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Lt Col among six soldiers martyred in N Waziristan gun battle with terrorists

Six Khawarij also killed in exchange of fire that took place on night between October 4-5, says ISPR; President, PM laud security forces for successful operation in North Waziristan

RAWALPINDI (APP): A Lieutenant Colonel among five valiant soldiers of Pakistan Army on Saturday embraced martyrdom while leading the troops that thwarted a terrorists' attack and killed six khawarij during a fire exchange took place between the Army troops and the khawarij in Spinwam area of North Waziristan district.

The six Khawarij terrorists were eliminated due to effective engagement by the Army troops, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

However, during the intense fire exchange, Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Ali Shoukat (Age: 43 years, resident of District Faisalabad), a brave officer

who was leading his troops from the front, fought gallantly and embraced shahadat (martyrdom) along with his five men.

The five brave soldiers who paid the ultimate sacrifice include Lance Naik Muhammad Ullah (age: 31 Years, resident of District Khyber), Lance Naik Akhtar Zaman (age: 30 years, resident of District Lakki Marwat), Lance Naik Shahid Ullah (age: 29 years, resident of District Tank) and Lance Naik Yusuf Ali (age: 31 years, resident of District Orkzai), Sepoy Jameel Ahmed (age: 26 years, resident of District Swat).

Online adds: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif

have appreciated security forces' successful operation against Khawarij terrorists in North Waziristan.

In a statement, President Asif Ali Zardari paid tribute to the brave soldiers including Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Ali Shoukat for sacrificing their lives while fighting terrorists.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, in his statement, paid tribute to Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Ali Shoukat and five other soldiers on embracing martyrdom while valiantly fighting the terrorists.

The Prime Minister prayed for the elevation of the martyrs' ranks in Jannah and expressed condolences with their families.



Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir carrying coffin of Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Ali Shoukat during funeral prayers of Army martyrs who valiantly embraced martyrdom while fighting terrorists during fire exchange in Spinwam area of North Waziristan at Peshawar Garrison.

Conflicting reports about KP CM Gandapur's arrest Clashes erupt between PTI protesters, police at D-Chowk

ISLAMABAD (INP): In a dramatic turn of events, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur was 'arrested' in Islamabad moments after he entered the federal capital along with party workers for holding protest despite imposition of Section 144 on Saturday.

The chief minister was arrested by a team of the Islamabad police in KP for "damaging public properties and attack on the state". He has also been accused of misusing state resources for his party.

The KP chief minister had earlier resolved to reach D-Chowk in the federal capital for the PTI protest on Imran Khan's call despite a ban on public gatherings and rallies. Clashes also took place between police and PTI workers at several points in the federal

capital. However, official sources have denied arrest of the KP chief minister while declaring the reports about his detention "false".

The federal capital witnessed ongoing clashes between the police and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) activists at D-Chowk on Saturday. Following heavy rainfall, which diminished the effects of tear gas, a large number of protesters surged towards D-Chowk, prompting police to detain several activists from Jinnah Avenue. According to Express News, PTI protesters organised in convoys to reach the protest site, leading to intermittent skirmishes with police.

Many activists advanced towards D-Chowk, pushing back law enforcement agencies, but were met with intense tear gas shelling that forced them to retreat.

The confrontations, which began in the morning, involved protesters throwing stones and retaliating against police actions. Earlier, demonstrators successfully removed obstacles to advance towards D-Chowk.

A convoy of 800 PTI activists from Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) entered Rawalpindi, where enraged individuals set a crane and a motorcycle on fire at Chungi Number 26.

The back-and-forth between police and PTI workers continued for an extended period on Jinnah Avenue, with police deploying tear gas and rubber bullets. Due to a shortage of tear gas, PTI activists took the opportunity to advance, resulting in clashes where protesters pelted stones and used slingshots against the police.



ISLAMABAD: Policemen fire tear gas shells to disperse protesters of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party during a protest in favor of their demands at Jinnah Avenue, in the Federal Capital.

Indian foreign minister rules out bilateral talks at SCO summit

Monitoring Desk

MUMBAI: India's foreign minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar will not discuss bilateral relations when he visits Pakistan this month, the first such visit in nearly a decade, for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit.

"I expect there would be a lot of media interest because of the very nature of the relationship," Jaishankar said in response to a query at an event in New Delhi.

"But I do want to say it will be for a multilateral event. I am not going there to discuss India-Pakistan relations," he added.

On Friday, the Indian foreign ministry confirmed that Jaishankar will visit Pakistan to participate in the summit on Oct 15-16 but did not say if he would meet any Pakistani leaders on the sidelines.

CM Punjab labels PTI as terrorist group

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif said, "Everything I've said over the years has been proven true today for all to see: PTI is not a political party — neither has it ever been, nor will it ever be."

In her statement on social networking website 'X', the chief minister added, "It is a terrorist group that consistently attacks its own country. The state must treat them as it would any other terrorist; otherwise, it may soon be too late."

She said PTI's sole aim was to set the country on fire.

"It does not deserve any concession or leniency. Its 'army' includes terrorists trained on the front lines, who are being used to attack police and the state. Which country can afford it," she questioned.

CPEC Phase-II begins with new agreements b/w Pakistan, China

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: The second phase of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor has been started with the signing of several new agreements between Pakistan and China, particularly in agriculture and industry.

These agreements are aimed at improving the quality productivity of agricultural and industrial sectors.

Pakistan's International Innovation Park Limited and China National Cereals, Oils and Foodstuffs signed an agreement worth 400 million dollars in the agricultural sector in Beijing. Under this agreement, many Pakistani products will get duty-free access to the global market.

A Memorandum of Understanding has also signed for digital transformation and supply chain optimization in two hundred textile factories to enhance cooperation in the textile sector.

The Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) on Saturday killed two khawarij terrorists among ring leader Atta Ullah alias Mehran during a joint intelligence-based operation (IBO) conducted in general area Charbagh, Swat district.

The Khawarij ring leader among two got eliminated after an intense fire exchange while one khawarij was apprehended in injured condition, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

Khawarij Atta Ullah

Traders petition: IHC imposes ban on gatherings in Islamabad ahead of SCO Summit

Orders authorities to allocate PTI place for lawful protest; Authorities directed to stop any unlawful protest in federal capital that disrupt peace during period of SCO summit

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has directed the local authorities to allocate a designated place to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for organising its demonstration and to stop any unlawful protest in the federal capital that create situation of lockdown or disrupt peace during the period of SCO summit.

The directives were issued by IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq through a three-page order on Saturday after hearing the petition filed by Traders Welfare Association President

Raja Hassan Akhtar, who sought the court's order to stop the major opposition party's protest in Islamabad.

Law and order situation of Islamabad remains precarious as the Imran Khan-founded party tried to stage a protest at D-Chowk amid the imposition of Section 144 (which bars political activities and gatherings) in the twin cities, ahead of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's meeting.

Clashes also broke out

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World acknowledging Pakistan's viable economic policies: Attaullah Tarar

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar addressing a press conference at 180H Model Town.

visit, but unfortunately efforts were made to hold march towards D-Chowk during the presence of Malaysian prime minister in the country.

He said that PM Shehbaz Sharif's speech in United Nations General Assembly session was widely hailed by all segments of society. He said, "Foreign guest always come to Pakistan to strengthen ties." It was agreed that Pakistan would export halal meat worth \$200 million and 100,000 tonnes of rice to Malaysia and handicrafts in this regard would be removed, he said and added that different countries were interested for doing trade besides making an investment in Pakistan.

Attaullah Tarar said that according to Bloomberg Pakistan economy was taking off and its stock market was one of the emerging market of Asia. He said

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QUETTA: Security officials are blocked road as they are standing high alert to avoid untoward incident in view of PTI protest, at Mannan Chowk.

Khawarij ring leader Atta Ullah alias Mehran among two killed in Swat IBO

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) on Saturday killed two khawarij terrorists among ring leader Atta Ullah alias Mehran during a joint intelligence-based operation (IBO) conducted in general area Charbagh, Swat district.

The Khawarij ring leader among two got eliminated after an intense fire exchange while one khawarij was apprehended in injured condition, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

September 22. "Sanitization of the area is being carried out to eliminate any other Khawarij found in the area as security forces in coordination with law enforcement agencies are determined to wipe-out the menace of terrorism from the country," the ISPR said.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi inquiring about the health of an injured police personnel at Polyclinic Hospital.

Mohsin Naqvi warns CM KP not to disrupt law and order situation ahead of SCO summit

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, in a press briefing at D-Chowk on Saturday, warned the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership headed by Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur not to disrupt law-and-order situation ahead of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit.

He stated that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur has "crossed all limits" but continues to test the patience of the federal government.

Naqvi accused the PTI leadership of tasking CM Gandapur to disrupt a law-and-order situation ahead of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit where international heads of state are set to arrive in Pakistan for the first

time in years. "Chief Minister KPK Ali Amin Gandapur is leading a mob with the intent to storm Islamabad. He is fully responsible for the current situation," Naqvi said, emphasizing Gandapur's role in orchestrating unrest.

Though Gandapur holds a prominent provincial office, Naqvi warned that there would be consequences for his actions. "He will have to pay the price," said Naqvi. "I still urge the CM and PTI leadership to avoid clashes and not force law enforcement agencies into taking extreme measures."

Despite repeated requests from the federal government to prevent escalation, Gandapur has ignored these warnings, according to Naqvi.

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SIALKOT: Defense Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif addressing the media persons at his residence.

Khawaja Asif slams PTI for prioritising power over national interests

SIALKOT (APP): Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif strongly criticised Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders on Saturday, asserting that their desire for power had eclipsed their commitment to the nation.

Addressing a press conference at his residence in Sialkot Cantonment area, he asserted that the loyalty of PTI and its leader, Imran Khan, lies solely in maintaining authority rather than serving Pakistan's interests. He said the pattern of behaviour from the PTI was continuing since 2014 when their protests had delayed the visit of the Chinese President and initiation of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). He said similar behaviour was being shown by the PTI

leaders today, when the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit was round the corner, and the party was all out to undermine Pakistan's international standing.

The defence minister raised concerns about the involvement of armed groups, including hundreds of Afghans, during PTI's protests. He accused the PTI of hindering Pakistan's development through their demonstrations, stating, "PTI's protests have always sought to obstruct Pakistan's progress." He raised an alarm at the identification of some protesters as potentially linked to a banned militant group.

Khawaja Asif said that the PTI was using the pub-

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Man, three kids die as rickshaw plunges into well in Tando Allah Yar

QUETTA (NNI): A motorcycle-rickshaw went out of control and plunged into a well in a village in Balochistan on Saturday, killing four members of a family.

A man, his two daughters and a son were riding the rickshaw in Balochistan area of Khan Qalatabad.

According to report, the deceased family belonged to neighboring village of Tando Allah Yar.

In the tragic accident, 44-year-old Manchi Jogi, his 12-year-old daughter Tagu Jogi, 7-year-old Padma Jogi and 5-year-old son Tejo Jogi died.

The deceased later were buried in their native area.



QUETTA: Provincial Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani, Secretary Education Hafiz Muhammad Tahir, Dr. Nasrullah Bareech, Prof. Tariq Baloch and others addressing a ceremony organized by Balochistan Professors & Lecturers Association on eve of World Teachers Day

Pakistani Teachers honoured with tributes, inspiring quotes on 'World Teacher's day'

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistanis joined the global community in paying rich tributes to their teachers on 'World Teachers' Day, who have dedicated their lives to shaping young minds, nurturing growth and inspiring futures where social media platforms were witnessed filled with heartfelt messages, inspiring quotes and digital tributes.

The World Teachers Day serves as a poignant reminder of the vital role the teachers play in transforming lives.

The teachers are the backbone of education, fostering growth, promoting social mobility and empowering students to become active citizens, according to a report aired on the state PTV news channel.

"Teaching is not just a profession, it is a passion. Teachers' dedication and expertise have inspired countless generations", said an educator.

Students are sharing their personal stories of how their teachers inspired them to pursue their dreams. "My teacher's guidance helped me overcome my struggles," said Ayesha, a student.

World Teachers' Day pays tribute to selfless educators who go above and beyond to ensure students' success, said a citizen of Lahore while paying honour to his teacher.

"To my incredible teacher, thank you for guiding me through thick and thin. You are the best", Jawad Ahmed shared a personalized digital card on the

Facebook group.

"Teachers like you make learning an adventure! Thank you for being an amazing educator", Ayesha Siddiqui also shared digital card with photo on whatsapp group and pay tributes.

"Teachers are the backbone of our education system. Thank you for all that you do", another student on Instagram s

The role of teachers and their importance in building a prosperous society cannot be ignored in any way and teachers deserve utmost respect and regard at all levels, said an education consultant.

Ayesha Siddiqui, Education Expert said that teachers play a vital role in developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills

in students. We must invest in teacher training and development programs.

Dr. Faisal Bari, Education Consultant added that Pakistan's education sector faces numerous challenges, but our teachers remain committed to providing quality education. We must support them through policy reforms and resource allocation.

Sadia Hussain, Education Specialist also said that teachers' Day celebrations should translate into tangible benefits for educators, such as improved working conditions, professional development opportunities, and competitive salaries.



QUETTA: Members of BUTEMS Staff Association holding protest demonstration against non-payment of their salaries, on the occasion of World Teachers Day, at Quetta press club

Mohsin Naqvi visits polyclinic hospital to meet injured police officers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Saturday morning visited Polyclinic Hospital to meet police officers who were injured in the line of duty while bravely confronting miscreants belonging to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

During his visit, Naqvi personally inquired about the well-being of the injured officers and closely monitored their medical condition.

Praising the unwavering resolve of the officers, Naqvi commended their patience and professionalism in the face of adversity.

"Despite the miscreant activities, you have shown great patience," he said, highlighting their composure under pressure.

The interior minister further lauded their commitment to their duty, stat-

ing, "You have set a great example of duty in upholding the law."

He expressed pride in their bravery, remarking, "You are the brave sons of Islamabad police, and we are proud of you."

He also acknowledged their significant role in maintaining peace in the capital, adding, "We salute you for ensuring public order in Islamabad."

During the visit, Naqvi directed the hospital administration to provide the best possible medical care to the injured officers, ensuring their swift recovery.

Inspector General of Islamabad Police, Ali Nasir Rizvi, accompanied Minister Naqvi on his visit, underscoring the government's support for the injured officers and their families during this challenging time.

Dengue tests fee at Rs. 90, overcharging to face strict action; Tahira Aurangzeb

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Punjab government has fixed Rs. 90, as fee for the dengue tests to maximize health facilities for the people. Strict action will be taken against the laboratories involved in overcharging.

This was said by focal person on Dengue, Tahira Aurangzeb MNA on Saturday, during her visit to dengue wards which have been established in the Holy Family Hospital (HFH).

The focal person was accompanied by parliamentarians including Malik Abrar and Parliamentary Secretary Information, Shazia Rizwan.

The focal person urged for the collective efforts to face the difficult time.

She directed the relevant departments to display panaflex and banners outside the labs mentioning dengue tests charges.

IHC imposes ban...

Continued from page 1

between the law enforcers and party workers, with both sides claiming that the other had attacked them.

Police fired tear gas at the protesters on Saturday in the capital as well as at the convoys trying to enter Islamabad, while the workers used slingshots to hit the law enforcers.

The PTI's protests entered the second day in Islamabad while it also started in Lahore, badly affecting the routine life due to blockade of roads, police-protesters' clashes, and suspension of metro services.

The high court's top judge noted that the free-

dom of assembly and movement are fundamental rights provided to the citizens under Articles 16 and 17 of the Constitution.

Justice Farooq stated that the Ministry of Interior and the Islamabad administration were responsible for the maintenance of peace and law and order in the federal capital.

However, such activities "are subject to reasonable and proportional restrictions in accordance with law."

Such restrictions are only justifiable through a legitimate purpose which must be in the best interest of the larger public," the order read.

Khawaja Asif slams PTL...

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lic resources to carry out its protests, led by Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur. He referenced historical precedents, reminding the public of PTI's past actions that delayed international visits and engagements, stating, "Political tensions have always existed, but no party has ever compromised their identity as Pakistanis like the PTI has."

The minister pointed out the stark contrast between PTI's actions and the sacrifices of Pakistani soldiers, noting that while many have fallen in defence of the nation, the PTI has not paid tribute to these martyrs nor addressed significant international issues such as the Palestinians' cause. He also linked PTI's current unrest to fears over improving economic indicators in Pakistan, suggesting that the PTI leadership was anxious about legal troubles and was trying to create chaos in response to the government's successes. He asserted that the prime minister has effectively presented issues like Kashmir and Palestine on the inter-

national platforms, which he believes has unsettled the PTI.

He called for accountability for the PTI actions and highlighted the necessity of exposing their alleged connections with foreign elements that did not align with Pakistan's interests.

To a question, he said that the PTI seeks to create chaos and violence. He praised the Punjab police for their resilience in handling the situation, stressing that the armed groups being brought in did not represent the values of Pakistan.

To another query, he remarked that the KP chief minister had crossed all limits, making it impossible to rule out any response. The PTI had already exploited the province and was now wasting resources in their assaults, which he labeled as acts against the nation.

MPAs Muhammad Manshaullah Butt, Chaudhry Faisal Ikram, Shakeela Arthur, PML-N President Sialkot City Muhammad Rafiq Mughal, General Secretary Women's Wing Nasrat Jamshed were present.



GWADAR: MPA Maulana Hidayat ur Rehman visiting District Headquarter Hospital with the officers of Health Department

England announce playing XI for first Test against Pakistan

Ollie Pope takes charge as stand-in captain, after regular skipper Ben Stokes was ruled out due to an injury

Sports Desk
MULTAN: England have announced their playing XI for the opening Test of the three-match series against Pakistan, which is set to begin on October 7 at the Multan Cricket Stadium.

With regular captain Ben Stokes ruled out due to an ongoing hamstring injury, Ollie Pope will take charge as the stand-in captain.

One of the most notable selections is Durham seamer Brydon Carse, who is set to make his Test debut,

adding fresh energy to England's bowling attack.

Additionally, spinner Jack Leach returns to the Test fold after a lengthy absence, while Zak Crawley has recovered from a broken finger and will feature in the top order.

This Test marks the first of three in a series that promises to be fiercely contested, with Pakistan led by Shan Masood.

England's lineup includes a mix of experienced players and newcomers, with Joe

Root, Harry Brook, and Chris Woakes providing stability to the middle order.

England Playing XI for first Pakistan Test: Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Ollie Pope @, Joe Root, Harry Brook, Jamie Smith, Chris Woakes, Gus Atkinson, Brydon Carse (Debut), Jack Leach, Shoaib Bashir.

The series schedule is as follows:
Oct 7-11: First Test, Multan
Oct 15-19: Second Test, Multan
Oct 24-28: Third Test, Rawalpindi

Mohsin Naqvi warns CM KP...

Continued from page 1

To counter the potential threat, the government has deployed police, Rangers and Frontier Corps (FC), and even called in the Pakistan Army to ensure peace and security.

"The government is unclear about PTI's specific demands, but it seems their real aim is to sabotage the SCO summit," Naqvi remarked.

He added that dialogue could only happen if Gandapur showed seriousness, stating, "Dialogue is not possible alongside attempts to storm the capital."

When asked about the possibility of imposing an emergency in KPK and arresting the chief minister under Article 6 of the constitution, Naqvi responded that the president and prime minister are in close contact, and all political leadership has been consulted. The interior ministry will implement the agreed-upon strategy in due course.

In a concerning development, Naqvi revealed that Islamabad police have

arrested 120 Afghan nationals in the last 48 hours, an alarming sign for the government.

Naqvi also criticized PTI protesters, accusing them of opening fire on police near Pathar Garh and using tear gas shells in large quantities.

He questioned how the protesters acquired the tear gas shells and pointed out that this was not a peaceful protest, as claimed by PTI. "Protestors are armed and have been inciting violence, while law enforcement remains unarmed. However, they are pushing the boundaries, forcing us to consider harsher measures to maintain peace," Naqvi said, disclosing that 80 to 85 police officers have been injured and were shifted to hospitals for first aid.

Naqvi concluded by reiterating the government's resolve to safeguard the upcoming SCO summit, stating, "Prime Minister Mian Shahbaz Sharif has made it clear that no one will be allowed to sabotage this important event."

Joe Root poised to surpass key records as England takes on Pakistan upcoming Test series

Sports Desk
MULTAN: England's cricketer stalwart Joe Root is set to take the field in an eagerly anticipated three-match Test series against Pakistan, starting on October 7 in Multan.

The 33-year-old batter has been in scintillating form, impressing in recent Test series against the West Indies and Sri Lanka.

Root, already one of England's greatest-ever cricketers, is on the cusp of several major milestones during this series. With 12,402 runs in 146 Test matches, he is just 71 runs shy of surpassing Alastair Cook's record of 12,472 runs, the highest by any English player in Test history. Achieving fifth on the all-time list of Test run-scorers.

Struggling Pakistan look to thwart adaptable England

England's 3-0 whitewash on their last trip to Pakistan in 2022 was the first clean sweep by any visiting team to the country

Sports Desk

MULTAN: Pakistan play England in a three-Test series starting Monday in Multan with the visitors favourites to inflict more damage on a team mired in a painful losing streak.

England's 3-0 whitewash on their last trip to Pakistan in 2022 was the first clean sweep by any visiting team to the country, and plunged the hosts into a slump that has left them winless in their last 10 home Tests.

The visitors will be buoyed by memories of that famous win, but begin the series without talismanic leader Ben Stokes, who will miss the first Test due to a hamstring injury.

While England sit in third place in the ICC Test rankings, five spots above Pakistan, they travel to South Asia with an inexperienced pace attack following the retirement of James Anderson and Stuart Broad.

Pakistan, meanwhile, are known for their unpredictability and will be desperate to wipe away the humiliation of a shock 2-0 defeat at the hands of low-ranked Bangladesh last month.

Captain Shan Masood, whose tenure has been

marked by a run of five consecutive defeats, said his players were motivated to prove themselves.

"We took steps in the right direction in Australia despite losing, but we could not take them forward in the Bangladesh series," Masood said this week.

"We are eager to stage a comeback in this important series."

Test of Azam
Pakistan cricket is flailing in all formats, with a revolving door of bosses and allegations of nepotism crushing the development of the nation's most popular sport.

Superstar batsman Babar Azam relinquished the white-ball captaincy this week, saying he wanted to focus on his batting after a run-drought of 16 Test innings without a half-century. The three Tests in Multan and Rawalpindi scheduled to wrap up on October 28 will be the first trial of the 29-year-old's renewed commitment to his craft. "We all know how good a player he is," said Masood. "The good thing is that he is not out of form, and we can hope he is just one innings away from producing his best."

While all eyes are on Azam to score big, Pakistan

will hope pace spearheads Shaheen Shah Afridi - who missed the 2022 Test with a knee injury - and Naseem Shah can crack England's robust batting order.

"We have told our fast bowlers that they are very important in taking 20 wickets," said Masood.

Steadfast without Stokes
Stokes will miss the first Test as he struggles to recover from a hamstring injury inflicted while playing for Northern Superchargers in The Hundred on August 11.

There are doubts over his return for the second match starting October 15, but England's record has remained strong in his absence. Top-order batter Ollie Pope led them to a 3-0 whitewash of the West Indies and a 2-1 win over Sri Lanka.

Two years ago, it was England's batting that set the tone for the 3-0 victory on the very first day of the series, smashing 506-4 to set a new record for an opening day total in Tests.

Top batter Joe Root will also be eyeing the record books, needing just 71 runs to best Alastair Cook's tally of 12,472, the most by any England batter.



HYDERABAD: Participants are holding protest rally against Israeli cruel and inhumane acts and express unity with the innocent people of Palestine organized by Jamat-e-Islami (JI), in Hyderabad

World acknowledging...

Continued from page 1

that Public Works Department had been closed down and corrupt officers of FBR had been sidelined. He said that Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, China Turkey almost every country was appreciating the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's commitment and country's economic policies aimed at putting the country on road to progress.

The information minister said that country's exports had increased by 14 per cent while the FBR digitalization was done without spending a single penny, adding that privatisation matters of Pakistan International Airlines and other state owned enterprises were underway. He said that the number of FBR filers had doubled, adding that this would definitely yield positive results for the country.

Attaullah Tarar said that economic vision of the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was being implemented and now the world was terming Pakistan's economy as emerging economy. He said that credit goes to PML-N that it saved the country from default. He said that World Bank President Ajay Banga was also terming Pakistan's economy policy as good policy. The minister said that subsidy had been provided on electricity while

prices of essential items were reducing. Price of petrol had been reduced for five times, he said and added with the grace of Allah Almighty Pakistan would become prosperous. He said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf had badly harmed the country during its tenure. KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur was using government machinery against the federation. PTI Barrister Saif invited Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar to attend PTI's protest. Attaullah Tarar said and added that one could imagine about PTI's mindset from this.

The federal minister said that nobody would be allowed to violate the law. After doing May 9, now all those involved in it were denying their involvement, he said and questioned that how they could deny evidences of video footage. No single person from the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf condemned the tweet of Zac Goldsmith which he had given in favour of Israel, he added. He further said that the PML-N strongly condemned the tweet of Zac Goldsmith. He said that October 7, would be observed as a "Day of Solidarity with Palestine" adding that walks, seminars and podcasts would be held in this regard. He said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf could do nothing except for causing chaos and unrest in the country.



QUETTA: Gypsy woman on the carrying water pots on donkey going for filling their water pots

Naqvi arrives at D-Chowk early morning to boost morale of police, FC personnel

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi made an early morning visit to D-Chowk to uplift the spirits of police and Frontier Corps (FC) personnel stationed in the area for the security of Red Zone and to stop the mobsters from storming highly sensitive areas.

Naqvi expressed his admiration for the officers' dedication and commitment to maintaining law and order in the capital.

"Well done! Great job! The nation is proud of you," Naqvi told the personnel, praising their relentless service.

The minister personally met with officers on duty, recognizing their ef-

ports and high morale despite the challenges they faced.

Naqvi also met with female police officers, acknowledging their hard work and dedication to their duties. He commended them for their role in maintaining public safety and security. In his remarks, Minister Naqvi paid tribute to the officers for their tireless efforts in protecting citizens' lives and property, noting their around-the-clock service.

"The morale of Islamabad Police and FC personnel is very high," he observed, adding that the teams remain vigilant and ready to respond to any situation.

"I commend all the officers carrying out their duties," said Naqvi, emphasizing their crucial role in ensuring the rule of law. "The guardians of the law have ensured its enforcement, and you all deserve congratulations."

The interior minister reassured the officers that their service is valued by the nation, stating, "You are fulfilling a national duty with dedication. We are all with you."

Inspector General of Islamabad Police, Ali Nasir Rizvi, accompanied Minister Naqvi during the visit, further demonstrating the government's support for the officers serving in critical roles across the capital.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior, Mohsin Naqvi visiting D Chowk to meet police personnel in Islamabad.

Indian FM participation in SCO summit a positive sign for bilateral relations: Irfan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Parliamentary Party Leader of the Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N) in Senate and Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman, Senator Irfan-ul-Haq Siddiqui has termed the announcement of Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's participation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit as a positive development for the bilateral relations between Pakistan

and India. In a statement posted on his social media account on platform 'X' on Saturday, the senior PML-N leader said the presence of the Indian foreign minister at the summit holds promise for easing tensions between the two neighboring countries. However, Senator Siddiqui expressed concerns regarding the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party's approach toward this diplomatic event.

He criticized PTI for

extending an invitation to only the Indian foreign minister, among all SCO leaders, to participate in its protest demonstrations. Senator Siddiqui further remarked that PTI should showcase its 'remarkable achievements' by taking the Indian foreign minister to visit more than 200 destroyed defense installations and memorials of martyrs, hinting at recent unrest, to solidify the 'eternal ties' between PTI and India.



ISLAMABAD: Federal minister for planning development Ahsan Iqbal addressing Teachers Day ceremony held at Model College for Girls F-11/3.

Ahsan pays tribute to teachers on 'World Teachers' Day'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reforms, Ahsan Iqbal here on Saturday paid rich tributes to teachers on 'World Teachers' Day', saying they were the builders of nation.

Addressing a ceremony at Islamabad Model College for Women, the minister praised teachers' great services and said that teachers were being paid tribute worldwide for their contribution in preparing youth for the future. He quoted Aristotle, saying, parents bring children into the world, but teachers teach them how to live.

He said, teachers' services and mission are un-

forgettable, however deplored that today, when we should have been united in paying tribute to our teachers, some elements were spreading chaos in the country. He said, Pakistan needs to move forward so we must not become part in hindering its progress.

The federal minister also discussed Pakistan's economic growth, saying, the world acknowledges the country's progress. He said that Pakistan Stock Exchange was setting new records while China was discussing the new phase of CPEC. Emphasizing the importance of teachers in the digital revolution, the federal minister stressed the need to update the edu-

cation system to promote creative and critical thinking skills. He said that there was need to revamp curriculum to eliminate rote learning and promote innovative capabilities.

He appreciated the efforts of Federal Secretary Education, Mohyuddin Wani, in equipping all government schools and colleges in Islamabad with modern facilities, which he termed a significant step towards improving education standards.

He announced that next year, Pakistan will host National Teacher Awards on World Teachers' Day to recognize and reward the best teachers across the country.

Protest ahead of SCO summit harms national image: Abdullah Gul

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Tehreek-e-Jawanan Pakistan (TJP) Mohammad Abdullah Gul on Saturday said the political party's protest ahead of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit was damaging the national prestige. The TJP chairman expressed these views in his statement on the protest call of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on SCO conference. Gul said that whenever a delegation of foreign delegates or a conference was held in Islamabad, protests and demonstrations start in the country. He said that about three years ago when OIC conference was held in the

federal capital, then the opposition parties staged protest and sit in the federal capital. "With this, Pakistan's prestige was greatly damaged due to protests, but now that the SCO summit is very close to be held in Islamabad, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf has staged a protest in D-Chowk, due to which it damaged the image of the country," Abdullah Gul said.

He said that protest was the right of every citizen and political party to struggle for their rights, but such activities should be avoided on the eve of arrivals of international delegations and meetings to save our humiliation.

ECP postpones tests for various positions

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Saturday postponed the tests for various positions, including Deputy Assistant Directors (Accounts), Senior Assistants and Junior Assistants, which were originally scheduled for October 6, 2024. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) spokesperson announced in a statement that due to unforeseen circumstances, candidates may face difficulties in accessing examination centers in Islamabad and Karachi. The revised examination schedule will be announced at a later date," she stated, adding that the Commission regrets any inconvenience caused by the postponement.

Uzma Kardar warns PML-N stands firm against PTI's "Destructive Agenda"

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader MPA Uzma Kardar on Saturday strongly criticized Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for its alleged anti-state agenda and accused it of promoting unlawful activities that undermine the values of young generations.

Talking to PTV news, she accused Imran Khan, PTI's chairman of prioritizing his personal quest for power over the well-being of the nation, exploiting citizens to advance his agenda and allegedly working to destabilize the country through foreign interference.

showcase Pakistan's commitment to peace and stability, she highlighted.

Uzma blamed the PTI is responsible for damaging Pakistan's youth and devaluing its youngsters which is a serious accusation.

Pakistan's hosting a historic conference in Islamabad with participation from foreign countries including India is indeed an honour for the country, showcasing its commitment to international cooperation and diplomacy, she said adding, however, PTI is prioritizing its agenda over national interests.

Pakistan's progress and reputation are at stake when political parties like PTI prioritizes their agendas over national interests, she added.

Uzma Kardar's statement highlighted the positive economic trajectory under PML-N leadership, indicating that economic indicators are trending upward, adding that this progress is a testament to the party's effective governance, particularly under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

She also labelled PTI's Islamabad protest a failure, indicating her strong disapproval of the party's actions.

Uzma Kardar, also accused the top leadership of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) of craving a return to power, adding that PTI's top leadership is working against the state's interests, specifically targeting CPEC Phase 2 and foreign visits to Pakistan. These foreign visits are crucial as they



ISLAMABAD: Artisans displaying different handmade products during the "Daachi Arts & Craft Exhibition" at Pak China Friendship Centre.

Yasin Malik says India misled him in name of talks for Kashmir settlement

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a striking revelation, Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) Chairman Muhammad Yasin Malik has revealed that Indian political leaders deceived him in the name of peace talks regarding the settlement of the Kashmir dispute.

According to Kashmir Media Service, in a detailed affidavit submitted to the UAPA tribunal, Malik asserted that he was assured by various Indian officials in the early 1990s that the Kashmir dispute would be resolved through meaningful dialogue, contingent on his organization's declaration of a unilateral ceasefire.

Malik's statement stems from a history of engagement with the Indian state that began in 1994 when he initiated a ceasefire and subsequently had all 32 militancy-related cases against him under TADA

dismissed. He maintained that this agreement was reached under the premise that it would facilitate a peaceful resolution to the ongoing conflict.

Despite the ceasefire, Malik said that the commitments made by the Indian authorities were never honoured, leading to an ongoing campaign against him and the JKLF, which the tribunal has recently declared an 'unlawful association' for another five years.

Malik argued that while he had renounced armed struggle and embraced a non-violent approach, his organization continued to be unfairly targeted.

Malik's affidavit not only dismisses the allegations against him but also challenges the credibility of the Indian government's assertions regarding the JKLF's activities.

ANF foils major Ice smuggling attempt at chakri motorway

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) successfully foiled a major methamphetamine (ice) smuggling attempt at the Chakri Motorway Toll Plaza on Saturday.

Acting on verified intelligence, ANF officers intercepted a Hino truck and arrested its driver.

During the search, 10 kilograms of methamphetamine were discovered expertly concealed inside two batteries installed in the truck.

In total, four packets of ice, each weighing 2.5 kilograms, were recovered.

The ANF stated that it remains fully aware of the

evolving and innovative methods that smugglers use to traffic drugs.

This latest operation highlights the force's effectiveness in countering these tactics.

"This is a significant achievement in our ongoing battle against the smuggling of methamphetamine," an ANF spokesperson remarked. The force remains steadfast in its mission to protect society, particularly the youth, from the harmful effects of drugs.

A case has been registered against the suspect under the Anti-Narcotics Act, and further investigations are underway.

World Teacher's Day Celebrated at IMCG F-11/3

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Model College for Girls (IMCG) F-11/3 on Saturday celebrated 'World Teachers Day' under the leadership of Principal Farah Hamid.

Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal graced the occasion along with Mohyudin Ahmad Wani, Secretary for Federal Education and Professional Training.

The event was attended by students, teachers, and educationists, who came together to honor the teaching profession in a spirit of admiration and gratitude.

The students paid tribute to their teachers through songs, tableau performances, and heartfelt speeches.

In his address, Ahsan Iqbal emphasized the need for advancing education to meet the demands of the 21st century.

He praised various initiatives undertaken by the college, including the establishment of a colorful library, a Mother-Child Healthcare Center, High-Tech IT lab, Gym, Podcast room, Art and a smart classroom.

He also commended the Early Childhood Center, designed for children aged 3 to 5, which reflects the institution's dedication to modern education.



ISLAMABAD: Frontier Constabulary (FC) personnel ready to stop a protest by the activists and supporters of former Prime Minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, in the Federal Capital.

Govt committed to protecting citizens, maintaining national stability: Ali Gohar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Ali Gohar Baloch Saturday reaffirmed the government's unwavering dedication to safeguarding national interests and ensuring public safety.

Talking to a private news channel, he said the government's top priority is to maintain national security, with zero tolerance for activities undermining stability, adding that the government will take swift action against individuals or entities threatening stability, particularly in light of serious concerns raised by

alleged terrorist activities linked to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party.

Ali Gohar strongly condemned Ali Amin Gandapur, the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, over videos showing people arriving with weapons.

Gohar criticized Gandapur's alleged involvement in promoting violence and instability.

Ali Gohar lashed out at Ali Amin Gandapur and his associates, labelling them a "violent group" bent on disrupting the country's peace and stability.

He emphasized that

their actions pose a significant threat to citizens' safety and well-being.

He made it clear that the government will not tolerate Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) violent tactics and will take action to maintain law and order.

"The safety and well-being of citizens, along with the protection of the state and government, remain the topmost priority," emphasized Ali Gohar.

"We will not tolerate any attempts to disrupt law and order and will take decisive action against those who engage in violent or destructive activities," he added.

APHC raises alarm over demographic changes in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD (APP): The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has issued a strong warning regarding the demographic situation in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). According to Kashmir Media Service, in a statement issued in Srinagar, the APHC spokesman Advocate Abdul Rashid Minhas said that the territory's Muslim majority status was facing a "grave threat" at the hands of the Hindutva regime in India led by Narendra Modi.

He said the Modi regime is intensifying efforts to alter the demographic makeup of IIOJK over the

past five years. India is systematically paving the way for "settler colonialism," alleging that the regime is granting domicile certificates to non-Kashmiris as part of a broader strategy to convert the Muslim majority into a minority, he added.

The spokesman said that the revocation of Article 370 was primarily aimed at engineering demographic change in IIOJK. He highlighted that the issuance of domicile certificates to non-locals was a deliberate tactic to erase the identity of Kashmiris and disrupt their longstanding connection to the land.

CERT trains Chitral, GB volunteers for disaster response

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) on Saturday conducted a joint training exercise for the volunteers from Chitral and Gilgit-Baltistan aimed at preparing for natural disasters.

According to the private news channel, the simulation, held in Hopper village of Gupis Valley, was organized with the goal of

equipping participants with essential skills to respond to emergencies in remote areas. The exercise sought to raise awareness among locals on how to address challenging situations in line with modern requirements. Volunteers were trained in crucial response skills, such as the safe evacuation of victims from slums and administering first aid in hilly terrains.

Too much coffee, soda may raise stroke risk, while tea may reduce it

ISLAMABAD (Online): Carbonated drinks, fruit juices/drinks, and too much coffee can increase the risk of stroke and intracerebral hemorrhage, according to newly released research.

Drinking four cups of coffee per day increases the risk of stroke, but drinking less does not, the researchers found.

Tea generally protects against stroke, although not in South Asia, say the researchers.

These conclusions are drawn from data representing a large number of participants from 32 countries.

Beverages many of us drink in our daily lives can increase the risk of having a first ischemic stroke Trusted Source or

intracerebral hemorrhage Trusted Source (ICH), according to a pair of new analyses from an international team of researchers.

The analyses implicate carbonated beverages, fruit juices and fruit drinks, and more than four cups of coffee per day, all of which significantly increase the risk of stroke or ICH.

The data upon which the analyses were based was the large, international rusted Source case study whose results were first published in 2016. That study involved 26,950 individuals from 32 countries.

The current analyses of INTERSTROKE data were collaboratively conducted by researchers at

McMaster University in Ontario, Canada, and the University of Galway in Ireland.

The risks associated with the beverages varied to some extent depending on geographic location and population in the new analyses. According to the analyses:

Carbonated drinks, both sugar- and artificially sweetened, such as sodas, were associated with an increased likelihood of a first stroke or ICH by 22%. This association was strongest in Africa, Eastern and Central Europe and the Middle East, and in South America.

Fruit juice and fruit drinks raise the risk of ICH by 37%, with women at a

higher risk than men. Two such drinks a day triples the risk. The researchers suggest this may be due to sugar and other ingredients added to fruit-based drinks that overwhelm their healthy properties.

Drinking more than four cups of coffee per day raises one's chances of having a first stroke by 37%.

Moderate daily consumption of coffee — less than four cups — was not associated with an increased risk of stroke.

Tea was found in the new analyses to have a protective effect against strokes in South America and China, but was associated with a higher chance of stroke in South Asia.

The researchers also

found that drinking more than seven cups (56 oz.) of water per day reduced the risk of stroke by 18%.

The study of carbonated beverages and fruit juices and drinks is published in the Journal of Stroke/Trusted Source, and the coffee and tea study was published in the International Journal of Stroke.

Fizzy drinks and fruit drinks

The conclusion that carbonated beverages — most of which are sodas — may not be healthy is not especially surprising.

Christopher Yi, board certified vascular surgeon at Memorial Orange Coast Medical Center in Fountain Valley, CA, was not involved in the research.



ISLAMABAD: The damage to the public property is evident after clashes between police and protesters, tear gas and shelling in the D Chowk of the Federal Capital.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent
Sunday October 06, 2024

Controversial timing

A wrong has been righted. But to what extent? The Supreme Court's decision to reverse its 2022 opinion on Article 63-A, allowing votes cast by defecting lawmakers to be counted, corrects a constitutional wrong.

The earlier ruling had unjustly meant that not only would party defectors be stripped of their seats, but their votes too would be discarded. This was viewed by many as an overreach that went beyond the intent of Article 63-A, which sought only to disqualify defectors, not nullify their votes. On its own, the reversal can be seen as a welcome move that restores the true essence of parliamentary democracy.

However, the timing of this ruling is debatable. The verdict comes at a time when the government is determined to push through a contentious 'constitutional package' which aims to curtail the judiciary's powers by introducing amendments that would pave the way for a 'federal constitutional court'. Now that the defectors' votes can be counted, this ruling may set in motion horse-trading, handing the government the numbers it needs. In that sense, the ruling cannot be viewed in isolation — it potentially opens the doors for a sweeping reconfiguration of the judiciary and the balance of power.

The proposed amendments include plans to limit the apex court's jurisdiction and alter the process by which judges are appointed. This will significantly rob the judiciary of its independence and shift the balance of power to the executive. Critics say that this package is less about strengthening the Constitution and more about consolidating political control by a ruling coalition that has struggled to muster enough support for its agenda. So, the optics of the verdict, unfortunately, are troubling. While the judgment undoes a past wrong, it risks being perceived as enabling a myopic political agenda. Such a perception could further erode public trust in the judiciary, especially in a climate already rife with accusations of political manoeuvring.

There is a broader question at play: will this judgment and the subsequent amendments resolve our deep-seated political instability or exacerbate the challenges?

Given the manner in which events have unfolded of late, it seems the latter is more likely. The amendments seem tailor-made to benefit those pushing for them, with the verdict regrettably strengthening their hand. One way these concerns could be mitigated is if the incumbent chief justice publicly declares that he is neither a candidate for any position within the proposed constitutional court nor does he seek an extension in his tenure.

Such a declaration would go a long way in dispelling any doubts about the court's impartiality. Without such reassurances, the verdict — while rectifying an earlier decision — may end up serving as the pawn in a larger, more troubling game.

Waqas Bin Najib

Looking ahead, all households should consider investing in solar home systems for electricity and solar water heating to reduce energy expenses in the future.

The government has historically provided unreasonably cheap energy (electricity and gas) and did not enforce building standards, appliance standards, or other energy efficiency measures. Meanwhile, we recklessly expanded the transmission and distribution networks. Consumers adjusted to high availability and low-cost energy, and residential demand grew. Today, the challenge is transitioning from cheap, abundant energy to a scenario with expensive and limited supply.

I have argued that residential energy consumption in the country is unsustainable. Both electricity and natural gas are consumed wastefully and do not produce any economic output. I also say that the government needs to curtail the supply to residential and commercial consumers who contribute to peak demand — mainly middle- and high-

income consumers.

Utilities are adopting this even in advanced markets like the US; for example, the electric utility company controls the air conditioners and electric vehicle home chargers in Texas and can turn the appliances off during peak load hours. A cruder version of a similar approach can be adopted in Pakistan to reduce peak demand and household energy costs.

Electricity and natural gas prices in Pakistan will increase in the coming years. The capacity payments for the new power generation projects will drive the electricity prices higher, while the increasing contribution of imported LNG will increase the gas prices. The inevitable rupee devaluation will also contribute to an increase in electricity and natural gas prices.

The impact of high pricing will be disproportionately more significant for low-income consumers in the country. Lower-income households will need government support to adapt to the changing energy landscape. According to the last Household Integrated Economic Survey in

2019, households spent seven per cent of their average income on energy — mainly electricity and gas. Lower- and middle-income households spent 8.5pc of their income on energy. Since that survey, increasing prices and stagnant income levels are expected to have increased energy expenditures by up to 10pc of household income.

Energy expenditures are around 5pc of household income in most developed and developing countries. The International Energy Agency (IEA) reports 2022 figures for the contribution of energy to average household expenditures: 5.5pc in Mexico, 5pc in Indonesia, 4.8pc in the UK, and around 3pc in the US and Canada. The high expenditure on energy by households in Pakistan should be seen in the context of energy poverty: our per capita energy consumption of only 3,895 kWh/capita/year is among the lowest in the world — one-tenth of Iran, the EU, or China, and almost half that of India.

The energy situation in Pakistan is driving the economy down and contributing to the prevalence of poverty.

Where do we go from here? The government must try to curtail demand to reduce new-generation requirements and other necessary sector reforms. Meanwhile, consumers must adapt to the new energy situation. Energy efficiency and demand-side management are the cheap ways to reduce energy costs.

Households have a few options for managing their demand. These include solar home systems, energy-efficient appliances, intelligent energy management systems, and low-energy buildings. Appliance replacements and building envelope improvements (such as building insulation solutions) will be demand-driven rather than regulation-driven. The government should introduce the labelling of appliance energy-efficiency ratings and work towards increasing consumer awareness of energy efficiency improvements.

Solar home systems remain the best option to reduce energy costs. Consumers should consider solar PV systems for electricity generation and solar water heaters to reduce gas

consumption. Solar water heaters can act as pre-heaters for conventional water heaters, while solar PV systems will supplement the grid electricity.

The current net-metering policy for grid-connected solar systems only applies to three-phase consumers, around 10pc of residential consumers. The remaining 90pc are single-phase consumers. Most single-phase consumers belong to middle- and low-income groups. A grid-interconnection policy for single-phase consumers is essential to enable them to install solar home systems.

The grid-interconnection scheme enables the consumers to inject the excess electricity produced by the solar system into the grid and adjust equivalent units against consumption. Under the current policy, the exported and imported units are netted off, and consumers are expected to be paid the off-peak tariff rate if they have unconsumed excess units.

The current policy needs to be revised to reflect the costs of using the grid as temporary storage. The policy must be changed for all the existing and new

consumers. Grid interconnection for solar home systems should shift to gross metering (K-Electric in Karachi already uses gross metering), and the buy-back rate should be around four US cents (Rs12) — roughly the last solar tariff awarded by Nepra. The price should be based on the alternate option for the grid to procure solar power and correctly reflect the costs of using the grid as storage. Even with a lower buy-back price for solar home systems, installing solar electricity systems will still be an attractive investment for households.

However, solar does not reduce the conventional power demand requirement. Pakistan has a peculiar power demand curve. Since residential and commercial consumers drive the demand, the peak load on the grid is after sunset when the consumers turn on their air conditioning in the evening. For example, in Karachi, the peak demand in the system is at 11 pm. This means that solar power does not help meet the peak demand, and the grid will still require other power generation capacity to meet the peak demand.

Judge, jury, executioner**Khawaja Khalid Farooq**

Recent years have seen a disturbing rise in the extrajudicial killings of blasphemy suspects — sometimes in police custody. Such cases reveal the increasing complicity of law-enforcement officials in the perpetuation of religious extremism, often under the influence of radical elements in society.

Although cases of suspected blasphemy are supposed to go through a legal process, police officers have increasingly become enablers or direct participants in extrajudicial actions.

A case last month exemplified this trend when Shahnawaz Kunbhar, a Muslim doctor from Sindh, was killed over blasphemy allegations. It was the second such killing within a week, following the murder of Abdul Ali in Quetta on Sept 12, 2024.

Police initially claimed that Kunbhar was killed during a shootout after allegedly opening fire at a checkpoint. However, when human rights groups raised ques-

tions about the police account, the official story changed. The authorities then claimed that Kunbhar had been shot by his colleague, who later fled. Local media, however, reported that the police had arrested Kunbhar and killed him in a staged encounter in Mirpurkhas.

A video then surfaced showing the DIG in charge of the area, who reportedly oversaw the operation, being garlanded by religious leaders. This public celebration of an extrajudicial killing by senior law-enforcement officials highlights the deep-rooted extremism in the police force. Rights groups are outraged. Attorney Lazar Allahrakha stated: "When police officers start acting like vigilantes, there's no hope left for justice."

Abdul Ali's killing in Quetta also exemplifies this trend. Ali had been arrested after a mob accused him of blasphemy, but despite being rescued from mob violence, he was killed by a police officer while in custody. Though the officer was arrested, the family of the suspect pardoned him, reflecting how deeply en-

trenched religious extremism is within our social and legal structures. These incidents show how the police, instead of protecting accused individuals from violence, have assumed the role of judge, jury, and executioner — receiving public praise for their actions.

Earlier incidents such as the lynching of Muhammad Waris in February 2023 also underscore the perilous environment for blasphemy suspects in police custody. Waris was beaten to death by a mob that stormed a police station in Nankana Sahib, despite his detention under police protection. Similarly, a Christian man accused of desecration was killed by a mob while in police custody in Karachi. The police either failed to protect the suspects or were complicit in their deaths, further illustrating the breakdown of law enforcement in the face of extremist pressure.

Several factors have contributed to the rise of extremism within Pakistan's police. A primary reason is the radicalisation of society, which has deeply influ-

enced state institutions, including law enforcement. Officers are often pressured by extremist groups, and some share the same ideological beliefs as the mobs they are supposed to control. These dynamics make it difficult for the officials to remain impartial or protect the accused.

Public pressure and fear also play a significant role. Police officers often face enormous pressure from mobs that quickly form around accusations of blasphemy. In some cases, officers fear for their own lives or those of their families, leading them to either comply with mob demands or participate in the violence.

The lack of accountability further exacerbates the issue. Officers involved in extrajudicial killings are rarely prosecuted, and in some cases, as in the murder of Ali, are pardoned by the victims' families under religious pretexts. This culture of impunity emboldens other officers to take similar actions, knowing they will likely face no consequences.

The growing trend of

police officers acting as vigilantes has severe implications for Pakistan's legal system and society. Extrajudicial killings erode public confidence in law enforcement and create an environment where mob justice is not only tolerated but also encouraged by the very institutions tasked with upholding the rule of law.

For religious minorities, these incidents are especially disturbing. Blasphemy laws have been frequently misused to target minorities, and the police's increasing involvement in extrajudicial killings further endangers their safety. The international community, including human rights organisations such as Amnesty International, has repeatedly called for reforms, but little progress has been made.

To address extremism within the police force, comprehensive reforms are necessary. This includes improved recruitment and vetting processes to ensure that extremist elements do not enter the ranks of the law enforcers. Training programmes should also be introduced to educate

officers on handling sensitive cases, particularly those involving religious issues, with an emphasis on human rights and tolerance, but most of all, on due process.

The government must ensure accountability for officers involved in extrajudicial killings. This includes independent investigations into incidents such as the deaths of Kunbhar — an inquiry in his case has already said that the encounter was staged — and Abdul Ali, as well as the prosecution of those responsible. Without consequences, the cycle of violence will continue, further undermining the rule of law.

The extrajudicial killings of blasphemy suspects in police custody represent a dangerous trend in Pakistan's law-enforcement system. Addressing the issue requires comprehensive reforms, accountability measures, and broader societal efforts to promote tolerance and protect the rights of all citizens. Without such actions, Pakistan risks further eroding its legal system and endangering the lives of its most vulnerable populations.

Shaping the nation**Ayman Zafar**

Words have a remarkable power to shape the course of nations. From inspiring movements and transforming policies to influencing public opinion and leaving a permanent mark on culture and society, the impact of words is profound. Our words help us build precious personal relationships and create powerful public ones. It is how we build our communities, instil hope and create a vision for generations to come.

Throughout history, we have witnessed the transformative power of eloquent words. Martin Luther King Jr's 'I have a dream' speech in 1963 stirred the conscience of a nation and set the stage for the civil rights movement, while Gandhi's words were instrumental in India's struggle for independence.

These speeches didn't just echo in the moment; they laid the foundation for lasting change. This is the true power of words; they drive nations towards their collective aspirations.

The political sphere is where words become more than just a means of communication; they are wielded as instruments for change. Political leaders, through their speeches, have the power to rally support, redefine policies, and determine the course of a nation. Nowhere is the power of words more evident than in the legal framework of a country. Constitutions, laws, and amendments consist of words that set the rules by which we live (or strive to live). In Pakistan, the Constitution, since its inception in 1973, stands as the most sacred set of words, carrying the weight of the country's history, governance, and the nation's

future.

In this respect, Pakistan's legislative process places great importance on the precise wording of the Constitution, wherein, a single change can open new doors of interpretation or close chapters on long-standing political practices. As a common law jurisdiction, Pakistan relies heavily on judicial interpretation, where centuries of precedent cannot simply be rewritten overnight.

The judiciary plays a crucial role in interpreting these words, ensuring they uphold constitutional principles. This is why the balance of power between the three branches of the state is fundamental in constitutional democracies — it is designed to prevent overreach and preserve justice within the system.

The proposed 26th Amendment to Pakistan's Constitution, though currently stalled, raises significant concerns over destabilising this delicate balance. While past amendments, such as the 18th Amendment, significantly altered the federal-provincial power dynamics, requiring judicial interpretation to maintain constitutional integrity, the 26th Amendment poses a more profound threat. It strikes at the very heart of the constitutional framework, by undermining the judiciary's independence and authority.

One of the most alarming aspects is the proposed establishment of a federal constitutional court (FCC), with a chief justice handpicked by the prime minister. This new process outrightly threatens the balance of power by allowing political influence to seep into judicial appointments, which not only crushes the judiciary's impartial-

ity, but more critically, strips the Supreme Court of its jurisdiction over key constitutional matters, diminishing its role as the final arbiter of such questions.

Perhaps the most troubling provision is the ouster of judicial review — one of the foundations of any constitutional democracy. This amendment would bar any court, including the FCC and the Supreme Court, from challenging constitutional amendments. It is an unprecedented move that questions the Supreme Court's authority to defend the basic structure of the Constitution, a principle it has historically defended.

In sum, the proposed 26th Amendment is not a mere legal reform — it is a deliberate attempt to restructure the constitutional framework in a way that weakens the judiciary, politicises judicial appointments, and grants the legislature unchecked authority. It poses a direct assault on the foundational principles of Pakistan's Constitution, particularly the doctrine of separation of powers, and threatens to pull to pieces the rule of law in Pakistan. The Supreme Court, as the guardian of constitutional principles, must retain its authority and role in interpreting the law.

While the proposed 26th Amendment has failed for now, its very introduction signals a concerning trend in attempts to undermine judicial independence. These efforts could resurface in the future, making it all the more critical for the judiciary, political leaders, and the public to remain vigilant in defending the core constitutional principles that uphold the rule of law in Pakistan.

Complex processes**Naeem Sadiq**

The least a state must know about its citizens is the date of their birth and the date they expire — also a legal requirement for all perishable products in the market. Pakistan, however, considers gathering this vital information an unnecessary hassle. Instead, complex bureaucratic procedures have been designed to dissuade citizens from providing this information.

While proud of Nadra, we have failed to use its powerful databases to create customer-friendly and hassle-free birth and death registration processes.

Every few days, the mainstream media reports on instances of young children, often less than 10 years, being tortured, raped or murdered. Superficial statements of sympathy follow. No one, however, points out that most of these children have never existed in the official records. They have had neither a birth nor a child registration certificate (CRC or B-form). According to Unicef's annual report, 2023, 60 per cent of children here are not registered before their fifth birthday. This makes Pakistan the country with the highest number of unregistered children globally.

Our existing system of obtaining a birth certificate requires an applicant to fill a form in Urdu and English, manufacture an affidavit on stamped paper, write an application to the union council chairman, produce a birth report issued by the hospital where the child was born, attach CNIC copies of the mother, father and grandfather, and deposit a fee of Rs200. For children born at home, one also needs copies of the midwife's CNIC and certificate, along with the

statements and CNIC copies of two witnesses, all attested by a Grade-17 officer and above. Cantonments also ask for a copy of the property tax payment receipt.

Ironically, one must return to Nadra with yet more photocopies of CNICs, affidavits and the birth certificate for the issuance of a CRC, a process that could have been easily merged with the one for obtaining the birth certificate.

A digital solution could eliminate the torturous steps involved. Combine the processes of obtaining the birth certificate and CRC into a single task. Next, create linkages and ask hospitals and maternity homes to provide Nadra with all related information within 48 hours of the birth of a child. This could include the CNIC details of the parents and grandfather, the child's name, gender, photograph, address, date and time of birth, the name and CNIC copy of the doctor who delivered the baby and the fee payment receipt — all sent in a single email. Simultaneously, the biometrics of the mother/father should be sent to Nadra for cross-checking and verification, followed by Nadra uploading the birth and CRC certificates on its website.

Dying, it seems, is much easier than obtaining a death certificate. No wonder almost 50pc of deaths are not registered, nor are the CNICs of the deceased cancelled. This has led to the promotion of a huge number of ghost pensioners and dummy voters. The existing death certificate procedure poses at least 10 hurdles for the heirs to cross. An application form in English and Urdu, a fee of Rs200 for the form, the death report from the hospital, an attested affidavit on stamped paper

of Rs100, a graveyard report, a photocopy of the CNIC of the deceased and the applicant, the family registration certificate, an NOC by all heirs on a Rs100 stamped paper, and, for the cantonments, a copy of the last property tax paid. If the heir survives to successfully receive a death certificate, yet another process must be initiated with Nadra to request the cancellation of the deceased's CNIC. Both could have been easily merged into a single process.

A digital death certificate system would call for the registration of all hospitals and graveyards across the country and make them legally bound to directly inform Nadra whenever an individual dies in hospital or is buried in a graveyard. Basic information such as an allocated ID for the hospital/graveyard, name and CNIC details of the deceased and his/her heir, date and time of death and burial could be sent as an SMS message to a dedicated Nadra number.

This would enable Nadra to receive first-hand information about all deaths, and initiate important downstream actions such as blocking pensions, Sims and CNICs, and uploading the death certificate on its website.

Each citizen should also be asked to directly send an SMS to a Nadra-specified number, providing basic information of a death or birth in the family. This could be helpful in the verification of the formally received information from hospitals and graveyards.

Why can we not bring decades of endless running around, in pursuit of photocopies, affidavits, attestations, challans, stamped paper, oath commissioners and notaries public, to a rapid and happy ending?

CM Sindh says his govt spending Rs218bn on Karachi's development

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, during a meeting with the elected body of the National Press Club Islamabad, said that approximately Rs1000 billion is needed for the development of Karachi every year, however, the resources are limited, despite this, the city is set to receive Rs218 billion for development this year.

The meeting was held at the CM House after the Islamabad journalists visited various districts of the province, including

Thar, Sukkur, and Gambat, where they commended the government's development efforts. Murad Shah mentioned in response to a question that a World Bank study conducted by the Sindh government revealed that \$3 billion is needed to make Karachi a liveable city. He suggested that although the required funds are substantial, around Rs1000 billion should be spent on the development and reconstruction of Karachi's infrastructure. "Due to resource constraints, only Rs218

billion has been allocated for Karachi's development," he said.

To another question, the CM said that under the City Government Karachi, the embankments of main Nullahs were allotted, and whatever space was left was allowed to be encroached. As a result, the cleaning of the Nullahs became a serious issue, and the city kept submerging during heavy rains.

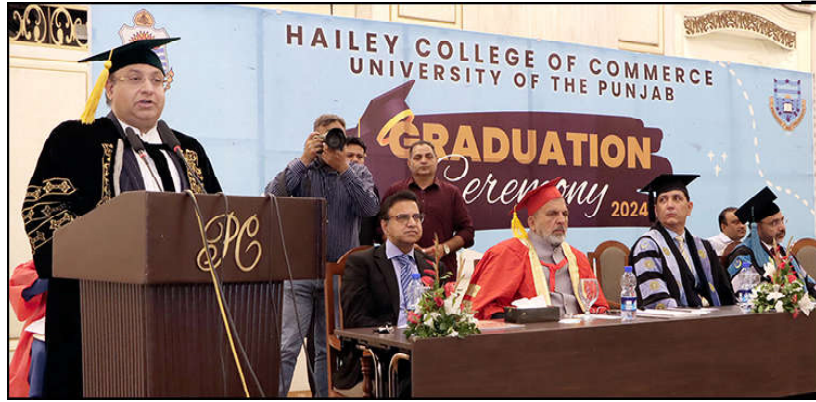
Mr Shah pointed out that commercial activities were allowed on the footpath, where hundreds

of shops were set up. The important roads that needed to be kept non-commercial were made commercial by allowing the establishment of commercial markets and centres, resulting in traffic congestion becoming another issue.

Murad Shah said that after hectic efforts, major nullahs have been cleaned, and the main roads constructed by his government were given stormwater drains to resolve standing water issues.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah in a meeting with the elected members of the National Press Club Islamabad, at CM House in Karachi.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Finance Mujtaba Shuja-ur-Rehman addressing the graduation ceremony organized by Punjab University Hailey College of Commerce.

Governor Sindh pays homage to soldiers martyred in NW

KARACHI (APP): Governor Sindh Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori on Saturday paid tributes to five soldiers including Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Ali Shaikat of Pakistan Army, who lost their lives protecting the motherland against enemy elements in North Waziristan.

He said that they lost

their lives while taking action against enemy elements in North Waziristan.

Governor Tessori prayed for elevation of ranks of the martyrs and patience for the bereaved families. He said that they were with the families of the martyrs. The sacrifices of the martyrs were a debt to the nation, he added.

Teachers real architects of society: CM Maryam

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has said that teachers are the real architects of society, tasked with spreading the light of knowledge and nurturing the new generation.

In her message on World Teacher Day, being celebrated on Saturday, she paid glowing tribute to educators, stressing their pivotal role in society.

The CM expressed deep respect for all teachers, stating that the act of educating is a sacred duty, akin to a lamp illuminating the darkness of ignorance. She highlighted that teachers provide new dimensions to human minds through

knowledge and the arts, declaring that those who teach with dedication and passion are the true heroes of society.

The chief minister remarked that teachers do not merely deliver lessons; they impart the art of transforming dreams into reality. Acknowledging her own journey, the CM stated that she could not forget the significant influence of her teachers on her life. CM Maryam Nawaz affirmed the importance and dignity of teachers, committing to their welfare and well-being. She emphasised that in reality, every day is dedicated to honoring the contributions of teachers who shape the future.

Sharjeel Memon says: PTI founder planted to destabilize country, undermine democracy

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Transport Minister, Sharjeel Inam Memon said on Saturday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan was "planted" to destabilize Pakistan and weaken its democratic foundation.

Speaking at a press conference, he claimed that Khan was brought in power with the intention of creating unrest and instability in the country. He cited the views of notable figures, such as Dr. Israr Ahmed and Abdul Sattar Edhi, who had warned that PTI was part of a conspiracy influenced by external agendas.

Memon accused PTI leadership of aligning with foreign actors and working against Pakistan's progress and stability.

When asked about the entry of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Chief

Minister into Islamabad, he commended the federal government for its restraint and patience.

"Despite having the means to respond, the government has demonstrated extraordinary patience," he said while expressing concerns over the actions of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government.

He accused the CM Khyber Pakhtunkhwa of overstepping constitutional boundaries and fueling political instability. Memon emphasized that no political party, including the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), desires the imposition of Governor's Rule. However, he stressed that extreme measures might become necessary if the situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa continues to deteriorate.

Ramesh Singh pays tribute to martyrs

LAHORE (INP): Provincial Minister for Minority Affairs Ramesh Singh Aroora expressed his heartfelt tribute to the six security personnel, including a Lieutenant Colonel, who were martyred in a firefight with militants in North Waziristan.

He stated that the entire Pakistani nation takes pride in its armed forces. The martyrs laid down their lives to ensure the protection of our beloved homeland, and with the presence of the Pakistan Army, no one can dare look at our nation with ill intent.

Arora emphasized that the entire Pakistani nation stands united with its army against the enemies of Pakistan, and those who cast a covetous glance towards our country will meet a dreadful fate.

Two killed, two injured in Swabi wedding firing

PESHAWAR (APP): At least two people were killed and two others injured when firing took place between two groups over a verbal clash during a musical program in Moza Jangi Dher area of Swabi district, late night, police informed on Saturday.

Chota Lahore police said, a resident of Manerai, Tariq reported that last night he along with his brother, Tufail Nasir (29) and friend, Asad Khan were present at a musical program of wedding in Moza Jangi Dher. During the program, he said, his brother had some argument with Saddam, resident of Chota Lahore following which, Saddam started indiscriminate firing, killing his brother Tufail and another 25-year-old youth, Basit, resident of Jalbai, Swabi.

Two children die as wall collapses in Manshehra

PESHAWAR (APP): At least two young-aged children lost their lives and another girl injured when a wall collapsed on them in Manshehra, police informed on Saturday. Police said two children, named Sufyan (4) and Abu Bakar (6) and another little girl were playing near their house in Pakhwal Chowk, Manshehra when the wall of the adjacent house.

Governor KP laments deteriorating condition of education

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, on Saturday emphasized teachers' contributions are invaluable, as they not only impart knowledge but also play a crucial role in character building and national development.

In a statement on World Teachers' Day, he expressed his heartfelt appreciation for all teachers, whom he described as the architects of the nation dedicated to the education and upbringing of children.

However, Governor Kundi lamented the deteriorating condition of universities in Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa, attributing this decline to the provincial government's incompetence.

He said that teachers were the beacon of a society but the education sector has been continuously neglected, leading to challenges for both teachers and students.

He urged the government to take immediate notice of this crisis and implement practical measures to improve the conditions of educational institutions.

Restoring the dignity and respect of teachers should be a top priority, as this is the true path to national progress, he concluded.



KARACHI: Sindh Local Government Minister, Saeed Ghani talking to media persons during Academia Choice Awards organized by All Sindh Private Schools and Colleges Association.

Meeting on establishing water, sanitation regulatory authority held

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Local Government and Community Development (LG&CD) Minister Zeeshan Rafiq chaired a meeting of the committee tasked with establishing a regulatory authority for sanitation and water supply services in Punjab at the Civil Secretariat on Saturday. Law Minister Malik Sohaib Ahmed Bherth, Secretary of Local Government Shakeel Ahmed, and Commissioner Lahore Zaid bin Maqsood attended the meeting.

The meeting reviewed a preliminary report presented by a sub-committee composed of officials from the Local Government and Housing Departments. However, Minister Malik Sohaib expressed dissatisfaction with the report, directing a re-examination to be completed by next week.

Law Minister Malik Sohaib emphasized the necessity of a dedicated regulator for sanitation and water supply, urging the sub-committee to evaluate existing laws to inform solid decisions.

LG&CD Minister, leading the committee, asserted that the Secretary of Local Government should oversee the sub-committee's efforts. He advocated for a unified authority to manage drainage and water supply services, reflecting Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's vision for centralized accountability.

Zeeshan Rafiq also indicated that the committee aims to propose new legislation to address gaps in current laws.



LAHORE: Newlyweds in a group photo with Rabia Humayun, Sohail Waraich, Nusrat Hamdan and others at the mass event organized by Door of Awareness.

Health dept confirms 141 new dengue cases across Punjab

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Health Department confirmed the detection of 141 new dengue cases, here on Saturday.

According to a spokesperson, Rawalpindi being the hardest hit, reporting 129 cases. Lahore, Jehlum and Mianwali each registered 3 cases, while single cases were detected in Attock, Bahawalpur and Sahiwal. This brings the total number of reported dengue cases in the province to 2,389 for the year 2024. A spokesperson for the Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department reassured the

public that all necessary measures are in place to manage the outbreak. Government hospitals are fully stocked with medicines and treatments for dengue patients. An advisory has been issued by the Health Department urging the public to maintain clean and dry surroundings to reduce the spread of the virus. Public cooperation was deemed critical as health teams continue to work actively across the province to control the situation. Citizens can contact the free helpline (1033) for further information.

Mariyum meets Australian HC Punjab govt taking proactive measures to eliminate all forms of smoke emissions: Mariyum

LAHORE (APP): Senior Provincial Minister Mariyum Aurangzeb held a meeting with Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins to discuss a range of issues including agricultural mechanisation, smart agriculture, sports development, aquaculture, shrimp farming, women's inclusion in the national workforce, green ammonia, smog control measures, carbon financing, and wildlife conservation and restoration.

She told the high commissioner that under the farmer-friendly vision of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, a pilot project would be launched to export five varieties of lentils, including munga, as an incentive-based

initiative. To promote smart agriculture, the government was establishing an agriculture mall, which would provide fertilisers, machinery, and seeds. She emphasised the need for Australian technical support to introduce new practices and innovations in agriculture.

The Punjab senior minister said the Punjab government had been taking proactive measures since March to eliminate all forms of smoke emissions in an effort to combat smog. One per cent of the budget for every construction project had been allocated for plantation efforts to improve the air quality index. The education,

transport, energy, and agriculture departments are actively engaged in this fight against smog, she added.

She mentioned that public awareness campaigns about wildlife conservation were being conducted through combing operations. Australian technology is being utilised in Punjab's wildlife sector, and drone surveillance is ongoing to protect and restore forests.

Regarding aquaculture, she announced that a pilot project for shrimp farming had been initiated on 100 acres in Muzaffargarh, with an expected production of 100 tons annually. Additionally, hockey stadiums, grounds,

CM pays tribute to officers, soldiers martyred

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has paid glowing tribute to the sacrifices of a lieutenant colonel and soldiers who were martyred during an operation in North Waziristan.

In her statement, the CM expressed her deep condolences to the bereaved families. She reaffirmed that the sacrifices made by these heroes in the fight against terrorism will not be in vain, and she emphasized that peace will ultimately prevail. "The sacrifices of our martyrs will bear fruit, and the flowers of peace will surely bloom," she said.

Punjab intensifies action against polluting kilns without zigzag technology

LAHORE (INP): Senior Provincial Minister Maryam Aurangzeb announced Saturday that the government has accelerated its crackdown on brick kilns operating without zigzag technology, which are a major contributor to pollution in Punjab. Recent operations led to the demolition of 3 kilns in Depalpur, Rajanpur, Pakpattan, Okara, 6 in Sargodha; and 8 in Mianwali.

In Okara, the Department of Environmental Protection faced resistance while attempting to halt the illegal use of municipal waste, plastic, and leather as fuel in kilns. With police

assistance, the situation was brought under control within two hours, and the remaining kilns were also demolished. The operation, led by the Director General of Environmental Protection, commenced early this morning.

Minister Aurangzeb praised the Environmental Protection Department's monitoring teams, noting that Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has directed a zero-tolerance policy against the causes of smog and air pollution. She stressed the government's commitment to taking firm action against offenders and those obstructing government operations.



LAHORE: Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins meeting with Punjab Senior Minister Mariyum Aurangzeb.

Cultural festival to be held in Khanewal

KHANEWAL (APP): A two-day cultural festival would be held in Khanewal from October 12 to 13.

Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali Bukhari chaired a meeting to finalise the festival arrangements. The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue (ADCR) Abdul Sattar Khan, Additional Deputy Commissioner General (ADCG) Ghulam Mustafa, Deputy Director (DD) Development Shahid Rehman, and Principal KPS Hafiz Muhammad Rashid Saeed Rana and others.

The festival, set to take place at Khanewal Public School, College and University, will showcase the rich cultural heritage of Punjab and the local traditions of the region. The culture of Punjab province and local culture would be promoted in the festival. A diverse range of stalls will be set up, offering visitors an immersive cultural experience, alongside colorful programs that will highlight the essence of Punjab.

In addition to entertainment, the festival will offer an affordable entry fee of just Rs. 100 for adults and Rs. 20 for students.

SACM addresses public grievances at open court in PP-159

LAHORE (APP): Special Assistant to Chief Minister (SACM) on Political Affairs Zeeshan Malik organised a 'khuli kutchehry' [open court] in PP-159 constituency on Saturday, following the directives of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif. A large number of people attended the open court, where officials from various departments were also present to address people's issues.

During the three-hour session, attendees engaged with the SACM, bringing forth a variety of issues impacting the constituency. Many

residents submitted personal requests for assistance, which the SACM addressed by issuing immediate directives to the relevant officials, ensuring prompt action. Zeeshan Malik said that the open court was specifically arranged to resolve the issues being faced by the constituency's residents without discrimination. The SACM assured the public that all commitments made to the residents of PP-159 would be fulfilled. Zeeshan Malik highlighted ongoing initiatives aimed at ensuring the availability of clean water.



CHINIOT: Teachers hold placards during protest in favor of their demands at a road in the city.



LAHORE: View of containers has been placed by police to blocked road as security has been high alert in a view of Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) protest, in Lahore.

Qaiser for boosting foreign investment in maritime sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Shaikh here on Saturday chaired a meeting with representatives from Malaysian companies, including Felda Global Ventures and KLK Malaysia, as well as the Pakistani Westbury Group to discuss foreign investment in Pakistan's maritime sector.

According to a statement from the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, the Malaysian companies, including Felda Global Ventures and KLK Malaysia, expressed their commitment to expanding business operations through Pakistan's ports. Shaikh said that the Port Qasim Authority, Karachi Port Trust, and other institutions under the Ministry of Maritime Affairs are actively addressing the concerns of importers and exporters.

The Federal Minister added that his office is always open to investors, and if foreign investors face any hurdles, they can directly contact him. Qaiser Ahmed Shaikh further stated in the same week, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with the Danish government, under which Maersk will invest two billion dollars in Pakistan's maritime sector.

This is proof that foreign investors are showing confidence in Pakistan, the minister said. He further said that the success of CPEC is also connected with our ports.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Shaikh is chairing a meeting regarding foreign investment in Maritime Sector.



LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif being briefed about Punjab Bank at Head Office of Bank.

Exports growth top priority of govt: Ihsan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to the Prime Minister for Commerce and Industries, Rana Ihsan Afzal Khan, said on Saturday that boosting the exports is a priority for the government. Talking to a private news channel, he said that the government's policies aim to increase exports to \$60 billion over the next five years. To achieve this goal, the government was creating a conducive environment to boost export growth, he added. He said that the measures, including increasing the tax rates on real estate, were taken to divert the funds towards productive sectors, such as exports. Pakistan has an

import tariff of 20 percent, by reducing this rate, domestic manufacturers were expected to focus more on exports, he added. Over 10,000 local manufacturers and enterprises in various sectors will receive training under the small medium enterprises (SME) initiative to achieve this goal, he further added. He said that the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has also introduced a refund policy for exporters, ensuring prompt processing of refunds. The government plans to expand the tax net by targeting sectors that currently evade taxes. Only with a broader tax base can tax rates be reduced, he added.

Minister terms commerce as backbone of economy

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Finance Minister Mujtaba Shuja-ur-Rehman Saturday said that commerce was the backbone of any thriving economy, with commerce graduates playing a pivotal role in shaping its future. Addressing the graduation ceremony for the 2023-24 batch of Hailey College of Commerce, Punjab University here, he noted that Pakistan's successful economic policies, investment opportunities, and trade markets heavily rely on the expertise of commerce graduates. Whether they pursue careers in finance, manage

their own businesses, or work in the public or private sectors, their individual achievements will contribute significantly to strengthening the national economy. The minister highlighted that the Punjab government is committed to creating a business-friendly environment to promote economic growth. Alongside traditional education, young people are being provided with opportunities for professional and technical training to prepare them for the evolving demands of the economy.

Industrial growth can lift country from economic woes, SM Tanveer

HYDERABAD (APP): The Patron in Chief of the United Businessmen Group (UBG) SM Tanveer has said Pakistan's industry has the potential to generate revenue and foreign exchange far above any credit facility being provided by some International Financial Institution (IFI). Addressing the business community at Hyderabad Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industry (HCSTSI) here on Saturday, he added that the local industries only required due facilities to flourish. He pointed out that the cost of electricity in Pakistan stood at 16 cents per unit in comparison to the global average of 6

cents per unit. Additionally, the country's interest rate hovers around 20 percent, a figure that was stifling growth and forcing businesses to shut down. He urged the government to take immediate steps to address these critical issues and create an environment where local industries could thrive. Tanveer emphasized that the key to resolving Pakistan's economic challenges lay in strategic thinking and bold actions at the national level. He believed that the economy could be revitalized through a reduction in electricity costs, lower interest rates, and by boosting exports.



ISLAMABAD: People visiting stalls during the "Daachi Arts & Craft Exhibition" at Pak China Friendship Centre.

Scientific symposium on date palm held

KARACHI (APP): The scientific symposium on Date Palm under the first Pakistan International Date Palm Festival was held at the Expo Centre Karachi on Saturday. The first Pakistan International Date Palm Festival is being organized by the Ministry of National Food Security and Research and Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) in collaboration with Embassy of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to Pakistan and Khalifa International Award for Date Palm and Agriculture Innovation.

Chief Executive Mohammed Zubair Motiwala addressing the event highlighted the importance of date palm and said this festival would open new avenues to increase the export of Pakistani date palm across the world. On the occasion, potential of industrial varieties for export, management of date palm pollen, date palm value chain development, good agriculture practices, increasing economic opportunities etc were discussed in various sessions of the festival. It is pertinent to mention here that around 150 delegates from eight countries had participated in the festival.

Practical steps being taken to control smog

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Agriculture Secretary Ifikhar Ali Sahoo has said that practical steps are being taken to control smog. He said this while presiding over the smog control meeting, held at Agriculture House on Saturday. He said that all possible resources and means were being used to implement the Punjab Chief Minister Smog Control Programme.

Super seeders were being provided to the farmers at a cost of Rs. 5 billion at 60pc subsidy, with the help of which the paddy residues would be made useful. A zero-tolerance policy was being followed against burning of paddy residue. Secretary further said that a control room was also being established for proper implementation of the smog control programme. The relevant field formations were responsible for smog control.

Commerce minister says: Economic indicators showing positive growth

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Saturday said that in the country's economy, all economic indicators were showing positive growth for sustainable economic growth. The country's exports show improvements as compared to last year, the interest rate is falling and inflation drastically gone low, he said in a statement issued by the Ministry of Commerce.

He said the foreign exchange stability achieved and stock exchange performing well as

compared with other global and regional markets. The upcoming visits of Azerbaijan President and Malaysian PM, Saudi Business submit and SCO summit are positive signs for local economy, he said. Jam Kamal Khan said that agitations by PTI and the role of KP chief minister was not only discouraging but also bad for the country. The foreign investment commitments and delegates are regularly coming to Pakistan, he said. Kamal said that

Privatization, FBR reforms, downsizing, ease of doing business and formation of Exim Bank were the key components of Small Medium Enterprise (SME) sector for betterment and growth of national economy. The commerce minister said that historical business participation in Expo fairs was a sign of the sign of their confidence in government's performance. Now the energy rate challenge will be resolved soon and will contribute to a better industrial growth, he added.



LAHORE: Ambassador of Argentina to Pakistan Mr. Sebastian Sayus meeting with Punjab Minister for Agriculture & Livestock Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani.

Students urged to acquire AI knowledge to explore economic opportunities

MULTAN (APP): International IT expert Tanvir Nandla called on students to equip themselves with skills in Artificial Intelligence (AI), stressing that mastering AI could open up remarkable economic opportunities in the near future. He expressed these views at the International Teacher Day ceremony, organised by the Food Science and Nutrition Department of Bahauddin Zakariya University (BZU) on Saturday. Tanvir, while addressing students, highlighted the transformative power of AI, likening its impact to previous eras of major economic change. "There was a time when industrialisation shaped the future of nations," he remarked, "and those who focused on it made tremendous progress. Similarly, the advent of the internet revolutionised the

world economy, bringing untold opportunities to those who embraced it." He further explained, AI is the next frontier, an emerging field that is rapidly changing job markets across the globe. "The nations and individuals who harness AI will be the ones who thrive in the future," Nandla stated. He encouraged students to not just learn about AI but to actively use it as a tool to identify new opportunities and create pathways for economic growth. "It's not just about learning AI," he stated, "it's about utilizing these tools smartly for personal and professional success." Nandla also stressed the importance of continuous learning and adapting to new technologies. He said that students who stay updated on the latest developments in AI would be better positioned to secure high-paying.



MULTAN: Traders are displaying seasonal fruit Oranges to attract customers at the fruit market.

SNGPL disconnects 112 meters, removes 148 extensions during Sept

MULTAN (APP): In the light of the instructions of the General Manager Sui Northern Gas UFG Control Task, the teams disconnected 112 meters over various violations during the last month of September.

According to the details, 18 meters were disconnected for commercial use and fined. Seven meters were disconnected over installing meters from the service area, 19 meters were disconnected for compressor use, FIR was registered against one consumer for direct use, four customers meters were disconnected for giving extension to four to five houses, illegally.

Similarly, two meters were disconnected for shifting meters from one house to another, one customer's meter was disconnected while not online, 23 meters were seized while not on site, two customers' meters were disconnected for reversing the meter reading. Four meters were disconnected for meter tampering while five consumers who disconnected their meters themselves had their meters seized to prevent illegal use. Due to the meters being installed upside down, two consumers' meters were disconnected, three private colonies were caught, out of which 14 meters were disconnected.

CM visits Bank of Punjab, sets target to lead rankings

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif visited the Bank of Punjab (BoP) headquarters and set a target for the bank to achieve a leading position in banking rankings.

It was the first visit of a chief minister in 15 years to the BoP. During her visit, she directed the bank officials to implement effective cost control measures. She said that the Bank of Punjab should be the first choice for depositors, reinforcing the importance of enhancing customer trust and satisfaction.

Bank President Zafar Masood gave a comprehensive briefing on various financial matters related to welfare schemes. The briefing included an overview of several key projects such as the Green Tractor Scheme, the Bike Program, the Himmat Card, and the Apni Chhat Apna Ghar program. CM Maryam Nawaz

received updates on the delivery of interest-free bikes, urging improvements to streamline the process further. The CM was presented with a report on the delivery of interest-free bikes, prompting her to call for further improvements in the delivery process. During the briefing, it was highlighted that students can apply for bikes through a digital process from home. Additionally, a facility has been established for students to make online payments for bike installments. So far, 1,591 interest-free bikes have been delivered under the initiative. Moreover, financial assistance of Rs 250,000 is being provided to 40,000 farmers through the Livestock Card scheme. The briefing also revealed that payments are being disbursed to 65,000 special individuals across Punjab through Bank of Punjab ATMs.

2 percent cess halts KP exports: President SCCI

PESHAWAR (APP): Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Fazal Moqem Khan said that export from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had halted after imposition of two percent cess and feared of shifting of export to other provinces from KP if the cess was not withdrawn immediately. Fazal Moqem said

that the provincial government move was not only adversely affecting exports but also incurred huge financial loss to exporters. He stated that export is shifting from KP to other provinces owing to negligence of the provincial government. Fazal Moqem asked federal and provincial governments.



KARACHI: Foreigners visiting a stall at first Pakistan International Date Palm Festival at Expo Centre.

Series of public hearings continues across LESCO region

LAHORE (APP): On the special instructions of the Ministry of Power Division, a series of open courts are being held in the LESCO region with the aim of solving the problems faced by the consumers in electricity bills and other matters immediately. Chief Executive Engineer Shahid Haider said here Saturday that public customers hearings are being conducted in all eight circles of LESCO. The public is also being informed about this in advance through the media and Pana Flexes. All SDOs, along with their teams, were ensuring regular holding of open courts in their sub divisions on daily basis. Superintending Engineers (SEs) and Executive Engineers (XENs) are reviewing these public hearings. Total 1151 complaints of various types were received at the open courts, out of which 1146 complaints were redressed on the spot.

PBF KP officials demands sustainable economic decisions for province

PESHAWAR (INP): The Executive Committee of Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) have appointed Mariam Iqbal and Haji Ifikhar Ahmed as Vice Chairmen of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Muhammad Atta ur Rehman Yousafzai as Secretary General for KP chapter besides Akbar Khan as PBF President Swat. The official notification in this regard has been issued. The newly appointed PBF officials have said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) is distinguished by its immense natural potential. Yet like other provinces, it currently faces significant challenges across economic, social, security, and political domains. "To attract investment in the current charged environment, the KP government must build sector-specific institutional expertise, as organisational support for sector-specific engagement is limited". Vice Chairperson, Mariam Iqbal said despite these challenges, long-term strategic thinking is vital to shaping policies that meet

the people's expectations amid the day's adversities, including declining purchasing power. This approach is essential for fostering political order in an era characterised by empowered individuals, politicised bureaucracy, and persistent crises. She said with a population exceeding 41 million, where 50% are youth and nearly five million are out-of-school children, the current economic and political climate presents a unique opportunity to invest in meaningful and transformative change. PBF Vice Chairman, Ifikhar Ahmad said in the current environment overwhelmed with rival politics, the government must break free from the short-term thinking that has hindered our economy for decades and implement policies that address the significant challenge of achieving lasting prosperity, as even in the bleakest circumstances, there will always be a requirement to improve welfare and security. He said Demographic diversity exacerbates issues like unemployment.

Israel targets Hezbollah intel HQ in Lebanon, Iran says it will not back down

Monitoring Desk

BEIRUT: Israel said it had targeted the intelligence headquarters of Hezbollah in Lebanon overnight and was assessing the damage after a series of strikes on senior figures in the group that Iran's Supreme Leader dismissed as counterproductive. Israel has been weighing options in its response to the Iranian ballistic missile attack on Tuesday, which Iran had carried out in response to Israel's military action in Lebanon.

Oil prices have risen on the possibility of an attack on Iran's oil facilities as Israel pursues its goals of pushing back Hezbollah militants in Lebanon and eliminating their Hamas allies in Gaza. The air attack on Beirut, part of a wider assault that has driven more than 1.2 million Lebanese from their homes, was reported to have targeted the potential successor to the leader of Iran-backed

Hezbollah, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, assassinated by Israel a week ago.

Hashem Safieddine's fate was unclear and neither Israel nor Hezbollah have offered any comment.

A blast was heard and smoke was seen over Beirut's southern suburbs early on Saturday, Reuters witnesses said, shortly after the Israeli military issued two alerts for residents of the area to immediately evacuate. The first alert warned residents in a building in the Burj al-Barajneh neighbourhood and the second in a building in Choueifat district.

US President Joe Biden said on Friday he would think about alternatives to striking Iranian oil fields if he were in Israel's shoes, adding that he thinks Israel has not yet concluded how to respond to Iran. Biden was asked at a White House press briefing if he thought that

by not engaging in diplomacy, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was trying to influence the Nov 5 US election in which Republican former president Donald Trump faces Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris.

"Whether he is trying to influence the election, I don't know but I am not counting on that," Biden said in response. "No administration has done more to help Israel than I have."

The government in Lebanon says more than 2,000 people have been killed there in the past year, most in the past two weeks. UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said on Friday the toll on civilians "totally unacceptable". "All parties must do whatever they can at all times to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure and ensure that civilians are never put in harm's way," he told reporters in New York.



People carry their belongings while walking on the rubble, after an Israeli strike, as they flee Lebanon due to ongoing hostilities between Hezbollah and Israeli forces, at Masnaa border crossing with Syria, in Lebanon.

At least 70 killed in gang attack on Haitian town, UN says

Monitoring Desk

PORT-AU-PRINCE: The death toll from a grisly attack on a small Haitian town by the heavily armed Gran Grif gang has risen to at least 70, the UN human rights office said Friday, adding that women and children were among those killed.

The tally of victims killed in this week's brutal attack on a small town in central Haiti by heavily armed gang members has risen to at least 70, the U.N. human rights office. Bodies lay strewn on the streets of Pont-Sonde following Thursday's attack in the Artibonite region, many of them killed by a shot to the head, Bertide Harace, spokeswoman for the Commission for Dialogue, Reconciliation and Awareness to Save the Artibonite, told Magik 9 radio station.

Initial estimates put the number of those killed to 20 people, but activists and government officials have been gradually accessing areas of the town.

The IMF deal.

The avowed Marxist held talks with IMF representatives for a second straight day on Friday, his office said in a statement. "President Dissanayake aims to achieve the objectives of the programme in partnership with the IMF, seeking alternative approaches that will alleviate the burden on the citizens," it said.

In his first meeting with the IMF delegation on Thursday, Dissanayake said he wanted to reduce the tax burden on lower income households.



SANAA: People walk past a billboard with an image of Hassan Nasrallah, the assassinated chief of Hezbollah.

Collapse of national security elites' cyber firm leaves bitter wake

Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: The future was once dazzling for IronNet. Founded by a former director of the National Security Agency and stacked with elite members of the U.S. intelligence establishment, IronNet promised it was going to revolutionize the way governments and corporations combat cyberattacks.

Its pitch — combining the prowess of ex-government hackers with cutting-edge software — was initially a hit. Shortly after going public in 2021, the company's value shot

past \$3 billion. Yet, as blazing as IronNet started, it burned out. Last September the never-profitable company announced it was shutting down and firing its employees after running out of money, providing yet another example of a tech firm that faltered after failing to deliver on overhyped promises.

The firm's crash has left behind a trail of bitter investors and former employees who remain angry at the company and believe it misled them about its financial health.

Blood and blades as Thailand celebrates vegetarian festival

Monitoring Desk

PHUKET: Soon after sunrise on the Thai island of Phuket, a swordsman chants an incantation and slowly slides the first of three blades through the right cheek of the woman sitting calmly below him.

Soon, blood is dripping off her face, and red-stained tissues are scattered over the ground.

The ceremony at the October 2-11 vegetarian festival in Phuket's old town aims to cleanse "sinful" souls. Sirinnicha Thampradit, 29, is believed to be a medium that a god has selected to bridge the

connection between human and divine.

"I felt weak, I felt numb and I couldn't control anything," Sirinnicha, who woke before dawn to prepare for the ceremony, was told AFP.

"One minute I was crying, another I was laughing," she said, adding that possession usually happens during the annual vegetarian festival.

Despite the blood, Sirinnicha, who has a 1.5-inch scar visible on both cheeks from her previous piercings, said she felt no pain during the procedure.

Biden unsure whether US polls will be peaceful

Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden said he was confident the upcoming presidential election would be fairly conducted, but he warned that Republican candidate Donald Trump and his running mate could refuse to accept the outcome. "I'm confident it will be free and fair. I don't know whether it will be peaceful. The things that Trump has said, and the things that he said last time out, when he didn't like the outcome of the election."

Indian forces claim killing 23 Maoists in Chhattisgarh

Monitoring Desk

NEW DELHI: Indian paramilitary forces shot dead 23 Maoist rebels during a firefight, days after the home minister warned the insurgents to surrender or face "all-out" assault. More than 10,000 people have died in a decades-long movement waged by the Naxalite movement in India's resource-rich tribal heartlands. The insurgency has drastically shrunk in recent years and a crackdown has killed 190 fighters this year.

Friday's gunfight took place in a remote part of the central state of Chhattisgarh.



SANAA: People walk past a billboard with an image of Hassan Nasrallah, the assassinated chief of Hezbollah.

Global food prices rise at fastest rate since 2022

Monitoring Desk

PARIS: Global food prices rose in September at their fastest rate since March 2022, with sugar prices surging as dry weather and fires damaged Brazilian sugarcane crops, the Food and Agriculture Organisation said on Friday.

The FAO Food Price Index reached 124.4 points in September, a three-percent increase from August. But it remained 22.4 per cent below the peak reached in March 2022 in the wake of Russia's invasion of agricultural powerhouse Ukraine.

100 elephants evacuated after floods in Thailand

Monitoring Desk

BANGKOK: More than 100 elephants in northern Thailand have been moved to higher ground to escape rapidly rising flood waters, local media reported, but many other animals were still stuck as their sanctuaries struggled to evacuate them on Friday.

Saengduan Chalert, director of the Elephant Nature Park in Chiang Mai province, had posted a video of the panic-stricken elephants splashing through muddy waters and asked the government to send "urgent help".

"The water is flooding worse than before."

Biden warns Israel against Iran oil strikes as war fears mount

Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden advised Israel against striking Iran's oil facilities, saying he was trying to rally the world to avoid the escalating prospect of all-out war in the Middle East.

Making a surprise first appearance in the White House briefing room, Biden added that Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu "should remember" US support for Israel when deciding on next steps.

"If I were in their shoes, I'd be thinking about other alternatives than striking oil fields," Biden told reporters, when asked about his comments a day

earlier that Washington was discussing the possibility of such strikes with its ally.

Biden added that the Israelis "have not concluded how they're going to do" in retaliation for a huge ballistic missile attack by Iran on Israel on Tuesday.

The price of oil had jumped after Biden's remarks on Thursday.

Any long-term rise could be hugely damaging for Biden's Vice President Kamala Harris as the Democrat confronts Republican former president Donald Trump in a November 5 election where the cost of living is a major issue.

Ukraine's Zelenskiy visits Sumy region bordering Russia's Kursk province

Monitoring Desk

KYIV: President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said on Friday he had visited the northern Sumy region, from where Ukraine launched a major incursion into the neighbouring Russian Kursk region.

Almost two months into the surprise operation, Kyiv's troops control swathes of Russian border territory, though the pace of the advance has slowed and Moscow's forces have begun to counterattack.

"It is crucial to understand that the Kursk operation is a really strategic thing, something that adds motivation to our partners, motivation to be with Ukraine, be more decisive and put pressure on Russia," Zelenskiy said on Telegram.

Shown alongside his top army commander,

General Oleksandr Syrskyi, visiting the 82nd Air Assault Brigade, the president thanked the military for defending Ukraine's territorial integrity.

He said the incursion, which Ukraine says is bringing war back to Russia, "has greatly helped" Kyiv to secure the latest military support packages from the West.

"We need to motivate the whole world and convince them that Ukrainians can be stronger than the enemy," he told the servicemen. Despite the initial rapid success, the Kursk incursion did not manage to significantly distract Russia from its advances in Ukraine's east. On Wednesday, the Ukrainian military said it had pulled back from the hilltop town of Vuhledar to avoid encirclement by Russian troops.

US says its forces strike 15 Huthi targets in Yemen

Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: US forces hit 15 targets in Huthi-controlled areas of Yemen, the US military said.

Four provinces were struck, the Iran-backed rebels' Al Masirah television network reported.

The United States and Britain have repeatedly carried out strikes aimed at curbing the Huthis' ability to target shipping, but the rebels' attacks on merchant vessels transiting the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden have persisted.

"US Central Command (CENTCOM) forces conducted strikes on 15 Huthi targets in Iranian-backed Huthi-controlled areas of Yemen today," the military command responsible for US forces in the Middle East said on social media. "These targets included Huthi offensive military capabilities," CENTCOM said, adding that the strikes were carried out "to protect freedom of navigation and make international waters safer and more secure for US, coalition, and merchant vessels."

Al Masirah—which said both the United States and Britain struck Yemen on Friday—had earlier reported four strikes on Sanaa and seven on Hodeida. AFP correspondents heard loud explosions in both cities.

At least one strike each hit Dhamar, south of the capital, and Mukayras, southeast of Sanaa, Al Masirah said.

The Huthis have been hitting shipping since November, saying that attacks, which have disrupted maritime traffic in a globally important waterway, target vessels linked to Israel and are intended to signal solidarity with Palestinians during the Gaza war.

Israel has also struck Yemen in response to Huthi attacks. Israeli strikes on Hodeida last month killed at least five people after the rebels said they had targeted Israel's Ben Gurion Airport with a missile.

10 EU states green-light additional hefty tariffs on Chinese EVs

Monitoring Desk

BRUSSELS: EU countries gave a definitive green light to hefty additional tariffs on electric cars made in China, despite strong German opposition and fears it will trigger a trade war with Beijing.

The European Commission — which provisionally approved the step in June after an inquiry found that Beijing's state aid to auto manufacturers was unfair — now has free rein to impose steep tariffs for five years from end October. China has slammed the "protectionist" tariffs and promised retaliation, but talks on addressing the subsidy dispute will continue between the two sides despite Friday's vote. Ten member states including France, Italy and Poland supported imposing the tariffs of up to 35.3 per cent, coming on top of existing duties of 10pc, several European diplomats told AFP.

Only five, including Germany and Hungary, voted against while 12 abstained, including Sweden and Spain. Madrid initially supported tariffs before reversing course to call on Brussels to "reconsider" its decision. Although the tariffs did not win support

from a majority of states, the opposition was not enough to block them — which would have required at least 15 states representing 65pc of the bloc's population.

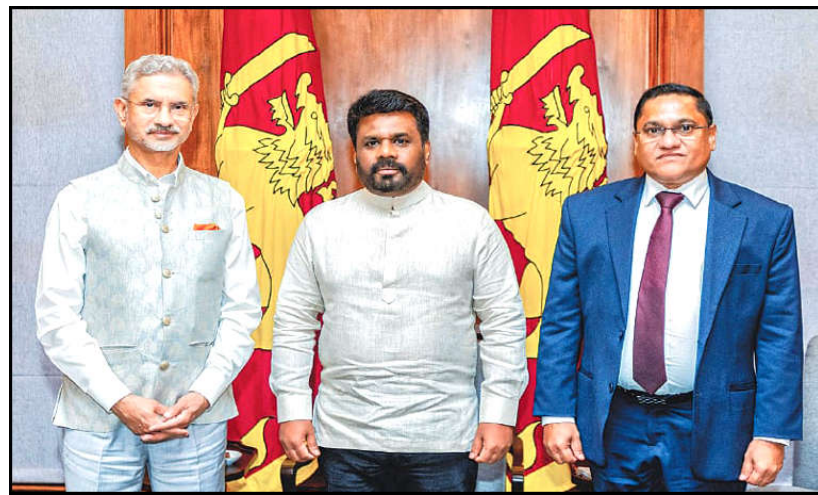
That leaves the choice on moving ahead in the hands of the European Commission — in charge of trade policy for the bloc — which said it had "obtained the necessary support for the adoption of tariffs".

After the vote, China's commerce ministry urged EU states to "return to the right track" by resolving trade frictions through dialogue.

"China firmly opposes the EU's unfair, non-compliant and unreasonable protectionist practices in this case," it said in a statement shared by state broadcaster CCTV.

The EU duties have pitted France and Germany against each other, with Paris arguing they are necessary to level the playing field for EU carmakers against Chinese counterparts.

Germany, renowned for its strong auto industry and its key manufacturers including BMW, Volkswagen and Mercedes heavily invested in China, urged the commission not to go ahead.



Sri Lanka's President Anura Kumara Disanayake, India's External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar (left), and Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Vijitha Herath pose for photos during a meeting in Colombo.

At least 14 dead in worst Bosnian floods in years

Monitoring Desk

KISELJAK: At least 14 people died in floods in Bosnia and Herzegovina and many others were missing as torrential rain and landslides destroyed homes, roads and bridges across the centre of the country, officials said.

The municipality of Jablanica, about 70 km (43 miles) southwest of the capital Sarajevo, where the deaths were reported, was completely cut off after road and railway links were destroyed.

Bosnia's inter-ethnic presidency — a Bosniak, Serb and Croat tripartite — said it requested military help for the wider Jablanica area, and engineers, rescue units and a helicopter were deployed, including to res-

cue 17 people from a mental hospital.

Some houses had been reduced to rubble by landslides, in what appeared to be Bosnia's worst flooding since at least 2014, when more than 20 died in floods.

"At least 14 dead were found in the Jablanica area," said Darko Jukan, a spokesman for the cantonal government. "There are a lot of people reported missing."

"In some cases only parts of roofs can be seen. I cannot remember the crisis of such a magnitude since the (1992-1995) war," he said.

At an emergency session, Bosnia's central government said it would allocate funds for the recovery of the affected areas.

France, Italy launch project to exchange migrant trafficking information

Monitoring Desk

PARIS: The interior ministers of France and Italy signed a declaration on their intention to exchange information related to migrant trafficking, the French interior ministry said on Friday. The project will be modeled after a similar deal between France and Britain, launched in 2020 in the north of France in a bid to stop attempts to reach the United Kingdom.

France's new Interior Minister Bruno Retailleau, a law-and-order politician from the conservative Republican party (LR), said it was his priority to further toughen immigration laws, echoing remarks from the prime minister who said the country needed to control its border better.

Three US police convicted in connection with beating death of Black man

Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: A former officer on trial over the brutal beating death of a Black motorist was found guilty of civil rights offenses on Thursday in US federal court, while two others were convicted on charges of witness tampering.

All three were cleared of the most serious charge they faced, which would have held them responsible for the death of 29-year-old Tyre Nichols. But they still face long prison sentences, up to 20 years, after the felony convictions.

A total of five Black police officers were charged in connection with the January 2023 death of Nichols, who was kicked, punched, tased and pepper sprayed after a traffic stop in Memphis.

Tunisia votes Sunday in its third presidential election since the Arab Spring

Monitoring Desk

TUNIS: With his major opponents imprisoned or left off the ballot, Tunisian President Kais Saied faces few obstacles to winning reelection, five years after riding anti-establishment backlash to a first term.

The North African country's Oct. 6 presidential election is its third since protests led to the 2011 ouster of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali — the first autocrat toppled in the Arab Spring uprisings that also overthrew leaders in Egypt, Libya and Yemen.

International observers praised the previous two contests as meeting democratic norms. However, a raft of arrests and actions taken by a Saied-appointed election authority have raised questions

about whether this year's race is free and fair. And opposition parties have called for a boycott.

Not long ago, Tunisia was hailed as the Arab Spring's only success story. As coups, counter-revolutions and civil wars convulsed the region, the North African nation enshrined a new democratic constitution and saw its leading civil society groups win the Nobel Peace Prize for brokering political compromise.

But its new leaders were unable to buoy its struggling economy and were plagued by political infighting and episodes of violence and terrorism.

Amid that backdrop, Saied, then 61 and a political outsider, won his first term in 2019.



A drone view shows boats stranded on the Rio Negro as the river reached its lowest point in its history during the most intense and widespread drought the country has experienced since records began in Manaus, Amazonas state, Brazil.

At UN, Pak urges stronger int'l coop. to promote social development

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Amid multiple challenges facing developing countries, such as armed conflict, climate change, poverty and food insecurity, Pakistan has called for stronger international cooperation to advance social development, bridge the digital divide and alleviate poverty.

"Inclusive social development is at the core of the several actions outlined in the Pact of the Future," Ambassador Munir Akram told the UN General Assembly's Third Committee, which deals with social, humanitarian and cultural matters.

He was referring to the Pact, which the world leaders adopted at UN headquarters in New York on Sept 22 at the Summit of the Future that includes a Global Digital Compact and a Declaration on Future Generations.

"Realizing the Pact's objectives of poverty eradication, social protection, education and health for all, empowerment of women and youth, sustainable development, and climate resilience, will require political will, global solidarity and adequate financing," the Pakistani envoy said.

"The world is witnessing a historic demographic

transformation," Ambassador Akram said. He added that the number of persons over 60 is projected to rise from 1.2 billion in 2024 to 2.1 billion by 2050.

"This will require adjustment to every aspect of our society, economy and public policy," he said, underscoring the need to prioritize social protection systems, promote decent jobs as well as access to healthcare and pensions.

"While the number of elders expands mostly in developed countries, he said, the youth bulge grows in mostly developing countries, noting that Declara-

tions on Future Generations reinforces the policy required to respond to these developments, the changing nature of work, legal and illegal migration and the impact of technology.

Referring to the upcoming thirtieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family, the Pakistani envoy urged the international community to reaffirm its commitment to supporting families as agents of sustainable development.

"Our religion, Islam, promotes family well-being, intergenerational solidarity, and social protection for all," he added.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Army troops patrolling in the Federal Capital, ahead of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit and several high-profile visits later this month in the wake of the protest calls given by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh is presenting souvenir to representative of Malaysian Company.

Dr. Rubaba for aligning educational system with modern demands

QUETTA (APP): Advisor to the Chief Minister of Balochistan on Women Development, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi has stressed the need for educational system aligned with modern demands and the importance of continuous professional development for teachers, ensuring that students get education that meets global standards.

She paid tribute to the role of teachers on the occasion of World Teachers' Day, said a news release on Saturday. She emphasized that it was through education that nations progress and teachers were the true leaders of this journey. She acknowledged the invaluable services of teachers in promoting education and ensuring quality learning in Balochistan.

Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi highlighted that teachers are not only spreading the light of knowledge but also play a pivotal role in shaping the character of the younger generation and contributing to social development. The Government of Balochistan is committed to implementing reforms in the education sector and is taking effective measures to improve the training and benefits of teachers.

Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi further said that World Teachers' Day provided us with an opportunity to recognize the contributions of our teachers and by acknowledging their dedication, to intensify efforts to provide them with better resources and support.

Dr. Musadik says: PTI tried to sabotage SCO summit by attacking the capital

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Minister for Petroleum, Dr. Musadik Malik, stated on Saturday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) attempted to sabotage the SCO summit and other high-level activities by attacking the federal capital. Speaking to a private news channel, he said that PTI's actions aimed to disrupt economic initiatives at a time when Pakistan was inviting international investment. He further claimed that the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa used official resources to attack the capital but, after failing to enter Islamabad.

DPM Dar deplors PTI's protest; finds it akin to damaging diplomatic prestige

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Saturday criticized Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's protest timing, terming it an attempt to harm country's prestige at the global level.

In a press statement, the deputy prime minister and foreign minister said that the protest was launched at a time when Pakistan was going to host Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Islamabad.

The objective of the protest was to create chaos in the country and sabotage

Pakistan's diplomatic efforts at the SCO's summit, he added.

DPM Dar also viewed PTI's invitation to a foreign minister of a particular country to participate in its protest as a political gimmick by its leadership inflicting damage to the national stature.

He stressed that the time was ripe for making a resolve to country's stability and leading it to its real destination.

The Deputy PM and foreign minister also called for shunning of petty political interests for the sake of larger national interests.

Military troops patrolling in Islamabad for security

ISLAMABAD (INP): The military troops patrolling in Islamabad's Red Zone and other areas after the interior ministry notified deployment of troops for security in the federal capital city.

The Ministry of Interior has issued military deployment orders under Article 245 of the constitution in aid of civil authority from 5th to 17th October 2024.

The military has been called in for maintaining law and order situation with respect to 23rd meeting of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Council of Heads of Government

meeting and visits of VVIP delegations for the said session. The military would have all policing powers to tackle a tense situation, and the local commander will act in coordination with the federal police.

The military would have powers to act against miscreants and arrest them. It could exercise baton charge and teargas shelling against protesters with minimum use of force, according to the government circular.

The military will act over reports about presence of miscreants or any other threat.

UK, Gulf to establish 280 skills centres in Pakistan for youth employment

ISLAMABAD (APP): Government of United Kingdom and Middle East institutions will provide jobs to millions of Pakistanis around the world by creating 280 skills centres in Pakistan.

A high-level British delegation is on a two-day visit to Pakistan to discuss possible cooperation with Pakistan in education, with a special focus on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

The delegation included Lord Boateng, House of Lords member Wendy Thomson, University of London Vice-Chancellor, University of Greenwich Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Edward, Queen Mary University Deputy

Vice-Chancellor Professor Richard Grose, Tony Degazon, City and Guilds Regional Director Dr. Aamir, and Executive Director of GEMS Middle East.

The delegation aims to take initiatives for skill development as per the needs of the industry in Pakistan.

In order to discuss the areas of mutual interest with the delegation, Federal Secretary Education Mohiyuddin Wani, Chairperson National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) Miss Gulmina Bilal, and Executive Director NAVTTTC on behalf of the government, represented Pakistan. On this occasion, the delegation was told that Prime Minister Shahbaz

Sharif, Federal Minister for Education Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui and Prime Minister's Advisor on Youth Affairs Rana Mashhood have their priorities that quality training should be provided to as many people of Pakistan as possible in accordance with the requirements of the modern era so that these people can offer their services in the best way not only in Pakistan but also around the world. The delegation representatives said that around 280 skills centers will be established in Pakistan. The candidates who successfully complete the training in these centres, they will be given a joint certificate by Pakistani, UK and Gulf universities.

Govt urged to take action against those blocking national highways

Independent Report
DUKI: Muslim League-N's District General Secretary Rahmatullah Musakhel has demanded that the government take strict action against individuals blocking national highways for personal gain. He stated that the repeated closure of highways due to disputes has caused immense difficulties for thousands of passengers, including women, children, and the elderly.

Additionally, the blockade has resulted in massive financial losses for farmers, with perishable goods such as fruits and vegetables worth millions of rupees being damaged. Musakhel emphasized that the government's inaction

has emboldened individuals to continue blocking highways, causing inconvenience to the general public. Immediate Action: Musakhel called for swift and unbiased action against those responsible for blocking highways. Prevention of Future Incidents: He urged the government to take measures to prevent such incidents from happening again. Accountability: Musakhel stressed the need for accountability and action against those who have been blocking highways for personal gain. The government's prompt response is awaited to address these concerns and ensure the smooth flow of traffic on national highways.



ISLAMABAD: Senior leader of PML (N) Fareed Afgan Advocate meeting with Chairman Ministry of Youth Affairs Rana Mashhod Khan

Naqvi pays glowing tribute to Martyr Lt. Col. Ali Shehwat, five soldiers in North Waziristan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has paid heartfelt tributes to Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Ali Shehwat and five soldiers who were martyred while bravely confronting the terrorist group Khawarji in the Spin Wam area of North Waziristan on Saturday.

In a statement, Naqvi honoured their courage and sacrifice, commending them for laying down their lives in defence of the nation.

"Martyr Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Ali Shehwat and five soldiers sacrificed their lives for the secure future of the nation," Naqvi remarked, acknowledging their ultimate sacri-

ifice in the face of adversity. The soldiers were engaged in a fierce battle with Khawarji militants, known for their brutal tactics when they were martyred.

Naqvi emphasized that the entire nation stands indebted to these heroes. "The nation will always remember the great sacrifices of Martyr Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Ali Shehwat and other martyrs," he said, ensuring their legacy will remain etched in the hearts of the Pakistani people.

The interior minister also praised the valour and effectiveness of the martyred soldiers in combating terrorism.



QUETTA: On the directives of Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti, Provincial Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar and Provincial Advisor Baba Sardar Ghulam Rasool Umrani meeting with Ameer JI Balochistan Maulana Abdul Haq Hashmi, MPA Maulana Hidayat ur Rehman is also present

Azma condemns Barrister Saif's invitation to Indian FM

LAHORE (INP): Provincial Information Minister Azma Bokhari said that Barrister Saif's invitation to Indian foreign minister Jaishankar was the next level of state enmity.

Talking to the media about Saif's statement, Bokhari said that she wants to see when the Israeli supporters get permission to agitate. In a sharp rebuke to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Adviser Barrister Saif, Provincial Prime Minister Uzma Bokhari questioned, "When will Israel's allies be permitted to protest?"

Accusing the opposition of lacking national dignity and integrity, Bokhari claimed that the DNA of Tehreek-e-Insaf is spoiled with anti-Pakistan sentiment.

Federal education minister lauds teachers role in shaping nation's future

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui on World Teachers' Day lauded the role of teachers in shaping the future of a nation.

In his message on "World Teachers Day" being observed on Saturday across the globe including Pakistan, he stated: "Dear Respected Teachers: I extend my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to each of you for your tireless efforts in shaping young minds and building a better future.

"Your dedication, passion, and commitment to education are the cornerstone of our society's progress. You not only impart knowledge but also in-

spire, motivate, and nurture the next generation of leaders" the Education Minister mentioned.

"As I reflect on my journey, I am reminded of the profound impact my teachers had on my life. Their guidance, encouragement, and wisdom helped shape me into the person I am today" he appreciated.

To all the teachers, I say: you are the true nation-builders. Your selflessness, expertise, and love for teaching make a lasting difference in the lives of your students, the minister said.

He urged "Let us celebrate your contributions, your perseverance, and your unwavering commitment to education. Thank you for all that you do".

Indian troops martyr two Kashmiri youth in Kupwara

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indian troops in their fresh act of state terrorism, martyred two Kashmiri youth in Kupwara district of Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday.

According to Kashmir Media Service, the youth were martyred by the troops during a violent cordon a search operation in Gugaldhar area of the district.

He was addressing a press conference in Mansoorah on Saturday.

The JI emir also urged the government to give the right to protest to political parties in order to diffuse

Ji emir urges CM Gandapur to focus on governance instead of leading protests

LAHORE (INP) - Jamaat-e-Islami Emir Hafiz Naemur Rehman has advised the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur to focus on governance in his province rather than leading the protest.

He was addressing a press conference in Mansoorah on Saturday.

The JI emir also urged the government to give the right to protest to political parties in order to diffuse

the political instability.

He criticised the deployment of army in the federal capital under the pretext of providing security for the upcoming SCO conference, days before the event. "The government must refrain from pitting the army against its own people," he said, adding that any military deployment should be reserved for the duration of the conference itself.

At a time when Gaza

is under siege and Israeli atrocities have reached alarming levels, Rehman said, Islamabad should be leading efforts to convene a summit of Muslim nations to deliver a clear message to Israel to immediately halt its aggression against Palestinians.

The JI, he noted, has made efforts to forge a united stance between the government and opposition parties to mark October 7 as Palestine Solidarity Day.

adding that the dam would supply three million gallon clean water per day to the residents of winder and its adjacent areas.

The Winder Dam has the capacity of 36,167 acre feet live storage to conserve flood water of Winder River to ensure annual availability of water for developing agriculture sector.

The Dam will also provide water supply to the agricultural lands through canals. Some 919 square miles catchment area of Winder Dam will irrigate the area through 21 kilometers (km)'s main canal along with its four branches of 16 km each.

The water supply will be also used for drinking and other domestic purpose after proper purification and treatment for human use.

The water storage and seepage from the dam will also recharge the ground water reservoirs and increase the ground water level.

Gillani expresses deep Grief over martyrdom of soldiers in North Waziristan operation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate, Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani, on Saturday, expressed profound sorrow over the martyrdom of Pakistan Army personnel, including a Lieutenant Colonel, during an operation in North Waziristan.

In a statement, the Chairman said the nation is immensely proud of the brave soldiers of the Pakistan Army who are sacrificing their lives in the service of the country.

He acknowledged their pivotal role in making the country's defense invincible.

"Our Army and the nation stand united in the fight against terrorism. The Pakistan Army is conducting operations with a well-structured strategy to eliminate this menace," he remarked.

He further highlighted the Army's unparalleled sacrifices in the war against terrorism, emphasizing that the entire nation is standing shoulder-to-shoulder with its armed forces in this ongoing battle.

He praised the dedication and valour of the soldiers, stating that their sacrifices ensure the safety and security of Pakistan.

Winder Dam project to be completed by 2025

QUETTA (APP): The Balochistan government has given top priority to Winder Dam project and expedited the construction work to complete it by 2025 which was initiated in year 2021 in Lasbela district of Balochistan.

The Winder Dam would bring over 10,000 acres of barren land under cultivation in water scarce areas of Lasbela which would help to ensure food security by increasing agricultural production in the region, said Project Director of Winder Dam Engineer Nasir Majeed Baloch.

Baloch said that the construction of Winder Dam is considered as an important step towards development of agriculture sector in the province.

"Winder Dam project initiated by federal government would be completed in four years which would help to refill the underground water, boost the agriculture and livestock progress in the area," he said

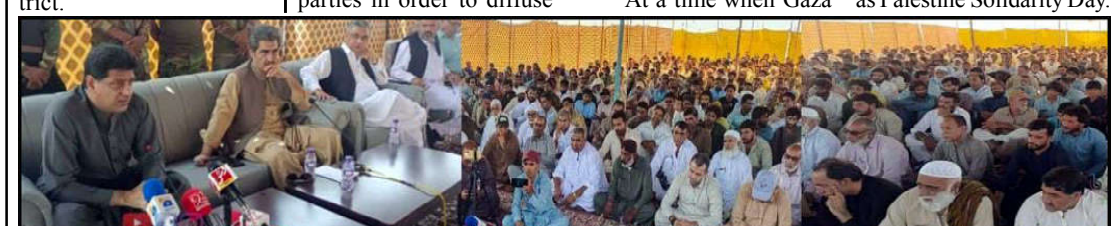
adding that the dam would supply three million gallon clean water per day to the residents of winder and its adjacent areas.

The Winder Dam has the capacity of 36,167 acre feet live storage to conserve flood water of Winder River to ensure annual availability of water for developing agriculture sector.

The Dam will also provide water supply to the agricultural lands through canals. Some 919 square miles catchment area of Winder Dam will irrigate the area through 21 kilometers (km)'s main canal along with its four branches of 16 km each.

The water supply will be also used for drinking and other domestic purpose after proper purification and treatment for human use.

The water storage and seepage from the dam will also recharge the ground water reservoirs and increase the ground water level.



BULEDA: Provincial Minister for Planning & Development Mir Zahoor Ahmed Buledi and Commissioner Mekran Division Daud Khan Khilji listening problems of people during khuli kutchery