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No tolerance for parallel courts or armed rebellion, Naqvi warns PTM, its supporters

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday warned that no one would be allowed to establish a parallel judicial system in the country, use four language against state institutions, or take up arms.

Following the ban on the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM), all formalities will be completed, including the cancellation of identity cards, passports, and the closure of political offices and activities. Anyone who attempts to support or assist PTM will also fall under the same ban. A clear message has been sent to those backing PTM that if they act against the country, the same will be done to them, he said. The minister emphasized that rights and taking up arms cannot go hand in hand.

While addressing a press conference at the Ministry of Interior here Wednesday, Mohsin Naqvi stated that while tribal jirgas (councils) have been held before, led by tribal elders, bringing thousands of people to such gatherings is not considered a jirga but something else entirely.

The government of Pakistan has decided that no parallel judicial system will be allowed under any circumstances, he said.

He further said that the main reason for the ban on PTM is the party's use of derogatory language against state institutions and the police, as well as inciting division among the nation through ethnic discrimination. While discussing political issues and people's rights is permitted, no one will be allowed to incite people against the institutions. Naqvi mentioned that it has come to their attention that individuals from one or two political parties, when meeting with PTM leaders, supported them on the issue of rights but also emphasized that rights cannot be discussed while simultaneously taking up arms.

He added that after the ban on PTM, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government had placed 54 individuals and the Balochistan government had placed 34 individuals on the Fourth Schedule.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of Cabinet Committee on Energy.

Cabinet committee okays independent multiplayer market for power sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Cabinet Committee on Energy on Wednesday approved the establishment of an independent multiplayer market for power generation and purchase to pave the way for a competitive environment and gradually end the government's role as a sole purchaser of electricity.

The committee, in its meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, principally approved the formation of an Independent System and Market Operator (ISMO) which will be later endorsed by the federal cabinet and registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan under the Companies Act 2017,

according to a PM Office press release.

The ISMO is aimed at gradually doing away with the government's role as a sole buyer of electricity and turning the electricity market into a multiplayer independent, transparent, and competitive market. It will also allow the power consumers to purchase electricity from suppliers other than power distribution companies.

Under the ISMO, long-term planning would be made to produce low-cost electricity and its transmission besides reducing the power prices and circular debt.

The ISMO Board will comprise the experts from the power sector.

Many things are being done unconstitutionally: CJP

SC seeks opinion from govt, WAPDA on keeping dam funds in private banks

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa on Wednesday remarked that most of the things in Pakistan were done illegally and unconstitutionally.

He made these remarks during the hearing of Diamir Bhasha and Mohmand Dam Fund case.

A three-member bench, headed by Chief Justice Qazi Faiz Isa, conducted the hearing, where the court was informed that the dam fund currently holds over Rs23 billion, with Rs11 billion as the principal amount and over Rs12 billion in markup.

The Supreme Court of Pakistan has sought actionable suggestions from the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), the Auditor General, and the Attorney General for the proper utilization of the funds in the Dams Fund case.

Additional attorney general informed the court that the apex court couldn't keep the dam fund amount, adding that the SC registrar was responsible for taking care of the account. He said that no irregularity was reported in the dam fund and markup.

The additional attorney general told the apex court that fund had total Rs23 billion with Rs11 billion as donations and Rs12 billion as markup amount.

The Chief Justice Isa criticized this practice, calling it an "eye-opener," and questioned why the government is essentially benefiting itself.

The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) legal advisor informed the court that the fund's money is managed by the government, and any funds allocated for WAPDA must go through the public account.



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari administering the oath of office to the Chairman of the Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC), Lt. General (Retd) Akhtar Nawaz Satti at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

President greets Shahzaib on winning World Karate Combat C'ship ; presents 100mn cheque

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday felicitated Shahzaib Khan on winning the World Karate Combat Championship title in Singapore.

The president presented a cheque worth Rs100 million to Shahzaib, Chief Minister of Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti was also present on the occasion, President Secretariat Press Wing said

in a press release. The president praised Shahzaib Khan for bringing laurels to the country and expressed the hope that he would register more triumphs in the future.

He observed that the youth in Balochistan province was gifted with immense talent which required provision of opportunities. He stressed that the youth should be encouraged to excel in arena of sports.

Lt Gen (Retd) Akhtar Nawaz sworn in as FPSC chairman

ISLAMABAD (APP): Lt. General (Retd) Akhtar Nawaz Satti on Wednesday took the oath of the office of Chairman of the Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC).

President Asif Ali Zardari administered the oath to the newly appointed chairman at a swearing-in ceremony held at the Aiwan-e-Sadr.

The ceremony was attended by notables including senior government officials.

PM visits martyred Lt. Col Ali Shaukat's residence for condolence

FAISALABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday visited the residence of Lt. Colonel Muhammad Ali Shaukat Shaheed here to offer condolence and pay tribute to the sacrifices made by the security forces to safeguard the country. Lt. Col Ali Shaukat, along with five security personnel including Lance Naiks Muhammadullah, Akhtar Zaman, Shahidullah, and Yousuf, and a sepoy Jameel Ahmed embraced martyrdom during a firefight with the terrorists in the Spinwam area of North Waziristan on October 5, 2024.

During interaction with the bereaved family members, the prime minister conveyed his condolence and offered Fateha for the martyred soul and strength for the family members to bear the loss.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb in a meeting with a high level delegation from the Asian Development Bank at the Finance Division.

Changing economy's DNA must for inclusive, sustainable growth: Finance Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Wednesday reaffirmed the government's commitment to implementing its reform agenda and meeting structural benchmarks to lend permanence to macroeconomic stability, promote inclusive, sustainable growth and end Pakistan's reliance on external borrowing.

He made it clear that the only way this goal could be successfully achieved, was by changing the DNA of the economy by moving it away from its usual boom-and-bust cycles and leading it to a sustained export-led growth, encouraging investment and FDI flows into export-oriented sectors and getting access back to the international capital market.

He made this observation during a meeting with a high-level delegation from the Asian Development Bank that called on

the Minister at Finance Division, according to press release issued by Finance Ministry.

The visiting delegation was led by Donald Bobiash, Executive Director of Asian Development Bank and Shigeo Shimizu, Executive Director Asian Development Bank while Yong Ye, Country Director Asian Development Bank and other senior officers from the ADB and Finance Division were also present.

Aurangzeb shared with them a roundup of ongoing structural reforms and the resultant growth trajectory and improvement in key economic indicators.

He particularly highlighted an efficient management of twin deficits backed by buoyant remittances and healthy exports, a steep fall in inflation from a 38 percent high of last year to a 44-month low of 6.9 percent in September last, and reduction in the policy rate by 450 bps with expectations of more cuts in upcoming months.

IHC suspends senior civil judge

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday suspended senior civil judge Naeemullah on issuance of a stay order against demolishing of structures in Margalla Hills national park in contradiction to the judgment of Supreme Court.

The chief justice IHC also ordered an inquiry into the aforesaid matter and made the civil judge as OSD. The court ordered the civil judge to report the IHC.

The court appointed session judge Kamran Basharat Mufti as inquiry officer.

It may be mentioned here that the senior civil judge had issued a stay order despite of the order of Supreme Court regarding the Monal Restaurants.

PHC bars banned PTM from holding PQA

PESHAWAR (APP): A two-member bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) on Wednesday restrained the banned Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) from holding "Pashtun Qaumi Adalat" on disputed land, while directed the police to take action to maintain law and order.

The PHC bench was consisting of Justice Attiq Shah and Justice Sahibzada Asadullah. The court issued a stay order to stop the event on the disputed land and adjourned the case till October 15.

Election Tribunal orders re-elections of PB-44

QUETTA (APP): The Election Tribunal on Wednesday ordered re-elections in 16 polling stations of PB-44, de-seating the Pakistan People's Party MPA Ubaidullah Gorgage.

The Balochistan High Court Election Tribunal, headed by Abdullah Baloch announced the decision. PPP's Ubaidullah Gorgage is no longer a member of the Balochistan Assembly; the notification has been annulled, the order read.

Ubaidullah Gorgage's victory was challenged by Atta Muhammad Bungalzai of the National Party.

Justice Abdullah Baloch, after hearing the both sides delivered the reserved verdict.

Saudi delegation arrives in Pakistan on three-day visit

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of Saudi investors, led by Minister of Investment Khalid bin Abdulaziz, arrived in Islamabad today on three-day visit to Pakistan.

Federal Ministers Musadik Malik, Jam Kamal Khan and Abdul Aleem received the delegation at the Noor Khan Airbase.

The delegation comprises representatives from various sectors, including energy, mining, minerals, agriculture, business, tourism, industry, and manpower.

According to the schedule, the Saudi delegation will hold business-to-business meetings with Pakistani companies, and several agreements will be signed during the visit.

ECP grants PTI candidate time until Oct 17 to submit replies

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Wednesday gave PTI-backed National Assembly candidate from Islamabad, Amir Mughal, time until October 17 to submit his replies to his opponent's queries in a case related to transferring Islamabad constituencies' Election Tribunal.

A four-member bench headed by Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja resumed hearing the case on transferring the election tribunal for Islamabad constituencies NA 45, 46, and 47. Amir Mughal's counsel, Faisal Chaudhry, and Anjum Aqeel's counsel, representing Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), appeared before the bench.

Anjum Aqeel Khan's lawyer told the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) that despite submitting revised applications and attending two hearings, they're still waiting for a response from the opponents.

Faisal Chaudhry, representing Amir Mughal, informed the Election Commission that Mughal's son has lost contact with his father, making it challenging to proceed. The Commission set a deadline of 11:30 am (Wednesday) for a response, but Chaudhry countered that meeting this timeline is impossible without direct communication from Mughal himself. Essentially, Chaudhry sought more time to facilitate communication with Mughal before providing a response. The Chief Election Commissioner inquired about the assurance of contacting the client by October 17. In response, Amir Mughal's lawyer requested the commission to make a unilateral decision if the reply is not submitted.

Soldier embraces martyrdom, two terrorists killed thwarting terrorist attack in Zhob

Pakistan repels Afghan aggression at Nushki-Ghaznali sector on border

RAWALPINDI (APP): A soldier of Pakistan Army on Wednesday embraced martyrdom while two terrorists were killed including a suicide bomber and high value target amid thwarting the terrorists attack at Frontier Corps (FC) Post in Zhob District of Balochistan.

"In early hours of 09 October 2024, a group of terrorists tried to attack a Frontier Corps' Post in Zhob District," an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said. The attempt to enter the camp was effectively thwarted by the security forces personnel, and resultantly two terrorists, including a suicide bomber and high value target Terrorist Umar alias Umari, were killed before they could cause the intended damage, it said.

Terrorist Umar alias Umari was involved in numerous terrorist activities against security forces as well as innocent civilians, including recent attack on convoy of the Deputy Commissioner,

Sherani.

The martyred soldier was identified as Havildar Jamsheer Khan (age: 39 years; resident of: Dera Bugti District), having fought gallantly, paid the ultimate sacrifice and embraced, Shahadat, during intense exchange of fire.

INP adds: Pakistani forces thwarted an act of aggression by Afghan soldiers at the Pak-Afghan border in the Nushki-Ghaznali sector on Wednesday.

According to security sources, Afghan troops opened fire on Pakistani posts while Pakistani forces were engaged in repairing the border fence.

In a swift and effective response, Pakistani forces targeted Afghan posts, inflicting significant damage.

As per the channel report, the incident occurred as part of ongoing efforts by Pakistan to secure its borders with the fence. The security forces have reiterated that they will continue to take all necessary measures to protect the country's territorial integrity.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Palestine MPC

Pakistan has a long history of showing solidarity with the Palestinian people — at both the state and popular levels — for religious and cultural reasons.

The support for the occupied Arab land ranges from Islamist parties to those on the left of the political spectrum. Therefore, it was not unusual to see nearly all main political forces, except the PTI, attend a multiparty conference on Monday, the one-year anniversary of the 'Al Aqsa Flood' operation, to highlight the ongoing Israeli atrocities in Gaza. The PTI was reportedly invited to attend the moot, organised by the president and the prime minister, but failed to send its representatives.

Among other suggestions, the MPC called for an immediate ceasefire and holding of an emergency OIC summit. Though largely symbolic, the moot at least sent the message that nearly all political forces in Pakistan stand by the oppressed people of Palestine. References to the Israeli aggression in Lebanon were also made, while the MPC upheld Kashmir's right to self-determination.

Of course, there are limits to what Pakistan can do, apart from expressing moral and diplomatic support for the Palestinian people. The state as well as private charities have also sent shipments of aid for the war-ravaged population of Gaza. Yet it must be observed that while the OIC has held several meetings after the Oct 7 events last year, to date the Muslim bloc has failed to adopt a comprehensive policy to help end Israel's genocidal war on Gaza.

Simply put, if summity and noble declarations were enough, Palestine would have been liberated a long time ago. But the Muslim world has failed the people of Gaza, and is now failing the people of Lebanon because there is no will amongst most Muslim ruling elites to take concrete actions to penalise Israel and those financing and supplying Tel Aviv's war machine. The Arab 'oil weapon' deployed in the 1970s, for example, seems like an event from the distant past.

It is also a matter of concern that the PTI did not attend the Palestine MPC. When meetings are held to discuss vital national issues — security, the economy, or in this case, solidarity with an oppressed population — internal political differences should be put aside and a spirit of unity must be displayed.

Indeed, there is acute mistrust between the ruling party and the PTI, but the latter should have joined the other political forces in speaking up for Palestine with one voice. Moreover, such meetings present opportunities where the ice can be broken, and openings can be provided for dialogue. The only democratic way out of the current political impasse is through negotiations — not through nihilistic confrontations. While one opportunity to talk may have been missed, it is hoped both sides clinch the next one, whenever it arises.

American complicity in Gaza

Zahid Hussain

"No administration has helped Israel more than I have. None, none, none," remarked US President Joe Biden recently as Israel's genocidal war in Gaza entered its second year, marking a death toll of tens of thousands of Palestinian lives, most of the victims being women and children. The first US president to publicly declare himself a 'Zionist', he is not wrong.

It may be true that previous US administrations, too, were fully committed to supporting the Zionist state, but the outgoing president went much further in backing Tel Aviv's war crimes in Gaza. The massive military aid provided by America has not only helped the Benjamin Netanyahu government sustain its longest and deadliest war but has also extended the conflict to other regional countries.

One year of devastating air strikes and ground invasions by the Zionist forces has turned the enclave into a death trap, displacing the entire population of Gaza. Meanwhile, hundreds of Palestinians have been killed in Israel's military operation in the occupied West Bank.

A similar horror has not been witnessed in recent history. Support from the US and some other Western countries has given Israel complete impunity. Given the Biden administration's unconditional support for Israel, many observers accuse it of being complicit in what amounts to war crimes. In fact, it has now also become an American war. A record \$17.9 billion has been spent by the Biden administration on military aid to Tel Aviv since the war erupted a year ago, leading to heightened tensions and conflict in the Middle East, according to Brown University's Costs of War project released this week.

It is by far the largest military aid sent to Israel in one year. In fact, the report indicates that details of some shipments to Israel are hard to come by. The exact amount of military aid then is apparently much higher. The report cited the Ameri-

can administration's "efforts to hide the full amounts of aid and types of systems through bureaucratic manoeuvring".

Additionally, America has spent \$4.86bn on enhanced military operations in the region, which includes the costs of its campaign against the Houthis in Yemen, who, siding with the Palestinian population, are carrying out strikes against Israel.

For the past one year, American aid to Israel has been a combination of military financing and arms sales and transfers from the US stockpile, according to the report. A large part of the arsenal contains artillery shells and the 2,000-pound bombs that Israel has used with devastating effect on the Palestinians of Gaza, turning their homes into rubble. Notwithstanding its hollow calls for a ceasefire, there has never been any serious intention or effort on part of the Biden administration to stop Israel's ongoing genocide in the Gaza Strip, where officially more than 41,000 people have been killed in the last one year.

While occasionally raising concerns over Israel's indiscriminate killings of civilians and briefly pausing the flow of some heavy bombs, Washington has refused to stipulate conditions for US military aid, despite growing international protests. It has remained silent over the wanton butchery currently going on in Lebanon, where more than 1,000 people have died in devastating Israeli air strikes that have used US-supplied bombs.

Being the most critical US ally in the Middle East, Israel is the biggest recipient of US military aid in history since 1959. Apart from the current administration's massive military aid, there is overwhelming bipartisan support for the Zionist regime in the US Congress. No US administration can afford to defy the powerful Israeli lobby that virtually controls Congress. At the height of this genocidal war, the Israeli prime minister, whose arrest warrant as a war criminal was requested by the International Crimi-

nal Court prosecutor some months ago, was invited to address the joint session of Congress in July, where he received repeated standing ovations by legislators from both sides of the aisle as he justified his genocidal war calling it a "clash between barbarism and civilisation".

He rejected the two-state solution making it clear that Israel was not seeking to resettle Gaza. Only a handful of progressive legislators abstained in protest. The growing sentiment among the younger generation of Americans against the war is not likely to have any effect on Washington's unqualified support for Israel's genocidal war.

Many analysts agree that it is Israel that effectively runs American foreign policy. Israel's powerful influence on US policy is well described in 'The Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy', a seminal book authored by two eminent US university professors and originally published in 2007.

"It is difficult to talk about the lobby's influence on American foreign policy, at least in the mainstream media in the United States without being accused of anti-Semitism..." the book says. "... Not only does it [the lobby] exert significant influence over the policy process in Democratic and Republican administrations alike, but it is even more powerful on Capitol Hill."

Writing in the New Yorker in 2005, journalist Jeffrey Goldberg recounted a meeting with an official of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, who putting a napkin in front of him, said, "You see this napkin? In 24 hours, we could have the signatures of 70 senators on this napkin." The unanimous support for aid to Israel in the Congress is a testimony of the influence and power of AIPAC on Congress, irrespective of whichever party wins the presidential election.

With just a few weeks left for the next election, there is no possibility of any change in Washington's unqualified backing for Israel.

Weather worries

Rafia Zakaria

According to scientists, for 800,000 years of Earth's existence the amount of carbon in the atmosphere did not exceed 300 ppm (parts per million).

Then in 1911, the amount of carbon in the atmosphere exceeded that level for the first time. Since then, carbon in the atmosphere has only been increasing. This year, carbon levels in the atmosphere exceeded 425 ppm.

Increased carbon dioxide and the effects of greenhouse gases have led to a host of problems that impact human health. The higher temperatures are especially dangerous for vulnerable populations such as children and pregnant women. Premature births, a leading cause of early childhood deaths, go up during heatwaves.

The temperature in many parts of Pakistan this summer was above 40 degrees Celsius. And going by the pattern over the past few years, the trend is likely to persist. This suggests that climate change produces a distinct and special risk to children, especially those who live in the hot regions of the world.

According to Unicef, one-third of all children globally experience four to five heatwaves in a year. It goes without saying that risks to their health may be exacerbated by poverty. In fact, climate change can adversely affect crop output, resulting in food insecurity and poor nutrition for growing bodies.

Climate change can also impact levels of air pollution and is believed to aggravate smog. Studies suggest that symptoms of asthma and other allergies are increasing in children, especially in poorer countries, leading to non-attendance at school.

And it is not just on account of illness that children face disruptions in their education schedule; every year, millions of children face weeks of school closure due to adverse weather conditions, including intense heat and heavy rain, as we have witnessed. Excessive heat also means

that children cannot play outdoors, and are subjected to a crowded environment inside their homes, which are often poorly ventilated.

Temperatures are more acute in large cities, such as Karachi and Lahore, where the proliferation of concrete and asphalt surfaces has created the urban heat island effect — that is, the temperature in these cities is often several degrees hotter than in the adjoining areas. Summer has thus become a time of dread, with temperatures continuing to soar year after year, with no respite in sight.

There seem to be few choices before parents in the hotter months, especially as children are particularly vulnerable to heatstroke. Of late, there has been some awareness of the matter, but are hospitals and clinics doing enough to treat young victims of heatstroke? Special wards are needed in the summer months that are equipped to treat children and babies who have suffered the effects of intense heat.

Similarly, can medical outlets cope with the rising cases of allergies and respiratory illnesses? Developing the requisite facilities and training staff to operate them efficiently requires advance planning and funding. It is simply not enough to have a climate change ministry. It is necessary to address what the weather means for our children's everyday health.

Then there is the matter of mental health. A recent qualitative study carried out by Shazia Soomro, Dianen Zhou and Ifikhar Charan focuses on the psychological effects of rising temperatures on Pakistani children, particularly the rise of "climate anxiety".

According to the authors, children are a vulnerable population because they are still growing physically and intellectually, and the increased tribulation and uncertainty caused by climate-related factors means that they can suffer a more permanent impact. Naturally, children in poverty-stricken and under-

resourced areas are the most susceptible, although each child is affected differently, depending on a host of circumstances.

The study, published in the African Journal of Reproductive Health, looks at how extreme weather events affect the educational achievement of Pakistani children. These weather events include heatwaves, droughts, and heavy rainfall. While the jury may be out on the exact parameters of an 'extreme' weather event, Pakistan has suffered heavy monsoon rains that have far exceeded expectations for some years now.

The authors of the study found that even accounting for changes in the river flow and patterns of snowmelt, the severity of the new monsoon could only be attributed to climate change. This was true also of the devastating flood of 2022, which affected 33 million people in the country.

The study found that extreme weather events were causing attachment disorders, depression, panic attacks, phobias and anxiety among children.

In addition to these mood disorders, a regressive impact on children's ability to control their emotions was also observed; many of the youngsters experienced cognitive deficits, behaviour issues, learning difficulties, language development problems, adjustment challenges and generally poor academic performance. There is a high proportion of children whose mental health has been affected by climate change. Children affected by the 2022 floods still report anxiety displacement stress, depression and sleep disorders. While the study focuses on a small cohort, it is likely that the results seen among them can be extrapolated to the at least 670,000 children that the authors say were affected by the floods. Interestingly, many spoke about the trauma of the flash floods that occur in Sindh every year. Many also noted how isolated they feel from the natural environment because they live in such heavily urbanised areas.

Commerce News

Jam pledges to revive cotton Industry, ensured to address high taxation, electricity costs challenges

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Wednesday vowed to revitalize Pakistan's cotton industry, acknowledging the sector's billion-dollar export potential and ensured to address challenges such as high taxation and electricity costs.

In this regard, the minister held a meeting with the Pakistan Ginners Association led by its Chairman DR Jassu Mal, said a news release.

The minister stressed that the government is

treating this issue with urgency, particularly given the \$3.4 billion spent annually on cotton imports, which could be saved by reviving domestic production.

Proposing a series of seminars and workshops, Jam Kamal expressed the government's commitment to collaborate with industry stakeholders, including APTMA and exporters, to formulate a comprehensive action plan.

He also encouraged the Association to submit proposals for funding through the Export

Development Fund (EDF) to help reinvigorate the sector and boost exports.

The minister also highlighted the alarming decline in the number of ginning companies from 1,200 to just 400, leading to under-utilization of electricity resources and disruptions in the cotton supply chain.

He emphasized that cotton is not merely a commodity but a livelihood, with millions of people in Pakistan depending on its growth, harvesting, and processing. He acknowledged the

heavy taxation across the cotton production cycle—from pesticides to ginning and oil extraction—that has made it difficult for cotton to compete with other crops.

Dr. Jassu Mal thanked the Minister for his unprecedented support and pointed out the sector's once prestigious title of "white gold."

He warned that without intervention, the high taxation and electricity costs would continue to drive farmers away from cotton, despite its billion-dollar export potential.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Ahsan Iqbal in meeting with the delegation of Asian Development Bank.

ADB reaffirms continued support for Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Asian Development Bank (ADB) here on Wednesday reaffirmed its continued support to government's agenda to implement structural reforms, generate fiscal space and stabilize economy.

The reaffirmation was made by a delegation of Executive Directors and Alternate Executive Directors of ADB that met with Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Ahsan Iqbal, to discuss the country's development priorities and macroeconomic reforms.

The delegation is on Pakistan's visit from

October 6 to 12, 2024 for consultations with the government and key stakeholders to better align ADB's support with government's priorities.

The visit of ADB's Executive Directors reinforces the robust collaboration between ADB and Pakistan, aimed at achieving sustainable development goals and enhancing economic stability in the country.

On the occasion Minister Cheema highlighted the strong partnership between Pakistan and ADB, reaffirmed during the recent visit of ADB President Masatsugu Asakawa.

Ahsan for promoting blue economy to ensure future stability

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister For Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday emphasized that development of blue economy was a transformative opportunity that can ensure future stability by creating jobs and food security.

Addressing the 4th International Maritime Symposium (IMS-24), the minister said, solving challenges confronting blue

economy were crucial to take the country forward on the path of development.

He pointed out that nations like China, Malaysia, and Türkiye achieved progress due to these key factors.

The 4th International Maritime Symposium (IMS-24) was organized by the National Institute of Maritime Affairs in collaboration with Bahria University. The symposium aimed to

address the challenges and opportunities in Pakistan's blue economy, focusing on aligning maritime strategies with SDGs.

Ahsan Iqbal stressed the need for sustainable practices and sought international cooperation to tackle environmental challenges effectively.

Minister Ahsan Iqbal said that by addressing issues like climate change and marine pollution we can create jobs and ensure food security.



ABU DHABI: Ambassador Faisal Niaz Tirmizi met with H.E. Ahmed Jasim Al Zaabi, Chairman of Federation of UAE Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UAE Chambers) and Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce & Industry. He is also Chairman of Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development, Abu Dhabi Global Market.

Saudi investment to boost economy: LCCI

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) Wednesday appreciated the government for paving the way for investment from Saudi Arabia that is bound to boost economic activities in the country.

LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad, Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman and Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry, in a media statement here, welcomed the government's landmark efforts for deals with Saudis which he is poised to finalize during the visit of Saudi Minister of Investment's upcoming visit to Pakistan.

These forthcoming deals are expected to not only enhance bilateral relations but also inject much-needed capital into Pakistan's economy, providing a lifeline to various critical sectors.

LCCI office-bearers lauded the prime minister's leadership, while describing the agreements as a historic step towards economic revival.

They said that Saudi Arabia has always been a pivotal partner for Pakistan and the signing of these trade and investment deals will open new doors of cooperation in key sectors such as energy, infrastructure, technology and manufacturing.

Shaukat advises taxpayers to approach Federal Tax Ombudsman for relief

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Advisor to the Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) for Hazara Region Shaukat Mehmood Wednesday has encouraged taxpayers to seek assistance from the Federal Tax Ombudsman in case of illegal tax procedures, unjust notices, or delays in receiving rightful refunds from the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR). He expressed these views while addressing a press briefing at Abbottabad Press Club.

Shaukat Mehmood highlighted that the FTO's actions have enabled many taxpayers to receive their due payments, ensuring fairness in tax collection without harassment.

He explained that taxpayers can file complaints through various channels, including the FTO website, email, mobile app, FTO portal, or by post, without needing to visit the office physically. Upon receiving a complaint, the FTO contacts the FBR, sets a response deadline, and ensures prompt resolution, Shaukat Mehmood stated. Those unable to attend hearings in person are offered the option of participating via video link.



KARACHI: A Pakistani stockbroker monitors share prices during a trading session at the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) in Karachi.

CM launches internship climate resilient leadership program for youth of Punjab

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has launched the CM Internship Climate Resilient Leadership Program, aiming to enhance environmental stewardship among the youth.

At the event, she inaugurated Pakistan's first smog hotline, "1373," and directed that 1 percent of development project funds be allocated for tree planting initiatives.

During her address, the CM announced an increase in the honorarium for interns from Rs 25,000 to Rs 60,000, emphasizing the need for job security for the interns post-program. She stated that environmental internships should not just be seen as opportunities but as a vital responsibility for fostering a greener Punjab.

She highlighted the significance of collective action against smog,

advocating for collaboration between Pakistan and India Punjab, noting that smog will end not by merely pressing a button. The CM urged educational institutions to integrate smog awareness into their curricula from October 15 to November 15.

The CM criticized past negligence in environmental management and stressed the importance of treating the environment as a shared responsibility across Pakistan. She reported that measures against animal cruelty have been intensified, reflecting a commitment to humane practices.

Addressing air quality issues, she outlined ongoing efforts to combat smog, including surveillance of industrial emissions and proactive measures against pollution

from brick kilns and fat-melting factories. She also emphasized that sustainable infrastructure development is crucial for national progress.

Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb shared insights into new environmental initiatives, including a vehicle inspection system and comprehensive climate change plans. She reaffirmed Punjab's leadership role in addressing climate challenges.

Provincial Minister for Information and Culture Azma Zahid Bokhari, Provincial Ministers Chaudhry Shafay Hussain, Sher Ali Gorchani, Sohaib Ahmed Malik, Kazim Pirzada, Ramesh Singh Arora, Ashiq Hussain, Chief Secretary, Secretaries and other officials were also present in the ceremony.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan administering oath to Ayesha Hamid as Punjab's first Ombudsman.

Swat gets child-friendly protection unit

By Haroon Siraj

SWAT: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Commission (KPCPW) has taken a huge step forward in safeguarding children's rights by launching a Child Protection Unit in Swat. This new unit aims to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children, protecting them from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

On this occasion key stakeholders, officials, and children attended the inauguration ceremony, where Deputy Commissioner Shehzad Mehboob pledged full support from the district administration. Mr. Ijaz Muhammad Khan, Deputy Chief Protection Officer of KPCPW, shared that the commission has already aided 32,564 at-risk children and established 21 fully operational Child Protection Units across the province.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi in a group photo with Young Leaders Parliament delegation at Governor House.

Governor Kundi urges youth to play role in addressing challenges

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday said that the province is facing multiple challenges, urging the youth to adopt a positive mindset and actively participate in addressing these issues.

He said this during a meeting with a delegation from the Young Leaders Parliament (YLP), led by President Naveed Ahmad Khan, visited the Governor House Peshawar.

During the meeting, the YLP delegation briefed the Governor on initiatives aimed at engaging the province's youth in positive activities through the platform of the Young Leaders Parliament.

They also requested the Governor's support and participation as a guest of honor for the upcoming three days entrepreneurship event in Peshawar.

The young members of the YLP engaged in a Q&A session with the Governor, discussing various issues affecting the province, particularly regarding the welfare of the youth.

Governor Faisal Karim Kundi welcomed the delegation, expressing his focus on advancing the interests of youth and women across all sectors.

He acknowledged the talent among the province's youth but said that they often lack

adequate opportunities for progress.

He announced that 100 percent scholarships have been allocated for tribal youth at Edward College and that free IT courses will be initiated to help young people pursue online businesses and job opportunities from home.

Kundi also highlighted that the provincial government has not effectively utilized its powers following the 18th Amendment.

He encouraged young people to share their proposals via email at any time, emphasizing the importance of their input for improving the education sector.

CM GB stresses importance of local government elections

GILGIT (APP): Chief Minister Gilgit Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan has emphasized the significance of local government elections in resolving public issues and ensuring the transfer of powers to lower levels.

Addressing the closing ceremony of a three-day training workshop for officers regarding local government elections, the CM said that these elections are crucial for bringing new leadership to the forefront and empowering people at the grassroots level. The CM expressed his commitment to holding local government elections, which have been delayed in Gilgit-Baltistan since 2004.

He praised the Chief Election Commissioner and Local Government Secretary for their efforts in completing the first phase of delimitation and assured the public that the current provincial government is dedicated to ensuring the holding of local government elections.

Committee formed to assess damages to KP House: CM KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister, Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur announced on Wednesday that a committee has been formed to estimate the damages to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa House in Islamabad.

The chief minister indicated that consultations regarding legal action besides formulation of a strategy would be undertaken.

Addressing the KP cabinet meeting here, the chief minister emphasized that there would be no compromise on constitutional rights and the provincial autonomy granted under the 18th Amendment.

He described the incidents during the PTI protests and at the KP House in Islamabad as intolerable.

Deploing the police raids and damages of property at the KP House, the CM alleged that police officers and Rescue 1122 officials, along with rescue equipment, were unlawfully detained.

He vowed to take strict action against the Islamabad police and administration if any torture against them was proven. As the chief minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, he stated that the necessary security personnel and equipment would accompany him wherever he goes.



HYDERABAD: Activists of Sunni Tehreek (PST) are holding rally in favor of Pakistan Armed Forces, in Hyderabad.

NAB presents Rs 36.8m recovery amount cheque to Punjab government

LAHORE (APP): National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Lahore reported a significant recovery in a corruption scandal involving former Punjab chief minister Ch Pervaiz Elahi and others linked to kickbacks in construction contracts. NAB Deputy Chairman Sohail Nasir presented a cheque worth Rs 36.8 million to the Punjab government, which was received by Additional Secretary

Finance Abdus Samad in the presence of NAB Lahore Director General Amjad Majeed Aulakh, said a spokesperson here Wednesday.

The recovery was a part of an ongoing investigation into corruption in public contracts. Additionally, the NAB Lahore successfully retrieved Rs 17.2 million from former chief financial officer Ikram Naveed through a plea bargain.

International News

Israel's strikes are shifting the power balance in the Middle East, with US support

WASHINGTON: Israeli military strikes are targeting Iran's armed allies across a nearly 2,000-mile stretch of the Middle East and threatening Iran itself. The efforts raise the possibility of an end to two decades of Iranian ascendancy in the region, to which the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq inadvertently gave rise.

In Washington, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, and Arab capitals, opponents and supporters of Israel's offensive are offering clashing ideas about what the U.S. should do next, as its ally racks up tactical successes against Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Houthis in Yemen and presses its yearlong campaign to crush Hamas in Gaza.

Israel should get all the support it needs from the United States until Iran's government "follows

other dictatorships of the past into the dustbin of history," said Richard Goldberg, a senior adviser at Washington's conservative-leaning Foundation for the Defense of Democracies — calls echoed by some Israeli political figures.

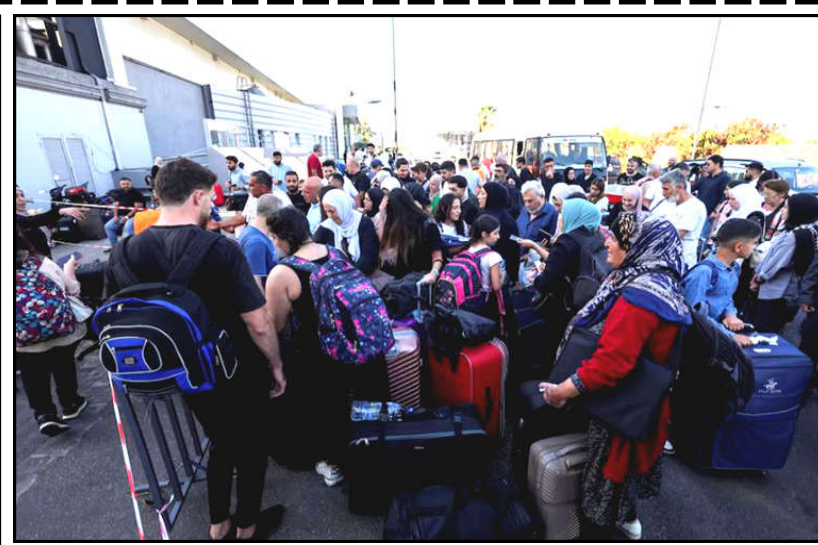
Going further, Yoel Guzansky, a former senior staffer at Israel's National Security Council, called for the Biden administration to join Israel in direct attacks in Iran. That would send "the right message to the Iranians — 'Don't mess with us,'" Guzansky said.

Critics, however, highlight lessons from the U.S. military campaign in Iraq and toppling of Saddam Hussein, when President George W. Bush ignored Arab warnings that the Iraqi dictator was the region's indispensable counterbalance to Iranian influence. They caution against racking up military

victories without adequately considering the risks, end goals or plans for what comes next, and warn of unintended consequences.

Ultimately, Israel "will be in a situation where it can only protect itself by perpetual war," said Vali Nasr, who was an adviser to the Obama administration. Now a professor at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, or SAIS, he has been one of the leading documenters of the rise of Iranian regional influence since the U.S. invasion of Iraq.

With Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu giving limited weight to Biden administration calls for restraint, the United States and its partners in the Middle East are "at the mercy of how far Bibi Netanyahu will push it," Nasr said, referring to the Israeli leader by his nickname.



Turkish nationals wait to register for boarding Turkish navy ships to leave Lebanon, amid the ongoing hostilities between Hezbollah and Israeli forces, in Beirut, Lebanon.

China says raised 'serious concerns' with US over trade curbs

BEIJING: The United States and China on Tuesday raised concerns about trade between the world's two biggest economies, with China's commerce minister urging Washington to lift sanctions on his country's firms "as soon as possible."

Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao's call with US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo was described

by Beijing as "candid, independent and pragmatic".

It comes shortly after sharp US tariff hikes on Chinese electric vehicles, EV batteries and solar cells took effect — with levies down the line on other products also recently finalised.

In addition, the US is planning to ban the sale of connected vehicles incorporating Chinese and Russian technology, citing national security risks.

Turkish Airlines pilot dies mid-flight, forcing emergency landing

ISTANBUL: A Turkish Airlines pilot died after collapsing mid-flight, forcing the Turkish national carrier to make an emergency landing in New York, the airline said on Wednesday.

The plane had taken off from the western US coastal city of Seattle on Tuesday evening, airline spokesman Yahya Ustun wrote on X, formerly Twitter.

Canada pledges another C\$15 million in assistance for Lebanese civilians

OTTAWA: Canada will provide C\$15 million (\$11 million) in new humanitarian assistance to support civilians affected by conflict in Lebanon, the Canadian foreign ministry said on Wednesday. "Canada is deeply alarmed by the rapid escalation of the crisis in Lebanon. We are mobilizing to ensure that Canada is there to bring much-needed assistance to the Lebanese people," Foreign Minister Melanie Joly said in a statement. The funding announcement brings Canada's assistance pledge for Lebanese civilians to C\$25 million.

Israeli strike kills 17 in Gaza refugee camp

GAZA/CAIRO: Gaza's civil defence agency on Tuesday said an Israeli strike killed at least 17 people at a refugee camp in the centre of the territory.

"The civil defence teams recovered 17 martyrs, including children, and several others who were wounded from the three-story home of the Abdul Hadi family, which was bombed by a missile from an (Israeli) warplane in Al Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza," agency spokesman Mahmud Bassal said in a statement. Bassal said the bodies of those killed and the wounded were taken to Al Awda hospital in Nuseirat camp and to Al Aqsa Martyrs hospital in the city of Deir el Bahah. Medics at Al

Awda confirmed the toll.

Kamal Adwan and Al Awda hospitals in northern Gaza have been asked to evacuate in the past 48 hours, World Health Organisation officials told a briefing in Cairo. Fewer than half of Gaza's hospitals remain even partially functioning after a year of Israeli bombardments. Bassal earlier said that several air strikes rocked central and northern Gaza since the early hours of Tuesday. Israel sent tanks deeper into Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip and told people to leave as it pounded the historic Palestinian refugee camp from the air, residents said. Palestinian medics said casualties had been reported in Jabalia but they were unable to reach areas under fire.

Ukraine strikes a Russian oil hub as Zelenskyy says the war is in 'a very important phase'

KYIV: Ukraine's military said it struck a major oil terminal Monday in Crimea that provides fuel for Russia's war effort as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the war has entered a key phase. Both sides are facing the issue of how to sustain their costly war of attrition — a conflict that started with Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 and that shows no signs of a resolution.

Ukraine's General Staff said on social media that the oil terminal in Feodosia, on the southern coast of the Russia-occupied Crimea Peninsula, has been supplying the Russian army with fuel and that the strike was part of an ongoing effort to "undermine the military and economic potential of the Russian Federation."

Russian-installed authorities in the city of Feodosia on the coast of the Black Sea reported a fire at the terminal on Monday morning but did not say what might have caused it.

Ukraine has increasingly targeted rear areas that are essential for Russia's onslaught, now deep into its third year. It has developed long-range drones that have hit oil depots and refineries as well as armories.

Ukraine's aim is to impair Russia's ability to support its front-line units, especially in the eastern Donetsk region where the main Russian battlefield effort is stretching weary Ukrainian forces.

Kyiv is still awaiting word from its Western partners on its repeated requests to use the long-range weapons they provide to hit targets on Russian soil.



DENVER: Pro-Palestinian demonstrators march on the first anniversary of the Israeli invasion of Gaza.

Iran Quds Force chief Qaani is well, to get medal from Supreme Leader

DUBAI: The commander of the overseas arm of Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards is well and will receive a medal from Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei soon, the semi-official Tasnim news agency quoted a senior Guards adviser on Wednesday as saying. Two senior Iranian security officials told Reuters earlier that Quds Force commander Esmail Qaani, who travelled to Lebanon after the Sept 27 killing of Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah in an Israeli airstrike, had not been heard from since further Israeli bombings of south Beirut late last week.

Govt allocates Rs 7.5 bln to bring out of school children back: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday said that federal government is allocating Rs 7.5 billion out of school children across the country.

Addressing an International Conference: "Education System Strengthening Challenges and Opportunities - A 20-Year Retrospective" held here at COMSTech, the minister announced that for this project the federal government would allocate Rs 25 million, while 25 millions would be given by the provinces and 25 millions by the partners.

The one-day conference was organized by Manhattan Strategy Group (MSG), a prominent US-Pakistani social and human development organization, with an aim to bring together local and global perspectives to address the critical challenges facing Pakistan's education system.

Speaking at inaugural session of the conference, Ahsan Iqbal said that education is not a sector but a foundation of development and prosperity. It was revealed in the census that literacy rate in Pakistan is 60 percent but for progress and development, we need 90 percent literacy rate in the country. He lamented that with such a huge number of out of school children, Pakistan can not progress. He termed education as mandatory tool to run the infrastructure of a country.

The minister said that federal government is also establishing South Asia's top teachers training center in Pakistan to fulfill the need of best teaching practices. "We have to revise our curriculum as per international standards and in order to teach modern curriculum, we are working on teachers training on war-footing steps".

The minister also underlined the importance of latest exams system, adding, current exam system

would be reformed as per international level.

Under another program, he said that campus of a university would be established in each district to facilitate the poor and needy students especially the girls at their door step.

He urged that our UETs should be a brand in the world like Indian IETs, adding, this government is on path of reformation under leadership of Shabbaz Sharif.

He hoped that our future generations would see a developed and prosperous Pakistan. Pakistan would be among top 15 economic countries through stability, consistency in policies, unity, reforms, continuity of democracy.

He stated that the diaspora of any country is key to its success and development. "It is inspiring to see the Pakistani diaspora. Manhattan Strategy Group (MSG), organized such a valuable event focused on education," he added.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs Gilgit Baltistan, States and Frontier Regions, Engineer Amir Maqam calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Pakistan ideal destination for spiritual tourism: Senator

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senator Mushahid Hussain on Wednesday said that Pakistan was in ideal destination for 'spiritual tourism' that bears potential to transform the country's tourism landscape. The former chairman Senate Defence Committee stressed on increased public-private partnerships, while noting that the government alone could not manage tourism.

Speaking at 'Tourism for Peace Dialogue' organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), and Walnut Travel and Tour Consultancy (WTTTC), the Senator praised 'Kartarpur Corridor' as an excellent soft power and spiritual transformation hub that needs to be effectively projected globally.

He also underlined the need for translating existing

goodwill and linkages such as strong ties between Pakistan and China, the enrollment of Afghan and African students in Pakistani universities, and Pakistan's cordial relations with Muslim countries into a greater promotion of tourism. He commended IRS for expanding its strategic focus to include promotion of tourism that could help build interfaith harmony and peace in the region.

President of IRS, Ambassador Jauhar Saleem highlighted the significant impact of tourism, contributing 10 percent to the world GDP. Not only leading developed countries such as the US and France generated hundreds of billions from tourism, but also emerging economies like Turkey, UAE and Thailand were earning more from

tourism than Pakistan's total exports.

Recalling that Pakistan was a major tourist destination for western tourists in the 1960s and early 1970s, he underscored the need to rebuild 'Brand Pakistan' since tourism, trade and investment mostly flowed to countries with a befitting soft image. He also felt that unlike many countries in the region such as India, Sri Lanka and Maldives, Pakistan did not fittingly show case its tourism prowess internationally. CEO of WTTTC, Sadaf Khalid Khan called for public-private collaboration to build international standards tourism infrastructure in Pakistan, while noting that Pakistan was recognized as the safest tourist destination worldwide in the 2023 UNWTO report.

Iranian envoy praises Pakistan's initiative to observe October 7 as 'Day of Solidarity with Palestine'

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan, Dr Reza Amiri Moghadam on Wednesday lauded Pakistan's initiative to observe October 7 as the 'Day of Solidarity with Palestine,' calling it a pioneering and commendable.

In a statement, Dr. Moghadam said this step could serve as a model for other countries, particularly Muslim nations, to develop creative approaches in commemorating the tens of thousands of innocent civilians who have lost their lives in Gaza and Lebanon, including women and children. He emphasized that the day would also honour the victims of genocide committed

by the Israeli regime.

He further said the 'Day of Solidarity with Palestine' would be a global symbol of the Palestinian nation's fight for freedom, resilience against occupation, and defiance against tyranny. "This initiative will shine on the global calendar as a day of resistance and self-determination," the envoy remarked.

Dr. Moghadam also highlighted the significance of this day in raising global awareness. He urged countries for concrete steps to condemn the Zionist regime's atrocities against humanities. "It is the demand of the supporters of the Palestinian cause worldwide to embrace



ISLAMABAD: CDA workers painting the poles of the highest national flag for preparation ahead of the 23rd Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit at Zero Point in the Federal Capital.

NADRA launches CRVS inception plan

ISLAMABAD (APP): In order to streamline the registration of births, marriages/divorces and deaths, NADRA has launched the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Inception Plan duly approved by the Ministry of Interior. Data integration between provincial and federal authorities through digitization to facilitate citizens is the cornerstone of the plan which will be implemented over two years in three phases.

In Phase I, Punjab's Health Information System Delivery Unit (HISDU) and Federal Dte of Immunisation (FDI) will be integrated with NADRA, introducing Birth and Death

Notification Tools in 10 hospitals and SMS alerts for birth certificates. Phase II will extend the system to 25% of public healthcare facilities nationwide. Registration of changes in marital status will also be digitized. Phase III will expand the coverage to 90% of healthcare facilities, while fully integrating all Town Committees and Union Councils.

For this purpose NADRA is also developing a mobile application accessible to the citizens and relevant officials. Due legislative reforms are being pursued to better harmonize federal and provincial registration systems.

NACTA holds letter writing activity for peace promotion

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) on Wednesday organized a letter writing activity at Islamabad College for Girls, F-6/2 focused on promoting peace through posting policy recommendation to NACTA on World Post Day.

The central theme of the activity was to inculcate the spirit of participation in policy recommendation among young students for peace, said a press release.

Speaking on the occasion, Director General Communication & Outreach, NACTA, Saleha Zakir Shah highlighted the significance of peace in so-

ciety. She stressed that each citizen holds the status of stakeholder for establishment of sustainable peace in the country. As a responsible citizen of Pakistan, each of us, should know how to positively voice their concerns and send policy recommendations to relevant departments.

In her remarks, the principal Aliya Durani said that students have an important role in the development of any country and have full potential to change its destiny, adding that NACTA being the policy recommendation body for CT, highly values the policy recommendations of all the stakeholders especially students.



ISLAMABAD: CDA gardeners shape marigold flowers on the greenbelt of Constitution Avenue ahead of the 23rd Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in the Federal Capital.

Ombudsman directs for online e-Protector Stamp Facility

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Wafaqi Mohtasib, Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi on Wednesday intervened to resolve the long-standing issue of affixing of e-protector stamp on the passports of Pakistanis intending to proceed abroad for employment or higher education. As a result, the Bureau of Immigration has now started online e-protector stamp facility also, which is available at all international airports of the country on 24/7 basis so that a protector stamp may be affixed on the passports of anyone desirous of going abroad.

protector stamps affixed on their passports otherwise they have not been granted permission to travel abroad and many had to return from the airports due to its non-availability. This resulted in not only the loss of foreign employment but also the money spent on buying the tickets. On the directions of the Wafaqi Mohtasib online e-protector stamp facility is now available at all international airports of the country on 24/7 basis so that a protector stamp may be affixed on the passports of anyone desirous of going abroad.



ISLAMABAD: Chaudhry Salik Hussain, Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development distributing cheques during a cheque distribution ceremony to disburse marriage and death grants to industrial workers.

Climate Change Ministry seriously address exotic wildlife, flora import impacts on biosphere: Sherry

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson, Senate Standing Committee on Climate Change, Senator Sherry Rehman on Wednesday directed the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination to seriously consider exotic wildlife and flora species' import impacts on biosphere beyond risks to human health.

The Senate Standing Committee on Climate Change met here with Senator Sherry Rehman in chair that led to a detailed discussion on the private member bill titled "The Pakistan Trade Control of Wild Fauna and Flora (Amendment) Bill, 2024" introduced by Senator Shahadat Awan during the Senate session on September 2nd which was referred to the Committee for consideration and submission

of a report.

Senator, Sherry Rehman on the occasion highlighted that the exotic wild fauna species were being sold despite CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) convention restrictions in Rawalpindi's market.

She said the Ministry should devise a cogent definition of exotic and invasive species as the CITES Convention prohibits imports of alien and invasive species. "The control of import and export of invasive species is the spirit of CITES. I am concerned about import of invasive species and absence of definition of invasive species which is a huge legislative deficit," she added.

Senator Rehman urged the Ministry to expand the

scope of the existing legislation under CITES to not only keep the law confined to risks to human health but also extend it to the ecosystem damage anticipated due to exotic wild fauna and flora. The mover Senator Shahadat Awan should have a focused discussion with the Ministry to remove all lacunas, the Chair said.

She also directed Commissioner Islamabad who is also Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) to approach the Ministry of Climate Change which is the focal person on Rawal Dam matter and deferred the agenda pertaining to Rawal Dam pollution for the next meeting. Commenting on the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), Senator Sherry Rehman said the NDCs were ambitious targets.

Ambassador of Ireland to Pakistan meets Chairman HEC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Ireland to Pakistan Mary O'Neill on Tuesday visited Higher Education Commission (HEC, Islamabad) and met its Chairman Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed. She was accompanied by a delegation including representatives from University College Dublin, the National University of Ireland, and Dublin City University. The meeting aimed to explore opportunities for continued collaboration between the two countries in the higher education sector.

The Ambassador O'Neill, the first resident Irish Ambassador to Paki-

stan, briefed the Chairman on the opening of the first Irish Embassy in Pakistan and expressed appreciation for the contributions of the Pakistani community in Ireland, particularly in medicine and social services.

The Chairman reaffirmed HEC's commitment to strengthening educational partnerships with Ireland, emphasizing the recognition of qualifications, faculty and student mobility, creation of scholarship opportunities for Pakistani students, and collaboration in joint research projects addressing shared challenges like climate change.

Court grants bail to 9 PTI women workers in D-Chowk protest case

ISLAMABAD (Online): Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Islamabad has approved bail of 9 PTI women workers in D-Chowk protest case and issued orders for releasing them against surety bonds of Rs 30000 each. Judge Abul Hasanat Zulqarnain of ATC Islamabad took up bail pleas for hearing Wednesday. The court accepted bail pleas of PTI9 women workers against surety bonds of Rs 30000 each. The bail pleas of Farrah Anjum, Saba Wahid, Siddiqa Malik, Tahira Hussain, Abida Malik, Shaheen Hashmi.



ISLAMABAD: A view of anti dengue spray initiative by the Health Department at Aabpara as a response to the rise in dengue cases in the twin Cities.

IHC rejects FIA plea for granting one week for appointment of prosecutor

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) while rejecting FIA plea for granting one week time to it for appointment of prosecutor in connection with bail plea of Bushra Bibi in Toshakhana-2 case has directed to appoint prosecutor till today (Thursday).

Bail plea of Bushra Bibi in Toshakhana-2 case came up for hearing before Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb in IHC Wednesday.

Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Arshid Mehmood Kiyani appeared in the court.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb said he would not give adjournment in bail case. Notice has gone from here. Suleman Safdar you should begin arguments.

Suleman Safdar, counsel for Bushra Bibi opened his arguments. FIA authorities remained on rostrum.

PTI counsel Kazmi granted bail in protest outside SC case

ISLAMABAD (Online): Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Islamabad has approved bail PTI counsel Mustafain Kazmi in PTI protest outside Supreme Court (SC) case.

Judge Abul Hasanat Zulqarnain of ATC Islamabad took up for hearing bail plea of Mustafain Kazmi Wednesday.

The court has approved bail plea against the surety bonds of Rs 30000.

Prosecutor Raja Navid argued that Mustafain Kazmi raised slogans against the judiciary which is sacred institution of the country.

Drug dealer sentenced to 9-year imprisonment

ISLAMABAD (APP): A local court on Wednesday sentenced a drug dealer to nine-year rigorous imprisonment for supplying drugs in educational institutions.

The court also imposed a fine of Rs 100,000 on the convict Owais Yaqoob, who was arrested by the City Police in May 2024, a police spokesman said. The police after thorough investigations presented a challan before the court with solid evidence of Owais Yaqoob's involvement in supplying drugs.

Conference on "Strengthening Pakistan's Education System", concludes at COMSTech

ISLAMABAD (APP): The International Conference titled "Education System Strengthening Challenges and Opportunities - A 20-Year Retrospective" held at COMSTech concluded on Wednesday.

The conference was organized by Manhattan Strategy Group (MSG), a prominent US-Pakistani social and human development organization.

This conference aimed to bring together local and global perspectives to address the critical challenges facing Pakistan's education

Conference on "Strengthening Pakistan's Education System", concludes at COMSTech

system.

Prof. Ahsan Iqbal Federal Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives inaugurated the conference.

He stated that the diaspora of any country is key to its success and development.

"It is inspiring to see the Pakistani diaspora. Manhattan Strategy Group (MSG), organized such a valuable event focused on education," he added.

He said that we are in the era of artificial intelligence and technology.



ISLAMABAD: The Federal Capital decorated with flowers and fancy lights to present a welcoming to international guests and delegates as it gears up for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit 2024.