

Independent

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Saudi investment in Pakistan to reach \$2.8bln as MoUs count enhanced to 34: Saudi minister

PM Shehbaz calls for keeping momentum to develop strong Pak-Saudi Arabia economic partnership

RIYADH (APP): The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on Wednesday announced to add another \$600 million to its recently announced \$2.2 billion investment in Pakistan what the Saudi Investment Minister called "only the beginning of something very special."

The announcement was made in a joint press stakeout by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Saudi Investment Minister

Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al Falih, following their "very productive" meeting encompassing the bilateral cooperation in multiple sectors including trade, finance, agriculture, technology and skilled manpower.

At the invitation of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the prime minister is currently on a two-day official visit to Saudi Arabia where he addressed the 8th edition of

the Future Investment Initiative (FII) on 'Infinite Horizons: Investing Today, Shaping Tomorrow', held in Riyadh and joined by the global leaders to discuss how investment could serve as a catalyst for a prosperous and sustainable future.

Accompanied by Advisor at the Royal Court Mohammad Maziad Al-Tuwajri, Saudi Minister Al Falih told the media that

during his recent visit to Pakistan, both sides had signed 27 MoUs for investment worth \$2.2 in Pakistan.

He announced that following Prime Minister Shehbaz's meeting with Crown Prince and their discussion, the number of MoUs has been increased from 27 to 34 to add \$600 million in investment, tak-

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RIYADH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Minister for Investment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Engineer Khalid bin Abdulaziz Al-Falih and Advisor at the Saudi Royal Court Mohammad Bin Mazayad Al-Tuwajri in a joint press conference on the sidelines of the 8th Future Investment Initiative Conference.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti presides over the review meeting on the performance of the textbook board at the Chief Minister's Secretariat.

Army Major among three martyred, eight khwarij killed in Bannu IBO

CM Bugti praises security forces for successful operation against terrorists

RAWALPINDI: Security Forces conducted an intelligence based operation in general area Bakka Khel, Bannu District on reported presence of khwarij.

During conduct of operation, own troops effectively engaged khwarij's location, as a result of which eight khwarij were sent to hell, while seven khwarij got injured.

However, during intense exchange of fire, Major Atif Khalil (age: 31 years, resident of District Sudhanuti, AJ&K, a brave officer, who was leading his troops from front, fought gallantly and embraced Shahadat along with his two men. The two soldiers who paid the ultimate sacrifice include Naik Azad

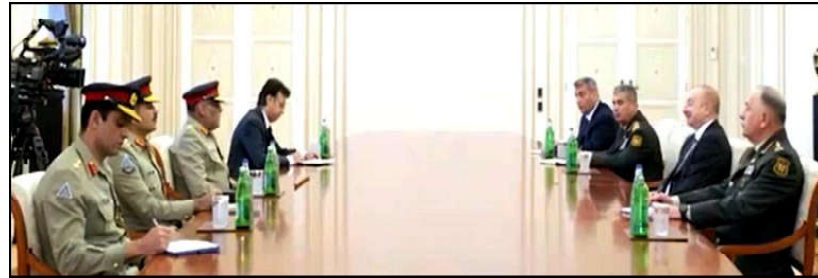
Ullah (age: 36 years, resident of District Karak) and Lance Naik Ghazanfar Abbas (age: 35 years, resident of District Layyah). Sanitization operation is being carried out to eliminate any other Kharij found in the area, as security forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe-out the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve.

Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, has commended the security forces for their successful operation against extremist terrorists in the Bakka Khel area of Bannu, paying tribute to the brave soldiers for their courage

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CJCS calls on President of Azerbaijan, Military-Civil leadership

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS), General Sahir Shamshad Mirza on an official visit to the Republic of Azerbaijan called on President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, Minister of Defence Colonel General Hasanov Zakir Asgar, Foreign Minister, Jeyhun Aziz Oghlu Bayramov, 1st Deputy Defence Minister and Chief of General Staff Colonel General Karim Tofiq Oghlu Valiyev and Minister of Defence Industry, Vugar Mustafayev. During the interaction, both sides appreciated deep and historic relations between the two countries and discussed matters of mutual interest including evolving security dynamics of the region and enhancement of existing defence ties in multiple domains.



RAWALPINDI: Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS) General Sahir Shamshad Mirza called on Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev.

Govt, opposition 'finalise names' for judicial body on judges appointment

Monitoring Desk ISLAMABAD: The government and opposition have finalised names for members of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP), which was re-constituted to include parliamentarians in light of the recently enacted 26th Constitutional Amendment.

Sources told that Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari from National Assembly (NA) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senator Irfan Siddiqui would represent the ruling coalition in the key body — which is responsible for nominating judges for constitutional benches in the Supreme Court and high courts.

Meanwhile, the main opposition party — Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) — has named Senator Shibli Faraz and Leader of Opposition in the National Assembly Omar Ayub for the judicial commission.

Speaking to, Ayub confirmed the development, saying that his name for the key panel was forwarded by PTI founder Imran Khan.

"Barrister Gohar Ali Khan and PTI General Secretary Salman Akram Raja informed us about the decision," he said.

The opposition leader noted that the PTI leadership consulted the incarcerated former premier before

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PTI workers attack Qazi Isa's car in London

LONDON (INP): Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers have attacked vehicle of former chief justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Qazi Faez Isa and his wife Sarina in London, media reports said on Wednesday.

Dozens of PTI supporters had gathered at Chancery Lane to stage a protest against Isa, who was attending a prestigious event held at the Middle Temple, after relinquishing charge as the country's top judge. Qazi Isa was going to attend the ceremony for constituting benches at the Middle Temple. The PTI supporters, led by former prime minister Imran Khan's ex-special assistant Sayed Zulfi Bukhari and former member of National Assembly MNA Maleeka Bokhari.

President signs bill to establish special courts for overseas Pakistanis

ISLAMABAD (INP): President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari has signed a bill establishing special courts for property matters concerning overseas Pakistanis.

Under the new law, special courts will be set up to address property disputes for overseas Pakistanis, ensuring their cases are resolved within 90 days. President Zardari also approved the Deposit Protection Corporation Amendment Bill 2024, granting both approvals under Article 75 of the Constitution. On October 17, the Senate passed the bill for establishing special courts to safeguard the property rights of overseas Pakistanis. Federal Minister Chaudhry Salik presented the bill, which was

unanimously approved, though PTI's Ali Zafar requested it be referred to a committee, citing concerns about potential false cases.

The special court will have jurisdiction over the entire Islamabad Capital Territory. Overseas Pakistanis can file petitions through modern devices, including e-filing. The special court will allow evidence to be presented through video links or other legally acceptable modes, supervised by officials from Pakistan's High Commission, embassy, or consulate. Cases filed in the special court will be disposed of within 90 days, thereby providing a speedy remedy, preventing delays in justice, and ultimately safeguarding the interests of overseas.

CM Bugti says: Children of Balochistan be taught research-based curriculum enabling to compete with major cities students

Directs high ups of Education Department to ensure timely supply of books in the schools

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti has emphasized that children of the province should be taught the curriculum based on the research so as to enable them to compete with the students of Islamabad and Lahore.

The Chief Minister said we have to come out of the Alif-Anaar and Be-Bakri as he referred to the syllabus taught to the children of nursery students in schools to make them familiar with the Urdu alphabets.

He said that we would encourage good officers and would provide protection to them in their tenure atleast during the era of present government.

He exhorted the officers to maintain continuity in the positive reforms and not come in any blackmailing.

The Chief Minister was chairing review meeting regarding performance of the Balochistan Text Book Board here at the Chief Minister's Secretariat on Wednesday.

The meeting was attended by the Provincial

Minister for Education, Ms Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister, Imran Zarkoon, Secretary Education, Muhammad Saleh Nasar, Additional Secretary, Chief Minister Secretariat, Muhammad Fareedon, Chairman Text Book Board, Gulab Khan Khilji, besides other concerned high ups.

The meeting was informed that the academic curriculum in Balochistan is being made compatible with the national curriculum.

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PM arrives in Qatar amid trade, investment push by Islamabad

DOHA (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif arrived in Doha on an official visit from Oct. 30-31 to discuss bilateral ties with a special focus on trade and investment, the premier's office said in Islamabad on Wednesday. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif landed in Qatar on Wednesday on the two-day visit. At the airport, the prime minister was received by Qatari Minister of State Mohammed bin Abdulaziz Al-Khulaifi, Pakistan's ambassador and other diplomatic staff.

Federal ministers Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Muhammad Aurangzeb,

Jam Kamal Khan and Attaullah Tarar also accompanied the prime minister.

"During this visit, I look forward to productive exchange of views with the Qatari leadership to further enhance our brotherly relations," Sharif said on X after arriving in Doha. "I will also inaugurate a special exhibition at Qatar Museum highlighting the cultural heritage of Pakistan." During his visit, the prime minister will hold bilateral meetings with Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar and Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, Prime Minister.



DOHA: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif arrives at Doha International Airport for his 2 day official visit of Qatar. He is being received by Qatar's Minister of State, Muhammad bin Abdulaziz Al-Khulaifi.

Athar Minallah says: No govt can deprive citizen of right to access to information

ISLAMABAD (INP): Supreme Court of Pakistan judge Justice Athar Minallah has said that although Article 19 A of the constitution guarantees citizens the right to access to information, but the right is subject to certain limitations. In his additional note on the petition, seeking access to information about the SC employees, the judge has said that despite some restrictions, however, the parliament does not have the power to limit the scope of this constitutional right. The judge, while saying he completely agrees with the decision pronounced by ex-chief justice

of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Qazi Faez Isa in the case, has said that neither the government nor any of its departments can deprive a citizen of the right to access to information.

"Article 8 of the constitution bars the state from doing any such legislation that either infringes upon fundamental human rights or restricts them," he has said, adding neither the apex court could place limitations on individual liberties. "It is simply unimaginable."

Justice Minallah has observed that if people think that those institutions, which are supposed to protect their rights.

More efficient, honest & professional experts needed in health & education sectors, stresses Jaffar Mandokhail

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that education and health sectors are the twin pillars of the social development, which form a bright future. The Governor stressed that more efficient, honest and professional experts are needed in these sectors. We have to pay attention on increasing capacity instead of quantity.

The Governor was addressing the ceremony held under the auspices of Voice of Balochistan here on Wednesday.

The Governor said

that teachers are held in high esteem in every civilized society as they play role in spreading the light of knowledge and wisdom. This is why, teachers have very respectable status in every society, he maintained.

The Governor appreciated the move of imparting modern training to the teachers serving in the remote areas. In this regard, it is responsibility of the government to provide all necessary facilities to the teachers, he said.

The Governor was especially appreciative of the female teachers who are

performing their duties despite lack of necessary facilities and financial constraints.

He said that the present government is focusing on the education sector and as such is taking measures to decorate the students with ornament of education. The Governor exhorted the teachers and parents to pay attention on their upbringing and morality along with their education. He also stressed that the process of capacity building of the teachers should remain continued in the educational institutions.

ISPR says: One Khwarij terrorist killed other apprehended injured in Zhob operation

3 khawarji killed during the security forces' action in Orakzai

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Security Forces on Wednesday killed a Khwarij terrorist while injured the other during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) conducted in general area Sambaza, Zhob District.

During conduct of the operation, intense fire ex-

change took place between the Army troops and Khwarij, an Inter Services Public Relations news release said.

The weapons and ammunition were also recovered from them.

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Imran, Qureshi others to be indicted on Nov 8 in GHQ attack case

RAWALPINDI (Online): Judge Amjid Ali Shah of Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Rawalpindi has fixed November 8 to indict PTI founder Imran Khan, former foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi and other accused in GHQ attack case.

The court also issued notices to the respondents

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QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan presides over the meeting of Secretaries Committee.

CM performs groundbreaking of Pakistan's first public sector cancer hospital

LAHORE (APP): Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif laid a foundation stone of the largest and first ever public sector cancer hospital in the history of Pakistan in which level 3 and level 4 cancer patients will also get free treatment. She assigned a 12-month target for the completion of the first phase of cancer hospital. She also announced to establish first ever public sector bone marrow transplant centre. The CM directed to review a proposal with regard to building hotels for attendants in front of hospital. She also announced to launch a programme of building specialised hospitals for blood diseases, paed, organ transplant and bone marrow in Punjab along with hiring specialist doctors from abroad with incentives in Punjab.

During a briefing on Nawaz Sharif Institute of Cancer Treatment and Research, she was apprised that 915-bedded cancer hospital to be established in Lahore and will be completed in two phases. Pediatric, oncology, operation theatre, 10-radiation therapy bunker, ICU and 30 beds emergency ward will be established in the cancer institute. A waiting hall and 24 beds for the attendants will also be built. It was further apprised in the briefing that bone marrow centre, cancer care clinic, doctor residences and a mosque will be constructed in the first phase of the main building. In the second phase, a new building with 300 beds and a parking plaza will also be constructed. Radiation therapy, chemotherapy, endoscopy and other facilities will also be provided in the first public sector cancer hospital. Prayers were also offered after laying foundation stone of the cancer hospital. Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique apprised about details of the project. He expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Deputy

Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and others for their special assistance. CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif while addressing groundbreaking ceremony of hospital said, "Good doctors will be given houses, vehicles and handsome salaries in Punjab. Anything that improves people's lives is my foremost priority. All necessary steps will be undertaken for public health and well-being in coming four years. I want to build cardiology, neurology, paed and dialysis centers in every city across Punjab. No cancer patient will be denied treatment. We are lighting a lamp of hope in terms of providing free health services to millions of lives." She said that first government cancer hospital will provide free treatment to patients coming from KPK, Sindh and other provinces. The CM said that Punjab has shown magnanimity in terms of providing health services to other provinces.



ISLAMABAD: Commander North Commodore Saqib Ilyas addressing the opening ceremony of 17th Chief of the Naval Staff Armature Golf Cup 2024 at Margallah Greens Golf Club.

NDMA hosts INSARAG conference to enhance emergency standards

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and participating delegates at the two-day Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on Wednesday devised a comprehensive regional work plan focused on mapping hazards and committing resources to effectively address future risks and refine emergency preparedness and response standards in the region.

The two-day INSARAG Asia-Pacific Regional Conference was hosted by NDMA, in its role as Regional Chair of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG). The event brought together 55 international delegates from across the Asia-Pacific region, including representatives from China, Russia, Australia, South Korea, Turkey, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Japan, Bangladesh and Nepal. Further discussions led to key agreements, including Asia-Pacific's ongoing contributions to the INSARAG Guidelines 2026, ensuring regional insights are integral to the

development process. The group expressed appreciation for the leadership shown by Pakistan in hosting this pivotal conference, which underscored the country's significant role in strengthening regional disaster preparedness. Key stakeholders from global humanitarian organizations, UN agencies and local government departments also attended. During the two days, participants from member countries presented updates and positions for the ongoing INSARAG Governance Review.

PCB chief directs officials to speed up National Stadium revamp work

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman Mohsin Naqvi on Wednesday visited the National Bank Cricket Stadium to inspect the ongoing construction work ahead of the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy 2025.

The ICC Champions Trophy 2025 is scheduled to take place in Pakistan from February to March, however, India's participation in the tournament is uncertain as the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) seeks the government's approval to visit the country.

One Khwarij..

Continued from page 1 Sanitization operation is being conducted to neutralize any other Kharij present in the area. "Security forces of Pakistan, in step with the nation, remain determined to thwart attempts at sabotaging peace, stability and progress of Balochistan," the ISPR said. Meanwhile, Three Khawarij have been killed during security forces action in district Orakzai. People have expressed pleasure over security forces action. These three Khawarij were involved in attacking anti polio team in district Orakzai. Two policemen had also embraced shahadat while fighting valiantly during attack.

Children of Balochistan be..

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The scanning bar code is also being printed on every page of the newly printed book so that teachers may approach the online portal for any kind of guidance, it was further briefed adding that government academic books would be printed by the end of current year. It was mentioned that this year the contract of printing of books has been given to the credible firms through call attention notices. The concerned official informed that not only Rs.750 millions would be saved directly through the bid of contract, but the aggregate saving of Rs. 1 billion would be made when it comes to the comparison with the annual inflation and other expenditures.

Besides, it was also told that the Research and Development Wing had been established in the Balochistan Text Book Board, which would continuously keep vigil on the research matters. Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister expressed satisfaction over the performance of Text Book Board and praised it's Chairman, Gulab Khan Khilji. He directed to the high ups of Education Department to ensure timely supply of books in the schools. In this regard, the Chief Minister directed to Directorate of Schools and Text Book Board to submit their recommendations in the Principal Secretary office within 10 days after preparing viable mechanism of timely supply of

the books at the union council level in all districts. Mir Sarfraz Bugti on the occasion noted with pleasure that the Punjab Text Book Board has appreciated and reiterated to adopt initiatives of Balochistan Text Book Board. He said that it is good to see that educational reforms of the incumbent provincial government are being appreciated and adopted in other provinces. He said that it is new history and we are determined to bring improvement in the education sector and overall governance system during era of our government. In the end, the Chief Minister awarded the commendation certificate to the Chairman Text Book Board, Gulab Khan Khilji on his high performance.



BEIRUT: The 18th Consignment of GoP/Pak NDMA carrying 95 tons landed at Beirut, Lebanon.



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Shaikh is taking briefing in National Institute of Maritime Affairs.

AJK govt enacts new law to maintain law & order during protests

MUZAFFARABAD (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir government has enacted a new law to maintain law and order during public protests aiming to safeguard the rights of the people to freely move and carry on routine life activities, said most senior Minister Col Waqar Ahmad Noor here on Wednesday during a press conference along with Prime Minister Ch. Anwar Ul Haq and other members of the cabinet.

The prime minister accompanying his eight ministers addressed a three hour longest duration press conference to reveal the successes of his government's eighteen months tenure where all minister turn by turn brief about the performances before Haq's conclusion to establish that his government was smoothly heading towards transparency and prosperity of the region. Senior Minister Col. Waqar Noor while initiating the briefing about his department's measures to achieve goals assigned by the Prime Minister, revealed that "The peaceful Assembly and public

order ordinance" has been enacted by the government to protect rights of the general public during protests by some groups. He said where the constitution has given the right of peaceful assembly, it has also guaranteed the right of common citizens to freely move and continue their routine life activities without any hindrance by any group of people. Without naming, he was referring the possible threat of protests announced by "Joint Amawi Action committee (JAAC)".

FBR increases property rates for 45 cities by 5%, aligning with IMF conditions

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has announced a new notification regarding official property rates in 56 cities across Pakistan, fulfilling another commitment made to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Effective November 1, the property rates in forty-five of these cities will increase by up to five percent, aligning them to approximately eighty percent of the current market rates.

However, the old property rates will remain unchanged in eleven major cities, including Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Islamabad, and Multan. Notable cities such as Quetta, Gwadar, Bahawalpur, Lasbela, Rahim Yar Khan, and Sargodha will also maintain their existing rates. The new rates will apply to other cities, including Peshawar, Abbottabad, Faisalabad, and Gujarat. Additionally, revised rates have been issued for Attock, Haripur, Hyderabad, Wazirabad, Sahiwal, and Gujranwala. Changes have also been made in Bahawalnagar, Bannu, Bhakkar, Chakwal, Chiniot, Dera Ismail Khan, and Dera Ghazi Khan.

PTA continues crackdown on illegal issuance of SIMs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Zonal Office in Lahore, in close collaboration with the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Cyber Crime Circle, Lahore conducted another successful raid against the Ufone franchisee located at Burewala.

According to a news release of PTA This franchisee was found to be involved in the illegal issuance of SIMs. During the raid, 14 active SIMs, 25 Suspicious SIMs, 5 BVS Devices and 3 mobile phones were discovered from the franchisee.



KARACHI: Sindh Minister for Health and Population Welfare, Dr. Azra Fazal Pechuho, MPA Balochistan Zamrak Khan Achakzai, Secretary Population Welfare Balochistan, Abdullah Khan, DG Health Balochistan Dr. Ameen Mandokhail and others from Sindh & Balochistan participating in the Safeguarding Women Health ceremony.

Govt, opposition..

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finalising the names. Earlier, NA Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq had sought nominations from the government and the opposition for appointment as JCP members. As per the addition of Article 175A in the Constitution through the 26th Constitutional Amendment, the JCP to be headed by the Chief Justice of Pakistan, shall also consist of two Senators and two MNAs. They would include one senator each from the government and opposition benches and one MNA each from both sides. The Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate would send nominations for the body. The Senate chairman on receiving nominations from the government and opposition in the Senate would convey the same to the NA speaker. The commission would also consist of three senior most judges of the Supreme Court, most senior judge of the constitutional bench, the Federal Minister for Law and Justice, the Attorney General for Pakistan, an advocate not having experience of less than 15 years of practice in the Supreme Court to be nominated by the Pakistan Bar Council (for two years). A woman or non-Muslim member of parliamentarian to be nominated by the speaker for two years will also be part of the key panel.

Imran..

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on acquittal plea of former minister Sheikh Rashid besides adjourning the hearing of the case. During the hearing of the case, Umar Ayoub, Zartaj Gul, Raja Basharat, Sadaqat Abbasi Raja Rashid Hafeez, Wasiq Qayyum Abbasi, Col (Retd) Ajmal Sabir, federal and provincial ministers, members of assembly and other accused appeared in the country. After marking attendance of the accused and providing copies to the accused among whom these could not be distributed due to some reason adjourned the hearing of the case till November 8. Sheikh Rashid filed acquittal plea in the court.

Saudi investment in Pakistan.

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ing its volume to \$2.8 billion. Prime Minister Shehbaz said the meetings with the Crown Prince and Al Falih were reassuring and told the media that some of the projects agreed upon during the recent Saudi delegation's visit were under implementation. He said both sides would work on the timelines of the project and expressed the hope that under the leadership of Saudi crown prince, both sides would strengthen bilateral relations, not only for the benefit of the people of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia but the entire Muslim Ummah. "When I come back, I will have good news for the people of Pakistan and

Saudi Arabia. With your valuable support, we will be able to carve our way forward and soon be able to make big announcements," the prime minister remarked. Minister Al-Falih said that as a follow-up of their Pakistan visit, both sides had "extensive" working-level meeting to elevate the bilateral relations to yet higher horizons in the fields of economy, finance, trade and people-to-people contacts. He said that some of the MoUs had resulted in exports from Pakistan in agriculture and other fields. He also expressed the Saudi government's willingness to import Pakistan's skilled workforce as he said the world was looking towards Saudi Arabia becoming

a key driver in digital technology and artificial intelligence. Prime Minister Shehbaz also expressed gratitude to the Saudi leadership for support to Pakistan which was critical to achieving the IMF program. He said with the commitment and collective efforts by the government and the support from the brotherly countries, Pakistan would march towards economic progress and prosperity. He also thanked 2.5 million Pakistani expatriates for contributing to Saudi development and assured that Pakistan would make efforts to prepare a skilled workforce to meet Saudi requirements to contribute in a big way to the Kingdom's development programme.

Govt. committed to ensuring equal rights to all communities: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif said that Father of the Nation, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah had envisioned a Pakistan where all communities enjoyed equality and freedom regardless of religion, race, or caste. "My government is firmly committed to upholding these values and ensuring that each community in Pakistan enjoys equal rights and opportunities, irrespective of their beliefs," the prime minister said in a message on the occasion of Diwali being celebrated on October 31.

over darkness and hope over despair. "As we come together to celebrate, let this occasion inspire us to look toward the future with optimism and unity," PM Office Media Wing, in a press release, quoted the prime minister as saying. As Pakistanis, he further said, they cherished their diversity, which strengthened their national fabric and enriched the shared culture. On this occasion, the prime minister also paid tribute to the valuable contributions of the vibrant Hindu community in Pakistan, whose role in the socio-economic and political spheres continued to strengthen the nation. The diversity of faiths in Pakistan was a true source of resilience and unity amongst the people, he added.

The prime minister also extended his warm greetings to all the members of Hindu community across Pakistan and around the world on the occasion of Diwali. Diwali, he said, the festival of lights, symbolized the triumph of light



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti presenting appreciation certificate to Chairman Balochistan Textbooks Board, Gulab Khan Khilji on best performance.

Dr Azra Fazal says: Provision of safe reproductive healthcare must be a priority

Independent Report

KARACHI: "It is imperative that health facilities nationwide integrate contraceptive and post-abortion care services. Lack of counseling is a major contributor to unsafe abortions, so it's essential to educate people about contraceptive options and make them widely accessible," stated Dr. Azra Fazal Pechuho, Minister for Health and Population Welfare, Sindh. Dr. Pechuho was speaking at the Karachi launch of the Population Council and Guttacher Institute's report, "Safeguarding Women's Health: Trends, Inequities, and Opportunities in Pakistan's Abortion and Post-Abortion Care Services." Dr. Pechuho highlighted the need to significantly increase the number of community health workers, underscoring how this shortage affects the quality and reach of healthcare. She

also raised concerns about the National Finance Commission (NFC) Award, suggesting that it should better incentivize health and population welfare improvements by rewarding provinces with strong health indicators with legislative representation. Dr. Pechuho further noted that Pakistan's policies on linking abortion with maternal health need alignment with World Health Organization guidelines to enhance the quality of care. "Rising maternal mortality due to unsafe abortions is a pressing issue, and accessible, safe reproductive healthcare must be a priority," she added. The event presented findings from the Population Council's national study, which highlights critical gaps in Pakistan's reproductive healthcare. The study estimates that in 2023, 66 per 1,000 women of reproductive age (15-49) had an induced abortion.



QUETTA: Secretary Colleges Hafiz Tahir giving award to teachers during a ceremony organized by AFAQ.

KP govt misusing state institutions against federation; Kundi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday accused the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-led KP provincial government of misusing provincial state resources and institutions against the Federation.

Talking to the media, he accused the former Prime minister's wife of misusing government resources and holding political meetings at the Chief Minister's House. Faisal said that the 26th constitutional amendment was approved by the Parliament with consensus while he described the release of Bushra BB and PTI founder's sisters as meaningful after the approval of the amendment. The Governor further added that the first result of Bushra Bibi's arrival in Peshawar, was the looting of the Supreme Court Bar election. He questioned, "To whom will you be against staging a protest or conducting public gatherings in Peshawar where you (PTI) are in government." He said, "We face the opponents in politics and playing with someone's life is not our way." Faisal said that the release of the PTI founder Chairman was possible only through the Courts as his wife and sisters obtained relief from the Courts.

Army Major..

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and sacrifice. Expressing his admiration, Chief Minister Bugti honored the memory of Major Atif Khalil and the valiant personnel of the security forces who heroically eliminated the terrorists, achieving martyrdom in the line of duty. "The nation is proud of these courageous martyrs who laid down their lives to bring terror-

ists to their ultimate end," he stated. Chief Minister Bugti further emphasized that the entire nation stands united with the security forces, acknowledging their unparalleled sacrifices in eradicating extremism. He affirmed the unwavering support of the people alongside the forces in their mission to eliminate terrorism and bring peace to the region.

Mushahid identifies leadership, adaptability as drivers of China's global success

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senator Mushahid Hussain Seyed on Wednesday cited effective leadership, stable policies, adaptability, and a peaceful foreign policy as key factors in China's ascent to global prominence.

He, in his introductory remarks while chairing the "China at 75: A Journey of Progress, Transformation and Global Leadership," celebrating 75 years of the founding of People's Republic of China, highlighted China's peaceful rise to global leadership without invasion, aggression, occupation, or colonization, attributing its success to peaceful leadership, stability, adaptability, and commitment to learning. The conference was hosted by Pak-China Institute.

He described Pakistan-China relations as unique as these are neither transactional nor tactical but rooted in deep strategic co-

operation. Reflecting on China's recent history, Senator Mushahid Hussain summed up China's 75 years in what he termed were '3 R's': Revolution under Chairman Mao, Reform under Deng Xiaoping and now peaceful Rise under President Xi Jinping.

Referring to his interaction at an American think tank in Washington, DC, where Senator Mushahid Hussain was asked: 'which side are you on, to which he retorted: 'Pakistan is on the right side of history, and the course of contemporary history is determined by the Asian Century, where China is our reliable strategic partner'.

He also appreciated Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar's role in raising voice for Dr Afia Siddiqui at highest levels of the Biden Administration and inviting Palestinian stu-

dents from Gaza to study in Pakistan.

The conference was uniquely marked by international representation from South Asia, featuring Mahbub Alam, Leader of Bangladesh Nationalist Party; Ahmed Thariq, Member of Parliament from the Maldives; and Achyut Prasad Mainali, Member of the Federal Parliament of Nepal.

Jiang Zaidong, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Pakistan expressed heartfelt gratitude to Senator Ishaq Dar for his attendance, despite his 32-hour journey from Samoa, underscoring the significance attached to the event.

Ambassador Jiang celebrated the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), now joined by over 150 countries, as a testament to China's commitment to shared prosperity.



ISLAMABAD: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi meeting with Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan Nawaf Bin Saeed Ahmed Almalaki.

Governor KP, Saudi Ambassador held meeting to discuss bilateral relations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi met with Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan, Nawaf Saeed Al-Malki, here on Thursday.

Accompanying the Governor was Ahmad Karim Kundi, Parliamentary leader of the Pakistan Peoples Party at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly.

During the meeting, Governor Kundi praised the role of the Islamic Development Bank in the Chashma Lift Canal project and expressed gratitude to the Saudi government, the

Ambassador, and the bank. He emphasized that this initiative is not only vital for Dera Ismail Khan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but is also a significant step towards Pakistan's overall development and prosperity. The Governor said that the project is expected to usher in an agricultural revolution in the region, opening new avenues for economic growth.

The Governor said that Saudi Government always helped and support Pakistan and it's people during any critical situations.

Wafaqi Mohtasib highlights commitment to human rights in insurance oversight

ISLAMABAD (APP): Wafaqi Mohtasib Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi has said that Pakistan was among the few countries in the world which has unique distinction of establishing a dedicated insurance ombudsman institution which offers a sound oversight mechanism for judicious protection of the interests of various stakeholders. He was addressing an international webinar organized by the Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA) in cooperation with the Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat on Wednesday.

Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi is the current President of the Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA), which is a 47-member strong non-political, professional body of ombudsman institutions in the Asian region.

Addressing the participants Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi

said that the commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights is a cornerstone of the country's Constitution. Pakistan has ratified several human rights instruments on the subject and is committed to achieving the collective aspirations of the internationally recognized human rights regime, he added.

He referred to the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights as endorsed by the UN Human Rights Council and underlined the need to address the adverse human rights impact resulting from the business activities. The institution of the Federal Insurance Ombudsman (FIO), therefore, has a significant role in promoting and protecting the best standards of business practices in the insurance industry, he added.

IGP Islamabad orders proactive measures against criminal elements

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: According to the details, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, presided over high-level meetings at the Central Police Office and Safe

overall crime situation in the federal capital, interrogated all officers, and sternly reprimanded those exhibiting poor performance.

He instructed SDPOs to take action against crime

downs against those involved in robbery, theft, and other crimes by utilizing modern technology and available resources.

He emphasized the importance of apprehending judicial fugitives and



City Islamabad. The meetings were attended by DIG Headquarters Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanveer, DG Safe City Shakir Hussain Dawar, SSP Operations, SSP Safe City, all zonal SPs, and SDPOs.

During the meetings, IGP Islamabad assessed the

in their respective areas and emphasized the need for a comprehensive strategy to prevent crime and improve performance.

The IGP Islamabad said that, all officers should formulate a special plan to eradicate serious crimes, ensuring effective crack-

wanted absconders, as well as taking strict action against those providing them shelter.

Officers were ordered to conduct indiscriminate operations against vehicles without number plates, with tinted glasses, and with blue lights.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan in a meeting with Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins.

PMYP and Australia join hands to empower youth

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan on Wednesday said that as many as 186 billion rupees had been distributed among young entrepreneurs to foster economic development and self-sufficiency.

During a meeting with the Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins to discuss various initiatives and collaborations aimed at empowering the youth of Pakistan, he emphasized his long-standing commitment to youth affairs, having served in this domain since 2002.

Mashhood highlighted the significant strides made by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) as the first political party to introduce a comprehensive youth policy. The discussions also focused on the potential for cultural exchange programs between Australia and Pakistan, particularly in the areas of sports and education.

Rana Mashhood proposed initiatives for mutual training in sports, aimed at enhancing skills and building partnerships. Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins expressed his admiration for

the talent and potential of Pakistani youth, stating, "The youth of Pakistan are an asset to the nation."

He also announced plans to introduce new scholarships for Pakistani students, reinforcing Australia's commitment to supporting education and skills development. Moreover, Commissioner Hawkins expressed a keen interest in enhancing cooperation in sports, particularly hockey, highlighting the importance of collaboration with the Prime Minister's Youth Programme to implement strategic initiatives in this field.

IGNHMP signifies parents, teachers role in officials' children success

ISLAMABAD (APP): Inspector General (IG) National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP), Salman Chaudhry, emphasized the role of parents and teachers in the success and exceptional achievements of the children of motorway police officers and employees.

He shared these views while addressing a special ceremony at the Central Police Office here Wednesday to honour the achievements of the children of Motorway Police Assistant Muhammad Nadeem Haider, who recently joined the Pakistan Air Force as GD Pilot

and Junaid Iqbal son of Motorway Police Head Constable Naveed Iqbal, who won a gold medal in the international Cambrian Patrol competition held in Wales, UK currently serving in the Pakistan Army.

Salman said that every effort would be made to encourage the youth at all levels for a bright future while agreements have been made with prestigious educational institutions across the country to provide scholarships for outstanding students among Motorway Police employees' children so they can secure admissions in top institutions.



ISLAMABAD: Director General PID, Ms. Tahira Saeeda in a group photograph during a seminar on "Anti-Corruption Awareness Activities-2024 Formation of Character Building Societies (CBS)" at Information Service Academy.

HEC warns Imposters defrauding public on name of degree attestation

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has warned that some imposters, claiming affiliation with HEC, are defrauding the public by making scam calls to extract personal information for degree attestation or re-verification of already attested documents. According to official sources from HEC, some individuals, posing as HEC Attestation Agents, are offering services for degree verification.

The public is alerted that HEC does not employ or authorise any representative/agent for attestation of degrees. Further, HEC does not make calls or contact individuals to facilitate the use of its services.

For verification of your degrees, only visit the HEC attestation portal www.hec.gov.pk.

They demand hefty

fees beyond the prescribed HEC charges, it added. Fake social media pages are offering services for degree verification.

The public is alerted that HEC does not employ or authorise any representative/agent for attestation of degrees. Further, HEC does not make calls or contact individuals to facilitate the use of its services.

For verification of your degrees, only visit the HEC attestation portal www.hec.gov.pk.

CDA to automate procedure for allocating open spaces in capital

ISLAMABAD (APP): Capital Development Authority (CDA) will automate the procedure for allocating open spaces in Islamabad.

It was decided in a meeting chaired by Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa here Wednesday. Randhawa instructed that a plan be presented for the allocation of open spaces according to categories.

He directed improvements in the fee collection system for open spaces by adopting modern technology.

He also instructed that

a comprehensive system for open space allocation be developed by the Law, BCS and DMA departments.

Moreover, Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa stated that action should be taken against the permanent installation of structures in allocated open spaces. Additionally, he directed for taking action against companies engaging in unauthorized advertising within the city.

The meeting also reviewed the condition of graveyards in the city and the Islamabad Beautification Plan.

MoHR to organise 8th meeting of implementation commission on prison reforms

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Secretary for Human Rights, Allah Dino Khawaja, chaired the 8th meeting of the Implementation Commission on Prison Reforms.

The session was attended by Home Secretaries from Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, Inspector General (IG) of Prisons from Balochistan, AIG of Prisons from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and representatives from the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of National Health Services and Regulation, National Commission for Human Rights, and the Director General for Human Rights, along with senior officials from provincial departments.

In his opening remarks, Khawaja underscored the importance of establishing a comprehensive file management system for prisoners to align with the Nelson Mandela Rules, aiming to improve prison conditions and ensure the humane treatment of incarcerated individuals.

The Commission reviewed critical issues, including the problem of overcrowding in prisons and the need for the establishment of a new prison in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). The current facilities, particularly for under-trial prisoners, were deemed insufficient, posing serious health and safety risks.

The Commission also recommended constructing hospitals and residential facilities for jail staff, with particular emphasis on addressing security and sanitation concerns in existing facilities.

Provincial governments were urged to adopt Punjab's model of healthcare services within prisons, with a focus on mental health and primary care.



ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary for Human Rights Saba Sadiq and Deputy Director Women Welfare and Development Centre Ismat Afridi, cutting the cake during a ceremony Breast Cancer title "Awareness seminar and Medical Camp" at Women Welfare and Development Center, in the Federal Capital.

IHC suspends ATC decision on granting physical remand of Imaan

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has suspended the Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) decision regarding physical remand of Imaan Mazari and her husband.

IHC has issued notice to Islamabad police.

The ATC decision regarding 3-day physical remand of renowned lawyer and social worker Imaan Mazari and her husband Hadi Ali Chatha was suspended by IHC.

The appeal plea filed by Imaan Mazari and her

husband Hadi Ali Chatha against 3-day physical remand came up for hearing before IHC division bench comprising Chief Justice (CJ) IHC Aamer Farooq and Justice Saman Rafat Imtiaz Wednesday.

Counsel Qaisar Imaan appeared in the court.

Counsel Qaisar Imaan took the plea 3 days remand has been given in respect of the petitioners.

Under the directives of court, counsel Qaisar Imaan read out remand order.

AIOU approves two new programs BS IR, Psychology

ISLAMABAD (APP): Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) on Wednesday granted formal approval to the two new four-year undergraduate programs—BS in International Relations and BS in Psychology.

The approval was given during a Faculty Board meeting for its Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, presided over by Professor Dr. Abdul Aziz Sahir, Dean Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities.

In addition to these new programs, the board endorsed the academic schemes for BS, MS/ MPhil, and PhD programs

across various departments, along with other curriculum and teaching-related matters.

Addressing the faculty, Dr. Sahir highlighted AIOU's commitment to introducing educational programs that address contemporary social and economic demands, aligning with the vision of Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood.

He stressed the importance of prioritizing educational quality, emphasizing that fostering genuine knowledge is more valuable than merely awarding degrees.



ISLAMABAD: DMA staff loading encroachments on a loading truck during anti-encroachments operation at Sittara Market, in the Federal Capital.

Overseas Pakistani Faisal wins 2024 UK volunteer of year award

ISLAMABAD (APP): Syed Muhammad Faisal Sami, UK Head of Faizan Global Relief Foundation (FGRF), has won the 'UK Volunteer of the Year 2024', in recognition of his dedicated humanitarian efforts both in the UK and internationally.

His efforts include food distribution, health services, drug prevention, and disaster relief worldwide.

Awarded by Charity Today, he was recognized for his exceptional contributions to supporting vulnerable communities in the UK and globally.

Faizan Global Relief Foundation (FGRF) is well-known for its dedication to humanitarian efforts, addressing relief needs both locally and globally. Its initiatives cover a broad spectrum, including disaster relief, food distribution, educational programs, and health services.

FGRF aims to empower communities, alleviate poverty, and foster social welfare through its outreach programmes and charitable projects.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent
Thursday October 31, 2024

Court business

It has been quite encouraging to note that the new chief justice has wasted no time putting his house in order.

After promptly reconstituting the Supreme Court Practice and Procedure Committee to include the next two senior-most justices after himself, Chief Justice Yahya Afridi had summoned a full court meeting this Monday to review business. By all accounts, the meeting — attended by all judges of the Supreme Court, including senior puisne judge Justice Mansoor Ali Shah via video link — was a successful one.

Held in a collegial atmosphere, it focused on the ways and means through which the Supreme Court can fulfil its core responsibility: delivering timely justice. Though many had speculated that various prickly issues would be brought up when the Supreme Court judges would first meet after the tumultuous end of justice Qazi Faez Isa's tenure, the court seemed more immediately concerned with the case backlog and how it could be reduced expeditiously.

Some may have been expecting bitterness from Justice Shah for being passed over for the chief justice's position. Instead, he displayed grace and magnanimity by placing his detailed plan for cutting down the case backlog before the court, thereby symbolically handing over the baton to the new chief justice. It seems worth mentioning here that this plan had been much anticipated within the legal community, and one of the main regrets cited when Justice Shah was passed over was that it may never see the light of day.

However, it was a much-changed Supreme Court on Monday that reviewed and eventually adopted the Case Management Plan 2023. It appears that not only was the new chief justice keen on restoring the respect previously denied to other senior justices but also on reorienting the court's priorities towards improving institutional performance rather than on external troubles and intrigues.

As it faces relentless assaults from multiple flanks, the unity and commonality of purpose on display in the Monday meeting are what will help the Supreme Court endure. Successive tenures marked by polarisation and internal frictions have eroded the institution's powers and left it vulnerable to the other pillars of the state. It must reclaim its space and fulfil its duty to protect the constitutional order.

It is hoped that the institution will not take too long to find its feet again, and once it does, will set about correcting the many imbalances in the tripartite distribution of power that have crept in over the past few years. It is refreshing to see that, after a long time, the judges of the superior judiciary do not seem to be harbouring personal grudges against each other. It is hoped that this spirit will prevail and that the institution will heal quickly in the days to come.

Rafia Zakaria

The state of Michigan sits in the upper Midwestern portion of the United States. Once the hub of the American auto industry the state has since become part of what Americans call the Rust Belt. It is rusting because the American auto industry and the jobs that came with it have shifted elsewhere.

Rust, perhaps a better word than rot, is a metaphor for the failing job landscape and the general feeling of malaise that surrounds many of the state's residents as they look at their future. Apart from all of this, two other facts about Michigan are important in the contemporary context. Firstly, Michigan is defined as one of the 'swing states' that will decide next week's presidential election in the US. Secondly, it is home to the largest geographic concentrations of Arab-Americans in the country.

The Muslim-Americans of Dearborn, Michigan, are largely from the Middle East and the 2023 figures put them at around 110,000. In 2020,

President Joe Biden won the state by 154,000 votes. In the current poll estimates, former president Donald Trump is leading in Michigan. This indicates that the Muslim-Americans, including the large Arab-American voting demographic in the state, are likely going to decide the election in Michigan in his favour, as at the present moment, most of these crucial Michigan voters are not inclined positively towards the Democratic Party.

In the Michigan Democratic primary, when the present incumbent was still the presumed presidential candidate, a substantial number voted 'uncommitted' because of their disapproval of US support for Israel's war in Gaza. The situation in the Middle East has only worsened since then with the Israel war machine dropping bunker buster bombs on Gaza and Lebanon, besides expanding its missile strikes to Iran.

On Tuesday, when the Israeli Knesset voted to ban the United Nations Relief and Works Agency,

which provides humanitarian aid to Palestinians living under Israeli occupation, the Biden-Harris administration could not even manage meaningful censure, only saying it was "deeply concerned" rather than calling out the ban for the gross humanitarian violation that it is.

Presidential nominee and Vice President Kamala Harris likely knows this and has probably decided to either naively hope for the best or feels that she can make up the votes in other places — notably from the state's large African-American population. The Obamas have been out in full force and are crowd favourites.

Former first lady Michelle Obama has been campaigning with Harris all of this past weekend. Singer Beyoncé was present at a Kamala Harris rally in Texas and even Taylor Swift, the other American songstress, is pitching for Harris against the spectre of a second-term Trump. Their collective efforts would have mattered more had the American electoral map not been as warped as it is. Not every vote actu-

ally counts — it is where the votes are that matters and a few hundred thousand of them will pick the next American president.

It is not just Arab and other Muslim-American voters who are annoyed at Harris's support for Israel and the near annihilation of Gaza and the latest round of hostilities aimed at Lebanon now. In a telling move, the young interns at the American leftist magazine *The Nation* published a piece in which they condemned the older editors of the magazine who have endorsed Kamala Harris. The *Los Angeles Times*, one of the larger newspapers in the US, refused to endorse Harris because of her support for the Israeli genocide in Gaza.

Young people, who had mobilised on campuses earlier this year, are one of the key constituencies that Democrats are counting on. If they think that their votes don't matter, then the result could be dire.

This is not to say that former president Donald Trump, if elected, would be good for mak-

ing any kind of changes in US policy towards Israel. If anything, he and his supporters have espoused even stronger support for Israel. Those who would be in a future Trump administration include people who support the evangelical take on US foreign policy that seeks to hasten the end of the world by instigating a conflagration in the holy land. Others are simply opposed to Muslims and have routinely fanned the flames of xenophobia in their red state constituencies. The choices before American voters is, therefore, between genocide and genocide.

Most American voters do not care about Gaza at all. The two big issues for them are the economy and reproductive rights. On the former, Trump leads — not least because the sharp increases in food prices and rent in the country have turned off middle-class voters who remember better times under Trump.

The fact that those were the times before the Covid-19 pandemic struck does not seem to have changed their minds.

Nor do they seem bothered by the xenophobia that leads Trump to make bizarre claims that immigrants are eating the pets of US citizens. Harris fares better on reproductive rights which has led to an increase in her support among suburban women — a constituency that is important and may win her the necessary margins for victory.

Whatever the outcome in the US election, it will affect the whole world. It is not, however, an outcome that will be known the day after the election. Both sides, in particular the Trump campaign team, have already set the stage for a barrage of court challenges as soon as or even before voting has concluded on Nov 5, 2024.

The mistake of 2020, according to those who are expected to begin the post-election legal battle of the Trump campaign, is that they were not prepared to fight in the courts. To them, the outcome in Michigan or anywhere will not be delivered at the ballot box but in the courtroom. -- Courtesy Dawn

The battle ahead**Zahid Hussain**

Barely a week after bulldozing a controversial constitutional amendment through parliament, the ruling coalition is said to be deliberating a new plan to further mutilate the Constitution.

Although the contours of what is being described as the '27th Amendment' are yet to be unveiled, there is some indication that the changes will likely reinforce the government's control over the judiciary.

It may also include some of the clauses related to the trial of civilians in military courts that were dropped from the 26th Amendment. Further changes to the Constitution were on the anvil, but now the rulers seem to be in a hurry to push them through. A major reason for this urgency seems to stem from the growing concern that despite the passage of the 26th Amendment, the government may not be able to fully control the apex court.

In the meantime, the ruling alliance is planning to bring a new law increasing the number of

judges in the Supreme Court to 23. The motive behind this move is apparent. The addition of six more judges at this stage is certainly not meant to lessen the huge backlog of cases, as is being indicated by the government, but appears to be driven more by a desire to pack the apex court with judges of its choice. This has become much easier with the new Judicial Commission dominated by parliamentarians. It will be interesting to see how the new judges are appointed.

The timing of the new move is quite intriguing. Many observers see it as part of an ongoing effort to make the judiciary completely subservient to the executive. It's a dangerous game that will have long-term implications not only for the country's judicial system but also for the democratic process, which is based on the trichotomy of power.

While the 26th Amendment may have helped the government block the elevation of Justice Mansoor Ali Shah to the position of top judge, it should not ex-

pect the new incumbent to toe its line. The first two decisions made by the newly installed chief justice — to include Justice Shah and Justice Munib Akhtar in the Practice and Procedure Committee and also have them as members of the Supreme Judicial Council — seem to have upset the government's game plan to have a controlled judiciary.

A major worry for the ruling coalition is whether it would have the constitutional bench it wants. In a TV interview recently, senior PML-N leader and prime ministerial adviser Rana Sanaullah said that the chief justice should not head the constitutional bench. He also said that Justice Shah and Justice Akhtar must not be part of the bench. Many observers see the statement as blatant interference in judicial matters.

It is apparent that the government had expected that the two judges would be sidelined. But that did not happen. Many believe that with his reputation as a straightforward judge, Chief Justice Afridi will not go by the script. The

decision after a full court meeting this week sets a clear direction for the top court. The top priority seems to be to unite a fragmented court and improve the delivery of justice.

But the incumbent chief justice's challenges are daunting with the latest constitutional amendments limiting the independence of the judiciary. In his speech at the reference for his predecessor, he emphasised the importance of the trichotomy of power as the foundation of the Constitution, which many have pointed out appears to be under threat. There is a long battle ahead for the new chief justice, not only to uphold the Constitution but to also correct past mistakes of judicial overreach which had inflicted enormous damage on the institution.

It will be hard to banish the disruptive legacy of former chief justice Qazi Faez Isa from public memory. Many saw the credibility of the apex court as severely damaged under his stewardship. It is rare for judges to engage in public polemics. But his biases, many pointed out, were reflected in his

judgments in critical political and constitutional cases. His ruling depriving a major political party of its electoral symbol was seen as aiming to disenfranchise a large section of voters and will be regarded as one of the biggest blots on his judicial career. The ruling has long-term implications for the country's democratic process.

Days before his retirement, he declared a majority judgment on the redistribution of reserved seats in the national and provincial assemblies to be non-binding. There are not many precedents in Pakistan's judicial history of a chief justice seen as undermining his fellow judges. It has not only damaged the writ of the apex court but has also exposed the former chief justice to charges of favouring the government in the power game.

There have also been questions about his taking up the review petition on the floor-crossing case in the last days of his tenure. His ruling came on the eve of the voting on the 26th Amendment that allegedly allowed the forced defection of the opposi-

tion lawmakers.

Many would agree with what Justice Shah said in a letter accusing the former chief justice of remaining "complacent and indifferent to external pressures on the judiciary" during his tenure. "Instead of standing as a bulwark against interference, he [CJP Isa] opened the gates wide, betraying the judiciary's sacred role as a check and balance on power," alleged Justice Shah, who missed the farewell reference for his former chief.

Not surprisingly, five other judges also stayed away from the event. It was a rare sign of protest against a chief justice who will be remembered for his divisiveness and capitulation to the powers.

The judiciary is perhaps facing its toughest test in defending its independence as the government plans to further distort the Constitution. In this situation, the responsibility of the top judge becomes much more important. Justice Afridi has pledged to safeguard the trichotomy of power. One hopes he fulfils his pledge. A tough battle lies ahead.

Trump or Harris?**Mahir Ali**

A week from today, nervous tension will be spiking within and beyond the US as the results roll in from what has been hyped up as the most consequential election in American history. The choice, essentially, is between the reinforcement of a deeply unsatisfying status quo and a return to the depressingly entertaining self-immolation of a Trump presidency.

Writing in the context of Nazism and its impact on Germany, Hannah Arendt noted long ago that "those who choose the lesser evil forget very quickly that they chose evil". In recent decades, it has more or less become the norm for the electorate in many democracies faced with a choice between two varieties of what voters might be inclined to detest or distrust. The US easily falls into that category, notwithstanding its posturing as an exemplar or, more absurdly, an enforcer of liberal democracy, given the number of dictatorships its interventions have spawned.

Criticism of Donald Trump's Madison Square Garden rally on Sunday has tended to focus on a warm-up comedian's obnoxious description of Puerto Rico as a garbage dump. Even the Trump campaign has disavowed his stance — but, at the same time, distracted attention from echoes of a notorious gathering at the same venue 85 years ago arranged by the German American Bund where an image of George Washington was flanked by Nazi insignia, and the keynote speaker's anti-Semitic, white-supremacist message was greeted with "siege heils" by the 20,000-strong multitude.

The f-word — fascism — had been flung at Trump even before a number of disenfranchised col-

leagues from his previous White House stint endorsed it. After all, the president had doubled down on his traditional pet hate — which involved denigrating all immigrants who entered via Mexico as rapists and murderers — by claiming that Haitian arrivals in Springfield, Ohio, were devouring cats and dogs. The lack of evidence for even a single instance of such behaviour did not matter to him or his acolytes.

The accompanying threat to violently deport millions of 'illegal immigrants' was almost a predictable corollary. It has stirred precious little alarm in the US which had in its initial stages relied on invaders and their slaves plus genocidal assaults against North America's native inhabitants that it should still be unwelcoming to outsiders keen on rebuilding lives that have been shattered all too often because of American-first mentality in Washington.

There is more alarm over Trump's vow to deploy the military against "enemies from within", a designation that encompasses pretty much all of his domestic opponents, who are obviously being unpatriotic in disavowing his MAGA agenda, which in part reflects the white-supremacist efforts of predecessors that were interrupted by Hitler's transgressions. Trump is hardly a pioneer, though. Richard Nixon, too, had his list of enemies — and he came a cropper within two years of winning an undeserved landslide in 1972.

American voters have picked many obnoxious presidents within living memory, and there has never been any reckoning for their international crimes — from Vietnam and Korea to Chile, El Salvador, Afghanistan and Iraq, among a far longer list. Trump, to his credit,

failed to spark any new wars. The claims that he would have pre-empted both the Russian invasion of Ukraine and Oct 7 alongside its genocidal aftermath in Israel, Gaza and beyond, are easy to denigrate as absurd. But these are hardly defining issues for most voters.

In the case of Israel's genocidal impulses, they matter more on the Democratic side. Kamala Harris has failed to distance herself from the Biden administration's demonstrably fake efforts for a ceasefire, even while its influence has been paramount in forestalling the kind of reversion Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant had in mind for Iran. Meanwhile, the Kahaniist 'ethnic cleansing' in the Palestinian territories proceeds apace. Would a reincarnated President Trump somehow halt it? Dream on. The Arab/Muslim 'community leaders' who latched on to him in Michigan recently are either unwise or ignorant in glossing over his efforts to bury the question of Palestine under the mendacious Abraham Accords.

Would Harris be any better? Yes, marginally, at least on domestic concerns. It matters, for instance, that she defends women's autonomy over their bodies, and on the economic front is slightly less enthusiastic than her rival about redistributing wealth to the rich. But then, false promises are the lifeblood of US elections.

On the global front, the choice perhaps is between a rapid apocalypse or the gradual decline and fall of an empire that has for too long surreptitiously prolonged the age of imperialism. Either way, but especially with Trump, the risk is that the rest of the world will pay the price for decades to come. -- Courtesy Dawn

Take school to the child**Gulmina Bilal Ahmad**

Pakistan is in the midst of a critical education crisis, with over 22.8 million children aged five to 16 years out of school, placing it second only to Nigeria in this context. The situation is especially dire for girls, with 53 per cent out of school as compared to 43pc of boys. Declaring a national education emergency, Pakistan identifies poverty, lack of infrastructure, cultural barriers, child labour, and early marriages as core obstacles.

Innovative solutions are required. Traditional efforts focus on bringing children to schools, yet many children living near these institutes of learning don't attend, often perceiving education as irrelevant. This signals a need to (a) connect education with job opportunities and (b) customise schooling to meet children's needs. To date, all conversations have focused on bringing the child to school. We need to now think of the reverse.

A promising model is hybrid technical and vocational education and training, which equips children with job skills alongside basic literacy. Hybrid TVET bridges the gap between education and work readiness, focusing on out-of-school children. It merges academic learning with vocational skills such as carpentry, tailoring, IT, plumbing, and agriculture, enabling children to acquire lifelong learning skills and employment options.

A significant education barrier in rural Pakistan is the lack of accessible schools and training centres. Mobile vocational training units address this by bringing education directly to remote communities. These

mobile units, equipped with training materials and technology, can deliver both academic and vocational education. A few years back, a pilot project was conducted by an international funding agency. Lessons learnt from it need to be mainstreamed and its success amplified.

The mobile model proves especially valuable in conflict zones, where establishing permanent schools is difficult. Flexible schedules allow children to work part-time if essential, and baseline assessments can lead to formal certification.

For girls, community-based learning centres with local women educators can provide safe, culturally appropriate spaces. These centres can offer literacy, numeracy, and skills like sewing, embroidery, and food preparation. Integrating these skills into local economic activities enables girls to contribute through community projects in sustainable agriculture or small-scale businesses.

Expanding internet access, with over 116m mobile broadband users as of 2021, can make online and blended learning transformative, especially in the urban areas. Hybrid TVET can leverage these platforms, using online courses and in-person practical sessions to teach vocational skills. For instance, children can learn IT online and gain hands-on experience in local vocational centres.

These online platforms can connect with existing TVET institutions, allowing remote learners access to the same curricula and certifications as in-person students.

Pakistan also hosts a significant refugee population, including over 1.4m registered Afghan

refugees, many of whom face disrupted education. Integrating hybrid TVET into refugee programmes can provide essential skills and education, fostering resilience and rebuilding communities. TVET in refugee camps could offer vocational training in fields like carpentry or tailoring, alongside basic literacy and numeracy to support self-sufficiency.

To further encourage school attendance, conditional cash transfers or stipends can aid low-income families. Expanding the Bena-zir Income Support Programme to include hybrid TVET would incentivise families to enrol children in vocational training programmes, providing financial support where child labour is common. Such financial incentives could be especially effective in rural areas, where families often rely on children's earnings. By offering stipends for participation in hybrid TVET, families' economic burden can be sustainably eased.

Pakistan's out-of-school children represent both a challenge and an opportunity. By adopting innovative solutions like hybrid TVET, Pakistan can educate marginalised children and equip them with the essential job skills. From mobile training units to online platforms and community-based centres, several strategies exist to bring education directly to underserved children.

Hybrid TVET is a flexible, practical answer to Pakistan's education crisis, providing a path to literacy, life skills, and employment.

The time to act is now: Pakistan's children deserve an education that prepares them for a brighter future, and hybrid TVET can unlock that potential. -- Courtesy Dawn

CM Punjab celebrates Diwali, announces welfare initiatives for minorities

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif announced several initiatives to support minority communities during the Diwali celebrations held at 90-Shahrah-e-Quaid-e-Azam, here on Wednesday. The CM announced writing a letter to the chief minister of Indian Punjab to undertake joint efforts to eliminate smog. During the ceremony, CM Maryam Nawaz announced issuance of special cards for minority communities, an increase in the number of cards, and the establishment of a Minority Virtual Police Station. She also highlighted plans to enhance development in minority areas.

As part of the celebrations, the Chief Minister lit a traditional Diwali lamp and participated in virtual

fireworks, creating a festive atmosphere adorned with traditional Rangoli. In a heartfelt gesture, she interacted closely with Hindu women and took a young girl into her lap, distributing cheques of Rs. 15,000 to 1,400 Hindu families.

Addressing the gathering, she assured the minority communities, "If anyone commits atrocities against minorities, I will stand with the victim. We are all Pakistanis, and Diwali symbolizes peace, harmony, and love." She urged citizens to view smog as a humanitarian issue, not a political one, and expressed her determination to protect minority rights.

The CM remarked on the importance of inclusivity, saying, "I felt immense happiness lighting the Diwali lamp. It symbolizes our unity as

Pakistanis." She shared her childhood teachings from Nawaz Sharif about treating minorities as a source of pride, stating that all religious celebrations would be honored collectively.

She also addressed safety concerns for minorities, directing police to ensure immediate security in case of threats and reinforcing that Islam teaches respect and protection for all, including minorities.

In a significant announcement, she mentioned that the Minority Card would launch on December 20, providing Rs. 10,500 every three months to needy families. The assistance and number of beneficiaries would also be increased, along with special provisions for differently-abled members of minority communities.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Local Government Zeeshan Rafique presides over the meeting regarding Lahore Development Plan. Punjab Minister for Information Azma Bukhari, SACM Zeeshan Malik and Rashid Iqbal are also present.

Governor Sindh calls on State Minister

KARACHI (APP): Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori held a meeting with Minister of State for Information Technology and Communication Shaza Fatima Khawaja at the Governor House here on Wednesday.

The meeting focused on the importance of IT and communication, alongside discussions on IT courses and other significant areas, said a statement.

Kamran Khan Tessori emphasized that IT and communication are the foundations of modern development, noting that IT courses are actively being conducted at the Governor House under the Governor's Initiative, with plans to expand these courses across the province. State Minister Shaza Fatima praised the IT classes under the Governor's Initiative as an excellent step forward.

Later, the State Minister and Governor Tessori visited the IT Market, where the governor briefed the media, highlighting that the IT program was launched last year. Covering 24,500

square feet, the IT Market hosts 32 classes weekly, providing IT education to 50,000 students.

The governor assured that all courses are free of charge and announced the addition of ten more air conditioners for students' comfort.

Expressing her delight during her visit to the Governor House, Minister Shaza Fatima lauded the Governor's IT initiative, noting that the Governor House doors are now open to the public, fostering closer ties with citizens.

She also commended the ongoing ration drive under the Governor's Initiative, acknowledging its impact in aiding people in need.

State Minister Shaza Fatima emphasized that the free IT courses would help youth gain self-sufficiency and contribute positively to the national economy.

The visit also included a tour of the "Bell of Hope" project, where Minister Shaza Fatima rang the bell in appreciation, and a review of the ration drive, lauding the efforts to provide relief through ration distribution.



LAHORE: Polio worker administering polio drops to children at Sodiwal during anti-polio vaccination campaign in Provincial Capital.

Minister stresses quality assurance in pharmaceutical industry

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Imran Nazir has stressed that the pharmaceutical industry must ensure quality of its medicines and other products, underscoring that public access to quality medicines is a fundamental right.

He made these remarks while presiding over the 286th meeting of the Punjab Quality Control Board (PQCB) on Wednesday.

During the meeting, Khawaja Imran Nazir highlighted elimination of corruption within the Health Department as his top priority. He directed the PQCB to expedite and resolve all pending cases of the pharmaceutical industry on a merit basis. Additionally, he instructed for the swift handling of pending appeals and cases

at the National Institute of Health (NIH).

The meeting provided a platform to review both regular and pending cases in the pharmaceutical industry.

The minister expressed his commitment to preventing any artificial shortages of medicines across the province, stating that such shortages would not be tolerated. He also acknowledged the essential role of the pharmaceutical industry in contributing to the stability of the national economy.

The meeting was attended by Special Secretary Operations Aun Abbas Bukhari, Additional Secretary Dr. Qalandar Khan, DG Drug Control Muhammad Sohail, Board Secretary Dr. Manwar Hayat, along with other PQCB members.

Two sons, nephew of Ex-Nazim shot dead in Pabbi

PESHAWAR (APP): At least three people including two sons of former Nazim, Wazir Garhi and his nephew were killed when their car was fired at in Pabbi tehsil here on Wednesday.

Pabbi police said the incident took place in Dag Behsud area of Pabbi where armed men fired multiple shots on a car, killing three people.

The dead included two sons of Malik Jamal Shah, the former Nazim of Wazir Garhi and his nephew. Bodies of the deceased were shifted to Mian Arshad Hussain Shaheed Hospital for medico legal procedure.

Police said former Nazim Malik Jamal Shah had a family feud with Gul Haji and the incident was likely to be the result of the enmity.

4 dead, 1,331 injured in Punjab road accidents

LAHORE (APP): Four people were killed and 1,331 others injured in 1,231 road accidents in Punjab during the last 24 hours. As many as 543 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 788 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by the rescue medical teams. The analysis showed that 741 drivers, 70 underage drivers, 161 pedestrians, and 433 passengers were among the victims of the road accidents. The statistics showed that 270 accidents were reported in Lahore, which affected 299 people, placing the provincial capital at top of the list, followed by Faisalabad with 90 accidents and as many 90 victims, and at third Multan with 78 accidents and 90 victims.

Dr. Shazia appointed as 6th VC GCWUS

SIALKOT (APP): Prof. Dr. Shazia Bashir has been appointed as the sixth vice chancellor (VC) of Government College Women University Sialkot (GCWUS). According to a spokesperson, after the notification, issued by the Higher Education Department, she has assumed charge of her post.

Earlier, Dr. Shazia Bashir she the honour of being the first woman vice chancellor of Government College University Lahore. She did her Master's in Physics from Government College Lahore and MPhil from the University of Engineering.



BUNER: Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions and President PML-N KP, Engr Amir Muqam addressing Jirga Members in Buner.

CM KP forms commission to resolve matters of discovery of petroleum, gas in NW

PESHAWAR (APP): An introductory meeting of the Provincial Joint Commission constituted by the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to resolve the matters with regard to the recently discovered petroleum and gas resources in North Waziristan, was held here at Chief Minister's Secretariat on Wednesday with Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur in the Chair.

Elected members of National and Provincial Assemblies from North Waziristan, high ups of energy department and relevant divisional administration, representatives from 11 Corps, SNGPL, Mari Petroleum Company and other concerned institutions attended the

meeting. Senior officials of Federal Ministry of Petroleum also attended the meeting via video link.

It is pertinent to mention here that the aforementioned Provincial Joint Commission was constituted to protect the rights of the local population with regard to the revenue/royalty of the recently discovered natural resources in North Waziristan by ensuring fair and just disbursement/ utilization of that development funds.

The Commission will also formulate long-term policies/strategies to ensure that the recently discovered natural resources are utilized in the best interests of the country, region, and local population, acting as a liaison amongst

committees at district and tehsil level, provincial and federal governments and other stakeholders.

On this occasion, the chief minister urged the Commission to move forward swiftly under the established guidelines, and directed that district and tehsil-level committees should be finalized without any delay. He emphasized that the committees must include elected local representatives, community elders, and district administration officials.

He directed the Commission to come up with viable recommendations within the next fifteen days by conducting extensive consultation with local community through the mentioned committees.

Muqam holds meeting with Nazriati Group

BUNER (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and President PML-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Engr Amir Muqam held a meeting with Nazriati Group leaders on Wednesday.

During the meeting, held at residence of Ishfaq Chhattan, the Leaders of Nazriati Group announced to abolish the Group and express full confidence on the leadership of PML-N, president Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Engr Amir Muqam and Murtaza Javed Abbasi, received a press release.

Extending full support to provincial president Engr Amir Muqam, the leaders vowed to work together for strengthening the party.

The Nazriati Group leader Abdul Subhan Khan, Malik Imran, group president from Peshawar

Arbab Ghulam Haider Khan, group leader from Abbottabad Sardar Abdur Rashid also spoke on this occasion. Provincial President Engr Amir Muqam hailed their decision and termed the decision of abolishment of group as "better late than never". He expressed the resolve to work under the dynamic leadership of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif.

On this occasion President PML N Mardan Inayat Shah Bacha, Swabi President Shiraz Khan, Buner President Salar Khan, Shangla president Intikhab Alam, Babar Salim, Nawabzada Khan, Adil Khan, Ajar Akram Bacha, Shah Bakht Rawan, Amanullah Khan, Liaquat Khan, Ishfaq Khan, Javed Ghazali and others were also present.

Tank police foil arms smuggling bid

TANK (APP): The district police foiled an attempt to smuggle arms during an ongoing crackdown against anti-social elements here on Wednesday.

According to police spokesman District Police Officer (DPO) Aslam Nawaz Khan has issued directives to take stringent actions against crimes and these operations had started yielding results.

As part of ongoing operations under the supervision of DSP City Circle Saleem Khan, SHO Shahid Mureed Akbar police station, Sher Afzal Khan successfully conducted a significant operation, recovering a large quantity of illegal arms. Giving details, he added that on a tip-off that arms were being smuggled from Wana, the SHO stopped a suspicious vehicle and searched it.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Primary, Secondary Healthcare Khawaja Imran Nazer presides over the 286th meeting of Punjab Quality Control Board and DG Health Services.

PDWP approves 5 developmental schemes

LAHORE (APP): The Provincial Development Working Party (PDWP), in its 41st meeting of the fiscal year 2024-25, Wednesday approved five development schemes amounting to Rs 12,042 billion. Chaired by P&D Board Chairman Barrister Nabeel Ahmad Awan, the meeting approved the following schemes:

1. Central Punjab Non-Formal Education Project at a cost of Rs 3,256.401 million.

2. South Punjab Non-Formal Education Project at a cost of Rs 5,153.816 million.

Police Executive Board meeting held

LAHORE (APP): A meeting of the Police Executive Board was held at the Central Police Office, here on Wednesday under the chairmanship of Inspector General of Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar.

Additional IGS, MD of the Safe Cities Authority, heads of all departments and field units, DIGs, and other officers attended the meeting.

3. North Punjab Non-Formal Education Project at a cost of Rs 3,603.508 million.

4. Feasibility Study for the Construction of a Sky Walk Glass Bridge at Murree (PC-II) at a cost of Rs 13,240 million.

5. Preparation of Dossiers for Tentative World Heritage Sites of Harappa and Hiran Minar at a cost of Rs 15,300 million. The meeting was attended by Secretary P&D Board Dr. Asif Tufail, Chief Economist Masood Anwar, members of the P&D Board and other senior officials.

Officers presented suggestions, proposals and observations regarding the agenda and discussed issues. IG Punjab said that supervisory officers should effectively manage administrative matters and complete developmental projects within the specified timeline.

Cop injured in Tank dies at LRH

PESHAWAR (APP): A police constable who was shot and injured in an attack in Tank district the other day breathed his last here at the hospital on Wednesday.

Police said, Constable, Zia ud Din, deputized at the gate of Civil Hospital Tank was injured in an attack by a miscreant and was brought to Lady Reading Hospital (LRH) in critical condition.

The Hafiz e Quran cop succumbed to his injuries at the hospital and later his body was shifted to his native village in Tank.

7th polio case of KP reported from Nowshera

PESHAWAR (APP): The Regional Reference Laboratory on Wednesday reported a child affected with polio virus in Nowshera district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. According to the laboratory report, a child from Gandheri union council of Nowshera was tested positive for Type-1 of Wild Polio Virus. This was the first polio virus case from Nowshera district while 7th in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This year Baluchistan province topped the number of polio cases with 21.

If federation does not play its role then security problems will not be resolved: PHC

PESHAWAR (Online): Peshawar High Court (PHC) has remarked if federation does not play its role then security problems will not be resolved.

"Will federation wait for letter from province. It has no responsibility of its own. Army officers and jawans are embracing shahadat daily. Does federation not see it, court further remarked.

The case related to miserable law and order situation in KP came up for hearing in PHC Wednesday.

The court directed additional chief secretary interior to appear in person. A division bench of PHC comprising Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice Syed Arshid Ali took up the case for hearing Wednesday.

Vice chairman KP Bar Council, Additional Advocate General (AAG), DIG and Assistant Attorney General appeared in the court.

Justice Ijaz Anwar inquired what is security situation of courts and judges in southern districts.

DIG legal told the

court security of courts, judges and their residences has been enhanced.

Justice Ijaz Anwar said security during the movement of judges is weak. Police men are too not secure in it. Has the provincial government taken up security matters with the federation, unless federation plays its role, the security issues will not be resolved.

AAG told provincial government has not made any contact with us on the matter of security.

Justice Arshad Ali remarked will federation wait for letter from provincial government. They have no responsibility of their own. Officers and jawans of army and paramilitary forces are embracing shahadat daily. Does federation see them. Court is not satisfied with the reply of federation. What apparatus you have for surveillance. Have you drone.

DIG Legal Akhtar Abbas told the court we have no drone. We conduct most of surveillance during movement through special branch personnel.



LAHORE: Speaker of the Provincial Assembly of Punjab, Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan, addressing during meet the press at press club, in the Provincial Capital.

Govt striving to combat smog, says Marriyum

LAHORE (APP): Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb has said that the Punjab government has implemented crucial measures to reduce the rising smog and air pollution in Lahore.

Addressing in the Punjab Assembly, she announced that 11 areas in Lahore have been designated as smog hotspots, with Shimla Hill being the most affected. A "Green Lockdown" will be enforced in these areas starting tomorrow, with an official notification issued, she added.

She said that under the Green Lockdown, all construction activities within one-kilometer radius of Shimla Hill and surrounding areas will be strictly prohibited, and the use of commercial generators will be banned. Chingchi rickshaws will be restricted from these zones, and open barbecue activities will be prohibited after 8 p.m. Heavy transport vehicles will also be restricted, and 50 percent of office employees will work from home, she

added. She also shared that Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has made a revolutionary decision to create a green ring around the city using modern technology. Under the Lahore Green Master Plan, a "wall of trees" will be established to curb carbon emissions and increase oxygen levels, she said, adding that every tree will be geo-tagged, and afforestation efforts in industrial areas will be increased.

According to the Senior Provincial Minister, cooperation with industries will be prioritized to expand tree plantations in industrial zones, and educational institutions and students will participate as part of a "Green Force" initiative, particularly during the three-month smog season. She said, "The Punjab Government's 'Operation Clean-Up' against environmental violations is underway, with two factories sealed and fines totaling 200,000 rupees imposed for causing pollution.



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

Seminar on breast cancer awareness arranged at LPC

LAHORE (APP): A seminar and awareness walk on breast cancer awareness was held at the Lahore Press Club, in collaboration with H I M M E L Pharmaceuticals, here on Wednesday. For the first time in the history of the club, women underwent mammography tests. The event was attended by renowned doctors, medical professionals, and individuals from various fields. The seminar focused on raising awareness about breast cancer among women, emphasizing the

importance of early detection and treatment. Attendees' questions were also addressed. Notable attendees included Arshad Ansari, President of Lahore Press Club, Vice President Amjad Usmani, Salik Nawaz, Badar Saeed, Muhammad Abdullah, Dr. Muhammad Arshad (Managing Director of H I M M E L Pharmaceuticals), CEO Sharif Sajjad, Dr. Usman, Dr. Maryam, Dr. Abbas Khokhar, Dr. Shehryar from Cancer Care Hospital, Dr. Saniya Khehra, Dr. Saba, and others.

Economy to go forward with sustainable recovery: Report

ISLAMABAD (APP): In the wake of positive developments, the country's economy will continue to observe sustainable recovery in the coming months as it has demonstrated sustained recovery during the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2024-25, the finance ministry said in a report released here Wednesday. According to the monthly Economic Update and Outlook for October 2024, the economy showed constant recovery during first quarter and stability in both, the fiscal and external sectors, has been maintained, supported by significant financial inflows.

Pakistan has received first tranche of US\$ 1.03 billion under International Monetary Fund (IMF) Extended Fund Facility (EFF) programme, reinforcing macroeconomic stability. Moreover,

successful hosting of SCO summit 2024 in Pakistan are paving the way for business and market confidence, it says.

According to report, the agricultural sector is benefiting from mechanization-based productivity. During FY2025 (Jul-Sep), imports of agricultural machinery increased by 115.9 percent to \$29.7 million. Urea offtake during Kharif 2024 recorded at 2,746 thousand tonnes while DAP offtake stood at 642 thousand tonnes. Overall fertilizer production during Jul-Sep FY2025 increased by 3.7 percent to 2.45 million tons compared to last year. During Kharif-2024, water availability remained satisfactory. During Jul-Aug FY2025, the production of wheat threshers increased by 22.8 percent compared to last year. All these factors will positively impact the

growth of agriculture sector.

Meanwhile, Large-Scale Manufacturing (LSM) on MoM basis observed a substantial growth of 4.7 percent in August 2024, reflecting the revival of economic activities. However, it has observed a slight dip of 0.2 percent during Jul-Aug FY2025, compared to 2.5 percent contraction in last year. On the other hand, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) based inflation has been on a consistent decline, reaching 44 months low in September. During Jul-September FY2025, CPI Inflation stood at 9.2% while it was 29.0% in the same period last year. YoY CPI Inflation in September 2024 was recorded at 6.9% - lowest level in 44 months, compared to 9.6% percent in the previous month and 31.4 percent in September 2023.



QUETTA: A delegation led by Vice President Quetta Chamber of Commerce Mirwise Khan meeting with Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

Maritime Minister for boosting blue economy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Shaikh on Wednesday visited the National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA), where he emphasized a coordinated approach to developing key maritime sectors like aquaculture, green shipping, and tourism in a bid to revitalize Pakistan's maritime economy.

During his visit, Minister Shaikh was briefed on NIMA's work in shaping maritime policies and promoting research.

NIMA officials presented an overview of Pakistan's maritime sector, pointing out that it currently contributes less than 0.2% of the nation's GDP, far below the global standard of 8-10%. This discrepancy, they argued, underscored the need for strategic reforms and

investments.

NIMA's partnerships with local, national, and international stakeholders were also discussed as crucial for growth in Pakistan's maritime sector. The institute highlighted how these collaborations are working to create new opportunities and expand Pakistan's maritime footprint. In a series of discussions, Shaikh and NIMA representatives explored various areas within the Blue Economy, underscoring the need for a cohesive national action plan to fully utilize the country's ocean resources. Both sides agreed on the importance of coordinated efforts among MoMA, NIMA, and other maritime stakeholders to ensure sustainable growth across all maritime sectors. Minister Shaikh reiterated his commitment to supporting NIMA's mission.

Pakistan, Maldives agree to form joint working groups on various sectors

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Maldives here on Wednesday agreed to form joint working groups on various sectors under the framework of the Pakistan-Maldives Joint Commission.

According to press release issued by Economic Affairs Division (EAD), High Commissioner of Maldives to Pakistan, Muhammad Thoha called on Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Ahad Cheema.

During the meeting both sides agreed to extend their bilateral ties in key sectors.

Minister Ahad Cheema proposed the creation of sector-specific

Joint Working Groups (JWGs) on Tourism, Trade, Labour, Investment & Aviation under the framework of the Pakistan-Maldives Joint Commission.

The High Commissioner welcomed the proposal and assured that Maldives will send their official representation for these Working Groups in the near future. Both sides agreed to hold the Inaugural Session of the Pakistan-Maldives Joint Commission in early 2025.

The Minister informed that Pakistan was keen to explore new avenues for cooperation with Maldives in key priority areas.

He welcomed the Maldivian side to explore the industries of Halal meat, Agricultural Products, Fruits and Surgical Instruments in Pakistan.

The High Commissioner, while emphasizing the physical proximity between Karachi and Maldivian Port, assured of his efforts to enhance bilateral trade between both countries.

The Minister also highlighted the significant role both countries can play in regional and international forums including SAARC and OIC on significant issues such as stronger climate action.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah along with his cabinet members in a meeting with a delegation of KCCI led by its Vice Chairman Anjum Nisar held at CM House in Karachi.

CM, KCCI delegation agree to resolve issues amicably

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Wednesday said that Karachi is the highest revenue-generating city because the provincial government has provided ample business opportunities to the traders.

"The credit of Karachi's highest revenue generation in the national exchequer not only goes to the traders but to provincial government also which has developed a congenial environment for trade and commerce," he said this during meeting with delegation of Karachi Chamber of Commerce (KCCI) at CM House.

CM said he wanted from the business community to portray the city as peaceful, business and investment friendly

city of the country.

Shah pointed out that for the one last month, a World Cultural Festival with artists from 44 countries has been in progress. "Various national and international events take place at the Expo Centre Karachi every month, he said, adding that these are loud indicators of improved law and order, stability, ample business opportunities and a conducive environment for people of different professions.

The KCCI delegation raised the issues of utilities such as gas shortage, costly electricity, water, dilapidated infrastructure, transport and others. At this, the concerned ministers discussed the measures being taken by them for the resolution of the issues.

Rupee sheds 05 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee on Wednesday depreciated by 05 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.79 against the previous day's closing of Rs 277.74.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 277.35 and Rs 278.85 respectively.

The price of Euro increased by 49 paise to close at Rs 300.72 against the last day's closing of Rs 300.23, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs1.81, whereas an increase of 94 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs361.33 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 360.39.

The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 02 paise and 01 paise to close at Rs 75.63 and Rs 73.96 respectively.

SCCI demands 5pc cut in interest rate

SARGODHA (APP): Chairman Standing Committee on Banking, Sargodha Chamber of Commerce & Industry Savaiz Ahmad urged the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) governor to reduce interest rate by 5 per cent immediately.

Talking to the media on Wednesday, he said that inflation had reached 6.3 per cent in September and inflation is expected to be 6.3 per cent in October, "so it is our demand the government must take immediate action in this regard. He appealed the government to take decisions in national interest and not to waste national resources.

Gold prices up by Rs.2,900 to Rs.287,900 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The price of 24 karat per tola gold increased by Rs.2,900 and was sold at Rs.287,900 on Wednesday compared to its sale at Rs.285,000 on last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs.2,486 to Rs.246,828 from Rs.244,342 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs. 226,259 from Rs. 223,980, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained unchanged at Rs.3,350 and Rs.2,872.08 respectively.



ISLAMABAD: Italian Ambassador, Marilina Armellini calls on the Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain.

Pervaiz pledges support to strengthen CCP

ISLAMABAD (APP): State Minister for Finance and Revenue, Ali Pervaiz Malik here on Wednesday visited the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP), underscoring the role of the Commission in checking market failure and protecting consumers from anti-competitive practices.

During his visit, Malik conveyed the Ministry's commitment to bolstering CCP's capacity to increase its effectiveness, whether through legislative reforms, follow-up on court cases or capacity-building initiatives.

Addressing CCP's officials, he emphasized the need for a comprehensive review of the Competition Act to ensure it remains modern, effective, and relevant as well as to address the challenges being faced by the Commission.

"Competitiveness in

markets is vital for protecting consumer interests. It also encourages new startups and attracts investments," said Malik. CCP Chairman, Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhu, briefed the Minister on Commission's role, performance, and ongoing inquiries in important sectors of the economy. Dr. Sidhu highlighted the challenges faced by CCP, including legal obstacles.

Minister Malik pledged his full support to CCP in overcoming its challenges. He requested a detailed list of pending court cases and stay orders, to take up with the Attorney General and Law Ministry for expeditious resolution. The Minister urged Dr. Sidhu to maintain close coordination with the Finance Ministry to ensure effective vigilance of consumer interests.

SECP engages to advance "Insured Pakistan" initiative

ISLAMABAD (APP): Reporting Service. This outreach is meant to promote insurance and associated benefits in Pakistan, as outlined in SECP's five-year strategic plan for the insurance sector.

The focus of the discussions centered on incorporating agricultural insurance into disaster risk financing strategies and national food security policies, introducing compulsory occupational health insurance, and strengthening the enforcement of mandatory group life and motor third-party insurance.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Finance and Revenue, Ali Pervaiz Malik, visited the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP).

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Five ships, Navios Tempo, MSC Positano, Doris, Se Hong Kong and Milaha Ras Laffan scheduled to load/offload Container, Rice, Chemicals and LNG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Engro Vopak Terminal and Pakistan Gas Port Terminal respectively on Tuesday.

Meanwhile a 'Green Genie' scheduled to load/offload Rice also arrived at outer anchorage during last 24 hours.

Ten ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them a hydrocarbons carrier 'South Port' left the port on today morning while five more ships, Navios Tempo, MSC Positano, Scarlet Rosella, Se Hong Kong and Zarraf Hanif are expected to sail on today.

Shaza Fatima says: Govt wants to make Pakistan hub of IT

KARACHI (APP): Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecom Shaza Fatima Khawaja Wednesday said that the government wanted to make Pakistan hub of information technology.

Addressing an event the Digital Pakistan Cybersecurity Hackathon 2024 officially launched here, she said special attention was being paid to cybersecurity. Organized by Ignite under the auspices of the Ministry of IT & Telecom, this flagship event marks the beginning of a nationwide series that will see 521 teams from across Pakistan competing in cybersecurity challenges designed to identify, nurture, and promote local talent in this critical field.

Shaza Fatima Khawaja also expressed her

gratitude to all participants, partner organizations, organizers who contributed to the success of the Karachi launch. "Events like the Digital Pakistan Cybersecurity Hackathon are instrumental in developing an ecosystem of innovation and collaboration in cybersecurity," said Shaza Khawaja. She further said, "I am proud to share that Pakistan has been recognized in the Top Tier-1 (Role-Modelling) of the ITU-Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI_V5) 2024, reflecting our nation's strides in strengthening cybersecurity and resilience. This milestone is a testament to the Ministry's leadership and the dedicated efforts of stakeholders across government.



FAISALABAD: A worker busy in his work in a local Garments factory in the city.

NEPRA concludes hearing into FCA for Sept

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) on Wednesday concluded public hearing into public petition filed by Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA) on behalf of XWDISCOs in power tariff increase under monthly fuel cost adjustment (FCA) for September.

The hearing was presided over by Chairman NEPRA Waseem Mukhtar while other members Mathar Niaz Rana of Balochistan, member Sindh Rafique Ahmad Shaikh, Member Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Engineer Maqsood Anwar Khan and member Punjab Amina Ahmed were also present.

The CPPA has sought 71 paise per unit reduction in the power tariff for the said period.

The regulator was told that some 12.11 billion units were sold during the said period. Additional electricity was generated from hydel and nuclear sources.

The CPPA also sought past adjustment of Rs 7.5 billion from the regulator.

Founding circular economy model Pak secondhand textile sector bears massive potential

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Sustainable Policy Institute (SDPI), in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the European Union, organized a workshop titled "Criteria and Guideline Development for Used Textiles Trade" under the framework of the Circularity and Used Textiles Trade in Pakistan.

This workshop aimed to strengthen the framework around Pakistan's growing secondhand textile sector, fostering sustainable practices and policies, a news release said.

Asad Naqvi from UNEP appreciated the workshop outcomes for debunking myths about the secondhand textile industry in the country and underlined the need to study early supply chain components of the sectors, particularly the farmers.

As one of the world's largest importers of used clothing from the EU, Pakistan's textile market

plays a pivotal role in driving the global circular economy. Zainab Naeem, Associate Research Fellow, Head of Circularity, noted the mission's focus on assessing Pakistan's textile value chain to enhance sustainable trade practices.

Beatriz Fernandez of UNEP's Environment and Trade Team emphasized textiles' economic importance, especially for women, who comprise 45% of the sector's workforce. However, she highlighted the need to address environmental concerns such as microplastic pollution, which the textile industry contributes to at a rate of 9%.

The workshop provided a platform for experts, industry representatives, and government officials to share insights and foster collaborations. Presentations outlined the current scale of secondhand clothing imports in Pakistan, which saw a 17% increase in 2023-24.

39th MAP Awards Meezan Bank wins 'Best Company in Financial Category' Award

Independent Report KARACHI: Meezan Bank, Pakistan's leading Islamic bank, has been honored with the prestigious 'Best

award, for the third consecutive year, highlighting its contributions to the success of Islamic banking in Pakistan.



Syed Amir Ali - Deputy CEO, Meezan Bank, received the award from the Chief Guest, Mr. Murad Ali Shah - Chief Minister of Sindh, in recognition of the Bank's outstanding performance in Pakistan's banking sector. The distinguished audience also included Mr. Faisal Karim Kundi, Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; Senator Sarmad Ali.

Minister discusses issues related to CM Kisan Card

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Syed Ashaq Hussain Kirmani on Wednesday chaired a meeting at Bank of Punjab Head Office Lahore in which present status and issues related to Chief Minister Punjab Kisan Card were reviewed.

Secretary Agriculture, Punjab Iftikhar Ali Sahoo and Bank of Punjab President Zafar Masood also attended the meeting.

The minister said that the issuance of Kisan Card was a history-making and farmer-friendly project of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif. Registration of 12 lakh farmers for Kisan Card had been completed till now while Punjab Bank had approved 446,000 applications while 320,000 farmers had received Kisan Card, he added. The provincial minister maintained that the process.

North Korea sends foreign minister to Russia as its troops train to fight against Ukraine

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korea said Tuesday its top diplomat is visiting Russia, in another sign of their deepening relations as rival South Korea and Western nations say the North has sent thousands of troops to support Russia's war in Ukraine.

North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said a delegation led by Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui departed for Russia on Monday, but didn't specify the purpose of the visit. In a closed-door hearing at South Korea's parliament, the South's spy agency said Choe may be involved in high-level discussions on sending additional troops to Russia and negotiating what the North would get in return, according to Lee Seong-kweon, a lawmaker who attended the meeting.

The announcement of Choe's visit came hours after the Pentagon said North Korea has sent to Russia about 10,000 troops, who are likely to fight against Ukraine

within "the next several weeks."

South Korean and Western leaders have expressed concern that North Korean involvement could help prolong Russia's aggression in Ukraine, and that Russia may offer technology in return that could advance the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile program.

Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder, the Pentagon press secretary, said a "relatively small number" of North Korean troops are now in the Kursk region, where Russia has struggled to push back a Ukrainian incursion. He declined to provide a more precise number. A couple thousand more troops are heading in that direction, he told reporters Tuesday.

"As of right now, you know, it remains to be seen exactly how the Russians and the North Koreans will employ these forces," Ryder said, adding that he expects the deployment to be discussed by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, Secretary of State Antony

Blinken and their South Korean counterparts when they meet in Washington this week.

South Korea's National Intelligence Service told lawmakers it's examining the possibility that some groups of North Korea's military personnel in Russia, including generals or other high-ranking officials, may have already moved to frontline areas. The spy agency said the two sides appear to be struggling to resolve communication issues, although the Russian military is training North Korean troops on Russian military terminology, Lee said.

The agency said space-based reconnaissance is an area where North Korea is likely receiving Russian help. It said North Korea may be acquiring advanced components from Russia as it prepares to launch another military reconnaissance satellite following a failed attempt in May, said Park Sun-won, another lawmaker who attended the hearing.



Palestinians inspect the site of an Israeli strike on a house, amid the Israel-Hamas conflict, in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip.

Gaza rescuers dig for survivors after Israeli strike kills 93

Monitoring Desk
GAZA STRIP: Rescuers pulled bodies from the rubble in Beit Lahlia on Tuesday after an overnight Israeli strike that Gaza's civil defence said killed 93 people in a residential building.

Bodies wrapped in shrouds lay in rows as mourners gathered, with witnesses saying many of those killed were women and children.

Around 40 people remained missing under the debris, the civil defence agency said.

Its spokesman, Mahmud Bassal, described

the complete destruction of a five-storey home, adding that the area lacked medical facilities to treat the wounded.

"The number of martyrs in the massacre of the Abu Nasr family home in Beit Lahlia has risen to 93 martyrs, and about 40 are still missing under the rubble," he told AFP.

The Israeli military said it was "aware of reports that civilians were harmed today (Tuesday) in the Beit Lahlia area".

"The details of the incident are being looked into," it told AFP.

CIA director, other officials to visit Middle East for talks

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: US officials including CIA Director William Burns and envoys Brett McGurk and Amos Hochstein will visit Egypt and Israel on Thursday to discuss issues involving Iran, Lebanon, and the release of hostages in Gaza, a US official said as Washington seeks to de-escalate tensions in the region.

CENTCOM Commander General Erik Kurilla is also in the region and will visit Israel, the official said on Wednesday.

Iran appoints first Baluch governor in restive Sistan Baluchistan province

Monitoring Desk
TEHRAN: Iran's government on Wednesday appointed the first governor from the Baluch minority in the country's restive southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchistan.

"Mansour Bijar was chosen as the governor of Sistan-Baluchistan," government spokeswoman Fatemeh Mohajerani said after a cabinet meeting.

Bijar, 50, hails from the Baluch community, a mainly Sunni Muslim ethnic group in a Shia-majority country. His appointment follows an attack in Sistan-Baluchistan that killed at least 10 policemen, later claimed by the militant group Jaish al-Adl (Army of Justice).

Austria says eight of its UNIFIL troops in Lebanon injured in rocket attack

Monitoring Desk
VIENNA: Eight Austrian soldiers belonging to the UN peacekeeping force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) sustained superficial injuries in a rocket strike on Camp Naqura near Israel, Austria's Defence Ministry said on Tuesday.

UNIFIL is stationed in southern Lebanon to monitor hostilities along the demarcation line with Israel, an area that has seen fierce clashes this month between Israeli troops and Iran-backed Hezbollah fighters.

"We condemn this

attack in the strongest possible terms and demand that it be investigated immediately," the ministry said in a statement, adding that it was not clear where the attack came from and none of the soldiers needed urgent medical care.

Austria contributes about 180 soldiers to the 10,000-strong force. They are part of a "Multi Role Logistic Unit" that performs roles like transporting goods and personnel, repairing vehicles, supplying fuel and firefighting.



Republican presidential nominee and former US President Donald Trump attends a campaign event, in Allentown, Pennsylvania, US.

Ukraine's Zelenskyy says war with Russia is being pushed 'beyond borders' as North Korea joins in

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Tuesday the thousands of North Korean soldiers expected to reinforce Russian troops on the front line in Ukraine are pushing the almost three-year war beyond the borders of the warring parties.

Western leaders say North Korea has sent some 10,000 soldiers to help Russia's military campaign and warned that its involvement in a European war could also unsettle relations in the Indo-Pacific region, including Japan and Australia.

Zelenskyy said he spoke to South Korean

President Yoon Suk Yeol and told him that 3,000 North Korean soldiers are already at military bases close to the Ukrainian front line and that he expects that deployment to increase to 12,000. South Korea, which has been in close contact with NATO, the U.S. and the European Union about the latest developments, warned last week it could send arms to Ukraine in retaliation for the North's involvement.

"There is only one conclusion — this war is internationalized and goes beyond the borders" of Ukraine and Russia, Zelenskyy wrote on Telegram.

Yemen's Houthis launched drones towards Israel's Ashkelon, spokesperson says

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: Yemen's Houthis launched drones towards an industrial zone in the Israeli city of Ashkelon, the group's military spokesperson said on Tuesday.

The Yemeni fighters, who have been attacking ships crossing the Red Sea since November of last year, say they are acting in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza and in support of Lebanon against Israeli strikes.

The Israeli military said on Tuesday morning that sirens sounded in Ashkelon after a drone crossed into Israeli territory but fell in an open space in the area.

Israel condemns the Houthis as terrorists following the instructions of its arch-foe Iran.

Iran executes German-Iranian Jamshid Sharmahd: judiciary

Monitoring Desk
TEHRAN: Iranian authorities on Monday executed German-Iranian Jamshid Sharmahd, who had been detained since 2020, the judiciary's Mizan website said. "After going through the judicial process and the final approval of the court decision by the Supreme Court, the death sentence of Jamshid Sharmahd... was carried out this morning," the website said, following Sharmahd's conviction for "corruption on earth".

Sharmahd, a German citizen of Iranian descent in his late 60s, was seized by Iranian authorities in August 2020 while travelling through the United Arab Emirates.

Floods in Spain kill at least 62 people in Valencia region

Monitoring Desk
PICANYA: At least 62 people have been killed in the deadliest flooding to hit Spain for three decades after torrential rain battered the eastern region of Valencia on Tuesday, leaving roads and towns under water, local authorities said on Wednesday.

Rescuers using dinghies worked in the dark to scour the floodwaters, rescuing several people, television pictures from the town of Utiel showed and emergency services were still working to reach the worst-hit areas.

"For those who at this moment are still looking for their loved ones, the whole of Spain weeps with you," Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said in a televised address. "To the villages and cities destroyed by this tragedy, I say the same: Together, we will

rebuild your streets, your squares, your bridges," he said.

Carlos Mazon, the regional leader of Valencia, one of Spain's most important agricultural regions, said some people remained isolated in inaccessible locations.

"If [emergency services] have not arrived, it's not due to a lack of means or predisposition, but a problem of access," Mazon told a press conference, adding that reaching certain areas was "absolutely impossible".

Dozens of videos shared on social media overnight appeared to show people trapped by the floodwaters, with some climbing into trees to avoid being swept away. Footage showed rescue workers transporting several women in a bulldozer's bucket.



A picture taken in Picanya, near Valencia shows cars and debris piled in a street after floods.

Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves poses with the red budget box outside her office on Downing Street in London, Britain.

India, China complete troops pull-back from border face-off points, Indian official says

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: India and China have completed pulling back their troops from two face-off points on their disputed Himalayan frontier as planned, an Indian defence official said on Wednesday. The nuclear-armed neighbours reached a deal last week on patrolling the frontier in the Indian territory of Ladakh to end a four-year military stand-off, paving the way for improved bilateral political and business ties. The disengagement that began last week has been completed

Suspect in Southport stabbing that killed 3 girls refuses to speak in court

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: The teenage suspect in the knife killing of three young girls in July that sparked anti-immigration riots refused to speak on Wednesday as he appeared in court to face new charges.

Axel Rudakubana, 18, held his sweater over the bottom half of his face while appearing by video from a London prison for a brief hearing at Westminster Magistrates' Court.

Philippine police to investigate Duterte's 'death squad' claims

Monitoring Desk
MANILA: The Philippine police said on Wednesday they will investigate revelations made by former President Rodrigo Duterte that he assembled a "death squad" to control crime when he was mayor of the southern city of Davao.

Duterte had pointed at former police officers present at a Senate inquiry into his deadly "war on drugs" on Monday as leaders of that death squad, the existence of which the former president and his allies had for years denied.

Duterte later said

gangsters, not police, made up the hit team.

Philippine National Police (PNP) spokesperson Jean Fajardo said the names mentioned in the hearing would be used as leads and the basis for its investigation.

She said the PNP chief has instructed officers to extract unsolved cases of deaths related to drugs, including those that may be linked to the so-called death squad.

"If we dig up cases showing police involvement, the PNP chief made it clear there will be no sacred cows," Fajardo told a press conference.

US presses ahead with modest Mideast plans despite election uncertainty

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: With the U.S. presidential election just a week away, the Biden administration is not giving up hope for short-term deals for cease-fires between Israel and Hamas in Gaza and Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon.

But U.S. officials are mindful that political uncertainty in the United States has made the sides reluctant to commit to any significant agreements before it is clear who has won the White House.

In the meantime, the Middle East is uneasy about what happens next after Israel struck Iranian military targets over the weekend in retaliation for Iran's barrage of ballistic missile attacks on Oct. 1.

U.S. officials said they

believe Israel's attack — whose targets were coordinated with Washington — will not draw an escalatory reaction from Iran. But the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity to share sensitive diplomatic discussions, caution that nothing is certain.

The Biden administration was able to persuade Israel to keep its response limited — gaining assurances it wouldn't hit nuclear or oil sites in Iran that would have escalated the conflict — despite limited U.S. influence as Biden's term wraps up. As Israel's closest ally and a key mediator in the Middle East, the U.S. still is pressing for any movement on a truce despite letdowns in the past and little expectation of immediate breakthroughs.

Harris warns of dangers of another Trump presidency in speech at Jan 6 riots site

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: Democrat Kamala Harris warned tens of thousands of people gathered in Washington at her biggest rally that her Republican opponent Donald Trump was seeking unchecked power as their tightening race for the presidency entered its final week.

Harris spoke on Tuesday evening to an outdoor rally estimated by her campaign to number more than 75,000 people at the spot near the White House where on January 6, 2021, Trump addressed his supporters before they attacked the US Capitol.

"We know who Donald Trump is," Harris said. She said the then-president sent an "armed mob" to the US Capitol to try to overturn his loss in the 2020 presidential election.

"This is someone who is unstable, obsessed with revenge, consumed with grievance and out for unchecked power," Harris said during what her cam-

paign called her closing argument before a tightly contested November 5 election.

More than 53 million Americans have already voted in the election, according to Election Hub at the University of Florida, in a battle that will decide who runs the world's richest and most powerful country for four years.

Harris was flanked by American flags on stage and surrounded by blue and white banners that said "FREEDOM" with a well-lit White House behind her.

The crowd included older people and college students, people from overseas, from New York and from nearby Virginia. Many women came in groups with other female friends.

"It's important that we do not go back to the horrible past policies under President Trump," said Saul Schwartz, a former federal worker from Alexandria, Virginia.

Investors take cover in Asia ahead of US election

Monitoring Desk
PENNSYLVANIA: Investors are selling yen and taking shelter in cash, India, pockets of China's markets and Singapore dollars ahead of a US election that could shake out global money and trade flows.

Asia's financial markets stand on the front line of what could be a wild ride when votes are tallied and in the months ahead since the region is an export powerhouse and shares and currencies are sensitive to changes in US trade policies.

That has money managers shying away from outright wagers on the outcome and looking instead to reduce exposure to vulnerabilities from Japanese manufacturers to Hong Kong stocks and make bets in India or China that stand to gain regardless of the US leader.

"We actually view China as a decent place to

hide," said Jon Withaar who manages an Asia special situations hedge fund at Pictet Asset Management, since the market has a lot of domestic drivers and lower correlation with global asset moves.

"The best thing for us to do is just sit on the sidelines and wait," he said, having already cut down on bets in Japan, where tariffs pose a risk for automakers and Hong Kong, where foreign selling of Chinese assets is likely to focus.

In the final stretch to the November 5 election, betting odds have Republican Donald Trump leading Democrat Kamala Harris and financial markets have moved to sell US bonds and buy dollars in anticipation that a Trump administration would increase inflation.

In Asia, the low-yield yen is favoured for selling against the dollar.

Iran moves to triple military budget amid Israel tensions

Monitoring Desk
TEHRAN: Iran's government has proposed tripling its military spending, an official said Tuesday, as tensions with arch-rival Israel rise following recent tit-for-tat missile strikes.

Government spokeswoman Fatemeh Mohajerani outlined the move that would see "a significant increase of more than 200 percent in the country's military budget" at a news conference in Tehran, without elaborating. Tehran has not disclosed any exact figures, but according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) think tank, Iran's military spending in 2023 was about \$10.3 billion.

The proposed budget will be debated, with lawmakers expected to finalise it in March. "All efforts have been made to meet the country's defence needs and special attention has been paid to this issue," said Mohajerani.

The plan came days after Israel carried out air strikes on military sites in Iran in response to Tehran's October 1 attack, itself retaliation for the killing of

Iran-backed militant leaders and a Revolutionary Guards commander.

At least four soldiers were killed in the Israeli strikes, according to Iran's military, and Iranian media reported Monday that a civilian was also killed in the attack. Afterwards, Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant said his country's strikes had shifted the balance of power between the sworn enemies.

"The enemy has been weakened—both in its ability to produce missiles and in its ability to defend itself. This changes the balance of power," Gallant said in a statement. Iran's attack on October 1, when it said it fired 200 projectiles at Israel, was its second-ever direct attack on its arch-enemy. Israel said most of the missiles were intercepted but one person was killed. The Islamic republic conducted its first direct attack on Israel in mid-April, in response to a suspected Israeli strike on Iran's consulate in the Syrian capital Damascus that killed seven Revolutionary Guards, including two generals.

At UN, Pakistan calls for steps to offset threats to regional, Intl security

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Reaffirming that international peace and security depended on stability at the regional levels, Pakistan has called for the preservation of balance in the defence capabilities of states at the lowest level of armaments and military forces.

Speaking at a key U.N. panel, Pakistani delegate Atif Raza also underscored the special responsibility of militarily significant states in promoting regional security.

"Several regions have reaped the benefits of applying these principles: Conventional arms control, risk reduction, and confidence-building measures (CBMs) have laid the groundwork for peace in many regions of the world," Raza, a Counsellor at the Pakistan Mission to the UN, told the General Assembly's First Committee, which deals with disarmament and international security issues.

"However, when a state spurs these regional approaches because it perceives its global ambitions as incompatible, it obstructs the path to peace," he said in the debate on 'Regional Disarmament and Security'.

"Such denial isn't just a regional issue; it destabilizes the entire global order," the Pakistani delegate added.

Confidence-building measures could lead to favourable measures for the peaceful settlement of existing disputes, he said, adding they should not become an end in themselves.

"They (CBMs) also cannot act as a substitute nor a precondition for steps towards peaceful settlement of disputes," Raza said. "Without progress towards eliminating underlying disputes and causes of mistrust between states, the utility of CBMs diminishes."



QUETTA: Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly Ghazala Gola in a group photo with Secretary Women Parliamentary Caucus Islamabad Dr. Shahida Rehmani and Women MPAs.

Planning minister calls for global action on climate disaster funding

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal emphasized on Wednesday Pakistan's unwavering commitment to resilience in the face of climate change and natural disasters.

Speaking at the Accreditation Award ceremony organized by the National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF), the minister lauded the rigorous efforts of the NDRMF and its partners, including representatives from federal ministries, provincial authorities, disaster management bodies, and international organizations, all of whom played a pivotal role in advancing Pakistan's climate resilience efforts.

Prof. Iqbal highlighted Pakistan's unique position as a nation that, while contributing less than 1% to global emissions, ranks among the countries most severely affected by climate disasters.

He pointed out that despite widespread verbal support for Pakistan's climate resilience efforts, substantial international funding has been lacking, leaving Pakistan to navigate the consequences of climate change with limited global support.

GoB announces closed holiday from Oct 31 to Nov 2 for Hindu employees on Diwali

QUETTA: The Government of Balochistan has announced the closed holiday for three days from October 31 to November 2, 2024 for the government employees belonging to Hindu community on account of Diwali.

This was announced in an official notification issued here by the Services and General Administration Department on Wednesday. According to the notification, the salaries of government employees from the Hindu community have already been paid on October 24 for the month of October.



QUETTA: Newly Elected President National Party Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch and member of central cabinet being administer oath by Akram Dashti.

Partial shutter down strike observed in Quetta city

Independent Report
QUETTA: The partial shutter down strike was observed in different parts of Quetta on Wednesday.

The call for shutter down strike was given by Balochistan National Party (BNP) against registration of FIR against the central leader of Party, Sardar Akhtar Mengal and other party leaders in Islamabad as well as inclusion of name of party workers and others in the 4th schedule list, alleged enforced disappearances of the people from province, passage of 26th constitutional amendment, and other issues.

While the shops and businesses concerns remain closed in different parts of the metropolis, the same remain opened in some parts thus showing a mix response to the shutter down strike call. The movement of traffic also plied below the normal on the streets and roads in the city.

Meanwhile, reports reaching here from interior parts suggested that the shutter down strike was observed in Kharan, Panjgur, Mastung, Kalat, Noshki and some other areas of the province.

BA Body expresses concerns over non-functioning of 30 libraries in Balochistan

QUETTA (APP): The Balochistan Assembly's standing committee on Culture, Tourism and Archeology expressed concern and concerns over the non-functioning of 30 libraries in various districts of the province.

The committee was informed that there are 90 libraries in 25 districts of the province, out of which 60 are functional and 30 are inactive due to insufficient staff and other issues.

The meeting of the Standing Committee on Culture, Archives, Tourism and Archeology was held under the chairmanship of Rahmat Ali Baloch and was informed that the department has formulated the Balochistan Artist Welfare Fund policy to provide financial support to well-known artists.

Under the policy, artists would be awarded financial support of Rs 40,000, 30,000 and 20,000 per month respectively.

Chairman Rehmat Ali Baloch emphasized the need to support the artists who are real ambassadors and the committee pledged to resolve the issues being faced by the artists.

The committee stressed to ensure the protection and promotion of the rich cultural heritage of Balochistan.

The committee expressed its concern that the Balochi, Pashto and Brahui Academies supervised by the Education Department instead of the Culture Department.

PTI senator Sania Nishtar resigns from Senate seat

ISLAMABAD (Online): PTI Senator leader Dr Sania Nisar has resigned from Senate seat.

According to sources, Sania Nishtar tendered resignation to join an international organisation in Geneva.

Sources said that former federal minister Dr Nishtar also sent her resignation to the Senate secretariat.

It is pertinent to note that former federal minister Nishtar was elected senator from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2021.

Dr Nishtar is the chief executive officer (CEO) of Gavi, a vaccine alliance. She is an internationally acclaimed public health and development expert having a degree in medicine.

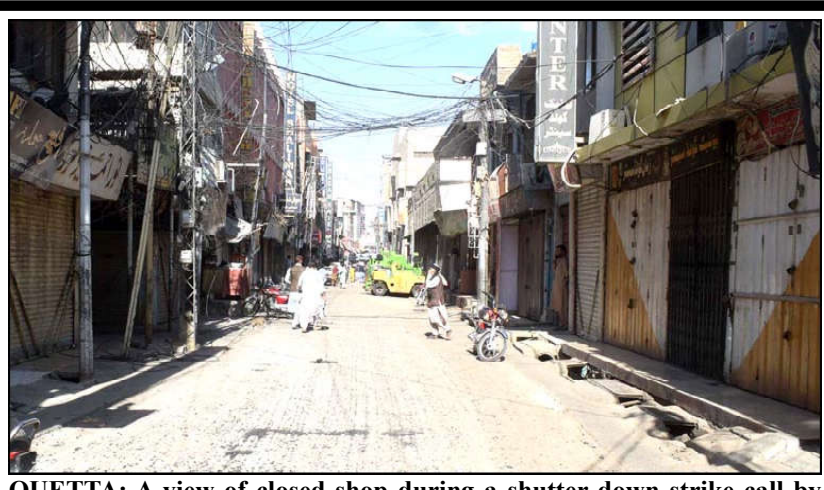
October 31 is last date for filing income tax returns

ISLAMABAD (INP): Only one-day left for filing income tax returns for fiscal year 2024 which already approaching fast.

Prior to this Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) extended last date of filing income tax returns for fiscal year 2024 twice due to slow and unavailability of internet, technical faults in IRIS Portal and on appeals from tax bar associations.

Now the final date for filing income tax returns for fiscal year 2024 is October 31, 2024.

Regional Tax Office established awareness camps for taxpayers under the supervision of Chief Commissioner Ahmad Shuja Khan.



QUETTA: A view of closed shop during a shutter down strike call by Balochistan National Party.

Govt. focusses on economic uplift of masses: DPM Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday highlighted that the incumbent government focused on efforts to uplift the economic conditions of the masses.

Now, the country was on road to sustainable growth as all the macro-economic indicators were doing well with food inflation nosediving and the GDP on the rise, the deputy prime minister and foreign minister expressed his views during the launching ceremony of BOGO LIV, a financial mobile application.

He further said that Pakistan Stock Market had been the best performing market in the Asia while the credible global institutions were all projecting Pakistan's economy on road to recovery.

Dar stressed that they needed to introspect on their past and reflect as to how correct the course and stay on the right course.

He said that government's strategy revolved around encouraging productivity through private sector, adding it was not the government's job to do businesses, rather it acted as facilitator to encourage the private sector.

The DPM further said that the airports were to be outsourced in the country. When the UK could do it why it could not be done here for the purpose of provision of better services, he added.

He said that the government was also focusing on downsizing its size and curtailing its spending, adding that immense potential still existed in the country, though they had lost a lot yet the vast opportunities existed.

Dar underscored the need of maintaining the economic stability and called for unity, hard work and moving in the right direction.



QUETTA: MPA Dr. Nawaz Kibzai meeting with Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

Chairman PAC dismayed over untimely completion of projects of Irrigation Department

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chairman, Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Asghar Khan Tareen has expressed dismay over untimely completion of the development projects of Irrigation Department.

The Chairman PAC said that the projects are not completing due to incompetence of the Irrigation Department.

He said that overrun payment of billions of rupees has been made for the projects and inquired as who would pay the losses?

The Chairman PAC was presiding over the meeting in the committee room of Balochistan Assembly on Wednesday. The meeting reviewed the audit paras of Irrigation Department for the financial year 2021-22 and 2022-23 and other related matters.

The members of PAC Zabid Ali Reki and Fazal Qadir Mandokhail, Director General Audit, Shuja Ali, Accountant General, Nasrullah Jan, Secretary Irrigation, Hafiz Abdul Majid, Additional Secretary PAC, Sirajuddin Lehri, Additional Secretary Law, Saeed Iqbal, Additional Secretary Finance, Muhammad Arif, Chief Accounts Officer, PAC, Syed Muhammad Idris, Project Directors of Irrigation Department, and other concerned officials were in attendance at the meeting.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Livestock Sardarzada Faisal Khan Jamali meeting with Speaker Balochistan Assembly Captain (retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai.

Balochistan agriculture dept showcases agri product in international conference

Independent Report
QUETTA: The government of Balochistan, Department of Agriculture participated in the International Sustainable Agriculture Conference 2024 held in Karachi under the leadership of Special Secretary of Agriculture Jahangir Kakar.

A statement issued by the Agriculture Department Balochistan said that the two-day conference was organized under the auspices of Pakistan Media Development Foundation, Ripple Concept and Exhibitor TV, which was also supported by the Green Pakistan Initiative.

On this occasion, the Research Wing, Water Management and Extension Wing of Balochistan Department of Agriculture with the support of WWF also set up wonderful stalls which were well appreciated by the participants. In the conference, a panel discussion was also organized on sustainable agriculture, organic agriculture, water management and various topics.

PM meets Vietnamese counterpart; suggests exchange of trade

RIYADH (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday met with his Vietnamese counterpart Pham Minh Chinh and expressed Pakistan's desire to enhance ties with Vietnam, while highlighting the immense potential of the two countries to enhance trade and investment cooperation.

In the meeting held on the sidelines of the 8th Future Investment Initiative (FII) Conference, the two leaders discussed ways to strengthen bilateral relations, particularly in trade and investment.

Prime Minister Shehbaz proposed an exchange of trade and business delegations between both countries to further explore these opportunities. The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening people-to-people ties and promoting tourism between the two countries.

Appreciating Vietnam's role in the ASEAN region, Prime Minister Shehbaz sought support for Pakistan's efforts to become a full dialogue partner of ASEAN.

He also extended an invitation to the Vietnamese prime minister to undertake an official visit to Pakistan.



RIYADH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh of Vietnam on the sidelines of the 8th Future Investment Initiative (FII) Conference.

Fazlur Rehman says: Improving national economy vital for country's stability

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Jamiat Ulema Islam (JUI-F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Wednesday said that strengthening national economy was vital for country's stability.

He stated this while addressing a ceremony by JUI-F district leadership in his honor.

He underlined the need of forming an effective policy to tackle the menace of terrorism in the country to ensure economic stability.

Fazl said his party would support the government in its all the steps taken for the betterment of the national economy.

He mentioned that the recent Shanghai Cooperation Conference (SCC) meeting held in Pakistan which was a matter of pride for the whole nation.

The JUI-F Chief said that after the passage of 26th constitutional amendment, the Parliament was bound to discuss the recommendations of Islamic Ideology Council (IIC) for making any legislation, which he termed a big achievement.

He said that earlier the agreement of 40 percent legislators was mandatory for sending any matter to the IIC and this ratio was decreased to 25 percent under the 26th constitutional amendment.

Commenting on Palestine issue, he said the Pakistan was standing with Palestinian Muslims where the occupying forces have martyred about 50,000 to 60,000 innocent civilians.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Health Bkhat Muhammad Kakar checking the attendance register during his visit to Basic Health Unit at Killi Nasaran Nawa Killi.

Forced shutter down not to be allowed, asserts Quetta administration

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Quetta district administration has announced that forced shutter down strike would not be observed in the city.

According to an official handout issued here Wednesday, the Assistant Commissioner Quetta city and other Assistant Commissioners visited Liaquat bazar, Prince road, Gordat Singh road and Jinnah road and they got opened the shops closed in the city.

Assistant Commissioner said that the people who were forcefully closing the shops were arrested.

He also said that patrolling of police has been increased in different parts. He said that no one can be forced to observe shutter down.

Surge in cases of polio in Balochistan continues Another child reported with crippling disease from Chaghai

Independent Report
QUETTA: Another polio case has been reported from Balochistan increasing tally of cases of crippling disease to 22.

The Emergency Operation Center for polio eradication sources said that the new polio case has been reported from Chaghai, which is the first one of the district during the current year.

The sources said that the polio virus has been detected in a child belonging to Chaghai.

It may be mentioned here that in all 21 cases of polio had already been reported in the province during current year.

Out of the total polio cases, six were reported from Killa Abdullah and three from Quetta district.



QUETTA: Additional Secretary Home Khalid Khan presides over the meeting regarding illegal activities in the province.