

# Independent

Member APNS & CPNE

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

www.dailyindependent.com.pk Quetta

Ph: 2841470/2841473 REG: No. BC-116 B/ID-445 Vdt XXVI No. 64, Rabi-us-Sani 21, 1446 AH Friday October 25, 2024 Pages 08, Price Rs.15

## CENTCOM magazine hails COAS Gen Asim Munir's leadership, military diplomacy

RAWALPINDI (PR): US Central command's magazine Unipath has paid tribute to Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir for his military diplomacy and his commitments for economic improvement in the country.

According to magazine, General Asim Munir has taken decisive action against Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan (TTP) within Pakistan, known as Fitna al Khawarij. Under his leadership, through July 2024, 22,409 intelligence-based operations have been conducted against terrorists and their facilitators. They eliminated 398 terrorists, including 31 high-value targets.

US magazine writes that General Asim Munir's tenure as the Chief of the

Army Staff has been characterized by determined action against extremism, proactive measures to address security challenges and a commitment to fostering socioeconomic stability.

General Asim Munir's approach to military diplomacy has not only strengthened Pakistan's relations with key global partners but has also underscored the nation's role in promoting regional peace and stability. As Pakistan navigates through intricate geopolitical dynamics and internal challenges, Gen. Asim Munir works to guide the Army and nation toward a future marked with professionalism, resilience, prosperity and unity.

Pakistan is also confronted with a formidable

Continued on page 1



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti inaugurating Moutain View Tech Park. Provincial Minister Mir Ali Madad Jattak, Zarak Khan Mandokhail and Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan are also present.

## Maulana Fazal tried to make constitutional amendment controversial: Bilawal

ISLAMABAD (INP): PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said that JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman tried to make the 26th Constitutional Amendment 'controversial' by passing remarks against one of their clauses.

In an interview with the BBC, Bilawal said that the coalition government could have got the amendments passed even without the support of the JUI-F. "But we followed the Charter of Democracy (CoD) and tried to develop a consensus among political parties."

He further said there was not much difference between a constitutional

court and a constitutional bench. "By a constitutional court, we don't mean a separate structure," he opined.

Bilawal Bhutto, expressed confidence that the party's numbers were sufficient to proceed with a constitutional amendment, even without the support of Maulana Fazlur Rehman. Bhutto stated,

"A significant task like the 26th Constitutional Amendment can be undertaken by any Chief Justice, and it was not feasible in the presence of Mansoor Ali Shah." He also noted concerns over attempts to politicize Chief Justice Qazi Faiz Isa.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Communication & Works Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

## Security forces kill nine terrorists, including two suicide bombers in Bajaur

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Security Forces on Thursday killed nine Khwarij, including two suicide bombers and a High Value Target Kharji ringleader.

Said Muhammad alias Qureshi, Ustad during an intelligence-based operation IBO conducted in Bajaur District on the night of October 23/24.

During conduct of operation, the Army troops effectively engaged the Khwarij location and after intense fire exchange, nine Khwarij were eliminated, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

A large quantity of weapons, ammunition and explosives was also recovered from killed Khwarij, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities against the security forces as well as innocent civilians.

Meanwhile President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif

on Thursday appreciated the security forces for carrying out a successful intelligence-based anti-terror operation in Bajaur.

The president and prime minister, in separately issued statements, appreciated the gallantry of the personnel and officers of the security forces in eliminating nine terrorists including suicide bombers and a mastermind of terrorists.

"The whole nation is united against terrorism. The people as well as the security forces will collectively foil the nefarious designs of terrorists," the president said and reiterated the country's resolve for continuous action till the elimination of terrorists.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that the entire nation stood to support their security forces in the war against terrorism. The war against terrorism will continue till its elimination of this scourge in toto, he added.



RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir witness the ongoing Multinational Exercise Indus Shield-2024, at an operational Air Base of Pakistan Air Force (PAF).

## Pakistan ready to collaborate with UN states: President

ISLAMABAD (INP): President Asif Ali Zardari has stated that Pakistan stands ready to collaborate with all United Nations member states to achieve a peaceful and prosperous world for all.

In his message on the occasion of the United Nations Day today, he said Pakistan has consistently championed the principles of the UN Charter.

Asif Ali Zardari said Pakistan has also made invaluable contributions to international peace and security, including by serving as a leading military and police contributor to UN peacekeeping operations.

The President said the UN Charter's vision of universal peace is currently under threat by the blatant violations of its principles in Occupied Palestinian Territory and the Indian illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir.

## CM inaugurates three major projects under Public-Private Partnership in Quetta

Historic projects include Mountain View Tech Park Marriabad, Circular Road Integrated Parking Plaza in Quetta and LPG Technical Laboratory Taftan; 1st IT Park established in building built 15 years ago in Marriabad.

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti inaugurated three major projects under Public-Private Partnership in Quetta on Thursday.

The historic projects inaugurated by the Chief Minister are included: Mountain View Tech Park Marriabad, Circular Road Integrated Parking Plaza in Quetta and LPG Technical Laboratory Taftan.

The first Information Technology Park has been established in a building built 15 years ago in Marriabad.

Speaking on occasion of the inauguration here on Thursday, the Chief Minister announced that 1,000 youngsters would be able to earn livelihood after making them skilled in next six months in the Mountain View Tech Park.

He said that there are several such buildings in the province which have been left after construction. This IT park has been established in the building which was constructed 15 years ago.

The Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan gave proposal of the IT Park, and thus the provincial government released funds acting on it and it is going to be functional today.

He mentioned that there would be 67 offices in the IT Park and this project would introduce different skills to youth in the IT sector.

Ultimately, the opportunities of livelihood would increase in future, he maintained.

Continued on page 2

## Case registered against Akhtar Mengal under terrorism clauses

ISLAMABAD (Online): Case has been registered against BNP chief Akhtar Mengal and other leaders of party under terrorism clauses.

FIR was got registered against BNP leaders in police station secretariat Islamabad.

The case was registered under 7 clauses including terrorism.

It is alleged in FIR they have manhandled staff members of Senate.

## SC sends case related to "shufa" to constitutional bench

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) has sent case related to "shufa" (right of preemption) to constitutional bench.

Newly appointed Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Yahya Afridi has said policy has been given to registrar office with reference to constitutional cases. Office has been directed a separate category be formed of the cases wherein any law has been challenged. We will continue to transfer the cases where interpretation of law is needed.

He gave these remarks on Thursday.

A 3-member bench of SC presided over by newly appointed CJP Yahya Afridi took up the case for hearing.

## Bushra Bibi arrives in Peshawar after release from Adiala Jail

PESHAWAR (INP): PTI founder Imran Khan's wife Bushra Bibi arrived in Peshawar after being released from Adiala Jail in the Toshakhana-II case on Thursday.

Immediately after her release from Adiala Jail, Bushra Bibi went to Bani Gala, where she stayed for a while before heading to Peshawar, where arrangements had already been made for her arrival at the Chief Minister's House in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

PTI Secretary General Salman Akram Raja announced on the social media platform X that Bushra Bibi will stay in Peshawar instead of Zaman Park in Lahore.



Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization & Communications Abdul Aleem Khan and Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan inaugurating the Hub River Bridge (N-25).

## Govt to ensure maximum dev. of Balochistan even by collecting revenue from other provinces

Aleem Khan says

Addressing the inauguration ceremony, Abdul Aleem Khan emphasized the importance of business activities for regional development. "We have to ensure maximum development of Balochistan, even by collecting revenue from other

## Rear Admiral Faisal Amin takes over as Commander Coast

KARACHI (APP): Rear Admiral Faisal Amin took over the duties of Commander Coast during Change of Command ceremony held at Karachi, where Vice Admiral Raja Rab Nawaz handed over the command to the Rear Admiral.

Rear Admiral Faisal Amin got commissioned in Operations Branch of Pakistan Navy in 1992, a Pakistan Navy news release on Thursday said.



He is a graduate of Royal College of Defence Studies (UK), Army Command & Staff College (Quetta) and National Defence University (Islamabad). The Admiral has an illustrious naval career comprising vast experience of various Command and Staff appointments.

His key appointments include Commander 18th Destroyer Squadron, Assistant Chief Of Naval Staff (Operations), Principal Secretary to the Chief of the Naval Staff, Additional Secretary-III at Ministry of Defence, and Naval Secretary. In recognition of his meritorious services, the Admiral was awarded Hilal-i-Imtiaz (Military).

## IHC directs to form medical board for PTI founder's check-up

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday directed the formation of a medical board to conduct a health examination of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder, including his personal physician, Dr. Faisal Sultan.

Hearing the case, Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb directed the executive director of Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) to form a medical board for the health assessment of the PTI founder. He also directed that the board should include Dr. Faisal Sultan, the PTI founder's personal physician, and submit a report to the court's registrar.

The decision came after the PTI founder requested a medical examination by his personal doctors. While the court acknowledged the importance of involving a personal physician, and ordered the formation of an independent medical board by PIMS to ensure thorough and unbiased evaluation.

## 'Will not sit idle until Pakistan purged of poliovirus,' says PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): The prime minister, who earlier launched a nationwide polio vaccination drive by administering polio drops to the children, appreciated the support from international partners including the World Health Organisation, UNICEF, and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, who had contributed to Pakistan's efforts to fight out the polio.

"With this commitment, we will meet success and polio will be pushed out of the country and will never be allowed to resurface," he resolved, and also appreciated the Saudi government's support.

Calling them the "real heroes" the prime minister paid tribute to the sacrifices of the polio workers in the

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday paying tribute to the efforts and sacrifices of the polio workers, and support by the international partners, reiterated his government's resolve to make Pakistan a polio-free country to save the future of millions of children.

The prime minister, addressing an event held on World Polio Day dedicated to recognise the sacrifices of the polio workers, said that the resurfacing of the polio cases in the country required reuniting the efforts to fight the menace.

He reaffirmed that the government would face the challenge with an unwavering commitment to purge the country of this crippling disease.

Continued on page 2



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif presenting souvenirs to front line Polio Workers and the relatives of those Polio Workers who embraced martyrdom in the line of duty.

## COAS visits PAF to review Indus Shield-2024 exercises

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir on Thursday visited an operational air base of Pakistan Air Force to witness the ongoing multinational exercise Indus Shield-2024.

The COAS was received by Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf was also in presence at the occasion, an Inter Services Public Relations news release said.

Exercise Indus Shield-2024 is the biggest multinational exercise of the region that is witnessing participation from 24 esteemed Air Forces converging to foster interoperability and training through state-of-the-art facilities embodying the exercise motto; "Stronger When Together."

COAS expressed his satisfaction over the combat readiness of Pakistan Air Force and the progress made through various modernization and up-gradation programs. Later, he witnessed exercise operations, static display of various niche and disruptive technologies where he was briefed on the modernization efforts of Pakistan Air Force to stay abreast with contemporary security challenges which was later followed by an enthralling aerial display by PAF fighter jets. COAS also interacted with the aircrew and appreciated the resolve of PAF personnel to safeguard the aerial frontiers of Pakistan. He emphasized on the critical role of inter-service collaboration, which he believes is essential for achieving operational success.

Chief of Air Staff expressed his gratitude for COAS's visit, reinforcing



ISTANBUL: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with Azerbaijan's Minister of State for Interior Aliyev Ismat Rashid in Istanbul.

## Naqvi meets Azerbaijan's Minister of State for internal affairs Ismat Rashid Aliyev

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister and Head of Anti-Narcotics Mohsin Naqvi held a meeting with Azerbaijan's Minister of State for Internal Affairs, Ismat Rashid Aliyev on Thursday in Turkiye.

The high-level meeting took place during the Istanbul International Expo, where the two leaders discussed ways to further strengthen the long-standing fraternal ties between Pakistan and Azerbaijan.

During the meeting, both ministers engaged in comprehensive discussions on multifaceted bilateral relations, with a focus on matters of mutual interest. The dialogue covered a wide range of topics, including security, economic collaboration, and cultural exchanges. The

leaders highlighted the deep-rooted historical and cultural connections that bind Pakistan and Azerbaijan, emphasizing the need to build upon the existing partnership.

One of the key points of discussion was the Pakistan Navy's recent successful operation in the Northern Arabian Sea, which resulted in the seizure of over 2,400 kilograms of narcotics worth an estimated \$145 million. Minister Aliyev praised the Pakistan Navy's swift action and commended the effective leadership of Minister Naqvi in guiding the nation's anti-narcotics efforts. He acknowledged Pakistan's critical role in combating drug trafficking in the region and highlighted how such operations are crucial for regional stability.



ISLAMABAD: Newly selected Community and Labor Welfare Attachés call on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## Bilawal reiterates commitment of polio eradication in Pakistan

KARACHI (APP): Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has reiterated his strong commitment to the complete eradication of polio, a global health challenge that continues to threaten the future of children, particularly in Pakistan.

In his message on World Polio Day, Chairman reflected on Pakistan's historical efforts to combat polio, led by Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, and emphasized the need for renewed determination in the face of recent setbacks. In a press release issued by the Media Cell Bilawal House, Chairman PPP paid tribute to Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, who launched the anti-polio campaign in Pakistan during her government despite significant opposition. "The anti-polio drive was initiated under the visionary leadership of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, who took bold steps to protect the health of the nation's children," he said.

"She personally administered the polio vaccine to her own daughter, Aseefa Bhutto Zardari, making her the first child in Pakistan to receive the vaccine."

This historic moment set the tone for Pakistan's commitment to eradicating the disease.

Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari expressed concern over the fact that 39 new cases of polio have been reported in Pakistan this year, underscoring the urgent need for continuous efforts to prevent the spread of the virus. "While significant progress has been made over the years, the recent surge in polio cases is a reminder that our work is far from over. Every child's health and future must remain our top priority," he added.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari praised the relentless efforts of health workers who risk their lives to ensure every child is vaccinated, calling them the true heroes of Pakistan's fight against polio.

"It is because of these courageous health workers that we have made progress, but we must not lose sight of the goal, a polio-free Pakistan. Their safety and support must be prioritized so that they can continue their vital work", Bilawal said.

He emphasized that eradicating polio is not only a public health priority but also a matter of social equity and justice. "Polio disproportionately affects the most vulnerable in our society, and no child should be left unprotected from a disease that is entirely preventable. We must ensure that polio vaccines reach every corner of the country, especially underserved and high-risk communities."

Chairman PPP also called upon political, social, and religious leaders to unite in raising awareness about the importance of vaccination and addressing misconceptions or resistance to polio campaigns. As Pakistan marks World Polio Day, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari reaffirmed the PPP's commitment to upholding the ideals of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto and eradicating polio once and for all. "We owe it to our children to make Pakistan polio-free, and this will remain our party's priority until the last case of polio is eradicated."



QUETTA: A delegation led by Parliamentary Secretary Samad Khan Gorgage meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

## Govt to ensure maximum dev. of...

*Continued from page 1*

"We will build new bridges and roads in Balochistan," Aleem Khan noted that while Balochistan boasts the largest network of the National Highway Authority (NHA) in the country, covering 4,500 km, the province generates relatively lower toll revenue.

The minister expressed concerns over the bridge's width, deeming it insufficient for current traffic demands, and announced plans for the construction of an additional parallel bridge.

He also approved the conversion of the N-25 highway from Karachi to Quetta into a two-way road to prevent accidents caused by traffic congestion.

"significantly contribute to the economic growth of the Hub area and the province. Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan echoed these sentiments, stating that the current government prioritized resolving issues of Balochistan. He commended the timely completion of the Hub Bridge and extended his gratitude to Abdul Aleem Khan for his efforts. During the visit to Karachi, Abdul Aleem Khan also met with Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah to discuss highway and communication sector issues in the province. At a high-level meeting presided over by Aleem Khan emphasized that financial stability in national institutions should be the top priority, urging that the NHA would enhance its resources and achieve a revenue target of Rs 25 billion for the current fiscal year. He instructed NHA officials to expedite work on 43 ongoing projects in Sindh while ensuring high-quality standards.

## PM meets newly appointed community & labour welfare attaches

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday directed the newly appointed community and labor welfare attachés at Pakistani missions abroad to work diligently to find employment opportunities for skilled workers from Pakistan.

"I am confident that your appointment has taken place through a highly transparent process," the prime minister said while talking to the group of the attachés here at the PM House.

He directed that the welfare of the overseas Pakistani community should be their top priority. "Overseas Pakistanis who are bringing valuable foreign exchange worth billions of dollars to Pakistan are our assets," he said.

The prime minister instructed to always keep Pakistan's interests in their mind besides making vigorous efforts to promote Pakistan's image abroad.

The prime minister directed the newly appointed attachés to also seek opportunities to bring business and investment to Pakistan.

The officials briefed the prime minister about their action plans related to their respective stations.

The prime minister expressed his best wishes for the officials.

The meeting was attended by the Prime Minister's Special Assistant Tariq Fatemi, the Prime Minister's Coordinator Rana Ehsan Afzal, and other senior government officials.

## Another petition filed in SC against 26th constitutional amend.

ISLAMABAD (Online): Another petition has been filed in Supreme Court (SC) against 26th constitutional amendment.

All political parties including PML-N and PPP have been made respondents in the petition.

The petition against 26th constitutional amendment has been filed by Afrasyab Khattak.

The petitioner has taken the plea inquiry be held into it whether the members of assembly cast vote in favor of 26th constitutional amendment voluntarily or under coercion. SC should either conduct inquiry on its own or it should get hold inquiry through Judicial Commission (JC) on the matter of pressurizing the members of assembly.

The resolution on 26th constitutional amendment has not been approved in correct way. The election disputes of members of assembly are pending in Election tribunal.

The petitioner requested the court to reject the 26th constitutional amendment by declaring it against the independence of judiciary.

## CENTCOM magazine hails...

*Continued from page 1*

supports greater tolerance and religious harmony. Condemning the Jarawal incident, where a mob vandalized and torched several churches and scores of houses after two men living there were accused of desecrating the Holy Quran, he declared: "There is no space for such incidents of intolerance and extreme behavior by any segment of the society against anyone, particularly against minorities."

Military diplomacy is an important facet of the COAS's vision. In December 2023, Gen. Asim Munir visited the U.S., marking a pivotal moment in Pakistan's expanding military and diplomatic relations with the U.S. In the midst of swiftly changing global dynamics, this visit was both symbolic and practical, with high-profile engagements that highlighted the multifaceted nature of Pakistan-US relations.

Also in 2023, Pakistan conducted joint military exercises with Malaysian, Qatari, Saudi Arabian and Emirati Armed Forces. Similarly, at the closing ceremony of 7th Pakistan Army Team Spirit (PATS) training exercise in which 15 teams, including those from the US, Turkiye and Saudi Arabia participated, he reiterated the significance of PATS in promoting team spirit and enhancing readiness in the face of evolving threats, particularly in the fight against terrorism.

He lauded the bond the Pakistan Army developed with other armies as a clear example of military diplomacy. Under his leadership, the Pakistan Army serves not only as the guardian of the nation's borders but also extends its support during calamities such as floods and earthquakes. Additionally, the Army's role in facilitating nationwide elections stands as a notable contribution to the nation.

## COAS visits...

*Continued from page 1*

the commitment to enhance cooperation between the army and air force in both training and operational contexts. Air Chief apprised COAS on modernization and indigenization drive being carried out by PAF through induction of state of the art weapon systems.

While speaking at the occasion, Air Chief highlighted that the ongoing exercise Indus Shield-2024 will go a long way in bolstering interoperability amongst the participating nations and will train their air & ground crews to face contemporary warfare challenges.

## Pak achieves macroeconomic stability, moving to attain economic goals: Finance Minister

WASHINGTON (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Thursday said that Pakistan has achieved macroeconomic stability and now the country's economy is moving towards attaining its economic goals.

Aurangzeb expressed these words with the Agence France-Presse (AFP) while leading Pakistan's delegation to the annual meetings of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) headquarters in Washington.

He has touted progress on the country's current account deficit and the stabilization of the Pakistani rupee, which has depreciated against the US dollar by about 65 percent since 2020.

"In May and June on the back of this macroeconomic stability and building up on our reserves, we paid more than \$2 billion to our existing international investors," he said.

Aurangzeb said Pakistan had been behind on existing profit and dividend repayments when the current government took office, and had taken steps to remedy that after making progress on macroeconomic stability.

The finance minister said that alongside privatizing state-owned enterprises (SOEs), Pakistan's IMF deal also rests on increasing its tax base, and reforming of the country's power sector.

Aurangzeb told AFP there was a common theme between all three major issues.

Pakistan is hoping to finalize the delayed privatization of its flag carrier and the outsourcing of Islamabad's international airport in November, the minister said.

During a previous interview with AFP in April, Aurangzeb had said he hoped the privatization of the government-owned Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) could be completed by June 2024.

The finance minister said the five-month delay was down to two factors: ensuring macroeconomic stability, and doing the proper due diligence of the interested parties.

"The reality is, when any foreign investor comes in, or even the local investor, who is going to put in a substantial amount of money, they want to ensure that the foundation is there," he said, referring to macroeconomic factors.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti addressing inaugural ceremony of Circular Road Parking Plaza.

## Ugandan delegation visits NADRA HQ, explores collaborative opportunities

ISLAMABAD (APP): A high-powered delegation from Ugandan authorities, led by Ms Lucy Nakyobe Mbonye, Head Public Secretary and Secretary to Cabinet, visited the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) Headquarters in Islamabad on Thursday.

NADRA's senior management welcomed the delegation and held a comprehensive briefing on effective management of the national identity system and innovative technological solutions developed by NADRA. The delegation commended the systems developed by NADRA, which effectively manage the national identities of the world's third-largest demographic segment.

## Policeman martyred as terrorists attacked SWU's account office in Tank

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): A policeman was martyred and another got injured as terrorists attacked District Accounts Office South Waziristan Upper (SWU) situated in Tank on Thursday.

According to police spokesmen, the terrorists, riding on two motorcycles, entered into District Account Office of South Waziristan Upper situated in Branch Street of Tank and opened fire at on-duty constable named Zia ur Rehmanem, who was martyred on the spot. Another constable retaliated and one of the attackers also got injured. However, the terrorists take away their accomplice and managed to escape from the scene on motorcycles.

After receiving information about the attack, DSB, Army, CTD and local police reached the site and cleared the District Accounts Office.

No official of Accounts office was injured in the attack. As many as 16 constables were deputed on security duty of the district accounts office out of which only three constables were present on the duty. Later, District Police Officer Aslam Nawaz Khan along with two SPs, 3DSPs, SHOs, CTD, MRAP, APC, LEAs and around 200 policemen reached the site and started search and strike operation in the area.

## 'Will not sit idle until...

*Continued from page 1*

the polio eradication efforts and also distributed shields among the family members of the martyred polio workers and also to those who sustained injuries during the polio vaccination drives.

"Around 40 cases have been reported across four provinces. Today, we make a pledge to handle these cases effectively. We will not sit idle until the virus is eliminated from the country. This is a challenge which we have accepted," he remarked.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said the existence of polio only in Pakistan and Afghanistan was a matter of concern and a challenge that needed to be handled through concerted efforts.

In his address, Coordinator to PM on National Health Services Dr Mukhtar Bharath said the constant oversight of the polio eradication efforts at the prime ministerial level was unprecedented which also gave hope for Pakistan to get rid of the virus.

He assured the government's all-out support to the polio workers and said the event was also held to acknowledge their dedicated efforts and sacrifices.

He said the surge in polio cases, caused by an immunity gap, was a matter of concern and resolved that the polio vaccination teams would reach every household to vaccinate every child to ensure no one was left behind.

Prime Minister's Focal Person on Polio Eradication Senator Ayesha Raza said considering the surge in polio cases, the government had launched a strategy to cope with the challenge with renewed vigour.

She also thanked the prime minister for personally overseeing the anti-polio efforts and expressed the hope that such dedication, repeated vaccination and efforts by the polio workers would make Pakistan a polio-free country soon.

She said under the polio vaccination drive, around 400,000 polio workers would be deployed to administer polio vaccines to around 45 million children.



QUETTA: Member Provincial Assembly Nasrullah Khan Zehri along with others addressing to members of different tribes community during meeting to settle the blood dispute, held in Quetta.

## CM inaugurates three major...

*Continued from page 1*

pleasure that by the grace of Allah Almighty, three major projects have been launched under Public-Private Partnership in six months fulfilling commitment made with the people by the national and party leadership. He said that the vision of provincial government speedily.

He said that the mafias present in different sectors create hurdles in provision of the facilities. However, we would continue our mission while removing all such hurdles, adding he pledged.

He said that we are ready for talks with different unions, but we would not be blackmailed by strikes, and would eliminate mafias. Besides, we would also not let anyone to create hurdles in the public facilities. He also asserted that no hurdle would be tolerated in the projects of public welfare whatsoever.

He also announced that the project of beautification of Quetta airport to Zarghoon road would be completed within six months.

He on the occasion directed to clean and organize the roads of Quetta city besides removing all encroachments from the roads.

Earlier, the Commissioner, Quetta briefed about the project saying that the projects are being prepared for developing Quetta as developed city under Public Private Partnership. He said that the circular road integrated parking plaza would be ranked in most modern parking plazas of the world.

**TENDER NOTICE**

The Executive Engineer (Building) CW PP&H Department Pishin invites sealed bids from eligible bidders who can prove their eligibility and qualification as mentioned in the bidding documents for the work mentioned below. The work estimated cost and other information of works as under tender based on Composite Schedule of Rates 2023. Government of Balochistan amended up-to-date as required from interested contractors / firms for the work listed below under BPPRA Rules. Tender Fee Rs.1000/- and Earnest Money 2% for each work.

S.No.	Name of Work	E/Cost
1	CONSTRUCTION OF COMPLETE BUILDING GOVT. BOYS HIGH SCHOOL BALA OBESH TAGI KAREZAT PISHIN PSDP.6312 (Z2024.2573) 2024-25 TSE-242510579893	Rs 78.510 M
2	CONSTRUCTION OF ACADEMIC BLOCK GOVT BOYS HIGH SCHOOL CHURMIAN DISTRICT PISHIN TSE-242510579883	Rs 25.00 M

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan public Procurement Rules-2014. **BASIC ELIGIBILITY:** Eligibility Criteria & Evaluation Criteria for bidders may be seen in the Bidding Documents. **METHOD OF PROCUREMENT:** Single stage - Two Envelop Bidding Procedure. **BIDDING / TENDER DOCUMENTS:** the Bidding document can be downloaded for [www.bppra.pk](http://www.bppra.pk) and the same can also be obtained from the office of the under signed upon payment of prescribed tender fee deposited in the head of account C-02716 NBP Bank green challan is verified by treasury. **DEAD LINE OF SUBMISSION:** S/No 1 only E-Bid & S/No 2 Manual Bid submit in the web site before 11, November, 2024 at 10:30 Hrs. **Opening:** "Technical Bids" will be opened on the same day i.e. 11, November, 2024, at 11:30 Hrs before procurement committee in the presence of bides. Address: Office of the Executive Engineer (Building) CWPP&H Department District Pishin

Executive Engineer (Building) CWPP&H Department District Pishin

PRQ No.1602/24-10-2024

www.dpr.gov.pk @dpr.gov dpr.gov @dpr.gov

## Rubina emphasizes importance of skill development

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid Thursday emphasized the importance of skill development in transforming liabilities into valuable assets.

During her visit to the Riphah Institute of Hospitality and Culinary Arts (RIHCA), she highlighted that empowering beneficiaries with skills could help them break the cycle of poverty while also creating opportunities for others in need of social protection.

Senator Rubina Khalid stressed the significance of international standard certifications in addressing Pakistan's challenges.

She called for high-quality training programs to unlock potential, particularly in the nursing sector, and urged organizations to provide world-class training and certifications.

Chancellor Hassan Muhammad Khan briefed Senator Khalid on the initiatives of RIHCA, focusing on vocational training and the medical-technical fields.

"RIHCA operates in various cities and serves nearly 30,000 students," he noted.

Both leaders agreed on the importance of integrating work ethics and hygiene into skill development programs to cultivate professionally competent and ethical leaders for the future.

Chairperson BISP also interacted with female trainees at RIHCA and cut a cake baked by them in celebration of 'World Chef Day'.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed addresses at the opening ceremony of the 'Pakistan Sustainability Summit' held at a local hotel.

## NRSP announces launch of GCF-Funded \$50mln Climaventures Program

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) on Thursday announced the launch of its \$50 million Climaventures Programme.

The NRSP acknowledged the role of the Government of Pakistan and the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination for their unwavering support, a news release said.

The Green Climate Fund committed \$25 million to Climaventures at its 40th Board Meeting held in Korea on October 22.

Investment Officer of the Green Climate Fund (GCF), Henry Gonzalez said, "We are proud to support Climaventures, a pioneering initiative that develops homegrown climate solutions by leveraging Pakistan's growing start-up ecosystem. The project aims to demonstrate that local climate needs can be met affordably, with strong demand for climate products and services, while offering investors financial returns on climate impact."

Climaventures is poised to be a groundbreaking initiative designed to kickstart Pakistan's climate startup ecosystem and accelerate Pakistan's transition towards a low-carbon, climate-resilient economy.

Pakistani Board Member of the GCF, Nauman Bashir Bhatti said, "I congratulate NRSP for the approval of the project. Although this is Pakistan's 9th project for which the GCF Board has approved funding, it is the first indigenously conceived and designed equity project from Pakistan's direct access entity aimed at mobilizing the domestic private sector for climate action in Pakistan."

Venture Accelerator, the foundational component with a size of USD 10 million, will provide financial and technical support to ideation-stage climate-focused businesses, helping them develop and scale their climate products.



ISLAMABAD: Joint Secretary MoIT, Ms. Saima Ahad, CEO of Universal Service Fund, Ch. Mudassar Naveed, and Oncologist Dr. Muhammad Farrukh lead the Breast Cancer Awareness Walk organized by the Universal Service Fund (USF) at Fatima Jinnah Park in the Federal Capital.

## US envoy lauds restoration of Karachi's historic Frere Hall at completion ceremony

ISLAMABAD (APP): The United States (US) Ambassador to Pakistan, Donald Blome on Thursday praised the successful completion of the restoration of the historic Frere Hall, a project funded by the US Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP).

Addressing a ceremony held at Frere Hall, Karachi, Ambassador Blome expressed his admiration for the initiative, stating that the restoration symbolizes the shared values and collaborative spirit between the US and Pakistan.

He said, "On behalf of the US government and the American people, it is an honor to join you today as we celebrate the completion of this remarkable project. Thanks to the AFCP, Frere Hall will continue to serve as a space for Karachi's vibrant artistic community and as a testament to the city's rich cultural heritage."

Ambassador Blome highlighted the cultural and educational significance of Frere Hall, noting that the restoration project reinforces its role as a center for civic engagement and learning in the heart of Karachi. He commended the Sindh Exploration and Adventure Society (SEAS) for their leadership in the restoration effort, led by Dr. Asma Ibrahim and Dr. Kaleemullah Lashari. The project, which spanned three years, involved local students in learning the skills of historic preservation, reflecting a commitment not only to cultural heritage but also to skill development and economic growth.

"Restoring Frere Hall and making it structurally safer and more accessible for public gatherings like today—and for the future—is a powerful symbol of the bond between the US and Pakistan," he remarked.



ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Romina Khurshid Alam signs Statement of Understanding (SoU) with private sector members to mitigate nitric acid mitigation pact for enhanced national climate action held at the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination in Islamabad.

## Climate Change ministry signs nitric acid mitigation pact to boost climate action

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination signed the crucial Nitric Acid Climate Action Group (NACAG) Statement of Undertaking (SoU), committing to reduce nitrous oxide emissions in the country's nitric acid industry.

The signing ceremony was attended by First Secretary at the German Embassy, Janine Rohwer, and Coordinator for Energy, Climate Change and Just Transition at GIZ Pakistan, Wolfgang Hesse.

The Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam confirmed present government's intention to implement policies to cut nitrous oxide emissions from nitric acid production in the long-term, a news release said.

Following this decision by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Fatima Fertilizers Multan Plant has become eligible for financial support from the NACAG Secretariat to install catalysts for mitigating nitrous oxide emissions and measuring technology in its production facilities.

Addressing the SoU signing ceremony, PM's climate aide Romina Khurshid Alam said that with the SoU signing with the private sector, Pakistan has become the 11th country to formally sign the understanding of collaboration, alongside Argentina, Colombia, Georgia, Jordan, Mexico, Peru, Thailand, Tunisia, Uzbekistan, and Zimbabwe to reduce over four million tons of CO2 equivalent emissions annually in the country's nitric acid sector.

"Today marks a significant step forward in Pakistan's efforts to combat climate change and advance sustainable development. The NACAG initiative plays a vital role in our climate action strategy, and we are grateful for the support from the German government and GIZ," Romina Khurshid Alam remarked.

The nitrous oxide emission reduction potential in the fertilizer sector in Pakistan has been estimated at around 1.86 million tons of Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2eq) per year. Nitrous oxide is an odorless, colorless, non-flammable gas. Its global warming potential is nearly 300 times that of carbon dioxide over a 100-year time scale.

The coordinator to the Prime Minister reiterated Pakistan's commitment to reduce the country's greenhouse gas emissions by aligning national actions with international agreements like the Paris Agreement.

In April 2020, Pakistan declared its commitment to helping ensure abatement of N2O from nitric acid production by signing the N2O Mitigation Declaration, she recalled, adding that nitric acid producers in Pakistan became eligible for over 7 million euros grant for advanced abatement technology and monitoring equipment.

## Irfan praises Uzbekistan's initiative to commence flights operation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Senator Irfan Siddiqui, met with Uzbekistan's Ambassador to Pakistan, Alisher Tukhtayev, on Thursday and discussed areas of mutual interest, with a particular focus on enhancing bilateral trade.

During the meeting, Senator Siddiqui warmly welcomed the newly appointed ambassador and extended his best wishes for a successful tenure.

He acknowledged the invitation to observe the elections to the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan, scheduled for October 27, 2024, expressing his enthusiasm for witnessing this important democratic event.

He also thanked the Central Election Commission of Uzbekistan for inviting a delegation of Pakistani senators to observe the elections. Ambassador Tukhtayev announced the launch of direct flights between Lahore and Tashkent, which will later be extended to other major cities in Pakistan.

Irfan Siddiqui praised Uzbekistan's initiative to commence flights starting next month, stating that this development will significantly boost trade, tourism, and people-to-people exchanges between the two countries.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Housing & Works, Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada, Ambassador of Hungary in Islamabad, Béla Fazekas and others cutting a cake on the occasion of the National Day of Hungary.

## Lok Virsa calls vendors, artisans to book stalls for Lok Mela in November

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (Lok Virsa) has called all vendors and artisans from across the country to book stalls for becoming part of the much-awaited annual cultural event of "Lok Mela", scheduled to be held from November 08-17 in Islamabad. The event is being arranged by Lok Virsa which is an autonomous cultural organization working under National Heritage.

## Bike lifter gang held; seven bikes recovered

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police on Thursday apprehended two wanted members of a notorious bike lifter gang involved in numerous bike thefts and recovered seven stolen motorbikes from their possessions.

According to a police spokesperson, under the special directions of Inspector General (IG) Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the ICT Police have intensified their crackdown on criminal elements to eliminate crime from the city. In this regard, the Shahzad Town police team used technical and human resources, successfully apprehending two wanted members of the bike lifter gang.

## Toshakhana case PTI founder appeal plea against his conviction fixed for hearing

ISLAMABAD (Online): Appeal pleas of PTI founder against his conviction in Toshakhana case has been fixed for hearing.

The hearing of appeals will take place on October 29.

The petition seeking early fixation of appeals against conviction of Imran Khan came up for hearing in IHC Thursday.

A division bench of IHC comprising Chief Justice (CJ) Aamer Farooq and Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb heard the case.

The court accepted the petition for fixing the appeal pleas for early hearing. The court directed to fix the appeal pleas for hearing on October 29.

PTI founder had filed appeal plea in IHC against decision of district court in Toshakhana case.

## AIOU establishes museum to preserve 50 Years of historical legacy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has officially inaugurated the "AIOU History Museum" to preserve its 50-year legacy. The museum was inaugurated on Thursday by Hassan Nasir Jami, Secretary of the National Heritage and Culture Division.

The ceremony was attended by Mr. Atadjan Movlamov, Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan, along with diplomats from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Iran, Russia, Turkey, and Malaysia, as well as AIOU Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood, Dr. Farhat Asif, President of the Institute of Peace and Diplomatic Studies, and Dr. Saleem Mazhar, Director General of the National Language Promotion Department and senior teachers and officers of the University.

Two separate corners of Turkmenistan and Iranian cultures have also been set up in the AIOU History Museum.

Following the inauguration, an international conference was held to commemorate the "300th Birth Anniversary of Turkmen Poet Magtymguly Pyragy and the Legacy of Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal." Federal Secretary Hassan Nasir Jami expressed enthusiasm for the museum's establishment and emphasized its potential to strengthen research and cultural ties between Pakistan and Turkmenistan.

Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood noted that Iqbal, who emerged 150 years after Pyragy, shared similar values of patriotism, dignity, and humanity.

## NA Speaker calls for polio vaccination for all children under five

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Thursday urged everyone to make sure all children under five get polio vaccine drops to help eliminate polio in Pakistan and create a healthier future for kids.

In his World Polio Day message, speaker said polio is a debilitating disease that leads to disability in children, and it is our shared duty to safeguard them from it. Sadly, Pakistan remains one of the few countries where the poliovirus is still present. The speaker appealed to the nation to ensure all children under five years receive polio vaccine drops, stressing the importance of collective efforts to protect them from this debilitating disease.

Ayaz Sadiq stated that the surge in polio cases is alarming, emphasizing that protecting children from the poliovirus is a collective responsibility as they are the future of the nation.

He highlighted the necessity of unified action to shield children from the poliovirus. He urged all sectors of society to collaborate in the fight against polio. Sadiq also commended frontline health workers for their relentless dedication in providing door-to-door polio vaccinations, recognizing their vital contribution to combating the disease.

The speaker appealed to the nation to ensure all children under five years receive polio vaccine drops.

## Law minister holds meeting with bar councils' representatives

ISLAMABAD (APP): The representatives of different bar councils on Thursday met Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tatar.

The representatives of bar associations from Jhelum, Khushab, Sohawa, Chuniyan and Nurpur Thal held meeting with the law minister.

They discussed the discussion on various issues related to bar councils.

The law minister said that Bank of Punjab branches and counters will be opened in court premises after discussing with the Punjab government and the Punjab Bar Council on the issues of court fees and stamps.

The contact has been established between the Vice Chairman Punjab Bar Council Chaudhry Babar Waheed and the management of Bank of Punjab.

He assured that full cooperation while discussing the problems of lawyers and said that government prioritizes welfare schemes for lawyers.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tatar held a meeting with Lawyers from various Bar Associations.

## IHC directs jail admin to present PTI founder

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday directed the Adiala Jail administration to present the PTI founder before court on coming Thursday for his meeting with lawyers.

The court said that the jail administration has to tell the certain security threat if the PTI founder is not brought here.

Justice Sardar Ijaz Ishaq Khan remarked that the interior ministry should also present the report and explain that what security threats are there. The court remarked that even the lawyers were not allowed to meet their clients in jail, adding that it was a contempt of court.

## 12 outlaws arrested; drugs, weapons recovered

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police on Thursday apprehended 12 criminals involved in various criminal activities, and recovered drugs and weapons, along with ammunition from their possessions. A public relations officer of the police department said that under the special directions of Inspector General (IG) Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the ICT Police have intensified their crackdown on criminal elements to eliminate crime from the city. In this regard, teams from the Islamabad Police, including Bhara Kahu, Khanna, Karachi Company, Golra, Nilore, Bani Gala police stations,

## IUI & UNICEF join hand for child rights protection in Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): UNICEF Pakistan and the Islamic Research Institute (IRI) of the International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Thursday to enhance the protection of children's rights in Pakistan.

The MoU was part of the launch of a research initiative focused on applying behavioral science to facilitate social dialogue and transformation regarding child rights.

The speakers underscored the importance of ensuring children's rights to survival, education, and protection against violence. They pointed out that the challenge lies not in legislation but in societal attitudes that often condone discrimination and violence against children. The signing ceremony took place at the Allama Iqbal Auditorium, with Mr. Abdullah A. Fadil, UNICEF's Country Chief, as the chief guest. Rana Mashood Ahmad Khan, Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Program, chaired the event, which also featured prominent guests such as Justice Muhammad Anwer.

## EC reserves judgment on PTI leader Raja petition regarding change of ET

ISLAMABAD (Online): Election Commission (EC) has reserved judgment on PTI leader Raja Khurram Nawaz petition regarding change of Election Tribunal (ET).

Petition by Raja Khurram Nawaz regarding change of ET came up for hearing in EC Thursday.

A 4-member bench of EC presided over by Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja took up the petition for hearing.

The counsels of Ali Bokhari and Raja Khurram Nawaz appeared in the court.

Counsel for Ali Bokhari said how the proceeding has to be done. I want to read paragraph about it.

Member KP said to my view he has read it three to four times. CEC remarked, no, read it what you want to read.

Counsel for Ali Bokhari said lack of trust instead of 62 has been written in what amended petition has come. Word has been changed. All the grounds are the same what were in the previous petition.

Counsel for Raja Khurram Nawaz said law does not prevent me that we make amendment in the petition, it was said from their side that we used wrong language. They have no trust on system. To us this system has given powers.



ISLAMABAD: Provincial Ombudsman on Protection of Women Against Harassment at Workplace, KP, Rukhsanda Naz, Minister for Social Welfare and Women Development, GB, Dilshad Bano, Executive Director PODA, Sameena Nazir presenting a certificate to a participant at Closing ceremony of 17th Annual Rural Women Leadership Training Conference held under the auspices of PODA - Pakistan at Lok Virsa in the Federal Capital.



## Cabinet approves transfer of land for construction of Custom House in D I Khan

PESHAWAR (APP): The meeting of provincial cabinet chaired by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister, Ali Amin Gandapur here Thursday approved transfer of 40 kanal of land from Board of Revenue to Pakistan Custom for construction of Custom House & Warehouses in Dera Ismail Khan. The cabinet meeting was also participated by Provincial Ministers, Advisors, Special Assistants, Chief Secretary, Additional Chief Secretary, Senior Member Board of Revenue and administrative secretaries. The meeting also demanded formation of a committee comprising representatives of government and political parties to look into proposals and demands of Pashtun Peace Jirga relating to federal

government. The provincial cabinet also authorized Relief Department to take up a case of establishing a desk at Bacha Khan Airport Peshawar for providing the facility of transporting the dead bodies brought from abroad. Cabinet also approved Rs.36 million grant for purchase of three ambulances also allowing Rs.0.7 million per month budget to Rescue 1122 for the purpose. It was also decided that such transportation facility would be provided on demand from the Islamabad International Airport. The cabinet approved federal government to legislate on the subject of "Explosive" for implementation of National Explosive Policy. Cabinet also decided to approve amendments in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Civil

Servants (Appointments, Promotion and Transfer) Rules, 1989 for reservation of quota for transgender, revising the fourth condition of its decision taken in the 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Provincial Cabinet allowing partial relaxation of ban for creation of positions of project employees with domicile from other than Ex-FATA. The cabinet approved guidelines for nomination of the chairman for production Bonus Utilization Committee and revised production Bonus Guidelines 2024. Under Petroleum Exploration and Production Policy 2012, the Production Bonus is payable once commercial production of Oil and Gas commences from a producing field. The Policy authorizes the Provincial Government to issue guidelines.



MUZAFFARABAD: President Azad Kashmir, Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry inspecting the parade on the occasion of the 77th foundation day of Azad Kashmir.

## Punjab Governor says: Exchange of trade, various delegations from Belgium will bolster bilateral ties

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Ambassador of Belgium to Pakistan, Idesblad van der Gracht, called on Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan here today at Governor House Lahore. In the meeting, cooperation in the fields of trade, education and sports were discussed. Speaking on this occasion, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that promotion of trade and business activities is very important for boosting the economy of the country. Governor Punjab appreciated the proposal of

the Ambassador of Belgium to promote sports diplomacy between the two countries for the promotion of sports, especially hockey. He said that hockey is the national sport of Pakistan and there was a time when Pakistan was champion in hockey at international level. He said that the exchange of trade and various delegations from Belgium will bolster bilateral relations. Governor Punjab further stated that Belgium is a gateway to Pakistani businessmen to explore export opportunities in European markets. He said that cooperation between Pakistan and Belgium in various fields should be increased. Governor Punjab said that there are vast opportunities for promoting bilateral cooperation in agriculture sector. He said that student exchange programmes should also be started between Pakistan and Belgium. On this occasion, Ambassador of Belgium to Pakistan, Idesblad van der Gracht said that cooperation with Pakistan in the fields of sports, education and food will be enhanced further.

## Progress on Chashma Lift Canal Project continues: Governor

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Thursday said that the Chashma Lift Canal project is moving closer to completion, with the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) issuing tenders for its first two phases. In a statement issued here, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi announced that the project will be inaugurated this year, fulfilling a long-standing demand of the residents of Dera Ismail Khan. WAPDA's North Project Manager has requested pre-qualification tenders for the initial two phases of the canal. The tenders for the first phase will be opened on November 22, followed by the second phase on November 25. WAPDA plans to complete the canal in six sections. Similarly, Ahmad Karim Kundi, the parliamentary leader of the Pakistan Peoples Party in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, emphasized that the party believes in taking practical steps rather than making empty promises. He expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, and the Federal Minister and Chairman of WAPDA for their support. He acknowledged the significant role played by Governor Faisal Karim Kundi in turning this vision into reality.

## Punjab Law Minister engages bar associations to resolve legal community's issues

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab government has embarked on a journey to address the issues of lawyers and bar associations across the province. In this context, Provincial Law Minister Malik Sohaib Ahmed Bharth invited the presidents and general secretaries of six bar associations in the first phase to meet with him at the Lahore Civil Secretariat's Darbar Hall on Thursday morning. Imran Khakwani, President of the Multan Bar; Muhammad Ibrahim, President of the Narawal Bar; Mariam Rana, President of the Mandi Bahauddin Bar; Mian Anwarul Haq, President of the Faisalabad Bar; Aamir Munir, President of the Gujranwala Bar; and Mohsin Shah, President of the Sargodha Bar, were welcomed by the Minister for Law Punjab and the Parliamentary Secretary for Law, Khalid Ranjha. The meeting was also attended by the general secretaries of the bar associations and the Punjab Secretary for Law, Bilal Ahmed Lodhi. During the meeting, the presidents and general secretaries congratulated the government on the successful passing of the 26<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment through a democratic process. Passing the 26<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment was a fully democratic process, and they expressed their full support for it.

## UCHS, Islamic Aid sign agreement for development projects

LAHORE (APP): The University of Child Health Sciences and Islamic Aid have entered into a significant agreement to undertake various development projects, including the construction and revamping of colleges, emergency blocks, and a day care center. The memorandum of agreement was signed by Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique and Chairman Islamic Aid Mahmoodul Hasan. During the signing ceremony on Thursday, the minister commended the efforts of Islamic Aid, particularly its Chairman, Mahmoodul Hasan, stating, "I appreciate Islamic Aid's commitment to serving humanity."



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah addresses the audience during the World Polio Day Program, held at CM House in Karachi.

## Aleem Khan calls on CM Sindh

KARACHI (APP): The Federal Minister for Communications, Privatization and Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan, during his visit of Karachi on Thursday, called on Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah. The federal minister and the Sindh CM had a detailed discussion on the matters relating to Highways and Communication sector in Sindh province, said a statement issued here. Meanwhile, Federal Minister for Communication, Privatization and Investment Abdul Aleem

Khan and Federal Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan, paid a visit to MQM-P's Member of the National Assembly Raana Ansar at her residence to offer condolence on sudden death of her young son Shahzeb Naqvi. They expressed their deep sorrow and grief over the sudden death of young Shahzeb Naqvi and offered sympathies with the bereaved family. They prayed that may Allah Almighty rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage and strength to the bereaved family to bear this loss with fortitude.

## 16 killed, 1638 injured in 1467 RTCs in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): At least sixteen persons were killed and 1638 injured in 1467 Road Traffic Crashes (RTCs) in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours. Out of these, 739 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 899 victims with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by Rescue Medical Teams thus reducing the burden of hospitals. Furthermore, the analysis showed that 846 drivers, 69 underage drivers, 181 pedestrians, and 627 passengers were among the victims of road traffic crashes. The statistics showed that 287 RTCs were reported in Lahore which affected 331 persons placing the Provincial Capital at top of the list followed by Faisalabad 100 with 97 victims and at third Multan with 79 RTCs and 88 victims.

## ANF recovers 232 kg drugs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting an operation managed to recover over 232 kg drugs, said an ANF headquarters spokesman here on Thursday. He informed that acting on a tip-off, ANF team conducted a raid near the Motorway Interchange, Balkasar and foiled a drug smuggling attempt from Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa to Punjab. 232.8 kg drugs including 174 kg hashish and 58.8 kg opium, worth more than Rs 30 million were recovered from secret cavities made in a Suzuki pick-up. An accused was arrested during the operation who is the main operative of the drug trafficking group, which smuggles drugs from Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa to different districts of Punjab.

## PG Punjab declares minor domestic worker murder case high-profile

LAHORE (APP): Prosecutor General Punjab Syed Farhad Ali Shah on Thursday declared the minor domestic worker murder case as high-profile. Earlier, after taking notice of the incident in which a minor domestic worker girl was tortured and killed within the jurisdiction of Lahore's Defense-C Police Station, the Prosecutor General Punjab summoned the investigating officer and the investigation in-charge, along with the case record. The investigating officer briefed the Prosecutor General that the accused had tortured the minor domestic worker girl, buried her body, and filed a false theft FIR against her. In response to a question from the Prosecutor General that



KARACHI: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi plants a sapling under POA Environment Commissioner Tree Plantation drive at KPT Football Stadium.

## US delegation meets Punjab minorities minister

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Minorities Affairs Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora met a US delegation at his camp office on Thursday to discuss issues regarding protection of human rights, particularly for religious minorities in Punjab. The delegation, which included Deputy Assistant Secretary Jacobsen, Consul General Hawkins, Laskowski, Nelson, Lakhpanal and political specialist Daim. In the meeting they discussed the measures taken by the Punjab government to support minority communities. Why the Anti-Rape Act 2021 was not applied and why the investigation was not conducted by the SSO Unit, the investigating officer failed to provide a satisfactory explanation. Expressing anger over the negligence and poor investigation, the Prosecutor General reprimanded the officers. Issuing a directive, the Prosecutor General ordered the SP Investigation to rectify the investigation's flaws and appear on October 28, 2024. Additionally, a letter was sent to the District Public Prosecutor Lahore, stressing the importance of following the guidelines issued by the Prosecutor General's office and ensuring that the investigating officer is provided with full legal assistance.



LAHORE: Ambassador of Belgium to Pakistan, Idesblad van der Gracht, called on Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan here today at Governor House.

## PPP leader calls for collective efforts to eradicate polio in Pak

LAHORE (APP): On the World Polio Awareness Day, Bushra Manzoor Maneka, Coordinator for the President of Pakistan People's Party Central Punjab, urged the nation to commit to saving Pakistan's future from the crippling effects of polio. In her statement on Thursday, she highlighted that the day was being observed worldwide, including in Pakistan, to raise awareness about polio eradication. She stressed the need for a zero-tolerance policy against the rising number of polio cases in the country. She emphasized the important role women, particularly mothers, can play in combating polio by ensuring that their children receive the necessary vaccinations. She called for both individual and collective efforts to make Pakistan polio-free, advocating for a "jihad" against this life-threatening disease in the affected areas. "A clean and healthy society is the true solution to polio."

## US delegation meets Punjab minorities minister

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Minorities Affairs Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora met a US delegation at his camp office on Thursday to discuss issues regarding protection of human rights, particularly for religious minorities in Punjab. The delegation, which included Deputy Assistant Secretary Jacobsen, Consul General Hawkins, Laskowski, Nelson, Lakhpanal and political specialist Daim. In the meeting they discussed the measures taken by the Punjab government to support minority communities.



LAHORE: Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique leading the awareness walk to control environmental pollution & smog at Fatima Jinnah Medical University.

## Volunteers training competitions held

SARGODHA (APP): Under the supervision of District Emergency Officer Mazhar Shah, a Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTS) challenge was organized among teams of rescue volunteers across the district. In the competition, teams from seven tehsils of the district participated. The challenge was held at the Central Rescue Station. Chief guest of Government Allied School Sargodha Ms. Sadia, rescue officers, and rescue staff participated in the event. In the competitions, shifting of the injured in any emergency situation, giving first aid, taking timely action in case of fire, searching and trying to rescue patients in case of building collapse, practical demonstration of rescuing a drowning person were exhibited. District Emergency Officer Mazhar Shah said the purpose of these competitions was to help volunteers in any emergency situation by reaching the spot safely before the arrival of Rescue-1122 and saving lives. He said that so far, CERTI teams consisting of volunteers have been formed in schools and colleges, factories.

## Punjab govt to support pediatric transplantation, says health minister

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique announced the provincial government's commitment to providing all possible support for pediatric transplantation. He made this statement during the opening session of the three-day 3<sup>rd</sup> International Pediatric Urology Congress, organized by the Pakistan Society of Pediatric Urology at the University of Child Health Sciences on Thursday. Addressing the attendees as the chief guest, the minister highlighted that Lahore's Children's Hospital is the second largest children's hospital globally and the largest in South Asia. He emphasized that, following the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the government is dedicated to enhancing healthcare services for the public. The health minister congratulated the University of Child Health Sciences for successfully organizing the international congress and presented commemorative shields to professionals from various countries. "We are working hard to ensure the best possible health facilities for children in Punjab," he stated. Vice Chancellor Professor Masood Sadiq, who welcomed the minister and international guests, shared that the Children's Hospital Lahore continues to offer top-notch medical services for children. He also acknowledged minister's efforts in initiating kidney transplant programs eight years ago. The International Pediatric Urology Congress, running from October 24 to 26, has attracted healthcare professionals from countries including Saudi Arabia, China, the UAE, Iran, the United States, and the UK. Key participants at the event include MD Children's Hospital Prof. Tipu Sultan, Prof. Ayaz Khan, Prof. Nabila, and Executive Director Jinnah Burn Center Prof. Yawar Sajjad, along with numerous students and experts from the field. The congress aims to discuss advancements and share expertise in pediatric urology to improve treatment outcomes for young patients globally.

## RIGHTS & MINORITIES AFFAIRS DEPART



LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Minorities Affairs Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora presenting souvenir to US delegation during a meeting.

## Rana Tanveer presents Industrial Policy to boost foreign investment

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain on Thursday presented the National Industrial Policy at UNIDO forum with an objective to create an enabling environment for local industry growth and attract foreign investment.

Addressing the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) Multilateral Industrial Policy Forum in Riyadh the minister said the policy would be finalized by October 2024, according to press release issued by the Ministry of Industries. The policy focuses on green energy initiatives, women empowerment, and regional

cooperation, aligning with Pakistan's Vision 2025 and Sustainable Development Goals. He said, a comprehensive and integrated approach is being adopted to effectively align the National Industrial Policies with national and regional Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for maximum impact.

The strategies used include prioritizing high-impact sectors, regional collaboration, inclusive stakeholder engagement, incentivizing sustainable practices, and strengthening governance and policy coherence.

The policy will focus on various sectors such as steel, cement, mining,

petrochemicals & chemicals, fertilizer, heavy mechanical, non-ferrous metals, plastics and composites, fisheries, transport and logistics.

It also cover value-added/GVG sectors such as auto parts, tractors, parts & accessories of office machines, travel accessories furniture, footwear, synthetic & non-traditional textiles and garments, food processing, surgical and medical devices, electronics, and pharmaceuticals.

Rana Tanveer said that the formulation of the green energy initiative also a prominent aspect of the policy. The minister highlighted that currently, the transport sector



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting on reforms of Federal Board of Revenue.



WASHINGTON DC: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb held a meeting with the delegation of Standard Chartered Bank.

## Awais for enhanced energy cooperation with Power China, Energy China

QINGDAO, China (APP): Federal Minister for Power, Sardar Ahmad Khan Leghari, held separate meetings with Mr. Yao Huan, Vice-President of Power China and Mr. Ni Zhen Deputy Secretary of the Party Committee and General Manager of the Energy China on the sidelines of the Third Belt & Road Ministerial Conference in Qingdao, China.

During these meetings, the minister engaged in fruitful discussions aimed at strengthening energy cooperation between Pakistan and these leading Chinese energy companies, according to a press release on Thursday.

Recalling historic visit of Premier Li Qiang to Pakistan, Minister for Power conveyed Pakistan's desire to modernize power dispatch and transmission systems, aimed at cutting lines and other losses. At the

meeting with Vice President Yao of Power China, both sides explored the possibility of establishing a state-of-the-art research and development center in Pakistan to facilitate the integration of advanced technologies and best practices into the country's energy framework.

The minister noted that the proposed center would not only enhance operational performance but also contribute to sustainable energy solutions benefiting both Pakistan and its partners.

During the meeting with President Ni of Energy China, both sides expressed their views on the future trajectory of energy cooperation under second phase of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), including enhancing energy mix and advancement of new technologies into the power generation and dispatch systems.

## Pak total liquid foreign reserves recorded as \$16.01 billion

KARACHI (APP): The total liquid foreign reserves of Pakistan stood at US\$ 16,017.1 million as of October 18, 2024 while the forex reserves held by the State Bank of Pakistan increased to \$ 11,040.7 million.

The State Bank of Pakistan, in a statement issued here on Thursday, informed that total liquid foreign reserves held by the central bank increased by \$18 million to \$11,040.7 million during the week ended on October 18, 2024.

Meanwhile, net foreign reserves held by commercial banks were recorded as \$ 4,976.4 million during the week under review, it added.

Total liquid foreign reserves held by the country, in the previous week ended on October 11, 2024, were \$16,111.3 million.

Among them foreign reserves held by the central bank were recorded as \$11,022 million while \$5,088.6 million were held by commercial banks.

## PM calls for using technology to improve tax, revenue collection

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday directed the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to utilise modern technology to improve the collection mechanism of taxes and revenues.

The prime minister, chairing a review meeting on the FBR reforms, instructed the measures for capacity building of the FBR officers and its effective use, according to

a PM Office press release.

He directed the formulation of a strategy for restructuring Pakistan Revenue Automation Limited (PRAL) and called for enhancing the effectiveness of the systems to curb smuggling.

The prime minister directed the FBR to provide a friendly atmosphere to the taxpayers and asked the officers to accomplish the reform process.

## China, Pakistan sign MoU to leverage space technology for global sustainable goals

BEIJING (APP): A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between International Research Center of Big Data for Sustainable Development Goals (CBAS), China and Space & Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO), Pakistan

recently to collaborate on utilizing space and big data technologies for natural resource management and the assessment of regional sustainable development goals (SDGs).

It is learned that the collaboration is set to advance China-Pakistan joint research initiatives

and leverage data from the Sustainable Development Science Satellite 1 (SDGSAT-1), which supports the attainment of the SDGs and fosters a data-driven approach to sustainable development. According to sources, this partnership aims to enhance data sharing.



QINGDAO: Federal Minister for Power, Sardar Ahmad Khan Leghari, meets Mr. Yao Huan, Vice-President of Power China on the sidelines of the Third Belt & Road Energy Ministerial Conference in Qingdao, China.

## OICCI hosts "Dining in Dark" to unite foreign investors for disability inclusion

KARACHI: The Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) organized a unique event, the "Dining in the Dark Experience," in collaboration with Khaas Foodz Kitchen (KFK) on Thursday. This initiative brought together OICCI's member companies and foreign investors to emphasize the importance of disability inclusion and address the challenges persons with disabilities (PWDs) face in corporate environments.

The highlight of the event was a sensory dining experience, where attendees were blindfolded and led through the meal cooked by visually impaired chefs from KFK, a social enterprise committed to training and employing individuals with disabilities. This unique setting allowed participants to experience first-hand the difficulties PWDs face, fostering empathy and sparking discussions on inclusion.

Ahmed Bozai, Chairperson of OICCI's Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee, emphasized the need for corporate Pakistan to drive change. "Inclusive environments are more than just a moral responsibility; they are a business necessity.

People with disabilities bring immense talent, and it's time we create pathways for them to fully contribute and thrive," said Ahmed during his keynote speech.

## OGDCL commences Oil & Gas production from Baloch-2 well in Sanghar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) on Thursday commenced oil and gas production from Baloch-2 well in Sanghar Sindh.

According to a news release, after the gas condensate discovery announced on August 30, 2024, the OGDCL has now successfully brought the Baloch-2 well into production.

The well, situated

within the Sinjhor block, is producing 350 barrels per day (BPD) of oil and 5 million standard cubic feet per day (MMSCFD) of gas. The production is connected to the Sinjhor Processing Plant, with the gas being fed into the Sui Southern Gas Company Limited (SSGCL) network, contributing directly to the country's energy supply.

OGDCL's in-house expertise played a key role in the delineation, drilling,

## FPCCI & FBR exclusive meeting Genuine taxpayers should be protected at all costs: Atif

KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, has apprised that Mr. Rashid Mahmood Langrial, Chairman of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), has agreed, in an

special request by FPCCI. It was intrinsically unnecessary and redundant as sales tax act 1990 already offers enough provision for responsible filing of the sales tax returns, he added.



exclusive, candid and detailed meeting, with FPCCI's demand of an end to harassment of genuine and regular taxpayers - and, only the tax evaders or defaulters should be served with notices.

However, FBR Chairman demanded that FPCCI should support the efforts of FBR to persuade all traders and industrialists to file their returns in a fair, legitimate and transparent manner. To which the high-profile FPCCI delegation agreed to assist FBR; if the tax collection machinery is run and policymaking is undertaken in a consultative style.

Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh acknowledged that the demand of signing an affidavit by chief financial officers (CFOs) of companies has been withdrawn by FBR after

Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, SVP FPCCI, observed that FBR's revenue collection target is PKR 12.97 trillion - representing a 40 percent YoY increase - while the economy is growing at only 2-3 percent.

This is huge cause of concern for the business community; and, may result in new taxes, mini budgets and taxing the already taxed even further.

Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon maintained the Finance Bill has significantly reduced the business community's confidence in the government policies due to the abrupt withdrawal of 1 percent full and final liability for exporters; and, sales tax exemption on local supplies to registered exporters authorized under the Export Finance Scheme (EFS).

## NEPRA approves 87 paisa per unit relief in FCA for August

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) on Thursday approved 86 paisa per unit decrease in power tariff under monthly fuel cost adjustment mechanism (FCA) for August.

The Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA) has sought 57 paisa per unit decrease in the tariff for the said period, said a notification issued here.

The regulatory conducted public hearing into the CPPA petition on September 26. The regulator had also slashed 37 paisa per unit in FCA for month of July, it further said.

The FCA for August would be 49 paisa less as compared to July and the relief would be given to the consumers in billing month of October.

Those consumers who had already received their electricity bills would be compensate in billing month of November, it further said.

The relief would be applicable to all consumers except lifeline, prepaid and Electrical Vehicle Charging Stations. It would not be applicable to the consumers of K-Electric.

## FBR amends income tax rules to enhance ATL system efficiency

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has amended the income tax rules 2002 to improve the efficiency and responsiveness of the Active Taxpayer's List (ATL) system, streamlining tax operations for enhanced compliance.

The board announced this under the Income Tax Rules, 2002, as notified by S.R.O. 1638(I)/2024, dated October 18, 2024, said a news release here on Thursday.

These amendments, issued under section 237 of

the Income Tax Ordinance, 2001, are aimed at improving the efficiency and responsiveness of the Active Taxpayer's List (ATL) system. Under the new amendments, the ATL will now be updated on daily basis, replacing the previous practice of weekly updates.

This adjustment ensures that taxpayers who meet their filing obligations are reflected as active taxpayers promptly, enhancing real-time accuracy and facilitating compliance.

## Rupee sheds 12 paisa against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee on Thursday depreciated by 12 paisa against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs277.84 against the previous day's closing of Rs277.72. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs277.30 and Rs278.80 respectively. The price of Euro increased by 62 paisa to close at Rs300.08 against the last day's closing of Rs299.46, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

## Kisan card, farmer-friendly initiative: Minister

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Agriculture Minister Ashiq Hussain Kirmani has said Kisan card is a historic and farmer-friendly initiative of Punjab chief minister.

He said this while presiding over a high-level meeting at Agriculture House on Thursday. He said that till now 1,500,000 farmers had got themselves registered for Kisan card while Bank of Punjab had approved 430,000 applications. He said that till now, farmers had activated 310,000 Kisan cards.

Kirmani was told in the meeting that purchase process of agriculture inputs through Kisan card was ongoing at 2,600 registered dealers. The meeting told that till now farmers had carried out purchase worth Rs 2 billion.

The minister said that Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz had started exemplary initiatives for prosperity of farmers. He said that 136 delivery centres had been set up at tehsil level for provision of Kisan card.

## PTC to finalize company for operating 27 electric buses on Nov 4

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Transport Company (PTC) has announced its decision to finalize a company for the operation of first 27 electric buses in the city under a pilot project. All major companies have been informed via advertisement to participate by November 4. PTC CEO Imran Ali emphasized that companies can register online through the Punjab Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) portal.

## systems optcl



DUBIA: PTCL and Ufone 4G President and Group CEO, Hatem Bamatraf and Asif Peer, Group CEO and MD Systems Limited exchange memorabilia during the partnership signing ceremony on the occasion GITEK 2024 Dubai for integration of Systems Ltd.'s Business Support Systems (BSS) and Operational Support Systems (OSS) in PTCL Groups technology infrastructure, held in Dubai.

# Israeli strike on Gaza shelter kills 17 as Blinken says cease-fire talks will resume

**Monitoring Desk**  
DEIR AL-BALAH: An Israeli strike on a school where displaced people were sheltering in the central Gaza Strip killed at least 17 people on Thursday, nearly all women and children, Palestinian medical officials said.

The strike came as U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Israel had accomplished its objective of "effectively dismantling" Hamas, and that negotiations over a cease-fire and the release of dozens of Israeli hostages would resume in the coming days.

Another 42 people were wounded in the strike in the built-up Nuseirat refugee camp, according to the Awda Hospital, which received the casualties. Among the dead were 13 children under the age of 18 and three women, according to the hospital's records.

The Israeli military said it targeted Hamas militants inside the school, without providing evidence. Israel has carried out

several strikes on school-turned-shelters in recent months, saying it precisely targets militants hiding out among civilians. The strikes often kill women and children.

Blinken, speaking to reporters in Qatar, which has served as a key mediator between Israel and Hamas, said negotiators would reconvene "in the coming days."

## Lebanon media says 17 Israeli strikes hit Beirut suburbs, 6 buildings levelled

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIRUT: Lebanon state media reported 17 Israeli raids on Beirut's southern suburbs, with six buildings levelled and the vacated offices of a pro-Iran broadcaster hit as the Iran-Hezbollah war reached its one-month mark.

APFPTV footage showed a massive explosion followed by smaller blasts in the embattled southern suburbs after the Israeli army issued an evacuation warning for the area, where Hezbollah holds sway.

The official National News Agency (NNA) reported at least 17 Israeli raids, marking one of the most violent nights in the area since the Israel-Hezbollah war erupted on Sep 23. Six buildings were destroyed around the suburb of Layluki, NNA said, calling the raids "the most violent in the area since the beginning of the war."

The strikes came shortly after the Israeli military's Arabic-language spokesman, Avichay Adraee, issued evacuation warnings on social media platform X.

There was no warning, however, for a strike that hit the Jnah neighbourhood in southern Beirut.



Men walk on the rubble at a site damaged in the aftermath of Israeli strikes on Beirut's southern suburbs, amid the ongoing hostilities between Hezbollah and Israeli forces, Lebanon.

## Russia's proposed grain exchange for BRICS countries may take years to launch

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: Russia's proposal for a new international grain exchange could take years to get off the ground even though the plan was welcomed by members of the BRICS group of countries at a summit this week in Kazan, Russia.

Russia has been pushing to establish the exchange as part of a broader plan to create new financial instruments, detach its trade from the US dollar and help Moscow combat Western sanctions.

President Vladimir Putin said at the summit that BRICS countries, which are among the world's largest producers of grains, legumes, and oilseeds, could establish such an exchange, potentially expanding it to trade other major commodities.

The plan to create the exchange has been approved by leaders of the BRICS countries, whose members include Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.

## UN chief calls for peace in Gaza, Lebanon, Ukraine and Sudan

**Monitoring Desk**  
KAZAN: United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told BRICS leaders including Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday that the world needed peace in Gaza, Lebanon, Ukraine and Sudan.

"Across the board, we need peace," Guterres said at the BRICS summit in the Russian city of Kazan.

"We need peace in Ukraine. A just peace in line with the UN Charter, international law and UN General Assembly resolutions."

## Indonesia says its coast guard drove away Chinese ship that interrupted survey in disputed sea

**Monitoring Desk**  
JAKARTA: Indonesian patrol ships drove away a Chinese coast guard vessel from a survey vessel in a disputed area of the South China Sea for the second time in three days, Indonesian authorities said Thursday.

Indonesia's Maritime Security Agency said a Chinese ship approached the MV Geo Coral on Monday and Wednesday, interrupting a seismic data survey being conducted by the state energy company PT Pertamina in a part of the South China Sea claimed by both countries.

Asked about the Indonesian statement, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said the Coast Guard vessel had carried out routine patrols in waters under Chinese jurisdiction.

"China is ready to enhance communication and consultation with Indonesia through diplomatic channels and properly handle maritime differences between the two countries," he added.

China's "nine-dash line," which it uses to roughly demarcate its claim to most of the South China Sea, overlaps with a section of Indonesia's exclusive economic zone that extends from the Natuna Islands.

## India approves \$119m fund for space startups

**Monitoring Desk**  
NEW DELHI: The Indian government on Thursday approved a 10 billion Indian rupee (\$119 million) fund for its burgeoning space sector, with 40 startups expected to benefit as the country strives to win a significant share of the commercial space market by 2033.

With funding ranging from 100-600 million Indian rupees depending on how mature each startup is, the fund will help generate employment, boost space technology development, fortify supply chains and support research and development, the Indian government said in a statement.

## Bomb attack in Kabul market kills child, injures 11 others

**Monitoring Desk**  
KABUL: An attacker carrying a bomb in a bag killed a child and wounded 11 others in a market in Afghanistan's capital, police said on Thursday.

The attack took place in a central area of Kabul on Wednesday afternoon, although Taliban officials did not confirm the incident until Thursday.

"Yesterday, there was an explosion in the Pamir Cinema area of Kabul from explosives a person was carrying in a bag," Kabul police spokesman Khalid Zadrani said in a statement.

"Due to this explosion, a child was killed and some civilians were lightly wounded," he said, telling

AFP later that 11 people had been hurt in the blast.

A suspect, who was also wounded, has been arrested, he added in the statement.

Italian organisation Emergency NGO, which operates a hospital in Kabul, said on Wednesday it treated 11 wounded, including two young children, a 16-year-old and two women.

"The explosion took place at a second-hand clothes market when it opened and people crowded to get in," said deputy country director Stefano Gennaro Spirnov. "This is the Pamir Cinema neighbourhood, one of the most densely populated in Kabul."

## Thai PM apologises for crackdown that killed 85 Muslims as hopes for justice fade

**Monitoring Desk**  
BANGKOK: Thailand's prime minister on Thursday apologised for the deaths of 85 Muslims who were piled up in army trucks, hours from the expiry of the statute of limitations on an incident over which no state official has been convicted.

The security crackdown in the southern town of Tak Bai in 2004 caused the deaths of 85 people and was one of the most high-profile events of a separatist insurgency that re-ignited that same year and has since killed more than 7,600 people. "I am deeply saddened that what happened and apologise on behalf of the government," Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra said, vowing to ensure no repeat of such events.

The incident in predominantly Buddhist Thailand captured international attention and drew widespread condemnation, after 78 people were crushed to death or suffocated while bound and piled on top of each other in army trucks. Seven others were shot dead. The crackdown was widely known as the Tak Bai massacre and took place under the administration of Paetongtarn's father, Thaksin Shinawatra, a key figure behind his ruling Pheu Thai Party.

Attempts to prosecute security personnel have failed, including two in the past two months.

In August, a court accepted a criminal lawsuit by victims' families against seven senior officials, among them a retired general and ruling party lawyer, but all of those failed to show up at a hearing. A separate case against eight other personnel filed by the attorney-general last month has made no progress.

Paetongtarn said the incident should not be politicised, adding the statute of limitations could not be extended because it would be a breach of the constitution.

## Bangladesh bans student wing of ousted Sheikh Hasina's party

**Monitoring Desk**  
DHAKA: Bangladesh's interim government has officially banned the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student wing of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League party, declaring it a "terrorist organisation".

This move comes in response to escalating demands from the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, which outlined five key demands, including the abolition of the current constitution, the removal of President Mohammed Shahabuddin, and the dissolution of the BCL.

The Ministry of Home Affairs cited the BCL's history of serious misconduct over the past 15 years, including violence, harassment, and exploitation of public resources.

The ban under the Anti-Terrorism Act takes effect immediately, it said in a gazette notification issued late on Wednesday.

The country has seen rising tensions and protests in recent months, after violent protests forced Hasina to flee to India on Aug 5 and an interim government led by Nobel Peace laureate Muhammad Yunus took charge.

The protests, which began as a student-led movement against public sector job quotas in July, escalated into some of the deadliest unrest since the country's independence in 1971, resulting in over 700 deaths and numerous injuries. During the unrest, BCL leaders and activists attacked protesting students and the general public with arms.

## Nearly 25 million votes already cast as Harris, Trump hit battleground states

**Monitoring Desk**  
PHILADELPHIA: Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris told a town hall in Pennsylvania on Wednesday her administration would be different from that of President Joe Biden's, as Republican Donald Trump campaigned in Georgia, another battleground state.

Harris's attempt to distance herself from Biden comes as several polls show the president is a drag on her candidacy and that voters are eager for a new direction with less than two weeks to go until the Nov. 5 election.

Harris has mostly brushed off questions on the campaign trail over how — and to what extent — she would break from Biden on policy.

"My administration will not be a continuation of the Biden administration," Harris said during a televised CNN town hall. "I bring to this role my own ideas and my own experience. I represent a new generation of leadership on a number of issues and believe that we have to actually take new approaches."

Harris's town hall in Chester Township was an attempt to persuade the dwindling number of undecided voters to support her

in a closely divided race where even a small percentage of votes could be critical.

Fielding several questions from attendees, Harris vowed to tackle high grocery prices, said it was time to end the war in the Middle East and called Trump a fascist and "danger to the well-being and safety of America."

The vice president also tackled questions on her changing position on policies such as fracking, saying she does not believe in having "pride associated with a position" when the important thing is to build consensus on issues.

Harris has repeatedly said she wouldn't ban fracking if elected president, a reversal of her position during her first presidential run in 2019.

Asked if she was in favor of expanding the Supreme Court to 12 justices from the current nine, Harris said: "I do believe that there should be some kind of reform of the court, and we can study what that actually looks like." Nearly 25 million voters have already cast ballots, either through in-person early voting or mail-in ballots, according to tracking data from the Election Lab at the University of Florida.



South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol and Polish President Andrzej Duda speak during a joint press conference at the Presidential Office in Seoul, South Korea.

## Venezuelan opposition leaders awarded Europe's Sakharov Prize for democratic campaign

**Monitoring Desk**  
BRUSSELS: The European Parliament on Thursday handed its annual Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought to Venezuelan opposition leaders Maria Corina Machado and Edmundo Gonzalez for "representing the people of Venezuela fighting to restore freedom and democracy."

Venezuela held a presidential election in July, with the opposition publishing vote tallies it says show Gonzalez won a resounding victory. But the national election board declared incumbent Nicolas Maduro the winner, and Gonzalez — who is wanted

## 'The whole city shook' after Israel pounded ancient Tyre

**Monitoring Desk**  
TYRE: Israeli strikes on Wednesday pounded Lebanon's Tyre, an ancient coastal city which boasts a UNESCO World Heritage site, leaving swathes of its centre in ruins.

The raids, among the worst since the start of the Israel-Hezbollah war last month, hit the "heart of Tyre," said Rana, a resident who asked to only use her first name over security concerns. "The whole city shook," said Rana, after fleeing to the seafloor following an Israeli military warning for people to evacuate much of Tyre's centre in the morning.

Thick black plumes of smoke were seen rising from several neighbourhoods, with parts of the evacuation area just 500 metres (yards) from the city's ancient ruins.

## Commonwealth nations to discuss slavery reparations, climate change

**Monitoring Desk**  
LONDON: Britain will ban single-use vapes from next year, a government minister said on Thursday, seeking to crack down on the environmental harm and rising usage levels among children.

Health authorities have raised concerns about the use of vapes among young adults, with their colourful designs and fruity flavours making them stand out on grocery store shelves.

According to a 2024 survey by health charity ASH, about one in five children aged 11-17 said they had tried vaping.

(CHOGM) that began on Monday. More than half of the Commonwealth's members are small nations, many of them low-lying islands at risk from rising sea levels caused by climate change.

Among them is Tuvalu, whose climate change minister, Maina Vakafua Talia, urged the grouping to strive for the Paris Accord's warming goal of 1.5 degrees C (2.7 degrees F), calling new fossil fuel projects a "death sentence" for his country.

## Critic of Tunisian president jailed over 'racist country' comment

**Monitoring Desk**  
TUNIS: Sonia Dahmani, a prominent Tunisian lawyer and critic of President Kais Saied, was sentenced to two years in prison on Thursday on charges of insulting her country, her lawyer said.

The conviction related to comments on local radio this year when she called Tunisia a racist country, lawyer Sami Ben Ghazi told Reuters. Her comments followed clashes between migrants and locals.

## Singapore weighs preserving Lee Kuan Yew's home as national monument

**Monitoring Desk**  
SINGAPORE: Singapore's heritage board will assess if founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew's home should be preserved as a national monument, the culture ministry said on Thursday.

The late statesman's youngest child Lee Hsien Yang applied on Oct 21 to demolish the single-storey bungalow on Oxley Road in central Singapore in line with his father's wishes.

Preservation as a national monument would mean the heritage board can stop any operation or activity that could destroy, damage or alter the home.

## Spain's Malaga to ban new holiday flat permits in 43 neighbourhoods

**Monitoring Desk**  
MADRID: Malaga will ban new short-term tourism rentals in 43 neighbourhoods of the city, the latest step taken by Spanish authorities to address residents' concerns that they are being priced out of the property market by the booming tourism business. The city in southern Spain joins other cities in cracking down on short-term rentals, including Barcelona, which plans to scrap licences for tourist rentals by 2028.

Residents protesting against high rents and a lack of long-term supply blame it on the proliferation of

short-term renting on platforms such as Airbnb and booking.com and an influx of foreigners choosing Malaga as a base for remote work. Over the past decade, Spain has experienced a rise in demand for rental homes from migrants and low-income families, according to recent figures from the Bank of Spain. Landlords, however, often prefer renting to tourists because of better returns.

Malaga has 14,000 hotel beds compared to 40,000 beds in holiday rentals, the city's mayor Francisco De la Torre told a business event in Madrid on Oct 18.

## Flights suspended in India, over a million flee as Cyclone Dana approaches

**Monitoring Desk**  
NEW DELHI: At least 1.1 million people on India's eastern coast are fleeing to storm shelters inland, hours before a powerful cyclone is expected to hammer the low-lying region, ministers said on Thursday.

Cyclone Dana is likely to hit the coasts of West Bengal and Odisha states — home to around 150m people — as a "severe cyclonic storm" late on Thursday, India's weather bureau said. It predicts winds will be gusting up to 120 kilometres an hour.

Major airports will shut overnight, including key travel hub Kolkata, where heavy rain was already lashing the sprawling megacity.

The eye of the storm is predicted to make landfall early on Friday, near the coal-exporting port of

## UK to ban disposable vapes from next year to crack down on teen use

**Monitoring Desk**  
LONDON: Britain will ban single-use vapes from next year, a government minister said on Thursday, seeking to crack down on the environmental harm and rising usage levels among children.

Health authorities have raised concerns about the use of vapes among young adults, with their colourful designs and fruity flavours making them stand out on grocery store shelves.

According to a 2024 survey by health charity ASH, about one in five children aged 11-17 said they had tried vaping.



Rohingya refugees are pictured at a temporary shelter after they landed at Labu Pekan beach in Deli Serdang, North Sumatra province, Indonesia.

# PM deplors UN's inability to address Kashmiris' self determination right

ISLAMABAD (INP): As the world observes 79th anniversary of the United Nations today, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has deplored the United Nations' inability to enforce its Charter in an equitable manner, especially "when the matter involves the question of the right to self-determination for peoples under foreign occupation such as in Palestine and Jammu and Kashmir."

The prime minister, in a social media post on X, reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to multilateralism and highlighted the world body's inability to enforce its charter in an equitable manner.

The prime minister, in a social media post on X, said, "As long as the provisions of the UN's founding document are ignored, the crises will continue to deepen".

He called the UN Day an occasion to recommit to the principles and objectives of the UN Charter, which provided the basis for a peaceful, and prosperous world.

He highlighted that the growing number of international conflicts including unconventional crises such as climate change, heightened geo-political tensions, major power rivalry and deepening economic woes of Global South were a strong evidence of world order being in massive disarray.

He said that at the heart of the global crisis was the United Nations' inability to enforce its Charter in an equitable manner, especially "when the matter involves the question of the right to self-determination for peoples under foreign occupation such as in Palestine and Jammu and Kashmir."

Reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to multilateralism, Prime Minister Shehbaz reiterated that Pakistan would continue to work with the UN to make this world a better place for all where rights of all peoples especially those struggling for their just, legitimate and inalienable rights were realized.

APP adds: As the world observes 79th anniversary of the United Nations today, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to multilateralism and highlighted the world body's inability to enforce its charter in an equitable manner.

The prime minister, in a social media post on X, called the UN Day an occasion to recommit to the principles and objectives of the UN Charter, which provided the basis for a peaceful, and prosperous world.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal, chairing a meeting of the Prime Minister's Committee for Planning and Execution of Foreign-Funded Development Projects in Federal Capital.

## Govt. ended nepotism establishing merit, claims Provincial Minister PHE

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Public Health Engineering (PHE) and WASA, Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran has stated that the incumbent provincial government has been paying special attention on resolving the public issues of the province. He said that the provincial government has ended nepotism by establishing merit in the province.

The Minister was speaking to the officers and different delegations in the PHE office here on Thursday.

Also present on the occasion was Managing Director of WASA, Muhammad Hamid Rana.

## Three alleged thieves held in Panjgur

QUETTA (APP)-Panjgur Police arrested three alleged thieves involved in robbery of National Hotel near Chatkan Bazaar area of Panjgur district on Thursday.

According to police sources, on special directive of SP Panjgur Syed Fazil Shah Bukhari, police team in supervision of DSP, SDPO Panjgur, Sadoor Khan Lashari conducted successful raid at place and apprehended three thieves involved in robbery of National Hotel at Chatkan Bazar.

A case has been registered against them.

SSP Panjgur Fazil Shah directed all police office to take strict action against criminals in order to eliminate crime activities from the area because it was first responsibility of police personnel to maintain law and order situation.

## Bakht pays surprise visit to Teaching Hospital Khuzdar

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Health, Bakht Muhammad Kakar paid surprise visit to the Teaching Hospital Khuzdar on Thursday.

During the visit, the Provincial Minister expressed deep concern over the poor cleanliness situation and non-functioning of the dialysis machines in the hospital.

He also found the pharmacist and some other staff of the hospital.

He expressed dissatisfaction over performance of the Medical Superintendent of Teaching Hospital and ordered to transfer him. He also directed to improve performance of the hospital in order to provide best medical treatment facilities to the people.

Also accompanied him were the Secretary Health, Mujeeb Rehman Qambrani and other concerned high ups.



Provincial Ministers Bakht Muhammad Kakar and Mir Shoaib Nausherwani visiting Prince Abdul Karim Khan Hospital Kalat.

## Ahsan Iqbal reviews 'Foreign-Funded Development Projects'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal, chaired a meeting of the Prime Minister's Committee for planning and execution of foreign-funded development projects here on Thursday. Attendees included Secretary Planning Awaise Manzur Sumra, Secretary Economic Affairs Division (EAD), Member Infrastructure, Waqas Anwar and senior officials from the Ministry of Planning.

Federal Minister for EAD Ahad Cheema participated via video link, said a press release.

The committee discussed in detail the planning and execution of foreign-funded projects and the need to refine policy guidelines in line with the Economic Coordination Committee's (ECC) decisions. During the briefing, it was highlighted that the challenges posed by scarce resources and huge demand for development projects needs to be addressed during the financial year. The ministries demanded PKR 2,900 billion whereas approved development budget was PKR 1,100 billion. The PSDP currently stands at PKR 1,100 billion, with an allocation of PKR 220 billion in foreign funding as rupee cover.

## JUI-F to celebrate Youm-e-Tashakur today

ISLAMABAD (APP): The spokesperson for Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F), Aslam Ghauri, said on Thursday that his party will observe Youm-e-Tashakur (Thanksgiving day) Friday across the country.

The spokesperson, in a news statement, said that the day will be marked following directives of party leader Maulana Fazlur Rehman to express gratitude for the enhanced protection of Islamic provisions within the Constitution. Ghauri said mosques and religious seminaries across the country will hold special prayers and supplications to mark the occasion.



PISHIN: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti addressing participants of inaugural ceremony of shifting of agriculture tubewells on solar energy.

## Bugti inaugurates project of transferring agri. tube wells to solar energy in Pishin

*Mir Sarfaraz Bugti highly appreciates cooperation of federal government in implementation of mega project*

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti formally inaugurated the project of solarization of the agricultural tube wells in Pishin district on Thursday.

The inauguration ceremony of the project was attended by the Provincial Minister for Agriculture and Cooperative Society, Mir Ali Madad Jatak, members of the provincial assembly, Asghar Khan Tareen, Syed Zafar Ali Agha, Zarak Khan Mandokhail, office bearers of Zamindar Action Committee, Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan, Secretary Energy, Bashir Khan Bazai, Secretary Finance, Babar Khan, Commissioner Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat, Chief Executive Officer, Quetta Electric Supply Company and elders of the area.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister noted with pleasure that we are going to resolve the long-standing issue of electricity faced by the zamindars in Balochistan on permanent basis.

He said that this project of solarization of the agricultural tube wells would bring revolutionary changes in the agriculture sector of the province.

The Chief Minister also said that we have materialized the dream of mega project of solarization today. He said that the Prime Minister Muhammad Shabbaz Sharif extended his wholehearted cooperation with the provincial government.

## Quetta administration cracks down on hazardous petrol pumps

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: Quetta's district administration has taken swift action against hazardous mini petrol pumps at Hazarganji Truck Adda, sealing 10 pumps to ensure public safety. The administration acted on public complaints and visited the site, finding pumps in high-risk areas that posed severe threats to human life.

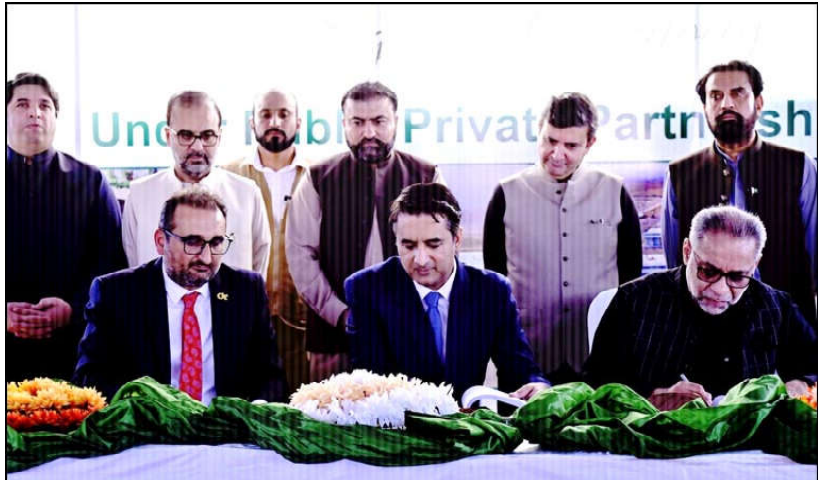
Assistant Commissioner (Sariab) Mariyah Shmeoun ordered the closure of all mini petrol pumps at Hazarganji Truck Adda and issued stern warnings, cautioning that no pumps will be allowed in high-traffic areas. Those who reopen pumps in such areas will face severe consequences. This action is part of the administration's efforts to protect citizens and maintain order in Quetta.

## Justice Mansoor writes another letter to outgoing CJP Isa

ISLAMABAD (INP): Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, a senior member of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, has penned another letter while addressing outgoing Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa.

Justice Mansoor emphasized upon self-accountability.

"People are watching our actions, and history never forgives," said Justice Mansoor.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti along with others witnesses MoU signing agreement during signing ceremony of four projects run under Public Private Partnership, held in Quetta.

## Peace not just aspiration but necessity for future of humanity: Gilani

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Thursday said that peace is not just an aspiration but a necessity for the future of humanity, calling on all nations to prioritize conflict prevention.

He expressed these views while addressing a ceremony in Islamabad in connection with UN Day, marking the 79th anniversary of the United Nations.

Reflecting on Pakistan's 77 years as a dedicated member of the UN, Gilani reaffirmed the country's commitment to the UN Charter's principles, including sovereignty, equality, and respect for human rights.

He said that Pakistan remains devoted to upholding these ideals as a cornerstone of its foreign policy.

## Awais discusses crossborder energy coop. with Iranian counterpart

QINGDAO (CHINA) (APP): Federal Minister for Power, Sardar Awais Leghari, met with the Iranian Energy Minister Abbas Ali Abadi on the sidelines of the 3rd Belt & Road Ministerial Conference held in Qingdao, China. Minister Awais Leghari underscored the importance of cross-border energy projects in boosting connectivity and trade, said a press release issued here Thursday.

Both sides discussed future collaboration, particularly focusing on the development of electricity projects in Gwadar, Balochistan.

## Big changes happening in health department

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: Two officials have been transferred: Dr. Tahira Kamal, Division Director Health Services Karim Khan Hospital in Kalat, pharmacist Waqar Ahmed Kakar was found absent without notice. The Minister directed the Secretary of Health to take disciplinary action against him. It's clear the government is cracking down on absenteeism and reshuffling key positions to improve healthcare services in the region.

Bakht Muhammad Kakar has ordered action against absent health staff. During a recent visit to Prince Abdul Karim Khan Hospital in Kalat, pharmacist Waqar Ahmed Kakar was found absent without notice. The Minister directed the Secretary of Health to take disciplinary action against him. It's clear the government is cracking down on absenteeism and reshuffling key positions to improve healthcare services in the region.



QUETTA: Different delegations meeting with Provincial Minister for PHE Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran.

## Humanitarian situation caused by Israel's Gaza siege blot on human conscience: FO spokesperson

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan on Thursday strongly condemning the Israeli forces' attack on UN peacekeepers in Lebanon, said that the humanitarian situation caused by Israel's siege of Gaza was a blot on human conscience.

Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, at her weekly press briefing, unequivocally condemned the brutal and indiscriminate Israeli airstrikes on Beit Lahia, which resulted in the tragic loss of over 80 Palestinian lives, including women and children.

She said that targeting the densely populated residential areas without warning and collective punishment of civilians by depriving them of food, water and essential medicines constitute war crimes. The spokesperson told the media that the UN peacekeepers had become the latest victim of Israeli aggression in Lebanon "Pakistan strongly condemns the deliberate and unlawful attacks by Israeli forces on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) peacekeepers. The Peacekeepers must be able to fulfill their mission without fear of attack or obstruction."

She called upon the international community to press Israel to cease all aggressive actions against UNIFIL immediately and forthwith cease.



RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir interacts with aircrew during the Multinational Exercise Indus Shield-2024, at an operational Air Base of Pakistan Air Force (PAF).

## Pakistan values its enduring relationship with Sri Lanka: CJCS

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS), General Sahir Shamshad Mirza on Thursday said that Pakistan valued its enduring relationship with Sri Lanka, and highlighted the shared commitment to fortifying bilateral ties, particularly in defense and security.

He made these remarks during a call on paid by Commander Sri Lanka Air Force, Air Marshal RAUP Rajapaksa, who is on an official visit to Pakistan, to the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee here at Joint Staff Headquarters, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

During the meeting, both sides reiterated their commitment to enhancing bilateral security and defense collaboration.

Air Marshal RAUP Rajapaksa, appreciated the high professional standards of Pakistan Armed Forces, their achievements in fight against terrorism and continued efforts for regional peace and stability.

Earlier, upon arrival at Joint Staff Headquarters, a smartly turned out tri-services contingent presented "Guard of Honour" to Commander of the Sri Lankan Air Force.

## US congressmen urge Biden to secure PTI founder's release

WASHINGTON (INP): More than 60 members of the US House of Representatives have written a letter to President Joe Biden urging him to pressure Islamabad to release PTI founder Imran Khan.

The congressmen stressed the president that efforts should be made to also secure release of other political prisoners in Pakistan.

The former prime minister has been incarcerated since August last year after his conviction in several criminal case ahead of the February 8 elections.

In their letter, the lawmakers belonging to the Democratic party urged President Biden to prioritise human rights in the US policy towards Pakistan. "We write today to urge you to use the United States' substantial leverage with Pakistan's government to secure the release of political prisoners including former Prime Minister Khan and curtail widespread human rights abuses," they wrote. They also asked the US embassy officials to visit Imran in Adiala Jail. The letter marked the first such collective call from congressmen for the release of Imran, "who otherwise has had tenuous relations with Washington as a long standing critic of US foreign policy."



QINGDAO: Federal Minister for Power Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan meets with Iranian Energy Minister Abbas Ali Abadi on the sidelines of the 3rd Belt & Road Ministerial Conference in Qingdao, China.

## BFA fines 20 food centers on violation rules in Balochistan

QUETTA (APP)-Balochistan Food Authority (BFA) fined the owners of more than 20 food centers in respective areas of Balochistan including Quetta, Dhadar, Loralai and Gwadar for violating the rules.

According to the spokesperson of BFA, the BFA's teams were carrying out indiscriminate actions against the food centers and factories to remedy the poor food with aim to maintain quality of edible items.

He said that in this regard, the authority teams have busted an illegal factory making unhealthy and harmful candy toffee in Eastern Bypass Quetta.

The sanitary and drainage arrangements in Plummet factory are very poor, the walls of the unit are dirty, the machinery is contaminated while the air circulation arrangements were found to be inappropriate during action, he said.

The spokesman said that the manufacture and date of cancellation were not shown on the candy toffees produced in the factory, while the colors, chemicals and other ingredients used in the manufacture of Plummet were found to be non-food grade, all the products were unregistered and the water used in the processing was found to be contaminated.

The condition of personal hygiene of factory employees was poor and fitness certificate masks, head covers etc. were also not available, he said.