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President for enhanced focus on regional connectivity, cultural cooperation

ASHGABAT (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday addressed an international forum held here in the Turkmen capital, where he emphasized an enhanced focus on the promotion of regional connectivity as well as cultural and economic collaboration in the region.

The president, addressing the forum on "Interrelation of Times and Civilizations- Basis for Peace and Development" said that Pakistan and Turkmenistan shared a deep-rooted bond of brotherhood which was built on mutual respect and commonalities of faith and a shared vision for a better and peaceful future.

The event, held to mark the 300th birth anniversary of Magtymguly Faragi, a great Turkmen thinker, poet and philosopher, was also attended by several regional leaders including Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Kazakhstani President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Uzbekistan Presi-

dent Shavkat Mirziyoyev, Tajik President Emomali Rehmon, Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov and others.

President Zardari, who arrived here on Thursday on a two-day visit, called Magtymguly Faragi a "towering figure" of Turkmen literature and a "beacon of spiritual enlightenment."

The great Turkmen poet and Pakistan's national poet Allama Muhammad Iqbal shared several commonalities in their poetry and thoughts on Sufism and

nationalism, he added.

He lauded the Turkmen government and people for organizing the event to promote understanding of peace and dialogue among different cultures which also provided him an opportunity to interact with leaders of regional countries to help strengthen mutual friendship.

President Zardari said that his participation in the Forum reflected his country's commitment to strengthening bilateral ties.



ASHGABAT: President Asif Ali Zardari in a group photo with Heads of States/Governments/Parliaments participating in the International Forum on "Interrelation of Times and Civilizations - Basis of Peace and Development."



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah presides over a cabinet meeting held at CM House in Karachi.

PM, Acting President, others condemn terrorist attack in Duki

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has strongly condemned the terrorist attack on miners in Duki district of Balochistan.

In a statement, he expressed grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives in the incident.

Comiserating with the bereaved families, he prayed for the departed souls.

The Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to root out terrorism in all its forms.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif also held telephonic conversations with Governor Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail and Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti.

Shehbaz Sharif expressed his resolve to uproot the terrorism in all its forms. He also assured to provide all possible support to the families of the

martyrs.

Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani also strongly condemned the attack in Duki area of Balochistan, which claimed lives of several miners.

In a statement, he expressed deep grief over the loss of lives in the attack and conveyed his sympathies to the families of the deceased workers.

The Acting President said perpetrators of this heinous incident should be awarded strict punishment.

Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani also prayed for early recovery of the injured and directed the relevant authorities to ensure best medical treatment to the injured.

Federal minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi has strongly condemned the brutal attack on coal miners in the Duki area of Balochistan, where 20 workers were tragically killed by armed individuals.



ISLAMABAD: Saudi Investment Minister Khalid Bin Abdulaziz Al Falih meeting with Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal.

Drum beaters should first read court's decision and then criticize: CJP

Says PTI's request to adjourn intra-party elections review, a delaying tactic

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa has refused to give more adjournment in intra party election review case due to absence of PTI lawyers from hearing remarking dilatory tactics are being used.

The CJP further remarked they want headlines but Supreme Court (SC) will not give them any such headline.

Intra Party Election review case came up for hearing before a 3-member bench of SC presided over by CJP Qazi Faez Isa Friday.

No lawyer from PTI side appeared in the court.

Ahmad Hassan counsel for Akbar S Babar said application for adjournment has come from advocate Hamid Khan.

The CJP while mov-

ing to counsel for Akbar S Babar remarked "read paragraph No 2 of application for adjournment. Paragraph regarding the family engagement of Hamid Khan was read.

The CJP remarked this is application for some novel adjournment. Application of such nature has not been seen before. This case was to be fixed for hearing in proposed cause list of May 29. There was application from advocate Ali Zafar for general adjournment till June 4. Open heart surgery of one member of bench took place.

He further remarked the drum beaters made the intra party election case as case of election symbol of bat. The drum beaters should read court's decision first and then criticize it.

Zardari, Putin emphasise strengthening bilateral ties

ASHGABAT (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday met his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin wherein they emphasised further strengthening of bilateral relationship.

The informal interaction was held on the sidelines of two-day international forum on "Interrelation of Times and Civilizations- Basis for Peace and Development" here in the Turkmen capital to commemorate the 300th birth anniversary of Magtymguly Faragi, a great Turkmen thinker, poet and philosopher.

Both leaders expressed good wishes for each other, according to a President House press release.

PM reviews SCO Summit preparations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday visited the capital city to review the arrangements being made for the upcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

On the occasion, the prime minister was briefed on the reception arrangements for the guests attending the SCO Summit.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, Information Minister Attaullah Tarar and other key officials accompanied him. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and relevant authorities briefed the prime minister about the arrangements.

PTI announces protest at D-Chowk during SCO summit

Monitoring Desk ISLAMABAD: Imran Khan's party has announced its decision to protest at Islamabad's D-Chowk on October 15—the day the country would host the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in the federal capital—to seek the incarcerated former prime minister's release.

"We announce the cancellation of the protest in the districts of Punjab in view of the preparations for the peaceful protest of D-Chowk on October 15," the PTI said in a statement on X after the party's political committee meeting on Friday. Pakistan is set to host a two-day SCO Council of Heads of Government meeting in Islamabad on October 15 and 16, with leaders from the bloc attending the event.

Numbers are complete but govt wants to work as per law, constitution: Bilawal

ISLAMABAD (Online): PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said numbers are complete with government but it wants to work as per law and constitution.

"PPP has always evolved constitutional amendments with consensus, he said this while talking to media men after parliamentary committee meeting here Friday.

He held government wants consensus. It will be our full endeavor to bring consensus draft in consultation with all parties. PPP presented in committee proposals of its original draft which include matters related to constitutional court. We presented this draft before all parties too.

He said Maulana Fazlur Rehman reiterated his stance that his party

wants to work out draft in consensus with PPP.

We have enormous trust on federal government, he said Law minister told he has two thirds majority but we are sitting for consensus among all political parties.

APP adds: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, on Friday said that the proposed draft of constitutional amendments presented by his party included the establishment of a Constitutional Court and amendments to Articles 175 A, B, D, E, and F.

Speaking to the media in his chamber at Parliament House, he said that the government has given time to reach a consensus on constitutional amendments related to judicial reforms.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif writes his remarks in the visitors' book at the Police Lines Headquarters.

20 coalmine labourers killed, seven injured in terrorism attack in Duki coalmines

No justification of attacking innocent mine labourers busy in earning livelihood: Governor

Independent Report

QUETTA: As many as 20 coal mine labourers were killed and seven others injured by unknown armed assailants in a terrorist attack in coalmine field of Duki on late Thursday night.

The reports reaching here suggested that some armed assailants approached the coalmines in Duki area and attacked the same with rockets and hand grenades. The assailants also resorted to indiscriminate fire targeting the coalmine labourers engaged in the mining of coal there.

As a result of the attack, at least 20 coalmine workers were killed while seven others got injured. The armed assailants fled from the scene after the horrific attack. The reports suggested that they also burnt the machinery used for the coalmining in the

field before fleeing from the scene.

However, the local police, Levies, Frontier Corps and administration reached the spot and cordoned off the area. The bodies of ill-fated labourers and injured ones were shifted to the district headquarter hospital Duki.

After necessary first aid, most of the injured were shifted to the teaching hospital Loralai. Afterwards, four of them were shifted to Trauma Center Quetta. Those died in the attack belonged to different areas of Balochistan besides Afghanistan. The sources said that six of all 20 deceased mine workers hailed from Zhob while four of them belonged to Killa Saifullah. Three of them were from Pishin while one each was from Loralai, Musakhail, Harnai and Kuchlak area of Quetta.



Rear Admiral Muhammad Saleem handing over Command Scroll to Commander Karachi Vice Admiral Muhammad Faisal Abbasi.

Sindh cabinet allows PSCM to maintain waiting list, strengthens SHOs powers

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, presiding over a Cabinet meeting, called on the federal government to stop power distribution companies from penalising citizens under the pretext of line losses, approved the Sindh Public Service Commission's proposal to maintain a waiting list of successful candidates for future vacancies, created 434 clinical care positions in teaching hospitals, sanctioned Rs. 367.5 million for a new 36-bed hospital in Taiser Town, and empowered SHOs with Drawing and Disbursing Officer (DDO) powers for effective management of police stations.

The Cabinet also approved the Drawing & Disbursing (DDO) Powers to the Station House Officers (SHOs) all over Sindh so that they can make necessary expenditures to run their police stations in the public interest.

The cabinet meeting, held at CM House on Friday, was attended by provincial ministers, advisors, the Chief Secretary, the Chairman P&D and other concerned officers.

The cabinet approved Rs69.2 million for 485 police stations in the province, including Rs33.8 million for 78 police stations of the Karachi Division. The other divisions have 407 police stations and their budget would be 35.4 million.

The cabinet also approved an amendment in Sindh Police Financial Powers Rules 2019 under which a Station House Officer (SHO), of grade BPS-16, has been given Drawing & Disbursing Officer (DDO) power and authorised to draw Rs200,000 per month. The CM termed the move to strengthen police at the grassroots level an effective delivery service.

The provincial government called for reforms in load management laws to address ongoing load shedding and inefficiencies in distribution companies (DISCOs). The CM approved the recommendations and directed the Energy dept to send them to Power Division, Ministry of Energy.

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Full court reference for CJP to be held on Oct 25

ISLAMABAD (Online): Full court reference for Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa will be held on October 25.

Registrar Supreme Court (SC) has issued notice in respect of full court reference and as per this notice full court reference will take place in connection with retirement of CJP Qazi Faez Isa on October 25.

Senior lawyers including president Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) have been invited in full court reference.

"Those who have a mindset to conspire against the country should better stay at home as no miscreant will be allowed to disrupt the SCO Conference in Islamabad," the minister said while talking to the media.

"The announcements do not make any difference as Islamabad has been made fully safe and secure," he said while referring to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf which had announced to hold protest in coming days.

"It (SCO Conference) will go as planned and will elevate Pakistan's prestige and improve its image at international level," the minister remarked.

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JUI-F Chief, Bilawal discuss proposed constitutional amendments

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Bilawal Bhutto Zardari visited the residence of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) chief, Maulana Fazlur Rehman, on Friday for discussions on proposed constitutional amendments.

During the meeting, both leaders held consultations on the suggested changes to the constitution,

reflecting a significant move towards collaboration between the two major political forces, said a news statement.

The JUI delegation included spokesperson Aslam Ghauri and JUI FATA chief Maulana Jamaluddin, while the PPP delegation was comprised of senior members Naveed Qamar, Murtaza Wahab, and Jamil Soomro.

Parliamentary special committee meeting: PPP, PML-N share their drafts for consensus on constitutional amendment

ISLAMABAD (Online): PPP and PML-N have shared their respective drafts in the meeting of parliamentary special committee on forging consensus on constitutional amendments.

PTI showed its inability for opposing or supporting any draft till the meeting with chairman PTI and his approval. On the other hand Maulana Fazlur Rehman while showing flexibility in his stance made it clear he will share the government draft with other parties and then he will give his stance. However no final date has been determined for presenting constitutional amendment draft in the parliament. Meeting

of parliamentary committee will continue today (Saturday) too.

Meeting of parliamentary committee was held under Syed Khurshid Ahmad in parliament house. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Maulana Fazlur Rehman participated in the meeting specially.

Chairman Barrister Gohar and Aamir Dogar attended the meeting from PTI side. Parliamentary leaders of other political parties were also present.

As per sources PPP shared its written draft with the committee wherein it has given its proposals in regard to establishment of constitutional court.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Disaffected voices

A fresh stand-off is brewing between the state, and the recently banned PTM, principally over the tribal jirga that had been planned for today by the latter in KP. Both the centre and the KP government have made it clear that the outfit cannot proceed with the gathering, while there have been violent clashes between PTM supporters and law enforcers, with the group saying that three of its activists have been killed.

Moreover, the interior minister held a presser on Wednesday offering a few carrots — but mostly sticks — to the PTM. Mohsin Naqvi said that talks could be held in a “proper manner”, but that the state would not tolerate incitement against institutions. While it is hoped that a peaceful resolution to this impasse is found, the state must ask itself why such movements emerge in the first place, and what mistakes made by successive rulers aggravate the situation in which is sometimes referred to as the country’s “peripheries”.

Looking at KP and the former Fata region, from where the PTM gathers most of its support, this part of Pakistan — especially areas close to the Afghan border — have experienced violence, displacement, and militancy ever since the ‘war on terror’ arrived in this region over two decades ago. Moreover, lack of development, and claims of state excesses, have added fuel to the fires of discontent.

It is these factors, amongst others, which led to the rise of the PTM. Similar factors are responsible for the popularity of groups such as the Baloch Yakjehti Committee in Balochistan. In fact, many of the BYC’s grievances mirror those of the PTM. Baloch activists have for years been calling for the state to deliver to them their constitutional rights, particularly when it comes to the issue of enforced disappearances. But it is not just the peripheries that are in tumult.

The PTI’s protest campaign — which finds most resonance in Punjab and urban KP — can be traced to the state’s efforts to cancel the party and cut its leadership down to size.

Instead of considering all these and other critical voices as threats, the state needs to treat them as opportunities, hear out the disaffected populations, and find a democratic way forward. Yet it must be said that all movements and political parties must remain peaceful and respect the law; while legitimate criticism of state institutions is kosher, incitement to violence or rebellion against organs of the state can simply not be condoned.

Meanwhile, the state should engage with critical voices, and refrain from forcibly silencing them, as this opens the door to radicalisation, militancy, and separatist sentiments. For the sake of national harmony, disaffected groups both in the peripheries and the mainstream must be engaged in a spirit of conciliation and respect to prevent further divisions.

Keeping promises

Nikhat Sattar

In our everyday lives as well as in matters of great import, such as governance and national and international dealings, human beings make promises. On a one-to-one basis, or collectively, the signature or stamp of a person or entity such as a government, or even a verbal agreement implies a commitment to a deed. Whether it be a peace treaty, an end to family or tribal feuds, or something as minor as a promise to meet at a certain time, it entails a firm commitment on the side of the persons involved. A promise is distinct from intention. The latter may or may not be carried out; the former is a must.

This is the meaning that a promise holds for a true Muslim. The word has been used 151 times in the Quran, and tens of times Muslims have been enjoined to fulfil their word to another person. It is not merely an expression of intent or desire, but a whole-hearted communication meant to indicate that whatever is being said or written will be carried out as per the terms of commitment.

The Holy Quran states: “...and fulfil (every) engagement, for (every) engagement will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning)” (17:34). Here, engagement means promise or a commitment.

In Islam, promises are of three types: the promises that God had made to human beings both in this life and the Day of Judgment; promise that all human souls made to God before coming to the world; that He was their Creator and one and only Lord; and promises that humans make to each other. Each of these three are sacred for they define the relationships between God

and His creation and among the latter. Breaking any of the latter two by human beings is to deny themselves the dignity, respect and courage that are the hallmarks of humanity.

The Prophet (PBUH) is believed to have said: “The signs of a hypocrite are three: Whenever he speaks, he tells a lie; and whenever he promises, he breaks his promise” (Sahih Bukhari, 6,095).

And yet, how easily and almost without missing a heartbeat do we break promises, both to each other and to God. For our promises to God are nothing but lip service and mechanical rituals without meaning and spirit, and our promises to each other are trivial and made to be broken. We commit to things we know we shall never do and sign papers knowing we shall default. From politics to simple trade, our commitments are worth nothing at all.

This is exactly what hypocrisy involves: saying something while meaning something different. At every level of Muslimhood, whether it be

Muslim organisations, or diplomatic assurances of support and unity of brotherhood, or a casual promise to meet tomorrow, our actions are far from our intent.

It is often commented that keeping promises is a part of simple ethics and there is no need to bring Islam into the concept.

Anyone who thinks so is probably unaware of the difference between Muslims and the rest of the world. Muslims are supposed to be bound by the belief that they shall return to God and are accountable for whatever they have done in this life, for their real life begins after this one ends. A Muslim will, therefore, go through

life with a code of ethics that will demand justification for their deeds in front of God. And thus, each will be asked as to why they broke their promise, umpteen times at umpteen places, to umpteen people and to God Himself. One should, therefore, think many times before making promises, about whether one shall be able to fulfil them or not.

It has become a habit to make promises to do something or be somewhere and break such promises easily. One such example is our promise to be at a given place at a given time, including at ceremonies. Guests often arrive at an occasion hours later than the time of invitation.

The other side of hypocrisy is sycophancy. Sycophants tell lies; they exaggerate and often create larger-than-life images of whoever’s virtues they extol, and defend the most appalling statement, policy or act as something that is beneficial for the people.

Two such examples are the bloated expenditure of government officials in the wake of the current economic crisis in Pakistan, and the repression of human rights in the country. Promises made to defend democracy and human dignity are brought to naught.

The ever-increasing tide of extreme religiosity, demonstrated so ably in devising intricate ways to prove the ‘Islamic’ nature of the state is one that is breaking each of the two types of promises: to God and to each other. Hypocrites and sycophants are aplenty and seldom it is that a promise is seen to have been made and fulfilled.

Promises are a serious matter. If only we, as a nation, could understand this. -- Courtesy Dawn

Punjab has the key

Aasim Sajjad Akhtar

To say that Punjab is Pakistan’s heartland is to state a simple fact. Even if one were to separate the Seraiki belt from the administrative unit that is the province, Punjab is still the country’s single biggest ethnic-linguistic group. Punjab retains control over the single largest share of economic resources and is the most politically powerful province.

Punjab has long been the crucial cog that has sustained military hegemony. Not only has a majority of the military rank-and-file and top brass been recruited from Punjab, but barring exceptional historical moments, a critical mass of Punjab’s people has provided consent to the national security state.

Is this consensus now fracturing? The political tug-of-war between the establishment and the PTI has certainly been accompanied by a greater and far more vocal critique of the former’s role in Pakistan from within Punjabi society than at any time in the recent past, especially amongst younger generations. Interrogating this contradiction is important not just to gauge what the future may hold for the PTI but for Pakistan’s historic militarised structure of power generally.

Elite wrangling or popular challenge: A notable feature of the current political imbroglio is fragmentation of Punjab’s political elite. Urbane DHA dwellers hailing from army families and dynasties like the Chaudhrys of Gujrat are positioned against the current top brass. Meanwhile, somewhat autonomously of the ruling-class rebels, working-class Punjabi youth have flocked to the PTI’s cause, united in their adulation for Imran Khan

and as vociferous in their anti-establishment rhetoric.

If palace intrigues take yet another turn and Punjab’s ruling-class rebels currently on the outside of the power equation are let back in, will anti-establishment sentiment amongst young, working people also dissipate? There are no guarantees in politics, and the answer will be determined by other related questions.

Economic factor: It is generally understated that the anti-establishment vote cast by many young people on Feb 8 was as much about the economy as anything else. The selective but successful argument peddled by the PTI was that inflation, unemployment and economic hardship were largely absent during Imran Khan’s reign and that the establishment committed a grave sin by booting out the PTI government and bringing back the Sharifs and Bhuttos.

What is missing in this story is that the establishment’s power is not just based on its manipulation of mainstream political parties, but also on an historic economic arrangement that would have to be undone if things are truly to change in this country. This establishment-centric economic order includes ever-inelastic budgetary allocations to defence, huge hidden subsidies provided to business entities like the NLC and FWO as well as the establishment’s broader footprint in natural resource grabs and profitable sectors such as real estate. Only when Punjab’s disaffected working-class youth get behind a substantive project to displace the bloated national security apparatus with a welfare-oriented political economy, and redistribute wealth away from the militarised ruling class as

a whole, will we see the crystallisation of a substantive anti-establishment politics in Punjab.

The national question: The final piece of this puzzle has to do with Punjab’s relationship with the rest of Pakistan’s ethnic nations. Establishment hegemony has been based on a dominant ideology that has privileged Islam and Urdu whilst criminalising national assertion by Bengali, Baloch, Pakhtun, Sin-dhi and other ethnic groups. Alongside questions of identity, the oppression of non-Punjabi peripheries has pivoted on the allocation of economic resources and control over the state apparatus.

At a time when movements like the PTM and BYC are subject to intense state repression, effectively repeating the cycle of history that started with the contentious accession of Kalat state, jailing of Bacha Khan and more, the question is whether Punjab’s youthful masses are willing and able to extend their fledgling anti-establishment sentiment to the ethnic peripheries and align themselves with the broader demand to end a colonial social contract and start afresh. This may be the hardest sell of all, but if there is a future to Pakistani politics beyond palace intrigues, the core-periphery divide must be addressed, not least of all because ecological crises bind all geographical regions together whether we like it or not.

Punjab has never been a monolith. Anti-establishment politics has always survived in Pakistan’s heartland despite military hegemony. As this hegemony frays, Punjab’s working people hold the key to how our putatively collective future unfolds. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Aleem Khan advises Saudi delegation to invest in Pak communications sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Investment, Privatization and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan on Friday advised Saudi business community to invest in Pakistan’s lucrative projects, particularly in the communications sector.

During the visit of Saudi business delegates headed by KSA Minister for Investment Sheikh Khalid Bin Abdul Aziz Al Faleh, Round Table Ministerial Conference was held in which both the countries reviewed in details to further strengthen bilateral ties in Government to Government (G2G) relations, said a news release. Addressing the conference Abdul Aleem Khan gave a briefing regarding the best investment opportunities

and new trends in the country. He offered Saudi Investment Minister along with the business delegation to come forward and invest in different public sector organizations. He said that there are many attractive and profitable projects for Saudi investment in Pakistan. The government welcomed all kinds of partnership and investment in Pakistan from Saudi Arabia even in the mode of Public Private Partnership. He invited Saudi investors to invest in the profitable projects like M6 and M9 motorways to develop the communication sector on modern lines. The two sides discussed mutual cooperation in projects on the basis of “G2G” while the Saudi Business community and government officials

expressed their great interest in various investment projects.

On this occasion, Saudi Investment Minister expressed special interest in the presentation of Minister Abdul Aleem Khan and said that doing something for the people of Pakistan.

has always been the first priority of the KSA Government and will continue in the future as well to make more Joint ventures.

Abdul Aleem Khan informed the delegation that in order to reduce the distances and make the routes easier, we want to connect the Karachi Port with the existing Motorway, while the completion of the Karachi-Hyderabad and Sukkur Motorways as soon as priority of the present Government.

Al Baik, GO ink strategic partnership to bring Saudi expertise to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): A memorandum of understanding was signed between Saudi Arabia’s Al Baik Food System Company and Gas and Oil Pakistan Ltd (Go) under the Saudi Ministry of Investment.

Reflecting Saudi Vision 2030 to enhance exports of rich national expertise and open new horizons for Saudi commercial expansion globally, this agreement would explore the possibility of establishing a strategic partnership to set up and operate Al Baik restaurants in Pakistan, marking a key step in Al Baik’s expansion strategy across the country.

The signing ceremony was held under the patronage of Saudi Minister of Investment, Engineer Khalid Al-Falih, and high-ranking delegations from both Saudi and Pakistani sides

in attendance. This event is the result of the Saudi Ministry of Investment’s persistent efforts to empower Saudi brands to expand internationally and enhance the Kingdom’s standing in the global economic arena.

Go, in which Saudi Aramco has acquired a 40 percent stake, is a leading player in Pakistan’s oil and gas sector. This partnership underscores the Kingdom’s commitment to diversifying its economy and creating new growth opportunities in foreign markets.

This initiative highlights the crucial role played by the Saudi Ministry of Investment in realizing the objectives of Vision 2030 and reinforcing the Kingdom’s position as a leading economic force both regionally and globally.

SBP injects Rs8.62 trillion into market

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) injected Rs8,623.85 billion into the market through a reverse repo purchase Open Market Operation (OMO) on Friday. According to OMO results issued here, the SBP conducted an Open Market Operation, Reverse Repo Purchase (Injection) on October 11, 2024, for 7-day and 28-day tenors and accepted 38 bids cumulatively amounting to Rs8,623.85 million.

The central bank received 23 bids for a 7-day tenor cumulatively offering an amount of Rs3,722.7 billion at the rate of return ranging between 17.56 to 17.62 percent while 15 bids amounting to Rs4,901.15 billion were received for the 28-day tenor at the rate of return ranging between 17.56 to 17.63 percent. The central bank accepted all 23 bids for 7-day tenor and 15 quotes for 28-day tenor at a 17.56% rate of return.



Group photo on reception in honor of KSA Investment Minister, Sh. Khalid Bin Abdul Aziz Al Faleh by Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization & Communications Abdul Aleem Khan in Islamabad.

ECC allows additional export of 0.5 million MT of surplus sugar

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet here on Friday approved export of 500,000 metric tonnes of surplus sugar keeping in view of availability of sufficient surplus stocks.

The surplus stock were available even after catering for the proposed and ongoing exports, the requirement for remaining two months of the ongoing crushing year, as well as maintenance of strategic reserves. The summary for the sugar exports was moved by the Ministry of Industries and Production to ECC, the meeting of which was chaired here by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue,

Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, according to a press release issued by finance ministry.

Among others, the meeting was attended, Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain; Minister for Power, Sardar Awaiz Ahmed Khan Leghari; Minister for Economic Affairs, Ahad Khan Cheema; Minister of State for Finance and Revenue, Ali Pervaiz Malik, Governor State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Chairman Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) along with federal Secretaries and senior officers from the concerned ministries and divisions.



FAISALABAD: Senator Rubina Khalid, Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) is addressing members of Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI).

BISP beneficiaries to reach 10m figure this year: Chairperson

FAISALABAD (APP): Chairperson Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) Senator Ms. Rubina Khalid said that the number of BISP beneficiaries would jump to 10 million from existing 9.3 million by the end of this year as the Prime Minister had provided more funding for it.

Talking to the media and addressing the business community in Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI), she said that the programme provides

partial relief to the poorest of the poor families to bridge difference between their income and expenditures.

She said that she was contemplating to promote a skilled development program under BISP to gradually drag out registered families from abysmal poverty.

She said that earlier “Waseela-e-Rozgar Scheme” was launched but it was abundant in its nesting stage. “We are again considering to restart it by equipping

the children of registered families particularly girls to get market-driven skills with the support of BISP”, she said and added that the ultimate objective of her visit to FCCI was to identify the areas where these children could be absorbed instantly.

She said that this skilled human resource could also start their own businesses or could be exported abroad to earn precious foreign exchange for the country.

PSX gains 30 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) gained 30.18 points on Friday, showing a nominal positive change of 0.04 percent, closing at 85,483.40 points against 85,453.22 points on the last trading day.

A total of 560,740,534 shares were traded during the day as compared to 503,750,595 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 26.12 billion against Rs. 27.912 billion on the last trading day. As many as 435 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 130 of them recorded gains and 251 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 54 companies remained unchanged.

Australia to provide AUD. 3 million for water project

ISLAMABAD (APP): Australia will provide AUD. 3 million to Pakistan for ‘Climate Resilient and Adaptive Water Allocation in Pakistan’ project which is to be completed in a period of five years (by 2029).

After the approval by the Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Ahad Cheema, Secretary EAD, Dr. Kazim Niaz signed a Memorandum of Subsidiary Agreement on the project with Chief Executive of the Australian Center for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), Prof. Wendy Umberger here Friday.

According to press release issued by Economic Affairs Division (EAD), it is a research project aiming to help improve canal water reliability through improved water allocation decisions and practices in Pakistan by updating the Water Apportionment Accord Tool to include mid-season planning and operations, exploring on-farm water storage options.

All this is aimed at achieving climate resilience, adaptive management, and equitable water use for better social and economic outcomes for farming communities, the press release added.

Governor Kundi says: India, Afghanistan lands used against Pakistan

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, on Friday, emphasized the importance of restoring peace and stability in the province, adding India and Afghanistan lands are being used against Pakistan. Addressing a press conference at the Governor House, he called for collective efforts to lift the region out of darkness and addressed the urgent need to manage internal affairs independently. Kundi highlighted the ongoing challenges, saying, "Our province is facing serious circumstances with rising incidents of terrorism. I have always

advocated for peace, and the law and order situation is deteriorating." He urged both the federal and provincial governments to take the situation seriously and implement measures to improve security. He mentioned recent political gatherings aimed at addressing the province's issues, saying that a committee led by the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will engage with local representatives to present their demands to the federal government. The Governor acknowledged the constructive role played by Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, who showed flexibility in

accepting recommendations during these discussions. Kundi reiterated the significance of dialogue and reconciliation, referencing the ideals of former President Asif Ali Zardari, who has consistently advocated for peaceful negotiations. He also encouraged local leaders to voice their concerns through parliamentary representation, asserting, "We will support their case until they have representation in Parliament." Furthermore, he reflected on the historical hospitality extended to Afghan refugees, urging them to contribute to peace and stability in the region.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi addressing press conference at Governor House.

Governor Punjab says: Bilawal's stance on constitutional courts represents voice of masses

LAHORE (APP): Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan has said that PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's stance on the creation of constitutional courts represents collective voice of the masses in the country. Talking to the media men at the residence of deceased journalist Ikhtlaq Bajwa here on Friday evening, he said that constitutional courts are need of the hour, adding that litigants had to move from pillar to post in search of justice while justice remains a far cry even for the third generation of a family. Sardar Saleem Haider Khan, to a query, said the PPP has neither committed an unconstitutional act throughout its history nor did it broker legislation for an individual, adding that PPP is the only political party which has no blocs in bureaucracy, judiciary, media.

"Once the constitutional court takes care of the constitutional matters, the Supreme Court will be able to dispense with the large number of pending cases," he said, adding that people have to wait decades for decision on a case of one marla of land and justice delayed is justice denied. He said that the PPP has neither committed an unconstitutional act throughout its history nor did it broker legislation for an individual, adding that PPP is the only political party which has no blocs in bureaucracy, judiciary, media.



FAISALABAD: Chairperson Punjab Chief Minister's Directorate of Inspection and Monitoring, Evaluation and Feedback Brigadier Retired Babar Alauddin is addressing the press conference in the Committee Room of the Deputy Commissioner's Office.

BISP registration starts, transparency to be ensured at all levels: Robina Khalid

FAISALABAD (APP): Registration for Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) has been started and transparency would be ensured at all levels, said Senator Robina Khalid. She said that eligible people could get them registered by visiting BISP offices at Tehsil and District

level. She said that there were 9.3 million people registered with BISP and now its scope would be expanded to 10 million people who were unable to earn sufficient income to meet their expenditures. She paid tribute to the visionary leadership of President Asif Ali Zardari and Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and said that BISP was initiated to improve life standard of the poor by providing them financial assistance.

Jinnah House attack: ATC remands accused in police custody

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Friday handed over an accused involved in the Jinnah House attack case to police on a 10-day physical remand. Earlier, the police produced the accused, singer Umar Aftab Malik, before ATC Judge Irfan Haider and sought a 30-day physical remand. The investigating officer stated that the accused was involved in the Jinnah House attack case and his custody was required for investigation.

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Arora celebrates birthday with staff

LAHORE (APP): A celebration was held at the Human Rights Department on the occasion of Provincial Minister for Minorities Affairs, Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora's birthday. The event saw a strong participation from the department's officials and staff.

Azma calls for laws to regulate social media

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari has stated that there is a need to establish laws and regulations governing the use of social media in the country. She emphasized that the humiliation and defamation of women on social media should not be tolerated. "I am fighting not just for myself but for all women who do not have access to the courts," she said during a media briefing at the Lahore High Court here on Friday. Azma revealed that

the main accused in her case is connected to a franchise of a mobile service that her husband operates. "To date, over 500 mobile SIMs have been issued in the accused's name, which are being used to blackmail people. This is more dangerous and cruel than one can imagine. They present themselves as innocent while victimizing others in court," she added. "We do not have fake accounts, nor do we intend to create them. I simply want to ensure that what happened to me does not happen to anyone else."

15 ACs transferred

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab government on Friday transferred 15 assistant commissioners (ACs). According to the notification, Assistant Commissioner Gojra Noman Ali Dogar has been made an OSD [officer on special duty], while Kamran Ashraf has been given transferred as Gojra AC. Ayesha Badar has been posted as AC Hazro while services of Khurram Mukhtar has been handed over to the C&W. Jawad Hussain has been appointed Assistant Commissioner Quaidabad and Ahsan Mumtaz as AC Okara.

IGP signs MoU for healthcare discounts for police

LAHORE (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with a private hospital (Hameed Latif) for treatment discounts for the Punjab Police employees. A ceremony in this regard was held at the Central Police Office on Friday. A Punjab Police spokesperson said that police employees and their families will receive a discount of 15 to 27 per cent on medical expenses

across all departments. Families of police martyrs will receive a 27 per cent discount on OPD services, while police employees and their families will receive a 22 per cent discount on OPD services. Police employees and their families undergoing treatment at the hospital will receive discounts of 15 to 22 per cent on overall expenses. A 25 per cent discount will be offered to police employees at the Lahore Institute of Fertility and Endocrinology Centre.

ANF recovers 75 kg drugs in 8 operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting eight operations across the country managed to recover 75 kg drugs worth over Rs 2.5 million and arrested nine suspects including two women, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday. He informed that 1200 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of an accused arrested from Sector, I-11/3, Islamabad. 9 kg opium and 3 kg 600 grams hashish were recovered from a vehicle rounded up near the motorway toll plaza, Islamabad.



FAISALABAD: Senator Rubina Khalid, Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), inspects the Benazir Income Support Program Registration Center at Al Fateh Sports Complex, Salimi Chowk.

MNA calls for SCO common currency to boost regional cooperation

LAHORE (APP): There is a need to build a consensus to introduce a common currency among the SCO countries to facilitate trade and strengthen economic ties. These views were expressed by Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Member of National Assembly (MNA) Sehar Kamran, while talking to APP. Sehar expressed these views in reference to as Pakistan is set to host a two-day SCO Council of

Heads of Government meeting in Islamabad on October 15 and 16. She said the SCO has the potential to bridge economies and bring together cultures. Let's utilize this opportunity to unite the people of this region and ensure economic prosperity for all. "United we stand, divided we fall," MNA Sehar Kamran said. She said this unique idea should be echoed in the background of sentiments of cooperation and solidarity.

International News

Israeli strikes on Gaza, Beirut kill 50 people

Monitoring Desk CAIRO: An Israeli airstrike on a school sheltering displaced people in central Gaza killed at least 28 people, including women and children, while 22 people were killed in an attack that targeted a senior Hezbollah figure in central Beirut. Israel has repeatedly pounded Beirut's southern suburbs, the bastion of Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah movement, over the last two weeks but Thursday's raid was only the third time the city centre has been targeted. Medics in Gaza said three hospitals in the north were told to evacuate, putting patients' lives at risk. The strike, in which many more were wounded, occurred in the city of Deir Al-Balah where a million people have taken shelter after fleeing fighting elsewhere after more than a year of war. The Israeli military

said it had carried out a "precise strike" on the fighters who allegedly had a command and control centre embedded in a school. Palestinian group Hamas denies such accusations. Medics said 54 other people were injured at the school. The health officials said the Israeli military on Wednesday gave patients and medics 24 hours to leave the Indonesian, Al-Awda and Kamal Adwan hospitals or risk being stormed as happened earlier in the war at Al Shifa Hospital in Gaza City. At least 22 people were killed in Israeli strikes on a densely populated area of central Beirut on Thursday, the Lebanese health ministry said, with a security source saying a Hezbollah figure was the target. "The Israeli enemy's attacks on the capital Beirut this evening

resulted in a new toll of 22 people killed and 117 injured," the ministry said in an updated toll statement. A Lebanese security source, requesting anonymity to discuss sensitive matters, told AFP that Israel had attempted to kill a Hezbollah official who often frequented the locations targeted. Israeli forces fired on positions used by UN peacekeepers in Lebanon on Wednesday and Thursday, the UN force said, as Israel warned Lebanese civilians not to return to homes in the south and pursued a widening offensive against Hezbollah. The UNIFIL force said two of its peacekeepers were injured in one of the incidents when an Israeli tank fired at a watchtower at the force's main headquarters in Ras al-Naqoura, hitting the tower and causing them to fall.



Russian President Vladimir Putin meets Iranian counterpart Masoud Pezeshkian on the sidelines of a cultural forum dedicated to the 300th anniversary of the birth of the Turkmen poet and philosopher Magtymguly Fragi, in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

Russia's Putin cements ties with Iranian president in Central Asia meeting

Monitoring Desk MOSCOW: Russia's Vladimir Putin held talks with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Friday in Turkmenistan, where the two leaders hailed their countries growing economic ties and similar views on world affairs, an entente viewed with concern by the U.S. At odds with Washington and the European Union over Russia's war in Ukraine, something he casts as part of a wider

existential struggle against an arrogant and self-interested West - Putin is keen to deepen ties with what he calls the Global East and Global South. Putin, whose country is hosting a summit of the BRICS nations in Kazan on Oct. 22-24, invited Pezeshkian to come to Russia on an official visit, a proposal the Iranian leader accepted according to Russia's state RIA news agency.

Russia says 'Nuclear Five' states to meet soon in New York

Monitoring Desk MOSCOW: A group of five nuclear weapons states will hold a meeting in New York in the next two weeks, Russian state media quoted Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov as saying on Thursday. The group brings together Russia, the United States, China, France and Britain, all of which are nuclear-armed states and permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. Ryabkov did not announce a specific date or say what level of officials would attend.

Erdogan says Gaza 'shame of humanity', calls for permanent ceasefire

Monitoring Desk TIRANA: Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan renewed his attacks on Israel as he arrived in Tirana Thursday, the first stop of a Balkans tour that will also take him to Serbia. Repeating his claim that Israel's actions in Gaza constituted "genocide", he branded it the "shame of humanity", at a joint press conference with Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama. "The international community, we must do our best to urgently guarantee a permanent ceasefire and exert the necessary pressure on Israel," he added. "The genocide that has been going on in Gaza for the past year is the common shame of all humanity," he added. The Hamas attack on Israel on October

7, 2023 resulted in the deaths of 1,206 people, most of them civilians, according to an AFP tally based on official Israeli figures. According to the Hamas-run territory's health ministry, 42,065 people have been killed in Gaza since the start of the war, mostly civilians. The UN has said the figures are reliable. Erdogan has branded Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu the "butcher of Gaza" and compared him to Nazi Germany's Adolf Hitler. "The aggression led by the Netanyahu government now threatens the world order beyond the region," Erdogan said. Later Thursday, Erdogan, accompanied by Prime Minister Edi Rama, inaugurated the Great Mosque of Tirana.

Zelenskiy seeks pope's help to free Ukraine POWs held in Russia

Monitoring Desk VATICAN CITY: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy asked Pope Francis during a meeting at the Vatican on Friday for help in securing the release of Ukrainians held captive by Russia. Zelenskiy, who is touring major European capitals to discuss his proposed "victory plan" for the war with Russia, said he had also invited the Vatican to take part in a conference on the prisoners-of-war, due to be held in Canada later this month. "We are counting on the Holy See's assistance in helping to bring back Ukrainians who have been taken captive by Russia," Zelenskiy said in a post on social media, adding this was the main topic of his 35-minute conversation with the pope. A Vatican readout provided no details about the pope's talks with

Zelenskiy, but said a subsequent meeting between the Ukrainian leader and the Vatican's chief diplomat had included discussions "dedicated to the state of the war ... as well as the ways in which it could be brought to an end." It was Zelenskiy's second face-to-face meeting with Pope Francis in four months. The two men also met on the sidelines of a Group of Seven (G7) summit in southern Italy in June. At the end of Friday's meeting, Francis gifted Zelenskiy a piece of bronze artwork with a flower growing next to a bird, inscribed with the phrase "Peace is a fragile flower." Zelenskiy gave the pope an oil painting showing a child amid ruins in the Ukrainian town of Bucha, which was occupied by Russian forces for 33 days in spring 2022.

Japan's Nihon Hidankyo wins 2024 Nobel Peace Prize

Monitoring Desk OSLO: Japanese organisation Nihon Hidankyo, a grassroots movement of atomic bomb survivors from Hiroshima and Nagasaki also known as Hibakusha, won the Nobel Peace Prize on Friday. "Hibakusha is receiving the Peace Prize for its efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and for demonstrating through witness testimony that nuclear weapons must never be used again," the Norwegian Nobel Committee said in its citation. Witnesses to the only two nuclear bombs ever to be used in conflict have dedicated their lives to the struggle for a nuclear-free world. "The Hibakusha help us to describe the indescribable, to think the unthinkable, and to somehow grasp the incomprehensible pain and suffering caused by nuclear weapons."

Hezbollah forges new command for crucial ground war after heavy Israeli blows

Monitoring Desk BEIRUT: Hezbollah is preparing for a long war of attrition in south Lebanon, after Israel wiped out its top leadership, with a new military command directing rocket fire and the ground conflict, two sources familiar with its operations said. Hezbollah has been diminished by three weeks of devastating Israeli blows - most notably the killing of its leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah. Friends and foes alike are now watching how effectively it resists Israeli troops that have crossed

into Lebanon with the stated aim of driving it away from the border. The Iran-backed group still has a considerable stockpile of weapons, including its most powerful precision missiles which it has yet to use, four sources familiar with its operations said, despite waves of airstrikes that Israel says has severely depleted its arsenal. Hezbollah's command was disrupted for the first few days after Nasrallah's Sept. 27 assassination until Shi'ite militants established a new "operations room" 72 hours later.

Germany's Scholz to discuss Middle East, Ukraine with Erdogan in Istanbul

Monitoring Desk BERLIN: German Chancellor Olaf Scholz will meet with Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan in Istanbul on Oct 19, where they will discuss the war in Ukraine and the situation in the Middle East, a German government spokesperson said on Friday. Migration as well as bilateral and economic policy issues will also be on the agenda.

Blinken says Asia concerned about spread of Middle East conflict

Monitoring Desk VIENTIANE: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Friday there was deep concern in Asia about the prospect of conflict spreading in the Middle East, as the U.N. chief called for everything possible to be done to avoid "all-out war" in Lebanon. The conflict in the Middle East was a central issue during Friday's East Asia Summit in Laos, where Blinken said Washington was dedicated to using diplomacy to try to control the situation in the face of what he called an Iranian-led axis of resistance. "The intense focus of the United States, which has been the case going back a year... (is) preventing these conflicts from spreading. And we're working on that every day," Blinken told a press conference. "We're working very hard through deterrence and through diplomacy to prevent that from happening. There's also obviously

deep concern that we share about the plight of children, women, and men in Gaza." The US has stressed to Israel the importance of meeting the humanitarian needs of people in Gaza, Blinken said, adding it was in Israel's interest that people forced from their homes by hostilities in Lebanon are able to return. The annual summit of the Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN) also included meetings with leaders and top diplomats from India, China, Japan, the United States, Russia, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand, as well as United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. Friday's discussions included the war in Ukraine, Myanmar's civil war, climate change, tensions in the Taiwan Strait and concern about confrontations in the South China Sea, a key conduit for at least \$3 trillion in annual ship-borne trade.

CM Murad denies reports of IMF reservations over NFC award, 18th amendment

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that neither the federal government nor the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has approached him with concerns regarding the National Finance Commission (NFC) Award or the 18th Amendment.

He said that the federal government has started implementing the 18th Constitutional Amendment by devolving or winding up some of its ministries.

He spoke to the media after attending the launch of the World Bank's latest editions of the South Asia Development Update (SADU) and Pakistan Development Update (PDU) for October 2024 at a local hotel. Mr. Shah stated that his government has reservations about some other matters, and he is in discussions with the federal government. He added that the Pakistan Peoples Party would only support measures that are in the interest of the country.

In response to a question, Murad Shah said that he learnt from media reports that the federal government has terminated power purchase contracts with five IPPs, which is expected to reduce electricity tariffs.

Mr. Shah suggested that the government should take steps to utilize surplus electricity. He proposed that industrial units could be offered electricity at subsidised rates if they increased their production capacity by starting additional night shifts. "This would help offset the capacity charges paid to the IPPs by the federal government, improve production, and create job opportunities for unemployed workers," he said.

Speaking at the launch of The World Bank's editions of the South Asia Development Update (SADU) and Pakistan Development Update (PDU) for 2024 at a local hotel, the CM said that the reports, which provide critical insights into the economic challenges faced by Pakistan and the South Asian region, praised for offering a roadmap for sustained growth.

The chief minister said the devastating floods of 2022, which submerged nearly 70 per cent of the province caused extensive infrastructural damage, compounding the developmental issues already exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic," he said and added that despite these challenges his government restored infrastructure and alleviated the economic hardships faced by people of the province.

"We are committed to overcoming these obstacles, and the people of Sindh have shown their confidence in the government to serve and uplift them," said Murad Shah.

Talking about poverty alleviation, Mr Shah said that his government responded to findings in the report, which underlined rising poverty during 2023.

He further highlighted that, in line with the government's commitment to ensuring no child in Pakistan is left out of school, the incumbent administration had implemented an educational emergency.

The Prime Minister called for the formulation of a strategy to provide monthly stipends to female students in rural areas of Islamabad, aiming to increase enrollment in these schools.

"Technical training should be integrated into the curriculum of Islamabad schools," the Prime Minister said. He added that students who had dropped out of education for any reason should be offered free technical training, and an awareness campaign should be launched to encourage them to return to school.

"Teachers are the builders of the nation," he said, highlighting the critical need to establish a high-quality teacher training institution in Islamabad. He also directed a third-party audit of teacher training programs and the assessment of teachers' skills. Special attention, he noted, should be given to ensuring transparency and merit in teacher recruitment.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on matters related to Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training.

No country can progress without a high-quality education system: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday emphasized that the provision of quality education and technical training was the government's top priority, as no nation can progress without a high-quality education system.

He was chairing an important review meeting on Federal Education and Technical Training Affairs.

The Prime Minister stated that, in today's education landscape, skills development, information technology, and digitization have become indispensable, stressing the urgent need to align Pakistan's education system with these modern principles.

He further highlighted that, in line with the government's commitment to ensuring no child in Pakistan is left out of school, the incumbent administration had implemented an educational emergency.

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President Zardari for railroad connectivity with Turkiye to boost trade, economic coop.

ASHGABAT (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday highlighted the need to improve railroad connectivity between Pakistan and Turkiye to boost trade and economic cooperation as well as people-to-people contacts.

In his meeting with the Speaker of Turkish Parliament, he called for further improving bilateral ties and exchanges of delegations to bring the two brotherly countries further closer.

President Asif Ali Zardari and the Speaker of Turkiye's Parliament, Numan Kurtulmus held a meeting in Ashgabat on the sidelines of the International Forum on "Interrelation of Times and Civilizations - Basis of Peace and Development".

Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, and Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti, were also present during the meeting.

During the meeting, the president said that Turkiye was a great and sincere friend of Pakistan and the Muslim World and had been taking principled positions on the issues faced by the Muslim Ummah as well as raising its voice against injustice.

The meeting expressed concern over the grave humanitarian situation in Palestine and Lebanon where Israel was killing innocent people. It was emphasized that the Muslim World needed to make sincere and serious efforts to address the challenges being faced by the Ummah.

President Zardari said that Turkiye was on its way to becoming an economic power and expressed his best wishes for the success and prosperity of Turkiye.



ASHGABAT: President Asif Ali Zardari in a meeting with the President of Turkmenistan, Serdar Berdimuhamedov.

Polio eradication drive campaign will start from 3th November in Larkana range. DC Larkana

LARKANA (APP): The assistant commissioners of the district, the staff of the health department, PPHI, and the entire staff of the district emergency operation center will monitor this campaign so that no child is left behind from drinking Polio.

On this occasion, he gave instructions to the officials of the health department and said that you have done complete planning and mobilized your teams so that no child is left behind from taking polio shots. He said that whatever the transit points are, you should see them and the teams should work perfectly during the campaign.

He further said that all the assistant commissioners of the district, the staff of the health department, PPHI, and the entire staff of the district emergency operation center will monitor this campaign so that no child is left behind from drinking Polio.

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He further said that all

Malaria, dengue cases drop 40% in Sindh, Medicines available for 195,000 patients: DG Health

HYDERABAD (APP): The Director General Health Sindh, has informed that due to timely spraying and fogging by District Health Officers after rain, the ratio of malaria and dengue cases dropped this year 40% as compared to 2022-23.

He said that the percentage of cases has decreased because health professionals and entomologists have been trained in this regard by the health department in collaboration with the Agha Khan hospital. Furthermore the wards for dengue, malaria and chikungunya were also active in all the hospitals of the province by the health department to provide better health facilities to the people, he added.

In an explanatory statement about the news circulating in the media regarding the shortage of medicines, the DG health stated that the data for all cases and medicines related to malaria, dengue and chikungunya has been collected by the relevant department. Currently, hospitals have sufficient medicines to treat 195,000 patients. Additionally, more stock of medicines for malaria, dengue and chikungunya was expected to arrive soon, which will be promptly distributed to hospitals and health centers to ensure the public does not face any difficulties.

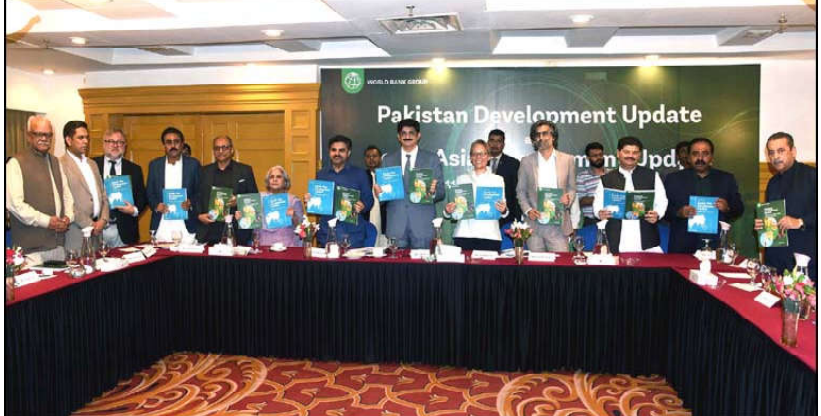


KARACHI: Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Karachi Division President, Raja Azhar addresses to media persons during press conference, at Karachi press club.

SAU hosts speech competition on AI, social media, Top Students honored with awards

HYDERABAD (APP): The Sindh Agriculture University (SAU) Tandojam Students-Teachers Engagement Program (STEP), in collaboration with the Prime Minister's Youth Program ØSIEEE-SAUI, hosted an intra-university speech competition at the Dr. A.M. Sheikh Auditorium. Students from various faculties delivered speeches in Sindh, Urdu, and English on the topic, "Artificial Intelligence and the Impact of Social Media on Society in the 21st Century."

According to the SAU spokesperson Gul Sher Lochi, over 35 students participated in the competition. In the Sindh category, Kashif Hussain secured first place, Gulshan Khan came in second and Qamber Ali took third. In the Urdu category, Muhammad Hasnain achieved first place, Muhammad Faisal secured second and Anna Baloch placed third. Similarly, in the English category, Kausar Panhwar secured first, Amma Habiba second and Kirti Kumari obtained third position. Addressing the closing ceremony, the Vice Chancellor Dr. Fateh Mari stated that the world was advancing through the positive influence of artificial intelligence and social media, and it was moving toward modern technologies like AI, ChatGPT, and robotics. He stressed the need for the youth to enhance their skills and capabilities to remain competitive on a global scale.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah along with his cabinet members and Franziska Lieselotte Ohnsorge, World Bank Chief Economist of South Asia Region launch the World Bank latest editions of the South Asia Development Update (SADU) and Pakistan Development Update (PDU) held at local hotel in Karachi.

Ahsan Iqbal, Saudi Minister explore strategies to strengthen bilateral cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal, on Friday emphasized Pakistan's commitment to increasing its trade volume with Saudi Arabia by collaborating with the current Saudi leadership.

During a meeting with Saudi Investment Minister Khalid Bin Abdulaziz Al Faleh, the minister highlighted that trade between the two countries stood at \$4.6 billion in 2022.

He stated that the relationship between the two countries was unique and had always withstood the test of time. However, he stressed that the challenge now is to align the relationship with modern realities by enhancing trade. "Our political relationship will strengthen with robust economic cooperation," the minister asserted.

Reflecting on the beginning of Chinese cooperation in the form of CPEC projects, he recalled, "In 2013, I was entrusted with the responsibility of launching a game-changing project with China. It started with a piece of paper, and within 3-4 years, Pakistan secured \$25 billion in investments under CPEC."

Quoting the success of CPEC, the minister added that by 2017, Pakistan had reached a point where every American and European businessman was keen on joining CPEC projects. "Unfortunately, due to the poor policies of the then government, our policies were discontinued, weakening the economy," he remarked.

When the current government took office again, the challenge was to stabilize the economy for long-term growth. To achieve this, the government created the 5Es framework, which, according to the minister, was developed after consulting 1,000 opinion leaders and sector experts.

Discussing Pakistan's future trajectory, the minister said that the country's most pressing challenge over the next 5-7 years would be increasing exports.



KARACHI: Workers of political parties are seen gathered outside the ECP office at Saddar area in the Provincial Capital.

Sabiha's message of hope attracts art lover at the Pak Saga IV art exhibition

KARACHI (APP): The message of hope by seasoned artist Sabiha Nasr-ud-din attracted attention of art lovers and critics as they throng to the art gallery on the second day of solo exhibition being held under the theme of The Pakistan Saga IV "A Dialogue with Nature". The collection of 30 paintings - denoted by the artist as message of hope and light at the end of tunnel - was on display in the solo exhibition that portrays the vibrant hues of flowers, trees and eye catching scenic natural beauty of Pakistan while use of oil with knife as medium and technique made the landscapes more vivid and brighter.

Senator Sarmad Ali has inaugurated the exhibition by cutting a ribbon along with the artist Sabiha Nasr-ud-din at Artcity gallery on the other day. The collection will be on display till Monday October 14, 2024.

Senator Sarmad Ali, speaking at the occasion, said that it was the fourth exhibition under the theme of Pakistan Saga with a sub-theme "A Dialogue with Nature" was unique in a sense that artist wanted to connect the people with the nature through vivid and attractive depiction of flowers, trees and other beautiful views of nature. He termed the art as an effective and powerful medium to educate the masses and eliminate the people's disconnection with the nature in the contemporary era and said that promotion of art particularly the street art may leave positive footprints in the society.

KMC to launch training program for Certified Nursing Assistants, Certified Nursing Aides: Mayor

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab has said that under the City Institute of Health Sciences that has been established in the Karachi Institute of Heart Diseases, the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation is launching a training program for Certified Nursing Assistants and Certified Nursing Aides.

This program will offer one-and two-year diplomas, with 100 percent scholarships for participants.

In a statement on Friday, he said that the aim of this program is to provide modern training for nursing staff in Karachi's medical institutions, including expertise in accidents, emergency and cardiac nursing.

The availability of such skilled nursing staff will enhance the quality of medical services in KMC hospitals and other public and private hospitals in Karachi, ensuring that citizens have access to modern and quality healthcare facilities, he said.

He said that in the start of admissions for the one-year and two-year diploma programs for Certified Nursing Assistants and Nursing Aides at the City Institute of Health Sciences, which operates under the KMC.



ISLAMABAD: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari talking to media persons, at Parliament House in Islamabad.

German Scientists visit ICCBS University of Karachi

KARACHI (APP): A delegation of German scientists, led by Prof. Dr. Thomas Iftner, Director of the Institute of Medical Virology and Epidemiology of Viral Diseases at the University Hospital of Tübingen, Germany, visited the International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS) at the University of Karachi (UoK) here on Friday.

Prof. Dr. Farzana Shaheen, Director of the ICCBS, along with other officials, welcomed the German delegation. The visiting group included Prof. Dr. Daniel Sauter, Heisenberg Professor, and Dr. Sumbal Sheikh.

Prof. Dr. Asmat Salim, Coordinator International Program and Dr. Iqbal Qureshi, Assistant Professor at the NIV coordinated the visit.

The purpose of the visit was to gain insights into the research activities at the National Institute of Virology, ICCBS, and explore potential collaboration opportunities.

The German delegation met with Prof. Dr. Farzana Shaheen and other scientists at the ICCBS.

Attendees included several key officials and faculty members of the National Institute of Virology and Dr. Panjwani Center for Molecular Medicine and Drug Research.

During the meeting, Prof. Dr. Farzana Shaheen gave a detailed presentation on the center's extensive scientific and research activities. She highlighted potential areas for collaboration, particularly in virology research.

"Staying updated on the latest knowledge of viruses and prevalent viral infections is crucial for preventing viral outbreaks during epidemics and pandemics," she stated.

She also informed the delegation about ongoing collaborative projects related to viral diseases and mentioned that new initiatives would be launched soon.



HYDERABAD: Residents of Latifabad No.11 are holding protest demonstration against high handedness of land grabbers, at Hyderabad press club.

Secretary directs officers to ensure 100% tax recovery

HYDERABAD (APP): The Secretary Excise, Taxation and Narcotics Control, Muhammad Saleem Rajput, has directed the department's subordinate officers in Hyderabad to ensure 100 percent recovery of the professional tax, entertainment tax and motor vehicle taxes.

According to the minutes of a meeting which was held under his chair on October 9, the Excise and Taxation Officer (ETO) of Professional Tax collected only 23 percent of Rs 38 million quarterly tax target reflecting a poor performance.

The Secretary told the meeting that a displeasure letter was being issued to the concerned ETO.

Rajput warned the ETO Cotton Fee to improve performance and to meet the given target by the end of December, 2024.

Several int'l, domestic flights called off at Karachi Airport

KARACHI (INP): Several international and domestic flights were called off at Karachi's Jinnah International Airport due to technical and operational reasons on Friday.

According to schedule, Karachi to Dubai AirBlue flight PA-110 has been cancelled while one more AirBlue flight PA-807 from Karachi to Multan has also been suspended.

Moreover, Fly Baghdad flight IF-334 from Karachi to Najaf has been called off while Karachi to Lahore AirSial flight PF-143 was cancelled too.

Further, Karachi to Islamabad AirSial flight PF-125 was cancelled and Karachi to Gwadar PIA flight PK-503 was also suspended.

Likewise, PIA flight PK-310 from Karachi to Quetta has been deferred while PIA flight PK-306 from Karachi to Lahore was also cancelled.

A walk held to mark World Mental Day

SUKKUR (APP): A walk to mark the World Mental Health Day was organized by the Ghulam Muhammad Mahar Medical College Sukkur in collaboration with Inter Global Human Development Society (IGHDS) Sukkur here on Friday. The day was observed to raise awareness about mental health issues.

Participants of the walk said that disorders such as depression, schizophrenia, epilepsy and substance abuse etc, caused immense suffering to the affected persons. This also intensifies the vulnerability leading patients to a life of self-destruction, they said.

The walk was attended by a large number of doctors, nurses, para-medical staff and people from different sections of the society.