

Independent

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Ambitious CM Youth Skills Development Programme launched: Dream of sending youths to abroad for livelihood after making them skilled materialized, says CM

Mir Sarfraz Bugti says 30,000 youngsters to be sent abroad gradually; and merit to be ensured in CM Youth Skills Development Programme; assures equal selection of youngsters from every district; urges youths to adopt positive approach for development; says provincial government is spending resources on youths minimizing other needs and projects; vows to bring them closer to State by ending bad governance

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has stated that the provincial government is spending its resources on youths of the province minimizing its other needs and projects. He exhorted the youths to adopt positive approach for development and not be misled.

He said that it was a dream to send youths of the province abroad for livelihood after making them skilled and now that his-

toric dream is being materialized. The Chief Minister was addressing the inauguration ceremony of the Chief Minister Youth Skills Development Programme here on Friday morning.

The Chief Minister formally inaugurated the CM Youth Skills Development Programme. Under which, some 30,000 youngsters would be sent abroad for livelihood.

First batch of the skilled youngsters will be sent abroad in November

this year. The provincial ministers, Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan, Additional Chief Secretaries, administrative secretaries of the concerned departments, other senior officials and government functionaries participated in the ceremony.

The Chief Minister asserted without mincing the words that merit would be ensured in implementation of the CM Youth Skills Development Programme

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding relief efforts in Gaza and Palestine by the Government of Pakistan.

Amendment made to Elections Act cannot undo judgment on reserved seats: SC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Friday issued a clarification regarding the judgment in reserved seats case.

In a two-page clarification, the court said, "Since the Commission and PTI both have asked for a second clarification, we want to simply clarify and reiterate the well-settled exposition of law that the effect of the amendment made in the Elections Act cannot undo our judgment with retrospective effect."

The Court granted the relief in the Short Order to enforce the right of the electorate through political parties to have proportional representation in the reserved seats under paragraphs (d) and (e) of clause

(6) of Article 51 and paragraph (c) of clause (3) of Article 106 of the Constitution, therefore, the amendments made in the Elections Act after the release of four Short Order will have no bearing and the Commission is bound to implement the judgment passed by the Supreme Court of Pakistan, in its letter and spirit, without seeking any further clarification."

It said, "Office is directed to send this clarification to the Commission and the representative of PTI who filed the application for clarification and also upload this clarification on the Supreme Court website. Both the Civil Misc. Applications are disposed of accordingly."

Resolution adopted in BA sitting about waiving off arrears of electricity by declaring Balochistan calamity hit

Independent Report QUETTA: A resolution was adopted in the session of Balochistan Assembly about waiving off the arrears of electricity by declaring the province calamity hit.

The session was held with the Speaker, Captain (Retd) Abdul Khaliq Khan Achakzai in the chair on Friday afternoon.

The Member Provincial Assembly, Maulana Hidayatur Rehman Baloch tabled the resolution.

While interacting with the presenter of resolution, Speaker said that the provincial assembly should be declared as calamity hit.

Speaking on the occasion, the Provincial Min-

ister for PHE, Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran said that the issue of electricity is being confronted in the whole province.

The Member Provincial Assembly, Ms. Farah Azeem Shah said that we are weeping on the issues of electricity and Sui gas while the world is developing fast.

She said that we would not make payment of the capacity of IPPs just because the poor people can't pay the amount due to poverty.

The Provincial Minister for Irrigation, Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umrani stressed that the issue of electricity load shedding should be re-

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QUETTA: Chairman Public Accounts Committee Punjab MPA Ali Haider Gilani presenting shield to Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti inaugurating Chief Minister Youth Skills Development Program

PM reaffirms support to Palestine, Lebanon people; calls for donations to relief fund

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday, reaffirming Pakistan's support to the suffering people of Palestine, Gaza and Lebanon, urged the countrymen to donate generously to the relief fund, established by the government.

The prime minister, chairing a meeting to review the relief efforts for dispatching the relief assistance for Palestine, Gaza and Lebanon, appealed the people to supplement the government's efforts and particularly the affluent people to donate wholeheartedly for the fund.

He said the locals as

well as overseas Pakistanis should send their donations to IBAN: PK11SBPD-0000001111114292 or Raast ID: 0111114292 to assist the suffering people of Palestine and Lebanon.

He told the meeting that Pakistan would soon dispatch another 3,000 tents and 12,000 blankets besides eatables and medicines for the people of Palestine and Lebanon.

He sought a report from the Pakistan's ambassadors in the neighboring countries of Palestine and Lebanon - Egypt, Oman and Syria - on the required quantity of tents and blankets, also directing them to

play their role to accelerate the supply of relief goods.

The prime minister condemned the impediments being created by Israel in the relief efforts and lauded the NGOs supplementing the Government of Pakistan's relief efforts.

He said the government would make no compromise over the quality of the relief items and asked the authorities concerned to dispatch the fireproof tents.

Expressing his concerns over the growing Israeli barbarism, he called for the international community's role to end the genocide of Palestinian people.

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Naval Chief calls for preservation of underwater ecosystems



ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, visited Italy and attended the Trans-Regional Seapower Symposium (TRSS).

He delivered a talk on 'Preserving the Underwater: The Secure and Sustainable Use of the Underwa-

ter.' The Naval Chief also held meetings with naval leaders from various countries, a Pakistan Navy news release said.

The Trans-Regional Seapower Symposium (TRSS) took place in Venice, Italy. The event aimed to address the grow-

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PM takes into confidence senior members of cabinet on his meeting with Maulana

ISLAMABAD (Online): Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif has made informal consultation with senior members of the cabinet and taken them into confidence on the meeting with Maulana Fazlur Rehman.

According to sources views were exchanged on PPP and PML-N constitutional amendment drafts during the consultative meeting.

Government will bring joint draft in consultation with the allied parties.

Law minister Azam Nazir Tarar and Attorney General gave briefing on important legal and constitutional matters.

Special Parliamentary committee approves constitutional amendment draft

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman, Special Parliamentary Committee, Syed Khurshheed Ahmed Shah Friday claimed that the committee has unanimously approved draft of the 26th Constitutional Amendment.

The Parliamentary Special Committee met under the chair of Syed Khurshheed Ahmed Shah to deliberate on the proposed constitutional amendment draft.

Talking to the media post consultative meeting, Khurshheed Shah said that he was unaware of the Supreme Court's recent decision but confirmed that consensus had been reached on the proposal to allow

overseas Pakistanis to contest general elections.

Shah said that the draft approved by the special committee would be then presented to the federal cabinet.

He also clarified that overseas Pakistanis would be allowed to contest elections, with a requirement to renounce dual nationality within three months.

Khurshheed Shah highlighted that PTI was also present at the meeting and raised the point about granting rights to contest elections to the overseas Pakistanis. The committee has recommended to the federal cabinet to include this right in the constitutional amendment draft.

Bilawal warns opposition of brute majority legislation on constitutional amendment



Monitoring Desk

HYDERABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said that he will be compelled to take "controversial path" for the passage of the 26th constitutional amendment if the opposition parties refused to support his efforts to pass the judicial package

with consensus. "I myself making last attempt to convince the opposition parties to vote for the constitutional amendment in a non-controversial way," he said while addressing a rally in Hyderabad held to mark the 17th anniversary of Karsaz incident.

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Gillani issues directives to brief Senate about prevailing law, order situation in Balochistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yusuf Raza Gillani on Friday issued directives to the Interior Minister to come to the House and brief this august forum about prevailing law and order situation in Balochistan.

The Chairman issued the directives after lawmakers from Balochistan including Manzoor Ahmad Kakar and Umer Farooq who raised their voices about deteriorating law and order situation in the province.

Meanwhile, the Chair also referred the calling attention notice to the concern standing committee for detail discussion.



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SS NO. 5/18.10.2024

ISSI hosts Hong Ting Forum: Dialogue in Islamabad in collaboration with Xinhua News Agency

ISLAMABAD (APP): China Pakistan Study Centre at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) in collaboration with Xinhua News Agency organised the Hong Ting Forum: Dialogue in Islamabad titled "Understanding China-Pakistan All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership and Chinese-Style Modernization Development Path."

The event highlighted China's unique national modernisation and the importance of the China Pakistan All Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership. Participants included notables from the diplomatic community, academia, think tanks and civil society, a news release said on Friday.

During his welcome remarks, Jiang Chao, Bureau Chief Xinhua News Agency, stated that under

the strategic guidance of the leaders of both countries, the China Pakistan friendship has stood the test of time. He added that comprehensive reform and promoting the Chinese style modernization under the 18th CPC Central Committee has led to a new milestone. This has also facilitated strengthening the China Pakistan All Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership.

Mudassar Iqbal, Deputy Director Associated Press of Pakistan, commended China's people centered approach to modernization which has resulted in the fruits of growth reaching the people. Pakistan also aspired to follow a similar path to modernization and development. Furthermore, China's sustainable and ecological development is also a guiding bea-

con that can serve as a model for developing nations including Pakistan.

Dr. Salma Malik, Associate Professor Quaid-i-Azam University, stated that the Chinese modernization is rooted in Deng Xiaoping's cardinal principles which included rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, strengthening China's global position, envisioning a new type of the development of Communist Party's own principles. She said that the cardinal principles create harmony between nature and humanity which is reflected in the greening of CPEC and BRI projects.

Dr. Hassan Daud Butt, Associate Professor Bahria University Islamabad, stated that the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) remains the buckle of the belt in the Belt and Road Initiative, where

CPEC is still the most inclusive, vital and progressive of all BRI corridors. Developing countries can also walk the Chinese path to middle and higher income levels by following the Chinese model of development and modernization.

Mr. Farrukh Pitafi, Senior Anchorperson, emphasized that storytelling has always been vital in building positive narratives and that the China story has always been a part of Pakistan's national narrative. It is high time that a retelling of the story of Pakistan-China relations is undertaken by media of both countries.



ISLAMABAD: Mongolia's Prime Minister, Luvsannamsrain Oyun-Erdene, captures memorable moments with Pakistani officials before departing for his homeland, wrapping up a successful visit to Pakistan.

PCB chief greets team for Multan victory, hopes for series win

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi, congratulated the national cricket team for their victory in the Multan Test and expressed hope that they will perform well in the final match to win the series against England.

The PCB chairman praised the cricket team, stating that the success in a home Test after a long time was due to excellent teamwork.

He highlighted the standout performances of Sajid Khan and Nauman Ali, whose brilliant bowling played a key role in the victory against the English team.

The PCB chairman

also commended Pakistani batsman Kamran Ghulam for showcasing his talent by scoring a century in his debut match.

Mohsin Naqvi further said the team's hard work, passion, and professional approach led to the win and added that the new players have justified their selection.

PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi also expressed optimism that the national cricket team will continue their strong performance in the final Test and clinch the series at home ground. Today, Pakistan secured their first home Test victory since February 2021, defeating England by 152 runs in Multan to level the series 1-1.

PM reaffirms... Continued from page 1

He said the major reason behind the world war in the 20th century was the indifference of the world powers to the conflicts.

In the briefing, it was told that since October 8, 2023, 12 cargos had been dispatched to Palestine through six chartered, three PAF special flights and another three through the sea route. The consignments consisted of 3145 tents, 12625 blankets, eatables, milk powder and medicines. Besides, another 3,000 tents and 12,000 blankets were being sent through three flights soon.

The prime minister was informed that two batches of Palestinian medical students had reached in Lahore and Islamabad.

Prime Minister Shehbaz asked the relevant authorities to make arrangements for Palestinian students to study in other disciplines as well, other than the medicine.

Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, federal ministers Ahsan Iqbal, Ahmad Khan Cheema, and Attallah Tarar, Advisor to PM Rana Sanaullah, SAPM Tariq Fatemi, chairmen of Higher Education Commission, and National Disaster Management Authority and relevant senior officers attended the meeting.

Resolution adopted... Continued from page 1

He also pleaded to call the General Manager Sui Southern Gas Company on the issue of Sui gas.

The parliamentary secretary Barkat Khand pointed out that only 15 megawatt electricity is being provided to Makran from Iran. He emphasized that the Iranian government may be approached for supply of 200 megawatt electricity. Earlier, on the point of order, the Provincial Minister for Agriculture, Mir Ali Madad Jatak said that there is an issue of Sui gas load shedding in Sariab area. He urged the chair to call upon the GM SSSGC in the chamber on the issue of gas.

Naval Chief calls for... Continued from page 1

future generations.

On the sidelines of TRSS, the Naval Chief also interacted with naval leaders from various countries. He had meetings with the First Sea Lord of the Royal Navy, Admiral Sir Ben Key; Chief of Naval Operations of the U.S. Navy, Admiral Lisa Franchetti; Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Thai Navy, Admiral Chonlathit Navanukroh; Chief of Staff of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, Admiral Akira Saito; Advisor to the Ministry of Defence of Italy, Professor Andrea Margelletti; and Managing Director of MBDA Italy, Mr. Giovanni Soccodato.

Later, the Chief of the Naval Staff visited the Headquarters of the Secretary General of Defence of Italy and met with Secretary General of Defence Dr. Luisa Riccardi, Director of Naval Armament Vice Admiral Giuseppe Abbamonte, and Deputy Chief of Defence Vice Admiral Giacinto Ottaviani.

During these meetings, matters of mutual interest, emerging shared security challenges in the maritime domain, and bilateral naval collaboration were discussed.

importance of the underwater environment from different perspectives, highlighting challenges and opportunities, and facilitating a fruitful debate within the maritime community.

During his talk, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf emphasized that the preservation of underwater ecosystems and the sustainable use of marine resources are critical to ensuring global biodiversity and economic stability.

"Through a combination of stringent international regulations, innovative technologies, and effective conservation strategies, we can secure a sustainable future for underwater environments while balancing human and environmental needs," the Naval Chief added.

Referring to the forthcoming AMAN Dialogue, concurrent with the Pakistan Navy's multinational exercise AMAN in 2025, Admiral Naveed Ashraf said that it will provide an opportunity for participating Chiefs of Navies and Coast Guards to promote a shared understanding of maritime security issues, including the protection of underwater resources for

also going to be materialized. He said that we are providing the opportunities to the talented youths of the province to move ahead under the Benazir Bhutto Scholarship Programme. Under the Programme, the provincial government would bear the educational expenses of the students for 16 years.

The Chief Minister on the occasion expressed the resolve to bring the youngsters closer to the State by ending bad governance.

He also reiterated his resolve that no job would be sold out and merit would be ensured.

He noted with concern that while we are providing opportunities of progress to the youngsters, they are being made suicide bombers on the other side, he added emphasizing that now the decision has to be made by the people of province.

He said that the State is our identity and as such we have to honour it.

The Chief Minister said that the passage of development comes out from Balochistan, while uneven development is the issue of whole province. He regretfully pointed out that falsehood is spread through baseless propaganda on social media.

He said that while Shanghai Cooperation Organization's summit was going on in Islamabad, on the other hand, resentment was spread through baseless propaganda of rape.

He once again urged the youths to move ahead by adopting positive approach.

Dream of sending youths to abroad... Continued from page 1

and asked the ministers, secretaries and other officers to ensure it.

The Chief Minister also announced that selection of the youngsters would be made equally from all districts.

He urged the youngsters going abroad from Balochistan under the programme to highlight better image of the country.

He said that those going abroad for the livelihood are ambassadors of Pakistan and thus they should earn good name for it.

He also exhorted the youngsters to adopt positive approach for development.

Referring the background and idea of CM Youth Skills Development Programme, Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that unemployment is a big challenge while on the other hand, the opportunities of jobs are limited. So under the given circumstances, the only solution we found out is to send youngsters abroad after making them skilled.

He mentioned that the President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif and Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari were agreed to the idea. Rather Chairman PPP wholeheartedly encouraged us to implement the programme, he added.

The Chief Minister said that we are committed to providing opportunities of development and livelihood to the youths of the province.

He said that dream of development of youths is

IHC seeks report on missing PTI focal person by Oct 21

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday directed the Federal Police to involve intelligence agencies in locating the missing Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) focal person, Advocate Intezar Panjtoha, who has been missing since October 8. The court also sought a full report by October 21. Chief Justice of Islamabad High Court, Justice Aamer Farooq heard the case. During the hearing, Chief Justice Aamer Farooq reviewed the petition filed by Advocate Ali Ijaz Butt for the recovery of Panjtoha. Advocate Faisal Chaudhry, representing the petitioner, along with DIG Police Headquarters Mustafa Tanveer and DSP Legal Sajid Cheema, appeared before the court.

The police stated that Panjtoha's vehicle was last seen entering Islamabad from Rawal Dam Chowk, heading toward Fateh Jang Road. The court expressed concern over the delay and emphasized the need for further action. Chief Justice Aamer Farooq directed the SSP Islamabad to remain in contact with Faisal Chaudhry and to provide all available footage to aid the investigation.

Advocate Chaudhry voiced concerns for Panjtoha's safety, stressing that the priority is to ensure his well-being. The court directed the police to collaborate with intelligence agencies and submit a progress report by October 21.

Faisal Jamali visits Quetta Dairy Farm

Independent Report
QUETTA: Minister Live Stock and Dairy Development Balochistan, Sardarzada Faisal Khan Jamali, visited the Quetta Dairy Farm alongside high-ranking officials. The delegation included Secretary Livestock Muhammad Tayyab Lehri, DG Animal Health Dr. Muhammad Farooq Tarin, and other officials.

During the visit, Dr. Kamran Basir provided a

briefing on the farm's performance. Additional Director Animal Breeding Dr. Mir Ahmed Khan then presented the achievements and significance of Animal Breeding Balochistan.

Jamali emphasized the importance of modernizing the Liquid Nitrogen Plant to enhance livestock development across the province. This would enable better semen production, leading to increased milk and meat production.



QUETTA: MD BPPRA Muhammad Afzal Khosti meeting with Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Nausherwani

Dream of sending youths to abroad... Continued from page 1

also going to be materialized. He said that we are providing the opportunities to the talented youths of the province to move ahead under the Benazir Bhutto Scholarship Programme. Under the Programme, the provincial government would bear the educational expenses of the students for 16 years.

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The Chief Minister said that the passage of development comes out from Balochistan, while uneven development is the issue of whole province. He regretfully pointed out that falsehood is spread through baseless propaganda on social media.

He said that while Shanghai Cooperation Organization's summit was going on in Islamabad, on the other hand, resentment was spread through baseless propaganda of rape.

He once again urged the youths to move ahead by adopting positive approach.



Pakistan team celebrating after winning second Test against England in Multan

Victory at last: Pakistan end home losing streak with 152-run win over England

Noman, Sajid combine to take all 20 wickets to level the three-match series at 1-1; 'We are back': PM lauds Team Pakistan for winning first home Test after long

MULTAN (INP): It had been a long time coming for Pakistan, but the conclusion was swift. Noman Ali and Sajid Khan combined for the second time in the match to bowl out England and seal Pakistan's first win in a home Test since 2021. Eight wickets fell in less than two hours as England went down in a flurry of sweeps and reverse-sweeps. Noman claimed seven of them himself to finish with 8 for 46 and 11 for 147 in the match. With Sajid, who took 7 for 111 in the first innings, picking up the other two, they became the first pair to take

all 20 wickets in a Test since Dennis Lillee and Bob Massie in 1972.

A crushing result, achieved within three-and-a-bit days on a re-used surface that Pakistan had hoped would help their spinners, means the series is level at 1-1 ahead of the third Test in Rawalpindi. It also provided Shan Masood with his first victory since taking over as captain, after a horror run of six consecutive defeats.

This was day four of the second Test, but the ninth day of action for the Multan pitch - with three days in between for a quick

spritz up - and it was by now offering consistent turn. England's not-out batters, Ollie Pope and Joe Root, had been practising their sweeps before the start of play and it quickly became clear what the plan of attack was in their attempts to score a further 261 for victory.

Pope, however, barely played a shot in anger before becoming the first wicket to fall, poking Sajid's second ball straight back to the bowler's hands. Harry Brook attempted to sweep his first ball, Root did likewise and the battle lines were drawn.

Not that such clarity of purpose did England much good. Root and Brook had amassed a record fourth-wicket stand of 454 on this pitch barely a week ago but the turnaround in control and composure was stark. Root faced eight balls, attempting to sweep almost all of them before being hit on the hip as he stretched out on off stump to be given lbw - a decision confirmed as umpire's call on review.

Brook got one reverse away to the boundary but his frenetic approach was not built to last and he went back to his 21st delivery, the ball staying a touch low

as Noman delivered from round the wicket, to be pinned in front of leg stump swinging across the line. England were 78 for 5, the top order back in the dressing room and the game as good as done.

It was soon 88 for 6, as Jamie Smith top-edged a slog sweep to mid-on three balls after dispatching Noman for four with the same shot. Ben Stokes barely played a straight-bat shot and had the most success, reaching 37 at quicker than a run a ball before he was lured down the pitch by Noman. His swing across the line saw the bat end up somewhere near midwicket as Mohammad Rizwan completed the stumping - a fitting metaphor for England losing their grip.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday lauded the Pakistan cricket team for winning the first home Test match against England after a long haul.

Pakistan defeated England at the Multan Cricket Stadium and leveled the three-match series 1-1. The

Green Shirts beat England by 152 runs in the second Test.

"Well done, Team Pakistan for winning the first home Test after a long haul with a historic win against England," the prime minister wrote on his X timeline.

He also appreciated the "spectacular" performances by Sajid Khan and Noman Ali for claiming nine and eleven wickets respectively.

"Remarkable team effort at display," Prime Minister Shehbaz remarked.

President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday congratulated the Pakistan cricket team on winning the Test match against England at Multan Stadium.

The president lauded the spectacular performance of the Pakistani players, particularly the spinners who paved the way to the victory, according to a President House press release.

He expressed the hope that the Green Shirts would keep up displaying the fabulous game in the future as well.

Bilawal warns opposition of... Continued from page 1

The PPP chief said if he failed to evolve consensus on the proposed constitutional amendment "then we all have to pray for the country's democracy".

"If the opposition still refuses to support us despite so many compromises then I will be compelled to pass the amendment with the support of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and the extra members," the PPP chief said.

He added that he will have to pass the 26th constitutional amendment in parliament via "brute majority" with the support of extra members if opposition refused to evolve consensus on the draft.

INP adds: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto claimed to have numbers to approve the constitutional amendment in the parliament.

Addressing to the media after the PPP's parliamentary party meeting, Bilawal said that PPP,

PML-N and JUI-F were on the same page regarding the amendment. Aseefa Bhutto, Yousuf Raza Gilani, Syed Khurshed Shah, Syed Naveed Qamar and others attended the meeting.

He also condemned the surfacing of differences after the consensus was reached. He said that all the lawful demands of the JUI-F chief were forwarded to the PM with the hope that the same would be addressed.

Bilawal further said that all the promises made in the Charter of Democracy would be materialised.

Bilawal Bhutto also paid rich tribute to the martyrs of the Karsaz tragic incident and said fatiha for them.

On the proposal of Aseefa Bhutto, Bilawal was elected as parliamentary leader of both the PPP and the PPP (Parliamentarian).

Bilawal also directed all the parliamentarians to stay in Islamabad till Monday. Bilawal further said that he wanted to pass the amendment without support of the turncoats.



ISLAMABAD: Pak Army soldiers patrolling at Jinnah Avenue during security high alert in the Federal Capital.

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Romina urges climate authority to coordinate with stakeholders for unified climate action

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam has urged the Pakistan Climate Change Authority (PCCA) to play its role to ratchet up collaboration and cooperation among various federal and provincial governmental organisations for achieving climate resilience, environmental sustainability and low-carbon development goals.

Presiding over the 2nd meeting of PCCA held here, the PM's climate aide said, "Driving the Pakistan's long-term sustainability and climate resilience actions is inevitable for ensuring that the country is better prepared to cope with the present and the future exacerbating impacts of climate change in various socio-economic sectors, particularly agriculture, water and energy."

Romina Khurshid Alam said further that the Authority, which has been established at the federal level, has been entrusted with a crucial responsibility of achieving the climate resilience, environmental sustainability and low-carbon development goals by spearheading the country's response to the growing threats of climate change, coordinating efforts across sectors and implementing policies that promote climate resilience through various evidence-based policy measures.

She noted that lack of collaboration and cooperation among federal and provincial government organisations for implementing long-term and short-term national climate change policy measures for coping with the adverse fallouts of climate change has only increased the climate vulnerability of not only various socio-economic sectors but also infrastructure, lives and livelihoods of the people.



ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam presiding over a 2nd meeting of the Pakistan Climate Change Authority in the Committee Room of the M/Climate Change & Environmental Coordination.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Dr. Musadik Malik addresses a seminar on sustainable tobacco control policies, aiming for a healthier Pakistan, organized by the Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC).

Pakistan to host global gathering of lawmakers for justice, peace

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly of Pakistan is set to host the 45th Annual Forum of Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) and the 13th Consultative Assembly of Parliamentarians on the International Criminal Court (CAP-ICC) on October 28-29 here.

The event will bring together parliamentarians from around the world to engage in open dialogue with their parliamentary peers, experts, academics, government officials, representatives of the International Criminal Court and international organizations.

The focus of the sessions will be on advancing domestic and international criminal justice, promoting the rule of law, and upholding human rights, said a

news release.

The event will also delve upon Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

As the current President of PGA, Syed Naveed Qamar, a seasoned Pakistani politician and Member of the National Assembly, will lead this important gathering.

His leadership emphasizes Pakistan's pivotal role in global discussions on justice, human rights, and the rule of law.

The National Assembly is all set to welcome delegates from across the globe for two days of strategic discussions and networking.

The hosting of this global event reflects Pakistan's growing role in promoting global justice, human rights, and security.

AAG tells IHC PM has written letter to US for remission of sentence, release of Aafia

ISLAMABAD (Online): Additional Attorney General (AAG) Munawar Iqbal Duggal has informed Islamabad High Court (IHC) Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif has written a letter to US president for remittance of sentence and release of Dr Aafia Siddiqui from US prison.

The petition related to release of Dr Aafia Siddiqui and her return to Pakistan came up for hearing in single bench of IHC led by justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan Friday.

Petition was filed by Fouzia Siddiqui sister of Dr Aafia Siddiqui petition in IHC.

Imran Shafiq advocate appeared on behalf of Fouzia Siddiqui.

ECP voices discontent over apex court's reserved seats ruling: former minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senior Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader and former federal minister Pervaiz Rashid said on Friday that the Election Commission is discontented with the apex court's ruling on reserved seats.

Speaking to media outside Parliament House, Pervaiz Rashid stressed that the Election Commission's decision on reserved seats will be vital, given the numerous questions raised by the court's ruling.

"We will see what decision the Election Commission makes, as there are many questions arising from the [court's] verdict," he said.

He emphasized that the Supreme Court's decision has raised several questions, and both the Election Commission and independent lawyers have expressed concerns.

Rashid pointed out that, as a constitutional body, the Election Commission must now make a decision, and that decision should be acceptable to everyone.

He added that the allocation of special seats is within the Commission's authority, and their decision will be definitive.

Education key to country's future: Dr. Musadik Malik

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Petroleum, Dr. Musadik Malik, on Friday said that education was essential for securing the country's bright future. In his closing remarks at a seminar on sustainable tobacco control policies, Dr. Malik stressed the importance of efforts to prevent children from dropping out of school.

He said that while the number of smokers is decreasing in most parts of the world, South Asia is experiencing an alarming rise in smoking rates, particularly among women and children. The minister expressed concern over how poverty has been turned into a business, allowing some to profit at the expense of public health.

Ayaz assumes of Chairman IRSA

ISLAMABAD (APP): Secretary Irrigation Department government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa/Member Indus River System Authority (IRSA) Muhammad Ayaz on Friday assumed the charge of the office of Chairman till the appointment of regular member IRSA KPK.

He assumed the charge of Chairman IRSA in terms of Section 4, Clause (2), (3) & (7) of IRSA Act No. XXII of 1992, said a notification issued here. Similarly, Chairman and member Balochistan Indus River System Authority (IRSA) Abdul Hameed Mengal has relinquished the charge.

Pakistan presents Second Periodic Report on ICCPR

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan has presented its Second Periodic Report on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) to the United Nations Human Rights Committee during its 142nd session in Geneva on October 17-18.

The review process, which was broadcast live on UN Web TV, was accessible to the public, member states, and civil society organizations, allowing global audiences to observe the proceedings.

The Pakistani delegation, led by Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan, Speaker of the Punjab Assembly, included key officials such as Malik Ahmed Bherth, Minister for Law & Parliamentary Affairs, Punjab; Allah Dino Khawaja, Secretary of Human Rights; and Muhammad Arshad, Director General (IC).

The Human Rights Committee, composed of 18 independent experts, had earlier issued a "List of Issues" that highlighted specific issues including gender equality, access to justice, and refugee repatriation among others.

IGP says: Ensuring law and order in capital utmost priority

ISLAMABAD: According to the details, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, visited D-Chowk and various duty points, a public relations officer said.

During the visit, he met with the officials of Islamabad Police, other law enforcement departments

and female police officers, boost their morale and appreciated their efforts who are performing duties in order to maintain the law and order situation in the capital. On the occasion, IGP Islamabad has instructed the officials to be highly alert and ready all the time to deal with any emerging law and order situation.

"Will shall take every possible necessary measures to protect the lives and property of citizens as well as private and commercial property and ready to thwart adventurism from any elements" he said while addressing the officials.



Proud of you all for the tireless efforts and bravery you have shown in ensuring the safety of foreign delegations during the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit and safeguarding the lives and property of the citizen's recent law and order situation.

SC constitutes seven benches for next week

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan has constituted seven regular benches for next week to hear the cases.

The first bench would be headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa and comprising Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan and Justice Shahid Bilal while Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Ayesha Malik and Justice Aqeel Abbasi are included in the second bench.

The third bench is comprising Justice Munib Akhtar and Justice Athar Minallah while the fourth bench comprises Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Shahid Waheed.

Similarly, the fifth bench is comprising Justice Amin ud Din Khan, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Irfan Saadat Khan while the sixth bench include Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Musarrat Hilali and Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmed.



ISLAMABAD: Rangers personal stand alert on closed road due to PTI protest in capital city.

CDA chairman for overhauling Islamabad healthcare system

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Capital Development Authority Muhammad Ali Randhawa on Friday emphasized the urgent need for better primary healthcare services to Islamabad citizens.

He called for an ambitious revamping program aimed at improving Rural Health Centers (RHCs) and Basic Health Units (BHUs), which are the backbone of primary healthcare. Chairing a meeting the CDA chairman directed the DHO to develop a comprehensive plan for infrastructure improvement, detailing timelines and associated costs. The DHO briefed the meeting regarding the current status of healthcare services and facilities as well as new initiatives aimed at improving healthcare services in Islamabad.

He further outlined several steps designed to enhance healthcare accessibility and quality in Islamabad.

The discussion highlighted the critical need for infrastructure improvements, replacement of out-

Women in law session focuses on competition law practice

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP), in collaboration with Islamabad High Court Bar Association (IHCBA) and Women in Law Initiative Pakistan, held a dedicated session titled 'Competition Law and Practice'.

This session provided a platform for lawyers to interact with Regulators and discuss matters pertaining to the legal fraternity that is into the practice of Competition Law, said a press release issued here on Friday.

The participants included senior officials from the CCP, office bearers of IHCBA, WIL and a large number of female lawyers.

In his keynote address, Mr. Salman Amin (Member, CCP) underscored the CCP's commitment for promoting open and fair competition in the economy. Emphasizing the significance, he highlighted economic benefits for economy and consumers. Furthermore, he stressed the importance of compliance regime with least intervention needed from the regulator.

Intezar Panjotha recovery case: IHC directs police to contact IB, ISI to trace location

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has directed police to contact IB and ISI to trace location of Intezar Panjotha recovery case besides ordering for filing progress report till October 21.

The order was issued on Friday.

The petition on recovery of Intezar Panjotha focal person of PTI founder Imran Khan who is missing since October 8 came up for hearing before single bench of IHC led by Chief Justice (CJ) Ameer Farooq Friday.

Faisal Chaudhry on behalf of petitioner Ali Ijaz

Buttar appeared in the court while DIG Headquarters Mustafa Tanvir and DSP legal Sajid Cheema also appeared.

The CJ IHC inquired report was given on Saturday that vehicle has been traced. Then what happened after it.

Islamabad police told that the vehicle can be seen while entering into Islamabad. The vehicle turns to left side from Rawal Chowk to Kashmir chowk Srinagar Highway. At 5.02 vehicle moves to Fateh Jang road. After it vehicle goes where, we have to see now.

Parents urged to vaccinate children to prevent diphtheria outbreaks

ISLAMABAD (APP): Dr. Shobha Lakshmi, a renowned specialist in infectious diseases, said on Friday that the diphtheria cases were spreading rapidly in Sindh.

Talking to a private news channel, she explained the seriousness of the disease by adding that diphtheria is a bacterial infection that affects the throat and airways.

It causes severe breathing difficulties, and if untreated, it can lead to complications like heart problems or even death, especially in young children, she added.

She said that the diphtheria is highly contagious and spreads through coughing, sneezing, or even close

ATC rejects bail after arrest plea of PTI leader Aamir in 2 cases

ISLAMABAD (Online): Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Islamabad has rejected bail after arrest plea of PTI leader Aamir Masood Mughal in two cases. Bail plea in two cases registered against Aamir Masood in police station Sangiani and Noon came up for hearing in ATC Islamabad Friday.

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CTO Islamabad hosts feast to honor officers for SCO Summit duty

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) of Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) Muhammad Sarfraz Virk on Friday organized a special feast at the Islamabad Traffic Police Headquarters to honor police officers from other districts who were assigned traffic duty during the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Islamabad. A police spokesman told APP that a total of 1,100 officers were deployed for traffic management during the summit.

He said among them, 585 officers were from the Islamabad Traffic Police, while 515 officers were brought in from other districts to assist with the event. Their outstanding performance in maintaining order and ensuring the smooth flow of traffic throughout the summit has

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Senator Rana Mahmood ul Hassan, Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Cabinet secretariat presiding over a meeting of the Committee at Parliament House Islamabad

contact with an infected person.

Dr. Shobha emphasized the importance of taking precautions, especially in areas where vaccination rates are low.

She urges parents by adding that the spread of the disease should be decreased by the vaccination.

"Make sure children wash their hands regularly, avoid contact with sick people, and always ensure they are up to date with their vaccines.

According to the Health department statistics, around 170 children of Sindh were infected by the diphtheria in October, out of which 27 children died due to the disease.



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been widely appreciated, he added.

During the occasion, CTO Muhammad Sarfraz Virk praised the unwavering efforts of the Islamabad Traffic Police, highlighting that the officers worked tirelessly around the clock to manage traffic effectively.

The CTO emphasized the critical role they played in ensuring smooth traffic flow during such a significant international event.

CTO Virk also acknowledged the patience and understanding shown by the citizens of Islamabad and Rawalpindi during the Summit, describing their cooperation as praiseworthy.

Muhammad Sarfraz Virk thanked the residents of the federal capital for their full support, which was instrumental in the successful execution of traffic arrangements.

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Bilateral progress

While there was no bilateral breakthrough during Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's visit to Islamabad for the SCO summit — and none was expected — the most positive takeaway was that the usual hostility that has marked Pakistan-India ties over the past several years was replaced with courteous exchanges. Though Mr Jaishankar did indulge in the usual Indian rhetoric of 'cross-border terrorism', there was no direct reference to Pakistan, and his words were couched in diplomatese. It has not gone unnoticed that while the format required SCO heads of government to attend, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi stayed away, preferring to send his top diplomat instead. Yet considering the state of bilateral ties, India could have skipped the moot entirely. Therefore, even limited bilateral engagement, under the umbrella of multilateralism, is welcome. Mr Jaishankar exchanged handshakes and pleasantries with the prime minister and his Pakistani counterpart, while thanking the government for its "hospitality and courtesies". This is certainly an improvement over last year, when Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari received a highly uncordial reception at the SCO foreign ministers' meeting in Goa.

Perhaps the SCO — with the heft of China and Russia behind it — is working better as a platform for bringing together regional states than groupings such as the moribund Saarc. The reason for this is largely India's refusal to engage with Pakistan even under the aegis of Saarc. But possibly the thinking is changing in New Delhi, while it might also be true that the Indians do not want to annoy Beijing and Moscow by appearing to sabotage the SCO.

The Indian foreign minister, in his comments in Islamabad, mentioned "terrorism" and "separatism" as obstacles standing in the way of "friendship ... and good neighbourliness". This is, of course, the standard Indian line. However, Pakistan also has legitimate concerns vis-à-vis India, which include the Kashmir question, the treatment of Muslims in India, and the activities of subversive elements on Pakistani soil with the apparent support of New Delhi. The joint communiqué issued after the SCO summit reaffirmed the participants' "commitment to the peaceful settlement of differences ... through dialogue". This is the key to peace in the subcontinent. Dialogue should be uninterrupted and should cover all sticking points standing in the way of better ties. While India's hawks may dismiss the need to talk to Pakistan, dreams of regional integration — especially if Delhi wants to reach Eurasian markets — will remain unfulfilled by not talking. Similarly, hardliners in Pakistan should realise that better ties with India can have economic advantages for this country. There are reports that the resumption of cricketing ties was discussed during Mr Jaishankar's visit. While India has denied this, better sporting ties and restoration of the respective high commissioners, can be the starting point on the long road to normalisation.

Zafar Mirza

Ischemic heart disease, diabetes, strokes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, chronic kidney disease and cirrhosis are among the top causes of death in Pakistan.

Together, these are called non-communicable diseases (NCDs), as opposed to communicable or infectious diseases, which are caused by bacteria, viruses or other living organisms. These are also called chronic diseases as, once they develop, they generally remain for the rest of one's life.

Therapeutic interventions are basically meant to control them to minimise the damage. These diseases are on the rise in Pakistan. 2010 was the year when, for the first time, the burden of disease in Pakistan due to NCDs outweighed communicable diseases, and there has been no looking back. In 2019, there were around 0.83 million deaths caused by NCDs, as opposed to some 0.58m deaths due to infectious diseases the same year.

In the case of diabetes, for example, in 30 years from 1990 to 2019, the dis-

ease has increased between 75 and 100 per cent. Today, every fourth individual above the age of 20 years in Pakistan is estimated to be suffering from Type II diabetes, which makes it a mass of 33m adults, the third largest population after India and China. According to the Global Burden of Disease study, an additional 11m adults in Pakistan have impaired glucose tolerance, while approximately 8.9m people with diabetes remain undiagnosed.

Likewise, ischemic heart disease has increased by more than 25pc in the last 30 years. After neonatal disorders, it is the second leading cause of death in Pakistan. IHD was ranked eighth in 1990 as a cause of the loss of DALYs (sum total of life lived with disability and years of life lost due to premature death) but it jumped to second position in 2019. Cardiologists in Pakistan tell me that they are now seeing far more cases of IHD in young adults than before.

Of course, genetic predisposition (family history) plays an important role in NCDs, but there are a few important behavioural and environmental risk factors

which, if controlled, can effectively prevent and manage non-communicable diseases. The WHO lists five key risk factors for major NCDs, ie, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancers and chronic respiratory diseases, namely: tobacco use, unhealthy diets, physical inactivity, harmful use of alcohol, and air pollution.

This is where lifestyle medicine enters the scene. This is a relatively new genre of medicine, which focuses primarily on lifestyle modification through medical advice. According to the American College of Lifestyle Medicine, "Lifestyle medicine is a medical specialty that uses therapeutic lifestyle interventions as a primary modality to treat chronic conditions including, but not limited to, cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, and obesity."

Lifestyle medicine-certified clinicians are trained to apply evidence-based, whole-person, prescriptive lifestyle changes to treat and, when used intensively, often reverse such conditions. Applying the six pillars of lifestyle medicine — a whole-food, plant-predominant eating pattern, physi-

cal activity, restorative sleep, stress management, avoidance of risky social connections — also provides effective prevention for these conditions." The ACLM presents itself as a society of medical professionals united to reverse chronic disease.

Two weeks ago, I was invited to attend a weekend conference and retreat on lifestyle medicine in the Margalla Hills. The conference was organised by the Riphah Institute of Lifestyle Medicine, the first such institute in Pakistan.

The founder and omnipresent spirit behind the institute is Dr Shagufta Feroz, who has quietly rooted the sapling of lifestyle medicine in Pakistan and is tending it wholeheartedly along with her growing team. She also founded a Pakistan Association of Lifestyle Medicine in 2016, which is now a member organisation of the Lifestyle Medicine Global Alliance.

She is a very accomplished and sought-after medical practitioner, with a PhD degree in holistic nutrition and another PhD and fellowship in integrative medicine, all from the US.

Her close senior associate, Dr Munira Abbassi, also holds a fellowship in endocrinology and metabolism and is board-certified in lifestyle medicine.

Lifestyle medicine puts great emphasis on prevention. I had the opportunity to meet two wonderful experts on preventive cardiology and diabetes. Dr Khawar Kazmi of NICVD and Dr Abdul Jabbar, who came especially from the UAE. Both made evidence-based presentations on the power of primordial, primary and secondary prevention in cardiology and diabetes. Dr Sohaila Cheema, who came from Qatar, spoke about harnessing the power of lifestyle medicine to redefine health.

The retreat part of the conference was great. Participants would start the day at 6 am with a yoga class, enjoy selected healthy menus through the day, interact with each other in organised social events, go for walks in the mountains and visit a few health food stalls. There was enthusiasm and camaraderie among the participants. Despite serious roadblocks due to a political protest call, participants managed to reach the

venue and we heard many adventure stories, one of which involved hours of journey on a Qingqi by a group of young women!

The pharmaceutical industry in Pakistan doesn't seem to have any interest in lifestyle medicine, for obvious reasons. It was a pleasure not to see any pharmaceutical stalls or their product advertisements at this conference. I hope this trend continues.

Four questions kept hovering in my mind during this three-day conference and retreat. One, should lifestyle medicine be another medical specialty? Or should it be a normal way of medical practice to help people modify their lifestyles to prevent and effectively manage diseases? Two, how can lifestyle medicine be mainstreamed at the primary healthcare level? Three, how should our health professionals, not just doctors, be educated and trained in lifestyle medicine at the undergraduate level? And four, how should the medical and food industry and environmental agencies collaborate to minimise the risks to human health? -- Courtesy Dawn

Lifestyle medicine

IMF misses the mark yet again

Nadeem ul Haque | Shahid Kardar

The 24th IMF programme has been approved by the Fund's Board.

As per the Fund's traditional approach, the programme is grounded in a basic accounting and meaningful framework that relies on a cash-based system to achieve a magical number for primary surplus (or deficit), all the while ignoring the structural problems of the country.

At best, lip service is paid to reforms. Despite all the celebrations, let us not forget that we are in a low-investment, low-growth, and low-export trap. Sadly, the IMF has once again missed the opportunity to address Pakistan's structural problems.

The programme essentially rolls over existing liabilities to the IMF and other creditors without any real reform. Most programmes have been doing so without addressing the real issues. How Chinese lenders are treated also appears to be out of the ordinary, with the finance ministry still looking for 're-profiling' — essentially restructuring bilateral debt.

The programme does

not care how the desired primary surplus is to be achieved. For example, the revenue numbers it uses to estimate this surplus includes the profits of the State Bank, which are largely driven by its injections of over Rs12 trillion into commercial banks to essentially lend to government. The interest on these loans is not being considered in the determination of the primary surplus.

Overly ambitious, it also underestimates the economic complexity of reform. We can take the example of two cases. For the last 30 years or so, the final income tax liability on exports has been a sum of one per cent deducted at source by banks on receipts, with no requirement for documentation. Similarly, agriculture has hardly been made liable for income tax, and now farmers with limited capabilities are required to maintain formal documentation — in a cash-based system — and pay regular income tax. Instead of taking a pragmatic, phased approach, the programme demands that, literally overnight, documentation by exporters and farmers should be at a level and of a quality acceptable

to the FBR.

Little has been learned from previous programmes; this one, too, is littered with one-time benchmarks and performance criteria targets to be delivered over the duration of the programme by a limited-capability system, which is overwhelmed by the confines of the political economy, the undertaking made more formidable by prevailing conditions.

There is a misplaced focus on numbers, with an overwhelming emphasis on revenue generation instead of the fiscal structure — especially on the expenditure side of the equation and the nature of instruments to achieve the objectives. Whereas the IMF's core competence is supposedly fiscal structures, our erratic tax policies at the behest of the Fund's single-minded aim of raising revenues, have destabilised the business environment, driving many towards informal economic activities and a culture of tax evasion.

This misplaced objective has resulted in a convoluted and unjust tax regime that is heavily reliant on import tariffs, arbitrary taxes — turnover tax, super tax, CVT, deemed in-

come, etc — presumptive and multiple-rate withholding GST and income taxes. This has led to repeated changes in taxes through 'mini budgets', creating huge uncertainty in the market. Forty years of revenue chasing in this manner has led to the labelling of all Pakistanis tax cheats and burdening them with huge documentation. We now have a most distorted tax structure, along with complete lack of trust between the government and the people — rather like the Sheriff of Nottingham, with the informal sector playing Robin Hood.

Meanwhile, expenditures have continued to run wild, with several expansionary agendas at play, resulting in the government performing numerous functions beyond its staple role. There is an unending drive to increase the number of agencies in the government from all sides. All stakeholders — political, bureaucratic and international partners — want an increase in the number of agencies, infrastructure, social support as well as government employment — all without decent data on the huge paid and growing liabilities and the future op-

erational costs of these structures. The trend has been for structures to grow despite many tasks having become redundant.

Adding to this dilemma is the politicised and expanded PSDP portfolio, with unknown cost overruns and no accountability. These misplaced expenditure priorities are being executed by a bloated and poorly equipped workforce absorbing a significant percentage of the budget, without even fully factoring in the opportunity cost of perks and privileges, including housing, vehicles, etc.

Compounding these problems is Pakistan's heavily regulated market with the government fixing prices and controlling markets. The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics estimates the government's footprint — through price controls or direct intervention — on 70pc of the economy, distorting markets, blocking opportunities and raising the cost of doing business by excessive, obsolete, discretion-laden policy and regulatory frameworks.

The estimated cost of government regulation in

some 50 activities is seen in well over 75pc of the economy. No wonder capital flight persists, investor uncertainty prevails, and the economic environment remains stifled.

Although the IMF charter calls for an open exchange system with a market-determined rate, each Fund programme has led to an appreciated exchange rate, distorting price signals and resource allocations, and making Pakistani exports less competitive, while lowering the cost of imports and further straining balance-of-payments. Despite claims of liberalisation, the exchange rate remains under tight government control, with artificial price and non-price mechanisms preventing the natural market dynamics from playing out. This is facilitated by the delay in the discharge of external obligations.

Excessive reliance on tariffs for revenue purpose as well as excessive non-tariff practices have adversely affected exports. It appears that the IMF has not even scanned the World Bank's work showing how excessive protection and poor tariff policy is reducing exports.

Teenage blues

Zubeida Mustafa

The teenage years are not a trouble-free phase in a young person's life. The transition to adulthood poses many challenges, mainly due to physiological reasons, including hormonal changes in the body and mental and emotional factors caused by a new experience. It helps if girls and boys are given knowledge about puberty in advance. It is generally believed that it is the job of the family and the teachers to play the role of guide in such matters. But even today, this is not the case universally, given society's prudish norms and taboos.

What happens when those expected to counsel the child at an appropriate age fail to perform their duty? The child's natural curiosity and propensity to explore take over. There are many peers and friends of the same age who extend a helping hand. What is dolled out is mostly incorrect information and misguided advice. What is never talked about socially and in education circles is the easy availability of technology which the youth use — ostensibly to facilitate their studies. The fact is that a lot of this online technology is used to access pornography.

In this context, I appreciate even more the literature produced in recent years by various organisations and writers. Its first purpose is to educate and not titillate.

The first to enter this field was Ahung, which started publishing their Life Skills-Based Education books in the 1990s and continue to do so. They tell me that now they are producing videos for teachers and students as well, and that hundreds of schools are reaching out for their publications

to benefit the child. I had seen these books in the Indus Resource Centre schools several years ago.

A new entrant in this sector is the ardent women's rights supporter and gynaecologist, Dr Shershah Syed. His latest book, Ammi Batayey, was launched at the Arts Council's Writers and Readers' Café. Since the subject of the session was Auraton ke amraaz: afsana aur haqiqat (Women's diseases: myth and facts) the book was overshadowed as the focus was on women's health rights. But Dr Shershah's book is important. Being a medical professional, his understanding of the subject is profound and, being a prolific writer, his style is appealing to the young reader. It is in the form of a dialogue.

When I distributed Ammi Batayey to a number of women with young children I received a mixed response. Some uneducated mothers to whom the book was read out were deeply interested and curious. They asked so many questions that I had to refer them to the Koohi Goth medical complex in Malir managed by Dr Shershah's family.

The reaction I received from another quarter — female students of 12-14 years of age — was shockingly different. They accepted the book in a very matter of fact manner. They apparently knew much more than what the book contains — saying that they obtained 'creams' from 'an aunty'. Another confided that her elder sisters knew all about intimate acts as they had watched it on YouTube.

Bits of information set me thinking, and connecting the dots gathered sporadically, the full picture emerged.

According to Sahil,

an NGO seeking to break the silence on child abuse, Pakistan ranked third globally in online child pornography in 2022. Wikipedia tells us that the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority has been banning pornographic websites in the thousands since 2011. I remembered all the horror stories when the Kasur scandal emerged in 2015; hundreds of children were kidnapped for pornographic films in-volving them. Cases have been reported of children being picked up and being forced to watch pornographic media.

Mental health consultants reveal discreetly that many adults are turning to them to confess that they have been watching pornographic films on the sly, and that even when they feel they have had enough, they are unable to wean themselves off this damaging habit. Damaging it is, no doubt; a psychiatrist describes watching pornography as addictive and isolating. Another mental health consultant says it "distorts belief and the perception of human relationship and sexuality" and leads to negative feelings in the affected person about himself.

Who do we turn to now? The government, which sees an enemy behind every bush, is busy chasing it while neglecting the social evils that are destroying this country. Criminals of all stripe have been given a free rein to loot the country of its human wealth.

Our youth can be equipped with the best self-defence mechanism to protect themselves. That comes only from a sensible and balanced education, combined with sports and games. Alas, these are not our government's priority. -- Courtesy Dawn

Ambulances for Karachi

Khurram Zia Khan

The global medical fraternity unanimously agrees that providing pre-hospital care to patients can save many lives. In India's state of Tamil Nadu, the 108 emergency transportation service, launched in 2008, has played an effective role in reducing infant mortality, and also saved the lives of 120,271 road accident victims through timely interventions. The response rate of Sri Lanka's Suwa Seriya ambulance service is 12 minutes, which is the fastest in the world. The Rescue 1122 emergency service was launched in 2004 in our own province of Punjab.

Karachi, Pakistan's largest city, has many ambulance services, but most, unfortunately, do not have the requisite facilities and equipment needed to administer pre-hospital treatment to patients. The first lifesaving ambulance on Karachi's roads was seen courtesy of the Aman Foundation. In 2018, this foundation handed over its 60 lifesaving ambulances to the Sindh government, on the understanding that the provincial government would increase the number of lifesaving ambulances to 200 for Karachi. The Sindh chief minister reiterated on the floor of the assembly that his government would increase the size of the fleet in accordance with the requirements of the city. Unfortunately, this pledge has not been fulfilled.

The Sindh Medical and Rescue Service (SERS), which started out with a fleet of 85 lifesaving ambulances (60 in Karachi, 25 in Thatta and Sajawal) in 2018, now has a total of 411 such vehicles. The size of the fleet has increased manifold, which is a good

sign, but it seems that Karachi has been left out.

Although the province was to provide an additional 140 lifesaving ambulances, in the last six years or so, only 31 new lifesaving ambulances have been added to the fleet of ambulances operating in Karachi under SERS. Karachi is the capital of Sindh, and more than 40 per cent of the province's population resides here. On the basis of population, it makes sense for 40pc of the province's health, education, and development budget to be spent on Karachi. If that is not possible, then at least 25pc. If SERS had diverted only 25pc of its fleet expansion to Karachi, the city could now have had 140 lifesaving ambulances, a strategy that would not only have benefited Karachi's residents but also brought the chief minister closer to fulfilling his commitment.

The lack of lifesaving ambulances is felt when people speak of their ordeal. I decided to raise this critical issue again when, a few weeks ago, the wife of a deceased friend narrated how she kept trying to get a properly equipped ambulance for her husband for three hours; after this critical period of time, she had to shift her husband to hospital via a carrier ambulance from a social welfare institute. The patient had already expired upon reaching the hospital.

Two years ago, I, too, had to wait for a SERS ambulance for more than three hours to shift my mother to hospital.

After this atrociously long wait, we shifted her, in critical condition, to a private hospital using the ambulance of the same hospital because of a relative's

links with the medical unit's administration. If people living in the city's more upscale localities struggle to get even basic services, what must be the problems faced by residents in underprivileged localities?

While discussing the provision of lifesaving ambulances, an argument that is often put forward is that Karachi has an abundance of narrow lanes and huge lifesaving ambulances would not be viable. This, in my view, is not a valid argument and dep-ri-ves citi-zens of a basic right. If the entrance of big vehicles insi-de narrow streets is not possible, then it is the responsibility of the provincial government to find a method to solve this problem. The quickest solution is for a small vehicle to bring the patient out of the street and shift him/her to the lifesaving ambulance at the first accessible point.

SERS is operating 10 motorcycles in Karachi under its Rapid Response Bike project. Although this is a good initiative, it cannot be a replacement for lifesaving ambulances. In 2018, when the chief minister announced that Karachi would have an additional 140 ambulances, the cost of making such an ambulance was approximately Rs75 million. Today, this figure has jumped to Rs125m.

Also in 2018, Karachi needed 200 ambulances based on the city's population. Today, not only has the cost increased but the required number of ambulances has also gone up due to the city's growing population.

Karachi has provided shelter to people of all ethnicities, but when it comes to being served, there is no one to help it. -- Courtesy Dawn

CM lays floral wreath at Karsaz incident martyrs

KARACHI (APP): The Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Friday said that 17 years ago, Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto landed at Karachi Airport after ending her exile. "Countless people across Pakistan gathered to receive their beloved leader," he said.

He said this while speaking to the media after laying a floral wreath at the Memorial of the Martyrs of the Karsaz incident. He was accompanied by provincial ministers Nasir Shah and Jam Ikram Dharejo, MPAs Mukesh Chawla, Imdad Pitafi and others. He added that due to the presence of a sea of people on the road, the convoy of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto took 10 hours to reach Karsaz, where it met an explosion.

Though hundreds of party workers were killed in the blast, even then, a large number of party workers gathered around

of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto could not be traced because the crime scene was washed to hinder any thorough investigation. "I had given details of the Karsaz incident to the CTI for investigation, but they told me that the ground evidence was not available, therefore it could not be traced," he said.

Talking about a constitutional amendment, the CM said that Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto is trying to develop consensus on each and every proposed clause.

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah categorically stated that the stance taken by the Pakistan People's Party (PPP)-led government on the incident of Dr Shahnawaz Kumbhar has never been witnessed before in this country; "even then Section 144 was violated by those who call themselves 'rawadar' or tolerant to protest.

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KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah speaks to the media at the Karsaz Memorial of Martyrs.

Governor Kundi remembers Oct 18 Karsaz tragedy; pays tribute to martyrs

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday remembered the tragic Karsaz incident and paid tribute to the martyrs.

In a condolence message, the Governor termed the incident as one of the most tragic events in Pakistan's history that claimed the lives of at least 180 deaths and 500 injuries.

He paid tribute to the martyrs and emphasized that October 18, 2007, serves as a reminder of the sacrifices made by brave individuals in the struggle for democracy.

Governor Kundi

highlighted that this event symbolizes the sacrifices made for democracy and reminds us of the necessity for national unity in combating terrorism and extremism.

He recalled how, on that day, people from all walks of life, women, children, and the elderly gathered at Karachi Airport to welcome their leader, a moment that was met with hostility from enemies of democracy, turning joy into mourning for the nation.

Reaffirming his commitment to the promotion of democratic values, justice, and peace, Kundi expressed condolences to the families

of the martyrs, assuring them that the nation would never forget their sacrifices.

He urged collective efforts to fulfill their mission and uphold the principles they fought for.

It's worth mentioning here that the Karsaz bombing attack occurred on October 18, 2007 in Karachi.

It was an attack on a motorcade carrying former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. The bombing occurred two months before she was assassinated.

Most of the dead were members of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP).

LHC decides to constitute full bench to probe into recent incidents in educational institutions

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has decided to constitute full bench to probe into recent incidents in educational institutions.

The petition seeking probe into harassment incidents in educational institutions came up for hearing before Chief Justice (CJ) LHC Aalia Neelum Friday.

IG Punjab and other officers appeared on the order of court.

The CJ LHC inquired "IG Sahb as to why step was not taken to stop videos from going viral. Have you contacted any authority to stop videos from going viral?"

IG Punjab replied We contacted PTA.

The CJ LHC while moving to IG Punjab remarked today is October 18 and videos went viral on October 13 and 14. You wake up when fire flares up and all is reduced to ashes. The court inquired from IG Punjab you contacted the relevant authorities too late.

IG Punjab replied the video went viral from more than 700 accounts. Police

have only one institution to check cyber crime.

The CJ LHC remarked IG Sahb it is your failure. You allowed the children to come on road. You should also give account of two days that you did what on October 14 and 15. Videos are still lying on X and Tiktok. You did nothing for two days. You kept on waiting.

The CJ LHC remarked you did nothing in two days after filing documents and started your work from October 16. If there is intent then all works are done.

IG Punjab took the plea it is not so easy to prevent data from being uploaded and nor we have authority in this regard. If we will stop it from one account it is reposted from other account.

The CJ LHC inquired had any harm been caused to the girls who came on roads then who was responsible.

Advocate General Punjab said it was said through Instagram on October 12 that a girl was assaulted in a private college.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Health Khawaja Salman Rafique presides over the 13th meeting of Cabinet Committee for anti-dengue, other diseases and disaster management.

Issues hindering plots for journalists at RUDA resolved: Azma Bokhari

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari announced that the case regarding plots designated for journalists in RUDA has been resolved, along with the lifting of the stay order.

"All eligible journalists will be granted five-marla plots. More than 3,200 journalists will receive plots under this scheme. A 10% quota has also been reserved for DGPR employees," she stated.

Speaking to the media, she congratulated all journalists in Lahore, saying, "Our hard work has paid off. This matter had been pending in court for a long time, and today the stay has been lifted." She acknowledged the cooperation of Arshad Ansari, President of the Lahore Press Club, in this effort.

Bokhari mentioned that they have a list of Lahore Press Club members, and those who are non-member journalists with ten years of experience can also submit applications. Journalists who have been associated with any media house for ten years only need to submit their salary slips for one year along with their application, she added.

She emphasized, "No cameraman is inferior, and no reporter is superior; everyone is equal in my eyes. All will receive five-marla plots without any discrimination."

Azma Bokhari expressed her happiness at being able to achieve something positive for media persons, adding that the 10% quota for DGPR employees allows them to apply as well.

7 dead and 1,446 injured in Punjab road accidents

LAHORE (APP): Seven people were killed and 1,446 others injured in 1,376 road accidents in Punjab during the last 24 hours.

As many as 628 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 818 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by the rescue medical teams.

The data analysis showed that 763 drivers, 182 pedestrians, and 508 passengers were among the victims of road crashes.

The statistics showed that 293 accidents were reported in Lahore, which affected 315 people, placing the provincial capital at top of the list, followed by Faisalabad with 101 accidents and 107 victims, and at third Gujranwala with 88 accidents and 81 victims.

According to the data, 1,234 motorbikes, 78 auto-rickshaws, 123 motorcars, 27 vans, seven passenger buses, 28 trucks and 130 other types of vehicles and slow-moving carts were involved in the road accidents.

Minister directs to resume work on Teri Chowk-Gargari Road

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Agriculture Muhammad Sajjad Barakwal has directed Communication and Works Department to immediately resume work on the Teri Chowk to Gargari Road.

He issued these directives while presiding over a meeting of line departments in the office of Deputy Commissioner Karak on Friday. The meeting was also attended by Deputy Commissioner Karak Shakeel Ahmad Jan, District Police Officer

Karak and officials of Public Health.

The meeting reviewed progress on developmental projects in various sectors highlighting the problems and difficulties faced by the departments.

Minister directed public departments to keep their offices doors open for the public and ensure implementation of the "Awami Agenda" of the Chief Minister.

He also urged people to inform authorities about their concern and monitor work on ongoing development projects.

Jewelry worth over 16 crores stolen in Sandra Lahore

ISLAMABAD (APP): Thieves stole jewellery worth more than 16 crores on Friday from a house in Sandra area of Lahore.

According to a private news channel, in addition to the jewelry, cash amounting to over 40 lakhs was also stolen. As soon as the incident was reported, police reached the scene and began their investigation. An FIR has been registered, and the search operation for the culprits involved in the massive theft was underway.



RAWALPINDI: Police personals arrest of a activists of PTI during a protest at Dhok Khaba in the city.

PITB holds training on 'Suthra Punjab' dashboard

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) on Friday organised a training session on the 'Suthra Punjab Performance Evaluation Dashboard' for representatives from Waste Management companies and contractors across the province.

The session was aimed at equipping the participants with in-depth knowledge of the initiative's monitoring and implementation processes.

ITBMS Project Director Nisar Ahmed, PITB Senior Program Manager Mariam Zaib and Lahore Waste Management Company (LWMC) Senior Manager Monitoring Shoaib Dar conducted the training session. They gave a detailed briefing on the various modules used within the application and how the dashboard functions in different districts of Punjab.

The training highlighted the scope and importance of the initiative in enhancing the

performance of waste management operations. Attendees were shown how the dashboard effectively tracks and evaluates cleanliness efforts, providing real-time data to ensure transparency and efficiency. The session concluded with a highly interactive Q&A, where participants discussed their queries and shared valuable feedback. Over a hundred employees and contractors from waste management companies across Punjab attended the session, gaining crucial insights into the system.

In this regard, PITB Chairman Faisal Yousof stated, "The Suthra Punjab Performance Evaluation Dashboard is a vital tool in ensuring transparency, accountability, and efficiency in waste management across the province. By providing real-time data on cleanliness operations, this system enables us to make informed decisions and elevate the standard of waste management services in Punjab."

Humayun drives initiatives to empower inmates in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): A meeting was held with key industry leaders under the chairmanship of Special Assistant to the Chief Minister for Prisons, Humayun Khan for enhancing the welfare prospects of inmates in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's prisons.

According to information, the meeting was attended by Hassan Nisar, CEO of Metrix Pakistan, and Huzafa Bahram, CEO of Lets Grow, along with their teams, the Superintendent of Central Jail Peshawar was also present at the meeting.

The meeting reviewed the measures aimed at improving the welfare prospects of prisoners, particularly by facilitating access to both national and international markets for products developed within the prison system. The participants acknowledged

the potential of these products to generate income for inmates while fostering community engagement and social entrepreneurship.

Additionally, the meeting highlighted the importance of offering Information Technology (IT) courses to educated youth in prisons, which would provide them with critical skills for better employment prospects after release and encourage continuous learning within correctional facilities.

The conversation also involved establishing startup opportunities for educated prisoners with IT skills, aimed at supporting them in launching small businesses while incarcerated, thus promoting entrepreneurship and self-sufficiency.

Humayun Khan expressed his commitment to rehabilitation and

Dera police arrest six outlaws

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Dera police during the operation arrested six outlaws including proclaimed offenders and recovered weapons from their possession in the limits of City and Cantt police stations on Friday.

According to the police spokesman, on the direction of the District Police Officer Dera Nasir Mehmood, City police station led by SDPO Muhammad Adnan along with SHO Sibtain Khan with police team conducted a search and strike operation in different localities. During the raid the police arrested the accused Dilwar Khan son of Muhammad Rafiq, Shahzad son of Bazak Khan.

Environment protection first priority: Secretary

FAISALABAD (APP): Provincial Parliamentary Secretary for Environment Protection Kanwal Parvaiz Chaudhry has said that environment protection is among top priorities of the government for which all-out resources are being utilised. During her visit here on Friday, she said that violators of smog laws were being dealt with an iron hand and no brick-kiln would be allowed to run without zigzag technology. She said that the use of eco-friendly shopping bags is the most urgent need of the hour for the protection of the environment.

She said that inspections of brick-kilns, industry, factories and

transport and a zero tolerance policy was being followed in this regard. The parliamentary secretary checked implementation on eco-friendly polythene bags in shops and markets in D-ground, Peoples colony area. She also held inspection of brick-kilns on Samundri Road in addition to visiting a treatment plant and Paharan drain.

She presided over a meeting of All Pakistan Textile Processing Mills Association and took proposals from executive members and other industrialists on an important issue of throwing waste water exhausted by the industries in Paharan drain.

Under-training officers visit BFC Sialkot

SIALKOT (APP): The under-training officers of 41st Mid-Career Management Course, National Institute of Management (NIM), Lahore, led by Rafia Haider and Huma Kanwal, visited the Business Facilitation Centre Sialkot, on Friday.

Officers were briefed about the centre operations and additional facilities like free sale certificate, Nadra Sahulat, free PSW and NTN login generation, city traffic driving test, provided to the business community of Sialkot. Later, Huma Kanwal wrote his remarks in the visitors book.



GUJRANWALA: Commuters are facing inconvenience due to protest demonstration of Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for release of PTI Founder Imran Khan, at Gt road in Gujranwala.

LHC decides to constitute full bench to probe into recent incidents in educational institutions

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has decided to constitute full bench to probe into recent incidents in educational institutions.

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PESHAWAR: Activists of Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) are holding protest demonstration for release of PTI Founder Imran Khan, at Peshawar press club.

SBP Governor's annual report highlights macroeconomic improvements in FY 2023-24

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), in Governor's Annual Report (GAR) for fiscal year 2023-24 released here on Friday, highlighted improvements across key macroeconomic indicators during FY24 after two challenging years. Fiscal consolidation, tight monetary policy, softer global commodity prices, and better agricultural production together with easing of external account pressure contributed in inflation deceleration, build-up of forex reserves and stability in the market, improvement in current account, moderate GDP growth and recovery of LSM production during the FY 24, the GAR stated.

The GAR is published under the SBP Act that requires the Governor to submit annual report to the Parliament regarding the Bank's objectives, conduct of monetary policy, the state of the economy and the financial system, said a statement issued here.

The Report highlighted decrease in National CPI inflation in

FY24, amid continued tight monetary policy stance, fiscal consolidation, and softer global commodity prices and noted that these trends came alongside the easing of external account pressures, contributing to a build-up of foreign exchange reserves, which together with FX market reforms including in exchange companies instilled stability in the foreign exchange market.

The year also witnessed a moderate agriculture-led GDP growth that was supported by a small but gradual



LAHORE: The delegation of Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Women Empowerment and Development Committee led by convener Maryam Qasim Khan in a group photo with Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House.



LAHORE: Labourers of Brick Kiln hold a banner during protest against Brick owners in front of press club in the Provincial Capital.

Governor Punjab says: Benazir Bhutto's epitome of courage among women

LAHORE (APP): Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan has said that PPP erstwhile chairperson Benazir Bhutto was an epitome of courage and resistance.

Talking to a delegation of Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FCCI) Women Empowerment and Development Committee during a meeting at the Governor's House here on Friday, he said Shaheed Benazir Bhutto is a role model for the women around the globe and PPP believes in

empowering women in all spheres of life.

Convener FCCCI Women Empowerment and Development Committee delegation Maryam Qasim Khan led the delegation which submitted various proposals for fostering women empowerment including establishment of Special Economic Zones were discussed.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab Saleem Haider Khan said that women are vital to progress and no society can develop without ensuring the participation of women in various

SPI inflation up by 0.28%

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.28 percent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on October 17, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday.

According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 319.79 points as compared to 318.91 points during the past week.

As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 15.02 per cent.

The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups.

Likewise, SPI for the lowest consumption group of up to Rs 17,732

witnessed increase of 0.27 percent and went up to 313.74 points from last week's 312.91 points.

The SPI for consumption groups of Rs 17,732 to 22,888; Rs 22,889-29,517; Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175, decreased by 0.28 percent, 0.27 percent, 0.28 percent and 0.28 percent respectively.

During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 19 (37.25%) items increased, 09 (17.65%) items decreased and 23 (45.10%) items remained stable.

The items, which recorded major decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week basis included onions (7.02%), bananas (2.83%), gur (1.82%), potatoes (1.15%), pulse mash (0.72%), rice irri-6/9 (0.40%), sugar (0.27%) and rice basmati broken (0.09%).

The commodities which recorded major increase in their average prices on week-on-week basis included tomatoes (26.24%).

BAJK earns record Rs. 1.414bprofit during 9 months

MUZAFFARABAD (APP): Bank of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (BAJK), a public sector institution, has earned a record profit of Rs. 1.414 billion during the first three quarters of the current year showing rising public trust and heading towards the goal to be recognized as a commercial bank.

The state owned bank, established in 2006, has been struggling to be recognized as a commercial bank has been a point of political criticism in the region since long but showing a betterment in its performance for the past many months raising the hope to achieve the targets and criteria set by the state

bank to be recognized as a commercial bank.

Shahid Mir, the President of the bank, told APP on Friday that not only the reasonable raise in the profit was recorded during the 9 months, bank's deposits and assets were also increased and flow of remittances was recorded high.

"The worth of the assets of the bank has grown up to Rs. 51.279 billion; deposits were increased to highest Rs. 31.118 billion while home remittances were recorded to Rs. 3,308 during the 9 months," Mir disclosed adding that his bank also landed a loan of Rs. 4.646 billion to its clients.

NADRA signs E-Payment Gateway Agreement with BoP to facilitate digital payments for services

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a major move towards improving digital services and accessibility, the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) has signed an E-Payment Gateway and Acquiring Agreement with the Bank of Punjab (BoP).

According to the spokesperson of NADRA, this agreement is expected to streamline digital payments for NADRA's wide array of services, further simplifying access for millions of citizens.

At a formal ceremony, Rehman Qamar, Chief Projects Officer at NADRA and Nofel Daud, Chief Digital Officer at BoP, signed the agreement.

The event was attended by top officials from both organizations, said a press statement issued here Friday. Chairman of NADRA, in his remarks, expressed the significance of this partnership, emphasizing that the collaboration would enable NADRA to enhance its service delivery through secure and efficient transactions.

He stated, "This partnership will ensure that citizens can now access our services more conveniently with reliable and seamless digital payment options. The agreement is a part of NADRA's commitment to improving public service efficiency by integrating modern financial technologies."

Zafar Masood, President and CEO of the Bank of Punjab, highlighted the alignment of this initiative with the broader vision of expanding digital banking services across the nation. "Our goal is to provide innovative and secure payment solutions that empower citizens. This collaboration with NADRA will not only improve service delivery but also encourage the adoption of digital payment systems nationwide, contributing to Pakistan's journey towards a digitally empowered future."

Gold hits record highs on US election uncertainty

WASHINGTON (INP): Gold prices hit record highs on Friday as uncertainty surrounding the U.S. presidential elections and the war in the Middle East prompted investors to seek out the safe-haven asset, while easing monetary policy environment kept prices elevated.



LAHORE: An old man is busy weaving a chair at his workplace near Lahore Hotel Road.

Spot gold rose 0.6% to \$2,689.86 per ounce by 10:23 a.m. ET (1423 GMT). U.S. gold futures gained 0.5% to \$2,705.30.

Gold has seen a surge of over 30% this year, surpassing record levels, driven by prospects of further Federal Reserve rate cuts after a half percentage point

CDA, P3A collaborate to boost Islamabad's tourism with luxury hotels project

ISLAMABAD (APP): Capital Development Authority (CDA) Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa on Friday discussed significant steps for the development of luxury hotels in Islamabad's prime locations.

A meeting was held via Zoom, included representatives from the Public Private Partnership Authority (P3A), consultants from AT Kearney and key CDA officials.

The discussion centered on a recent feasibility study by AT Kearney, which presented multiple models for hotel development, such as land leases, joint ventures, and revenue-sharing schemes.

With tourism and business on the rise, these projects aim to meet the growing demand for premium accommodations in the capital, providing long-term economic benefits.

Chairman Randhawa stressed the importance of selecting the most viable model while ensuring that the hotel plots are priced competitively, maintaining high construction standards to attract investment and enhance bankability.

Further analysis of the feasibility report will be conducted, with ongoing consultations between CDA and AT Kearney to finalize land pricing and construction costs.

The meeting also covered the development of other projects, including the Jinnah Medical Complex and the Gandhara Citizen Club, which will feature recreational facilities like a cricket ground and a library.

Revenue from these initiatives will go towards citizen welfare and park upgrades.

The collaboration between CDA and P3A is seen as a strategic move to draw private sector investment, spurring economic growth and elevating Islamabad's infrastructure and global appeal.

Rupee gains 18 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee on Friday appreciated by 18 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs277.61 against the previous day's closing of Rs277.79.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs277.75 and Rs279.25 respectively.

The price of Euro decreased by 50 paise to close at Rs301.02 against the last day's closing of Rs301.52, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen came down by 01 paise and closed at Rs1.84, whereas an increase of Rs 1.19 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound.

Textile export increases 9.51% to \$4.520 bln during 1st quarter 2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): Textile exports witnessed an increase of 9.51 percent during the first quarter of the current financial year (2024-25) as compared to the same quarter of last year.

The textile exports from the country were recorded at US \$4.520 billion during July-September (2024-25) against the exports of US \$4.127 billion during July-September (2023-24), the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) said.

The textile commodities that contributed in trade growth included cotton cloth the export of which increased by 10.20 percent to \$523.63 million from \$475.187 million while the export of knitwear surged

PSX continues with bearish trend, loses 335 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bearish trend on Friday, losing 335.34 more points, a negative change of 0.39 percent, closing at 85,250.09 points against 85,585.43 points on the last trading day.

A total of 323,919,892 shares were traded during the day as compared to 513,288,944 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 15.679 billion against Rs. 21.612 billion on the last trading day. As many as 445 companies transacted their shares in the stock market,

SBP injects over Rs4 trillion in the market

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) injected Rs4,093 billion in the market through reverse repo purchase and Shariah Compliant Mudarabah based Open Market Operation (OMO) on Friday. According to OMO results issued here, the SBP conducted Open Market Operation, Reverse Repo Purchase (Injection) on October 18, 2024 for 7-day and 28-day tenors and accepted total 29 bids cumulatively amounting to Rs4,068 billion. The central bank received 28 bids for 7-day tenor cumulatively offering an amount of Rs4,041.6 billion at the rate of return ranging between 17.56 to 17.61 percent.

Railways employees receiving late salaries due to grant in aid: Awaisi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Parliamentary Secretary for Railways, Muhammad Usman Awaisi on Friday submitted before the lower house of the Parliament that the lower cadre staff of Pakistan Railways was receiving late salaries due to grant in aid provided by the Ministry of Finance.

The Parliamentary Secretary was responding to a calling attention notice of Member National Assembly (MNA) Aliya Kamran regarding failure of

the month to ensure swift transfer of salaries, he added.

He expressed his support for the employees receiving late salaries and assured the move to take up the matter with the Ministry of Finance and Revenue citing the calling attention notice to resolve the matter. The mover, MNA Aliya Kamran said the issue is persisting for the past three years and the former Minister for Railways Khawaja Saad.



HYDERABAD: A vendor displaying and selling the covers of motorcycle to customers at Kohe noor chowk.

Industrial output declines by 0.19% in first two months of FY25

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Large Scale Manufacturing Industries (LSMI) in the country witnessed a negative growth of 0.19 percent during the first two months of the current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding period of last year, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported Friday.

The provisional quantum indices of Large Scale Manufacturing Industries (LSMI) for August 2024 with the base year 2015-16 have been developed based on the latest data supplied by the source agencies.

The main contributors towards overall negative growth of

0.19% are food (0.32), tobacco (0.39%), textile (0.63%) garments (2.15%), petroleum products (0.51%), automobiles (0.39%), pharmaceuticals (-0.10%), cement (-1.02%), iron & steel products (-0.71%), electrical equipment (-0.63%) and furniture (-1.85%).

The production in July-August 2024-25 as compared to July-August 2023-24 has increased in food, tobacco, textile, wearing apparel, coke & petroleum products, chemicals, automobiles, other transport equipment, and other manufacturing (football) while it decreased in pharmaceuticals.



PESHAWAR: Activists of All Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Goods Transport Association hold protest in favor of their demands at fruit mandi G T road.

Biden urges Israel to use Sinwar's death to move toward peace

Monitoring Desk
BERLIN: U.S. President Joe Biden is reiterating his call for Israel to use the death of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar as an opportunity to move toward peace.

Biden said as he met German Chancellor Olaf Scholz in Berlin Friday that Sinwar's killing "represents a moment of justice." He added that Sinwar "had the blood of Americans and Israelis, Palestinians and Germans and so many others on his hands."

Biden said: "I told the prime minister of Israel yesterday, let's also make this moment an opportunity to seek a path to peace, a better future in Gaza without Hamas."

Scholz, also a staunch ally of Israel, said Sinwar's death hopefully opens "the concrete prospect of a cease-fire in Gaza, of an agreement to release the hostages held by Hamas."

On Thursday night, Biden said "now's the time to move on. ... Move toward a cease-fire in Gaza, make sure that we move in a direction that we're able to make things better for the whole world."

Biden urges West to sustain Ukraine support as US election looms

Monitoring Desk
BERLIN: US President Joe Biden urged the West on Friday to sustain its support for Ukraine against Russia's full-scale invasion as Kyiv faces a bleak winter and a looming US presidential election raises worries about the strength of Washington's own resolve.

Biden was speaking to reporters before holding closed-door talks with ally German Chancellor Olaf Scholz during a swansong one-day trip to Berlin to discuss matters ranging from Ukraine to the expanding conflict in the Middle East.

"As Ukraine faces a tough winter, we must, we must sustain our resolve," Biden said in a statement. "And I know the cost is heavy, but make no mistake, it bears in comparison to the cost of living in a world where aggression prevails, where large states attack and bully smaller ones simply because they can."

He said he would discuss with Scholz ongoing efforts to increase military support for Ukraine and shore up its civilian energy infrastructure "by unlocking the value of frozen Russian assets." They would also discuss the Middle East conflict.



Russian President Vladimir Putin listens to South African President Cyril Ramaphosa speaking via a video link during the BRICS Business Forum in Moscow, Russia.

China building capacity to rapidly strike Taiwan, senior Taiwanese official says

Monitoring Desk
TAIPEI: China is building its capacity to rapidly turn military drills into a full-on attack, a senior Taiwanese security official said, providing the Taipei government's assessment of the strategic intent behind Beijing's war games around the island this week.

China, which views democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory, staged large-scale drills on Monday that it said were a warning to "separatist acts" following last week's national day speech by Taiwan President Lai Ching-te.

Taiwan has for the past five years complained

of almost daily Chinese military activities around the island, including at least four rounds of major war games and regular "joint combat readiness patrols".

"They are increasing the building up their capacity to turn military exercises into a conflict," the official said at a briefing in Taipei, requesting anonymity to be able to speak more frankly.

Taiwan reported a record 153 Chinese aircraft took part in the drills, and the official added an unprecedented 25 Chinese navy and coast guard boats also approached close to Taiwan's 24-mile (39-km) contiguous zone.

Cuba accuses US of half-hearted investigation into 2023 embassy attack

Monitoring Desk
HAVANA: Cuba accused the United States of a half-hearted investigation into a 2023 attack on the Communist-run nation's embassy in Washington, D.C., further souring already-bitter relations between the neighboring countries.

A man in dark clothing hurled two Molotov cocktails at the Cuban embassy in Washington in September 2023 before running into the night, US and Cuban authorities have said. No one was hurt and little damage was done to the building.

Johana Tablada, Cuba's deputy director of US affairs, said US authorities have told Cuban counterparts they are investigating the incident, but officials have yet to identify the perpetrator.

"The message is, against Cuba, you can do whatever you want," Tablada said on Cuban television Wednesday.

She said slow progress violated US law and the international obligation of nations to protect diplomats and their embassies.

A US State Department official told Reuters "the United States is dedicated to the protection of diplomatic personnel and premises in the United States."

The US Secret Service has previously said it was conducting an investigation into the incident and White House officials condemned the attack in 2023.

Tablada said the United States had also declined to label the assault as a "terrorist attack."



Britain's Foreign Secretary David Lammy and Chinese Vice Premier Ding Xuexiang shake hands before their meeting at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China.



U.S. President Joe Biden signs the Golden Book, as German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier looks on, at Berlin's Bellevue castle in Berlin, Germany.

Russia's Putin seeks greater role for Brics in global energy dialogue

Monitoring Desk

MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin called on Monday for a bigger role for the Brics bloc on world's energy markets as Russia seeks ways to counter Western influence.

Russia, which is the world's second largest oil exporter and has the biggest reserves of natural gas, hosts annual Energy Week International Forum later this week and it is expected to hold a meeting of Brics' energy ministers.

"It is obvious that in the new geopolitical realities, cooperation in the energy sector should serve to strengthen national economies, help solve priority social problems, and improve people's quality of life," Putin said in a letter to the forum's participants and guests. "It is crucial to agree on common principles for our countries in the just energy transition, and outline ways to strengthen the role of Brics in the global energy dialogue."

Iranian foreign minister discusses regional tensions with Egyptian officials in Cairo

Monitoring Desk

CAIRO: Iran's foreign minister Abbas Araghchi discussed rising tensions in the region with Egyptian officials Thursday in Cairo during the first such visit by a top Iranian official to the North African nation in around a decade.

Araghchi held talks with his Egyptian counterpart Badr Abdelatty and Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi focusing on efforts to deescalate Israel's conflicts against Gaza and Lebanon.

El-Sissi reiterated calls to end Israel's war in Gaza to prevent it from expanding into a regional conflict.

An expanded war would have serious repercussions for the security and capabilities of all nations in the region, he added.

The Egyptian president also called for an end to the escalation in Lebanon, the violations in the West Bank, and to ensure the delivery of much needed humanitarian aid.

Araghchi's visit to Egypt is part of a wider diplomatic tour in the region meant to ease tensions. This month he met with officials in Syria, Lebanon, Qatar, Oman, and Iraq, and is expected to head to Turkey after concluding talks in Egypt.



North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un visiting the command of the 2nd Corps of the Korean People's Army, at an undisclosed location in North Korea.

Bangladesh crimes tribunal issues arrest warrant for exiled former prime minister

Monitoring Desk

DHAKA: Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal on Thursday issued an arrest warrant for former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, citing her alleged involvement in mass killings during violent protests that erupted earlier this year.

The protests, which began as a student-led movement against public sector job quotas, escalated into some of the deadliest unrest since the country's independence in 1971, resulting in over 700 deaths and numerous injuries.

The violence ultimately forced Hasina to flee to India on Aug 5 and an interim government led by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Muhammad Yunus took charge. The tribunal's proceedings, presided over by Justice Golam Mortuza Majumdar, saw prosecutors request arrest warrants for 50 individuals, including Hasina.

"I appealed to the court that if the accused, who are extremely influential, are not arrested, it will be impossible to conduct the investigation."

Nepal's Sherpas deserve more, says teenager who scaled world's 14 tallest peaks

Monitoring Desk

KATHMANDU: A Nepali teenager, the youngest person ever to scale all 14 of the world's tallest peaks, says he wants to use his skills to benefit the Himalayan nation's Sherpa community and turn out world-class athletes. Sherpas, an ethnic group living mainly in the vicinity of the world's highest peak, Mount Everest, are known for climbing skills that make them the backbone of mountain expeditions.

They fix ropes, ladders, carry loads, cook and guide foreign climbers, earning from a single expedition amounts that range from \$2,500 to \$16,500 or more,

depending on experience. "I want to see Sherpas as global athletes, not just guides," said Nima Rinji Sherpa, 18, who last week climbed Shishapangma, the world's 14th highest peak at 8,027m (26,335 ft), in Tibet.

"We deserve the same privilege as Western climbers," added the 12th grader, who began climbing at the age of 16, and scaled all 14 peaks exceeding 8,000 ft (2,438 m) in the last two years.

He said he planned to exploit his climbing skills to build contacts with donor agencies, mobilising funds and support for schools, hospitals and activities to benefit the mountain community.

North Korea sending 'large-scale' troop deployment to Russia, Seoul spy agency says

Monitoring Desk

SEOUL: North Korea has decided to send a "large-scale" troop deployment to support Moscow's war in Ukraine, with 1,500 special forces already in Russia's Far East and undergoing training, Seoul's spy agency said on Friday.

The National Intelligence Service (NIS) said North Korea had decided to send thousands of soldiers to help Russia, releasing detailed satellite images it said showed the first deployment.

South Korea's President Yoon Suk Yeol convened an emergency security meeting Friday, with Seoul slamming Pyongyang's move as "a

significant security threat not only to our country but also to the international community," the president's office said.

The NIS said it had "detected that from the 8th to the 13th (of October), North Korea transported its special forces to Russia via a Russian Navy transport ship, confirming the start of North Korea's military participation" in Russia's war in Ukraine.

According to the NIS, multiple Russian landing ships and frigates have already completed transporting the first contingent of troops, who are currently stationed in military bases across Russia's Far East.

Zelenskyy says 10,000 North Koreans could join Russian forces in Ukraine as he pushes 'victory plan'

Monitoring Desk

BRUSSELS: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Thursday his government has intelligence information that 10,000 troops from North Korea are being prepared to join Russian forces fighting against his country, warning that a third nation wading into the hostilities would turn the conflict into a "world war."

Zelenskyy did not go into detail about the claim that came a day after U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell said that Washington and its allies are alarmed by North Korea's military support for Russia's war in Ukraine but couldn't confirm Ukrainian claims that soldiers were sent to fight for Moscow.

"From our intelligence we've got information that North Korea sent tactical personnel and officers to Ukraine," Zelenskyy told reporters at NATO headquarters. "They are preparing on

their land 10,000 soldiers, but they didn't move them already to Ukraine or to Russia."

Earlier, he warned that any North Korean involvement would be "the first step to a world war." The Ukrainian leader's comments raised the stakes for his Western allies as he met in Brussels with European Union leaders and then NATO defense ministers to discuss his "victory plan" to end the country's devastating war with Russia.

Major points of the plan include an invitation for Ukraine to join NATO and permission to use Western-supplied longer-range missiles to strike military targets deep inside Russia, steps that have been met with reluctance by Kyiv's allies so far.

"Ukraine truly deserves to become the 33rd NATO member one day, and we must do everything to ensure this happens," Zelenskyy said in an appeal at the alliance's headquarters.

Hezbollah says it will escalate war with Israel after Hamas leader killed

Monitoring Desk

JERUSALEM: Lebanon's Hezbollah group said on Friday it was moving to a new and escalating phase in its war against Israel while Iran said "the spirit of resistance will be strengthened" after the killing of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar.

Sinwar, a mastermind of the Oct. 7, 2023, attack that triggered the Gaza war, was killed during an operation by Israeli soldiers in the Palestinian enclave on Wednesday, a pivotal event in the year-long conflict.

Western leaders said his death offered an opportunity for the conflict to end, but Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the war would go on until the hostages seized by Hamas were returned.

"Today we have settled the score. Today evil

has been dealt a blow but our task has still not been completed," Netanyahu said in a recorded video statement after the death was confirmed on Thursday.

"To the dear hostage families, I say: This is an important moment in the war. We will continue full force until all your loved ones, our loved ones, are home." Sinwar, who was named as Hamas' overall leader following the assassination of political chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran in July, was believed to have been hiding in the warren of tunnels Hamas has built under Gaza over the past two decades. He was killed during a gun battle in southern Gaza on Wednesday by Israeli troops who were initially unaware that they had caught their country's number one enemy.

Big Tech's energy needs mean nuclear power is getting a fresh look from electricity providers

Monitoring Desk

NEW YORK: Nuclear power is garnering renewed attention amid growing demand for power and cleaner energy.

The power source has seen a resurgence as nations focus on reducing emissions in an effort to combat climate change. At the same time, the technology sector's energy needs are growing in the form of data centers and powerful advances in artificial intelligence.

Those factors have prompted companies and governments to look more closely at a power source whose potential hazards made it unpopular only a few decades ago. The U.S. is the fastest growing market for data centers, according to McKinsey, which forecasts demand to more than triple by 2030 to 80 gigawatts.

Constellation Energy plans on reopening Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania under a deal with Microsoft. Oracle plans to use new technology in the form of small modular nuclear reactors to power its data centers, while Google is purchasing nuclear energy from small modular reactors in development by Kairos Power. Amazon bought a data center

powered by nuclear energy in Pennsylvania earlier this year and is also investing in small nuclear reactors.

"The power sector is rapidly becoming a protagonist in the AI story," McKinsey analysts said in a report. "Access to power has become a critical factor in driving new data center builds."

Nuclear power has the U.S. government's support as an option moving ahead for cleaner energy to help lower carbon emissions. Georgia's Vogtle nuclear power plant opened two new reactors over the last several years.

The forecasts for growing demand have made utilities with nuclear plants a target for deals with big data companies.

Three Mile Island, located in Pennsylvania, was the site of the worst commercial nuclear accident in U.S. history, when its Unit 2 reactor suffered a partial meltdown and went offline in 1979. The recent deal between Microsoft and Constellation proposes reopening the Unit 1 reactor, which remained in operation until 2019.

"This deal recognizes the critical role that nuclear has in providing clean energy, and supporting reliability."

President stresses mass awareness, collective efforts to reduce mortality rate of breast cancer

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari has emphasised the countrywide public awareness and collective efforts at individual and national levels to reduce the mortality rate due to breast cancer in Pakistan.

The president, in his message to the nation on the International Day Against Breast Cancer annually observed on October 19, said that breast cancer was not only the most frequently diagnosed cancer but was also the leading cause of death among women in low and middle-income countries.

He said the incidence of breast cancer was more common in South Asian countries, majorly due to a lack of breast cancer awareness in women.

"In our country, one in every nine women is at risk of breast cancer and the late diagnosis of the disease considerably contributes to the high mortality rate.

Moreover, economic obstacles deter many from receiving the required treatment," the president added.

He said the International Day Against Breast Cancer was observed to raise awareness about the disease and to promote timely diagnosis and treatment.

He said that this year's theme "No One Should Face Breast Cancer Alone" for Breast Cancer Awareness Month reminded us of the importance of support, solidarity, and care for every person dealing with this disease.

He stressed the need to raise awareness about the disease by addressing misconceptions and prioritizing healthy lifestyle adjustments.

He said that Pakistan needed the broader level efforts to educate women about breast cancer, regular self-examination and mammographic screening.

He urged the



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal, presides over a high-level consultative session focused on transforming transport corridors into economic corridors.

Federal govt in contact with provinces to deal major security issues: Atta Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, National Heritage Attallah Tarar on Friday informed the Senate that although after the 18th Constitutional Amendment, the maintenance of law and order situation was the responsibility of respective provincial governments but the Centre was also in contact with the provinces in major security issues especially at border areas to control drugs smuggling, and terrorism.

Responding to a point of order, the minister said the National Action Plan (NAP) was devised after Army Public School (APS) incident in Peshawar. Innocent children were martyred in APS attack which resulted forging unity among the entire nation to purge the terrorism from the country's soil, he added.

The federation at that

SC abolishes policies of recruitment of govt employees' children

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has declared unconstitutional all policies and quota related to packages in respect of children of government employees.

11-page verdict was authored by Justice Naem Akhtar Afghan.

According to written order all the policies regarding children of government employees have been declared unconstitutional.

In the decision Prime Minister (PM) package for employment and section 11-A of Sindh Civil Servants Rules-1947 related to quota have been declared null and void.

A 3-member bench of SC presided over by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa took up the case for hearing.

Additional Attorney General (AAG) told the



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers talking with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti during Balochistan Assembly session

To achieve SDGs Collaboration b/w public & private sector institutions, NGOs & civil society crucial: Rubaba

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Advisor to the Chief Minister for Women Development, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi has emphasized the crucial importance of coordinated collaboration between public and private sector institutions, NGOs, and civil society to achieve sustainable development goals.

She expressed these views during a consultation session held at the National Institute of Management (NIM) Quetta.

Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi stated that sustainable development in Balochistan can only be achieved through a joint strategy involving all stakeholders. She further highlighted the need to focus specifically on education,



KARACHI: Activists of a religious party burned tyres on a road during protest, in Provincial Capital.

Motorways, highways being connected with economic zones: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal says motorways and highways are being connected with the economic zones to boost tourism and economy. Speaking at a meeting in Islamabad, he said the government is working on transforming the transport corridors into economic corridors.

He said CPEC provided us with an opportunity to bring about a socio-economic change in Balochistan and other parts of the country.

Ahsan Iqbal said the industrial and agricultural areas of the country will be connected with the special economic zones to help build engines of growth.

He said infrastructure development and construction of highways and motorways in Northern areas and rural parts of the country will help bring an economic revolution in the country. The minister, in his opening remarks, emphasized the importance of utilizing Pakistan's existing transport infrastructure as a springboard for broader economic growth.

History of PPP is full of sacrifices: Hassan Zehri

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim on Friday granted protective bails to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa advisors Muhammad Ali Saif and Mashal Yousafzai and MNA Umar Ayub for three weeks and directed them to appear in the relevant courts.

Meanwhile, the Chief Justice of Peshawar High Court granted three weeks' bail to all the applicants.

which the brave Pakistani people and party workers made history with their blood. The sacrifices of the martyrs are unforgettable and the sacrifices of the sincere workers will always be remembered.

Mir Ali Hassan Zehri further said that we salute to the martyrs, whose unparalleled bravery and steadfastness, democracy is alive today.

He said that by sacrificing their lives on October 18, the stalwarts of Pakistan Peoples Party proved that the soldiers of martyr Zulfikar Ali Bhutto are in the country. They do not hesitate to make any dark day in the history of Pakistan Peoples Party in



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti handing over documents of Journalists Cooperative Society to President BUJ Khalil Ahmed

Bugti hands over journalists' society land ownership document to BUJ

ISLAMABAD (APP): Secretary of BUJ, Abdul Shaqoor Khan, President, Quetta Press Club, Abdul Khaliq Rind, General Secretary, Banaras Khan, president of Journalists Cooperative Society, Salim Shahid, besides the Provincial Minister Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran, Parliamentary Secretary, Muhammad Khan Lehri, spokesman of the provincial government, Shahid Rind and Press Secretary to Chief Minister, Sheikh Abdul Razzaq.

PM lauds Pak Navy operation to seize 1.3 tons of narcotics

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday lauded the Pakistan Navy for successfully carrying out an operation in the North Arabian Sea in which 1.3 tons of narcotics were seized.

The prime minister, in a statement, said that the vibrant leadership of the Pakistan Navy led to the seizure of huge quantity of narcotics in the operation.

He said that foiling the attempt to smuggle a huge quantity of narcotics was laudable. "The whole nation feels proud of the officials of the Pakistan Navy. The elimination of narcotics was essential for the welfare of humanity," he remarked.

Prime Minister Shehbaz reiterated that the government was determined to extend all possible facilities to the Pakistan Navy in its mission to purge country of narcotics.

Noshervani condoles death of Humayun Marri

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Provincial Minister for Finance, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani has expressed condolence and grief over death of the former caretaker Chief Minister Mir Humayun Khan Marri. In a condolence statement issued here on Friday, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani prayed that may Allah Almighty rest the departed soul into its eternal peace and give enough strength and patience to the bereaved family to bear the tragic loss of his death.



QUETTA: MPA Prince Agha Umer Ahmed Zai addressing on khuli kachehri. Deputy Commissioner Saad Bin Asad also present.

Protecting constitution collective responsibility of all political forces: Irfan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)'s Parliamentary Leader in the Senate, Senator Irfan-ul-Haq Siddiqui said on Friday that protecting the Constitution is the responsibility of all political forces, describing it as the document that binds the nation under one umbrella. Speaking on the floor of the Senate in response to concerns raised

by Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) Senator Maulana Atta-ur-Rehman regarding a potential constitutional amendment, he acknowledged the crucial role played by JUI-F and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leadership in the drafting of the Constitution.

He assured that any amendments would be made with the agreement of all political parties.

Global Times Challenges won't deter CPEC cooperation of China, Pakistan

BEIJING (APP): In a joint statement made public in Islamabad, China and Pakistan agreed to work together to build the "upgraded version" of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and make it into a demonstration project for cooperation under the high-quality Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The statement not only highlights the steadfast commitment of both countries to collaborate in addressing challenges and combating terrorist threats, but also conveys their confidence in the CPEC.

China's cooperation with Pakistan has remained steadfast and unwavering. In particular, both nations

have shown a resolute commitment to advancing the construction of the CPEC, sending an unmistakable message that their dedication to this ambitious project will not be deterred by any obstacles or challenges they may encounter, according to Global Times.

So far, under CPEC Phase I, both sides have completed 38 projects worth \$25.2 billion. About 26 projects worth \$26.8 billion are in the pipeline and many of those have been included in CPEC Phase II. The reason why China and Pakistan are committed to promoting an upgraded version of the CPEC despite facing diffi-

culties lies in the fact that this project is deeply rooted in the common interests of both countries. For Pakistan, the CPEC serves not only as a vital pillar of infrastructure development but also as a key driver of economic transformation and comprehensive social progress. The construction and operation of Gwadar Port, for example, have elevated Pakistan's status as a regional logistics hub and facilitated trade with neighboring countries. Moreover, the CPEC encompasses multiple sectors, including energy, agriculture and information technology, enabling Pakistan to address energy shortages.

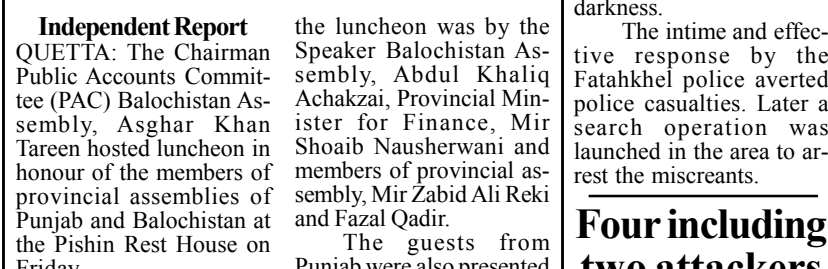
Asghar hosts luncheon in honour of members of PA and BAs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Chairman Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Balochistan Assembly, Asghar Khan Tareen hosted luncheon in honour of the members of provincial assemblies of Punjab and Balochistan at the Pishin Rest House on Friday.

The guests from Punjab were also presented the traditional turbans.

The programme highlighted the resolve to promote inter-provincial cooperation and strengthening relations among provinces.

In addition to this, the programme also provided a platform for the meaningful dialogue and exchange of views.



QUETTA: Activists of PTI and BNP holding a protest in front of Press Club

Sardar Khetran defends 26th constitutional amendment; says no need to make it issue

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Provincial Minister for Public Health Engineering (PHE), Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran has said that amendment in the constitution may not be made an issue.

He said that 25 amendments have already been made in the constitution and it is the 26th amendment.

Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran said that this is not such issue for the country-wide style may be observed and present in as an issue.

He said that amendment can't be made in Holy

PHC grants protective bails to Saif, Mashal, Umar Ayub

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim on Friday granted protective bails to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa advisors Muhammad Ali Saif and Mashal Yousafzai and MNA Umar Ayub for three weeks and directed them to appear in the relevant courts.

Meanwhile, the Chief Justice of Peshawar High Court granted three weeks' bail to all the applicants.



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers, Advisors and MPs expressing their views on resolutions presented in the Balochistan Assembly