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dailyindkhi@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

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Global peace without end to Gaza bloodshed out of question: PM

Calls for global partnerships to tackle modern challenges

RIYADH (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday, while underscoring the importance of knowledge-based economy driven by innovation in domains of artificial intelligence, education and health, called for collective global efforts and partnerships to overcome the contemporary challenges. He said that no nation could overcome today's challenges alone and no single country could harness the potential of tomorrow without the support of others.

"Pakistan stands ready to join those who dare to dream big. We invite you to invest, to bring your expertise and creativity to Pakistan, as we build a future, rooted in resilience

and shared prosperity," the prime minister said during his address at the plenary session of the 8th edition of two-day Future Investment Initiative (FII) held here.

The prime minister said that he was elated to share that Pakistan, too, was on a transformative journey; a journey of resilience, sacrifice, and a relentless pursuit of stability and growth.

Attended by global leaders, this year's FII is themed "Infinite Horizons: Investing Today, Shaping Tomorrow" and focuses on global investments aimed at addressing major issues such as artificial intelligence, robotics, education, energy, space, finance, healthcare, and sustainability.

The participating countries engage in the dialogue for the promotion of investment and a sustainable future while highlighting the strength of their respective economies.

The FII conference featured discussions on artificial intelligence, robotics, education, energy, space, public health, and challenges, confronting sustainable development.

The prime minister, citing future course, said Pakistan was laying the foundation for a knowledge-based economy driven by innovation in three pivotal domains, artificial intelligence, education, and health in which they looked forward to forging useful partnerships.



RIYADH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met the Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia His Royal Highness Mohammed bin Salman on the sidelines of Future Investment Initiative Forum.

IDEAS 2024 to strengthen Pakistan's strategic relationship with int'l partners: CM Murad

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that the International Defense Exhibition and Seminar—IDEAS 2024 would not only strengthen Pakistan's strategic relationships with international partners but would also enhance commercial exchanges among delegates, trade visitors, defense officials, and OEMs from across Pakistan and around the globe.

He said this while addressing the 3rd Steering Committee meeting of the 12th Edition of the International Defense Exhibition and Seminar—IDEAS 2024.

Provincial ministers, Major General Asad Nawaz Khan Hilal-i-Imtiaz (Military), DG DEPO, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, representatives from federal ministries, the Sindh

government, the Armed Forces of Pakistan, law enforcement agencies, and others attended the meeting.

Shah convened the meeting to finalize the comprehensive plans for the upcoming 12th edition of the International Defense Exhibition and Seminar—IDEAS 2024. IDEAS 2024 is set to take place from November 19 to 22 at the Karachi Expo Centre.

Shah said, "IDEAS has, since its inception in 2000, become a hallmark of the national and international defense industry."

He added that this biennial event has steadily evolved into a renowned gathering, showcasing state-of-the-art technology and fostering knowledge exchange within Pakistan and beyond.

The CM said that

IDEAS is now recognized worldwide, a testament to the deep-rooted and mutually beneficial relationships we maintain with our international partners.

"It provides a shared platform dedicated to advancing global peace, stability, and prosperity, bringing together foreign delegates, defense manufacturers, and thought leaders to discuss today's defense and security challenges," he said.

He added, "Today's meeting is pivotal, allowing us to assess and ensure alignment with the plans presented by various organizations and departments." He said and added that he would like to reaffirm the full support and cooperation of his government in all areas necessary to bring this extraordinary event to life.

COAS reiterates Pakistan's commitment to strengthening traditional defense ties with Russia

RAWALPINDI (Online): Colonel General Alexander V. Fomin, Deputy Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation, met General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at the General Headquarters (GHQ) today. The meeting addressed the regional security environment and matters of mutual interest, including the enhancement of bilateral defense and security cooperation.

COAS reiterated Pakistan's commitment to strengthening traditional defense ties with Russia, while both sides affirmed their dedication to bolstering collaboration in various security and defense domains. Colonel General Fomin commended the Pakistan Army's achievements in combating terrorism and highlighted the importance of a unified, cooperative approach among the global community to counter extremism.

Meanwhile, a high level delegation led by Deputy Defence Minister of the Russian Federation, Colonel General Aleksandr V. Fomin called on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force at Air Headquarters here on Tuesday.

The meeting remained focused on bolstering military cooperation and industrial collaboration between the two sides while exploring new avenues to fortify existing ties through joint military exercises and technical support for PAF equipment, an Inter Services Public Relations news release said.



RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir exchanging views with Colonel General Aleksandr V. Fomin, Deputy Defence Minister of the Russian Federation during meeting held at General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi.

Home Minister Lanjar says: Sindh Government to strengthen security for Chinese workers on CPEC and non-CPEC Initiatives

Independent Report
KARACHI: Sindh Home Minister Zia-ul-Hasan Lanjar on Tuesday said that the security of Chinese citizens associated with China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and non-CPEC projects should be integrated and effective at all levels. Presiding over a meeting, regarding the security of Chinese nationals, in his office, the provincial minister ordered a review all the security SOPs on ongoing CPEC and non-CPEC projects in Sindh.

He said that the overall security issues of foreign

Provincial Minister inaugurates Urs festivities for Syedna Qutb Alam Shah Bukhari (RA) in Karachi

Independent Report
KARACHI: The Annual Urs of Syedna Qutb Alam Shah Bukhari (RA), organized by the Sindh Department of Auqaf, was inaugurated today with



the arrival of the Provincial Minister for Auqaf, Religious Affairs, Zakat, and Ushr, Syed Riaz Hussain Shah Shirazi, at the shrine.

The Minister was warmly welcomed by the

He also inspected the arrangements made for the Urs, accompanied by Ayaz Soomro, the Administrator of Auqaf Karachi, as well as the shrine manager and caretakers.

Sindh LG by-polls: 31 candidates elected unopposed

Independent Report
KARACHI (APP): At least 31 candidates have been elected unopposed including nine chairmen, six vice chairmen, eight members of district council and eight General Members Ward, in the by-election on local government seats in Sindh.

According to a statement issued by Election Commission Sindh on Tuesday, the election forms were filed for 77 seats in the by-polls for local government seats in Jacobabad, Shikarpur, Larkana, Qamber, Shahdadkot, Ghotki, Sukkur, Nowshero Feroze, Shaheed Benazirabad, Mirpurkhas, Matiari, Tando Allayar, Hyderabad, Tando Mohammad Khan, Thatta, Malir, Korangi, Karachi's West, South, Central and Kemari districts.

31 candidates have been elected unopposed and now the candidates will compete on 42 seats while no candidate filed the form for four seats. The by-elections on 42 seats will be held on November 14, 2024 as per the schedule.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah presides over the 3rd Steering Committee meeting for the 12th Edition of the International Defense Exhibition and Seminar (IDEAS-2024), held at CM House in Karachi.

26th Constitutional Amendment aims to enhance representation and justice in Pakistan: Sharjeel

Commends Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's Leadership in Advancing the 26th Constitutional Amendment

Independent Report
KARACHI: Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon termed the 26th Constitutional Amendment a far-sighted move by Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, stating that, like the Eighteenth Amendment, it is a revolutionary step in Pakistan's political landscape.

Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's foresight is both enviable and admirable, and his leadership and dedication were crucial in making this amendment a reality.

In a statement, Sindh

Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, Excise, Taxation, and Narcotics Control, Sharjeel Inam Memon, said that the 26th Constitutional Amendment was made possible through the hard work and dedication of Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, who has played a key role in guiding Pakistan towards a brighter, more egalitarian future, where democratic institutions, particularly Parliament, will be strengthened.

He stated that Chairman Bilawal Bhutto

Zardari's initiative will foster a more equal and united Pakistan. The 26th Constitutional Amendment will strengthen and unify the federation, ensuring equal representation for all provinces. This amendment will also contribute to building a more inclusive and just society, benefiting the entire nation.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that the 26th Constitutional Amendment will strengthen democracy and guarantee the rights of all citizens.



KARACHI: Head of Cooperation at European Union Mission to Pakistan Jeroen Willems called on Speaker Sindh Assembly Syed Awais Qadir Shah.

EU visits Sindh Assembly for Strategic plans 2024-2029

By Nazir Siyal
KARACHI: Jeroen Willems, Head of Cooperation at the European Union Mission to Pakistan, called upon Speaker of the Provincial Assembly of Sindh, Syed Awais Qadir Shah, here on Tuesday.

CEU Mission to Pakistan leader Jeroen was accompanied by Ms. Huma Ikramullah, Provincial Coordinator for Mustehkam Parlamaan, and Ms. Barbara.

Speaker SA Awais Qadir Shah welcomed the European Union delegation to the Sindh Assembly.

On the occasion, key matters, including capacity building of the Provincial Assembly of Sindh, parliamentarians, caucuses, committees, and the training of officers were discussed during the meeting.

Strategic plans for 2024-2029 were also deliberated, focusing on how the

European Union and the Provincial Assembly of Sindh can collaborate to ensure effective implementation.

Important issues such as the Internship Program, E-Parliament Program, and Inter-Parliamentary Exchange Programs were also part of the discussions.

The European Union delegation thanked Speaker Syed Awais Qadir Shah for his time and valuable input during the meeting.

Speaker Syed Awais Qadir Shah expressed his gratitude to the European Union for its efforts toward the welfare of the people of Pakistan and for being a steadfast partner to the country.

As a gesture of honor, Speaker Awais Qadir Shah presented the delegation with a legacy shield of the Provincial Assembly of Sindh, along with a traditional Sindh Ajrak and historical Sindh Cap.

Sui gas companies seek up to 53% price hike from July 2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): Another inflationary blow seems imminent as gas companies have requested to increase Sui gas prices by up to 53%, effective from July 1, 2024.

Sui gas prices are expected to rise by 53.47% for Sindh and Balochistan, while for Punjab, Islamabad, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the proposed increase is 3.66%.

The Sui gas companies have submitted their applications to the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) to increase the gas prices from the back date.

Five killed, two injured in Panjgur firing incident

PANJGUR (APP): Five people were killed and two others sustained injuries in a firing incident that took place near Panjgur area of Balochistan, TV channels quoting police reported on Tuesday.

According to details, unknown assailants opened fire and killed five persons working near the Dam area of Panjgur.

During the firing, two other persons were also injured and they have been shifted to nearby hospital for emergency treatment.

Police team rushed to the site and started search for the perpetrators.

Meanwhile, provincial government spokesman Shahid Rind said that five persons who lost their lives were working near the dam area.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning & Development, Ahsan Iqbal chairing a review meeting of the focal groups constituted by the PM to analyze recommendations made by the Chinese working team.

Mayor Karachi for completion of ongoing road works within week

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Tuesday directed the Engineering department to complete ongoing road construction, repair and carpeting projects within a week.

This was stated during a high-level meeting chaired by the Mayor Karachi with officials from the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation's Engineering Department. He emphasized that there should be no negligence in improving the city's basic infrastructure and urged that machinery and manpower be increased to expedite developmental work.

He specifically mentioned accelerating construction work on I.I. Chundrigar Road, Liaquat Road, Mai Kolachi Road,

M.T. Khan Road, Old Queens Road, Mumtaz Hasan Road and Jinnah Bridge.

Additionally, he instructed that street lights be converted to LED and permanent lighting arrangements be made for all historical buildings. The project director, engineers, and other officials should focus on resolving citizens' issues and prioritize their efforts accordingly. He noted that restoring public trust in the organization requires providing prompt relief to citizens.

Municipal Commissioner Afzal Zaidi, Director General Engineering Azhar Ali Shah, chief engineers, XENs, project directors and other officials were also present.

President greets Turkish govt, people on 101st Republic Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari extended his greetings to the government and people of Turkey as they celebrated the 101st Republic Day on Tuesday.

The president said that over the past century, Turkey had achieved immense development in various fields and expressed the hope that the country would reach more milestones under the leadership of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, according to a President House press release.

He said that Turkey always raised voice on the issues faced by the Muslim world.



KARACHI: On instructions of Prime Minister, Pak NDMA Dispatched 17th Consignment of 17 tons of relief items for affected people of Lebanon through chartered flight from Jinnah International Airport.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Regional trade

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb was correct in saying that not trading with your neighbours makes little sense.

In Pakistan's context, trade with regional states is negligible, and South Asia remains one of the least integrated regions in the world. Mr Aurangzeb was replying to a question at an event in Washington, and observed that while "political" and "geopolitical" issues were beyond his purview, Pakistan sought to expand its trade relations. He pointed out that this was one of the key reasons for joining the SCO, and seeking membership to BRICS.

Indeed, trade can be a key conduit to bring states closer and reduce tensions and conflict. But in Pakistan's case, the biggest obstacle standing in the way of greater regional commerce is its long-time strained relationship with India. Yet it is also true that if Pakistan and India were to improve trade ties, better bilateral ties could develop across the spectrum.

The ruling PML-N, with its 'pro-business' outlook, has historically always argued for better trade ties with India. Both the prime minister and the foreign minister have earlier expressed the desire to improve trade ties with our eastern neighbour, hence there is nothing novel in what the finance minister suggested in Washington. The issue is that important stakeholders within the state must be on board if there is to be a normalisation of trade ties.

For example, despite the elected leadership's enthusiasm for trade with India, the Foreign Office had clarified in August that normalisation of commercial ties with Delhi was not on the agenda. This indicated that influential quarters were not overly enthused with the idea of trading with India. Cross-border commerce was suspended in 2019, after the abrogation of held Kashmir's limited autonomy by India, though it has resumed slightly, while smuggling and indirect trade through the UAE continue.

For its own economic interests, Pakistan should trade with India, Afghanistan, Iran and all other regional states. With reference to India, though it is the larger economy, cross-border trade can offer Pakistani businesses new markets in India, while Delhi can tap Central Asian markets by transiting through Pakistan. If done right, restored trade relations can also open the door to better bilateral ties. But for proper commercial ties to flourish, other ancillary facilities — a friendlier visa regime, direct flights, and banking channels — will be essential. It remains to be seen whether hardliners in the Indian capital would be willing to resume trade with Pakistan, while powerful quarters in this country must also be on board for cross-border trade to succeed. A blueprint for normalising trade finalised in 2012 can be used as a reference point to start the process afresh. As witnessed in other regions, economic interdependence can significantly help reduce chances of conflict.

Imbalance of power

Dr Niaz Murtaza

Power is a double-edged sword. It corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. But it produces order as well. Without power, there is chaos. Eschewing absolute power in the hands of a few, the sages suggest a balance of power with checks and balances, one that is diffused vertically and horizontally among state organs. Power must be legitimate to reduce violations and revolt.

But we have long blithely ignored such wisdom. The 2008-18 era had witnessed progress. But the last two years under the PML-N/ PPP have seen a huge reversal of this progress, with power illegitimately sucked upwards vertically and inwards horizontally. This concentration and illegitimacy of power in a diverse, complex and large state bodes ill for stability and peace.

We had earlier devolved power. Sadly, local bodies today are even more in a state of limbo than previously. Even the provinces have lost powers they had won via the 18th Amendment, due to fiscal cuts, court verdicts and the informal sway of an omnipotent centre. The centre dominates the peripheries such as Balochistan and the former Fata areas, leading to local ire, revolt and violence.

We now see autonomous entities being defanged: the ECP and NAB earlier and the higher courts now in the name of parliamentary, but in reality executive, sway. In parliamentary systems, executives come from parliaments. So, it's easy to confuse the executive and parliamentary dominance. True parliamentary sway in hiring judges means legislators in cabinets, not sitting in appointing

committees, which also have cross-aisle parity and follow Article 63-A's party discipline provisions.

A two-stage system with open applications and clear merit criteria is best where legal acies (judges, ex-judges, bar council heads and legal academics) first vet the applicants. Parliament rechecks their decisions, rejecting the nominees only if both aisles agree. This ensures that decisions don't reflect narrow executive concerns but those based on merit. We had a system like this, with its easily fixable gaps being lack of merit criteria and open applications. Instead of fixing them, we adopted an opaque, non-merit, executive-run system.

Some people present long lists of post-2009 judiciary ills — oddly without a proper 'before versus after' review — to argue that 'free' courts caused us harm and deserve their fate. The logic mimics the clichéd one that democracy causes harm. Judicial freedom is a big part of democracy and basic rights such as fair trials; undoing it undoes democracy as well as basic rights of which we have had little experience.

A free judiciary forms slowly when it's not hired by executives but emerges through a process of merit that employs able judges who do not succumb to pressure and who curb personal biases. It is strengthened by formal laws that enhance court freedoms and when agencies don't hound judges. The only formal freedom courts got briefly was the one via the 19th Amendment. So, the blame for the judiciary's many ills goes to the old system when its current old guard leadership was first hired long ago by executives on mainly political grounds.

It is unsurprising if some judges misused the informal space. We are sadly back to that system. But the fruits of limited formal freedom will surely emerge once able judges hired in the high courts via the 19th Amendment adorn the judicial leadership. Six such judges have already shown unprecedented guts in their recent letter against the agencies, which many say spurred the apex court's judges to rule rightly against regime interests on reserved seats. So, the courts are being chained not for old wrongs but present resolve.

This sucking of power upwards and inwards should mean a muscular, omnipotent ex-cutive in Islamabad. Oddly, we see an emaciated one. Where did all the inflow of power go? Wise ones talk in hushed tones of the establishment.

This then is our power (im)balance: top-stuffed, illegitimate and opaque. Diverse and autarkic groups in large and complex states chafe at such power traits and pursue legal, peaceful avenues against them.

But they are all being shut with courts defanged, parliament disabled, media silenced and protests crushed. Unfortunately, in this case, legitimate gripes erupt in ugly forms: crime, mob rage attacks or terrorism. Nearby Sri Lanka and Bangladesh have shown the power of huge upheaval. Earlier years showed our struggles in conflict despite armed power, even against ragtag militants. The future will show if our muscles can curb upheaval. The right way lies in renewing power legitimacy and diffusion. But when power lies elsewhere, more sensible and complex ways evade rulers quite easily. — Courtesy Dawn

Essential judgments

Parvez Rahim

While almost all employers in Pakistan engage third-party contractors to carry out some or most of their work, many are not aware as to what type of work they can safely contract out and how the job will be managed administratively.

Human resource professionals had believed that core jobs in the office or factory operations should not be assigned to contractors' employees. Such jobs required constant supervision by the company's staff, which provided an opportunity for the contractors' employees to claim the status of the principal employer's workers. The experts believed that ancillary services, or non-core jobs, such as housekeeping, gardening or canteen operations, could be safely contracted out as supervision by the company personnel was not required.

However, due to a spate of Supreme Court judgments, employers now feel it has become risky to outsource even support services. The provisions of the draft labour codes have triggered caution because they state that permanent jobs cannot be contracted out. Nevertheless, a perusal of three SC judgments, since the 2013 landmark judgment in the Fauji Fertiliser Company (FFC) case, reveals that none of them bars ancillary services' outsourcing. These judgments establish the principle that employees hired through contractors and working with the company's own staff under the same supervision are the latter's employees and not the contractor's.

In a landmark SC judgment on May 16, 2013, then chief justice Iftikhar Chaudhry confirmed the status of 112 workers of the bagging and loading section as

FFC's employees and not of the contractor. The reasons were valid: 1) The authority to hire and fire, including settlement of wages and benefits of the contractor's workers rested with the company; 2) their work was supervised, controlled and looked after by the in-charge of the bagging department and his subordinate staff/ supervisors; 3) these workers had been continuously in the employment of the company for a long time; 4) they were also responsible for cleaning the machines and floors.

Prior to the judgment, this case had been pending in the lower courts for over two decades. FFC had purchased a plant at Mirpur Mathelo in Sindh from the Pak-Saudi Fertiliser Company, a state enterprise. The intention was to manage the plant professionally. But erasing irregular practices required time.

The bagging and loading section was considered the most manpower-intensive area in a fertiliser plant. Another fertiliser plant of an American company at Daharki where I worked till 1982 was grappling with a similar situation. It was acquired by the Engro Fertiliser Company. When I visited it more than two decades later, I was amazed to see that the huge bagging and shipping area was now fully automated. Even the loading of urea bags on trucks was mechanised.

In the second SC judgment on Dec 8, 2017, a three-judge bench headed by chief justice Mian Saqib Nisar regularised the services of 210 employees at Pakistan State Oil. During the hearing, the top judge observed that unfortunately, companies, including large enterprises, do not regularise their employees. In fact, the hiring was carried out

through the contractor. The court also noted that it was sad that companies do not bother to own their workers. Instead of granting workers their rights, the companies file cases to avoid doing so. Some of the contractors' employees had been in service since 1984.

In the third SC judgment on April 4, 2024, the services of 20 employees, allegedly employed by contractors, were confirmed at IFFCO Pakistan (Private) Ltd, the user company. The judges stated "there is no bar to contract out the whole job, or in bits and pieces, to the outsource contractor, including human resource, within its own premises or through toll manufacturing agreements, but what is crucial is that the outsourcing should not be used as a weapon of circumvention of labour laws by means of sham agreements".

There is a common factor in the aforementioned judgments: the supervision and control of the employees hired through the contractors and regularised by the SC rested with user companies. Employers must bear in mind that they need to avoid hiring employees through contractors to save on costs or to retain the right to terminate their employment at will.

The judgment in IFFCO's case is significant as it clearly spells out the outsourcing of jobs in totality or partly, provided a lawfully executed agreement is complied with in letter and spirit.

The employers should honour such verdicts by ensuring that the contractors abide by the labour laws applicable to the establishment, and secure social security and pension schemes for their employees. — Courtesy Dawn

National News

Governor Punjab credits President Zardari for stable coalition govt in country

RAWALPINDI (APP): Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan has said that positive criticism was meant for improvement of the government's performance. He credited President Asif Ali Zardari for a stable current coalition government.

"Pakistan People's Party always plays its positive role when the country faces challenges of national integrity and dignity", he said and added that the credit goes to President Asif Ali Zardari for present stable coalition government. The governor remarked this during his address at the 8th annual session of Ghulam Rabbani

Qureshi Welfare Foundation (GRQWF) in Kahuta here Tuesday.

He said that education and health were the responsibility of the government, but unfortunately, the past governments did not pay attention to it. He further said that government owned schools should not be privatized.

"Where there is a shortage of staff, the government should fill this shortage", he maintained. Appreciating the dialysis center and the health facility being provided to the poor by the GRQWF in Kahuta, the governor said that people should come ahead

to serve the needy segments of the society. He said that the poor are treated free of cost in Sindh province. He informed the audience that a dialysis center would soon be established at Tehsil Hospital Pindi Gheb, Attock. A large number of people including former federal minister Mehreen Anwar Raja and former MNA Ghulam Murtaza Sati participated in the ceremony.

The Governor Punjab visited Al-Fateh Women Vocational Free Technical Center, Computer Lab, Laboratory, Free Kidney and Dialysis Center and other departments established in GRQWF.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi presides over the meeting of Pakistan Red Crescent Society Merged Districts Branch at Governor House.

Minister attends 25th COTHM convocation

LAHORE (APP): COTHM (Global UK) organised its annual 25th convocation on Tuesday at Golden Pearl Hall, Faletti's Hotel, in which Provincial Minister for Minority Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora participated as the chief guest.

A large number of students of various programmes, including hospitality, culinary arts, baking & patisserie and travel & tourism management were awarded appreciation certificates and medals. In his address, Ramesh Singh Arora congratulated all graduating

students, emphasizing that their achievements are a result of their hard work, prayers of their parents, and the blessings of Allah.

He lauded the role of COTHM in leading the youth towards economic empowerment through meaningful education and training. He said that COTHM does not just prepare graduates equipped with market-driven skills but also produces graduates who are able to discover their own identity and serve the hospitality, travel and tourism industry in true sense of the word.

KP Assembly passes DDACs KP Amendment Bill 2024

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly with panel Chairman Muhammad Idris Khan here on Tuesday passed the KP Districts Advisory Committee Amendment Bill 2024.

The Bill pertaining to giving DDAC Chairmanship to Members National Assembly, was approved by majority members of the House. The Bill was presented by Provincial Minister Arshad Ayub.

High-level delegation from US, Canada and AKU visits KIU

GILGIT (APP): A high-level delegation from the United States, Canada, and Aga Khan University (AKU) visited the Karakoram International University (KIU) here Tuesday. The delegation met with the Vice Chancellor of KIU, Professor Dr. Attaullah Shah and discussed potential collaboration in promoting higher education and research. During the meeting, the importance of joint efforts in enhancing educational frameworks and research initiatives was discussed. The delegation expressed its commitment to exploring possible partnerships that would benefit both students and faculty.

Kundi for promotion of merged districts

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday urged the development of a comprehensive operational proposal to attract donor funding, highlighting that the Red Crescent should actively engage in fostering interest among potential donors regarding the merged districts.

He said this in a meeting of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) merged districts chapter was convened at the Governor's House.

The meeting included participation from the chairman, Imran Wazir, Vice President Farzand Wazir, members of the managing committee, and various officials. During the session, comprehensive briefings were provided on the objectives, duties, financial management, and administrative matters of the merged districts branch.

Key discussions focused on the availability of relief supplies for natural disaster response, annual income and expenditures, securing funds from donors, and the importance of volunteer services. Governor Kundi emphasized the effective use of PRCS-managed properties and the necessity of utilizing funds responsibly.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Minority Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora distributing certificates amongst the students during annual convocation.

Opposition decries worsening law, order situation in merged areas, demand to convene APC

PESHAWAR (APP): Opposition parties in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly on Tuesday demanded to convene All Parties Conference (APC) to ponder over the deteriorating law and order situation in merged areas and to address feelings of insecurity among people.

The proceedings of the day were presided over by Muhammad Idris of Panel of Chairman. Opposition benches demanded convening of APC to deliberate over law and order situation while treasury benches stressed to form a full house committee to assess the situation. Parliamentary leader of Awami National

Party, Arbab Usman said that incidents of insurgency had been increased in merged districts during last two months and writ of government was being challenged time and time again. He suggested a meeting of APC and a visit of parliamentarians to meet members of affected families and express solidarity with them.

He also questioned delay in investigation of attack on Bara Check Post and said that compensation amount should be paid to heirs of martyred. Ahmad Kundi of PPP said that insurgency was not confined to district Khyber but whole province is affected by these incidents.



LAHORE: Participants are holding Breast Cancer Awareness Walk organized by Lahore Press Club Administration, held in Lahore.

Swedish envoy, CM agrees to strengthen cooperation

LAHORE (APP): Swedish Ambassador to Pakistan Alexandra Berg von Linde called on Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif here on Tuesday. The meeting explored avenues for strengthening bilateral relations.

The discussions focused on potential collaboration in various sectors, including education, health, IT, agriculture, trade, and environmental sustainability, with an emphasis on creating a

conducive investment climate in Punjab.

CM Maryam Nawaz emphasized a strong focus on agriculture and support for farmers, stating, "There is a favorable environment for investment in Punjab." She assured investors that they can invest in the province without fear of risk.

The Swedish ambassador commended the Punjab government's initiatives to protect minority and women's rights.

KP Govt forms body to appoint VCs in universities

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has formed Academic Search Committee to appoint Vice Chancellors in public sector universities of the province. A notification issued said that Professor Abdullah Malik had been appointed as the convener of committee while the other members included Anwar-ul-Hasan Gilani, Muhammad Aslam Baig and Dr Sara Safdar while the secretary of higher education department had been appointed as secretary of the committee.

Smog engulfs Multan, disrupts routine life

MULTAN (APP): Early morning smog blanketed Multan and surrounding areas, intensifying pollution and disrupting daily life. According to Deputy Director Meteorological Department, Muhammad Arshad, the smog index hit 226 on Tuesday, with a further rise expected over the next two weeks.

PITB, Al-Khidmat signs MoU

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) and Al-Khidmat Foundation Pakistan have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to empower women with digital and entrepreneurial skills. In this regard, an Al-Khidmat Foundation delegation visited PITB Chairman Faisal Yousaf, marking a significant step towards fostering inclusive growth within Pakistan's digital ecosystem.

PITB Director General (DG) e-Governance Sajid Latif and Al-Khidmat Foundation Lahore President Engr Ahmad Hammad Rashid signed the MoU on behalf of

their respective organizations. Key participants included PITB Director Skills Development Chaudhary Ahmad Islam, Al-Khidmat's Director BanoQabil Program Lahore Dr. Usman Afzal, and Regional Head VMD Al-Khidmat Foundation Lahore Moawiz Bin Tahir.

As part of the MoU, PITB will provide Al-Khidmat Foundation with a database of high-achieving and deserving female students from its SheWins program. Al-Khidmat Foundation will support these students by offering interest-free financing for essential digital tools, including laptops and mobile phones.

Maritime Minister lauds China's economic model, strengthens bilateral ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmad Sheikh, on Tuesday emphasized China's economic model as a global example during a recent conference, underscoring the strengthening partnership between Pakistan and China.

Addressing the conference "China at 75: A Journey of Progress, Transformation & Global Leadership," organized by the Pak-China Institute, Qaiser Ahmad Sheikh praised China's economic approach, which he said surpasses Western liberal and neo-liberal models. He highlighted the Chinese

economic model as an ideal for other countries, adding that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is also inspired by this approach.

The minister discussed the strengthening strategic partnership between Pakistan and China, noting that the two nations consistently support each other in international fora, a reflection of their close ties. He expressed optimism about the completion of Phase II of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) with China's continued support and thanked the Chinese government for prioritizing Pakistan within South Asia.

Sheikh pledged to elevate Pakistan's maritime sector to meet the standards of China's port and shipping industry. He emphasized that terrorism and actions by hostile groups would not weaken the longstanding friendship between the two nations. He also assured that Pakistan's federal government is addressing the concerns of the Chinese government and investors.

The minister reiterated the importance of CPEC for the development of Balochistan and other provinces, stressing Pakistan's commitment to seeing all CPEC projects through to completion.



QINGDAO: The first 'Pakistan-China B2B Investment Meeting' on Fisheries was organized in Qingdao, Shandong province, on 29 October 2024. Ambassador of Pakistan to China Mr. Khalil Hashmi and Secretary of the Board of Investment Mr. Rahim Hayat Qureshi in a group photo with the representatives of participating companies of Pakistan and China.

Chinese-Pakistani companies participate in B2B Investment Meeting on Fisheries in Qingdao

BEIJING (APP): As many as 45 Chinese and 28 Pakistani companies participated in the first Pakistan-China B2B Investment Meeting on Fisheries held on Tuesday in Qingdao, Shandong province in China.

The event was the first in a series of sector-specific meetings to foster joint ventures and partnerships between Pakistani and Chinese companies.

The event is a follow-up to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit to China in June 2024 to further promote trade and investment between the two countries.

Sun Huanjiang, Committee Member of CPC, Qingdao Municipal Marine Development Bureau, in his remarks, reiterated the historic All Weather Cooperative Partnership between Pakistan and China.

Shahid Usman lauds EDB efforts in promoting innovation technologies

ISLAMABAD (APP): Parliamentary Secretary Ministry of Industries and Production Shahid Usman on Tuesday commended the Engineering Development Board (EDB) for its remarkable progress in promoting innovative technologies, aligning with the government's vision.

During his visit to the EDB for a detailed briefing on its activities, the secretary expressed his appreciation, said a news release.

The secretary praised the efforts of EDB's current management in formulation of Auto Industry Development and Export Policy (AIDEP 2021-26), Mobile Device Manufacturing Policy, interventions for promotion of Solar and Allied Equipment.

He also applauded EDB new initiatives for development of engineering sector including New Energy Vehicles (NEV) Policy, Indigenization of Agriculture Implements, and mainstream Petrochemical Policy and Promoting.

Additionally, he commended the EDB for preparing a comprehensive policy to promote local manufacturing and the early adoption of Electric Vehicles (EVs), including New Energy Vehicles (NEVs), in support of a sustainable transport system in Pakistan, energy efficiency, and the transition to clean technologies and environment in the country.



ISLAMABAD: Japanese Ambassador HE Wada called on the Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain in Islamabad.

Chairman WAPDA reviews construction work on Tarbela 5th Extension Hydropower Project

TARBELA (APP): Chairman WAPDA Engr Lt Gen Sajjad Ghani (Retd) on Tuesday visited under-construction 1530 MW-Tarbela 5th Extension and reviewed the progress on the project.

The Chairman had a detailed visit of the key sites, which include the Raised Intake, the Tunnel and the Power house, and witnessed construction work going on there, said a press release.

During the on-site

briefing, the Project Director and the Construction Manager briefed the Chairman about the milestone achieved on these sites. Temporary support work in the tunnel is complete paving the way for commencement of construction on the connecting tunnel.

Installation of equipment such as draft tubes of all three units - Unit No. 18, 19 and 20 - is in progress at the Power house Site.

PCCC, CEMB to collaborate on cotton research

MULTAN (APP): The Pakistan Central Cotton Committee (PCCC) and Centre of Excellence in Molecular Biology (CEMB) have agreed on a joint proposal to advance cotton research and development in Pakistan.

The initiative was agreed between Dr. Yusuf Zafar who represented PCCC, and Dr. Abdul Qayyum, on behalf of CEMB.

New Service Center launched to enhance China-Pakistan cooperation in agriculture

BEIJING (INP): The Overseas Luban Workshop Agricultural Machinery Service Center, Pakistan was inaugurated at the International Conference Center in Changsha, Hunan.

It aims at enhancing agricultural capabilities in Pakistan and fostering greater cooperation between China and Pakistan in agricultural mechanization, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Tuesday.

The unveiling ceremony marked a collaboration

between the China Agricultural Machinery Distribution Association (CAMDA), Tianjin Modern Vocational Technology College, Tianjin Tailai Import and Export Co., Ltd., Tianjin Agricultural Mechanization Technology Testing Service Center, and Wugu Media.

On the occasion, according to CEN Asif Shah, Honorary Consultant of the Pakistan Luban Workshop and Executive Board Member of the Punjab Agricultural Research Board.

Rupee sheds 06 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee on Tuesday depreciated by 06 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.74 against the previous day's closing of Rs 277.68. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 277.25 and Rs 278.75 respectively. The price of Euro increased by 27 paise to close at Rs 300.23 against the last day.

Ch Shafay chairs SMEs Council meeting

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Industry and Commerce Chaudhry Shafay Hussain chaired the first meeting of the Provincial Council on SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) here Tuesday.

The meeting took several key decisions aimed at promoting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Managing Director of Punjab Small Industries Corporation (PSIC) Saira Umar gave a detailed briefing on actions and strategies being taken to support SMEs.

During the meeting, it was decided to start a new loan scheme with easy terms for SMEs. This scheme, to be advanced in partnership with banks, will provide easy loans to promote solar energy in small industrial estates. Additionally, a new program aimed at enhancing business skills for women investors was approved. Under this program, with the support of the Asian Development Bank, Women Resource Centers will be established in Faisalabad.

International News

Israeli strike in northern Gaza kills at least 60, officials say, as Hezbollah announces new leader

Monitoring Desk
DEIR AL-BALAH: An Israeli strike on a five-story building where displaced Palestinians were sheltering in the northern Gaza Strip killed at least 60 people early Tuesday, more than half of them women and children, Gaza's Health Ministry said.

In a separate development, Lebanon's militant group Hezbollah said it has chosen Sheikh Naim Kassem to succeed long-time leader Hassan Nasrallah, who was killed in an Israeli airstrike last month. Hezbollah vowed to continue with Nasrallah's policies "until victory is achieved."

Israel also faced back-

lash from aid groups after its parliament passed legislation that could severely restrict the ability of the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees to operate in the Palestinian territories. The agency, known as UNRWA, is the largest aid provider in Gaza. Israel has long accused it of militant ties, allegations denied by the agency.

A spokesperson for the U.N. children's agency said the decision "means that a new way has been found to kill children."

Hezbollah said in a statement that its decision-making Shura Council elected Kassem, who had been Nasrallah's deputy leader for over three de-

acades, as the new secretary-general.

Kassem, 71, a founding member of the militant group established following Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon, had been serving as acting leader.

He has given several televised speeches vowing that Hezbollah will fight on despite a string of setbacks.

Hezbollah began firing rockets into Israel, drawing retaliation, after Hamas' surprise attack on Oct. 7, 2023, triggered the war there. Iran, which backs both groups, has also directly traded fire with Israel, in April and then again this month.



Chinese President Xi Jinping attends the welcome ceremony for Finnish President Alexander Stubb at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China.

Russia's air attacks kill four in Kharkiv, injure four in Kyiv, Ukraine says

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: At least four people were killed and another four injured in Russia's multi-wave overnight attacks on Ukraine's two largest cities of Kharkiv and Kyiv, Ukrainian officials said on Tuesday.

Four people were killed in Kharkiv after midnight on Tuesday in Russia's bombardment of the city's Osnoviyskiy district, Mayor Ihor Terekhov said on his Telegram messaging channel.

That attack followed a Russian guided bomb attack on Kharkiv late on Monday that shattered much of the Derzhprom building, one of the most celebrated landmarks in the city, dating from the 1920s.

In Kyiv, falling debris from a destroyed Russian drone injured four people and set a residential building on fire, the mayor of the Ukrainian capital said.

Hezbollah elects Naim Qassem to succeed slain head Nasrallah

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: Lebanese armed group Hezbollah said on Tuesday it had elected deputy head Naim Qassem to succeed slain secretary general Hassan Nasrallah, who was killed in an Israeli air attack on Beirut's southern suburb over a month ago.

The group said in a written statement that its Shura Council had elected Qassem, 71, in accordance with its established mechanism for choosing a secretary general.

Finland warns Xi of 'provocation' by North Korea in Ukraine war

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: Finnish President Alexander Stubb said he told China's President Xi Jinping that North Korean activities with Russia were an escalation and provocation in a message on behalf of NATO and the EU during talks in Beijing on Tuesday.

Stubb and Xi met as North Korea's foreign minister arrived in Russia, with Western military alliance NATO and South Korea warning that Pyongyang's troops could soon be entering the Ukraine war on Moscow's side.

The U.S. estimates 10,000 North Korean troops have been deployed

in eastern Russia.

"My message to the president was that North Korean activity right now is in terms of arms exports. Especially in terms of sending troops to Russia, is escalation. Expansion and provocation. So we had a good discussion about this," Stubb told reporters.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has not denied the presence of North Korean troops, while Pyongyang has not commented. Stubb, who met various European leaders in recent weeks, said he delivered to Xi messages coordinated with Finland's allies in NATO and the EU.



A crowd gathers to watch as first responders work after a tram derailed and crashed into a building in the center of Oslo, Norway.

US warns Iran at UN of 'severe consequences' in case of new attacks

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: The United States warned Iran at the United Nations Security Council on Monday of "severe consequences" if it undertakes any further aggressive acts against Israel or US personnel in the Middle East. "We will not hesitate to act in self-defense. Let there be no confusion. The United States does not want to see further escalation. We believe this should be the end of the direct exchange of fire between

Israel and Iran," US Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield told the 15-member council.

The Security Council met after Israel struck missile factories and other sites in Iran before dawn on Saturday. It was retaliation for Iran's Oct. 1 attack on Israel with about 200 ballistic missiles.

Iran's UN Ambassador Amir Saied Iravani accused Washington of being "complicit" through military support for its ally.

Ship with suspected toxic waste in Albania

Monitoring Desk
DURRES: A ship carrying hundreds of tonnes of possibly toxic industrial waste returned to Albania's largest seaport of Durres on Monday, months after setting sail to dispose of the material in Thailand.

The Turkish-flagged Moliva container ship, believed to be carrying about a hundred containers filled with suspicious waste, was expected to be tested by Albanian authorities.

Bangladesh immunity order sparks fears of justice denied

Monitoring Desk
DHAKA: Hundreds died in the student-led revolution that toppled Bangladesh's autocratic leader Sheikh Hasina, but those impacted in the violent aftermath fear the new authorities' promise of justice will exclude them.

The family of 16-year-old Shahriar worried those who beat their son into a coma may never face trial.

Firework explosion at temple in India's Kerala injures over 150

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: Indian police detained two people on Tuesday after a temple fireworks show erupted into a ferocious explosion, leaving almost a hundred people in hospital, eight in a critical condition. Hundreds were crowded around a Hindu temple at Nileschwaram in the southern state of Kerala on Monday evening to watch the fireworks, videos posted by Indian newspapers showed.

Then, from inside a building, a surge of crack-

les can be heard, before a powerful ball of flame surges high into the sky.

"Around eight people are critical, and around 154 have been reported injured, out of which 97 people are admitted in hospital," local police chief Shilpa Dyavaiah told AFP.

"They burst fire-crackers very close to the place where they have stored the firecrackers," Dyavaiah said, adding that sparks from the burst crackers reached the cache.

Israel votes to ban UN aid agency, Palestinians say 100,000 residents trapped

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: Israel's parliament passed a law on Monday to ban the UN relief agency UNRWA from operating inside the country, alarming some of Israel's Western allies who fear it will worsen the already dire humanitarian situation in Gaza.

Israeli officials cited the involvement of a handful of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees' thousands of staffers in the Oct. 7, 2023,



US Vice President and Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris speaks during a campaign rally at Burns Park in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Harris to rally where Trump riled Capitol riot crowd

Monitoring Desk
MICHIGAN: Kamala Harris will urge Americans to turn the page on Donald Trump as she delivers her closing election argument Tuesday on the spot where her rival rallied supporters before the January 6, 2021 US Capitol attack.

With polls in a dead heat exactly one week before Election Day, the Democratic vice president's campaign said she chose the symbolic site to push her case that the Republican former president is a threat to American democracy.

But Harris will also deliver an "optimistic and

hopeful" message, a senior campaign official said, amid rumblings in the party that she is focusing too much on Trump and not enough on her own policies.

She will address some 20,000 people on the Ellipse, a park outside the White House where Trump delivered a fiery speech in which he ranted up his false claims that he won the 2020 election.

Trump supporters then marched on the Capitol to disrupt the certification of Joe Biden's victory, in an assault that left at least five people dead and 140 police officers injured.

ADB approves \$500 mln loan to support climate, disaster resilience in Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$500 million policy-based loan to support climate change and disaster risk reduction and resilience in Pakistan.

The Climate and Disaster Resilience Enhancement Program (CDREP) will strengthen Pakistan's institutional capacity for planning, preparedness, and response; increase inclusive investment in disaster risk reduction and climate resilience; and support the scale up of disaster risk financing using a risk-layered approach, according to ADB press release received here Tuesday.

Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change and disasters triggered by natural hazards in Asia and the Pacific. Average losses from disaster events exceed \$2 billion per year. Women and other vulnerable groups are

disproportionately affected by climate change and disaster events.

"This program builds on ADB's longstanding work in Pakistan to understand and reduce climate and disaster risks and support effective disaster response," said ADB Director General for Central and West Asia Yevgeniy Zhukov.

"We are proud to support an integrated and comprehensive approach to climate and disaster risk management, including a portfolio of disaster risk financing instruments for timely and adequate funding for disaster response," Zhukov added.

The program supports enhanced capacity for disaster risk mapping and modeling for investment and development decisions. It enhances coordination for disaster monitoring and response. It supports enhanced planning and

prioritization of gender-sensitive and resilient public investments, including integrated flood risk management and nature-based solutions.

The program supports mobilization of climate finance from public and private sources. This includes issuance of a domestic green sukuk (Islamic bond).

A key innovation of the program is the use of ADB's Contingent Disaster Financing option for the first time in the Central and West Asia region. This will provide quick disbursing budget support in the event of a disaster.

The program will support the establishment of a solidarity fund to facilitate the uptake of risk transfer solutions such as agriculture insurance. The program also supports shock-responsive social protection to deliver cash assistance in the event of a disaster.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, H.E. Ms. Valentina Matvienko, calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

PM for utilizing potential for Pakistan-Russia multiple cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said that there existed a huge potential for cooperation between Pakistan and Russia in multiple fields, which could be utilized to achieve the development goals of the people of both countries.

The prime minister, in a meeting with a parliamentary delegation, led by the Speaker of the Russian Federation Council Valentina Matvienko, said that the strength and sustainability of the bilateral relations following the recent visits of Pakistan by the Russian senior leadership was welcoming, according to a PM Office press release.

The prime minister welcomed the Russian delegation to Pakistan and called their visit an important step towards strengthening the parliamentary relations between Pakistan and Russia.

He said that the upcoming meeting of the Pakistan-Russia Joint Commission in December this year would provide an important opportunity to expand bilateral cooperation.

In the meeting, the two sides discussed the strengthening of banking channels, and the formation of a comprehensive roadmap to promote economic, trade, and investment cooperation between Pakistan and Russia.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that the recent visit of a 70-member Pakistani business delegation to Russia led by the Communications Minister and participation in the Pakistan-Russia Trade and Investment Forum was a welcoming step for the promotion of bilateral trade and investment.

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SC bar elects best person as its President: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Tuesday felicitated Asma Jahangir Group's candidate Mian Rauf Atta on getting elected as the President of the Supreme Court Bar Association. The minister, in a news statement, also congratulated Head of the Asma Jahangir's Group Ahsan Bhoon for the achievement.

The best person has been elected as the President of the Supreme Court Bar Association, the minister remarked. Lawyers are the defender of democracy, human rights and the constitution, he said, adding the fraternity had a crucial law in upholding the rule of law, supremacy of the constitution and democratic norms.

HANDS delegation calls on Sindh Assembly Speaker

KARACHI (APP): The delegation of HANDS led by its Chief Executive Dr. Shaikh Tanveer Ahmed, called on the Speaker Sindh Assembly Syed Awaiz Qadir Shah at his office on Tuesday.

The delegation, which also included Waseem Shah, expressed their gratitude to the Speaker for notifying the WASH Caucus, aimed at promoting hygiene and well-being for the masses.

DC emphasis for plantations in graveyard

SUKKUR (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Khairpur, Syed Ahmed Fawad on Tuesday directed the authorities of the Forest Department and Revenue staff to make plantations in the graveyard.

Presiding over a meeting at his office, the deputy commissioner said plants should be grown in the spaces between the graves, walls with installation, and entrance and exit gates should be constructed around the graveyards.

Planning Minister reviews draft plans

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Prof Ahsan Iqbal here Tuesday chaired a review meeting of the focal groups constituted by the Prime Minister to analyze recommendations made by the Chinese working team.

The meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh; Secretary Planning, Awaiz Manzoor Sumra; Chairman of the National Highway Authority and high-ranking officials from various ministries and divisions, including Communication, Investment, Petroleum & Natural Resources, Na-

tional Food Security, Power, Commerce, Economic Affairs, Interior, and Railways.

This was the third meeting chaired by Minister Ahsan Iqbal, following the Prime Minister's directives, to review the draft plans prepared by the focal groups. The Minister emphasized the need for action plans for implementation with timelines. He further stressed the need to highlight where Pakistan has already made progress.

During review of agriculture sector, the Ministry of Food Security highlighted that Pakistan lacks a long-term, comprehensive, and independent development plan for the sector.



ISLAMABAD: Russian Federation's Deputy Minister for Defence, Colonel General Alexander V. Fomin called on Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf at Naval Headquarters.

In Asia, Pakistan has highest rate of breast cancer, Principal DMC

KARACHI (INP): Principal Dow Medical College Professor Dr. Saba Sohail has said that the rate of breast cancer in Pakistan is the highest in Asia, commonly seen in premenopausal women and diagnosis in their 30's is not uncommon.

She said that most cases are diagnosed at Stage III and IV the main reason of which is avoiding screening. She said that timely mammographic screening can significantly reduce breast cancer-related deaths.

She further mentioned that although mammography is a painful test, women over the age of 40 should undergo this test biennially for early diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer. She said this at a mini symposium on breast cancer awareness at Arag Auditorium, Dow Medical College.

The symposium was organized in collaboration with Dow University of Health Sciences, Civil Hospital's Breast Surgery Unit, Surgical Unit 3, and the Department of Medical Oncology.

The symposium was addressed by several distinguished speakers, including Principal of Dow Medical College Prof. Dr. Saba Sohail, Dr. Nargis Muzaffar from SIUT, Assistant Professor from Dow University Dr. Maryam Nauman, Associate Professor Aga Khan University Dr. Abida Khalil Sattar, Assistant Professor Dow University Dr. Ameema Saleem, and Head of Breast Surgery Unit Prof. Dr. Farhat Jaleel, Dr. Raja Rahul and Civil Hospital's Medical Superintendent Dr. Khalid Bukhari were also present on the occasion.

SAU launches innovative food solutions to combat malnutrition, food insecurity

HYDERABAD (APP): Sindh Agriculture University (SAU), Tandojam, held a seminar and product launch event, titled "Banana Recipe Book Launch & Moringa Product," organized under its Student Teacher Engagement Program (STEP).

The event served as a collaborative platform, bringing together academia, students, and representatives from different organizations to address critical issues of food security and malnutrition, with a specific focus on banana and moringa-based products.

SAU Vice Chancellor, Dr. Fateh Marri, inaugurated the event, affirming the university's commitment to advancing food security and developing innovative agricultural practices. He highlighted the importance of sustainable food systems, noting that this new recipe book would benefit food technology students, experts, and local communities alike.

James Robert Okoth, Head of the FAO Sindh Office, reinforced the importance of educational partnerships in fostering resilient agrifood systems, underscoring FAO's commitment to supporting projects that address food insecurity.



HYDERABAD: Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP), Kashif Ali Qadri along with Asghar Ali Tunio, Station House Officer (SHO) addressing a press conference regarding arrest of criminals, in Hyderabad.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar and Ambassador of Türkiye, Dr. İrfan Neziroğlu, and others cutting the cake during the 101 Anniversary of Turkish National Day at a local hotel in Federal Capital.

World Bank team reviews progress of SFERP activities

KARACHI (APP): The new task leader designate of the World Bank in Pakistan, Yohannes Yemane Kester, on Tuesday assured full support to carry out the activities under the Sindh Flood Emergency Rehabilitation Project for uplifting the living standard of masses, especially in remote areas, without any interruption.

He also appreciated the pace of work in implementing the various activities during a review meeting. Yohannes has joined in place of Ahsen Tehsin, who has been posted out to Tashkent.

The Deputy Project Director Mohammad Aslam Leghari, while welcoming, briefed the WB task leader about various activities of different components of the project and disclosed that 81 roads measuring 448 kilometers

had been completed as against a total number of 144 roads measuring 835 kilometers in 19 districts of Sindh.

"Most of the completed roads have been handed over to the Services and Works Department for operations, and the remaining roads would be completed by the end of this year," he added.

The meeting was informed that with the completion of these roads, a population of 1.3 million in rural areas had been facilitated to carry out their normal life activities.

In the public health sector, the total number of schemes in the districts of Badin, Mirpurkhas, Sanghar, Umerkot, and Shaheed Benazirabad is 137, out of which 114 are drinking water supply schemes and 23 are drainage schemes.

DC Sukkur inspects ongoing Anti Polio drive

SUKKUR (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Sukkur, Dr MB Raja Dharejo on Tuesday visited different areas to inspect the ongoing anti-polio campaign in the district.

He checked the signs on the fingers of the children to confirm their anti-polio vaccination.

Deputy Commissioner Sukkur urged the parents to get vaccinated their children up to 5 years of age and cooperate with polio workers fully in that regard.

The officers of the Health department briefed the deputy commissioner that anti-polio drive would continue from October 28 to November 1 during which all the targeted children would be administered anti-polio drops in the district.

The deputy commissioner expressed complete satisfaction with the working of anti-polio teams.

PTI challenges decision on formation of Punjab ETs

ISLAMABAD (Online): PTI has challenged the decision regarding formation of Punjab Election Tribunals (PETs) in Supreme Court (SC).

Election Commission (EC) and others have been made respondents in the petition.

PTI leader Suleman Akram Raja has filed review petition on September 30 decision of SC.

September 30 decision of SC is being reviewed. Meeting between Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Chief Justice Lahore High Court (CJLHC) can not become reason for change of Election tribunals. Who will be judge of Election Tribunal, this power rests with Chief Justice.

PMA welcomes SHC decision regarding MDCAT

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) welcomed the Sindh High Court's decision to order a re-conduct of the Medical and Dental College Admission Test (MDCAT) in Sindh.

However, the PMA strongly advocated for a nationwide re-conduct of the MDCAT to ensure fairness and equity for all aspiring medical students across Pakistan.

In the press release issued by Dr Abdul Ghafoor Shoro, Secretary General PMA (Center) it is said,



KARACHI: A large number of lawyers gathered in the High Court on the occasion of the annual elections of the Supreme Court Bar Association in the Provincial Capital.

Jeddah-based IsDB helps Pakistani female doctors reclaim careers

KARACHI (INP): Jeddah-based Islamic Development Bank, of which Saudi Arabia is the largest funder, turned out to be a blessing for women doctors such as Farah Farooq, who dreamt of becoming the first female doctor in her conservative family and finally did so, before marriage threw a spanner in the works.

While Farooq's struggle paid off and she graduated in medicine from the Dow University of Health Sciences (DUHS) in Karachi in 2000, her family married her off shortly after her final-year exams, dashing her hopes of serving people and causing significant distress to her.

Dr. Farooq was one of

over 30,000 women doctors in Pakistan who graduated between 1989 and 2017 but either did not enter the medical profession due to societal pressures or left it after marriage, despite completing five years of rigorous studies and a one-year house job, the Arab News reported Tuesday.

However, the IsDB came to her rescue. It provided a second chance for doctors such as Farooq to fulfill their dreams by extending financial support to the Pakistani educational technology platform EduCast and Dow University of Medical Sciences, enabling the re-entry of doctors who had

left the profession—after the government had invested Rs10 million (\$35,947) in each of them.

Dr. Farooq, who returned to the field in 2021, almost two decades after her graduation, says she had gone into depression after distancing herself from her profession due to a lack of family support and her responsibilities as a mother of three.

"I couldn't pursue any of my dreams, for which I had worked so hard for 5 years, almost 6 years with the house job. It did bother me a lot," she said, adding that the e-doctor program by EDUCAST reopened that "bright window."

Flood survivors in Sindh suffer disease, food insecurity amid govt inaction: AI

KARACHI (INP): Severe flooding in Pakistan's Sindh province has left thousands of people suffering from disease and food insecurity amid government inaction, Amnesty International said Tuesday.

Following major flooding in August 2024, more than 140,000 people were displaced with many now living in tents, says a press release Tuesday.

Months later, affected communities are still struggling with health risks and lost livelihoods compounded by little international or government support. With disease rampant due to stagnant floodwaters, older people, children and pregnant women are at increased risk of illness and death.

By failing to guaran-

tee access to adequate healthcare, food and housing in the wake of the floods, the government of Sindh has failed to fulfill economic, social and cultural rights set out in key human rights instruments ratified by Pakistan. The biggest emitters of greenhouse gases, who bear most responsibility for climate change-related disasters, must also minimize the harmful effects of climate change on human rights by phasing out fossil fuels as quickly as possible.

"Tens of thousands of people have been abandoned by the Sindh government and the international community after being devastated again by major floods," said Scott Edwards, Amnesty International's Crisis Re-

sponse Programme Director.

"Many impacted communities were harmed by record-breaking floods in 2022, and have struggled to rebuild their lives. Inaction in the face of repeated disasters is evidence of waning resiliency and global lethargy.

"Climate change is not a tentative threat; lives are being lost today to global inaction and inadequate humanitarian response. The international community and Pakistani authorities must act urgently before more people suffer unnecessarily."

In late September 2024, Amnesty International visited eight flood-affected villages in Badin and Dadu districts in Sindh province and interviewed

36 people, including older people, people with disabilities, children, pregnant women, and one doctor.

In affected communities, most homes were damaged or destroyed, which forced people to set up tents on nearby roads elevated from floodwaters. Almost every person interviewed by Amnesty International said that they had at least one family member who was sick, typically with malaria, skin infections, or diarrhoea and vomiting. Older people and children, who generally have lower resistance to disease, are at elevated risk.

Shazia Chandio, 22, lost her 18-month-old son when her village in Dadu district was flooded. With their house surrounded by floodwaters, Shazia, her

daughter and son were all hospitalized after suffering vomiting and diarrhoea.

Her son received an intravenous drip, but the family brought him home after one night because they could not afford further treatment. She told Amnesty International: "For one day and one night he was suffering diarrhoea, and then the next day he died."

Khalid Hussain told Amnesty International his father Haji, a 61-year-old farmer, lost his hearing around five years ago. Haji was still able to work in the fields and was fully independent before their home was flooded. The family was displaced to a nearby roadside where they lived in a tent for about 25 days.