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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 foul 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

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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.

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 terrorist Umar alias Umari, were killed before they could cause the intended damage, it 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 Jansher Khan (age: 39

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ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari presenting a cheque of Rs. 100 million to Shahzaib Khan, who won World Champion Karate Combat in Singapore, at Aiwan-e-Sad. The Chief Minister of Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti is also present on the occasion.

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.

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.

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, Shahidulla, 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: Investment Minister of KSA, Sh. Khalid Bin Abdul Aziz Alfaleh welcomed by Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan.

Deputy Speaker BA, other speakers emphasize Long term planning needed to cope with impacts of climate change

QUETTA: The Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly, Ms. Ghazala Gola, Provincial Minister for Education, Ms. Raheela Hameed Durrani and other speakers have stressed the need to make long term planning for coping with the impacts of climate change in the province.

They stressed that the students would have to prepare them to cope with these challenges.

In this regard, necessary legislation and implementation on the measures are unavoidable in the provincial assembly.

They were addressing the closing session of climate conference organized under the auspices of FDI here on Wednesday.

The Deputy Speaker of Provincial Assembly said that we would have to promote the measures for saving from the impacts of climate changes. The women

parliamentarians caucus would extend wholehearted cooperation for legislation in this regard, she added.

The Minister Education on the occasion said that the climate change issue is in top priorities of the provincial government.

She said that we are going to include the subject of climate changes in the curriculum of the province.

While on the other hand, all educational institutions of the province would be shifted on solar system gradually.

She said that for the first time a comprehensive scholarship programme has been introduced in the province.

The Executive Director of Forum for Dignity Initiatives, Uzma Yaqoob also addressed the conference. She assured to continue mutual cooperation to deal with the extraordinary challenges of the climate change in the province.

Governor summons BA session on October 14

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has summoned the session of provincial assembly at 03:00 PM on October 14, 2024.

This was announced in an official notification issued here by the Provincial Assembly's secretariat on Wednesday.

According to the notification, the officers and staff of different concerned departments and media persons would be allowed in the premises of assembly building through special entry cards.

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.

Governor Mandokhail directs to Commissioner to pay focus on situation of cleanliness, roads & issues of traders in Quetta

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has directed to the Commissioner and Administrator Quetta to pay focus on the situation of cleanliness, poor conditioned roads and issues of traders in the metropolis.

In this regard, he also stressed that the visits of Quetta and its adjacent areas should also be paid to resolve the public problems.

The Governor was speaking to a delegation of traders and office bearers of Anjuman Tajran Balochistan, who called on him under leadership of Abdul Rahim Agha, here at the Governor House on Wednesday.

During the course of

meeting, issues being faced by the traders were discussed. The members of delegation sought cooperation of the Governor to resolve their issues.

He said that once Quetta was called as "Little London" due to its scenic beauty and administrative attractions.

He on the occasion directed to the concerned authorities to take notice of the increasing street crimes, traffic issues and lawlessness.

The Governor stressed the need to promote economic activities and protect traders community in the province.

He said that resolving the issues of citizens of Quetta means to resolve the issues of half of Balochistan.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan meeting with Provincial PHE Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran.

Sardar Khetran directs to pay special attention on timely completion of projects

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Public Health Engineering (PHE), Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran has stressed the need to pay special attention on timely completion of development projects. For the purpose, all necessary measures should be taken.

The Provincial Minister for PHE was speaking to the Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan here on Wednesday.

During the course of meeting, mutual and departmental matters were discussed between the Provincial Minister PHE and Chief Secretary.

There was consensus on expediting pace of work on the development projects and paying special

attention on their timely completion.

It was decided that monthly review meetings would be conducted to speed up the pace of development work.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Secretary said that the emergent steps would be taken for resolving the issues, which could not be resolved at the level of secretaries.

They were also agreed on identifying new projects for different districts.

Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran stressed that such projects should be identified which may benefit the general public.

He said that the development projects are very important for Barkhan and Musakhail districts.

CM Bugti directs to develop effective mechanism for route and timing of Green Buses to facilitate students

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti has directed to the Secretary Transport to develop an effective mechanism for route and timing of the Green Buses that facilitates students during their school and college timings in Quetta.

In his orders, the Chief Minister directed to provide better travelling facilities to the students in Green Buses. Particularly, he directed to provide quality transportation facilities to the students of schools and colleges in the morning and evening compatible to facilitate them.

In this regard, adding he directed to the Secretary Transport to submit a report to him by preparing comprehensive recommendations within five days.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Communication Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa and Provincial Minister for Irrigation Mir Sadiq Umrani holding a meeting

BHC reserves verdict on demolishing of BA

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan High Court on Wednesday reserved the verdict challenging the demolishing of historic Balochistan Assembly building.

Former President Supreme Court Bar Association Senator Amanullah Kanrani had filed a constitutional petition against the demolition of an old and historical building of Balochistan Assembly terming the government move tantamount to damaging the historical national heritage.

The division bench of the BHC comprising Justice Hashim Khan Kakar and Justice Mohammad Amir Nawaz Rana reserved

the decision.

Senator Kanrani contended that the decision of demolishing the historical building of Balochistan Assembly is a sheer violation of article 28 of the constitution of Pakistan.

He said Article 28 of the constitution of Pakistan says, "subject to article 251, any section of citizens having a distinct language, script or culture shall have the right to preserve and promote the same and subject to law, establish institutions for that purpose deploring that the incumbent government is going against the constitution."

He further contended

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QUETTA: A delegation led by Vice President Institute of Architects Pakistan Quetta Chapter Saif Durrani meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

Amid concerns over malpractice and exam leaks Senate Committee calls for overhaul of medical education fees, MDCAT system

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Senator Amir Waliuddin Chisti chaired the meeting of Senate Standing Committee on National Health Services Regulations and Coordination (NHSR&C) held today at Parliament House.

The Senate Committee deliberated on the non-rebate of the annual fee for medical students in Islamabad. It was briefed that the PMDC should ensure that private colleges are not allowed, as per law, to increase fees during mid-career. Additionally, private colleges should give a 4% or 2% discount on payment of a lump sum fee. Senator Irfan ul Haque Siddiqui

highlighted instances of annual fee increases during mid-career by several private medical colleges. The Committee directed the PMDC to submit a report in two weeks regarding whether private colleges increase the annual fee during the course, with a focus on rebates on the annual fee.

The Committee also constituted a sub-committee under the convenership of Senator Palwasha Mohammad Zai Khan to discuss the issue in detail. Furthermore, the Committee was briefed on the alleged leak of the MDCAT exam paper held on September 22, 2024. Officials of the PMDC stated that six

questions were found at Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto University and the same number was recommended by the PMDC. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Bharath, PM Coordinator for National Health Services Regulations and Coordination, reiterated that the Intelligence Bureau (IB) has initiated a probe into the matter and no leakage was found.

However, it was noted that the MDCAT paper was more difficult in one or two provinces compared to others. Senator Amir Waliuddin Chisti, Chairman of the Committee, voiced strong concerns about the existing MDCAT system.



QUETTA: Different delegations meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

SC adjourns dam funds case till Friday

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Wednesday adjourned hearing of Dam Fund case till October 11 and directed WAPDA counsel, representatives of the Auditor General and the Attorney General to suggest a workable solution to the problem.

A three-member bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa heard the case.

During the proceedings, the chief justice questioned that whether the amount of dam funds could be kept in private bank for mark up? He said that the court wouldn't go toward the top court's judgment regarding the construction of dams.

Additional Auditor General informed the court that the SC couldn't keep this amount with itself. He said that the dam fund account was opened in line with the order of the top court and registrar office had been looking after it.

He said that there were no irregularities found in dams' fund and its mark up, adding that mark up couldn't be received if the money was kept in public account.

Former attorney general Khalid Javed Khan said that there was no objection on changing of account name. He said that this amount should be used only for construction of dams.

The chief justice remarked that no review petition was filed when the judgment was issued.

The legal advisor to the statement said that there was more than Rs23 billion in dam funds. A total of

Rs11 billion were collected while Rs12 billion is mark up against it, he said.

To a query, the additional attorney general said that it was government who used to pay the mark up. It is paid against the amount which is used by the government, he said.

The CJP said that by putting the burden of mark up on the government, he was happy that 11 billion rupees have increased to 23 billion.

Additional Auditor General said that the amount of dams fund should be transferred to WAPDA through the public account of the government.

The CJP asked that under what jurisdiction the Supreme Court had been seeking progress report of the construction of dams and whether there was provision of implementation bench in the constitution.

WAPDA's lawyer Saad Rasool said that the purpose of the court was only to ensure the implementation of the order for the construction of dams, adding that there was no mention of implementation bench in law.

The chief justice remarked that in Pakistan, many things are done without constitution and law. I took the oath of supremacy and implementation of the Constitution, not judicial decisions, he said. He questioned that can the dams fund money be given to the government.

Khalid Javed said that the Supreme Court had sought progress reports under the jurisdiction of 184/3.

BHC reserves verdict on...

Continued from page 1
that government has planned to demolish the assembly building and spend Rs 5 billion on the construction of historic building without taking the cabinet into confidence. The prejudice move would be a just a waste of public money, he lamented.

The senator referred lower house of United Kingdom as saying the building of UK lower house is being preserved given that

it was century old building of the country. The building of Sindh Assembly is intact based on the same reason, he stressed.

Referring section 2 of the article 199 of the constitution, he said it is the responsibility of the court to protect the basic right of the citizen. The division bench of the Balochistan High Court preserved the verdict saying the detailed judgment would be made in line with the ground realities and facts of the case.

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's 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 Aamir 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.

The Election Commission granted Aamir Mughal until October 17 to submit his response.

During the course of proceedings, CEC Raja warned Faisal Chaudhry not to dictate terms, prompting Faisal to assert, "We don't come here to be insulted." The CEC advised him to tone down his language.



NASEERABAD: Deputy Commissioner Naseerabad Munir Ahmed Khan presiding over a meeting regarding polio

No tolerance for parallel courts...

Continued from page 1

the Balochistan government had placed 34 individuals on the Fourth Schedule. According to Pakistani law, anyone who supports PTM in any way will have their identity cards and passports blocked, the minister underlined.

Naqvi noted that such planning has never been carried out in Pakistan before, and it will soon become clear the direction PTM wants to take the nation. He revealed that foreign companies are making documentaries about them, and evidence of their funding will be provided in the coming days.

He reiterated that there is a clear message for those

backing PTM; if they do such things against the country, they will face the same consequences. The message to troublemakers is that they would not be pardoned in any way.

The interior minister said the state will not remain silent against those using derogatory language against the public and state institutions.

He stressed the need to eliminate the perception of a "soft state." He said that the government was ready to talk to those who speak about rights, but not to those who speak against the country.

He concluded by saying that anyone who takes up arms against the state and talks of separation

would be considered an enemy, while those who speak within the legal framework, no matter how bitter, will be engaged in dialogue.

In response to a question, Naqvi said that the chief minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa should clarify whether or not he met with the IG of Islamabad. "On one hand, it is said that the meeting was avoided, while on the other, it is claimed they met".

The Interior Minister emphasized that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government must realize the poor state of law and order in the province, and the police's primary task should be to improve security conditions.



GWADAR: Chairman Gwadar Port Pasand Khan Buledi and former Minister Mir Hamal Kalmati inaugurating Gwadar's first solar car parking project and repair and renovation of GPA head office

1st All Balochistan Shahid Zaman Squash Championship begins

Independent Report
QUETTA: The 1st All Balochistan Shahid Zaman Squash Championship organized by Zahid Gul kicked off in Quetta, bringing together the Balochistan's top squash talent under one roof. The organizer of the Championship, Zahid Gul said that he is honored to welcome players and enthusiasts from across Balochistan to this prestigious event.

"This tournament showcases the finest squash players our province has to offer, promising an electrifying display of skill and sportsmanship."

The championship is made possible through the generous

support of Shahid Zaman Khan, whose dedication to promoting squash in Balochistan has been instrumental in making this event a reality.

"We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Shahid Zaman Khan for his unwavering commitment to the sport," added Zahid Gul. "His contributions will inspire the next generation of squash players and help cultivate a thriving sports culture in our province." The All Balochistan Shahid Zaman Khan Squash Championship promises to be an exciting competition, featuring top-ranked players from across the region.



MULTAN: Players are in action during the third day of 1st Test Match between Pakistan and England, held at Multan Cricket Stadium

Soldier embraces martyrdom...

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solve," the ISPR said.

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.

This is not the first instance of unprovoked aggression from the Afghan side. Pakistan remains resolute in defending its borders and will respond decisively to any threats.

The Durand Line is the 2,640-kilometre (1,640-mile) border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the fence on this border was the fence of peace, and it had been erected to stop the cross-border movement of terrorists. The fencing, which is 11 feet high and three feet wide, has blocked the entry of terrorists into Pakistan.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday

praised the security forces for foiling a terrorist attack on Frontier Corps post in District Zhob.

The prime minister appreciated the security forces for sending two terrorists to hell, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

He also expressed his grief over Shahadat of Havaldar Jamshad Khan and prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul and for the bereaved family to bear the loss with fortitude.

The prime minister observed that the Jawans of security forces were acting like bulwark against the scourge of terrorism and the sacrifices of Shuhada would not go in vain.

He also reiterated the resolve to continue the fight against terrorists till complete elimination of terrorism.

Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi on Wednesday paid rich tribute to the security forces for foiling a terrorist attack on an FC check post in Zhob. He expressed heartfelt condolences to the family of Havaldar Jamshad Khan, who was martyred in the firing incident.

Mohsin Naqvi commended the bravery of security forces, saying, "I congratulate the brave personnel of the security forces for thwarting the attack and sending two terrorists to hell."

He further stated that security forces deserved appreciation for foiling the terrorists' nefarious plans.

Climbers set multiple records on Shishapangma

ISLAMABAD (APP): Climbers from around the world have set multiple world records this autumn while summiting Shishapangma, a 8,027-metre remote peak in Tibet.

According to the details shared by Alpine Club of Pakistan on Wednesday, the season has witnessed several climbers reaching the coveted goal of conquering all 14 of the world's 8,000-metre peaks, marking a significant milestone in mountaineering history.

Among the record-breakers, Alina Pekova of Russia became the first person from her country to scale all 14 of these towering summits.

Pakistan's Sirbaz Khan made his mark as the first Pakistani climber to accomplish this feat, having completed 11 of these summits without the use of supplemental oxygen — a rare and difficult achievement in high-altitude mountaineering.

Naoko Watanabe from Japan added to the momentum by becoming the first Japanese woman to conquer all 8,000-metre peaks, while Nima Rinji Sherpa, at just 18 years old, made history as the youngest climber ever to achieve the same.

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Post-Covid transformational changes leading towards multi-polar world enhanced SCO importance: Romina

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister's Coordinator for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Romina Khurshid Alam on Wednesday said the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)'s significance as a multilateral forum has further enhanced post-Covid-19 pandemic that stirred transformational changes leading towards multipolar world.

She was addressing as a keynote speaker at the webinar on "Multi-polar World and Role of SCO" organized by the China-Pakistan friendship group of the Parliament of Pakistan in collaboration with the Asian Institute of Eco-civilization, Research, and Development (AIERD) and Sutanability First.

She said "Pakistan is hosting a Head of Government meeting in the coming week. Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was built by adhering to the philosophy of the Shanghai Spirit, which revolves around the principles of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for the diversity of civilizations, and the pursuit of common development," she said.

The SCO forum, she said started with a low profile but was highly focused on its goals and objectives. Since the organization's inception, SCO has adhered to respect, trust, and win-win cooperation principles, she added. The forum's principles led to the successful execution of plans and achievement of the most urgent objective, including border issues, which boosted the confidence of SCO members, Romina Alam said.

"Thus, in recent years, SCO underwent expansion. Pakistan, India, Iran, and Belarus are the most recent additions to the organization. The inclusion of Pakistan and India highlights the core values of the organization that SCO is open, culturally diverse, and focuses on common grounds," she said.

The SCO member states constitute 40% of the world population and have a combined GDP of around US\$24 trillion, she added.

Saudi Arabia, UAE and some other countries are in line to join the organization. These factors make SCO one of the most important organizations, Romina underlined.

The specific objectives of the event were to deliberate on the ongoing changes at the global and regional levels to explore the future role of SCO in the changing world and future prospects an influential forum amid emerging multipolar world. CEO of AIERD, Shakeel Ahmed Ramay, said, "We have to deliberate on whether we are moving towards a multipolar or Multiblock world."

He also emphasized that SCO must have a comprehensive communication policy to compete with the world.



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

Independent Report
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.

Digitization of 25 mouzas completed; CDA told

ISLAMABAD (APP): The digitization of 25 mouzas in the ICT has been completed, Punjab Land and Revenue Authority (PLRA) officers informed a meeting chaired by the CDA chairman on Wednesday.

The mouzas will be made available online by the end of this month for public convenience.

The meeting was held to review the Digitization of ICT records and CDA's (Capital Development Authority) Property Management System. Furthermore, two service centers are being established in Bhara Kahu and Tarlai for this purpose.

The meeting was also informed that preparations for the launch of E-Stamp papers in Islamabad are in the final stages, and the issuance of E-Stamp papers will commence soon.

Following the introduction of E-Stamp papers, the process of E-Registry will also start in Islamabad.

Regarding the CDA Record Management System, the meeting was briefed that the software testing has been completed, and the housekeeping phase has also been finalized. It was mentioned that quality assurance is being carried out after the system will soon be available for public use.

It is pertinent to mention here that under this project, 130,000 files of CDA's land and property are being digitized. On this occasion, CDA Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa stated that, in line with the Prime Minister's vision and the Interior Minister's directives, this is a significant step towards making Islamabad a smart city.

He further mentioned that the record digitization and property management system services will also be provided through an app for Islamabad.

Two accused of raping woman held by Sumbal Police, SSIU

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) in a significant action by the police teams of Sumbal Police Station and Special Sexual Investigation and Operations Unit (SSIU), two accused of raping a woman were arrested on Wednesday.

According to a police statement, the victim, M, and a resident of G-12, Islamabad, filed a written complaint at the Parthana Sumbal police station.

She reported that Tahir Abbas had deceived her into believing that he could solve her personal problems through taweez (amulets) and spiritual guidance.

Using this pretense, Tahir Abbas, along with his accomplice, Taswar Abbas, took her to a room and allegedly raped her.



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 expanded 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 global 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.

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 Pakistan, 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 PTI19 women workers against surety bonds of Rs 30000 each. The bail pleas of Farrah Anjum, Saba Wahid, Siddiqia 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.

Bail plea of Bushra in Toshakhana-2 case: 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 bring arguments.

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

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 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.

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.

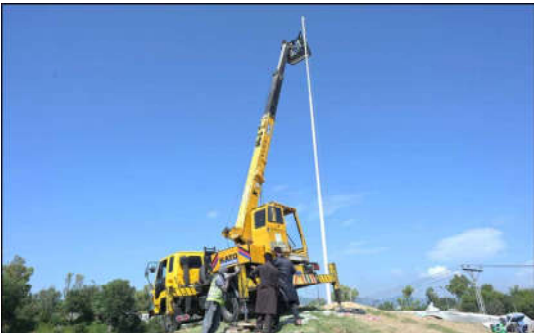
Iranian envoy praises Pakistan's initiative to observe October 7 as 'Day of Solidarity with Palestine'

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 also 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 society. 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 the airports too.

It may be informed that it is obligatory for all those traveling to middle eastern or other countries for employment to get the 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: 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.

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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 summitry 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.

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 American 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 grow-

ing 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 Criminal 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. It's not surprising that both contenders for the office, Donald Trump and Kamala Harris, have pledged support for Israel's expanding war in the Middle East, where the war in Gaza has effectively imprisoned over a million people in a small strip of land which Israel has converted into a killing field.

With active support from Washington, the Zionist regime has now turned the conflict into a regional conflagration. The fear of an Israeli attack targeting Iranian nuclear and oil facilities could directly involve the US in a war with disastrous consequences.

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 ex-

act 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.

Pakistan cannot reverse climate change by itself. However, given that the recurrence of these extreme weather events annually is certain, efforts can be made to prepare for coming disasters by teaching children protocols that can be followed when they occur.

A level of preparedness will help the children, who have been born into a polluted and environmentally hazardous world, and equip them with some tools to handle the situation in the face of a very hot and difficult future.

After independence**Mohammad Ali Babakhel**

Following independence and until the passage of the 25th Amendment in 1988, the tribal areas in Pakistan's northwest were federally administered. They only came into the limelight due to the USSR's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and then the arrival of US-led coalition forces in 2001. Before the Pakistani state finally launched kinetic operations, the areas were a magnetic pole for militants.

Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah strongly desired the integration of the tribal areas in Pakistan. He supported a peaceful penetration policy, which was led by the establishment of schools and hospitals. This policy would not have conflicted with tribal customs. However, Jinnah's death a year after independence lost us the opportunity to convert such ideals into reality. Instead, Jinnah's successors continued with British policies contrary to his vision.

The Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) law was adopted after independence with minor changes. It reflected a contradiction as, on the one hand, it allowed Pashtunwali to exist as the primary law, and on the other, it entrusted suppressive powers to political authorities by empowering the political agent in a judicial capacity. Once the PA made a decision, no appeal could be made.

The FCR segregated the residents of Fata from people living in other parts of Pakistan. It was never intended to promote integration; indeed, the office of PA was envisioned to pacify Pakhtun tribes rather than establish state authority. Since most cases handled by the

FCR were adjudicated by Pashtunwali, Fata was deprived of the benefits of rules enforced in other parts of the country.

The tribal areas were administered under the British 'malik' system, which was based on making certain concessions, subsidies and allowances in exchange for total administrative control. Before their eventual merger, various governments tried to minimise the problems of the tribal people by offering similar incentives, but this failed to reduce poverty and strengthen state authority. Under the malik system, each tribe was governed by a malik. The title was traditionally passed down within a family, making it hereditary. Before the granting of adult franchise, maliks were also members of the National Assembly's electoral college.

Maliks were not representatives of the people; indeed, they would not allow direct contact between the government and the people and put their interests before the state. This system invariably failed to bridge the gap between the state and the people and created an elite class that had no place in the egalitarian Pakhtun social fabric.

In 1955, as part of administrative reforms, the tribal areas were included in the One Unit plan in West Pakistan. However, the plan failed to foster a sense of integration among different ethnic groups.

Apart from Punjab, the smaller provinces consistently advocated for the restoration of their pre-One Unit plan administrative status. The eventual dissolution of the plan was welcomed as it provided social benefits. The Pakhtuns in the tribal belt realised that having strong relations with the state of Pakistan

was a better option than any other. Development programmes in Fata between 1972 and 1977 positively impacted the social sector. However, the Afghan war brought drugs and guns, which negatively impacted the socioeconomic dynamic of the tribal belt, reducing its dependence on government subsidies and allowances.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan impacted Pakistan's policy for the tribal areas, resulting in the modification of policies focused on penetration and integration. Pakistan's strategic interests then became the sole focus. Fata was finally merged into Kh-yy-ber Pakhtunkhwa in 2018 as a consequence of the 25th Constitutional Amendment. This altered the provincial boundary and KP's demographic balance and added new challenges.

Certain external and internal developments and policies provided space for violent extremists who take advantage of the tribal areas. Globally, for states bordering such areas, having strong defences is a top priority, which means ensuring economic development and social cohesion. This is not possible without a fully functional criminal justice system, strong local governance, and social empowerment.

The effects of globalisation, militancy, and kinetic operations have fostered awareness in these areas about human rights and encouraged comparisons with other areas. The merger has provided representation in the provincial legislature and dismantled the colonial legal and administrative apparatus. However, there is a need to develop stronger linkages and synchronise state and public interests.

Beyond Oct 7**Mahir Ali**

If it is considered impolitic to denounce Israel's mass slaughter in Gaza over the past year without condemning the inhumane crimes committed by Hamas and its associates on Oct 7, 2023, perhaps the reverse should also apply. Surely, it's equally unreasonable to focus on the events of that traumatic day while ignoring the depth and breadth of the retributive injustice unleashed in its wake.

Nor, for that matter, does it make much sense to decontextualise Oct 7 from the Palestinian experience of dispossession, dehumanisation, arbitrary incarceration and bloodshed across the preceding 75 years, let alone from the 18-year siege of Gaza after direct occupation was replaced with a chokehold regularly supplemented by destructive attacks. As Israeli journalist Gideon Levy put it: "It's 2.3 million people just closed in a cage. And you wonder what will come out of this experiment in human beings, and you got it on the 7th of October."

The residents of the kibbutzim and towns close to Gaza obviously did not deserve to be murdered or abducted, let alone sexually violated, any more than inmates confined to Gaza deserve their daily dose of death, disease or starvation. Some Israeli propagandists deemed it appropriate to exaggerate the atrocities of Oct 7, with Western media and politicians amplifying untruths. Even Joe Biden claimed to have seen pictures of beheaded babies, until the Israeli military clarified that there weren't any. Last month, the Gaza health ministry released information about 34,344 Palestinians killed in the territory, almost a third of them identified as chil-

dren. Among the latter, 710 were victims of what can only be classified as Zionist infanticide. They never got to celebrate their first birthday.

And we live in a world where this level of genocide is considered sad, but acceptable. Israel, after all, has the divinely ordained right to self-defence. Even against infants. Who might otherwise grow up to challenge the unrelenting brutality of their forebears endured.

When the history of these times is written, the US will be in the dock, alongside other Western powers that have striven to wash off their guilt over their failure to forestall the Holocaust. Jewish refugees were turned away from many a shore, and many ended up in Auschwitz, Treblinka or one of the other extermination camps.

Since last October, the ongoing 'ethnic cleansing' in the West Bank — which was always the primary motive of the 2005 'withdrawal' from Gaza — has been stepped up, with military backing for settler violence morphing into direct attacks by the Israel Defence Forces (IDF). The all-out assault against Lebanon, following the decapitation of Hezbollah, preceded by the technological coup of detonating the explosives placed in Israeli-assembled paggers and walkie-talkies, has helped to restore Benjamin Netanyahu's domestic political status.

After Tehran responded to the assassinations of Ismail Haniyeh and Hassan Nasrallah with a largely token missile barrage, Israel has been negotiating the extent of its retaliation with the US. The latter seems to think that any attempt to destroy Iran's nuclear facilities could prove counterproductive, but igniting Iran's petroleum infra-

structure might be acceptable. Ayatollah Khamenei hasn't helped matters by endorsing the Oct 7 travesty and reinforcing Iran's backing for Hezbollah and Hamas.

Israel's response to Iran will help to determine where the Middle East goes next. The wider war that the US was supposedly seeking to prevent is already proceeding, largely courtesy of its chief proxy in the region, which appears to have little interest in lame-duck 'warnings' from an American president who has proclaimed himself to be Israel's biggest White House supporter. As the Israeli genocide scholar Raz Segal reflected in The Guardian, "Biden's words constitute ... a textbook use of the Holocaust not in order to stand with powerless people facing the prospect of genocidal violence, but to support and justify an extremely violent attack by a powerful state and ... distort this reality."

Israeli historian Ilan Pappé, meanwhile, sees this moment as a precursor to the demise of the Zionist project dating back to the 19th century. He argues that "the original Zionist idea of planting a European Zionist state at the heart of the Arab world through the dispossession of the Palestinians was illogical, immoral and impractical", and that it has survived as a consequence of serving "the ideological or strategic objectives" of a "very powerful ... religious, imperialist and economic" alliance.

Emmanuel Macron has switched sides after a year. Biden or Kamala Harris are unlikely to follow suit. "Is this really it?!" asks Palestinian poet Mosab Abu Toha. "Is our only job to report on our deaths, or film our cut-off bodies/and ask you for help? When do YOU wake up?"

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 f-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.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori receiving Pakistanis stranded in Lebanon at Jinnah International Airport after their return to home.

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. The NAB deputy chairman emphasized that recovering national wealth was the bureau's top priority, ensuring that all actions were taken in the public interest. Under the leadership of DG Amjad Majeed Aulakh, the NAB Lahore had achieved remarkable success, recovering billions of rupees in 2024 alone.

He affirmed that all NAB initiatives were designed to benefit both the public and the national treasury. To further enhance its outreach, an accountability facilitation cell (AFC) had been established for parliamentarians and the business community.

Court adjourns PA illegal recruitment case till Oct 23

LAHORE (APP): An anti-corruption court on Wednesday adjourned the hearing of Punjab Assembly illegal recruitment case until October 23.

Anti-Corruption Court Judge Sardar Muhammad Iqbal Dogar conducted the proceedings, during which the accused, Muhammad Khan Bhatti, was produced after being brought from jail. The other accused, who were out on bail, also appeared and marked their attendance.

A counsel on behalf of former chief minister Punjab Chaudhry Parvez Elahi submitted an exemption application, stating that his client was ill and doctors had advised

him to rest. He requested the court to exempt Parvez Elahi from personal appearance for one day.

The court allowed the application but remarked that during every hearing, someone from the accused remains absent to avoid indictment. It further noted that this practice was not acceptable and added that it was the last opportunity being granted to Parvez Elahi. All accused must be present on the next date of hearing, it added.

The Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) Punjab had registered the case, accusing Parvez Elahi of unlawful appointments and kickbacks. Allegedly, qualified candidates were denied positions.

Monetary dispute takes three lives

PESHAWAR (APP): A monetary dispute led to crossfire between the two groups, claiming the lives of three people here on Wednesday.

Police said the incident occurred in Pahari Pura area during morning hours where two groups resorted to indiscriminate firing at each other over a monetary issue. As a result of the firing three people were killed on the scene, however before the arrival of police, the accused involved in the firing fled the scene.

Principal shot dead

MULTAN (APP): A female principal was shot dead by unknown outlaw at Gulzaib Colony, here on Wednesday.

According to Rescue 1122, Safoora Bibi (29) of Fatima Jinnah High School was heading to the school when an armed outlaw opened fire and killing her on the spot.

Police were investigating the incident.

Timber smuggling attempt foiled in Lower Dir

LOWER DIR (APP): Police on Wednesday foiled an attempt to smuggle valuable timber through the Zolam checkpoint in Lower Dir district.

According to the police spokesman, Acting on a tip-off, the police conducted an intensive operation at the Zolam checkpoint late at night.

During the operation, a dumper truck with registration number 2158, coming from the Munda area was stopped and searched.



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.

He 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.

KP Cabinet approves amendment in Police Act, Prisons department rules

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: The provincial cabinet of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has taken significant decisions during its 15th session held at Civil Secretariat Peshawar, approving important amendments, projects, and reforms aimed at improving law enforcement, prison facilities, healthcare, education, and infrastructure across the province.

Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur chaired the meeting which was attended by Ministers, Advisors, Special Assistants, Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, Inspector General of Police Akhtar Hayat Khan, Additional Chief Secretaries and Administrative Secretaries.

The cabinet has approved vital amendments to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police Act, 2017, after identifying several gaps and ambiguities that hinder effective law enforcement.

The proposed changes aim to strengthen police capabilities, enhance accountability, improve community-police relations, and address the shortcomings in the current legislation.

The purpose of these amendments is to maintain internal discipline, achieve high-performance standards, and ensure uniform service delivery. The amendments also incorporate the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police Complaint Authority Act 2024, enabling swift inquiries into complaints against police misconduct.

The cabinet has also approved an increase in the budget for the De-radicalization/Rehabilitation Centre in Merged Districts program, raising the total cost to Rs. 1,763,097 million.

This initiative, launched in response to radicalization in the Merged Districts, focuses on rehabilitating detainees from military operations.

ANF recovers 44 kg drugs in five operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting five operations across the country managed to recover 44 kg drugs worth Rs 9.4 million and arrested four accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Wednesday.

He informed that in an operation, 1500 intoxicated tablets were recovered from the possession of an accused arrested near Hayatabad Toll Plaza on Ring Road Peshawar.

In another raid, 500 grams hashish was recovered from the possession of an accused netted from Murree Road in Abbottabad.

Seven kg hashish was recovered from an accused nabbed near a university in Tando Jam, Hyderabad.

The arrested accused confessed to selling drugs to the students of educational institutions. The spokesman further informed that 12 kg hashish was recovered from a vehicle intercepted near Motorway Toll Plaza Islamabad.

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.

Deplored 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.



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

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.

Commitment of our government to local government elections is a significant step towards promoting decentralization, empowerment, and democratic governance in Gilgit-Baltistan, he added.



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

Swat gets child-friendly protection unit

SWAT (Haron Siraj): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Commission (KPCPCWC) 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

KPCPCWC, shared that the commission has already aided 32,564 at-risk children and established 21 fully operational Child Protection Units across the province. UNICEF's Child Protection Specialist, Sohail Ahmad, emphasized the importance of community engagement in creating a safe environment for children. The event also featured performances by children from local organizations, who received medals for their participation.

It is pertinent to mention here that this initiative is part of KPCPCWC's mission to ensure every child in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa grows up in a secure and nurturing environment.



LAHORE: Postmaster General Central Punjab, Anwar Malik giving certificates and cash award to a student who won the third position in the district in the letter writing competition along with the Chief Postmaster, on the occasion of World Post Day at the provincial capital.

209 terrorists killed, 244 held in nine months

PESHAWAR (APP): The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) in its report issued here Wednesday said that as many as 209 terrorists were killed and 244 were held during intelligence based operations across the province during the last nine months.

It said that a total 497 incidents of terrorism took place in 27 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the last nine months in which 1,154 terrorists of banned organizations were nominated in FIRs, adding that so far 16 accused had so far been punished by the relevant courts.

Sharing the details, the CTD report stated that 39 terrorists were killed in 52 incidents of terrorism occurred in district Dera

Ismail Khan, the hometown of the Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and provincial Chief Minister. The police arrested four terrorists.

Similarly, 22 miscreants were killed and 25 were held in 55 incidents in Khyber district, it said, adding that 54 incidents of terrorism were reported from North Waziristan wherein the CTD police killed 27 terrorists and arrested eight others during the operations.

The provincial capital witnessed 33 incidents of terrorism wherein 21 terrorists were arrested while 15 were killed.

In district Shangla, six incidents of terrorism were reported in which 33

others were killed in one incident in district Charsadda.

The CTD said that six incidents of terrorism occurred in district Lower Dir where two suspects were apprehended. Similarly, two terrorists were held in district Hangu where nine incidents of terrorism were reported.

In Karak, three suspects were arrested in connection with five incidents of terrorism. Four terrorists were killed in Kohat where five incidents occurred. Six terrorists were held and one killed in 17 incidents of terrorism in District Kurram. 14 terrorists were killed and eight arrested in 37 incidents of terrorism in District Lakki Marwat. 25

terrorists were arrested in four incidents of terrorism in Malakand.

Similarly, four suspects were arrested in one incident of terrorism in Manshera district. 11 terrorists were killed and nine were arrested in nine incidents in Mardan.

In Mohmand district, eight incidents were reported wherein six terrorists were killed and one was arrested.

Five terrorists were arrested while two were killed in seven incidents in Nowshera district.

The CTD killed 28 terrorists and arrested six suspects in 51 terrorist incidents in Tank District.

One militant was killed in a terrorist incident that occurred in Swabi during the last nine months.



KARACHI: Members of Karachi Union of Journalists (KUJ) and Pakistan Association of Press Photographers (PAPP) are holding protest demonstration against forced dismissal of journalists from private news channel, held at Karachi press club.

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, Ahad Cheema in meeting with the delegation of Asian Development Bank.



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.

The LCCI leadership said that the deals will bring in billions of dollars of foreign investment, catalyze the country's economic growth and strengthen its standing on the global stage.

Mian Abuzar Shad said Pakistan stands to benefit greatly from Saudi investment. The LCCI President also added that sectors like industrial growth, agriculture and information technology will see a major boost as a result of these agreements.

PTCL launches Pakistan's first 800G WDM system in partnership with Huawei

ISLAMABAD (APP): PTCL Group, Pakistan's top integrated ICT provider, has achieved a major milestone by successfully launching the country's first 800 Gbps per wavelength Super C+L Wavelength Division Multiplexing (WDM) system.

This advanced technology enables a data transmission capacity of 64 Tbps per fiber, with the potential to reach up to 96 Tbps, marking a significant step forward for Pakistan's digital infrastructure and a news release.

Developed in collaboration with Huawei, PTCL's Super C+L system supports a broader optical spectrum of up to 12 THz, compared to the 4.8 THz provided by traditional systems.

It combines high-speed 800 Gbps per wavelength, ultra-wide Super C+L spectrum, and advanced Flexible Grid optical switching.

This breakthrough positions PTCL at the forefront of Pakistan's digital transformation, preparing the network for future technologies like Fixed 5.5G (F5.5G) and enabling faster, smarter, and more efficient connectivity.

Jafar Khalid, Group Chief Technology and Information Officer, PTCL & Ufone 4G, commented: "Our focus is on advancing cutting-edge technology while maintaining sustainability. This upgrade will improve service quality, lower latency, and enhance the overall user experience for both consumers and enterprises, while reducing our environmental footprint. It will also help us manage the growing demand for data traffic across different customer segments with reliable, cost-effective solutions."

Victor Zhou, President of Huawei's Optical Domain,

Gold prices witnesses further decrease

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs.3,000 and was sold at Rs.271,700 on Wednesday compared to its sale at Rs.274,700 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs.2,572 to Rs.232,939 from Rs.235,511 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went down to Rs.213,527 from Rs.215,885, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained unchanged at Rs.3,050 and Rs.2,614.88, respectively.

The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$30 to \$2,617 from \$2,647, the Association reported.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where three ships, MSC Alina, Petrel-1 and Al-Diab-II carrying Container, Palm oil and LPG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Liquid Cargo Terminal and Sui Southern Gas Terminal respectively on Tuesday.

Meanwhile three more ships, FSM, Maya Gas-1 and Al-Wajbah carrying LPG and LNG are also arrived at outer anchorage the port during last 24 hours.

A total of nine ships were engaged at POA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them five ships, MSC Alina, Sunda, ST. Cergue, Al-Diab-II and Aligote are expected to sail on today.

Cargo volume of 123,511 tonnes, comprising 70,158 tonnes imports cargo and 53,353 tonnes export cargo carried in 2,765 Containers (488 TEUs Imports & 2,277 TEUs Export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

There are 11 ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them three ships, Christos-K, FSM and Al Wajbah & two more.

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.



KARACHI: All Pakistan LPG Distributors Association Senior Vice Chairman, Muhammad Ali Haider addresses to media persons during press conference, held at Karachi press club.

Pak envoy, UAE Chambers head discuss collaboration, B2B joint ventures

ABU DHABI (APP): Ambassador of Pakistan to the United Arab Emirates Faisal Niaz Tirmizi met with Ahmed Jasim Al Zaabi, Chairman of Federation of UAE Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UAE Chambers) and Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ADCCI).

In the meeting, they discussed the enhancement of collaboration between UAE Chambers with Pakistani Chambers of Commerce and Industries and the establishment of B2B joint ventures to promote bilateral trade, according to a press release received on Wednesday.

Ambassador Tirmizi congratulated Al Zaabi, who is also Chairman of Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development (ADDED), Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM) on his appointment.

He also appreciated the visionary initiatives of the UAE leadership and the contributions of ADCCI in the economic development of the UAE through facilitation and support of business entities.

Ambassador Tirmizi briefed the chairman regarding Pakistan's investment regime and initiatives of the government for the facilitation of foreign investors.

He briefed about potential investment sectors of Pakistan including IT, food and agriculture, textile, leather, tourism, and infrastructure, etc.

Shaukat advises taxpayers to approach Federal Tax Ombudsman for relief

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Advisor to the Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) for Hazara Region Shaukat Mehmoed 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 Mehmoed 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 Mehmoed stated. Those unable to attend hearings in person are offered the option of participating via video link.

Mehmoed assured that complaints are resolved within 60 days, with implementation of the Ombudsman's decisions ensured within 45 days.

PSX gains 5.30 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) gained 5.30 points on Wednesday, a nominal positive change of 0.01 percent, closing at 85,669.28 points against 85,663.98 points on the last trading day.

A total of 596,052,076 shares were traded during the day as compared to 506,565,368 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 31,341 billion against Rs 33,049 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 448 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 208 of them recorded gains and 172 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 68 companies remained unchanged.

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, Ahad Khan Cheema 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.

The Minister articulated the government's commitment to a comprehensive reform agenda, focused on restoring macroeconomic stability and promoting sustainable growth.

A body discusses Seed Amendment Bill 2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Assembly's Standing Committee on National Food Security and Research here on Wednesday discussed again the Seed (Amendment) Bill 2024.

According to press release issued by National Assembly Secretariat, the meeting was chaired by Syed Tariq Hussain.

The press release said, the Minister for National Food Security and Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain, informed the Committee that one provincial government has given the concurrence to

the Bill.

However, the Committee emphasized that, in accordance with Article 144 of the Constitution of Pakistan, resolutions from all provincial assemblies must be taken before the bill is enacted into law by Parliament.

The Committee recommended that the Chairman of the authority should have a minimum of 10 years of experience, a Master's degree, and relevant management experience. It also suggested the need for a clear definition of "Progressive Farmer."



QUETTA: A delegation led by President Anjuman Tajir Balochistan Raheem Agha meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

KCCI to remain open full day on every Friday

KARACHI (APP): To better serve the business and industrial community, the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) management has decided to keep all its departments fully operational every Friday for full day, instead of observing half-day schedule as per past practice.

KCCI members, according to a statement issued here on Wednesday, could now avail various facilities on Friday, as all the departments except the Attestation Department will continue to offer services as per office timings starting from 9:30AM to 6:00PM, with a lunch break scheduled from 1:15PM to 2:00PM from Monday to Thursday and Saturday whereas on Friday, lunch hours will be observed from 12:45PM to 2:30PM.

The Attestation Department will start its operations from 9:00AM to 5:00PM throughout the week with 30-minute lunch break from 1:30PM to 2:00PM while Friday prayer or lunch break timings will remain the same as being observed by all other departments.

The decision to keep KCCI operational throughout Friday was made by the KCCI Office.

ADB delegation visits BISP One Window Center

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of Executive and Alternate Executive Directors from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) visited the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) One Window Center in G-7, Islamabad, to review its operations.

Led by Donald Bobiash, the delegation included Shigeo Shimizu, Supak Chaiyawan, Nour Ahmed, Shantanu Mitra, and Llewellyn Roberts.

During the visit, Naveed Akbar, Director General NSER/CCT at BISP, briefed the team on BISP's core programs, including Benazir Kafalaat,

Taleemi Wazaif, Nishanuma Undergraduate Scholarship, the NSER database, Mobile Registration Vehicles, and the payment mechanisms.

The delegation also observed the registration process for women beneficiaries, the enrollment of out-of-school children under Taleemi Wazaif, the Nishanuma Center, and the payment facilities at BISP partner bank counters.

The ADB delegation commended the efficient operations and the range of services provided to women beneficiaries at the BISP One Window Center.

Workers' remittances increase by 38.76% to \$8.785 bn inflow

ISLAMABAD (APP): The overseas workers' remittances witnessed an increase of 38.76 per cent during the first quarter (July-September) of the current fiscal year 2024-25, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) said on Wednesday.

The inflow of \$ 8.785 billion was recorded during July-September 2024-25

as compared to the inflow of \$6.331 billion during July-September 2023-24, showing growth of 38.76 per cent.

Similarly, on a year-on-year basis, the worker's remittance went up by 29.03 per cent in September 2024 to \$2.849 billion from \$ 2.208 billion during the same month last year.



Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication, Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja chairing 61st meeting of Board of Directors of Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB) in Islamabad

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

Monitoring Desk

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.



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

Turks set to evacuate from Lebanon by ship, driven by safety fears

Monitoring Desk

BEIRUT: Nearly 2,000 Turkish citizens and family members prepared to leave Beirut on two Turkish navy landing ships on Wednesday, evacuating from Lebanon over fears for their safety as Israel expanded its operations against Hezbollah militants. Those gathered at the port said the deteriorating security situation and economic hardship in Lebanon prompted them to flee on the ships, which left Turkey on Tuesday.

"We cannot take this situation anymore. No one knows where this country is taking us. The siege is becoming bigger," said Issa Malak, who like many of the evacuees holds Lebanese as well as Turkish citizenship. "There is no bread

here. There is no future in Lebanon."

The ships first unloaded humanitarian aid upon arriving in Beirut. Turkey's defence ministry said they were carrying some 300 tons of supplies.

"There are beds, tents, blankets, food parcels, kitchenware and hygiene kits," Turkish Ambassador Ali Baris Ulusoy told state-owned Anadolu news agency.

Ahead of the ships' arrival, the passengers registered their papers and waited with their luggage.

"We're leaving because the rockets and shells started dropping on us," said Tarek Issa. Mariam Darwish, who holds Turkish and Lebanese nationality, said she would travel with her 80-year-old Turkish father.

New French PM survives no-trust vote

Monitoring Desk

PARIS: French Prime Minister Michel Barnier passed the first test of his new government on Tuesday, as a leftist no-confidence motion failed to garner enough votes to bring down his center-right administration. President Emmanuel Macron tapped Barnier for the job of prime minister last month after a snap election led to a fractious hung parliament. Barnier's government is weak, propped up by the far right and despised by leftist lawmakers who filed the no-confidence motion on Friday.

The no-confidence motion was always a longshot, as it needed the backing of the far-right National Rally (RN) party to get over the line — a move RN lawmakers had signalled they were unwilling to take.

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

Monitoring Desk

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.

said.

But despite larger and more frequent cross-border disasters, a trust deficit between South Asian countries has meant they have struggled to work together and have instead often resorted to mutual recrimination.

India is Nepal's biggest trading partner, but the two also have several border disputes. Similarly, Bangladesh and India have strong economic ties but are in dispute over water sharing and the killing of people crossing the border illegally.

"No country in the region trusts others when it comes to riparian management, thanks to the political differences," said Harsh Vasani, a professor of international studies at Flame University in India.



People fill bags with sand at a park in Stuart, Florida, in preparation for Hurricane Milton.



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

Monitoring Desk

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, in-depth 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

Monitoring Desk

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

Monitoring Desk

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.

Spain's Sanchez touts benefits of migration

Monitoring Desk

MADRID: Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez on Wednesday announced measures to make it easier for immigrants to settle in Spain, championing migration and its economic benefits even as other European governments have tightened their borders against newcomers.

To stop undocumented migrants, Germany, Slovakia and Hungary have reintroduced temporary border controls in what was long the heart of the European Union's Schengen open travel zone.

France says it is considering similar moves while Italy aims to set up

detention camps in non-EU Albania for migrants picked up at sea. "Immigration is not just a question of humanitarianism... it's also necessary for the prosperity of our economy and the sustainability of the welfare state," Sanchez said in a speech to parliament.

"The key is in managing it well." Spain will work on making it easier for migrants to come with a series of initiatives, including recognising academic qualifications for temporary workers, simplifying contracts as part of a new labour migration programme, and reducing red tape for residency applications, Sanchez said.



Indian soldiers help people cross a stream in Wayanad, India, using a rope.

'Evacuate now, now, now', Biden pleads with Floridians

Monitoring Desk

TAMPA: Storm-battered Florida girded on Tuesday for a direct hit from Hurricane Milton, a monster weather system threatening catastrophic damage and forcing President Joe Biden to postpone an overseas trip.

As the second huge hurricane in as many weeks rumbled toward the US state's west coast, a sense of looming catastrophe spread as people raced to board up homes and flee.

"It's a matter of life and death, and that's not hyperbole," President Joe Biden said, urging those under or-

ders to vacate to "evacuate now, now, now." Biden's warning came amid a bitter pre-election quarrel, with his Democratic vice president Kamala Harris castigating her rival Donald Trump for peddling false claims that recovery efforts after the first storm, Hurricane Helene, were diverted away from Republicans. Biden postponed a major trip to Germany and Angola to oversee the federal response, as storm relief efforts have emerged as a political battleground ahead of the presidential election on Nov 5.

Hezbollah is still organised despite Israeli attacks

Monitoring Desk

MOSCOW: Russia's foreign ministry said on Wednesday that Hezbollah was still organised and had not lost its chain of command despite strikes by Israel which Moscow said was trying to stoke an armed conflict across the Middle East.

"According to our assessments, Hezbollah, including the military wing, has not lost its chain of command and is demonstrating organisation," Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova told reporters.

Ishiba dissolves Japan's lower house to set up an Oct. 27 parliamentary election

Monitoring Desk

TOKYO: Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba dissolved Japan's lower house of parliament Wednesday to set up an Oct. 27 snap election and seek a mandate from voters for his 93-day-old government.

Ishiba took office last week as Fumio Kishida resigned after leading the governing Liberal Democratic Party for three years as it was dogged by corruption scandals.

With the early election, Ishiba is seeking to secure a majority in the lower house for his governing party while he is

still fresh and before the congratulatory mood fades.

The move has been criticized as prioritizing an election rather than policies and for allowing little debate. But Japan's opposition has remained too fractured to push the governing party out of power.

Ishiba announced his plans for an election even before he won the party leadership vote and became prime minister. His Cabinet planned later Wednesday to formally announce the election date and the start of campaigning next Tuesday.

Israeli strike kills 17 in Gaza refugee camp

Monitoring Desk

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 Balah. 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 'a very important phase'

Monitoring Desk

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 south 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 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.

Kenya's senate to consider impeachment of deputy president

Monitoring Desk

NAIROBI: Kenya's senate will next week debate whether to dismiss Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua, the senate speaker said on Wednesday, after the national assembly voted to impeach Gachagua.

Lawmakers voted by 281 to 44 late on Tuesday to impeach Gachagua, with one abstention. That was far more than the two-thirds majority needed to carry the motion to the senate.

Senate speaker Amason Kingi said the senate would investigate the allegations on Wednesday and Thursday next week. If at least two-thirds of the senate vote to uphold the impeachment, Gachagua will be dismissed.

Gachagua has denied all 11 charges against him, which include enriching himself and stirring ethnic hatred. He called the impeachment process a "theatre of the absurd."

His rift with President

William Ruto, whom he backed in a 2022 election, split into the open after deadly protests this year against proposed tax increases and the cost of living.

Ruto has not commented publicly on the impeachment proceedings.

Gachagua outraged many in Ruto's coalition for likening the government to a company and suggesting that those who voted for the coalition had first claim on public-sector jobs and development projects.

The push to impeach Gachagua has divided Kenyans, with some saying that parliament should focus on the economy instead of politics and others calling for both Ruto and his deputy to quit.

"They should both be removed. After two years there has been no positive effect. We have had more crises. They came as a package so they should leave as a package," said Melissa Kagondi, who sells beauty products.

Second-warmest September sees extreme rainfall: EU body

Monitoring Desk

PARIS: Last month was the second-warmest September ever registered globally in an exceptional year "almost certain" to become the hottest on record, the EU climate monitor Copernicus said on Tuesday.

As global temperatures rise due to climate change, September also saw "extreme rainfall and destructive storms" across the world, events that are occurring with greater severity and frequency.

Pakistan was "severely" impacted by the monsoon while wetter than average conditions were also witnessed in parts of Africa, Russia, China, Australia and Brazil, said Copernicus, which uses billions of measurements from satellites, ships, aircraft and weather stations to aid its calculations.

In September some parts of the world saw "months' worth of rain falling in just a few days", said Samantha Burgess, deputy director of the Copernicus Climate Change Service. "The extreme rainfall events of this month, something we are observing more and more often, have been made worse by a warmer atmosphere," the official said. "The risk of extreme rain-

fall will continue to increase with rising temperatures." In a month of wild weather, Hurricane Helene pounded the south-east United States, Typhoon Kra-thon slammed into Taiwan and Storm Boris brought floods and devastation to central Europe. Typhoons Yagi and Bebinca left a trail of destruction in Asia while deadly floods hit Nepal, Japan and west and central Africa.

The average global temperature last month was second only to September 2023, said Copernicus.

Last year was the hottest on record, but 2024 looks set to rewrite history yet again, as global warming isn't just about rising temperatures but the knock-on effect of all that extra heat being trapped in the atmosphere and seas resulting in more intense downpours and storms. Copernicus said the months January through September 2024 have already set fresh highs "making it almost certain that 2024 is going to be the warmest year on record". Fourteen of the last 15 months have been at least 1.5 degrees above average temperatures experienced in the pre-industrial era, taken as the period between 1850 and 1900.

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 to enrol back 26.2 million 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 numbers 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 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 Shahbaz Sharif.



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.



QUETTA: Prime Minister's Climate Change Coordinator Romina Khurshid Alam and Senate Human Rights Committee Chairperson Samina Mumtaz Zehri pose for a group photo with Secretary Forest Dostain Jamaldini and others during their visit to Balochistan.

Implementation on PM Health Insurance Scheme for media persons starts in Balochistan

Independent Report QUETTA: The implementation has been started on the Prime Minister Health Insurance Scheme for the working journalists and other media persons in Balochistan. Three media persons belonging to Hub district and associated with TV channel were given their PM Health Insurance Cards from the State Life Insurance after their verification by the office of Information Department, on directives of Secretary In-

formation Balochistan, Imran Afridi and Director General of Public Relations, Muhammad Noor Khetran. The Assistant Director, Abdul Wahid Baloch visited the Hub Press Club. He also discussed the issue of grant of the Press Club as was announced by the Spokesman of President Asif Ali Zardari for Balochistan and Advisor to Chief Minister, Mir Ali Hasan Zehri. Speaking on the occasion, Assistant Director Public Relations assured

the office bearers that the measures would remain continued for welfare of the media persons as per the policy of government. The President of Hub Press Club, Muhammad Ilyas Kamboh and other office bearers thanked Secretary Information and DGPR for initiating PM Health Insurance Scheme from Hub. It may be mentioned here that the media workers would be able to avail the facility of medical treatment upto Rs. 1 million.

GDA, UoG ink pact for regional development

Independent Report GWADAR: The Gwadar Development Authority (GDA) and the University of Gwadar signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to foster educational activities and promote regional development. The agreement was signed by GDA Director General Shafiqat Anwar Shahwani and University of Gwadar Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Abdul Razzaq Baloch. The partnership aims to unleash the potential of young individuals in Gwadar's development by providing opportunities for research, training, and exhibitions. Both organiza-

tions will collaboratively organize workshops, conferences, research and development initiatives, and other activities to enhance professional skills and address regional challenges. During his visit to the university, Shahwani was briefed on various projects, departments, and the under-construction new building. The MoU signing ceremony was a significant step towards promoting educational and professional development in Gwadar and surrounding areas. This strategic partnership is expected to have a profound impact on the region's growth and prosperity.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan addressing a ceremony at Arya Institute of Medical Sciences.

PPP Kalat observes 31st anniversary of Shaheed Baba Sikandar Jan Zehri

Independent Report KALAT: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) District Kalat observed the 31st anniversary of Shaheed Baba Sikandar Jan Zehri with great reverence at Municipal Committee Kalat. Party leaders and workers paid tribute to Zehri's services, cutting a cake to commemorate the occasion. Speakers recalled Zehri's sacrifices for the nation, stating that his legacy will be remembered in golden words. They emphasized that martyrs never die, but live on in the hearts of the people. Zehri's family has consistently made sacrifices for the country and the Baloch people. PPP leaders praised Chief of Jhalawan, Nawab Sanaullah Khan Zehri, for his unwavering commitment to principles and traditions. They expressed pride in Zehri's courage and resilience, vowing to follow in his footsteps. The event reaffirmed the party's resolve to continue Zehri's mission, upholding his ideals and values. The gathering paid homage to Zehri's enduring spirit, ensuring his memory remains an inspiration for future generations.

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SCO Summit marks major diplomatic success for Pakistan: Syedaal Khan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Chairman Senate, Syedaal Khan Nasar on Wednesday hailed the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit in Islamabad and termed it as a significant diplomatic victory for Pakistan, crediting the relentless efforts of Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Deputy Prime Minister Senator Ishaq Dar. Speaking at Parliament House during a meeting with key business figures from Rawalpindi and Karachi, Khan emphasized that the successful hosting of the summit highlights global confidence in Pakistan's leadership and diplomacy. "The SCO summit is

a clear reflection of the world's trust in Pakistan. It will boost trade, attract foreign investment, and pave the way for the nation's prosperity," Khan remarked. He noted that the conference will review the regional economic and security landscape, strengthening international cooperation with Pakistan.

British High Commission allocates over £10 million for flood response in Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): The British High Commission has announced a significant relief package of over £10 million to aid Pakistan in its recovery from devastating floods. The funds, aimed at addressing the immediate needs of flood-affected communities, will focus on providing essential relief items, supporting rehabilitation efforts, and strengthening infrastructure to withstand future climate-related disasters, says the official

handout. This commitment comes in response to the widespread damage caused by torrential monsoon rains, which have displaced thousands, submerged vast areas, and caused severe disruption to livelihoods across the country. The allocated funds will be distributed through partnerships with local and international humanitarian organizations to ensure swift and effective relief operations.

Dr. Rubaba calls for raising awareness about women and children's welfare

Independent Report QUETTA: Advisor to the Chief Minister for the Women Development Department, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi, underscored the importance of raising awareness about women and children's welfare, particularly their health. She stressed the need to inform every individual in society about essential health practices to effectively address the challenges faced by women and children. She shared these views during a meeting with Kathleen Kamal Raisani Foundation (KKRF) CEO, Zulekha Raisani, where they discussed the foundation's ongoing

awareness sessions in Quetta's schools and women's training centers, focusing on breast cancer, general health, and hygiene. Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi emphasized that such awareness programs are crucial for spreading knowledge within society. She noted that educating women and children on health issues, particularly breast cancer and hygiene, is vital, along with taking practical steps to address these concerns. She further advocated for the establishment of additional training and awareness centers to empower women, making them more self-reliant and capable of solving their problems independently.

Two Khwarij terrorists killed in NW IBO



QUETTA: Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly Ghazala Gola, Provincial Minister Education Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani, Pro-Vice Chancellor BUTEMS Dr. Abdul Rehman, Head of FDI Uzma Yaqoob and panelists in a group photo after conclusion of Climate Conference.

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Security Forces on Wednesday killed two Khwarij terrorists during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in Mir Ali area of North Waziristan District. During the operation, intense fire exchange took place between the Army troops and khwarij, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said. Weapons, ammunition and explosives were also recovered from killed Khwarij, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities against the security forces as well as target killing of innocent civilians in the area, it said.

Health Secretary says: Govt taking steps to provide medical aids to people at official level

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Health Secretary Mujib-ur Rahman on Wednesday said that incumbent provincial government is taking practical steps to provide better medical facilities to the people at the official level in the province. He expressed these views while chairing a meeting of the officers of the Balochistan Health Department after assuming as a charge of Secretary Health. The meeting was attended by Special Secretary Health Shahak Baloch, Additional Secretary Health Arif Khan, Additional Secretary Health Khaliq Zehri, Chief Planning Officer Dr. Ghulam Mustafa, Deputy Secretary Health, Deputy Secretary Health Riasat Ali, Director Technical Dr. Shah, Personal Secretary Muhammad Asif, Deputy Secretaries, Section Officers and other assistants. Additional Secretary Health Arif Achakzai and Director Technical Balochistan Dr. Shah briefed Health Secretary

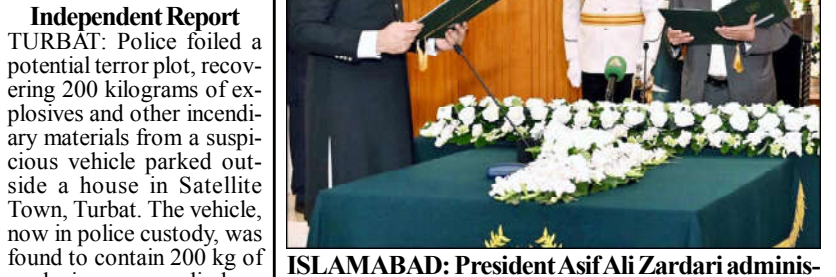
regarding the provision of services and ongoing projects in the Health Department. Addressing the meeting, Health Secretary said that according to the vision of Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti to provide quality health facilities in Balochistan. He said that reforms would be brought to improve health facilities for patients in government hospitals saying that the Treasury Care Hospitals of the provincial capital are the center of treatment for the people not only of Quetta but of the entire Balochistan. He also directed all MSs and District Health Officers to immediately improve the sanitation situation in hospitals. The Secretary said that the problems being faced by respective hospitals should be identified in writing so that the steps taken to solve them could be continuously reviewed with the aim to prevent wastage of resources.

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 macro-economic 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 ex-

port-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.

Police seize explosives laden vehicle in Turbat



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.

Independent Report TURBAT: Police foiled a potential terror plot, recovering 200 kilograms of explosives and other incendiary materials from a suspicious vehicle parked outside a house in Satellite Town, Turbat. The vehicle, now in police custody, was found to contain 200 kg of explosives, gas cylinders, petrol and diesel containers. Authorities believe the materials were intended for destructive activities. The timely intervention by law enforcement agencies has prevented a potential disaster.

Noshervani exhorts officers to use modern resources for better public service

Independent Report QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Finance, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani has exhorted the civil officers to make effective planning using modern resources for better service of general public wholeheartedly. He stressed to give top priority to transparency and honesty in resolving public issues so that confidence of people is restored and expedite the journey of development of the provinces. He directed to the bureaucrats to remain in the field for resolving the public issues immediately. The Minister Finance was speaking to the newly appointed officers on different positions here on Wednesday. Those who met the Finance Minister were included Secretary Health, Muejbur Rehman Panezai, Commissioner Rakhshun Division, Muejbur Rehman Qamrani and Managing Director of BPPRA, Muhammad Afzal Khosti. Mir Shoaib Nausherwani congratulated the officers on their new postings. He said that there is a key role of officers in welfare of the people as well as development and prosperity of the province.

DPM chairs meeting on humanitarian assistance to Gaza

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday chaired a meeting to discuss humanitarian assistance for the people of Gaza. "He appreciated the efforts of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and directed to continue humanitarian assistance in pursuance of the Declaration adopted by All Parties Conference.

Chief Secretary urges private sector to play role for improving healthcare facilities along with government

Independent Report QUETTA: The Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan has stressed that responsibility of improving healthcare facilities also rests with the private sector along with the government. The Chief Secretary also stressed on paying attention on establishing nursing colleges instead of the medical colleges besides improving it further. He was speaking on occasion of the ceremony arranged at the Arya Institute of Medical Sciences here on Wednesday. Also present on the occasion was Chief Executive Officer of Arya Institute besides other concerned. The Chief Secretary visited different sections of the Institute and reviewed the facilities being extended to the patients there. He said that medical profession is a sacred pro-

ession and important source to serve the ailing humanity. He urged those associated with the medical profession to serve the people considering it as a mission. Meanwhile, the Chief Secretary appreciated CEO of the Medical Institute for improving healthcare facilities there. He also inaugurated the eye department in the Arya Medical Institute.



QUETTA: Chairman Public Accounts Committee Asghar Ali Tareen presiding over meeting regarding Quetta Package of P&D Department.