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Pak bolsters regional ties with Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Belarus and Kyrgyzstan

PM emphasizes enhanced trade, investment between Pakistan, Kazakhstan; Meets Tajik counterpart; calls for cementing bilateral cooperation in trade, connectivity; Underlines need to increase Pak-Turkmen high-level exchanges; Calls for sustained Pak-Belarus exchanges to enhance cooperation in investment, joint tractors production

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif engaged in multiple high-level bilateral meetings with regional counterparts during the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit held in Islamabad on Tuesday. The discussions aimed at strengthening cooperation in trade, investment, and regional connectivity between Pakistan and its Central Asian partners.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday emphasized upon the need to increase high-level exchanges between Pakistan and Turkmenistan.

He stressed the importance of both sides continuing to work closely to realize the full potential of bilateral cooperation, particularly in the domains of trade, energy and connection.

On the sidelines of the SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) meeting, being held from 15-16 October in Islamabad, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Rashid Meredov called on the prime minister, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

Welcoming Turkmenistan's participation in the SCO CHG Meeting as a 'Special Guest', the prime minister reaffirmed the significance of Pakistan's long-standing, historic and brotherly ties with Turkmenistan.

He also conveyed his best wishes and warm regards to the Turkmen leadership.

Meredov congratulated Pakistan for successful organization of the SCO CHG Meeting and conveyed best wishes of the Turkmen leadership to the prime minister.

He reaffirmed Turkmenistan's unwavering commitment to building stronger and closer Pakistan-Turkmenistan ties.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday held a bilateral meeting with his Tajik counterpart Qohir Rasulzoda wherein he emphasized close bilateral collaboration to further cement mutually advantageous cooperation across all spheres of shared interest.

In the meeting, held on the sidelines of the SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) meeting here, the prime minister called for promotion of bilateral ties in the areas of trade, investment, energy and regional connectivity.

While deeply appreciating Tajikistan's active and constructive participation in the SCO CHG meeting, Prime Minister Shehbaz stressed that as brotherly countries and regional partners, Tajikistan and Pakistan shared enduring bonds of friendship and cooperation.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday while noting the warm and excellent bilateral relations between Pakistan and Kazakhstan emphasized the need to enhance trade and investment, while also focusing on regional connectivity and security.

To achieve this shared objective, the prime minister emphasized the need to maintain regular and high-level contacts, including through institutional mechanisms of bilateral engagement.

The prime minister had a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister of Republic of Kazakhstan Olzhas Bektenov on the sidelines of the SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) meeting earlier, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

Welcoming Kazakhstan's participation at the SCO CHG Meeting, the prime minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to work with all SCO countries in advancing SCO's principles and purposes.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday called for sustained exchanges between Pakistan and Belarus to realise the potential of bilateral cooperation, particularly in the areas of trade, investment, agricultural machinery and joint production of tractors and connectivity.

He also underscored the need to enhance connectivity through all-weather road networks to strengthen trade and people-to-people linkages.

He said that Chinese companies should benefit from the investment opportunities in Pakistan by investing in the Pakistan Stock Exchange.

The president stated that the time was ripe to fully leverage China's economic growth, particularly through the opportunities presented by CPEC and the Gwadar Port.

He shared that he would be visiting China in November and looked forward to reconnecting with old friends and engaging in discussions to further strengthen bilateral ties.

Reflecting on his previous visits to China during his earlier tenure, he noted that Pakistan has consistently enjoyed



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif welcoming foreign dignitaries to the dinner for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's (SCO) first day.

Chinese PM assures continued support for Pakistan's sovereignty, prosperity

Pakistan, China resolve to deepen strategic cooperation; President Zardari announces plans to visit China in November to further strengthen ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and China on Tuesday reaffirmed their commitment to further deepen strategic cooperation across key areas, including the economy, investment, and regional connectivity.

Both sides also emphasized the need to expedite the implementation of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects.

This was discussed during a meeting between the visiting Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, Li Qiang, and President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr. Welcoming the delegation, the president emphasized that Pakistan's friendship with its all-weather partner remained a cornerstone of the country's foreign policy.

He stressed the importance of exploring new avenues for cooperation as there was more space to expand bilateral relations.

He also underscored the need to enhance connectivity through all-weather road networks to strengthen trade and people-to-people linkages.

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China's unwavering support on key issues of mutual importance.

President Zardari expressed his heartfelt condolences over the tragic loss of two Chinese nationals in a terrorist attack, stating that the heart-breaking incident deeply grieved the entire nation.

He emphasized that the enemies of the Pakistan-China friendship were trying to undermine bilateral relations by targeting Chinese nationals and attempting to disrupt CPEC projects, adding that such malicious efforts would not succeed.

He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to tracking down the perpetrators and ensuring they receive exemplary punishment.

He assured the Chinese Premier that Pakistan would take all necessary measures to enhance the security of Chinese nationals working in the country.



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari in a meeting with the Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, Li Qiang, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

China trustworthy, sincere friend of Pakistan: Ayaz

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker of the National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, met with Chinese Premier Li Qiang on Tuesday and said China is a trustworthy and sincere friend of Pakistan and the country takes great pride in its everlasting friendship with China.

According to a news release issued by the National Assembly Secretariat, during the meeting, both sides discussed parliamentary and economic relations, as well as matters of mutual interest.

Both countries agreed to further expand parliamentary and economic ties. Welcoming the Chinese Premier to Pakistan, the

Speaker expressed confidence that the Premier's visit would serve as a significant milestone in strengthening bilateral relations.

He lauded the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit being hosted in Pakistan, stating that it was a great honor for the country.

He expressed hope that the SCO summit would enhance regional cooperation and strengthen regional stability. He reiterated that Pakistan attaches great importance to the SCO platform and that the summit would help project Pakistan's positive image on the global stage.

Indian FM Jaishankar arrives to attend SCO summit

ISLAMABAD (APP): India's Minister of External Affairs Subrahmanya Jaishankar arrived at the Noor Khan Airbase on Tuesday to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit being held here on Wednesday.

He was received at the airport by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs officers. Jaishankar left for Pakistan in a special plane from the capital New Delhi.

Jaishankar is the first Indian foreign minister who arrived in Pakistan after a 2015 visit of former foreign minister Sushma Swaraj.

After a team of doctors from the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (Pims) visited Adiala Jail, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan on Tuesday shared an update on incarcerated party founder

Imran Khan's health, saying: "Khan Saab is in good health and had exercised for an hour today."

Gohar's statement came after his party deferred its protest at Islamabad's D-Chowk on the SCO summit's inaugural day after Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi assured the party that a team of doctors would examine the PTI founder's health at the Rawalpindi central jail.

PM extends warm welcome to Indian FM Jaishankar, others to SCO dinner

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif warmly welcomed Indian Minister of External Affairs Subrahmanya Jaishankar along with other international leaders during a dinner marking the first day of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit on Tuesday.

While the main SCO meeting will take place on Wednesday, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif hosted a welcome dinner for delegates on Tuesday. The Foreign Office said the premier will also hold bilateral meetings on the sidelines.

Live footage showed Pakistan's PM and Indian FM having a brief chat while shaking hands.

This rare interaction marked the first visit by an Indian foreign minister to Pakistan in nearly a decade, highlighting the ongoing complexities in diplomatic ties between the two nuclear-armed neighbours.

Both leaders greeted each other at the dinner, which is part of the broader SCO summit activities taking place in the capital.

Jaishankar's arrival at Islamabad's airbase shortly before 3:30 PM was ceremoniously accompanied by children presenting him with bouquets of flowers, underscoring the event's importance.

Opposition to judicial reforms based on personal likes, dislikes: Bilawal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari stated on Tuesday that opposition to judicial reforms, including the establishment of federal constitutional courts, is driven by personal likes and dislikes.

In a message posted on X (formerly Twitter), Bilawal referred to the opposition, said, "Their opposition today is based on personal likes and dislikes or partisan positions on the politics of the moment."

He further said that the PPP's stance on judicial reforms has been consistent for nearly two decades.

Our representatives, elected in every election under my chairmanship, have been given the mandate by the people of Pakistan to establish a Federal Constitutional Court with equal representation for all," he said.

Bilawal said that the establishment of a Federal Constitutional Court has been a key part of the party's manifesto since the 2007 elections, following the Charter of Democracy signed in 2006.

He also attached relevant portions of the Charter of Democracy and the PPP's manifestos from 2013 and 2024 to his message.

SCO leaders arrive in Islamabad to attend 23rd Heads of Govt meeting

ISLAMABAD: The leadership of the member states of Shanghai Cooperation Organization has arrived in Islamabad to attend 23rd SCO Council of Heads of Government meeting.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif will preside over the meeting today. The foreign dignitaries, who have arrived in Islamabad, include Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan Zhaparov Akylybek, Belarus Prime Minister Roman Golovchenko, Prime Minister of Tajikistan Qohir Rasulzoda, Prime Minister of Kazakhstan Olzhas Bektenov, Turkmenistan's Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers Rashid Meredov, Indian Minister for External Affairs Subrahmanya Jaishankar and Prime Minister of Mongolia Oyun-Erdene Luvsannamsarai.

JUI-F rules out constitutional amendments sans PTI

ISLAMABAD (APP): Amid the prevailing ambiguity surrounding the narrative of the prospective constitutional amendments being pushed by the ruling coalition, the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) has ruled out any tweaks to the Constitution without the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Speaking to a private TV channel, JUI-F's Senator Kamran Murtaza said that they cannot ignore the PTI and that the Constitution cannot be called a consensus-oriented one if the Imran Khan-founded party is not on board.

The lawmaker's remarks come amid strenuous efforts by the incumbent government to woo the JUI-F in its bid to secure relevant numbers in the parliament to successfully pass the constitutional package provisioning a three-year fixed tenure for the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP).

COAS expresses desire to further strengthen Pak-Belarus military ties

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During the meeting, discussions were held on regional dynamics and enhancement of bilateral security and defence cooperation between the two nations, an Inter-Services Public Relations news release said.

The COAS reaffirmed Pakistan's appreciation for Belarus's contributions to global and regional affairs and expressed the desire to further strengthen the military partnership between both countries.

Prime Minister Golovchenko commended the Pakistan Armed Forces for their pivotal role in promoting regional peace and stability, and acknowledged their professionalism and sacrifices in the fight against terrorism.



ISLAMABAD: Indian Minister of External Affairs Subrahmanya Jaishankar being received by DG South Asia Ilyas Nizami at Nur Khan Airbase.

Pakistan considers China one of its closest friends: Gilani

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani met with the Premier of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Li Qiang, on Tuesday and said that Pakistan considers China one of its closest friends, with both nations committed to mutual trust, respect, and goodwill.

The meeting, aimed at deepening the bond of friendship and enhancing bilateral cooperation, particularly in the fields of economics, trade, and investment said a news release issued by the Senate Secretariat.

He underscored the historic ties between Pakistan and China, tracing back over 2,000 years to the an-

cient Silk Road, which served as a bridge of friendship between the two ancient civilizations.

He acknowledged the strong amity that has characterized Pakistan-China relations since the establishment of diplomatic ties in May 1951 and said that Pakistan was one of the first countries to recognize the People's Republic of China. Paying tribute to the visionaries who built this enduring relationship, including former Prime Ministers Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto, as well as Chinese leadership, he reflected on their contributions to solidifying ties between the two nations.

Ambassadors from key member states, including China, Russia, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan, have already arrived in Islamabad, further emphasizing the importance of Pakistan's role in the summit.

The ambassadors were summoned to assist in the coordination and organization of the conference.

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'Imran Khan in good health', says PTI chief after doctors' visit

RAWALPINDI (APP): Despite waiting outside Adiala jail for an hour, personal physician says he was not allowed to meet PTI founder

After a team of doctors from the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (Pims) visited Adiala Jail, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan on Tuesday shared an update on incarcerated party founder

Imran Khan's health, saying: "Khan Saab is in good health and had exercised for an hour today."

Gohar's statement came after his party deferred its protest at Islamabad's D-Chowk on the SCO summit's inaugural day after Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi assured the party that a team of doctors would examine the PTI founder's health at the Rawalpindi central jail.

The lawmaker's remarks come amid strenuous efforts by the incumbent government to woo the JUI-F in its bid to secure relevant numbers in the parliament to successfully pass the constitutional package provisioning a three-year fixed tenure for the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP).

Efforts will be made to initiate restoration of Pakistan-India relations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senior Indian journalist Suhagini Haidar expressed hope for a revival of bilateral relations between Pakistan and India during the upcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit. In an exclusive interview with a private TV channel, Haidar noted that trade between the two countries has been stagnant for the past five years.

With Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar visiting Pakistan, she emphasized the importance of initiating bilateral dialogue.

Haidar pointed out that there were currently no connections between the two nations similar to those established before 2019, suggesting that such discussions might not take place during this visit, as both countries have indicated that it is a multilateral engagement. She highlighted

that Pakistan had halted trade with India in 2019, following a ban on bilateral trade during the tenure of the former PTI government.

She stressed the need to restore relationships as the SCO provided a platform for leadership dialogue. Haidar called for the return of high commissioners, and the resumption of the bus service between Lahore and Delhi.

Another Indian journalist, Smita Shama, reflected on her previous visits, including a trip in 2015 during former Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swara's visit to Pakistan. She noted that since then, there has been very little forward movement in relations between both countries. She mentioned that after her last visit in July 2019, hopes for improvement have diminished as even now, Jaishankar's visit only focused on the SCO summit.

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Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Conciliatory approach

While visiting survivors of last week's heinous attack on coalminers in Duki, Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfaraz Bugti said on Saturday that a military operation was not on the cards in the troubled province. He added that intelligence-based operations were "ongoing" to uncover the facts behind the atrocity.

Though a variety of militant groups are active in Balochistan, till date no one has claimed responsibility for the Duki massacre. While there is surely a need to neutralise violent elements that present a danger to public safety in the province, the fact is that militarised responses to terrorism and insurgency have been tried in Balochistan for decades, but have failed to bring permanent peace to this tortured land.

Therefore, there is a need to investigate the intelligence lapses that led to the Duki terrorist attack and earlier violent episodes, while kinetic responses can only work if there are complementary political and economic efforts to address the deprivation that fuels separatist sentiment.

However, it appears the state is determined to continue using the same old playbook against voices peacefully demanding their rights in Balochistan. In this respect, a terrorism and sedition case has been filed against rights activist Dr Mahrang Baloch for her alleged "anti-state campaign". Perplexingly, the case has been filed by a businessman from Karachi's Landhi area.

Unfortunately, these tactics are not new. Whenever elements within the state want to tar someone with the 'anti-national' brush, cases are filed by random individuals in far-flung cities with no connection to the activists or their cause. In some instances, the activism has 'hurt' the feelings of the random aggrieved parties, and they have dutifully filed cases based on extremely serious charges. Dr Baloch has termed the case "fabricated" and has vowed to "fight this in a court of law".

The sad truth is that when the powers that be marginalise and defame peaceful voices calling for change and rights, then disaffected populations are pushed towards radicalisation and confrontation with the state. The recently concluded jirga in Jamrud, organised by the proscribed PTM, raised many of the same points that Baloch activists have been highlighting for years. It includes the problem of enforced disappearances and the extraction of KP's resources, with few benefits reaching the common people from this natural wealth.

In order to stem the tide of disaffection, efforts to maintain law and order have to be supported by political initiatives that allow deprived segments of the population to freely air their grievances, with appropriate responses from the state. Pakistan can only move forward when disillusioned segments of society — particularly in Balochistan and KP — are brought into the mainstream, and are given their constitutional rights. In the long term, this can be amongst the most effective counterterrorism measures.

Whose supremacy?

Dr Niaz Murtaza

A debate is on about the right mix between parliamentary supremacy and judicial freedom. Regime circles say the former is democracy's core but our courts now act supreme. In fact, democracy actually means supremacy of people's will and welfare, and the first two are just democracy's tools to ensure these two. So, the right mix between the first two is one that maximises public welfare.

People in democracies delegate governance to elected agents. However, agents often cheat clients. So, many clients hire third parties to monitor big agents. Parliaments monitor executives, but both come from the same political parties and a political process rife with compromises. So, democracies globally make free courts their monitors as the courts' members imbibe the high principles of justice and lack political links. What if judges cheat? Democracies don't keep another formal monitor but use free media and civil society to informally influence all state pillars to pursue people's welfare. This system of checks and balances is imperfect but works better than absolute systems.

Courts punish elected violators of the law but, globally, also review laws that undermine basic human rights or democratic norms as well as the ability of courts, media and civil society to monitor elected agents. These powers cut parliamentary supremacy but ensure that bad laws don't harm the public welfare. Can courts nix constitutional laws passed by super majorities? As people's supremacy trumps parliament's, courts must nix such bad laws passed by

even a 100 per cent majority to protect the people, but not laws in technical or administrative areas where judges lack the needed expertise.

So, public welfare is not maximised by not maximising parliament's supremacy but by balancing it with judicial freedom. Democracies flounder without such balance. Judicial freedom requires powerful executives to have no formal role in judges' hiring and accountability and court rules and work, as that may undercut their ability to monitor executives freely. This is more true for weak democracies, where executives use even informal powers to coerce the courts, which must be curbed.

It is better to have parliament, the judiciary itself, civil society and academia do these tasks. However, executive influence must be avoided while involving parliament by having committees with parity among ruling and opposition legislators, but no executive members. Our law ensures parity in committees while it involves executive members in judicial hiring. There is a case for adopting the system that the UK and India now have, where only judges do this, but by adding legal aces from civil society and academia to cut insularity. Our law rightly lets only judges hold judges accountable given the legalities involved, but gives too much leeway to chief justices in all court matters.

The new constitutional bill and other laws must be viewed via this lens. The key bad is a House with a rigged mandate amending the Constitution opaquely, hastily, and with possible horse-trading to alter the balance between state pillars for

long. The worst specific issue is the prime minister alone naming the first head of the constitutional court, which means not parliamentary but executive sway over it. Even the basic case for such a court is weak.

Separate constitutional courts were set up mainly in civil law states where regular courts lack the powers to review laws. Our courts already review laws, thus nixing the most critical logic in favour of a constitutional court. Nor will it cut pendency much, which exists mainly in the lower courts. Ace legal minds point to the huge pitfalls involved in dividing our legal system. Few common law states like ours have done so. Involving politicians in judges' hiring and accountability means conflict of interest and legal expertise issues.

The recent change in the Supreme Court procedures committee rules has also led to executive sway over the courts, as it was done via presidential assent to a cabinet decision and has re-established the chief justice's monopoly, cut by an earlier law.

So, the bill reflects not principles but a naked power grab to tame judges. It may boost parliamentary supremacy but will reduce public welfare. Our courts have often harmed public welfare like other state pillars. But the common factor undermining all state pillars is the establishment's sway over civilian structures. The bill will empower the executive but the establishment even more. It will reverse our democratic snail march by decades and increase political illegitimacy, instability, conflict and insecurity. -- Courtesy Dawn

'Here, take this'

Shahzad Sharjeel

The provenance of the gesture, 'lanat', can be traced back to ancient Greece. That the moutza or faskeloma, a gesture of disgust and condemnation, should survive many millennia and still be used in our part of the world is unsurprising, as some of our circumstances hark back to that era. Democracy and the flourishing of philosophy and arts are certainly not among them. Muddy and unpaved streets are the resemblances that survive, along with the lanat.

In the olden times, undertrials and condemned prisoners were paraded in the streets in shackles and handcuffs. The passersby, usually similar misfits, would dip their hands in the abundant muddy slush on the street and, with all five digits apart, rub it down the prisoner's face to record disgust over the actual or suspected misdeeds of the victim. Yet others, repulsed by these wretches, avoided physical contact and imitated the hand gesture from a distance. Lest their insult goes to waste, they would also yell 'na, meaning 'here, take this!' Precisely what it means in Sindhi — ie 'he vath,' a necessary accompaniment of 'bujo' or 'bhundo', as lanat is called.

Every region and society adapts cultural norms, civil and vulgar, according to its temperament.

Punjab and Sindh have added the suffix 'lakh' to 'lanat' for added effect. The Seraiki-belt has taken the insult to another level by exclaiming 'gaharore kay' (rotating and grinding) while communicating it. The Baloch and Pakhtun do not seem to have an indigenous word for it,

and the insult is uncommon, though not entirely unheard of in their cultures.

Having established the antecedents and gravity of the word, let us discuss its latest usage and the currency it is given through a viral video. By way of a full public disclosure, I have issues with the chief justice. I also favour the public right to discuss, even criticise, observations made and verdicts passed by courts on judicial merits. The incumbent chief justice and his family have been persecuted in courts of law and subjected to media trials. His tormentors are on record as acknowledging that the reference filed against him in the Supreme Judicial Council was ill-advised. The same party's supporters are piling all kinds of abuse on him. Have they not heard 'what goes around, comes around'?

Does the PTI leadership not realise that they are inviting their opponents to get equal by showing disrespect not just to them but to anyone and everything dear to them? A judge may be seen as bristling in his courtroom, scolding attorneys pleading their clients' cases, coming under the clergy's pressure to dilute earlier decisions, engaging in verbal jousts with journalists. But that does not justify the treatment being meted out to him and his family.

He may not be the best this exalted office demands or deserves, but he is not the worst.

Our history is replete with prime ministers, presidents, and service chiefs seeking safe havens abroad when they leave office or are shunted out; we seem hell-bent on adding chief justices to

this category. Yes, judges need to earn the public's respect and goodwill through their rulings while in office, but if they have committed any wrongs, how do we make them right by forcing them to leave the country? Shunning someone socially is an individual choice, but resorting to violence, physical or otherwise, begets violence.

Prime ministers, judges, or generals, serving or retired, cannot be above the law. We, the people, must ensure that institutions and those who serve and, especially, head them, act according to the Constitution while in office. Those who do not abide by the law of the land should face it regardless of whether they are in or out of office.

One hopes that truth shall prevail in every instance, muckraking and sully the reputations of the upright stops, and those hurting the rights of the citizens are punished according to law and not given a safe passage to foreign lands. The wrongfully accused and defamed should take heart; Faiz Sahib, too, was taken through the streets in handcuffs, albeit in a tonga.

That we remember his famous verse, 'aaj bazar mein pa ba jaulan chalo...' (swagger through the bazaar in shackles today), is a testament to the abiding resilience of good repute and truth. Bhutto and Faiz have acquired iconic status.

Urfi, the Persian poet, famously said, "Barking of dogs doesn't impact the beggars' sustenance." War dogs, for their part, no longer lend an ear to their master's voice and are snapping at his heels. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Pakistan Night highlights chances for IT sector growth

DUBAI (APP): A special networking event, 'Pakistan Night' held at Pakistan Association Dubai as part of the GITEX Global 2024 activities on Tuesday, highlighted opportunities for information technology sector growth.

This event was organized to foster connections among tech professionals and business leaders, which attracted hundreds of tech executives from various nationalities, providing a unique platform for collaboration and exchange of ideas.

Sheikh Mana Bin Muhammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum graced the occasion as a chief guest.

Ghanim Al Falasi, Senior VP Entrepreneurship and

Innovation Dubai Silicon Oasis, and other Emirati dignitaries also attended the event.

Pakistan's Ambassador to the UAE, Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, expressed his gratitude to his Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum for providing such a significant platform through GITEX.

"With events like these, we can substantially increase our IT-related exports and showcase Pakistan's technological potential on the global stage," the ambassador stated.

He further emphasized the importance of leveraging international platforms to promote Pakistan's growing tech industry and expand its global footprint.

On behalf of the Government of Pakistan, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, and Minister of State for IT & Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Ambassador Tirmizi thanked GITEX Global for declaring Pakistan as a tech destination in 2024.

The Ambassador highlighted the collaborative efforts of the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunications (MoITT), Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB), Pakistan Software Houses Association (PASHA), and the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) for jointly working towards strengthening Pakistan's IT industry.

SNGPL disconnects another 121 illegal connections

LAHORE (APP): In a significant enforcement operation, Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) has disconnected another 121 illegal gas connections across Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Islamabad, imposing fines totaling over 3.5 million PKR.

According to a spokesman for the department, in Multan and Sahiwal, 26 connections were severed for illegal gas usage, while Lahore and Faisalabad saw 19 more connections cut, resulting in fines exceeding 600,000 PKR. Additionally, in Sheikhupura, Gujranwala, and Sargodha, eight illegal connections were removed, incurring fines of 1.1 million PKR. Bahawalpur and Gujrat faced the disconnection of 13 connections, with penalties amounting to 20,000 PKR.



KARACHI: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Program Rubina Khalid observing the facilities at textile and design center of Hunar Foundation Korangi.

PTCL Group reports 15.3% YoY revenue growth

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL), the leading telecom and ICT services provider in the country, has reported a 15.3% year-on-year (YoY) revenue growth, reaching Rs. 160.6 billion.

This growth was primarily driven by the strong performance of the consumer segment, led by fixed broadband, mobile data, and wholesale & business solutions.

Announcing its financial results for the quarter ending September 30, 2024, following a

Board of Directors meeting, the company disclosed an operating profit of Rs. 1.6 billion. However, it also reported a net loss of Rs. 15.3 billion. In 2024, PTCL Group upheld its momentum and strengthened its position as a major telecom service provider in Pakistan. PTCL achieved revenue of Rs 79.5 billion during the first nine months of 2024, which is 11.1% higher than the same period of last year, mainly driven by growth in fixed line, wholesale & business solutions segments.

SCCI visits Thalassemia Blood Center

SARGODHA (APP): A delegation from the Sargodha Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) led by newly-elected President Khawaja Yasir Qayyum visited the Hila A-Hmer Thalassemia and Hemophilia Blood Center on Sillanwali Road on Tuesday. The delegation included executive members Rubina Mukhtar, Usman Atiq and others.

President SCCI Khawaja Yasir Qayyum, along with other members, spent time with children suffering from Thalassemia besides distributing gifts among them.

PSX turns bullish trend, gains 578 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 578.96 points, a positive change of 0.68 percent, closing at 85,840.34 points against 85,261.39 points on the last trading day. A total of 422,107,359 shares were traded during the day as compared to 477,642,675 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 24.467 billion against Rs. 23.474 billion on the last trading day.

SBP to Celebrate Women Entrepreneurship Day on November 19, 2024

ISLAMABAD (Online): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) will celebrate Women Entrepreneurship Day (WED) on November 19, 2024. The event will be inaugurated by Governor SBP Jameel Ahmad at the SBP. The event is expected to bring together top officials from banks and non-bank institutions and working women associations to recognize the significant contributions of women

entrepreneurs in the economy. Besides other activities, the event will also include recognition awards to high-performing banks that have consistently extended loans to female borrowers. Additionally, awards will be presented to women-led businesses across various categories, acknowledging their remarkable achievements in the entrepreneurial landscape.

Pak envoy to US Rizwan Sheikh begins visit to Texas in effort to expand economic ties

WASHINGTON (APP): Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Rizwan Saeed Sheikh, met with the leadership of U.S. state of Texas, business community, and Pakistani diaspora in Dallas and Houston in his efforts to further strengthen Islamabad-Washington relationship, according to a Pakistani embassy press release.

"There are immense opportunities to forge a strong partnership

between Pakistan and Texas in diverse fields, including IT, agriculture, textiles, and sports," the ambassador said as he began a 3-day visit to Texas on Monday with that message.

"Our diaspora in the United States can play a pivotal role in strengthening economic ties with the U.S. while also helping their counterparts capitalize on economic opportunities in Pakistan," he said.



ISLAMABAD: A view of closed Petrol Pump due to Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit, in Islamabad.

IMF says global public debt to top \$100 trillion, growth may accelerate

NEW YORK (INP): The world's total public debt is set to exceed \$100 trillion this year for the first time, and may grow more quickly than forecast as political sentiment favors higher spending and slow growth amplifies borrowing needs and costs, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said on Tuesday.

The IMF's latest Fiscal Monitor report showed global public debt will reach 93 per cent of global gross domestic product by the end of 2024 and approach 100pc by 2030. That would exceed its 99pc peak during COVID-19. It would also be up 10 percentage points from 2019, before the pandemic exploded

government spending. Released a week before the IMF and World Bank hold annual meetings in Washington, the Fiscal Monitor said there are good reasons to believe future debt levels could be well higher than currently projected, including a desire to spend more in the US, the world's largest economy.

"Fiscal policy uncertainty has increased, and political red lines on taxation have become more entrenched," the IMF said in the report. "Spending pressures to address green transitions, population aging, security concerns, and long-standing development challenges are mounting."



PESHAWAR: Ex Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali addressing to the meeting of Mohmand Chamber of Commerce.

SCCI calls for joint initiatives to improve Pak-Iran trade

PESHAWAR (APP): President Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Fazal Moqem Khan called for cementing bilateral trade and economic relations between Pakistan and Iran, said a release issued here Tuesday.

He was talking to Ali Banafshehkh, Iranian Consul General in Peshawar during a meeting held here at the Chamber House.

According to a spokesman for the department, in Multan and Sahiwal, 26 connections were severed for illegal gas usage, while Lahore and Faisalabad saw 19 more connections cut, resulting in fines exceeding 600,000 PKR. Additionally, in Sheikhupura, Gujranwala, and Sargodha, eight illegal connections were removed, incurring fines of 1.1 million PKR. Bahawalpur and Gujrat faced the disconnection of 13 connections, with penalties amounting to 20,000 PKR.

Ali Banafshehkh who was accompanied by commercial attaché Hossein Mailli, said Iran wants to improve trade and economic relations with Pakistan and all neighboring countries.

KP CM directs For implementation of minimum monthly wages

PESHAWAR (APP): KP Chief Minister Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur has ruled out compromise on the rights of the labourers and directed the concerned authorities for the implementation of minimum monthly wages in any circumstances.

He issued these directives while presiding over a meeting of the Labour Department here on Wednesday. Besides, the Provincial Minister for Labour, Fazal Shakoor, the Secretary Labour and Advocate General and other concerned authorities also attended the meeting.

The meeting took various steps and decisions for the welfare of labourers and workers of the

industrial units and brickkilns. The chief minister directed the authorities for the opening of the bank accounts of labourers and workers of the industrial sector to transfer their salaries to them. The chief minister also directed the authorities to sit with the owners of industries and framed a comprehensive policy for the protection of the rights of labourers. He further directed for provision of protection to the employment of the workers of the industrial sector and a platform for the redressal of the complaints and prevention of injustice in this regard.

The chief minister further directed for fixation of a job quota for

employment of the local labourers and its strict implementation.

He on this occasion said that workers of brickkilns are met out cruelty and excesses and said that they will not allow the exploitation of those workers in any circumstances and directed for special focus on the prevention of excesses with workers of brickkilns.

The chief minister said that the provision of justice and protection to the rights of such oppressed class of the society is the responsibility of the government and directed the concerned authorities to register brickkilns and compile data of the labourers working in them.



KARACHI: Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Chairperson, Senator Rubina Khalid visiting the Hunar Foundation in Karachi.

KP Law Minister says: Work on under-construction building of LMH Kohat will resume soon

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs Aftab Alam Afridi Advocate has said that work on the under-construction building of Liaqat Memorial Women and Children Hospital Kohat will be resumed soon for which the PDWP has already approved revised estimate of more than Rs.2.44 Billion.

Sheikh Allah Dad the other day. He on this occasion also condoled the sad demise of the members of Tableeghi Jamaat who were died in a road accident recently and prayed for the eternal peace of the deceased. The minister said that a Tender of Rs.1 Billion has already been done for the said hospital in April this year, out of which Rs.20 Million have been released. He added that Liaqat Memorial Hospital will be equipped with modern medical equipment and facilities.

This he said while talking to the local people on the occasion of his visit to the Union Council Ziarat

Federal Ombudsman intervenes to waive fine for widow, restore ID card

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Federal Ombudsman, Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi Tuesday successfully intervened to waive a fine imposed by NADRA and restore the ID card of a widow from Havelian.

The woman had filed a complaint at the Abbottabad regional office, reporting a fine of 10,000 rupees for the issuance of a duplicate ID card, which had led to the suspension of her identification.

Upon receiving the complaint, the Federal

Ombudsman Secretariat's Regional Office promptly issued notices to NADRA officials and requested a comprehensive report on the case.

Following a thorough investigation and hearing, Ombudsman Qureshi ruled in favor of the complainant, ordering NADRA to immediately waive the fine and restore her ID card in compliance with these directives. NADRA Abbottabad has reinstated the widow's ID card and waived the fine.

CM forms committee to probe rape case

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif constituted a 7-member high-powered committee to investigate the private college alleged rape case, and directed it to submit a detailed investigative report within 48 hours.

The CM directed the investigation committee to record evidence of the abuse case, besides statements of the parties concerned. She also directed them to examine police action and response of the college administration to the case.

The CM appointed the Chief Secretary convener of the committee. Other members of the committee include Secretaries Home.

Health adviser visits UNICEF Office Peshawar

PESHAWAR (APP): Advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Health Ihtisham Ali and Health Secretary Adeel Shah visited UNICEF Peshawar office and express gratitude for support and assistance being provided to provincial health authorities.

They were received by UNICEF Health Team Lead Dr Inamullah, Program Manager Wisam Hazem and Nutrition Specialist.

Taking care of special children is nothing less than a virtue: Governor

Independent Report
LAHORE: A delegation of Down Syndrome Association Pakistan led by Member Provincial Salma Hashmi called on Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House Lahore.

Speaking on this occasion, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that taking care of special children and equipping them with education is nothing less than a virtue. Governor Punjab appreciated the efforts of Dawn Syndrome Association to educate and train the children with Down Syndrome in an inclusive environment. Governor Punjab said that

such institutions which are serving humanity should be encouraged in every way. Governor Punjab assured the delegation of all possible support for Down Syndrome Association. Member Provincial Assembly Salma Hashmi informed the Punjab Governor about the efforts of Dawn Syndrome Association to provide inclusive education to children with Down syndrome like the developed countries and make them active members of the society. On this occasion, Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan along with the delegation also planted a sapling in the Governor's House.



KARACHI: Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Chairperson, Senator Rubina Khalid exchanging views with Saeed Ghani, Sindh Minister for Local Government during meeting held in Karachi.

PDWP approves five development schemes worth Rs 8.471b

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Development Working Party (PDWP) in its 37 meeting of fiscal year 2024-25 here Tuesday approved five development schemes worth of Rs 8.471 billion.

Chaired by Acting Chairman of P&D Board, Dr Asif Tufail, the meeting approved the following schemes: Establishment of a State-of-the-Art Wildlife Hospital at Safari Zoo, Lahore, at a cost of Rs 2482 million. Chief Minister Wildlife Rescue Force at a cost of Rs 2363 million. Immersive Wildlife

Experience (cinema and moving theatre) in Punjab at a cost of Rs 1765 million.

Environmental Monitoring of Industrial Units (DLI 1-3, PGDP World Bank) at a cost of Rs 861 million.

Replacement of Old/Condemned Equipment of PFSA at a cost of Rs 1,000 million. Additionally, the Punjab Tourism for Economic Growth Project (PTEGP) - World Bank-assisted scheme is recommended for CDWP at a cost of Rs 12.472 billion.



LAHORE: Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan along with delegation of Down Syndrome Association Pakistan led by Member Provincial Salma Hashmi offering Dua after sapling tree at Governor House.

Suthra Punjab outsourcing bidding completed in 64 tehsils: Minister

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Local Government Minister Zeeshan Rafiq has said that in line with the vision of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif regarding Suthra Punjab, the bidding process has been completed in 64 tehsils of the province and the pre-qualification process will be completed in the rest of tehsils during October.

He was chairing a meeting at the Civil

Secretariat here on Tuesday. Secretary Local Government Department Shakeel Ahmed Mian, Additional Secretary Maria Tariq, CEO of LWMC Babar Sahib Din were also present while CEOs of other waste management companies participated through video link. On this occasion, the progress on Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's Suthra Punjab program and outsourcing model was reviewed in detail.

'Maryam Ke Dastak' now covers 22 districts

LAHORE (APP): The 'Maryam ke Dastak' initiative, launched by Chief Minister of the Punjab (CM) Maryam Nawaz and executed by the Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB), has expanded to 22 districts across Punjab to enhance public service delivery. The citizens of Kasur, Jhang, Attock, Bhakkar, Khanewal, Muzaffargarh, Bahawalnagar, Sialkot, Jehlum, Mianwali and Sheikhupura can also now avail over 60 government services from the comfort of their homes. Previously these services were available in 11 districts: Lahore, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, Multan, Gujranwala, Bahawalpur, Dera Ghazi Khan, Sargodha, Sahawal, Okara and Pakpattan. Since its launch on June 4, 2024, the program has rapidly expanded from offering 10 essential public services in the Lahore district to over 60 services across 22 districts within a mere three months.

International News

21 killed in Israeli strike on Lebanon's Christian village

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: Lebanon's health ministry said at least 21 people died in a rare Israeli strike on a northern Christian-majority village, far from Hezbollah strongholds, with DNA tests being conducted to identify body parts.

A Lebanese security official said the building "housed families displaced from Lebanon's south, and was targeted shortly after a man had arrived in a car".

"The Israeli enemy strike on the village of Aitko... killed in a preliminary toll 21 people and injured eight. DNA tests are being conducted to determine the identity of body parts recovered at the strike site," the ministry said, referring to a village in the Christian-majority Zgharta district. The official National News Agency said Israel targeted a "residential apartment" in the village.

A photographer at the site of the strike said it had levelled a residential building at the entrance to the village. Body parts were scattered in the rubble, with Red Cross volunteers searching for survivors in

the wreckage while ambulances evacuated the wounded.

The Lebanese army

Israel kills at least 40 in Gaza, tanks deepen raid in the north

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Israeli military strikes killed at least 40 Palestinians across the Gaza Strip as Israeli forces tightened their squeeze around Jabalia in the north of the enclave on Tuesday, amid fierce battles with Hamas-led fighters.

Palestinian health officials said at least 11 people were killed by Israeli fire near Al-Falouja in Jabalia, the largest of Gaza's eight historic refugee camps, while 10 others were killed in Bani Suhaia in eastern Khan Younis in the south when an Israeli missile struck a house.

Earlier on Tuesday, an Israeli airstrike destroyed three houses in the Sabra suburb of Gaza City, and the local civil emergency service said they recovered two bodies from the site, while the

search continued for 12 other people who were believed to have been in the houses at the time of the strike. Five others were killed when a house was struck in the Nuseirat camp in central Gaza.

Jabalia has been the focus of an Israeli offensive for more than 10 days, with troops returning to areas of the north that came under heavy bombardment in the early months of the year-long war. The operation has raised concerns among Palestinians and UN agencies that Israel wants to clear residents from the north of the crowded enclave, a charge it has denied.

The United Nations human rights office said on Tuesday the Israeli military appeared to be "cutting off North Gaza completely from the rest of the Gaza Strip."



Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, with Minister of Foreign Affairs Melanie Joly, and Minister of Public Safety, Democratic Institutions and Intergovernmental Affairs Dominic LeBlanc, takes part in a press conference about the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's investigation into "violent criminal activity in Canada with connections to India", on Parliament Hill in Ottawa.

North Korea blows up roads connecting it to the South

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: North Korea blew up sections of the deeply symbolic roads connecting it to the South on Tuesday, Seoul's military said, adding it had conducted a "counter-fire" operation in response.

Pyeongyang's military last week vowed to permanently seal its southern border after spending months laying mines and building anti-tank barriers in the wake of leader Kim Jong Un declaring the South his

country's "principal enemy".

The North also accused Seoul of using drones to drop anti-regime propaganda leaflets on the capital Pyongyang, with Kim convening a security meeting to direct a plan of "immediate military action" in response, state media reported on Tuesday.

"North Korea has detonated parts of the Geongui and Donghae roads north of the Military Demarcation Line."

India to buy 31 armed drones from US

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: India signed a deal with the US State Department on Tuesday to buy 31 armed MQ-9B SkyGuardian and SeaGuardian High Altitude Long Endurance (HALE) drones, the South Asian nation's defence ministry said. The deal follows talks that began in 2018. It is expected to significantly increase India's surveillance and intelligence capabilities and is in line with US efforts to coax India away from buying Russian military equipment and counter China's growing dominance. India's apex defence body approved the procurement last year just before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to Washington.

Saudi crown prince visits Cairo

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman is visiting Cairo on Tuesday to discuss trade and investment as well as the crises in Lebanon and Gaza with Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, Egyptian diplomatic sources said. The visit comes amid speculation about potential Saudi investments in Egypt.

US, Philippines launch war games a day after China's Taiwan drills

Monitoring Desk
MANILA: Thousands of US and Filipino marines launched 10 days of joint exercises in the northern and western Philippines on Tuesday, a day after China held huge drills around Taiwan. The annual Kamandag, or Venom, exercises are focussed on defending the north coast of the Philippines' main island of Luzon, which lies about 800 kilometres from self-ruled Taiwan.

Beijing considers Taiwan part of its territory and has vowed it will never rule out using force to take it, calling Monday's drills a "stern warning" to "separatist" forces on the island. The joint US-Filipino

exercises come amid a series of escalating confrontations between China and the Philippines over reefs and waters in the South China Sea, which Beijing claims almost in its entirety.

Philippine Marine Corps commandant Major-General Arturo Rojas stressed at Tuesday's opening ceremony in Manila that Kamandag was long planned and had "nothing to do with whatever is happening in the region".

The drills' primary focus will be live-fire exercises along Luzon's north coast, while other activities will be conducted on tiny Philippine islands between Luzon and Taiwan.

Sending a THAAD air defense system to Israel adds to strain on US Army forces

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: The deployment of a U.S. Terminal High Altitude Area Defense battery to Israel and roughly 100 soldiers to operate it will add to already difficult strains on the Army's air defense forces and potential delays in modernizing its missile defense systems, Army leaders said Monday. The service's top two leaders declined to provide details on the deployment ordered by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin over the weekend. But they spoke broadly about their concerns as the demand for THAAD and Patriot missile batteries grows because of the war in Ukraine and the escalating conflict between Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah and Hamas militants.

"The air defense, artillery community is the most stressed. They have the highest 'optempo' really of any part of the Army," Army Secretary Christine Wormuth said, using a phrase meaning the pace of operations. "We're

just constantly trying to be as disciplined as we can, and give Secretary Austin the information he needs to accurately assess the strain on the force when he's considering future operational deployments." Wormuth said the Army has to be careful about "what we take on. But of course, in a world that's so volatile, you know, sometimes we have to do what we have to do." The Pentagon announced the THAAD deployment Sunday, saying it was authorized at the direction of President Joe Biden. U.S. officials said the system will be moved from a location in the continental United States to Israel and that it will take a number of days for it and the soldiers to arrive. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details of troop movements.

The move adds to what have been growing tensions within the Defense Department about what weapons the U.S. can afford to send to Ukraine.

UN Security Council voices 'strong concern' for UN peacekeepers after Israeli attacks

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: The U.N. Security Council expressed "strong concern" Monday as Israel has fired on and wounded U.N. peacekeepers in southern Lebanon during intensified fighting, reiterating its support for their role in supporting security in the region. It's the first statement by the U.N.'s most powerful body since Israel's attacks on the positions of the peacekeeping force known as UNIFIL began last week, drawing international condemnation.

U.N. peacekeeping chief Jean-Pierre Lacroix told reporters that Secretary-General António

Guterres confirmed Monday that peacekeepers will remain in all their positions even as Israel has urged the peacekeepers to move 5 kilometers (3 miles) north during its ground invasion in Lebanon.

Israel has been escalating its campaign against Hezbollah in Lebanon across a U.N.-drawn boundary between the two countries.

The sides have been clashing since the Iranian-backed militant group started firing rockets a year ago in solidarity with its ally Hamas in Gaza. Hamas' deadly attacks in southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, launched the war.

Iran summons Hungarian ambassador, condemns EU and UK sanctions

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: Iran's foreign ministry summoned Hungary's ambassador on Tuesday to protest against new European Union sanctions on Tehran and denied Western allegations that it has transferred ballistic missiles to Russia, Iranian state media reported.

The EU agreed on Monday to impose sanctions on seven people and seven organisations, including airline Iran Air, for alleged links to Iranian transfers of ballistic missiles to Russia. Britain, which is not in the EU, also imposed new sanctions.

Canada's Trudeau slams India as tensions soar over Sikh separatist's murder

Monitoring Desk
OTTAWA: Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau accused India on Monday of making a "fundamental error", as an escalating row over the killing of a Sikh separatist on Canadian soil last year saw both countries expel each other's ambassadors.

A grave Trudeau branded New Delhi's actions as "unacceptable" during a press conference in Ottawa on the diplomatic expulsions, which saw tensions reach a new height after the 2023 mur-

der of Canadian citizen Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

Trudeau has previously said there were "credible allegations" linking Indian intelligence services to the killing. Both countries have traded barbs since then, culminating with the expulsions Monday of each other's ambassadors and five other top diplomats in both countries. "The government of India made a fundamental error in thinking that they could engage in supporting criminal activity against Canadians here on Canadian soil."

Pakistan calls India's occupation of Kashmir 'worst manifestation' of colonialism; urges peaceful settlement

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Describing India's occupation of Jammu and Kashmir as the "worst manifestation of modern-day colonialism," Pakistan has underscored the need for the resolution of the decades-old dispute over the Himalayan state to achieve durable peace in South Asia.

"The United Nations and all its Member States are bound by the UN Charter to promote a peaceful settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions and the wishes of the Kashmiri people," Ambassador Munir Akram, permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN, told the General Assembly's Special Political and Decolonization (Fourth) Committee on Monday.

Noting that since 1946, 80 former colonies have gained independence, he said, "There are still peoples who are denied the right to self-determination, among them the people of occupied Kashmir and Palestine."

Condemning Israeli genocidal war against the Palestinian people and the aggression against Lebanon, the Pakistani envoy said, "Israel's massacres and brutalities will not extinguish the struggle for freedom and self-determination of the people of Palestine". In this context, he advocated a two-state solution to usher in lasting peace in the Middle East.

"Similarly, India's occupation of Jammu & Kashmir is another worst manifestation of modern-day colonialism," he added.

The right of self-de-

termination of the Kashmiri people, Ambassador Akram said, was explicitly recognized in UNSC resolution 47 (1948) and several subsequent resolutions, which prescribed that the final disposition of the State of Jammu & Kashmir should be decided by its people through a free and fair plebiscite held under UN auspices.

These resolutions were accepted by both India and Pakistan, he said.

"Under Article 25 of the UN Charter, both parties are obliged to implement these resolutions," he added.

On Kashmir, the Pakistani envoy said, "For 75 years, through force and fraud, India has avoided the implementation of UN resolutions, and since 1989, it's 'brutal' campaign of repression killed 100,000 Kashmiris.



ISLAMABAD: Kazakhstan's Prime Minister Olzhas Bektenov arrives in Pakistan to attend the 23rd SCO conference. Federal Minister for Privatization, Communication and Investment Abdul Aleem Khan, welcomes the Kazakhstan's Prime Minister at Islamabad International Airport.

APHC urges UN to hold India accountable for atrocities in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD (APP): The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has made an urgent appeal to the United Nations to intervene and hold India accountable for its atrocities in occupied Jammu and Kashmir. According to Kashmir Media Service, APHC spokesman Abdul Rashid Minhas in a statement issued in Srinagar condemned the actions of Indian occupation regime including the torture of innocent Kashmiris, seizure of their properties, and suppression of their right to self-determination through relentless cordon and search operations and house raids.

He said Indian personnel, including paramilitary, police, National Investigation Agency, and State Investigation Agency are terrorizing Kashmiris to crush their legitimate demand for self-rule. Minhas emphasized that the BJP regime is exploiting the judiciary to intimidate Kashmiris, targeting Hurriyat leaders, journalists, scholars and ordinary citizens with fabricated cases. Kashmiris committed to the freedom struggle are being booked under draconian laws for their political beliefs and advocating for a plebiscite. Despite facing brutalities, the Kashmiri people remain resolute in pursuing their freedom cause. The spokesman urged the United Nations to play its role in settling the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the UN resolutions and aspirations of the Kashmiri people to avert a catastrophe like the one the world is witnessing in the Middle East.

Pak-Russia Joint Exercise Druzhba-VII commences at NCTC Pabbi

RAWALPINDI (APP): Pakistan-Russia Joint Exercise Druzhba-VII which is the 7th bilateral joint exercise in Counter Terrorism domain between the Armies of Pakistan and Russia has commenced at National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC).

The two weeks long exercise commenced on October 13 at National Counter Terrorism Centre, Pabbi with participation of Light Commando Troops of Pakistan Army and Russian Military Contingent, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

The Commandant National Counter Terrorism Centre graced the opening ceremony of the exercise as a chief guest.

The exercise is aimed at refining professional skills through joint training besides harnessing the historic military to military relations among the friendly countries.

Chinese Premier's visit to herald new era for CPEC: Dr Talat Shabbir

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director China-Pakistan Study Centre at Institute of Strategic Studies Dr. Talat Shabbir Tuesday said that Chinese Premier's visit to Pakistan will be a game-changer for the country, marking the beginning of a new era for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

In an exclusive talk with PTV news channel, he said the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is poised to be a game-changer for Pakistan's economy, with estimates suggesting it will generate millions of jobs by 2030, adding, "The Summit is expected to usher in a new era of cooperation and growth for Pakistan, with CPEC at the forefront of this strategic partnership."

Hosting the prestigious SCO meeting in Islamabad is a significant diplomatic achievement for Pakistan, marking a major

MoIB releases song to welcome guests of SCO summit

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has released a song to welcome the foreign guests attending 23rd meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) here in Islamabad.

The song gives an insight into Pakistan's colorful cultural heritage and tradition of hospitality, said a news statement.

Beautiful places, historical and important buildings and diverse culture of Pakistan are beautifully presented in the song.

The lyrics of the song entails the hospitality of the people of Pakistan and the spirit to welcome the SCO heads of state.



ISLAMABAD: Urs (death anniversary of a Sufi saint) of Sheikh Hazrat Syed Abdul Qadir Gilani being held Golra Sharif in the Federal Capital.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets with Prime Minister of Kazakhstan H.E. Olzhas Bektenov on the sidelines of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Head of Government Meeting.

Sherry urges Pakistan to harness momentum for regional connectivity, growth

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senior leader of the Pakistan People's Party & former Ambassador Senator Sherry Rehman Tuesday stressed that Pakistan has a historic opportunity to leverage momentum and achieve its connectivity goals, particularly with numerous dignitaries from various states participating.

In an exclusive interview, Senator Sherry Rehman highlights connectivity potential and said it is best time for Pakistan's Chance to Shine globally.

Senator Sherry Rehman emphasized the importance of Pakistan leveraging its momentum to strengthen regional connect-

ivity, particularly through initiatives like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Gawadar.

Pakistanis are known for their genuine warmth and welcoming nature, which is deeply ingrained in the country's cultural fabric, she added.

This remarkable hospitality has the power to convey a strong message to the world, showcasing Pakistan's soft image and its people's kindness, she added.

By leveraging its hospitality, Pakistan can improve its international image, promote intercultural harmony and create employment opportunities for

Pakistan desires to expand new avenues of cooperation with Kyrgyz Republic: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday while reiterating Pakistan's strong desire to further strengthen cooperation with Kyrgyz Republic, stressed the need to enhance new avenues of collaboration in the areas of trade, investment, people-to-people contacts and regional connectivity.

The prime minister held a bilateral meeting with Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic Akybek Japarov on the sidelines of SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) Meeting, being held in Islamabad from 15-16 October, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The prime minister thanked Kyrgyz Republic's positive and active participation in the SCO CHG Meeting and appreciated Kyrgyz Republic's support



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister of Tajikistan, Qohir Rasulzoda calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on the sidelines of SCO Council of Heads Meeting.

SCO holds strategic value for Pak foreign policy: Bilawal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Pakistan People's Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, emphasized on Thursday that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit holds significant strategic value, presenting a crucial opportunity to open new economic and diplomatic avenues for the country.

Talking to a private news channel, he said that the SCO offers a vital platform for multilateral engagements, enabling member states to collaborate on a broad spectrum of issues.

He stated that the successful hosting of the SCO will significantly boost regional cooperation and strengthen Pakistan's global standing. In response to a query about bilateral talks with India, he clarified that, according to SCO regulations,

IG Rizvi reviews foolproof security plans for SCO summit

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Inspector General (IG) Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, on Tuesday presided over a high-level meeting to discuss security arrangements for the "Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit" in Islamabad.

A public relations officer told APP that the meeting was attended by DIG Headquarters Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanveer and other senior police officials.

During the meeting, IG Rizvi, reviewed the security arrangements and directed senior officers to implement more effective security measures.

The IG emphasized that security of the delega-



KARACHI: Ambassador of Italy, Marilina ARMELLINI, along with Rear Admiral Stefano BARBIERI, Capability Director of the Italian Defence General Staff, called on Commander Pakistan Fleet, Rear Admiral Abdul Munib.

TikTok removes 78,827,465 videos for 'breaching' its community guidelines

ISLAMABAD (APP): In its ongoing efforts to foster a safe and positive user experience, TikTok has removed 78,827,465 videos for breaching its community guidelines.

Notably, 144,430,133 of these videos were removed through automated systems, highlighting the platform's innovative use of its detection technology to eliminate harmful content in real time.

According to TikTok Q2 2024 Community Guidelines Enforcement Report, over 30,709,744 videos were removed from TikTok in Pakistan, in the latest reporting period, as the platform continues to strengthen its content moderation systems to safe-

Khurram Dastgir Khan hails SCO summit as boost to Pakistan's economy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz prominent leader Khurram Dastgir Khan Tuesday expressed pride in the government's hosting of the SCO summit, highlighting its potential to unlock bilateral ties and create economic opportunities.

In an interview with a private news channel, he said, "This historic move is seen as a significant step in strengthening Pakistan's relationships with neighboring countries, including China, with whom they have enjoyed warm and cordial relations."

"The SCO summit offers a platform to forge closer ties in areas such as trade, economy, invest-

AIOU Int'l moot: World should work on education diplomacy, Dr. Mukhtar

ISLAMABAD (APP): The world should work on education diplomacy and should use science not as a means of destruction but as a tool for global peace and development, said Chairman, Higher Education Commission (HEC), Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed.

He was addressing the inaugural session of the 37th AAOU Annual Conference 2024 at Allama Iqbal Open University as a chief guest, yesterday (Monday).

The three-day conference of Asian Association of Open Universities titled "Expanding horizons.



ISLAMABAD: Pak Army soldiers stands alert at Express Chowk due to security high alert ahead of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit 2024, in the Federal Capital.

Historic SCO meeting in Pakistan: a moment of pride: former CPEC PD

ISLAMABAD (APP): Dr. Hassan Dawood Butt, former CPEC Project Director, emphasized on Tuesday that the 23rd Summit of the Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) marked a historic milestone and a moment of pride for Pakistan after 27 years.

Talking to APP, he noted that the SCO meeting's primary agenda was to strengthen regional cooperation among member countries, focusing on economic, trade, and infrastruc-

ture collaboration. The meeting provided a platform to tackle challenges and explore opportunities for shared development.

He stated that the participation of member countries in the meeting aimed to foster peace, stability, and economic development in the region, benefiting all, including Pakistan.

He also mentioned that the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would create new development opportunities.

This phase would pri-

Journalist community, public hail SCO conference as 'diplomatic triumph'

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) conference Tuesday hailed as a resounding success, earning widespread acclaim from journalists and the general public alike for its significant contribution to economic growth and for prevailing brotherly atmosphere among neighboring countries.

Journalists from various channels hailed the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) conference as a diplomatic triumph, marking a significant milestone in regional cooperation.

The SCO conference has set a positive tone for regional cooperation, eco-

omic growth and peaceful development, cementing the organization's role as a key player in global affairs, Asad ullah Khan a renowned foreign Affairs expert talking to PTV news channel said.

He praised that the conference marked a new era of cooperation among SCO member states, with a focus on promoting economic growth, regional security and stability.

The organization's expanded membership and growing international influence make it an increasingly important player in global affairs, he added.

"Pakistan's peaceful narrative is being amplified on social media, producing compelling content that resonates with younger audiences and promotes a positive national identity," said a citizen of Islamabad.

"Social media platforms are also being utilized to showcase Pakistan's peaceful face, crafting engaging content that targets impressionable segments and fosters a positive global image," said a youngster.

"The SCO's focus on economic cooperation and regional security is a welcome shift, providing a platform for member states to address pressing issues," Waqas Bakir a journalist from Karachi added.