

Independent

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

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

Monitoring Desk

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

Alarms sounded across Israel and explosions could be heard in Jerusalem and the Jordan River valley after Israelis piled into bomb shelters. Reporters on state television lay flat on the ground during live broadcasts.

Reuters journalists saw missiles intercepted in the airspace of neighbouring Jordan. Israeli media reports said as many as 100

missiles had been launched.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said the missile attack under way was in response to the killing of Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah last week as well as that of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh.

"In response to the martyrdom of [Hamas leader] Ismail Haniyeh, Hassan Nasrallah and [Guards commander] Nilforoshan, we targeted the heart of the occupied territories (Israel)," the Guards said in a statement reported by the Fars news agency.

The Guards threatened to carry out "crushing attacks" against regional Is-

rael if it retaliated after the missile attack.

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

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

Iran's mission to the United Nations in New York posted on X that the attack on Israel is a "legal, rational, and legitimate response to the terrorist acts."

"Should the Zionist re-

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QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti in a group photo with officials of Kachhi Canal Project

Repair work on Phase-I to be completed by November 15: Kachhi canal project has backbone status in agricultural economy of Balochistan, says CM

Mir Sarfaraz Bugti asserts no further delay tolerable in important project; emphasizes upon ending disappointment of zamindars concerning Kachhi canal project; assigns task of monitoring of project to Chief Secretary; work on Kachhi canal project Phase-II to be started after approval and release of funds from competent authority

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti has stated that the Kachhi canal project has the backbone status in agricultural economy of the province.

He noted with concern that the supply of water is suspended for agricultural purposes to Balochistan due to destruction caused to the Phase-I during 2022 floods. As a result of non-supply of water, the zamindars and farmers are in mess and disappointed. Even the dwellers are also

forced to migrate from the uncultivated command area of Kachhi canal due to the agricultural water, he regretfully pointed out adding he warned that no further delay would be tolerated in completion of the necessary work.

The Chief Minister was chairing a high level review meeting on the repair of Kachhi canal phase-I and construction work of the Phase-II here on Tuesday.

The Provincial Ministers Mir Zahoor Ahmed Buledi and Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umrani, Chief Secre-

tary, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Additional Chief Secretary Development, Hafiz Abdul Basit, administrative secretaries of different line departments, Project Directors and other concerned high ups were in attendance at the meeting.

The Irrigation Department authorities briefed the meeting about the Kachhi canal project in detail.

It was informed that the work is continued on repair of the Kachhi canal Phase-I, which otherwise was af-

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

Naqvi meets Maulana Fazal, seeks cooperation on constitutional amendment

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

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

According to sources interior minister appealed to Maulana Fazlur Rehman to cooperate with government. Mohsin Naqvi requested Maulana Fazlur

Rehman to sit with government and listen government stance on the matter of constitutional amendment.

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

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

Two security personnel injured in blast at FC check post in Turbat

Independent Report

TURBAT: A blast occurred at the FC check post located at Educational Chowk in Turbat, injuring two personnel, including a junior officer.

According to police, the explosion targeted the FC 168 Wing post, leaving

Naik Ashraf and Shahi Tahir wounded. The injured were rushed to the hospital for medical treatment.

Police and law enforcement agencies immediately reached the scene, launched an investigation, and initiated a search operation to apprehend the perpetrators.



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

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

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

Independent Report

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

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

He said that we restored the constitution

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

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

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

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

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

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

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QUETTA: Provincial Minister Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

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

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

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

The CJP remarked you should return to your seat. We will hear you later. After hearing Shahzad Shaukat, Barrister Ali Zafar and Farooq H Naek, the chief justice remarked that the court would hear the remaining lawyers tomorrow and adjourned the hearing.

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

the closed door in SC.

PPP counsel Farooq H Naik said we have appeared voluntarily. Our roll will be also signed.

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

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

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

Active participation of youth necessary for our collective development: Governor

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that voice of youth has immense importance in the society and their character and actions leave their impacts.

Therefore, youngsters should play their due part for sustainable solution to the public issues and hardships.

They should also take wholehearted part in all welfare, political and social activities for the sake of economic and social comfort just because their active participation is necessary for our collective develop-

ment.

The Governor was speaking to a delegation who called on him under leadership of provincial General Secretary of PML-N, Sajjad Raisani, here on Tuesday. The Governor exhorted youth to inform the great majority of the society about their democratic rights and values so as to pave the way for ensuring the comprehensive participation and transparent decision making.

He said that we can get dignity together and form such a healthy society which is justified, equal and prosperous for all.

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday expressed his satisfaction at the slowing down of price-hike which now clocked in at the lowest 6.9 percent when compared with runaway digits in the last 44 months.

The prime minister lauded the government's economic team for capping the headline inflation which now clocked in at 6.9 percent on a year-on-year basis in September 2024.

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

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) index reading

remained at the lowest in September this year bringing the spiraling inflation to record low in the last 44 months.

"With the grace of Allah Almighty, the promises made with the public have started yielding results. With inflation rate at 6.9pc, the common man will get relief," the press release quoted the prime minister as saying.

The prime minister further observed that with continuous reduction in the petroleum prices, the public was getting relief, whereas after interest rate slide, the business activities would get a spur.

He also expressed his satisfaction at the achievement of target of bringing the inflation rate to 7pc

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

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

ISLAMABAD (APP):

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

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

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

His bilateral meetings with heads of state and government of other countries



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

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

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QUETTA: Provincial Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar enquiring about health of a patient during his visit to Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Institute of Cardiology

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

ISLAMABAD (INP):

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

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

The new bench will be led by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa and it includes Justices Ameenuddin, Jamal Mandokhel, Mazhar Alam Miankhalil, and Justice Naem Afghan. The formation of the new bench comes after Justice Munib Akhtar did not attend the pro-

ceedings.

Justice Munib earlier penned a letter to Court Registrar, saying he could not participate in the five-member bench, arguing that it was inappropriate for only four judges to hear the case.

His second letter prompted the adjournment of the hearing, as he expressed that while he did not formally recuse himself, he felt unable to join a bench constituted by the Practice and Procedure Committee.

The apex court's hearing is crucial as it addresses critical interpretation of Article 63-A, which relates to disqualification of lawmakers for defection.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over a meeting

Committee expresses concerns over selection of MPhil, PhD scholars without any methodology

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman PCSIR, expressed displeasure and directed that recurrence of such practice should be avoided in future and parliamentary business should be given priority over every other assignment.

The committee has deferred the important issues due to the absence of the Chairman of the PCSIR.

The committee members raised pertinent questions regarding the ongoing PSDP projects 2024-2025.

The Member of PCSIR briefed about the ongoing projects, which are Cultivation and Processing of Industrial Cannabis at PCSIR Karachi, Lahore and Peshawar, Data Repository of Scientific Instrumentation, Development of Computer Controlled Fermentors, Digital transformation, strengthening and automation of PCSIR, Research development and Innovation Programming



QUETTA: A delegation of PML-N Youth Wing led by Siraj Raisani meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

PM Shehbaz effectively....

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region.

"The prime minister vociferously raised the Palestine issue in his UNGA session and during his meetings on the sidelines, which was acknowledged by the international community and that is a matter of pride for Pakistan," he reiterated.

The minister said that PM Shehbaz had always raised the Palestine issue at all international fora. He not only highlighted the Palestinians' genocide and Israeli war crimes in Gaza but also stressed that the aggressor should be brought to justice.

The PM's UNGA address was among the most watched events on the internet, and it would figure on top in the UN history as there was a true representation of the sentiments of entire Muslim Ummah, he added.

Tarar said that led by PM Shehbaz, the Pakistani delegation boycotted the address of Israeli prime minister and many other countries followed suit, whose representatives also walked out of the General Assembly hall. Netanyahu delivered his speech in an



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

Our struggle for constitutional....

Continued from page 1

specific, not mine," he added.

Expressing a profound respect for Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, he asked if he would accept the constitutional court, if the constitution said so.

The government last month pushed the proposed constitutional package amid speculation about a potential extension in the tenure of Chief Justice Isa, who is set to retire in October this year, following the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) request in August for the early issuance of a notification regarding the appointment of the next top judge.

Despite claims of securing the "magic number" needed to push the bill through, the government failed to table the amendments in the parliament and postponed its move indefinitely. To pass the constitutional amendments, the government is short of 13 votes in the National Assembly (NA) and nine in the Senate.

The PPP chairman said constitutional amendment

FBR extends date of filing income tax returns for 14 days

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

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



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti talking with leader of PPP Agha Shakeel Durrani. Former Senator Nawabzada Saifullah Khan Magtgi and other leaders are also present

PML-N put country on right track, moving towards economic stability: Qaiser Sheikh

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh has claimed that Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) has put country on right track and it was moving towards economic stability.

Speaking to a private news channel on Tuesday, he said that taking the country out of the economic quagmire and to put

Lasbela University: A beacon for marine sciences in Pakistan: Secretary Fisheries

Independent Report

LASBELA: Javed Anwar Shahwani, Secretary of Fisheries and Coastal Development Balochistan, praised Lasbela University as a prestigious institution for marine sciences in Pakistan.

During his visit to Lasbela University of Agriculture, Water and Marine Sciences, Shahwani empha-



He discussed the operational preparations of the department's established laboratory with the university administration and expressed his desire to utilize Pakistan's vast coastline for the benefit of students pursuing marine education at Lasbela University, ensuring they receive dignified employment opportunities.

Shahwani highlighted the significance of the agreement between the department and Lasbela University, aiming to address the challenges faced by the university and work together to achieve common goals.

Swat police vows to eliminate terrorism, prioritize law, order

By Haroon Siraj

MINGORA: Irfanullah Khan, the newly appointed Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) for Malakand Division, has expressed confidence in Swat police's ability to combat terrorism and restore peace in the region.

"We have the spirit to eliminate terrorism," Khan emphasized, highlighting the police force's bravery and readiness to tackle any untoward incidents [2].

Khan stressed that maintaining law and order is the top priority, with concrete steps being taken

to achieve this goal. He acknowledged the ultimate sacrifice made by hundreds of police personnel and officers who lost their lives fighting against terrorism [2].

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

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

CM Sindh acquitted in Nooriabad power project reference

KARACHI (Online): Accountability Court (AC) has acquitted Chief Minister (CM) Sindh Murad Ali Shah in Nooriabad power project reference.

Judge Nasir Javed of AC Islamabad took up for hearing Nooriabad power project reference against CM Sindh and others Tuesday.

Barrister Qasim Nawaz Abbasi counsel for the accused appeared in the court.

The AC while accepting plea of chairman NAB for withdrawing the reference acquitted CM Sindh from the reference. The court also acquitted other all accused persons who were nominated in the reference.

President's Cup commences tomorrow

ISLAMABAD (INP): Nine departmental cricket teams will take part in the 19-match tournament, which will be held in five cities from 3 to 16 October.

The PCB has set aside a total prize money of PKR7.75 million for the winner, runners-up and top performers of the tournament.

The Nine departmental cricket teams will be in action in the 50-over President's Cup commencing from 3 October across five cities. The two semi-finals will be played on 13 and 14 October, while the final of the tournament will be staged on 16 October.

All the matches will be day with the first ball expected to be bowled at 9.30am. The venues and start time for the semi-final and final will be announced in due course.

A prize pot of PKR7.75 million will be up for grabs as the winner of the tournament will bag



QUETTA: Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari talking with Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly Ghazala Gola and Provincial Advisor Meena Majeed Baloch before departure for Islamabad

PM vows further relief as inflation...

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cent in 2024 ahead of next year.

The prime minister said that from the day first, they had accorded priority to the measures aimed at providing relief to public, adding that machinations of those who wished Pakistan ramming into default, had been foiled.

The entire nation suffered due to incompetence of a junta during their previous rule, but now the journey of common man's prosperity has started with economy on the right track and diplomatic relations being strengthened.

The prime minister opined that with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme, the country's economy would get further boost and Pakistan's journey towards progress which was halted way back in 2018, had once again commenced.

According to a report of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), the core inflation measured by Consumer Price Index (CPI) decreased further to 6.9 percent during September 2024 as compared to 9.6 percent recorded during August 2024.

According to data, CPI inflation Urban decreased to 9.3% on year-on-year basis in September 2024 as compared to 11.7% in the previous month and 29.7% in September 2023. On month-on-month basis, it decreased to 0.5% in September 2024 as compared to an increase of 0.3% in the previous month and an increase of 1.7% in September 2023.

CPI inflation Rural, decreased to 3.6% on year-on-year (YoY) basis in September 2024 as compared to 6.7% in the previous month and 33.9% in September 2023. On month-on-month (MoM) basis, it decreased to 0.5% in September 2024 as compared to an increase of 0.6% in the previous month and an increase of 2.5% in September 2023.

The Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI) inflation on YoY decreased to 9.2% in September 2024 as compared to 10.8% a month

TENDER NOTICE

The Divisional Forest Officer Pishin has invited the sealed tenders on the Composite Schedule of Rates Government of Balochistan from interested firms of following work. **BID SECURITY/ Earnest Money 2% in Shape of Call Deposit at Schedule Bank and Tender Fee Rs.1000/-**

S.NO	NAME OF WORK	E/COST
1.	SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF SOLAR SYSTEM WITH PUMP TSE-242509562083	3,500,000/-

The Procurement shall be carried out in accordance with Balochistan Public Procurement Regulatory Authority rules, 2014, **BASIC ELIGIBILITY:** The Firms must have valid registration with Pakistan Engineering Council who also has deposited case for renewal (2024-25) in relevant Category. Firms (Single Entity) having valid registration with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) in the Category C-6 or above with required Specialized Code Valid Registration with Income Tax, & Baluchistan Revenue Authority. Other Mandatory conditions and Detail Marking Criteria mentioned in the Bidding Documents. Sequential page numbering of Proposal. Signing and stamping of proposal (Technical and Financial) wherever indicated as well as initial signature and seal on all other pages of proposals. The Proposal is bound as hard book to deny addition/removal of pages. **METHOD OF PROCUREMENT:** Single Stage-One Envelope procedure. **BIDDING/TENDER DOCUMENTS: ISSUANCE:** The Firms can obtain the bidding Documents from the office of the **Divisional Forest Officer** upon payment (non-refundable) bidding document fee Rs. 1000/- deposited in government treasury under head C-03370 through Green Challan Form in National Bank of Pakistan (NBP). (The NIT & Bidding Document can also be downloaded from www.bppra.org.pk in this regard, the interested bidders must submit Green Challan Form deposited in government treasury one day prior to the bid opening in the office of undersigned. **Issuance of Tender Documents: From the date of publication of NIT to 18 October, 2024 during office hours on working days. Last date of bid Submission:** The bidding Documents duly filled and attached with copies of supporting documents must be delivered in sealed envelopes by hand or through registered mail to the address mentioned below on or before on 18/10/2024 at 11:00 am. **Opening:** The all tender will be opened on 18/10/2024 at 12:00 pm, before procurement committee in the presence of contractors or their authorized representatives/agents. **Place of issuance and submission will be:** Address: **Divisional Forest Officer Pishin** Bid Validity Period: Ninety (90) Days. **Phone No:** 0826240541

Divisional Forest Officer Pishin

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Denmark, Pakistan to jointly work for green energy transition, climate resilience

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Denmark Jakob Linulf called on Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam Tuesday and discussed mutual matters of interest, particularly assistance to Pakistan for transition to green energy, building climate resilience, water conservation, biodiversity conservation and protection.

The two sides also discussed at length possible ongoing and future collaborative initiatives aimed at tackling climate change challenges facing both nations. Chairperson of the Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights, Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri and Secretary Climate Change & Environmental Coordination Ministry Aisha Humera Ch also attended the meeting.

The PM's climate aide highlighted the country's commitment to the global climate action through support to various initiatives being taken globally for protection of oceans, biodiversity, water and energy resources.

She shared the present government's vision and commitment for protecting its ocean waters from growing pollution, saying that preserving marine ecosystems and promoting sustainable practices along the country's extensive coastline was its top priority. "Efforts are being taken with government, non-governmental organizations and corporate sector to achieve 'clean ocean agenda' of the present government," she emphasized.

"Our oceans are vital to our economy and our environmental sustainability. The clean ocean agenda is a crucial step toward ensuring that our marine resources are preserved for future generations and efforts are being taken in support with various stakeholders to combat pollution and protect our oceans."

Highlighting Pakistan's efforts for protection and conservation of marine resources, particularly mangrove forests in its coral parts, Romina Khurshid told the Danish ambassador that the achievement of increasing mangrove cover by 300% along the coastline over the past months was a significant milestone, which had been globally lauded, which underscored the country's commitment to environmental sustainability and climate resilience.

The meeting also focused on commitment of the both countries towards sustainability and the importance of international cooperation in combating various challenges of climate change, deforestation, droughts, water scarcity, air pollution, coastal erosion, energy crisis.

Ambassador Jakob Linulf also highlighted his country's extensive experience in renewable energy and sustainable practices, emphasizing the potential for knowledge sharing and technology transfer with Pakistan to achieve environmental sustainability and climate resilience goals.



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

Chairperson BISP urges youth to promote tolerance, critical thinking

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Pucar-15 helpline received 0.158m calls in September

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police emergency helpline "Pucar-15" received 158,760 calls in September, playing a crucial role in providing timely services to citizens in emergencies within the federal capital. 10,438 of these calls were related to guidance, while 11,021 cases required immediate police assistance, for which emergency teams were dispatched promptly, a public relation officer told APP.

He said the helpline is part of the Safe City initiative, where various services, including police, fire brigade, and ambulance, are provided based on the nature of the calls.

He said that, however, 137,301 calls or 86% of the total, were unrelated or hoax calls, which unnecessarily consumed police time.

DG Safe City emphasized that hoax and unnecessary calls can delay assistance in genuine emergencies.



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

Foreign Secy reaffirms commitment to preserving ancient archeological heritage

ISLAMABAD (APP): The International Conference on "Celebrating Pakistan's Ancient Archeological and Civilizational Heritage", organized by ISSI, concluded with Foreign Secretary Anna Baloch reaffirming commitment to preserving and promoting Pakistan's rich archeological and civilizational heritage. The one-day conference drew a significant gathering of diplomats, cultural experts, and academics, underscoring the keen interest in exploring, preserving, and promoting Pakistan's rich archeological and civilizational heritage.

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

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

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

Son arrested for torturing mother

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police on Tuesday arrested Musadiq Abbasi after the Koral police team took swift action on a complaint from his mother, accusing him of misbehavior and issuing threats.

According to a police statement, the accused was apprehended and a case was registered against him.

Further investigation is currently underway, the statement said.

Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Syed Ali Raza, issued instructions to all police stations to take immediate legal action on complaints from parents regarding disobedience or mistreatment by their children.

DIG Ali Raza said that such behavior towards parents, who are highly respected figures in the society, is unimaginable and deeply regrettable.

Ali Raza emphasized that police stations should prioritize these complaints and take prompt action.



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

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

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

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

Dr. Ata-ur-Rehman further added that the CII, male and female Islamic scholars, and religious leaders from various faiths will be consulted for the guidance. Speaking on the occasion, Vice-Chancellor of Health Services Academy, Dr. Shehzad Ali Khan highlighted that the family was the core unit of society, with the mother playing a pivotal role. He pointed out that while Pakistan's family system is exemplary, there are efforts to undermine it through specific media campaigns. Dr. Shehzad also noted that Islamic teachings on maternal and child health were highly advanced, underscoring the importance of collaboration between the religious affairs ministry and religious scholars to safeguard the health of mothers and children.

CDA auctions commercial plots for record-breaking Rs 2.45 billion

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

Parents urged to support polio vaccination efforts

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

IHC accepts ICA for hearing regarding election tribunal

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday accepted the intra court appeal (ICA) for hearing regarding the appointment of election tribunals in federal capital. A division bench of high court declared the ICA as maintainable against the verdict of single member bench. The order said that the petitioner stated that election tribunals were appointed under article 225 of the Constitution. It stated that as per the judgment of the top court the appointment of judges couldn't be made in tribunals.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

ETPB reclaims 6,140 acres of land illegally occupied nationwide

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate Standing Committee on Religious Affairs on Tuesday held a meeting at the Parliament House under the chairmanship of Senator Atta-ur-Rehman and focused on various critical issues, including the implementation of the Supreme Court's orders regarding the removal of illegal constructions from the ETPB lands and the review of the Muslim Family Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024.

During the meeting, Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) Chairman, Dr. Syed Ata-ur-Rehman informed the committee that the Supreme Court had directed the removal of illegal constructions from the occupied lands.

In compliance with these orders, he informed that a total of 247 acres, 4 kanals, and 13 marlas of land were reclaimed in Tehsil Fateh Jang with the assistance of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) out of a total of 283 acres, 4 kanals, and 9 marlas.

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday emphasized that the people of the province were united in their desire to eliminate extremism and restore peace in the region.

He expressed his deep appreciation for the peace-loving nature of the province's people during a ceremony to pay tribute to martyred police constable Burhan Ali, who was killed in a terrorist attack in Malam Jabba recently.

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

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

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



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

ICT police arrest 15 criminals, drugs and weapons seized

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

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

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

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

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

IRSA advisory body to meet today

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

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

Sajid elected as new President of NA ECHS

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

According to a notification issued by Deputy Commissioner / Registrar Cooperative Societies, ICT, Islamabad, Sher Muhammad Saqi was elected as Vice President and Shafiq Ur Rehman Secretary.

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

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent
Wednesday October 02, 2024

Punitive tax plan

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

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

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

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

Shahid Kardar

The federation is now at stake. The bonds of national integration for a functioning federation are under severe stress. There is anger at the denial of political rights and the lack of effective ownership or even a say in the use and pricing of assets such as coal, gas and the ports. A recent decision to transfer land in Sindh and KP to the military for corporate farming intensifies this disgruntlement. In the case of KP and Balochistan, the bitterness extends to Islamabad's controlling the provinces' opportunities in cross-border trade.

In KP and Balochistan, social transformation has rendered traditional political leadership irrelevant. The baton has now been grasped by the youth, who are angry, if not alienated. In the case of Balochistan, they are seemingly unwilling to accept solutions within the ambit of Pakistan. The causes of their distress are historical and deep-rooted, and their significance should not be trivialised by claiming that the uprising and terrorism are being stoked by the Indians. Even if true, it is de-

cadecades of Baloch grievances that are providing the fuel for the present insurgency.

To satisfactorily address these protests, a new federal structure has to be devised for the long-term sustainability of the state of Pakistan. Let us forget, we have a centre because the provinces ceded some powers to it. This requires a recasting of the Constitution for a more viable structure that strengthens the autonomy of the provinces following the 18th Amendment. This realignment would have to entail the handing over of full control of all key resources (such as coal, oil, gas, and major minerals) to the provinces where these are located.

If Pakistan's political and economic structure were to be implanted in oil-rich Texas (and in federations like Canada and Australia), this American state, with all its oil, would not be rich; instead, entrepreneurs in New York and Washington would be living it up. Whereas the wealth of Texas belongs to the citizens of that state, in Pakistan effective control over this country's lifelines and richest resources does not lie with the provinces

where they are found, the corruption of the provincial leadership notwithstanding.

More importantly, whereas the government of Punjab can carve out its own vision and development agenda for the province, a province like Balochistan and to a significant extent Sindh, whose two principal assets are their minerals and coastline, are unable to develop their own growth strategy because these assets are essentially controlled by the federal government. KP suffers similarly in the case of its gas and the denial of regular, timely payments of committed net hydro profits.

The argument that provincial governments are partners in decisions made by the federation on such matters, through the Council of Common Interests, and paid a royalty — in whose determination the provincial role is limited — for its minerals, and a 'modest' share in the port profits in Balochistan's case, is a weak one. It doesn't fully recognise their right to ownership and full autonomy to take decisions on the utilisation and disposal/leasing of these assets. The

acceptance of such rights should be complemented by an effectively functioning CCI, instead of a Special Investment Facilitation Council.

Government spokesmen lament that the narrow interpretation of Article 158, which gives the residents of the province where gas or coal is found precedence over others in their utilisation, results in non-productive consumption and is unfair to other users. However, this conveniently overlooks how Punjab imposes Section 144 on the movement of wheat in order to buy the crop at a price lower than its market price so that it can subsidise its consumption for its own citizens.

The injustice does not end here. While Punjab and Sindh have, at times, been selling their cotton and wheat and related products to KP and Balochistan at higher than world prices, the latter has historically been made to provide its gas to the residents of other provinces at well below world prices, reflected also in the nominal royalty payments on this scarce resource. There-

fore, the provinces should have full control over their minerals and be paid international prices for them. After all, decision-makers in other provinces and at the federal level support world prices for other products on the pretext that these are produced and sold by the private sector and that good economic policy should not disincentivise efficient investments through a regime of distorted price structures.

Islamabad should also shelve many activities that it is performing in Balochistan, partly on the plea that it does not have the capacity to carry out such projects — which the federal agencies themselves execute through private consultants and contractors! Federal programmes include Gwadar and Gadani (in partnership with the Chinese), the Saindak and Reko Dik projects and provincial roads. Islamabad will simply not let go of functions that rightfully belong to the lower formations of government, as it refuses to shed weight by correct-

ing the incongruity of its size and the expanded role and mandate that it has arrogated to itself.

Moreover, the argument that there is a need to prevent the siphoning of funds by the corrupt leadership in the province is an amusing one. Those making it neither have clean hands themselves nor are accountable to the voters in the province on whose behalf this money is being spent on a whole range of projects that may not be accorded similar priority by the provincial leadership. In fact, taking this line of reasoning to its logical conclusion, we should still have been the colony of the honest and benevolent Britishers.

Therefore, the answer to the existing unfair arrangement lies in a genuine federal system and not in conjuring a political system around some misconceived notion of 'supreme national interest'. There is a small window of opportunity that is open, and that too for a short while, to halt and reverse the process of this drift, before there is little left to salvage. -- Courtesy Dawn

A fraying federation**As legacies of colonialism go**

Kashmir and it continues to stalk the heavily militarised region unabated. Palestinians and Kashmiris have also hijacked planes to press their rights, but this is where the similarities begin to wane. Palestine was supported by the USSR and Kashmiris had the backing of the West, not least because Pakistan was a handy ally.

Pakistan straddles a different history altogether. All countries in the Middle East that were close to Moscow stand wrecked today by US-led military campaigns. Needless to say, this could not have happened without the vengeful support of the West's allies, led by Saudi Arabia and Jordan. (The Pakistani military was used to crush a Palestinian uprising in Jordan in 1968.) Among the US-led targets are Libya, Syria, Iraq, and the erstwhile Marxist-ruled South Yemen. Iran got into the crosshairs by overthrowing the Shah. The ongoing targeting of Palestinians thus has different roots from Kashmir. India was spared the ordeal inflicted on former Soviet allies as it changed corners in the

footsteps of Egypt. The former non-aligned friends ardently support Israel as America's "unsinkable ship" in the region.

In the 1990s, at the height of the upsurge against Indian rule in Kashmir, it was normal to hear from resistance leaders in Srinagar that the dispute over their Himalayan region could lead to nuclear war. It was offered as a reason for nuclear-armed India and Pakistan to settle the Kashmir dispute amicably before it was too late. The argument was romantic at best and luckily delusional. It was spawned by well-regarded thinkers of the Hurriyat Conference. Prof Abdul Ghani Bhatt, the mild-mannered, Rumi-loving Persian scholar, led the field, peppering his fears of a war with ornate stanzas from Persian anthology.

Last week's speech at the UN by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif claiming preparedness against a real or imagined military adventure by India was of a piece with what Indians clumsily call Pakistan's 'internationalisation of the Kashmir issue'. It's worth noting that China,

which also has territorial disputes with India, has seldom, if ever, taken the international stage to raise bilateral differences with India. Part of the reason could be that it seeks to have India as a partner, not adversary in its economic and political plans. Nor do we hear of dire threats made against China by India. This is not to say the two sides don't remain militarily primed for a contingency.

In its zeal to take on India before an international audience, Pakistan may have missed the visuals of India itself 'internationalising' the Kashmir issue, which it laughably did by giving a giggled tour of the elections underway in J&K to a clutch of foreign diplomats. (Did we ever see a foreign diplomat taken to elections in Uttar Pradesh?)

Unlike the skies over Kashmir, nine Western satellites are permanently stationed over territories of interest to Israel's defence. For years they have been observing the landscape very minutely, a point Prof Bhatt shouldn't miss. The eyes in the sky have been

watching Hezbollah, Syria and Iran, and possibly the Houthis, but curiously, not Hamas.

Thus, when the Israeli woman officer who detected Hamas activity in Gaza before the catastrophic events of Oct 7 last year, alerted the male colonel responsible for keeping vigil on the open prison, he told her: "Your job is to ply us with coffee, just keep that coming." The exact details of the conversation would be known when Benjamin Netanyahu is removed from office, which he is working feverishly to delay by widening Israel's war in the region and keeping it perpetually on the boil.

Else, peace was an earshot away: heed the call to end the Gaza slaughter and nobody would shoot rockets into Israel anymore.

The US elections gave Netanyahu the leeway to dismiss the ceasefire calls with contempt and impunity.

Hassan Nasrallah's death thus followed a deep study of his bases for years with human, visual, and technical intelligence. The Israeli military was

preparing for this venture, not the conflict with Hamas, an embarrassment hard to live down. The satellites and saturated intelligence enabled the precision killing of a Hamas leader in Tehran, followed by decapitating strikes against Hezbollah in Lebanon. Striking fear among Lebanese civilians was part of the battle drill, and it was staged by exploding paggers, killing dozens and injuring thousands.

Having said that, the war in Lebanon may have only just begun, unless big powers, out of sheer self-interest, douse the inferno quickly. An estimated 90 per cent of Hezbollah fighters, commanders with their lethal arsenal of well concealed hardware, are believed to be keeping the powder dry.

This was evident in the signal from Tehran, which said the "battle against Zionism" post Nasrallah would continue to be led by Hezbollah. Iran sees itself as more useful guarding the supply lines to Lebanon, and this it's doing without the need for an untenable arsenal India and Pakistan keep flaunting, mercifully vacuously, over Kashmir.

Burying democracy**Dr Niaz Murtaza**

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

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

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

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

The cure is undeni-

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

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

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

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

However, few appear to be actively opposing these anti-democratic moves. In fact, it would seem that certain sections of the media and the legal community, who have fought past

assaults, are also toeing the line of those responsible for the current assault on democracy. Many in civil society are muted, seeing it as intraclass wars. But it is possible that once they succeed in nixing the PTT, they will use their enhanced control to nix progressive periphery causes as well. One must proactively resist any attempt to subdue the judiciary, even if it is not championing any progressive causes at present.

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

Legitimacy is the glue that binds states and ensures progress. It was never allowed to grow much here and is being further eroded now.

Such state-led lawlessness can only undermine state foundations and have a severe impact on security and the rule of law via increased terrorism, crime, extremism and external threats.

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

Power is knowledge?**Nazir A. Jogeza**

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

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

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

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

place in society.

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

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

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

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

Entrance exams for prestigious institutes serve as critical gatekeeping tools.

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

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

Teachers act as intermediaries between curricula, assessment, and students. They wield power in shaping the delivery, interpretation, and internalisation of knowledge by students. However, teachers themselves operate within a broader power structure defined by educational policies, standards, and societal expectations. A teacher's ability to either challenge or reinforce dominant narratives in the classroom can greatly influence students' critical thinking and worldview. For instance, a teacher who encourages students to question and critically analyse the dominant social values can empower students to recognise and challenge inequities.

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

It is crucial to acknowledge that knowledge is neither neutral nor apolitical; it is shaped by power relations. Therefore, those who control knowledge — whether through curriculum design, assessment, or pedagogical practices — wield significant power over individuals and society.

The challenge is to craft educational systems that are more equitable and inclusive and allow a diverse range of knowledge to be recognised and valued, thereby democratising power and education. -- Courtesy Dawn

Sindh govt implements steps to combat extremism, radicalisation: CM Murad

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Tuesday said that government has implemented measures to combat extremism and terrorism by intelligence sharing and coordinated operations with the help of law enforcement agencies.

He addressed to the participants of National and Security & War Course-25 included 240 officers of Armed forces, Civil servants and military officers from 24 friendly countries led by Chief Instructor Major General Mohammad Akhtar.

Provincial Ministers Sharjeel Memon, Sardar Shah, Nasir Shah Saeed Ghani, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, Home Secretary Iqbal Memon, Chairman P&D Najma Shah, IG Police Ghulam Nabi Memon, Secretary to CM Raheem Shaikh and other provincial secretaries also attended the program.

Shah stated that the Sindh government has implemented various initiatives to strengthen the police force. These initiatives include training programs and infrastructure development. He mentioned specific initiatives such as the upgrading of the Counter

Terrorism Department (CTD) and Special Branch, as well as the launch of the Karachi Safe City Project.

Additionally, he highlighted the Sindh Smart Surveillance System (S4) project, which involves the installation of ANPR and facial recognition cameras at 40 toll plazas in Sindh.

The CM revealed that the investigation cost has been increased, and police stations have been allocated a direct budget of Rs4.8 billion. Furthermore, the police force has been provided with health insurance amounting to Rs4.961 billion.

He also announced enhancements to the Shaheed Package, raising it from Rs10 million to Rs23 million, which includes salary until retirement and job opportunities for family members.

The Sindh Government has taken steps to address challenges in the Katcha area, focusing on infrastructure development and social services provision. The CM mentioned that resources have been allocated to the Sindh Police to acquire modern technology to combat challenges in the Katcha area, such as drones, APCs, and

12.7 guns. Additionally, efforts are being made to construct roads and bridges to improve mobility, which is crucial for effective policing.

Talking about the fiscal position of the province, Murad Shah stated that for the year 2024-25, the total budget outlay is Rs.3.056 trillion. This includes Rs.1,912 billion for current revenue, Rs.959 billion for development projects, and Rs.184.8 billion for capital expenditure.

The General Revenue Receipts amount to Rs.2,562 trillion, with Rs.1,900.8 billion from federal transfers and Rs.661.9 billion from provincial resources. However, the government is facing a Rs.139 billion shortfall from Federal Board of Revenue transfers in the first two months of 2024-25, along with a Rs.35.9 billion provincial revenue shortfall.

This has resulted in expenditures reaching Rs.300.9 billion, leading to a deficit of Rs.28.9 billion.

The Chief Minister emphasized the need for better financial management, highlighting that essential monthly spending amounts to Rs.143 billion, including salaries.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah in meeting with a delegation of Chinese investors, led by Chairman of the Belt and Road Initiative, Wan Xiaowu, held at CM House in Karachi.

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

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

This was remarked by the Governor Punjab, Sadar Saleem Haider Khan while delivering his speech at the 1st Convocation of the Rawalpindi Woman University (RWU), which was held here on Tuesday. He said that everyone should

value the country which has the honor of being the sole nuclear country in the Islamic world.

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

The governor while congratulating the graduating students highlighted the responsibilities they would have to render in their future. He underlined the need for collaborative ef-

forts by all the stakeholders towards improvement in diverse fields including the national economy.

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

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

Pakistan-Malaysia ties based on common values, mutual respect: Governor

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori has said the roots of Pakistan-Malaysia relations are based on common values, mutual respect and enduring friendship.

Governor Tessori said this while speaking at the ceremony organized on the occasion of 67th Independence Day of Malaysia as chief guest here at Malaysian Consulate the other day.

According to Governor House spokesman, Governor Sindh felicitated the Government and the people of Malaysia on the Independence Day.

On arrival, the Consul General of Malaysia Herman Hardynata Ahmad received the Governor Kamran Khan Tessori at the Consulate.

Kamran Tessori said that the exchange of information technology helping the two countries to understand culture and tourism of both the countries.

In Pakistan, all possible help, support and the assistance is being provided to domestic as well foreign investors under the SIFC project in Pakistan, Governor said, adding that he would soon visit Malaysia to extend invitation to Malaysian investors and the business persons to take benefit by investing in Pakistan.

Consul General of other countries posted in Karachi and other dignitaries were also present on this occasion and later a cake was cut on the occasion of Malaysia's Independence Day.



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

Salman chairs emergency meeting to address rising dengue cases in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique on Tuesday chaired an emergency meeting of the Technical Working Group in the Department of Primary and Secondary Health Care in response to the increasing cases of dengue.

Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Imran Nazir participated in meeting via video link, while Health Advisor Major General (Retired) Azhar Mehmood Kayani attended the meeting in person at the Health Department. During the meeting, Khawaja Salman Rafique reviewed the latest dengue situation across the province. Experts presented their suggestions to control the spread of dengue.

Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique emphasized that the Technical Working Group should immediately determine the causes of death due to dengue in Rawalpindi and assess the severity of the disease in treated patients. "To control dengue, field officers need to operate outside

of their offices. In Rawalpindi, provisions are being made for the treatment of dengue patients in both government and private hospitals. The concerned officers should monitor every dengue case closely. A special campaign should be conducted to raise awareness about dengue. Due to better surveillance, the dengue situation in Lahore is under control. Departments must remain vigilant to control cases in Rawalpindi", he added.

Provincial Minister for Primary and Secondary Health Care Khawaja Imran Nazir stated that while dengue is not typically life-threatening, it can become dangerous if patients report to the hospital too late. "With the dengue season at its peak, there will be no compromise on the care of infected patients. Union Councils will ensure the involvement of elected representatives in anti-dengue activities. Dengue workers should be provided with new Android mobile phones.



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

75th National Day of China celebrated

PESHAWAR (APP): The vibrant atmosphere of Peshawar resonated with the spirit of friendship and collaboration as Muhammad Ali Saif, Advisor to the Chief Minister on Information, addressed distinguished guests at the 75th National Day celebrations of the People's Republic of China, organized by China Window here Tuesday.

Consul General of Islamic Republic of Iran in Peshawar Ali Banafshekha, senior politicians, artists, sportsmen and people from all walks of life were in attendance at the celebrations.

In his speech, Saif commended the efforts of Amjad Aziz Malik, Admin-

istrator of China Window, for establishing a center that fosters Pakistan-China relations.

He expressed deep appreciation for the center's role in strengthening ties between the two nations, highlighting its importance in Peshawar.

"Today, we are not just celebrating an event; we are honoring a deep-rooted friendship," Saif stated, emphasizing the historic bond that has flourished between the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and their Chinese counterparts.

He extended warm congratulations on behalf of the provincial government to Chinese Ambassador Jiang Ziadong, and people of the China.

Bushra, Imran enjoying VIP facilities in jail: Azma Bokhari

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari has said that creating sensational news and staying in the headlines through publicity gimmicks is a favourite hobby of Bushra Bibi. Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz is not bothered about what does Bushra Bibi eat, be that eggs, chicken or soup pulao etc. Maryam Nawaz is unaware of the cell that has been allocated to the Bushra Bibi in Adiala Jail. Azma Bokhari expressed these views in response to a statement by Barrister Saif here on Tuesday.

Bokhari said that Bushra Bibi had been given B-class facilities in jail. "The facilities available to the couple in jail are beyond the imagination of the common man. Bushra Bibi and Imran Khan are serving their time in jail in a VIP manner," she added. She said that Maryam Nawaz had suffered numerous hardships during Imran Khan's government, while Bushra Bibi is safe from all of them. "The conditions in which Maryam Nawaz was kept in Kot Lakhpat Jail and the NAB torture cell were all due to Bushra Bibi's wishes.

PPP decides launching protest movement against KP Govt

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

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

LHC directs police to expedite submission of pending challans

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Tuesday ordered the police authorities to promptly submit pending challans in all cases. LHC Chief Justice Aalia Neelum issued the orders while hearing a bail petition filed by Imran Ali related to a drug case. During the proceedings, in response to previous court directives, police officials appeared and presented a detailed report regarding the submission of pending challans in cases.

The officials informed the court that the number of pending challans had reduced from 380,294 to 20,979 which would soon be submitted to the prosecution department.

CM message on International Day for Older Persons

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

The CM said elders were a reflection of our past, a light for the present and a lesson for the future, adding that elders were the lamps in whose light generations grow. "Elders have made our present possible by giving their youthful energies. Elderly people of Pakistan are our true asset, I pay them rich tribute", she

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

The chief minister appealed to the citizens that never forget your elders, rather give them the respect and status they deserve. Only those societies rise that value their elders. She underscored that government was taking steps for the dignity, welfare and comfort of senior citizens.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Health Khawaja Salman Rafique presides over the high level meeting of cabinet committee for anti-dengue. Punjab Chief Secretary Zahir Akhtar Zaman is also present.

Quality to be ensured in development projects: CM aide

PESHAWAR (APP): Special Assistant to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Anti-Corruption, Muhammad Mossadeq Abbasi has said that quality should be ensured in development projects, and steps be taken to prevent the use of substandard materials. He expressed these views during fourth monthly Khuli Kachari of Anti-Corruption Establishment held in Mardan.

Assistant Director Crime, Mardan Region of Anti-Corruption Establishment, Circle Officers of Mardan Region participated in the Khuli Kachari and listened to complaints of people.

AI based legal assistant 'YourMunshi' launched

KARACHI (Online): Pakistan's first AI-powered legal assistant, 'YourMunshi', has officially been launched. This AI platform efficiently integrates the country's judicial system and legal history, providing substantial convenience for the legal community, including lawyers and judges, in handling their legal tasks.

'YourMunshi' aims to support the judicial system of Pakistan by facilitating lawyers and judges in preparing applications for filing cases, maintaining daily case diaries, and accessing detailed judicial decisions within minutes.

During the session at the Karachi Bar Association Hall at City Court Complex Karachi, Aamir

Zahoor, co-founder of YourMunshi, thoroughly briefed the participants on the benefits of AI and its growing global applications in the legal field and how Pakistan is now part of this exciting race because of YourMunshi. Advocate Adam Jabbar demonstrated how lawyers could effectively use YourMunshi to streamline their legal work.

His hands-on guidance helped participants understand how the platform could ease routine legal processes and enhance efficiency. YourMunshi's Co-Founder and Country Manager, Waqas Ahmed, emphasized the importance of AI in legal support and its relevance to Pakistan's judicial system.

Muqam visits Swabi, inspects site of blast

SWABI (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan, Engr. Ameer Muqam on Tuesday visited Swabi and inspected the site of blast in City Police Station.

He announced amount of Rs. 100,000 each for families of those killed in the explosion. He said federal government would be requested to announce compensation amount for martyred and injured of the incident.

Later, he went to the residence of Iqtidar who lost life in the City Police Station blast and condoled with his father.

Meanwhile talking to media, he said that provincial government should focus on the problems of people rather staging useless protests.

ANF recovers 159 kg drugs in five operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting five operations across the country managed to recover 159 kg drugs worth over Rs 12.5 million and arrested five accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Tuesday.

He informed that ANF had also accelerated its ongoing operations against drug dealers supplying drugs to students of educational institutions.

100 grams hashish was recovered from the possession of an accused rounded up near a hostel on Multan Road in Dera Ismail Khan.



PESHAWAR: Jamat-e-Islami (JI) Secretary General, Liaqat Baloch along with Prof. Muhammad Ibrahim Khan are inspecting the wedding gifts for bridegrooms during mass marriage ceremony organized by Al-Khidmat Foundation held in Peshawar.

ADB delegation meets Ahsan to discuss transport infrastructure

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

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

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

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

He welcomed the ADB's input in this regard, stating that it would greatly enhance the work already completed by Pakistan.

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

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

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

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

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

Additionally, the minister recommended that the ADB establish a knowledge-sharing system to allow countries around the world to easily access and learn from its models and experiences.

Both sides discussed in detail the Multi-Tranche Financing Facility (MFF) for road projects and expressed their commitment to collaborate on future endeavours in the sector.

Ahsan Iqbal thanked the ADB delegation for their continued support, noting that the Bank had been a critical development partner for Pakistan, particularly in post-flood infrastructure rehabilitation efforts.

He also highlighted the need for modernization of PMDC's outdated machinery, which has contributed to 80 fatalities over five years. Senator Qurat-ul-Ain Marri raised the issue of provincial consultation, questioning how the Federation could privatize land belonging to the provinces without their input. The Secretary of Petroleum clarified that only the corporate entity, not the leased land, was being privatized, and that further clarity would emerge once a financial advisor was appointed.

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



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

Senate body on Petroleum rejects PMDC privatization

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

Chaired by Senator Umer Farooq, the committee warned of the risk to 5,000 jobs if privatization proceeds. Senator Manzoor Ahmed questioned the need for privatization, asserting that PMDC has been profitable over the past three years and urging the government to prioritize local employees. He argued that the corporation should not be privatized if it is not incurring losses.

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

He also highlighted the need for modernization of PMDC's outdated machinery, which has contributed to 80 fatalities over five years. Senator Qurat-ul-Ain Marri raised the issue of provincial consultation, questioning how the Federation could privatize land belonging to the provinces without their input. The Secretary of Petroleum clarified that only the corporate entity, not the leased land, was being privatized, and that further clarity would emerge once a financial advisor was appointed.

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NA body urges IT Ministry to accelerate 5G spectrum auction

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

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

Recognizing the necessity for comprehensive reforms in the telecom sector, the committee stressed the importance of involving all stakeholders in the design of the auction, spectrum valuation, and the development of appropriate 5G models. "The timely completion of the auction is seen as critical to Pakistan's technological advancement," it added.

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

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

The committee sought a comprehensive overview of PTCL properties leased or rented at its next meeting.

It also directed the PTCL to enhance its complaint management system, ensuring a swift response time of 6 to 12 hours to prevent customer dissatisfaction and maintain competitiveness in the market.

The slow progress of the Islamabad IT Park project was another point of concern. Originally slated for completion by February 2025, only 44% of the work has been completed so far.

With the project fully funded by the Korean Government and delays occurring due to prolonged approval processes, the committee called for a third-party audit of the project, demanding that the evaluation report be presented at the next meeting.



SIALKOT: President Chamber of Commerce Ikram ul Haq is presenting a shield to Chairman PIEDMC Punjab Mijor (r) Khalid Javaid at SCCI.

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

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

The meeting was attended by the LCCI Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman, Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry, representatives from various market associations. This interaction marks a significant step in the new LCCI leadership's efforts to build trust and strengthen the Chamber's role as a mediator between traders and government authorities.

The LCCI President assured them that resolving their issues would be at the forefront of his agenda. He acknowledged the challenges that traders have been facing. Mian Abuzar Shad added that he fully understands the gravity of the challenges traders face on a daily basis. He said that Lahore Chamber would actively work to create a more enabling environment for traders, their concerns would be communicated to the highest levels of government. During the meeting, traders brought up several pressing issues that continue to affect their businesses.

BISP, SBP to develop new banking model for payment disbursement

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

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

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

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

Secy for expediting construction of new model bazaars in 13 districts

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

Model Bazaars CEO Naveed Rafaqat Ahmad said that Model Bazaars are a key source of relief for the general public, providing essential goods at prices lower than government-notified rates.

The secretary directed the CEO to personally oversee the process, ensuring that all necessary steps are completed as per the government's instructions. "This project is a priority for the government, and we aim to establish these Model Bazaars at the earliest to benefit the public," he stated. The Secretary also called for an urgent submission of the summary to kick-start the approval process.

Kamran elected as chairman APTMA

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

He highlighted that Arshad's experience was crucial for the cotton and textile sectors. Dr Zafar also stressed the importance of settling Rs 3.5 billion owed in cotton cess. He urged Arshad to ensure timely payments, as agreed by his predecessor Rahim Nasir.



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

Rs30b allocated for Green Tractor Scheme: Minister

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani on Tuesday said the Punjab government has allocated a huge amount of Rs30 billion for the Chief Minister Punjab Green Tractor Scheme.

Presiding over a meeting with representatives of the tractor industry at Agriculture House, the minister said earlier farmers were not provided such a large subsidy on tractors. Under the scheme, the owners of 1 to 50 acres of agricultural land are being provided with tractors of 50 to 85 Horse Power (HP) according to their choice at a subsidy of Rs. 10 lakh per tractor.

He said that the chief minister desired that the local manufacturing industry of tractors should show generosity and provide a discount of 10 to 15 per cent tractor to the farmers. The initiative will promote agriculture and the tractor manufacturing industry and local farmers' confidence in the tractor industry would increase, he added.

The provincial minister said that the entire system up to the delivery of tractors to the farmers will be mechanised. According to the vision of the chief minister, the scheme is being launched on a large scale. In connection with the purchase of the tractor, the farmer would be given an option to buy a tractor of their choice, the minister said and made it clear to the representatives of the tractor industry that the SOPs of Agriculture Department must be kept in mind while manufacturing the green tractor.

Secretary Agriculture, Punjab, Hkhar Ali Sahoo added that not only the farmers but also the tractor industry would benefit from this scheme. He said that supply of tractors, receipt of applications and draw would be conducted in a transparent manner.

Chief Executive Officer Millat Tractor Raheel Asghar said that the local industry appreciates the Chief Minister Punjab Green Tractor Scheme and the entire industry would provide support and cooperation to the scheme locally.

Climate risks Mobilink Bank introduces climate insurance to protect agri-borrowers

ISLAMABAD: Mobilink Bank, Pakistan's leading digital microfinance bank, has introduced Climate Shock Insurance to protect small and medium-scale farmers and livestock owners from the escalating risks of climate change. Under the initiative, the Bank provides financial security by covering losses to crops and livestock resulting from unpredictable climate catastrophes, enabling farmers to maintain their livelihoods amid growing weather volatility.

The insurance product is integrated into the Bank's existing Agri-Lending and Livestock offerings, streamlining access to coverage and accelerating payout times compared to traditional disaster relief methods. Through this initiative, Mobilink Bank reinforces its commitment to Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles, promoting resilience and sustainability in the agricultural sector.

Pakistan's agri-sector, vital to its economy, faces many threats from climate change, with forecasts predicting an 8% to 10% decline in productivity by 2040.

In response, Mobilink Bank's Climate Shock Insurance is designed to provide financial relief for farmers impacted by extreme weather events, including droughts, heavy rainfall and plant diseases. The insurance covers major crops such as wheat and rice and protects livestock from natural disasters and diseases.

New ICCI office-bearers sworn in

ISLAMABAD (APP): Nasir Mansoor Qureshi has taken over charge as President, Abdul Rehman Siddiqui, Senior Vice President, and Nasir Mehmood Chaudhry as Vice President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry during a ceremony held at Chamber House here on Tuesday. Khalid Iqbal Malik Group Leader, Khalid Javed, Zubair Ahmed Malik, Mian Akram Farid, Zafar Bakhtawari, Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi, Mian Shaikat Masud, Sheikh Amir Waheed and others also attended the ceremony. Speaking at the occasion, Nasir Mansoor Qureshi said that taking over charge of the ICCI Presidency was a great honor and that his only mission is to serve the business community.



QUETTA: A vendor patiently waits for customers on the roadside in the city, selling antioxidant-rich black grapes known for their health benefits.

Objections raised on big consignment of rice exported to EU

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

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

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

Minister Economic EU wrote several letters regarding objections to Pakistani authorities.

Prime Minister constituted high level committee to probe into the matter.

The committee sought 5 years record from department of plant protection Karachi that as to why plant protection Karachi department allowed to export rice without checking.

Rupee gains 03 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee on Tuesday appreciated by 03 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.68 against the previous day's closing of Rs 277.71. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 278.50 and Rs 280 respectively.

The price of Euro decreased by Rs2.03 to close at Rs 308.63 against the last day's closing of Rs 310.66.

Pak emerged as 2nd-largest market for Chinese solar products amid energy shift

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan has emerged as a significant new market for Chinese photovoltaic (PV) companies, aligning with its path toward energy transformation. According to statistics from the China Photovoltaic Industry Association (CPIA), in the first half of 2024, Asia overtook Europe as the largest export destination for PV products and Pakistan has become the second-largest market for module exports after Europe.

During the same period, China exported inverters worth a total of RMB 1.714 billion to Pakistan. In August alone, the total value of inverter exports to Pakistan reached 326 million yuan, showing a year-on-year surge of 429.04%. And shimmering blue panels now sit atop a vast array of factories, households, hospitals and mosques. The surge in exports of photovoltaics and supporting products reflects the urgency of turning to new energy power generation in Pakistan, China Economic Net reported on Tuesday.

"Electricity prices continue to rise; thus, people are trying to find their own way out," Abbas a Pakistani trader said at the Investment and Trade Forum for Cooperation between East and West China.

As of June 2023, the installed capacity of solar power in Pakistan stood at 630 megawatts, namely 1.4% of the overall installed power capacity, which has a huge room for improvement. In terms of natural conditions, according to the World Bank's Global Solar Atlas data, taking Balochistan with good lighting conditions as an example, the average annual total photovoltaic output power of a 1KW household photovoltaic system can reach 1990kWh (corresponding to approximately 1990h of sunlight), which is approximately 41% and 59% higher than New Delhi, India and Shandong Province, China, respectively, the Global Tilted Irradiance (GTI) can reach 2536.5KWh/square meter.



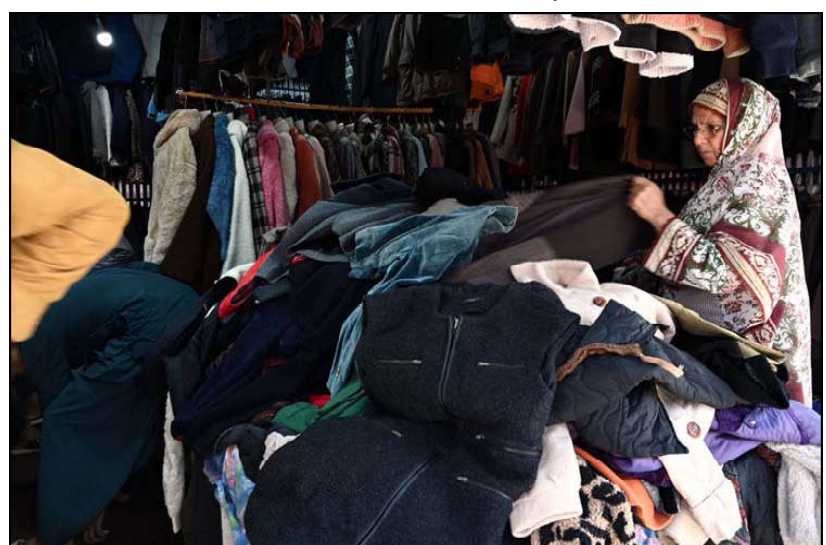
KARACHI: Technician busy in repairing work of batteries to earn his livelihood for support his family, as demand of batteries in city during hot weather of summer season and high tariff of electricity bills, at his workplace located on Garden area in Karachi.

CDNS to achieve Rs 200 billion mark in fresh bonds

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has achieved a target of Rs 200 billion in fresh bonds and achieved 11 percent of the annual target in the first quarter of current fiscal year, from July 1 to September 30th. The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has set an annual target of Rs 1650 billion for the current Fiscal Year, 2024-25, which will promote the saving culture in the country, the senior official of CDNS told APP on Tuesday.

Similarly, the CDNS has set a target of Rs 170 billion in investment in Islamic finance for the current Fiscal Year, which will lead to growth of the Islamic economy in the country.

Replying to a question, he said that the CDNS has realized a target of Rs1.742 trillion in fresh bonds and exceeded 100 percent of the annual target in the last fiscal year 2023-24, from July 1 to June 30th. National Savings has set an annual target of Rs 1.7 trillion for the year 2023-24; it is encouraging that this year, "We surpassed the 100 percent of the annual target." The CDNS surpassed the annual target and achieved the target of Rs 1.6 trillion in fresh bonds in the previous fiscal year 2022-23, he said.



ISLAMABAD: An woman selecting to stock up on second-hand warm clothes and other stuff at the weekly Bazaar as the capital city prepares for the onset of winter.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A Lebanese security source told Reuters that Israeli units had crossed into Lebanon overnight for reconnaissance and probing operations.

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

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

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

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

Flares were repeatedly launched over the Lebanese border town of Rmeish, lighting up the night sky.



Firefighters work to extinguish a burning bus that was carrying teachers and students from Wat Khao Phraya school, reportedly killing at least 23, on the outskirts of Bangkok, Thailand.

Japan's new PM Ishiba unveils cabinet ahead of snap election

Monitoring Desk
TOKYO: Japan's new Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba on Tuesday unveiled his cabinet as he seeks to heal party divisions and secure a national mandate with an Oct. 27 snap election.

The 67-year-old former defence minister, who last week won a close-fought contest to lead the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), was confirmed earlier in the day as prime minister by parliament. He is scheduled to hold his first press conference later in the day in Tokyo.

The Ishiba administration's approach to diplomacy with Japan's closest ally, the United States, will be in focus, as he has repeatedly called for a more balanced relationship with Washington.

He has also proposed creating an Asian version of the collective security group NATO to deter China, an idea that could draw ire from Beijing and has already been dismissed by a senior US official as hasty.

Ishiba must quell simmering anger at home over rising living costs and a sluggish economy, and navigate a volatile security environment in the day as prime minister in the day as prime minister by parliament. He is scheduled to hold his first press conference later in the day in Tokyo.

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Shanghai knife attack kills 3, injures 15 on eve of China's National Day

Monitoring Desk
SONGJIANG: Three people were killed and 15 others injured in a knife attack at a suburban supermarket in Shanghai on Monday on the eve of China's week-long National Day holiday, the latest in a series of stabbing incidents in major Chinese cities this year.

The assailant, a 37-year-old man surnamed Lin, has been detained, local police of Songjiang district said in a statement on Tuesday.

According to an initial investigation by police, Lin had travelled to Shanghai to vent his anger following a personal financial dispute.

Indian doctors resume strike over colleague's rape and murder

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

The discovery of the 31-year-old's bloodied body at a state-run hospital in the eastern city in August rekindled nationwide anger at the chronic issue of violence against women.

Doctors briefly returned to limited work in emergency departments last month but decided at a union meeting to cease work again. Union spokesman Aniket Mahato said the West Bengal state government had failed to deliver on its promises to upgrade lighting, CCTV cameras, and other security measures in hospitals.

French top diplomat urges Israel against Lebanon ground offensive

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot on Monday urged Israel not to send ground troops into Lebanon, calling on Israel and armed group Hezbollah to immediately agree to a ceasefire.

"I urge Israel to refrain from any ground incursion and to cease fire. I call on Hezbollah to do the same and refrain from any action that could destabilise the region," Barrot told reporters in Beirut.

He called on the sides to agree to a truce put forward at the United Nations.

"It is still on the table. There is still hope, but there is little time," Barrot said.

Paris and Washington, joined by Arab,



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

School bus fire in Thailand kills at least 23

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

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

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

Images posted on social media and carried by local news outlets showed thick grey smoke pouring out of the bus, parts of which were still on fire.

The blaze was later extinguished. A Reuters photographer saw fire trucks, police, and rescue vehicles parked around the blackened vehicle, with a cluster of firefighters at the entrance.

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

Russia calls on Israel to withdraw troops from Lebanon

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russia on Tuesday called on Israel to withdraw troops from Lebanon, warning that the attack would lead to a further escalation of violence in the Middle East.

Israel said commando and paratrooper units launched raids into Lebanon on Tuesday as part of a "limited" ground incursion, while Iran-backed Hezbollah said it had fired a barrage of missiles into Israel, including at its spy agency near Tel Aviv.

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

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: An explosive-loaded drone crashed into one ship Tuesday in the Red Sea as a missile exploded against another, the British military and private security officials said, marking the latest suspected attacks by Yemen's Houthi rebels.

The attacks likely are the rebels' first assaults on commercial shipping in weeks as the Israel-Hamas war threatens to become a regional conflict.

They come as Israeli ground forces entered Lebanon after days of Israeli airstrikes that killed Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and other top officials, and earlier explosions of sabotaged electronic devices used by the Shiite militia. The Houthis threatened "escalating military operations" targeting Israel on Monday after they apparently shot down a U.S. military drone flying over Yemen.

The first attack took place some 110 kilometers (70 miles) off the port city of Hodeida. A captain on a ship saw four "splashes" near his vessel, the British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations center said in a warning.

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

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



A view of a damaged road resulting in the disruption of all means of transportation after the deadly flood following heavy rainfall, along the bank of Kalati River, in Bhumidanda village of Panauti municipality, in Kavre, Nepal.

Anger in Nepal over relief delays as flood toll hits 218

Monitoring Desk
KAVRE: Survivors of the monsoon floods that ravaged Nepal over the weekend criticised the government on Tuesday for inadequate relief efforts during a disaster that killed at least 218 people.

Deadly floods and landslides are common across South Asia during the monsoon season from June to September but experts say climate change is making them worse. Entire neighbourhoods in the capital Kathmandu were inundated at the weekend, along with villages in remote pockets of the Himalayan country that were still awaiting relief efforts.

"There is no road, so no one has come," Mira KC, who lives in a village in Kavre district to Kathmandu's east, told AFP. "Even if they do, those who died are dead already and the damage is done. All they will do is offer condolences, what will they do?"

The floods disproportionately hit Kathmandu's poorest residents living in haphazard slums along the banks of the Bagmati river and its tributaries.

US military slams 'unsafe' Russia fighter jet maneuver near Alaska

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The US military on Monday released video of what it said was an unsafe maneuver by a Russian fighter jet near Alaska during an intercept by the US military last week.

The United States regularly carries out aerial intercepts of Russian aircraft in international airspace near Alaska, and usually says they are carried out in a safe and professional manner.

Swiss glacier melt exceeds average in 2024 after hot summer

Monitoring Desk
ZURICH: Swiss glaciers melted at an above-average rate in 2024 as a blistering hot summer thawed through abundant snowfall, monitoring body GLAMOS said on Tuesday.

Earlier this year, glaciologists had celebrated heavy winter and spring snow dumps in the Alps, hoping this would signal a halt to years of hefty declines or even a reversal of losses. But with average August temperatures a few degrees above freezing even at the 3,571 meter high Jungfraujoch station perched above the Aletsch Glacier, scientists measured record ice losses across the country that month.

Fires in Brazil's Amazon rainforest region surge for third month

Monitoring Desk
SANTAREM: Fires in Brazil's Amazon rainforest region surged to the highest number for September in almost a decade and a half, preliminary government data showed on Tuesday, after reaching similar highs in the two preceding months.

A prolonged drought across much of South America, linked to climate change, means the fires in Brazil's Amazon have burned more intensely this year and at times smoke has covered more than half of the continent. Satellites detected 41,463 fire hot spots in Brazil's Amazon in September, the largest number for that month since 2010, data from the National Institute for Space Research (Inpe) showed.

Fires in the first nine months of the year are also the worst for that period since 2007.

A Reuters reporter traveling on Monday on a flight to Santarem in the Amazonian state of Para saw hundreds of miles of haze. Para also recorded the highest number of fire hot spots for the month of September since 2007, the data showed.

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

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

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

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

US sees indications of imminent Iranian missile attack on Israel

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

A second US official said that the Iranian strike could be as large or potentially bigger than the one on April 14 in which Tehran launched more than 300 missiles and drones. Iran's mission to the United Nations did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

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

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

Gaza children 'extremely impacted' by war: UNICEF

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

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

He talked to AFP about the plight of Gaza's children, who have not had a single day of education since the Israel-Hamas war broke out on October 7.

"You see children who are not allowed to have the life of normal children, no education, no play, no joy," Crickx said.

"The faces of these children are... so sad."

Most children he saw in the war-battered Palestinian territory were helping their family as they no longer had classes to attend.

"So, you see a lot of children carrying these dirty yellow plastic jerrycans" with up to 25 litres of water, he said.

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

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

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

The boy's uncle had died a horrific death, Crickx said.

Ahmad "was saying things that a 10-year-old should not tell you, how the body was in pieces, how the head was far away."

Rate of ocean warming has nearly doubled since 2005: study

Monitoring Desk
BREST: The pace at which oceans are warming has almost doubled since 2005 as global temperatures rise because of human-caused climate change, a report from the EU monitor Copernicus said on Monday.

The findings by the Copernicus Marine Service underscore the consequences of a warming planet on oceans, which cover 70 per cent of earth's surface and acts as a major regulator of the climate.

Ocean warming has "increased continuously" since the 1960s but sharply accelerated in the years since 2005, oceanographer Karina von Schuckmann from Copernicus told reporters. Over the past two decades, the pace of warming has close to doubled from a long-term rate of 0.58 watts per m2 to 1.05 watts per m2. "Ocean warming can be seen as our sentinel for global warming," said von Schuckmann, a specialist on the unique role the ocean plays in Earth's climate system.

The findings echo the IPCC, the expert panel of climate scientists mandated by the United Nations, on the longer-term heating of the oceans because of humanity's release of planet-heating emissions.

Since 1970 some 90pc of excess heat trapped in the atmosphere due to the release of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases has been absorbed in the oceans, the IPCC says. Warmer oceans fuel storms, hurricanes and other extreme weather by influencing global weather patterns and where rainfall lands. Copernicus said its report detailed "record-breaking ocean temperatures, marine heatwaves stretching down to the deep ocean, unprecedented sea ice loss and rising levels of heat stored in the ocean."

It said in 2023, more than 20pc of the world's oceans experienced at least one severe to extreme marine heatwave, events that have ripple effects for marine life and fisheries. Such heatwaves can lead to the migration and mass mortality of certain species, harm fragile ecosystems, and interfere with the flow of deep and shallow waters, hindering the distribution of nutrients.



People chant slogans as they participate in a protest condemning and marking one month since the rape and murder of a trainee medic at a government-run hospital in Kolkata, India.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

Rana Sana says: Imran's political approach undermines democracy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Adviser to the Prime Minister on Inter-Provincial Coordination and Political Affairs, Rana Sanaulah, on Tuesday said that political approach of the founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) negates the essence of democracy in the country.

Speaking to a private news channel, he said that the PTI leader spent three and a half years attempting to undermine every politician and political party in Pakistan.

"He insisted on avoiding dialogue, striving for a political landscape where only his party remained dominant," he said.

Commenting on the current government's progress.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

He instructed the relevant authorities to take preventive measures, and establish effective supervision and checks and balances to stop reemergence of the disease in the country. He also directed the authorities to leverage existing technical capacity and expertise, urging field officers, doctors and others to collaborate effectively to achieve success in all areas of life.

Pakistan, Oman agree on MoU to facilitate enhancement of workforce

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Oman agreed on the early finalization of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on labor and manpower exchange which would facilitate the enhancement of Pakistan's workforce and its smooth movement from Pakistan to Oman. This was decided in a recent meeting held in Muscat between Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Chaudhry Salik Hussain and Minister of Labour of the Sultanate of Oman Dr. Mahad bin Said bin Ali Baowain, said a press release issued here.

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

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

He said that the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis was upgrading the technical training centers in Pakistan on modern lines which would train the workforce according to the certification requirement of each country or region. Chaudhry Salik Hussain informed that the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis was going to start a compulsory pre-departure orientation program for all the workers going abroad which would educate them about the labor laws of the host country.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti coming to airport to see off PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari to Islamabad.

CEO Health Card says: Govt utilizing resources to provide health facilities

QUETTA (APP): Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Health Card Balochistan Dr. Samiullah Kakar on Tuesday said that the government is utilizing all available resources to provide health facilities to the people.

He expressed these views while chairing a meeting with MS Dr. Sultan Lahri of Helper Eye Hospital, MS Dr. Ishaq Panizai of Civil Hospital Quetta, consultants of the medical faculty, cardiology, gynecology and surgery departments.

Dr. Sami said that the misunderstandings regarding the health card have been removed in Bolan Medical Hospital and treatment of patients through health card has been formally started. Soon 247 services at BMCH will be fully available for patients on health card, he noted. He said that health services would be provided absolutely free through the health card so that every individual, especially the poor and needy could easily access the best treatment.

He said that Cardiac Department and other 11 specialties in Civil Hospital Quetta have committed to continue providing quality health services to the poor and deserving people of Balochistan through Health Card Program.

He also assured the consultants that the health card program would provide full support to the consultants saying that collective efforts are very important for the success of the health card program.

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Bugti greets Chinese nation on 75th National Day: Balochistan Govt. to ensure timely completion of all projects under CPEC, says Chief Minister

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti has congratulated the Chinese nation on the 75th National Day and said that the friendship of Pakistan and China is higher than Himalaya and deeper than the oceans.

In a felicitation message issued here on eve of the 75th National Day of the Peoples Republic of China observed on Tuesday, the Chief Minister said that the Pak-China economic, social and commerce relations span over last several decades. These relations are important for the regional peace and balance of power and stability, he added.

The Chief Minister said that Pakistan values its relations with China a lot and the CPEC is also an important part of expanding the long-standing relations between the two countries.

He said that work is continued on certain important projects including trade and energy, he added.

The Chief Minister said that the provincial government would ensure timely completion of all the projects under CPEC.

With this, not only more opportunities of livelihood would be created, but new era of development and construction would be started in the province, adding he believed.

He said that the people of two countries could be brought together through cultural exchange programmes. He said that the provincial government is taking steps to make effective the progress on the CPEC projects.

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Now one chief justice should go, second should come: Naeem

ISLAMABAD (Online): JI Amir Hafiz Naeem ur Rehman has demanded of Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa to take initiative to end prevailing judicial crisis.

"We will not accept any constitutional package of government. Opposition parties are requested not to be hoaxed by government. Next strategy in connection with Haq Do Tehreek will be given after October 7, he said this while addressing a press conference here Tuesday.

He held the entire Pakistan will stand in support of Palestine on October 7 so that one voice goes to world that we are with Palestine. We are making contacts with different political parties in this connection. He stated JI will start protest movement under Haq Do Awam Ko after October 7. Government has breached the agreement made with us. In this regard we will start our movement on October 7.

Both youth hailing from Zhob died on the spot in the accident. Police and rescue teams reached the scene and shifted the bodies to Zhob Trauma Center.

Two youth crushed to death by over speeding bus

ZHOB (INP): Two youth were crushed to death by an over speeding bus at Zhob-Quetta National Highway on Tuesday.

According to details, a reckless driven bus ran over a motorcycle carrying two youth near BRC College in Zhob.

Both youth hailing from Zhob died on the spot in the accident. Police and rescue teams reached the scene and shifted the bodies to Zhob Trauma Center.

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PYCA organized awareness workshop in Quetta

QUETTA (APP): Pakistan Youth Change Advocates (PYCA) organized an awareness workshop in Quetta for bringing together journalists to advance the cause of the transform Pakistan campaign.

This workshop strove to inform journalists of their roles as TRANSFORM Pakistan ambassadors for the regulation of industrially produced trans fats (ITFAs) and ban on partially hydrogenated oils (PHOs) in all dietary sources across Pakistan.

Media Advocacy Workshop was started on September 30th at the Quetta Press Club.

A total of 19 journalists from major print and electronic media platforms participated in the training.

"We have been doing discussions on the urgent need to regulate industrially produced trans-fatty acids (ITFAs) across all dietary sources and to legislate a ban on the production and distribution of partially hydrogenated oils (PHOs) in Pakistan to ensure that the food that we all consume is free of these poisonous substances. Among these discussions, one on one talks with media personnel remains pivotal considering the power of media to bring change," said Areebah Shahid, Executive Director at PYCA.

The workshop was attended by Deputy Director Technical, Balochistan Food Authority, Mr. Nageeb Ullah.

Addressing the group of journalists, he said, "A single regulation is necessary in times of health crisis in Pakistan.

MNCH Program boosts healthcare Infrastructure in Balochistan

QUETTA (APP): In a significant move to enhance maternal healthcare in Balochistan, the Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH) Program headed by Dr Gul Sabeen Azam, has established a Pre-Fabricated Static Centre in Dera Bugti.

"This initiative, directed by Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Bugti, aims to reduce maternal mortality rates in the region by providing accessible healthcare services," said Dr Gul Sabeen, Provincial Coordinator MNCH Balochistan while talking to APP here Tuesday.

She noted that the newly inaugurated Centre, launched by Ejaz Sarwar, DC Dera Bugti, with support from Dr. Azam Bugti, DHO Quetta, will facilitate normal deliveries and enable swift referrals of complicated cases to the District Headquarters Hospital (DHO).

To address transportation delays, Dr Gul Sabeen said a critical factor in Balochistan's high maternal mortality rates, an ambulance has also been provided.

This development follows the MNCH Program's earlier successes in Usta Mohammad and Naseerabad, where similar Pre-Fabricated Units were established in 2022.

About increasing its outreach, she said the program plans to extend its support to other districts, further strengthening healthcare infrastructure in the province.

Govt contacted heirs of ailing child taking notice of post viral on social media

QUETTA: The Government of Balochistan has contacted the family of the ailing child whose post had gone viral on social media for treatment. The spokesman of Provincial Government, Shahid Rind said that the child suffering from disease has been admitted in the Children hospital. The operation of child would be conducted in the Children Hospital on advise of the doctors, the spokesman of provincial government added.

Dr. Samiullah Kakar said that the process of treating patients through health card in Helper Eye Hospital Quetta was stalled for the last 8 months which has been started.

He said that Cardiac Department and other 11 specialties in Civil Hospital Quetta have committed to continue providing quality health services to the poor and deserving people of Balochistan through Health Card Program.

He also assured the consultants that the health card program would provide full support to the consultants saying that collective efforts are very important for the success of the health card program.

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He also assured the consultants that the health card program would provide full support to the consultants saying that collective efforts are very important for the success of the health card program.

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Fatal shooting in Panjur

PANJGUR: Unidentified armed men opened fire in Chitkan New Bazaar, Gadroshiya Point, resulting in the death of Pir Jan, son of Sofi Aslam, a resident of Chitkan.

Police sources confirmed the incident and launched an investigation into the fatal shooting.

Labourer shot dead by robbers over resistance

DUKI (INP): Robbers gunned down a labourer and injured another over resistance during a robbery here on Tuesday, police said.

According to details, two armed robbers attempted to snatch motorcycle from labourers in Meraj area Salazai Stop of district Duki of Balochistan. The labourers offered resistance and injured a robber in attack by hoeing. The robbers opened straight firing killing a labourer on the spot, leaving other critically injured and fled the scene.

PCG seizes arms, narcotics in Balochistan

QUETTA (APP): Pakistan Coast Guards (PCG)'s jawans seized arms and narcotics in respective areas of Balochistan including Gwadar, general area Musa Goth, Winder and Uthal.

According to PCG's spokesman, on a tip off, PCG's personnel conducted raids at places and recovered arms including 226 Glock pistols with magazines, 34 Beretta pistols with magazines, 145 30-bore pistols, 140 Sapier magazine 30-bore pistols and 324 Sapier magazine Gulag pistols.

The Pakistan Coast Guards also seized drugs including alcohol, hashish and heroin during the past few days.

According to details, 959 bottles of high quality foreign liquor and 2203

cans of beer were recovered from Gadani area.

In a similar operation, 332 kg of high quality hashish was recovered from Gwadar in the last few days.

Apart from this, 44.5 kg of high quality heroin hidden in a suspicious house and bushes were seized from Winder and Uthal and two persons were arrested.

The seized liquor and heroin are worth around Rs 60 million in the international market.

It should be noted that Pakistan Coast Guard is always engaged in preventing drug and all kinds of smuggling and will continue to play its role in cleaning the society from the scourge of drugs and illegal weapons.

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