsin Naqvi requested Maulana Fazlur Rehman to sit with government and listen government stance on the matter of constitutional amendment.

Interior minister conveyed the message of President Asif Ali Zardari to Maulana Fazlur Rehman. Sources disclosed

Maulana Fazlur Rehman has sought time for consideration and consultation with party. Meeting is likely to take place again in the next few days.

Earlier Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi reached residence of Maulana Fazlur Rehman to meet him.

Mohsin Naqvi congratulated Maulana Fazlur Rehman and Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haidri on being elected unopposed as JUI-F Amir and JUI-F secretary general respectively.

Mohsin Naqvi said the role played by Maulana Fazlur Rehman for supremacy of parliament and promotion of democratic norms is appreciable. He is prudent, far sighted and visionary politician.

Have never left, nor will leave masses on mercy of fate: Nawaz

LAHORE (INP): President Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and former prime minister, Muhammad Nawaz Sharif has said that his party has never left the people nor will leave them at mercy of fate.

This was stated by him while speaking during a meeting held at Chief Minister House on Tuesday under the chair of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz. During the meeting, strategy regarding the development projects of the province came under discussion.

Nawaz Sharif has directed the Punjab government to focus on public relief projects for providing maximum relief and facilities to the people.



QUETTA: Chairman of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addresses the Balochistan High Court Bar Association, focusing on key legal and political issues in the provincial capital.

All know what is happening in SC, nothing is happening behind the scene: CJP

ISLAMABAD (Online): Review appeal regarding interpretation of article 63 A was heard in the Supreme Court (SC).

A larger bench of SC headed over by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa took up the case for hearing.

CJP remarked at the inception of hearing Justice Munib Akhtar was requested to join the bench but he maintained his old stance.

The CJP remarked every one knows at present what is happening in SC. Nothing is going in behind

the closed door in SC. PPP counsel Farooq H Naik said we have appeared voluntarily. Our roll be also got signed.

At the inception of hearing advocate Ali Zafar requested he wants to raise objections over bench.

The CJP remarked you should return to your seat. We will hear you later.

After hearing Shahzad Shaukat, Barrister Ali Zafar and Farooq H Naek, the chief justice remarked that the court would hear the remaining lawyers tomorrow and adjourned the hearing.

FBR extends date of filing income tax returns for 14 days

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has extended final date for filing income tax returns for fourteen days, now taxpayers can file their tax returns until Oct 14, 2024.

Initially, Federal Board of Revenue strongly rejected all the announcements on social media and said that there is no proposal under consideration for extension in last date for filing for filing income tax returns. But on the 11th hour FBR decided to extend last date for filing income tax returns and enable taxpayers to file tax returns until October 14.

Islamabad prepares for SCO Summit with extensive renovations

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) is leaving no stone unturned in its preparations for the upcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit.

Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa on Tuesday chaired a crucial meeting to review the ongoing beautification drive across Islamabad and the renovation of the Jinnah Convention Center (JCC).

The Jinnah Convention Center is undergoing a comprehensive transformation to meet international standards, with a focus on enhancing its in-

frastructure and smart capabilities.

The installation of SMD screens, digital boards, advanced conferencing systems, and high-speed internet facilities will ensure smooth operations during the SCO Summit.

Furniture and carpets have been replaced with premium quality materials to uplift the overall aesthetic of the venue.

The surrounding environment of the Center will be enhanced through landscaping and horticultural work, including new tree plantations and attractive designs.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq in a group photo with Renowned Islamic Philosopher Dr. Zakir Abdul Karim Naik at Parliament House.

NA Speaker urges Muslim Ummah to unite, promote Islam's true message globally

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Tuesday emphasized the need for unity among the Muslim Ummah, urging them to come together and work collectively to promote Islam's true message globally.

During meeting with prominent religious scholar Dr. Zakir Naik at the Parliament House, he welcomed Dr. Zakir Naik and expressed his delight over his visit to Pakistan. The matters pertaining to the challenges faced by the Muslim Ummah, interfaith harmony, and other important issues were deliberated.

The speaker said that Islam is a complete code of life that promotes peace,

tolerance, and love. Ayaz Sadiq lauded the services rendered by Dr. Zakir Naik's in spreading the message of peace and love of Islam around the world.

He said that the Constitution of Pakistan provides equal rights to all citizens and that the rights of minorities are fully protected in the country.

The Speaker stressed that the solution to the challenges faced by the Muslim Ummah lies in unity and solidarity.

Dr. Zakir Naik praised the love and hospitality of the Pakistani people, stating that "the people of Pakistan are very loving and caring".

He emphasized on the

Muslim countries to shun their differences and unite in the light of the Holy Quran and Sunnah to confront the challenges being faced by the Muslim Ummah.

Dr. Zakir Naik said that Islam is a religion of peace, love, and brotherhood, and his missionary work aims to highlight the true message of peace and love in Islam across the world.

He praised Pakistan's role in promoting the true teachings of Islam and fostering unity among Muslims.

Later on, Dr. Zakir Naik, accompanied by the Speaker of the National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, visited the National Assembly Hall.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Punitive tax plan

The government is desperate to increase its abysmally low tax collection to meet the stringent revenue conditions of the new \$7bn funding programme approved by the IMF recently.

In order to meet the tax target, the FBR has worked out a new compliance and enforcement plan, which primarily relies on punitive actions against tax evaders and cheaters. The authorities hope that it will compel existing taxpayers to stop underreporting their taxable incomes and incentivise non-filers to become taxpayers in order to avoid restrictions on their use of cash for travel, and the purchase of property, cars and financial instruments. The political and financial leadership appears to be enthusiastic about the new strategy, owing to its promise of achieving the desired results in the near term by narrowing the tax gap of Rs7.1tr — representing tax evasion and corruption — without the need to pursue tedious reforms. On the basis of this plan, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb announced on Sunday the government's "war on cash" as part of the strategy to tap into over the Rs9.3tr in circulation and maximise revenue potential. According to him, non-filers and under-filers are evading taxes amounting to around Rs1.3tr at the individual level. When it comes to circumventing real tax reforms to broaden the tax base, the new 'transformation plan' does not deviate from previous strategies.

There is a broad consensus among tax experts and economists that Pakistan's tax system is complicated, unfair, inequitable, corrupt, and inefficient — enough to discourage people from filing. The experience of other countries has established that broad-based, low-rate taxes provide the least incentives for people to evade, avoid and underreport taxable incomes. India, for example, has significantly increased its direct income tax collection as a ratio of the economy by streamlining its tax regime, offering reduced rates, and curbing exemptions. In addition to increased monitoring and compliance, and the expansion of the formalisation of the economy through technology, initiatives such as incentivised lower tax rates for corporations and individuals who forgo exemptions have been implemented, aligning with the agenda to simplify taxation. It is no wonder that India's direct tax-to-GDP ratio reached a record high of 6.5pc in the fiscal year 2023-24. This increase is attributed to growth in income tax collections rather than corporate tax collections. The Indian experience shows that tax compliance can be ensured only through a combination of incentives and the fear of punishment. However, the strategy developed by the FBR to boost compliance rates appears to rely solely on enforcement through punitive actions against tax evaders and cheaters, without actually reforming the complicated tax regime.

Hence, most tax experts — unlike the minister — have little confidence in the plan as a viable strategy that will help Pakistan overcome its tax woes.

Burying democracy

Dr Niaz Murtaza

Pakistan's democracy is an endangered species now, long hunted by uniformed elements. But it seems that now a deal has been struck to make it an extinct species, after which it may be buried at sea so that those who love it can't find its remains and erect a tomb as that may spark its 'reincarnation' later.

Arguably, no civilian era has witnessed greater assaults on democracy than this one: delayed, then badly rigged polls; large-scale politicisation of key state entities; open disregard of Supreme Court verdicts; domination by the establishment; and now, a no-holds-barred assault on both the Constitution and the judiciary.

It is widely acknowledged that the primary entity behind this state of affairs is the deep state. However, as unabashed implementers, the PML-N and PPP are now widely criticised as perhaps the most culpable parties with dubious intent in our history. In fact, many observers would go so far as to argue that they aren't so much political entities now as extensions of the security apparatus.

We have long seen the assault on democracy. Oddly, what we are now seeing is virtual suicide by democracy. Both the PML-N and PPP say they are swallowing all this as bitter pills to cure the nation of the PTI's ills. However, the prescribed pills may contain ingredients injurious not only to democracy but to these parties as well. In the end, only Sherlock Holmes may then deduce if it was suicide or murder that eliminated democ-

racy.

The cure is undeniably worse than the ills. I was a strong critic of the PTI when it ruled at the centre. I am ready to critique it if it rules like it did again as well as the powers that be if they target the PML-N or PPP again. It is evident that the 2018-22 period damaged democracy more than 2008-18. It is even clearer that the current era's damage far exceeds that inflicted under the PTI. But many anchors still talk more of the out-of-power PTI's ills than the bigger ones of the incumbents.

The PML-N acts servile fearing that higher powers may dump it for the PPP. The latter does so hoping they do. It's a race to the bottom among them and some judicial elements. At this point, it is hard to see who is ahead. But no one wins a race to the bottom: everyone loses. Nature has its own way of nixing plots. It would be sweet justice if no unjust elements get unjust extensions.

But even this may be small sanction for moves against democracy. To keep a rigged regime from falling fairly under a new judicial command, the PPP and PML-N, which gave us some sterling laws such as the 1973 Constitution and the 18th Constitutional Amendment, are now, ironically, willing to maim their own creation.

This goes beyond violating one clause as they did in delaying the polls. The no-trust vote against the PTI was also carried out for petty gains against public gains.

However, few appear to be actively opposing these anti-democratic moves. In fact, it would seem that certain sections of the

media and the legal community, who have fought past assaults, are also toeing the line of those responsible for the current assault on democracy. Many in civil society are muted, seeing it as intra-elite wars. But it is possible that once they succeed in nixing the PTI, they will use their enhanced control to nix progressive periphery causes as well. One must proactively resist any attempt to subdue the judiciary, even if it is not championing many progressive causes at present.

A lawyer's movement is not yet here. But will we see a movement in the judiciary that triggers it, as in 2007? Supreme Court judges had blocked Gen Pervez Musharraf's illegal emergency, leading to their house arrest and dismissal, only to be reinstated later. If we reach a point where judges feel that they have no choice but to write joint letters, recuse themselves from benches made under controversial new procedures, etc, the blame for all of this will fall on the establishment and the political rulers of the day.

Legitimacy is the glue that binds states and ensures progress. It was never allowed to grow much here and is being further eroded now. Such state-led lawlessness can only undermine state foundations and have a severe impact on security and the rule of law via increased terrorism, crime, extremism and external threats.

But do our rulers understand this truth? For decades, our ability to become a normal, progressive nation has been stifled. Can a hapless victim gasping desperately break the state's chokehold? -- Courtesy Dawn

Power is knowledge?

Nazir A. Jomezai

Knowledge empowers individuals, but societal and educational power structures shape what knowledge is accessible and valued. A complex relationship exists between power and knowledge, encompassing curriculum design, assessment, and teaching. We must understand the dichotomy between 'knowledge is power' — where knowledge grants power — and 'power is knowledge,' where power produces knowledge. Thus, knowledge is both a means to acquire power and a medium to sustain it, shaped by the societal power dynamics.

The curriculum serves as a powerful medium for both expressing and reinforcing power. The knowledge embedded in curricula primarily reflects the perspectives, priorities, and values of those in power. This knowledge may emphasise certain historical narratives while excluding others.

Even after independence, many post-colonial countries' educational curricula still reflect the colonial powers' cultural, historical, and linguistic heritage of colonial powers. In some African countries, the curricula emphasise European literature and history, while ignoring local knowledge systems, languages, and cultural practices. This perpetuates cultural hegemony by elevating the knowledge and values of the dominant culture above local ones, thereby marginalising local knowledge and sustaining colonial power relations.

Similarly, in Pakistan, the focus on certain sects or ethnic groups marginalises others, including non-Muslims, the poor, girls, and women. This control over knowledge directly influences what students learn, how they think, and ultimately how they perceive their

place in society.

Learning design and assessment can become powerful tools for reinforcing dominant societal values and power structures. In a competitive education system, children may learn that success lies in surpassing others and that individual achievement takes precedence over teamwork or collective well-being. This mindset can foster a preference for individualism and wealth over community and social responsibility.

Given its central role in the power-knowledge nexus, curriculum reform often becomes a battleground where various groups compete to define what knowledge is legitimate and valuable. These struggles reveal the power dynamics of education, as well as the potential for curricula to be a tool for social justice or otherwise.

Assessment practices further determine the value of knowledge. High-stake tests are examples of coerced standards. Assessment often prioritises memorisation over creativity, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence, perpetuating a narrow definition of intelligence and success. This marginalises students' intellectual potential and reinforces social stratification, as wealthier students typically have access to more resources that better prepare them for such tests.

Assessments frequently act as gatekeepers to further educational opportunities, professional careers, and social mobility.

Entrance exams for prestigious institutes serve as critical gatekeeping tools.

They typically demand specific knowledge and skills, more accessible to students from affluent backgrounds who can afford private tutoring and test preparation resources. Such assess-

ments reinforce social stratification by offering greater opportunities to those already in positions of power, thereby perpetuating existing inequalities.

Teachers act as intermediaries between curricula, assessment, and students. They wield power in shaping the delivery, interpretation, and internalisation of knowledge by students. However, teachers themselves operate within a broader power structure defined by educational policies, standards, and societal expectations.

A teacher's ability to either challenge or reinforce dominant narratives in the classroom can greatly influence students' critical thinking and worldview. For instance, a teacher who encourages students to question and critically analyse the dominant social values can empower students to recognise and challenge inequities.

Conversely, a teacher who rigidly follows the prescribed curriculum without encouraging critical discussion may unintentionally uphold existing power dynamics. These examples illustrate a complex and multifaceted relationship between knowledge and power. The societal landscape defines power as either a means to liberty or suppression.

It is crucial to acknowledge that knowledge is neither neutral nor apolitical; it is shaped by power relations.

Therefore, those who control knowledge — whether through curriculum design, assessment, or pedagogical practices — wield significant power over individuals and society. The challenge is to craft educational systems that are more equitable and inclusive and allow a diverse range of knowledge to be recognised and valued, thereby democratising power and education. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

ADB delegation meets Ahsan to discuss transport infrastructure

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Director of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Transport Sector Group, Chen Chen, on Tuesday met Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal to discuss Pakistan's transport infrastructure development.

The ADB delegation comprised senior officers and specialists from the Transport Sector Group, while the Ministry of Planning was represented by Member for Infrastructure Waqas Anwar and senior infrastructure department officials, said a news release.

The meeting focused on the ADB's ongoing support for Pakistan's transport sector, future development plans, and the challenges facing the sector.

During the meeting, the minister emphasized the importance of road and rail connectivity projects, noting that the country was in the process of finalizing a comprehensive regional connectivity multi-modal plan.

He welcomed the ADB's input in this regard, stating that it would greatly enhance the capacity of Pakistan.

While discussing the 2022 floods, the minister highlighted that Pakistan suffered \$30 billion in damages.

Ahsan Iqbal lamented the inadequate international response, noting that critical programmes in education, health, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) had to be repurposed to address flood

relief efforts.

The minister stressed that Pakistan should not bear the brunt of conventional financing losses due to the disasters, particularly as it did not receive sufficient support from nations responsible for exacerbating climate change.

Ahsan Iqbal expressed Pakistan's strong interest in enhancing the capacity of its railways through modern technology and emphasized the need for prioritizing connectivity projects that align with the National Agenda Reforms.

He also urged the revival and review of several key projects related to railways, transport, and maritime infrastructure that had been approved in 2018 but were stalled under the previous government.

BISP, SBP to develop new banking model for payment disbursement

ISLAMABAD (APP): Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) and State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) are jointly working on the development of a new banking model for the disbursement of payments to over 9.3 million BISP beneficiaries.

In a Zoom meeting, Secretary BISP, Amer Ali Ahmed and Deputy Governor State Bank of Pakistan, Saleemullah discussed the progress of the new banking model.

The Deputy Governor SBP assured full cooperation to streamline and improve the payment process.

He informed that SBP was ready to develop a pilot and BISP has to finalize the internal mechanics of the implementation strategy.



MOSCOW: Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization and Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan addressing Pakistan-Russia Trade and Investment Forum, in Moscow.

Senate body on Petroleum rejects PMDC privatization

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate Standing Committee on Petroleum on Tuesday rejected the proposed privatization of the Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation (PMDC), voicing concerns over potential job losses.

Chaired by Senator Umer Farooq, the committee warned of the risk to 5,000 jobs if privatization proceeds. Senator Manzoor Ahmed questioned the need for privatization, asserting that PMDC has been profitable over the past three years and urging the government to prioritize local employees. He argued that

the corporation should not be privatized if it is not incurring losses.

In response, the Petroleum Authority clarified that PMDC's inclusion in the privatization list aligns with the SOES Act 2023, and the decision was made by the cabinet. The PMDC remains fully owned by the Federation, although concerns were raised by Senator Ahmed, who pointed out that the land was leased rather than owned outright by the Federation.

He also highlighted the need for modernization of PMDC's outdated machinery, which has contributed

to 80 fatalities over five years. Senator Qurat-ul-Ain Marri raised the issue of provincial consultation, questioning how the Federation could privatize land belonging to the provinces without their input. The Secretary of Petroleum clarified that only the corporate entity, not the leased land, was being privatized, and that further clarity would emerge once a financial advisor was appointed.

The committee also reviewed delays in the gas supply project for Gulistan Tehsil in Qilla Abdullah, which was inaugurated in 2015.

Secy for expediting construction of new model bazaars in 13 districts

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Industries Secretary Ehsan Bhutta has instructed the Punjab Model Bazaars Management Company (PMBMC) to expedite the construction of new model bazaars in 13 districts, including Muzaffargarh, Chinot and Jhelum. The land for these projects has already been transferred free of cost by the government, the Secretary said and stressed the need to fast-track all remaining formalities to initiate construction without delay.

Model Bazaars CEO Naveed Rafiqat Ahmad said that Model Bazaars are a key source of relief for the general public, providing essential goods at prices lower than government-notified rates. The secretary directed the CEO to personally oversee the process, ensuring that all necessary steps are completed as per the government's instructions. "This project is a priority for the government, and we aim to establish these Model Bazaars at the earliest to benefit the public."

Kamran elected as chairman APTMA

MULTAN (APP): Pakistan Central Cotton Committee (PCCC) congratulated Mian Kamran Arshad on his election as Chairman of All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA). Dr Yusuf Zafar, vice president of the PCCC, expressed hope for Arshad's leadership.

He highlighted that Arshad's experience was crucial for the cotton and textile sectors. Dr Zafar also stressed the importance of setting Rs 3.5 billion owed in cotton cess.

NA body urges IT Ministry to accelerate 5G spectrum auction

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Assembly's Standing Committee on Information Technology & Telecommunication Tuesday expressed serious concerns over the slow progress of the 5G spectrum auction and directed the Ministry of IT to expedite the hiring of consultants.

The meeting, chaired by Syed Amin ul Haque, MNA, emphasized the need for swift action to meet the 2025 target for launching 5G services.

Recognizing the necessity for comprehensive reforms in the telecom sector, the committee stressed the importance of involving all stakeholders in the design of the auction, spec-

trum valuation, and the development of appropriate 5G models. "The timely completion of the auction is seen as critical to Pakistan's technological advancement," it added.

The committee also raised concerns about the unresolved property dispute between PTCL and Etisalat, which had lingered for 18 years.

The ministry informed the committee that a special task force, led by the Finance Minister, had been established by the Prime Minister to address the issue, with progress being made towards a resolution, and its detailed report on any final decisions was awaited.



ISLAMABAD: An elderly vendor patiently awaits customers, offering eco-friendly shopping bags at the weekly Bazaar in Federal Capital.

LCCI President vows to resolve traders' issues, unveils action plan

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) President Mian Abuzar Shad here Tuesday chaired a detailed meeting with the delegations of traders and assured to help resolve their concerns while outlining a strategic roadmap to foster a more favorable business environment in the region.

The meeting was attended by the LCCI Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman, Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry, representatives from various market associations. This interaction marks a significant

step in the new LCCI leadership's efforts to build trust and strengthen the Chamber's role as a mediator between traders and government authorities. The LCCI President assured them that resolving their issues would be at the forefront on his agenda. He acknowledged the challenges that traders have been facing. Mian Abuzar Shad added that he fully understands the gravity of the challenges traders face on a daily basis. He said that Lahore Chamber would actively work to create a more enabling environment for traders.



KARACHI: Technician busy in repairing work of batteries to earn his livelihood for support his family, as demand of batteries in city during hot weather of summer season and high tariff of electricity bills, at his workplace located on Garden area in Karachi.

Objections raised on big consignment of rice exported to EU

ISLAMABAD (Online): Objections have been raised on a big consignment of rice exported to Europe this year. The consignment of rice valued Rs over 120 billion is feared to be returned to Pakistan.

Sources said the rice which have been objected were exported from January to June this year.

It is feared that export of Pakistani rice can be banned. In 45 varieties of exported basmati rice, dangerous pesticide was found.

Minister Economic EU wrote several letters regarding objections to Pakistani authorities. Prime Minister constituted high level committee to probe into the matter.

Governor Punjab says: Role of youth imperative for country's development

RAWALPINDI (APP): The challenges being faced by the country can be countered by inculcating youth in national affairs. The young graduates must contribute their role in practical fields for the country's prosperity and stability.

This was remarked by the Governor Punjab, Sadar Saleem Haider Khan while delivering his speech at the 1st Convocation of the Rawalpindi Woman University (RWU), which was held here on Tuesday. He said that everyone should value the country which has the honor of being the sole nuclear country in the Islamic world.

"Our enemy wants to create division among us on the basis of ethnicity, but together we will not allow anyone to succeed in such a malicious conspiracy against the country", he said.

The governor while congratulating the graduating students highlighted the responsibilities they would have to render in their future. He underlined the need for collaborative efforts by all the stakeholders towards improvement in diverse fields including the national economy.

The governor stressed

for further enhancing the women's role in national development and said "The majority position holders in the university education are our daughters which is encouraging towards creating gender equity in the society".

He extended his felicitations to the parents of the graduating students saying it was a special day for them.

"Parents have surely faced the difficulties and sacrificed to get their daughters graduated today. I salute and present my tribute to them", he said and urged the students to generously respond to their parents in the days to come. He further urged the parents to allow and encourage their daughters to contribute their efforts for the country's peace and stability.

The governor also expressed his pleasure of attending the event for being the first chancellor on the university's first convocation. He hoped for the further flourishing of the university in future.

In his address, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, Chairman Higher Education Commission (HEC) informed the audience that HEC's journey to take higher educa-

tion at new heights since 2002 has been successful. He said that are 265 universities in Pakistan with 13% students' access rate as compared to that of in 2002 having 51 universities with an access rate of 2.1%. He further highlighted that presently 48% of the total students in the universities were female students which was 32% in 2002. Moreover, 40,000 research papers are published each year, which were only 865 per year in 2002, he added.

Dr. Mukhtar highlighted that financial crisis, reduced funds to the universities and provincial devolution of the higher education were the main challenging areas to be redressed to further explore the young talent.

"The total budget of all universities of Pak is less than that of a single university of any other country", he said.

The chairman further underlined the need to start a special period in the university classes regarding ethics and social norms.

"Misuse of technologies like mobiles has contributed much in wrongdoing instead of fruitful results", he said and urged the teachers to produce virtue professionals.



PESHAWAR: Advisor to Chief Minister Information & Public Relations of KP Barrister Dr. Muhammad Ali Saif and Administrator China Window Amjad Aziz, along with other officials cutting cake during China 75th National Day Celebration at China Window.

Salman chairs emergency meeting to address rising dengue cases in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique on Tuesday chaired an emergency meeting of the Technical Working Group in the Department of Primary and Secondary Health Care in response to the increasing cases of dengue. Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique participated in meeting via video link, while Health Advisor Major General (Retired) Azhar Mahmood Kayani attended the meeting in person at the

Health Department. During the meeting, Khawaja Salman Rafique reviewed the latest dengue situation across the province. Experts presented their suggestions to control the spread of dengue.

Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique emphasized that the Technical Working Group should immediately determine the causes of death due to dengue in Rawalpindi and assess the severity of the disease in treated patients.

PPP decides launching protest movement against KP Govt

PESHAWAR (APP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has decided to launch a protest movement against the provincial government of Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf (PTI) in the province.

Addressing a press conference here at Peshawar Press Club (PPC) on Tuesday, President PPP KP chapter Syed Mohammad Ali Shah Bacha said that in first instance, a protest demonstration would be staged in front of the provincial assembly.

CM message on International Day for Older Persons

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif said on Tuesday the Punjab government was improving old homes for senior citizens. In her message on International Day for Older Persons, she said that elderly people living in old home have also had the blessing of Hajj.

The CM said elders were a reflection of our past, a light for the present and a lesson for the future, adding that elders were the lamps in whose light generations grow.

"Elders have made our present possible by giving their youthful energies. Elderly people of Pakistan are our true asset. I pay them rich tribute", she added.

The CM said the life experiences and observations of elders were like a treasure for us. Respecting elders is a part of our beliefs and civilization, she said and added, "It is our duty to take care of rights of elderly and to create facilities for them that they deserve."

The chief minister appealed to the citizens that never forget your elders, rather give them the respect and status they deserve. Only those societies rise that value their elders.



GUJRANWALA: Chief Minister Directorate for Evaluation, Feedback, Inspection and Monitoring (DEFIM) Chairperson, Brigadier (Retd) Babar Ala Uddin addresses to media persons during press conference, in Gujranwala.

Mir Murtaza Bhutto murder case: SHC criticizes Police for delays in report submission

KARACHI (INP): The Sindh High Court (SHC) has once again adjourned the hearing on appeals in the Mir Murtaza Bhutto murder case, expressing dissatisfaction with delays in submitting reports.

During the session, the court issued a show-cause notice to SSP East for failing to provide a report on deceased accused individuals. The defense lawyers informed the court that Wajid Durrani and Rai Tahir, key accused in the case, could not appear due to illness. The court, however, questioned whether illness or Supreme Court assignments could excuse their absence.

The court was also informed that four other accused—Shahid Hayat, Shabbir Qaimkhan, Agha Jameel, and Masood Sharif—had passed away, further complicating the case.

Justice Nimat Phalputo expressed frustration, noting that the appeals have been pending since 2010. The court has now adjourned the hearing until November 7.

Pakistani devotee of patriotic songs has collected 5,000 recordings

KARACHI (INP): Absar Ahmed placed the large vinyl disc on a vintage Dansette phonograph and lowered the stylus onto the record as the sound of a decades-old Pakistani patriotic song began to fill the room.

Ahmed, a 36-year-old broadcaster and researcher, was three years old when he fell in love with the iconic 1987 song "Dil Dil Pakistan," becoming a devotee and going on to collect more than 5,000 patriotic songs, or "milli naghmas" as they are called in Urdu. The songs span decades, and Ahmed's collection has them in dozens of languages and formats, including cassette tapes, CDs, and vinyl

records. Ahmed has also authored two books on national songs, "Yeh Naghma Pakistan Kay" and "Har Taan Pakistan."

"I started collecting cassettes in 1996 when I bought my first cassette," Ahmed told Arab News. "By 1999, I properly began gathering milli naghmas and at that time."

Many recordings have fallen into Ahmed's lap as his reputation as a collector has spread. Others he has had to research, find and buy, traveling across Pakistan just to get his hands on a particular vinyl disc or a set of spool tapes. But many hundreds of songs he has recorded directly from

radio or TV.

"I would record every national song that was broadcasted on radio or television. I always kept a cassette in my tape recorder, ready to record any milli naghma that played on Radio Pakistan," Ahmed said, referring to the country's state broadcaster. "This treasure, this collection of sounds from Pakistan, has been safely preserved and it is now part of my record collection."

A significant part of Ahmed's collection is in the Bengali language as many Pakistani patriotic songs were sung by Bengali artists when present-day Bangladesh used to be a

part of Pakistan before it seceded after the 1971 war.

Mufeez Rahman, an official who worked at Radio Pakistan's Dhaka Station, had protected the records from rioters in 1971, Ahmed said. In 2014, he contacted the Pakistani collector after learning about his collection through the Internet. "I can't even imagine how I found these," Ahmed said. "They were no longer available anywhere else but before his death, he [Rahman] made sure to pass them on to me."

One of Ahmed's most notable finds is the first Indian national song recorded in 1911, "Tarana-e-Milli," based on a poem by the legendary Allama Muhammad Iqbal, widely regarded as having animated the impulse for the Pakistan Movement and who would go on to become the national poet of Pakistan after the country's creation out of India in 1947.

The 1911 version was sung by Ustad Pyare Sahib, a revered singer from the Indian city of Kolkata, who migrated to Karachi after the partition of the subcontinent.

"I was able to obtain the audio of this song in a digital format, which was given to me by someone who had the gramophone record although it later broke."

Jacobabad police foil motorcycle theft ring, arrest ringleader

JACOBABAD: In a successful operation, Jacobabad police apprehended the leader of a notorious motorcycle theft ring, Intiaz alias Kararu, following a police encounter near Chacho Shah Bilawal.

The ringleader, along with his accomplices, was involved in various motorcycle theft and snatching incidents. Police recovered five stolen motorcycles and a TT pistol from Police Encounter.

International News

Israel launches ground invasion of Lebanon, saying 'targeted raids' aimed at Hezbollah

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: Israel said its troops had launched raids inside Lebanon on Tuesday, starting its widely expected ground operations after two weeks of devastating airstrikes against Hezbollah's command structure and weapons sites.

The Israeli military said the operations in Lebanon began on Monday night and involved paratroopers and commandos from the elite 98th division, which was deployed to the northern front two weeks ago from Gaza where they had been fighting for months.

It claimed its air force and artillery supported ground troops engaged in "limited, localised, and targeted ground raids" against Hezbollah in southern Lebanon villages that it insisted posed "an immediate threat to Israeli communities in northern Israel".

In the past 24 hours, at least 95 people had been killed and 172 wounded in Israeli strikes on Lebanon's southern regions, the eastern Bekaa Valley, and Beirut, Lebanon's health ministry said early on Tuesday.

Israel has dealt heavy blows to Hezbollah, allegedly Iran's most powerful Middle East proxy, assassinating its leader Hassan Nasrallah in Beirut last week, eliminating a towering figure who turned it into Lebanon's top military and political force.

Despite its biggest successes against Hezbollah in decades, Israel has indicated it is primed for a full-fledged invasion of Lebanon with the stated aim of enabling thousands of its citizens who fled Hezbollah rockets to safely return to their communities near the northern border.

A Lebanese security source told Reuters that Is-

raeli units had crossed into Lebanon overnight for reconnaissance and probing operations.

Lebanese troops also pulled back from positions along the border, the source added. Lebanese army spokesperson did not confirm or deny the movement.

Lebanon's army has historically stayed on the sidelines of major conflicts with Israel, and in the last year of hostilities has not fired on the Israeli military.

The operation into Lebanon represents an escalation of the conflict in the Middle East between Israel and allegedly Iran-backed fighters that now threatens to suck in the US and Iran.

Local residents in the Lebanese border town of Aita al-Shaab reported heavy shelling and the sound of helicopters and drones overhead.

US sees indications of imminent Iranian missile attack on Israel

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The United States has indications that Iran is preparing to imminently launch a ballistic missile attack against Israel that could be at least as large as a strike that Tehran staged earlier this year, US officials said on Tuesday. The United States is actively supporting preparations to defend Israel against a new Iranian missile attack, a senior White House official said.

"A direct military attack from Iran against Israel will carry severe consequences for Iran," the official said. A second US official said that the Iranian strike could be as large or potentially bigger than the one on April 14 in which Tehran launched more than 300 missiles and drones. Iran's mission to the United Nations did not immediately

respond to a request for comment.

The April attack - the first-ever direct Iranian strike on Israel - was in retaliation for what Iran called an Israeli strike on its Damascus consulate that killed seven Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps officers, including two senior commanders.

It caused only modest damage inside Israel due to air defense interceptions not only by Israel but also by the United States, Britain, and other allies in the region. The US warning of a looming Iranian strike followed Israel's announcement that its forces staged raids into southern Lebanon in a limited incursion as it pursues two weeks of strikes against Hezbollah militants that have killed the Iran-backed group's leader and senior commanders.

Indian doctors resume strike over colleague's rape and murder

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: Indian doctors in Kolkata said on Tuesday they had resumed a strike to protest against the brutal rape and murder of a colleague because their demands for hospital safety improvements had not been met.

The discovery of the 31-year-old's bloodied body at a state-run hospital in the eastern city in August rekindled nationwide anger at the chronic issue of violence against women. Doctors briefly returned to limited work in emergency departments last month but decided at a union meeting to cease work again. Union spokesman Aniket Mahato said the West Bengal state government had failed to deliver on its promises to upgrade lighting, CCTV cameras, and other security measures in hospitals.



President Xi Jinping and ex-premier Wen Jiabao attend the national day reception at the Great Hall of People.

School bus fire in Thailand kills at least 23

Monitoring Desk
BANGKOK: At least 23 people died in Thailand when a school bus carrying more than 40 students and teachers on a field trip caught fire on the outskirts of the capital Bangkok, police said on Tuesday.

Twenty-three bodies have been identified, Trairong Phiwpan, forensic science commissioner told reporters, with an investigation on the causes underway.

Sixteen students and three teachers were sent to a hospital for treatment, Transport Minister Suriya Juangroongruangkit said.

Images posted on social media and carried by local news outlets showed thick grey smoke pouring out of the bus, parts of which were still on fire. The blaze was later extinguished. A Reuters photographer saw fire trucks, police, and rescue vehicles parked around the blackened vehicle, with a cluster of firefighters at the entrance.

"Teachers told us that the fire ignited very quickly," acting police chief Kittirat Phanphet told a press conference.

Drone boat hits ship in Red Sea as missile strikes another in likely assaults by Yemen Houthi rebels

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: An explosive-loaded drone crashed into one ship Tuesday in the Red Sea as a missile exploded against another, the British military and private security officials said, marking the latest suspected attacks by Yemen's Houthi rebels. The attacks likely are the rebels' first assaults on commercial shipping in weeks as the Israel-Hamas war threatens to become a regional conflict.

They come as Israeli ground forces entered Lebanon after days of Israeli airstrikes that killed

Russia calls on Israel to withdraw troops from Lebanon

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russia on Tuesday called on Israel to withdraw troops from Lebanon, warning that the attack would lead to a further escalation of violence in the Middle East. Israel said commando and paratroop units launched raids into Lebanon on Tuesday as part of a "limited" ground incursion, while Iran-backed Hezbollah said it had fired a barrage of missiles into Israel, including at its spy agency near Tel Aviv.

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and other top officials, and earlier explosions of sabotaged electronic devices used by the Shiite militia. The Houthis threatened "escalating military operations" targeting Israel on Monday after they reportedly shot down a U.S. military drone flying over Yemen. The first attack took place some 110 kilometers (70 miles) off the port city of Hodeida. A captain on a ship saw four "splashes" near his vessel, the British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations center said in a warning.

Putin orders conscription of 133,000 servicemen in Russia's autumn draft

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered the conscription of 133,000 new servicemen in Russia's autumn draft that starts Oct. 1 and goes until the end of the year, according to a Kremlin decree published on Monday. The decree, published in Russian state-run newspaper Rossiyskaya Gazeta, calls for carrying out the draft of citizens "aged 18 to 30 years, who are not in the reserve and are subject to conscription in accordance with the Federal Law.

China's Xi calls for Taiwan reunification in national day speech

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: On the eve of the 75th Foundation Day of the Republic of China, President Xi Jinping has reiterated his call for China to "reunite" with Taiwan, saying that achieving complete national reunification is the common aspiration of the Chinese people. "It is an irreversible trend, a matter of justice, and it is in accordance with the popular will. No one can stop the march of history," President Xi said during his address to thousands of people who had gathered for a banquet celebrating 75 years of the People's Republic.

The People's Republic of China was founded on October 1, 1949, after the Communist army defeated nationalist Kuomintang for-c-es at the end of a civil war lasting two decades. The defeated nationalists fled to Taiwan. "Taiwan is sacred territory for China. People on both sides of the Taiwan Strait have blood ties, and these family ties will always be stronger than others," Xi said. Xi also used his speech to call for opposition to the "separatist activities". Earlier, US President Joe Biden approved \$567 million in military assistance for Taiwan.

The United States does not officially recognize Taiwan diplomatically, it is Taipei's key partner and major provider of weapons.

Gaza children 'extremely impacted' by war: UNICEF

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: Nearly a year of devastating war has left Gaza's 2.4 million people enduring a humanitarian tragedy, with children in the besieged territory the most vulnerable, a UNICEF official told AFP in an interview.

Jonathan Crickx, the UN agency's spokesman for the Palestinian territories, has returned this month from a week-long mission to Gaza, still heavily impacted even as Israel shifts its military focus to Lebanon.

He talked to AFP about the plight of Gaza's children, who have not had a single day of education since the Israel-Hamas war broke out on October 7. "You see children who are not allowed to have the life of normal children, no education, no play, no joy," Crickx said.

"The faces of these children are... so sad." Most children he saw in the war-battered Palestinian territory were helping their family as they no longer had classes to attend. "So, you see a lot of

children carrying these dirty yellow plastic jerrycans" with up to 25 litres of water, he said.

"I've seen children pushing these jerrycans with a broken wheelchairs, trying to bring water, which is one of the major issues... in the Gaza Strip."

Crickx said it was heartbreaking to see children, some as young as five or six, trying to find food for their families.

They are "walking in huge piles of garbage and trying to get whatever they can," he said. "These children are extremely impacted by the violence and the bombings and insecurity they have been through for a year." Crickx vividly remembers his conversation with Ahmad, a 10-year-old Gazan boy who lived with his family in a displacement camp in southern Gaza.

The boy's uncle had died a horrific death, Crickx said. Ahmad "was saying things that a 10-year-old should not tell you, how the body was in pieces, how the head was far away".

Like Trachoma, PM urges sustained efforts to eliminate polio, hepatitis from Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday stressed the urgent need to eradicate polio and hepatitis in the country through sustained efforts, similar to the successful elimination of Trachoma, a contagious eye infection that causes inflammation on the inner eyelids.

Speaking at a function where Dr Lou Dapeng, Head of Mission for the World Health Organization in Pakistan, presented a Trachoma-free Pakistan certificate to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, he said that the certificate symbolized the dedication of the Health Ministry and other stakeholders in the effort to eliminate the disease.

Trachoma is a disease caused by infection by the Chlamydia trachomatis bacterium and can result in irreversible blindness if left untreated. This achievement marks a significant milestone in public health.

The prime minister directed the relevant authorities to sustain their hard work and dedication, emphasizing that such efforts could elevate Pakistan to new heights of excellence, as long as they were prepared to tackle the challenges ahead.

He recalled that during his tenure as Punjab chief minister, he initiated effective programmes to combat the diseases, and hoped that the same would continue under the current leadership of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz and in other provinces as well. He offered the cooperation of Federal Government in that regard.

PM Shehbaz appreciated the collaborative efforts of the Health Ministry, provincial governments, NGOs, experts, and other departments in eradicating Trachoma, which had helped save the sight of hundreds.

He instructed the relevant authorities to take preventive measures, and establish effective supervision and checks and balances to stop reemergence of the disease in the country.



ISLAMABAD: Famous Islamic Scholar Dr Zakir Naik meeting with the students of Sweet Home in a Local Hotel.

Religious scholars urged to raise awareness on Islamic perspective of breastfeeding duration, benefits

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony's Additional Secretary Dr. Syed Ata-ur-Rehman on Tuesday urged the religious scholars to raise public awareness on the Islamic guidance regarding duration and benefits of breastfeeding. During a national interfaith dialogue on the 'Role of Religious Leadership in Promoting Better Nutrition and Welfare for Women and Newborns', he said providing breast milk to newborns was their fundamental right, and emphasized that the religious affairs ministry was ready to fully collaborate with the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination and other relevant institutions to create awareness on this significant matter.

The meeting, held at the religious affairs ministry, was attended by representatives from the health ministry, UNICEF, Save the Children, Health Services Academy, Dawah Academy, Council of Islamic Ideology (CII), and several religious scholars.

Dr. Ata-ur-Rehman further added that the CII, male and female Islamic scholars, and religious leaders from various faiths will be consulted for the guidance.

PM reiterates commitment to enhance life, healthcare quality of senior citizens

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday reiterated the commitment to implement policies that eventually enhance senior citizens' quality of life, ensuring access to healthcare, social services and active community participation.

The Prime Minister, in a message on International Day of Older People being observed today, pledged to create an inclusive society that valued and supported its elder population.

This year's theme "Aging with Dignity: The Importance of Strengthening Care and Support Systems for Older Persons Worldwide," highlights our critical responsibility to safeguard the rights and well-being of older individuals, he said.

"I extend my heartfelt greetings to our senior citizens and acknowledge their immense and invaluable contributions to our society. Our senior citizens are the custodians of our history, the bearers of wisdom and the anchors of our families," he added.

He said: Older people are the true guides for our younger generation, providing invaluable wisdom and experiences that can help create a more resilient, tolerant, and compassionate society.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the incumbent government's vision was to empower elder members of the society, ensuring that every senior citizen felt valued, their voices were heard, and they continued to share their wisdom and insight. "Let us work together to build a tolerant society where every citizen is valued and our senior citizens receive the care and respect they deserve," he added.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif offering condolences to Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on the demise of his elder brother.

People united to eliminate extremism, restore peace in KP: Governor Kundi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday emphasized that the protection of citizens' lives and property was the government's foremost duty and responsibility.

The ceremony, hosted by the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and the Ambassador of Turkmenistan, was attended by Governor Kundi along with ambassadors and high commissioners from 14 countries, as well as other senior officials.

Family members of the late constable were also specially invited to the event.

hotel here, Governor Faisal Kundi emphasized that the protection of citizens' lives and property was the government's foremost duty and responsibility.

The ceremony, hosted by the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and the Ambassador of Turkmenistan, was attended by Governor Kundi along with ambassadors and high commissioners from 14 countries, as well as other senior officials.

Family members of the late constable were also specially invited to the event.

Swat police vows to eliminate terrorism, prioritize law, order

By Haroon Siraj MINGORA: Irfanullah Khan, the newly appointed Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) for Malakand Division, has expressed confidence in Swat police's ability to combat terrorism and restore peace in the region. "We have the spirit to eliminate terrorism," Khan emphasized, highlighting the police force's bravery and readiness to tackle any untoward incidents (2).

Khan stressed that maintaining law and order is the top priority, with concrete steps being taken to achieve this goal. He acknowledged the ultimate sacrifice made by hundreds of police personnel and officers who lost their lives fighting against terrorism (2).

The DIG instructed police officers to foster a friendly environment, demonstrating humility and courtesy when interacting with the public at police stations, and showing respect to all individuals (2).

As the new DIG, Khan's leadership aims to ensure public safety and security in Swat and the broader Malakand Division.



ISLAMABAD: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi along with Ambassador's presents condolences letter to family members of martyred police Constable Burhan Ali at Serena Hotel.

ICT police arrest 15 criminals, drugs and weapons seized

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police arrested 15 criminals involved in various illegal activities, including drug trafficking and possession of illegal weapons, recovered drugs and weapons with ammunition from the suspects' possession.

According to a police statement on Monday, under the special directions of Inspector General (IG) Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the ICT Police have intensified its crackdown on criminal elements to eliminate crime from the city.

He said the ICT Police teams from the Industrial Area, Sabzi Mandi, Noon, Koral, and Kirpa police stations took legal action against those involved in drug peddling and possession of illegal weapons, arresting five accused.

He said police teams recovered 1,200 grams of heroin, 600 grams of hashish, and a pistol with ammunition from the suspects. Additionally, 10 absconders were also apprehended during the last 24 hours. DIG Syed Ali Raza emphasized that the ICT Police are committed to ensuring the safety of citizens' lives and property in the federal capital. He stressed that no individual or group will be allowed to disrupt the peace of the citizens. He added that protecting the lives, property, and dignity of citizens remains the top priority of the Islamabad Police.

Citizens are urged to report any suspicious activities to the relevant police station, emergency helpline "Pukar-15," or the "ICT 15" app to help make the city crime-free through cooperation between the police and the public.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Denmark Jakob Linulf meets with Romina Khurshid Alam, Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, alongside Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri, Chairperson of the Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights, in the Federal Capital.

Chairperson BISP urges youth to promote tolerance, critical thinking

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid Tuesday urged the youth to promote tolerance, critical thinking and social change actively.

"There is a dire need for social change, and the younger generation must play a role in distinguishing right from wrong and fostering a culture of understanding," she said.

The chairperson was speaking during her visit to the Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology (GIKI) as the chief guest for the induction ceremony of the new batch of students.

She also discussed social media's influence on society and stressed the importance of using words wisely to build character. Keeping in mind Pakistan's internal and external challenges, there is a dire need for coordinated efforts and giving up the practice of protest. The people believe in peace and progress of the country, she said.

Rubina Khalid emphasized the importance of unity and working together to strengthen the country.

President of SOPREST, Engr. Salim Saifullah Khan addressed the students that they were the future of Pakistan.

He praised the efforts of the late Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in establishing BISP and said the Programme currently supports 9.3 million underprivileged women across the country, and the number of beneficiaries is expected to reach 10 million soon.

On the occasion, Prof. Dr. Fazal Ahmad Khalid remarked, "GIKI Institute has become an icon of quality education over the past three decades." He noted that the Institute's over 7,500 alumni work in multinational companies worldwide.



ISLAMABAD: Convener Fact-Finding Committee, Azam Nazeer Tarar chairing the committee meeting at Parliament House.

Foreign Secy reaffirms commitment to preserving ancient archeological heritage

ISLAMABAD (APP): The International Conference on 'Celebrating Pakistan's Ancient Archeological and Civilizational Heritage', organized by ISSI, concluded with Foreign Secretary Anna Baloch reaffirming commitment to preserving and promoting Pakistan's rich archeological and civilizational heritage.

The one-day conference drew a significant gathering of diplomats, cultural experts, and academics, underscoring the keen interest in exploring, preserving, and promoting Pakistan's rich archeological and civilizational heritage.

The inaugural session, addressed by Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed and Federal Secretary for National Heritage and Culture, Hassan Nasir Jamy, was followed by three working sessions.

Addressing the concluding session, Foreign Secretary Anna Baloch expressed her deep pride in the country's rich and multi-layered legacy. She highlighted how the ancient civilizations of the Indus Valley and Gandhara, which flourished in the present-day Pakistan, continue to inspire modern society.

The Foreign Secretary emphasized the importance of preserving heritage, noting that the values of innovation, resilience, and coexistence seen in the ancient cultures remained relevant today. She called for a balanced approach to conservation, tourism, and development, ensuring that Pakistan's cultural assets were safeguarded for future generations. She lauded the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad's (ISSI) initiative of focusing on this subject. The Foreign Office, she re-assured, would remain a committed stakeholder and partner in these efforts, working closely with local communities and international experts to protect and promote Pakistan's shared legacy.

CDA auctions commercial plots for record-breaking Rs 2.45 billion

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has kicked off a three-day auction of commercial plots in the federal capital, generating a whopping Rs 2.45 billion in just the first day.

The auction, held at the Gandhara Citizens Club in F-9 Park, saw enthusiastic participation from investors, with two prime plots in the coveted F-8 sector selling for record-breaking prices.

Plot 13-G was sold for Rs 1.22 billion, while Plot 16-D fetched Rs 1.25 billion.

This auction offers a golden opportunity for investors to purchase commercial plots in Islamabad's prime locations, including Blue Area and Class III shopping centers. Additionally, plots for motels and apartments are also up for grabs.

A committee headed by the Member Finance is overseeing the transparent auction process.

The CDA aims to provide a conducive business environment, and this auction is expected to boost commercial activity in the capital.



ISLAMABAD: Salim Saifullah Khan, President of the Society for the Promotion of Engineering Sciences and Technology in Pakistan (SOPREST) and Board of Governors GIKI Institute presenting shield to the Chairperson BISP Senator Rubina Khalid during the Induction Ceremony of GIKI Batch 34.

Parents urged to support polio vaccination efforts

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Health, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Bharath on Tuesday visited the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) to review the ongoing efforts to eradicate polio.

During the meeting, a comprehensive assessment of the current polio situation and the challenges faced was presented.

The review also included a discussion on the success of the September polio campaign, which vaccinated nearly 33 million children across the country.

Dr. Bharath was briefed on the strategic plans for the upcoming polio campaigns scheduled for October and November.

Dr. Bharath emphasized the critical need for coordinated efforts to ensure all children in high-risk districts, including South Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Karachi, Quetta, and Peshawar, receive the polio vaccine. "These areas are still reservoirs of the poliovirus, and we must intensify our efforts to stop its transmission," he stated.

The meeting highlighted that the poliovirus was present in environmental samples from 67 districts, with 24 cases reported to date. Dr. Bharath reaffirmed the government's commitment to eradicating polio, noting that serious emergency measures are in place, and with unwavering support from the federal and provincial governments, we will strengthen our polio campaigns. Dr. Bharath urged the parents to cooperate fully with vaccination teams.



ISLAMABAD: The flags of Pakistan and Malaysia hoisted in front of Parliament House, celebrating the warm reception for Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim during his first official visit to Pakistan in early October.

PM visits DPM Dar to condole his brother's demise

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday visited the residence of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar to express condolence over the death of his elder brother Khizar Hayat Dar.

The prime minister offered Fateha for the departed soul and conveyed his deep grief.

He also prayed to Allah Almighty for peace for the departed soul and strength for the bereaved family to bear the loss.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi accompanied the prime minister.

IRSA advisory body to meet today

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) convened the meeting of its advisory committee on Wednesday to finalize water availability plan for the upcoming Rabi season, scheduled to commence from Oct 1 to March 31.

Meeting of the IRSA's technical committee already held on September 26, while meeting of the advisory committee has been convened on October 2, sources told APP here Tuesday.

Sajid elected as new President of NA ECHS

ISLAMABAD (APP): Muhammad Sajid has been elected as President National Assembly Employees Cooperative Housing Society (ECHS) for the period of three years.

According to a notification issued by Deputy Commissioner / Registrar Cooperative Societies, ICT, Islamabad,

Sher Muhammad Saqi was elected as Vice President and Shafiq Ur Rehman Secretary.

Among other office bearers of the Society Raja Danish Shahzad Treasurer and five Executive Members including Tahir Mehmood Adil Farooq, Shehzad Azam, Iftikhar Malik and Khurram Rasheed.