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US State Dept reiterates Imran Khan's matter for 'Pakistani courts to decide'

Says Khan's release not interlinked with Trump's success in polls

WASHINGTON (INP): The US State Department has reiterated its stance on the ongoing legal proceedings against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan, stating that it is a matter for the Pakistani courts to decide.

"As we have said many times, legal proceedings against the former prime minister are matters for the Pakistani courts to decide," said State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller during a regular press briefing in Washington.

Matthew Miller said that there is no truth in claims that Imran Khan could be released if Donald Trump is elected as the new president.

Replying to a question regarding PTI leaders Latif Khosa's claim that US diplomat Donald Lu was involved in a conspiracy to remove Imran Khan from prime minister office, Matthew Miller said that it is not true.

"The allegations that the US played any role in his removal from office are false. We've gone over that many number of times from this podium," Matthew Miller said.

He said that Pakistani politics are a matter for the Pakistani people to decide in accordance with their laws and constitution. "Ultimately Pakistani politics is a matter for the Pakistani people to decide in accordance with their laws and constitution."



DOHA: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets with Amir of Qatar His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani.

Visits Shuja Abad to condole with heirs of martyr labourers: Baloch is hospitable nation and custodian of traditions; terrorism not our tradition, CM Balochistan

Bugti says he wants to give message to people of Pakistan including Punjab that Balochistan government is fighting against terrorists in province; gives away cheques of financial compensation to heirs of martyr labourers and injured

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti has categorically stated that Baloch is a hospitable nation and as such terrorism is not our tradition.

The Chief Minister was speaking on occasion of the expression of condolence with the bereaved families of those martyred in the terrorist attacks in Panjgur and Musakhail during his visit to Shuja Abad, Multan on Thursday.

The Chief Minister expressed condolence and sympathy with bereaved families of the martyr labourers and prayed for the departed souls.

He said that we equally share the grief with heirs of the labourers and prayed to Allah for success against terrorists taking revenge of the sacred blood of the martyrs. He said that we strongly condemn the incidents of terrorism. Besides, adding he said that all Baloch tribes have condemned the incidents of terrorism. Meanwhile, speaking to the media persons, the Chief Minister said that any Baloch didn't martyr any Punjabi or Seraiki, rather the terrorists martyred the innocent Pakistanis as they (terrorists) don't belong to any nation or religion.

He said that the terrorists made nefarious attempt to spread hatred among provinces by martyring Pakistanis, however, it was foiled by the people of country.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that he wants to give message to people of Pakistan including Punjab that Balochistan government is fighting against terrorists in province. He said that we are creating such a peaceful environment that the people from all over the country may earn livelihood without fear in Balochistan.

The Chief Minister also pledged to foil every conspiracy against the country and take revenge of every single drop of blood.

Pakistan, Qatar reaffirm commitment to deepen strategic ties, regional stability

Pakistan, Qatar PMs discuss trade, investment cooperation, high-level exchanges

DOHA (APP): Pakistan and Qatar on Thursday reaffirmed their commitment to further deepening strategic bilateral ties, underscoring the importance of shared economic goals and regional stability.

The bilateral relations were discussed in the delegation-level talks between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, followed by a one-on-one meeting encompassing a wide array of bilateral interests, according to a PM Office press release.

The leaders reviewed the entire spectrum of Pakistan-Qatar relations, exploring potential avenues for enhanced cooperation in trade, potential areas of investment, energy, and culture. Both the leaders also discussed regional and international issues of mutual interest particularly the ongoing genocidal war by Israel against innocent Palestinian people and escalation of tensions in the region.

Prime Minister Shehbaz, who is on a two-day official visit here, commended Qatar's stance on Palestinian issue expressed by the Amir during the 79th UNGA held on September 24, 2024.

He appreciated mediation efforts by Qatar for immediate ceasefire and unimpeded supply of humani-

tarian aid. Prime Minister Shehbaz also invited Amir of Qatar to visit Pakistan.

The prime minister's visit marks another milestone in the ever-strengthening partnership and expanding collaboration between Pakistan and Qatar.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday met his Qatari counterpart Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani wherein they discussed avenues to further strengthen bilateral relations, particularly focusing on enhancing cooperation in areas such as trade, investment, energy, and cultural exchange.

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ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, Mistuhiro Wada, calls on Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Pak has no intention of negotiating with TTP: FO

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan on Thursday ruled out any talks with terror outfit Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan and reiterated its call for the Afghan Interim Government to act against the militant groups using Afghan soil to target Pakistan. The Foreign Office spokesperson Murtaza Zahra Baloch, at her weekly press briefing, said that Pakistan rejected any offer or advice for talks with TTP as the country had done so on several occasions.

Asked to comment on a statement by an Afghan

diplomat in Islamabad, she said Afghan authorities had the responsibility to act against terror groups, primarily TTP as Pakistan had also provided the pieces of evidence to the Afghan authorities. She explained that this was not merely Pakistan's demand but also the international community. The spokesperson condemned the recent Israeli attacks on Lebanon's Bekaa Valley and Baalbek region resulting in the tragic loss of civilian lives, including women and children, and the displacement of over a million people.



LAHORE: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with Sikh Yaartis delegation from USA at State Guest House.

President suffers foot fracture on arrival in Dubai

DUBAI (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari, suffered a foot fracture last night upon disembarking a plane at Dubai Airport, a President House Spokesperson said on Thursday.

He was immediately taken to the hospital for initial medical assistance. After examination, doctors applied a plaster to his foot, the spokesperson said adding that the plaster will remain for four weeks.

Martyred Army officer, two soldiers laid to rest

RAWALPINDI (APP): A Pakistan Army officer and two soldiers, who lost their lives during counter-terrorism operation in the Bakakhel area of Bannu district, were laid to rest in their ancestral areas with full military honors.

According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), those who were laid to rest include Major Aatif Khalil Shaheed, Naik Azadullah Shaheed, and Lance Naik Ghaznafar Abbas.

There will be no visa fee for Sikh pilgrims visiting Pakistan: Naqvi

LAHORE (INP): Federal Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control Mohsin Naqvi said on Thursday that there would be no visa fee for the Sikh pilgrims visiting Pakistan to pay respect to their religious sites, adding that pilgrims would get visa within half an hour.

The Interior Minister welcomed a 44-member American Sikh delegation at the State Guest House where he told them about visa on arrival facility extended to the US citizens, stressing that there would

be no hassle even if they wanted to visit as many times as they can.

Mohsin Naqvi highlighted Pakistan's commitment to fostering easier access for Sikh pilgrims, recognizing that they have often faced visa challenges in the past.

Recalling his time as former chief minister of Punjab, he noted efforts to improve the conditions for Sikh visitors, adding, "During my tenure, I worked to address issues faced by the Sikh community."

Kakar vows to mobilize all resources for making all services in SPHHQ effective

Independent Report QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Health, Bakht Muhammad Kakar has vowed to mobilize all available resources to make all departments and services in the Sandeman Provincial Headquarter Hospital Quetta (SPHHQ) effective.

He also announced to hold meeting with the heads of all departments of SPHHQ on regular basis so as to resolve the issues related to the finance, manpower and logistics besides improving the service delivery.

He also stressed the need to improve the measures in the healthcare sector.

departments of SPHHQ at PGMI on Thursday.

Those who were present in the meeting were included Secretary Health, Mujeebur Rehman, Medical Superintendent of SPHHQ, Dr. Noorullah Musakhail, Principal of Bolan Medical College, Professor Dr. Raz Muhammad Kakar besides the heads of departments of the Hospital.

It was informed on the occasion that steps are being taken for bringing improvement in the healthcare system in the government hospitals through a roadmap.

A set format has also been prepared to review the performance of medical superintendents of the tertiary hospitals.

We can bring revolution by adopting modern techniques of cultivation on fertile land of Balochistan: Governor

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that Balochistan can surely emerge economically very soon through its two sectors including trade and agriculture just because it is located on the juncture of Central Asia, Mideast and Southern Asia.

We can bring revolution by giving access to our traders and industrialists to the trade markets of neighbouring countries and adopting modern techniques of cultivation on the fertile land of the province.

The Governor was speaking to the delegation who called on him under leadership of the Vice President of Quetta Chamber of

Commerce and Industry (QCCI), Engineer Mir Wais Khan Kakar here at the Governor's House on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor said that we are well aware of the hardships being faced by the small and big traders and businesses community. He said that people of the province especially traders community have been affected owing to the world epidemic Coronavirus, natural calamities, closure of the borders during previous few years. As a result of which, the present government is taking solid steps for promotion of border trade and economic activities in the province.

The delegation com-

prising Mir Wais Khan Kakar and Abdul Ahad Agha thanked the Governor on behalf of the traders community especially QCCI. They said that the Governor Balochistan has always extended wholehearted cooperation to them every time.

The Governor has opened the doors of Governor House for the general public from the day first, and he has raised his voice with the concerned high ups of the federal and provincial governments, the members of QCCI maintained.

They also appreciated the role of Governor in opening of the Taftan border for 45 days saying that he has won hearts of the traders.



QUETTA: MPA Zarak Khan Mandokhail and President PML-N Balochistan Youth Wing Sajjad Raisani meeting with Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

Govt's right-sizing Hundreds of Grade 17 to 22 posts abolished

ISLAMABAD (INP): As part of its right-sizing policy, the federal government has eliminated 456 officer positions across various ministries, divisions, and departments from Grade 17 to Grade 22.

According to the documents, this decision follows the federal cabinet's August 27, 2024, directive aimed at reducing administrative costs by downsizing the federal structure.

This initiative resulted in the termination of two positions at Grade 22, 22 positions at Grade 20, 69 at Grade 19, 93 at Grade 18, and 270 at Grade 17.

As per the documents, federal ministries and divisions have informed the Establishment Division of their compliance with the federal cabinet's decision.

Finance ministry rules out chances of a mini-budget

ISLAMABAD (APP): The finance ministry has rejected any possibility of a budget adjustment midway through the fiscal year, asserting that the current economic situation reflects the effectiveness of financial policies and lays the groundwork for financial stability.

In a statement, the ministry noted that the economic indicators, particularly inflation, growth in large-scale manufacturing, and import trends, align with government projections and expectations. "There is no justification for adjustments to the budget at this stage," the spokesperson said.

The ministry highlighted that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has recently revised

its forecasts regarding economic indicators, with its estimates now closely aligning with the ministry's projections.

For instance, the consumer price index-based inflation for the first quarter of the current fiscal year was recorded at 9.2%, significantly lower than the government's estimate of 10.2%.

Additionally, the IMF has revised its inflation forecast for fiscal year 2024, lowering it from 12.7% to 9.5%, reflecting a 3.2% decrease. The ministry stated that any discrepancies between actual and projected economic figures should be viewed as integral to the models used for policy formulation and budget planning.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Health Bkhat Muhammad Kakar inspecting the burn unit at Quetta Civil Hospital. Secretary Health Mujeeb-ur-Rehman Panezai is also present.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Property valuation

The FBR decision to increase its property valuation rates by up to 80pc in 56 Pakistani cities from next month is another attempt to boost tax revenue from real estate transactions and discourage speculative investment in the heavily undertaxed property sector.

Additionally, FBR has extended the scope of property valuation for tax purposes to 12 new cities. The valuations have been changed based on the type of property, its location and other variables. The valuations are raised periodically to close the gap with actual market prices of real estate in order to calculate such taxes as capital gains tax, federal excise and withholding tax, but the authorities have never been able to catch up with the market.

The market value of real estate is normally much higher than government-fixed rates. The entire system of fixing valuation rates for collecting taxes on real estate transactions is indicative of a massive informal, undocumented economy where most sellers and buyers neither want to pay taxes nor disclose the sources or size of their income.

Little wonder, the unregulated sector has emerged as one of the most attractive avenues for investment in Pakistan for wealthy individuals to evade taxes or park their dirty cash. The gains offered by property investments, sweetened by low taxation, also make real estate highly lucrative for corporates.

FBR has been trying to "bring real estate under effective taxation" by determining fair market property prices in major urban centres. However, it has always remained far behind the market because of the deep-rooted financial stakes of powerful lobbies: politicians, businesses, military, bureaucracy and overseas Pakistanis.

A World Bank study estimates that real estate transactions in a comparable economy could generate between Rs600bn and Rs700bn in tax revenues. Tax officials estimate Pakistan's actual collection from real estate transactions to be around Rs200bn. There are several reasons as to why FBR has not been able to effectively tax this large sector.

The existence of the undocumented economy is a major reason. Tax exemptions allowed to certain segments of the population, including military personnel and bureaucrats, is another crucial factor preventing realisation of the tax potential of this asset class. The informality perpetuated by the government in the real estate market, in fact, has led to the creation of a tax-free parallel currency — 'plot files' — which is as liquid as any other asset if not more. The government failure to regulate benami property transactions have complicated the situation. It means that a plot file may change hands multiple times, and for a very long period, without anyone involved in this chain of buyers and sellers paying any tax at all. Market valuation rates, no matter how realistic they are, will not help boost tax revenues without plugging such loopholes in the system.

The third pillar

F.S. Aijazuddin

One would need more than 10 fingers to count the number of lawyers who have governed Pakistan since its inception.

Our founder was a lawyer; our first prime minister a lawyer. Our former prime minister, sentenced to death by a court of law, was a lawyer. Others with law degrees have appeared in court, either as plaintiffs or as defendants. And a few have applied their juridical talents to bending or subverting the law.

One would imagine that Pakistan is awash with lawyers. It has 160,000 plus registered lawyers (98,000 in Punjab alone). In fact, we are not the most litigious nation, by far. Israel is, with 694 lawyers per 100K of population. The US has 401 lawyers per 100K. The UK has 226 per 100K, with almost as many lawyers — 153,600 — as Pakistan, serving a far smaller population.

Yet, the British judicial system, despite its "efficient legal processes, rigorous legal education, and a focus on mediation and arbitration", has a backlog of over 64,000 cases. Pakistan has 2.23 million cases waiting to be decided in all our courts. Of these, as of end December 2023, some 56,000 cases lay unresolved before the Supreme Court.

Anyone commenting on our judicial practices is fearful of being summoned for contempt of court. The unarguable truth today is that many perceive the courts themselves as rebuffing the system of impartial justice they took an oath to uphold.

It would not be unfair to assess the tenure of three recent chief justices of our Supreme Court.

Former CJP Saqib

Nisar (2016-19) began by having himself photographed in full robes and wig in his family parlour, surrounded by relatives. During his tenure, his judicial overreach knew no bounds — visits to the Punjab Institute of Mental Health and an obsession with Lahore's graveyards. He thought nothing of summoning senior law-abiding citizens to his court to pay him court. His connivance with Musharraf's regime in ousting Nawaz Sharif from the prime ministership in 2017 is a less memorable residue of his legacy.

A later successor CJP Umar Ata Bandial (2022-23) gave hope when, in his early days, he made an avowed commitment to clear the backlog of cases that were obstructing the flow of justice. "In his first month as CJP, the Supreme Court decided a record 1,761 cases." Soon, however, he too succumbed, like some fragile submersible, to external pressures.

Some parties accused him of bias, others of inaction. His suo motu action regarding the delay in polls in KP and Punjab in 2023 made him more enemies than friends — as if he did not have enough of the former within his colleagues on the bench.

CJP Qazi Isa (2023-24), during his swearing in, kept his wife by his side, to compensate for the humiliation she had suffered at the hands of their detractors. Many applauded when he opened the sittings of the Supreme Court to television.

He wanted the public to see justice being done. Others feared that such exposure would draw the Supreme Court into the glare of reality. They proved to be right. Like royalty after the intrusion of television into their private lives, the

gossamer mystique evaporated, exposing their human frailties.

Television coverage of the Supreme Court hearings became another soap opera. Almost from the outset, the schisms amongst their lordships became apparent. They used the SC courtroom to ventilate their opinions, not their learning. An eloquence of judges degenerated into a quarrel of judges.

To paraphrase Walter Bagehot's observation about parliament, the Supreme Court proved that it, too, "like every other sort of sovereign, has peculiar feelings, peculiar interests; and it may pursue these in opposition to the desires, and even in opposition to the wellbeing of the nation".

The 26th Amendment to our Constitution, conceived in spite and delivered in haste, has destroyed that sovereignty, the once vaunted independence of our judiciary. Judges are now at the mercy of parliament.

The third pillar providing judicial checks and balances in our system has crumbled. The scales of justice have tilted in favour of legislative anarchy.

And for two superseded SC judges, the reward of a lifetime of dedication, hard work and public service has been reduced to naught by an arbitrary constitutional amendment. The novelist W. Gaddis once warned: "You get justice in the next world; in this world, you have the law."

Parliament has bulldozed an unjust law. Future parliaments would do well to heed Bagehot's advice. Their function is "not to win power by awing mankind, but to use power in governing mankind". -- Courtesy Dawn

BRICS & Stone Age

Shahzad Sharjeel

Mukesh Ambani, of the unending wedding ceremonies fame, recently enlightened Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang about the Sanskrit meaning of his company's name and its significance in the logframe of progress.

A little digression: we just witnessed two important conclaves where world leaders and nations aspiring to join their ranks got together to discuss ways of co-operation and agree upon the rules of competition. Pakistan hosted the delegates of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in Islamabad, and Russian President Vladimir Putin recently welcomed the world leaders at the BRICS summit in Kazan. Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar attended the Pakistan and Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the BRICS meeting. He met Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines.

Easing one of the irritants between them, India and China have agreed to resume patrols along the disputed Line of Actual Control in Ladakh. Soon after Mr Modi returned home, the CEO of Nvidia, a leader in chipmaking and AI, visited India. We, too, can claim that Bill Gates, another tech giant, visits Pakistan more often than he goes to his company headquarters. But alas! He comes here to share his concerns over our horrific failure on the polio front: over 40 new cases so far this year. Who knows what else he discusses while here? We only hear the bits and pieces about giving each family free-range chicken to have fresh eggs. News on this enlightening front has also dried up since Imran Khan's imprisonment.

Returning to Ambani's pearls of wisdom, he informed Mr

Huang that in Hindi, 'Vidya' is the name of Sarasvati, the goddess of knowledge. In the Vedic scheme of things, one who prays to the goddess of knowledge gets the attention of Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity. In other words, to borrow from the geeky world of IT, knowledge and prosperity are inter-connected on the circuit board of progress; without this connection, the motherboard of any development strategy is nothing but a motherlode of chicken droppings.

It is not as if no one of consequence visited us following the SCO summit. The English cricket team was here. Entire transport systems like the celebrated Metro between Rawalpindi and Islamabad were suspended, and major highways and arteries connecting the twin cities and beyond were routinely closed to facilitate the 20-strong visiting squad's commute between their hotel in Islamabad and the match venue in Rawalpindi.

It is beyond comprehension why these cricketers could not stay at a hotel in Rawalpindi to spare millions of people daily misery on the roads. If the five-star hotel in the garrison city does not meet the visiting princelings' standards, other accommodations are there to give any manor or mansion a run for their money. They can also be put through the rigours of Kakul Academy, albeit much closer to the sea level, while there.

On conclaves and sporting events and their follow-up, one has never heard a squeak from any quarter regarding the gains and investments resulting from these spectacles. It would be great if the Pakistan Cricket Board or some chamber of commerce could tell us about rev-

enue generation or a boost to the local economy from these unending hosting sprees. The state of planning that goes into these adventures could be discerned from the fact that stadium renovations are undertaken without any regard for timelines for the upcoming series. This recently resulted in most matches being played in Multan and Rawalpindi. Lahore has to be skipped, as we cannot risk thousands of PTI supporters turning it into a political ga-la. It is not for no-thing that cricket and the interior ministry are entangled with the same person.

A few years back, we celebrated the return of international cricket to Pakistan. Remember, no one wanted to come here after the attack on the Sri Lankan team in 2009? One would like to ask who adopted and emboldened the forces who attacked the visiting team. The same benefactors now want us to celebrate the return of international cricket, but to what end, one must ask? To close down entire cities so that some boys could play ball?

Petty differences apart, all religions, ideologies, and philosophies hold the knowledge and its acquisition in the highest esteem. May we be granted some common sense, if not wisdom, to stop being mesmerised by jets doing aerobatics while letting off coloured smoke during parades and boys playing cricket to satisfy the 'boys' vanity.

We need to earn some Lakshmi. We cannot live on borrowed money or ideologies. We must decide whether to pursue a future of BRICS and SCO or be at the mercy of the bricks and stones brigade hell-bent on taking us back to the Stone Age. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Uzbekistan-Pak trade potential needs to increase from current \$311.1 million: Laziz Kudratov

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Investment, Industry and Trade of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Laziz Kudratov has said that the current trade volume of \$311.1 million between Pakistan and Uzbekistan is far below its potential which needs to be increased.

The volume of mutual trade from January to September of this year reached US\$311.1 million, reflecting a 9.8% increase compared to the same period last year, Minister for Investment, Industry and Trade of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Laziz Kudratov told APP in Tashkent.

The minister said that considering the economic potential of both nations, discussions are underway to expand the list of products eligible for the

preferential trade regime outlined in this agreement.

He said that by broadening the range of goods covered under the preferential trade agreement, "We anticipate a further boost in trade volumes through reduced customs duty rates in our bilateral trade relations and the creation of favourable conditions for local product exports."

He said that to further strengthen trade and economic cooperation between the two countries a bilateral trade agreement, a preferential trade agreement was signed between Uzbekistan and Pakistan on March 3, 2022.

This agreement came into effect on March 13, 2023, and currently establishes a preferential

trade regime for beans and peanuts cultivated in Uzbekistan, along with industrial chocolate and confectionery items, canned mixtures, copper wire, refrigerators, televisions, transformers, and electrical conductors, he said.

The minister said that with political will and ongoing economic reforms, transit trade between Pakistan and Uzbekistan holds significant potential for growth in the future.

Replying to a question, he said that in 2021, a transit trade agreement was signed between Uzbekistan and Pakistan, which streamlined customs procedures for Uzbek long-haul drivers and facilitated the development of the southern transport corridor.



LAHORE: A Women browses and selects handcrafted decorative items especially truck art at a handicrafts shop near Delhi Gate.

NPO, APO collaborate to enhance workplace in surgical industry

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Productivity Organization (NPO) and Asian Productivity Organization (APO) on Thursday successfully completed a project aimed at improving workplace environment management in Pakistan's surgical instruments industry through lean manufacturing practices. The workshop was held at Sialkot, which brought together

stakeholders, experts, and practitioners to share insights and strategies for implementing lean manufacturing techniques that prioritize workplace environment management, said a news release. During the event, the participants had the opportunity to learn about the latest methodologies, best practices, and tools to improve efficiency and sustainability within their operations.

PSX continues with bearish trend, loses 1,319 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bearish trend on Thursday, losing 1,319.80 points, a negative change of 1.46 percent, closing at 88,966.77 points as compared to 90,286.57 points on last trading day.

A total of 546,274,609 shares were traded during the day as compared to 614,564,066 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 24.117 billion against Rs. 27.341 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 437 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 137 of them recorded gains and 240 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 60 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were K-Electric Limited with 73,617,949 shares at Rs 4.44 per share, Bank of Punjab with 42,667,349 shares at Rs 5.82 per share.



QUETTA: A delegation of Quetta Chamber of Commerce meeting with Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti.

DWP Technologies shines at Cisco, Ingram Partner award night 2024

Independent Report

LAHORE: DWP Technologies, a division of Pakistan's leading business conglomerate, DWP Group, has secured two prestigious accolades at the Cisco and Ingram Partner Award Night held on October 23, 2024, in Karachi.

The company was honored with the Cisco Technology Partner of the Year and Security Partner of the Year awards, reinforcing its position as a leader in technology solutions and

cybersecurity.

DWP Technologies was honored as the Cisco Technology Partner of the Year, recognizing its exceptional annual performance and outstanding customer satisfaction across Cisco technologies, including Application Centric Infrastructure (ACI), SD-WAN, Collaboration, and Security. This award highlights DWP's dedication to delivering advanced, customized solutions and ensuring flawless project execution.

Crackdown against sub-standards, illegal manufacturing

Independent Report

KARACHI: As per directions of honorable Minister of Science and Technology, the Director Conformity Assessment CA Islamabad Zone assigned the task to Conformity Assessment Officers of Islamabad Zone for crackdown against Illegal / Sub-Standards and Non-Licensed Products. In this regard Assistant Director and Field Officer conducted Market Surveillance of food and non-food mandatory products.

Non-licenssee brands without having PS Mark on label found in Super Stores and were de-shelved. During the crackdown against illegal

keeping in stock and sale, some mandatory items such as Skin Cream, Toilet Soap, Hair Dye, Iodized Salt, Red Chilli Powder, Fruit Drinks, Pickles and Jams were found illegal / Non-Licensed. The Manager of Departmental Stores were given notices to avoid keeping in stocks of mandatory food and non-food items/brands, which are not licensed and duly marked PS logo.

They were also warned that in case of non-compliance of the directives of the Authority, the illegal/un-licensed items will be confiscated and strict legal action will be taken.

Experts, officials convene to unlock Bamboo's benefits for economy, environment

ISLAMABAD (APP): Government officials, international organizations and experts on Thursday, in a workshop, explored bamboo's vast potential to address climate change, create economic opportunities, and reduce plastic use, as they gathered to develop a comprehensive national bamboo strategy.

The workshop began with a welcome address by Hammad Shamimi, Additional Secretary of MoCC&EC, (Ministry of Climate Change & Environmental

Coordination), who highlighted the importance of collective efforts in tackling Pakistan's climate challenges.

He noted that the Ministry is committed to sustainable solutions that address the pressing environmental challenges while simultaneously creating economic opportunities.

Bamboo has been used extensively for construction and woven products. Especially, bamboo was successfully used for building transitional and permanent shelters in response to natural calamities such as earthquakes and floods.

Among 1,600 species found globally, more than 900 are in Asia of which three are native to Pakistan: Arundinaria falcata, Bambusa bamboo, and Dendrocalamus strictus.

Bamboo has been used extensively for construction and woven products. Especially, bamboo was successfully used for building transitional and permanent shelters in response to natural calamities such as earthquakes and floods.

Rupee sheds 06 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee on Thursday depreciated by 06 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs277.85 against the previous day's closing of Rs 277.79. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 277.40 and Rs 278.90 respectively.

The price of Euro increased by 96 paise to close at Rs 301.68 against the last day's closing of Rs 300.72, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen went up by 01 paise and closed at Rs1.82.

Iraqi Ambassador urges for strengthening Pak-Iraq bilateral trade

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Ambassador of Iraq in Islamabad, Hamid Abbas Lafta on Thursday reiterated his country's resolve to enhance its bilateral trade with Pakistani in a range of business and investment areas. He underlined the need to increase the exchange of trade delegations between the two countries.

The ambassador remarked this in his meeting with the top brass of the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) which was held during his visit here at the chamber on Thursday.

Ambassador Hamid Abbas while underscoring the shared historical, religious, and diplomatic ties between the two nations, noted that approximately two hundred and fifty thousand Pakistani pilgrims travel to Iraq annually, especially to Najaf and Karbala (Arba'in), demonstrating the significant movement of people between the two countries.

While pointing to the low trade volume between Pakistan and Iraq, he highlighted the opportunity for increased commerce.

Smog Control Program: CM Maryam launches super seeder project

LAHORE (APP): Historic era of mechanized cultivation in Punjab begins as Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif launched the first and biggest Super Seeder project in the country's history.

She inaugurated the distribution of super seeders among farmers at Rice Research Institute Kala Shah Kaho. She highlighted that the use of Super Seeder will not pollute the environment.

The Chief Minister announced to start modern agricultural equipment rental services in every tehsil. She set a target to start rental service of modern agricultural equipment to farmers at

zero profit in 60-days. She said that the path of development passes through field.

Maryam Nawaz Sharif said Pakistan Muslim League-N government is gaining momentum, adding that no one but the PML-N knows how to perform. She highlighted that there were 300 super-seeders in the whole of Punjab. "We are adding 1000 more from today while 5000 in total will be added in our five years' tenure," she said and noted that to get a super seeder worth Rs 13 lakhs, a farmer will have to pay just Rs 5 lakhs, the remaining Rs 8 lakhs will be paid by the government.

The CM said that

public cooperation is essential to eliminate smog. She added that seeing smoke from a chimney prompts immediate action as the smog spreads many diseases.

Maryam Nawaz Sharif said that farmers will be given latest agricultural equipment at 60% subsidy while they have bought Rs 10 billion worth of agricultural inputs through Kisan Card.

CM Maryam said that people from Kashmir are coming to Punjab due to cheap bread and low inflation. She observed that one must have to be sympathetic towards people to reduce inflation.



LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif chairs provincial cabinet meeting held in Lahore.

Governor Kundi calls for unified political stand on provincial rights

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Thursday said that the province was the most affected due to terrorism and all the political parties should unite to get its rights from the federation.

He emphasized that all political parties must put aside their differences and unite to advocate for KP's rights at the federal level.

He made these remarks at a seminar organized by the Center for Governance and Public Accountability (CGPA) at

the University of Peshawar. The seminar, titled "NFC Award and the Case for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa" was attended by members of parliament, political leaders, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Peshawar, faculty, and students.

During his address, Governor Kundi highlighted the contributions of the Pakistan Peoples Party, which introduced Pakistan's first constitution and, in 2010, promoted equitable resource distribution through the NFC Award.

KP CM inaugurates solarization project for public sector colleges

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, inaugurated the solarization project for government colleges in the province. Initially under this project, installation of a 10KVA solar system has been initiated in 80 government colleges, with already completed in 10 of them.

The Chief Minister formally launched this important project in a ceremony held here at Government College

Peshawar on Thursday. Provincial cabinet members, members of the provincial and national assemblies, relevant government officials, college faculty members, and a large number of students attended the ceremony.

The project includes the installation of a 10 KVA solar system in each college, with a total cost of Rs 2.41 million per college. The solar system is expected to reduce electricity consumption by 1,100 to 1,200 units per

month per college, saving around Rs 55,000 in monthly electricity bill for each college.

The installation costs of the solar systems is also expected to be recouped within approximately three years. Similarly, each solar installation is expected to reduce the national grid load by 120 KW of electricity per month per college. If the system is installed in 290 colleges in the province, the national grid would save a total of up to 34.8 MW of electricity per month.

Political stability in vital to economic development of the country: Governor

Independent Report
LAHORE: Speaker Punjab Assembly Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan met Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Punjab House Islamabad. During the meeting, the overall situation of the country was discussed. Both the leaders expressed their determination to work together for the constitutional stability of the country, and the development of Punjab province.

Speaking on this occasion, Governor Punjab

Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said political stability in the country was vital to the economic development of the country. Governor Punjab said that as coalition partner Pakistan Peoples' Party believed in strengthening the government for political and economic stability in the country.

He said that the challenges faced by the country could be overcome with the supremacy of democracy and rule of law.

Two brothers die, third injured in Nowshera accident

PESHAWAR (APP): Two real brothers were killed, and another was injured when the motorcycle they were riding was hit by a tractor in the Khesghi Payan area of the Nowshera district, police reported on Thursday.

The unfortunate incident took place in Shah Swar Chowk of Khesghi Payan where three brothers travelling on a motorcycle were hit by a tractor trolley.

LDA seals another 187 properties over rules violations

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Development Authority (LDA) on Thursday sealed another 187 properties during its on-going crackdown on commercialisation fee defaulters and rules violations here in the city.

Under the directives of DG LDA Tahir Farooq, the Lahore Development Authority (LDA) is conducting daily operations against illegal

commercial buildings and fee defaulters.

Recently, LDA teams have executed actions in various areas, sealing a total of 187 properties. Significant operations took place in Poonch Road, Samanabad, Gulberg, and the Revenue Scheme in Johar Town.

In Gulberg, 22 properties were sealed due to unauthorized commercial use and non-payment of fees.

Father kills stepson

MUZAFFARGARH (APP): A man killed his stepson to avenge torture on his wife by her close relatives in a nearby locality. Police said on Thursday that Asiya Bibi, resident of Southern Muradpur at Khairpur Sadaat, had married to Dhani Bakhsh Machi and the couple had three children, 10-year-old Allah Wasaya, six-year-old Abdullah and three-year-old Tayyaba. The women said to have illegitimate relationships with friend of her husband, Pervaiz Machi.

Station Commander says: Irfan Mehsud, a source of pride for nation

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Station Commander Dera Brig. Amir Hayat has said Irfan Mehsud, a holder of over 100 Guinness World Records, was a source of pride for the area and the country as well. He expressed these views during a meeting with Irfan Mehsud, who holds over 100 Guinness World Records, here at his office on Thursday. The station commander added that the

Pakistan Army will continue to encourage athletes who perform exceptionally in the field of sports.

He congratulated Irfan Mehsud on his historic achievements and offered his support.

He said that Pak Army would continue to extend all possible support for the promotion of sports along with maintaining peace and order in the country.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Health Khawaja Salman Rafique addressing the 57th convocation ceremony of CPSP at local hotel.

International News

At least 30 Palestinians killed in Israeli strikes, hospital hit, says Gaza ministry

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: At least 30 Palestinians were killed in Israeli military strikes across the Gaza Strip on Thursday, mostly in the north where one attack hit a hospital, torching medical supplies and disrupting operations, the enclave's health officials said.

Israel's military has accused the Palestinian militant group Hamas of using Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahiya for military purposes and said "dozens of terrorists" have been hiding there. Health officials and Hamas deny the charge.

Northern Gaza, where Israel said in Janu-

ary it had dismantled Hamas' command structure, is currently the main focus of the military's assault in the enclave. Earlier this month it sent tanks into Jabalia, Beit Hanoun, and Beit Lahiya to flush out militants it said had regrouped in the area.

Eid Sabbah, director of nursing at Kamal Adwan - which is in Beit Lahiya - told Reuters some staff had suffered minor burns after the Israeli strike hit the third floor of the hospital. There were no reports of any casualties at the hospital, which Israeli forces stormed and briefly occupied last week. Israel said it had captured around 100

suspected Hamas militants in that raid. Israeli tanks are still stationed nearby.

The health ministry in the Hamas-run Gaza Strip called for all international bodies "to protect hospitals and medical staff from the brutality of the (Israeli) occupation".

as U.S. mediators work on a proposal to halt hostilities between Israel and Lebanese armed group Hezbollah. The Israeli military has said its forces are operating in the hospital area based on intelligence about the presence of terrorists and terror infrastructure in the vicinity.



ABU DHABI: Ambassador Faisal Niaz Tirmizi and CEO of Al-Ansari Exchange, Rashed Al Ansari inaugurate the consular halls at Pakistan Embassy.

Israel bombards historic Lebanon city as US scrambles for truce

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: Strikes rocked the eastern Lebanese city of Baalbek, famed for its Roman temples, and its outskirts on Wednesday, hours after Israel issued an evacuation call for the area, AFP reported. The attacks came as US mediators were said to be working on a proposal to halt hostilities between Israel and Lebanon, starting with a 60-day ceasefire.

Meanwhile, in his first speech as Hezbollah's leader, Sheikh Naim Qassem has said his group would agree to a ceasefire with Israel under acceptable terms, but added that a viable deal

has yet to be presented. Lebanon's Prime Minister Najib Mikati also said he was striving for a ceasefire in the Israel-Hezbollah war within days. "We are doing our best... to have a ceasefire within the coming hours or days," Mikati said during a televised interview with Lebanese broadcaster Al-Jadeed, adding that he was "cautiously optimistic".

Baalbek mayor Mustafa al-Shall confirmed strikes hit the city and its surroundings, while state media said "enemy warplanes launched a series of strikes on the Asira area of the city of Baalbek" and in a nearby town.

Germany to close Iranian consulates after execution of dual national

Monitoring Desk
BERLIN: Germany will shut all three Iranian consulates in Germany but allow the embassy to remain open in reaction to the execution of a German-Iranian national, the foreign ministry said on Thursday. "Our diplomatic relations are already more than at a low point," German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said in New York. Germany has already recalled its ambassador to Iran over Sharmahd's execution and summoned the Iranian charge d'affaires to voice Berlin's protest.

Nine injured in Russian drone attack on Kyiv, Ukraine's officials say

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: At least nine people were injured, including an 11-year-old girl, and several apartments were on fire after a Russian drone attack on Kyiv, Ukrainian officials said on Wednesday.

Falling debris from a destroyed drone sparked a fire in a multi-storey apartment building in the Solomianskyi district in Kyiv's west, Mayor Vitali Klitschko said on his Telegram messaging app.

Biden calls Trump's supporters 'garbage', puts Kamala in a fix

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: White House rivals Donald Trump and Kamala Harris launched a frantic last week of election campaigning on Wednesday, with the Democrat having to distance herself from comments by President Joe Biden that appeared to label Trump supporters "garbage." Harris traveled to North Carolina and onward to Pennsylvania, focusing again on two of seven battleground states that could determine who wins the closest election in modern US history.

Republican Trump was also in North Carolina on Wednesday - in the town of Rocky Mount, about an hour's drive from Harris's Raleigh rally - and will then head to Wisconsin, where he will appear alongside US sports

star Brett Favre.

Trump is expected to reject the election result if he loses, with the Republican already seizing on isolated irregularities caught by election officials to amplify his claims of widespread "cheating."

On Wednesday, Harris had hoped to be basking in the afterglow of a speech attended by tens of thousands outside the White House, where she warned her rival was unstable and itching for unbridled power.

Instead, she was fending off questions about Biden's apparent gaffe when the president reacted to a warm-up speaker at a Trump rally referring to the island of Puerto Rico as "a floating island of garbage" in an off-color joke that risked alienating Latino voters.

Security Council warns against attempts to dismantle UNRWA

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations Security Council on Wednesday "strongly warned against any attempts to dismantle or diminish" the operations and mandate of the UN Palestinian refugee agency UNRWA after Israel passed a law banning its operations.

In a statement adopted by consensus, the 15-member body expressed grave concern over the legislation adopted by the Israeli parliament on Monday, which is due to come into effect in 90 days and has sparked international condemnation. The council urged Israel "to abide by its international obligations, respect the privileges and immunities of UNRWA and live up to its responsibility to allow and facilitate full, rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian assistance in all its forms into and throughout the entire Gaza Strip." UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has said Israel's ban on UNRWA,

if implemented, would violate international law, the founding UN Charter and a 1946 UN convention on the diplomatic privileges and immunities granted to UN operations. UNRWA head Philippe Lazzarini warned that the organisation's aid operations in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip were now at risk of collapse because of the new law. The Security Council "underscored that UNRWA remains the backbone of all humanitarian response in Gaza" and said that no other organisation can replace UNRWA's ability to serve Palestinians in need of life-saving humanitarian assistance. The move by Israel comes as the amount of aid entering Gaza has plummeted to its lowest level all year, according to UN data. A global hunger monitor has warned of a looming famine, and the UN has repeatedly accused Israel of hindering and blocking attempts to deliver aid, particularly to Gaza's north.

PAKISTAN AIRPORTS AUTHORITY
پاکستان ایئرپورٹس اتھارٹی

INVITATION TO e-BID

SERVICE LEVEL CONTRACT/AGREEMENT FOR JANITORIAL AND GLASS CLEANING SERVICES AT NEW GWADAR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (NGIAP, GWADAR)

- Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA) invites electronic bids from registered companies/firms/service providers, etc., with sound relevant experience and valid registrations with SECP, FBR, EOBI and ESSI for the provision of janitorial and glass cleaning services at New Gwadar International Airport, Gwadar for a period of two (02) years.
- E-bidding documents, containing detailed instructions, terms and conditions and requirements, etc., are available for the registered bidders on EPADS at (www.eprocure.gov.pk).
- The electronic bids must be submitted by using EPADS on or before **Monday, 18th November 2024 at 11:00 hours** and in hard copy format (in separate sealed envelopes for Technical and Financial Bids as per Single-Stage, Two-Envelope method) duly filled and attached with requisite information in the specified format as provided in the bidding documents at the office of Additional Director APS (Terminal Facilities) Headquarters Pakistan Airports Authority (HQPA) Terminal-1 JIAP, Karachi. The bids will be opened on the same day at 11:30 hours.

[Note: All prospective bidders shall immediately inform PAA before the bid opening date/time and submit proof of being on Active Taxpayer List (100% compliance) and GST/NTN Certificates of FBR at the address above.]

- The original Bid Security, as specified in the bidding documents, must be submitted with the Technical Proposal (hard copy), and a copy of the Bid Security (pay order/bank guarantee) must be submitted/attached through the E-PADS online submission process before the closing date and time.
- For registration, training, or technical assistance with E-PADS, prospective bidders may contact the PPRA office at Room No. 109, 1st Floor, FBC Building, Sector G-5/2, Islamabad (Contact Number: 051-111-137-237).
- The Authority reserves the right to reject any or all the quotations for sufficient and cogent reasons which may be communicated to the bidder on request and without being liable to any claim/compensation of any nature whatsoever. The tender notice is also uploaded and available at www.caapakistan.com.pk and www.ppra.org.pk.

Warning: Any financial instrument submitted by the bidder, if found fake or got dishonoured at any stage would result in blacklisting and legal action as per law.

Additional Director APS (Facilitation)
Headquarters Pakistan Airports Authority (HQPA)
Terminal 1, JIAP, Karachi
Telephone: 021-9907-2395

www.caapakistan.com.pk



DOHA: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets with the Prime Minister of Qatar H.E. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani.

At UN, Indian and Pakistani delegates spar over Kashmir after Ambassador Akram's speech

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Pakistani and Indian delegates Wednesday engaged in a fresh verbal duel at the United Nations that resulted from an earlier speech by Pakistan's UN Ambassador Munir Akram in which he called for applying the International Court of Justice's actions on Palestine to Jammu and Kashmir as well.

A significant contribution towards the resolution of the conflict, and emphasized that those steps must also be applied to the situation in Indian occupied Kashmir.

"Many peoples, particularly the people of Palestine and occupied Jammu and Kashmir, continue to be subjected to foreign and colonial occupation and denied their right to self-determination," the Pakistani envoy had said, noting that genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity are being committed, with impunity, by some rogue States.

On Wednesday, Indian delegate R. Maythili reacted to Ambassador Akram's sharp comments and accused him of misusing the UN forum. She then claimed that Jammu and Kashmir was an integral part of India, saying that Pakistan was in occupation of a part of that state.

Pakistani delegate Rabia Ijaz hit back at India immediately.

"Jammu and Kashmir is not an integral part of India, it is a disputed territory as is evidenced by all UN Maps and official documents," she told the 193-member Assembly.

Governor calls Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch; greets on election as President National Party

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Jaffar Khan Mandokhail contacted Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch over telephone and congratulated him on his election as the President of National Party.

He also greeted Kabir Muhammad Shahi on his election as General Secretary of National Party.

The Governor acknowledged the public friendly struggle of Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch for the rights of people praising his leadership.

Jaffar Mandokhail expressed best wishes for all the central and provincial leadership of the National Party and stressed that there is a dire need to establish pleasant relations among all political organizations at the provincial level.

President pays tribute to Army personnel martyred in Bannu operation

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Thursday paid tribute to the personnel of the Pakistan Army who were martyred in an anti-terrorist operation in Bannu.

The president saluted martyred Major Atif Khalil, Naik Azad Ullah, and Lance Naik Ghazanfar Abbas on behalf of the entire nation and said that the soldiers of the Pakistan Army embraced martyrdom while fighting bravely against terrorists, according to a President House press release.

"The entire nation stands united in support of its forces against terrorists. Pakistan's security forces are on the all-time alert to safeguard the country," the president said and prayed to Allah Almighty for the elevation of the martyrs' rank in paradise and for strength for the bereaved families to bear the loss.

Problems being faced by traders to be resolved gradually, assures Chief Minister

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti has assured that it is his endeavour to resolve the problems being faced by the traders gradually.

While at the same time, the concerned federal departments would be approached for resolving the issues related to the federation.

This assurance was made by the Chief Minister while speaking to the delegation of Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry (QCCI) who called on him here on Thursday.

The members of delegation apprised the Chief Minister about the issues being faced regarding border trade.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti on the occasion assured that we would resolve the issues of traders community and the federal government institutions would be approached for resolving the issues concerning to the federation.

The Chief Minister believed that the opportunities of livelihood would be available to the people in private sector by expediting the business and trade activities in the province.

Therefore, it is our endeavour to resolve the problems being faced by the traders.

Speakers want Pak takes steps to extend CPEC to Afghanistan

LAHORE (Online): Speakers at a seminar suggested that Pakistan must make progress towards (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor) CPEC's extension to Afghanistan as a priority.

The Beaconhouse National University (BNU), Lahore hosted the Seminar entitled "Regional Connectivity - BRI and CPEC Extension to Afghanistan and Beyond," according to a BNU press release.

The purpose of the Seminar was to have threadbare discussions on the prospects as well as challenges to China's mega-connectivity initiative BRI and its flagship project CPEC's extension to Afghanistan and beyond for promoting regional connectivity and economic integration.

Faculties, researchers and students from four universities in Lahore were in the audience in this Seminar.

The Seminar was attended by eminent experts on the subject including

Ambassador Asif Durrani who until recently was Pakistan's Special Envoy on Afghanistan, Haroon Sharif, former Minister of Investment, Dr. Ishrat Hussain former Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan, Mirwais Yasini former Deputy speaker of Afghan Wolesi Jirga, Ambassador Javed Hussain former Pakistani diplomat having regional expertise and Lt. General Nasir Khan Janjua, former National Security Adviser, Prof Tang Jun of the Pakistan Studies Center at Inner Mongolia University China also delivered remarks online at the Seminar. Mansoor Ahmad Khan, former Ambassador of Pakistan to Afghanistan had convened this important Seminar in his capacity as Director of the Beaconhouse National University's Center for Policy Research (BCPR).

The participants made thought provoking remarks regarding the opportunities that existed for building economic linkages through CPEC's extension to Afghanistan and beyond to the central Asian countries and Eurasia as well as the impediments and challenges that continued to hinder the progress in achieving this goal.

All the distinguished speakers were unanimous in pointing out that promoting economic integration with neighbours and region was of crucial importance for Pakistan's economic recovery, growth and development.

In this regard, they endorsed that CPEC as a hallmark of China's BRI needed to be used as a key instrument for strengthening regional infrastructure, energy and trade/transit connectivity.

Their remarks also echoed a consensus that CPEC's extension to Afghanistan had to be a starting point towards achieving this objective.

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PM, Amir of Qatar visit gallery of Pakistani artworks at National Museum of Qatar

DOHA (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif along with Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani visited the gallery of Pakistani artworks titled "Manzar: Art and Architecture of Pakistan from 1940s to Today" in the National Museum of Qatar on Thursday.

After attending bilateral

delegation level meetings, the Amir of Qatar and the Prime Minister traveled together to the museum.

The Amir of Qatar and his sister Sheikha Al-Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani who is also Chairperson of Qatar Museums showed the prime minister the artworks in the exhibition and introduced organizers and the Pakistani artists in an informal and friendly atmosphere. PM Shehbaz Sharif expressed gratitude for holding the art gallery titled "Manzar" and promoting the Pakistani artists.

He said holding of this exhibition was a matter of pride for every Pakistani.

The prime minister emphasized that establishing of "Manzar" art gallery based on Pakistani artworks reflected the strong brotherhood and social bonds between Pakistan and Qatar.

During the visit, the prime minister met with renowned Pakistani architect Nayyar Ali Dada, Pakistani photographers, painters,



calligraphers and other artists. Pakistani paintings, photography, calligraphy and other artworks were displayed in the exhibition.

The artworks of Shakir Ali, Sadeqain, Gul Ji, Zubaida Agha, Kamil Ali Mumtaz, Nayyar Ali Dada and several other Pakistani artists were exhibited in the exhibition.

Meanwhile, in his post on X, the prime minister said that he was deeply touched by the warm reception accorded by Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, the Amir of Qatar. "Pakistan greatly values its special bond of friendship with Qatar! In this visit, we are adding momentum to Pak-Qatar ties."

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Federal Minister for Planning & Development, Ahsan Iqbal Chairing a meeting to review the progress of ongoing projects under the CPEC in Islamabad.

Planning minister reviews progress on CPEC projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal chaired a high-level meeting here on Thursday to review the progress of ongoing projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The meeting was attended by Secretary of Planning, Awaiz Manzoor Sumra, Joint Chief Economist Operations Zafar-ul-Hassan, and other senior officials from the Ministry, according to press release issued by planning ministry.

During the meeting, Ahsan Iqbal emphasized the need to ensure the success of the five-year CPEC development plan by involving all provinces of Pakistan and promoting equal development opportunities.

He directed that all five corridors be interconnected, including essential components such as CPEC Phase I, CPEC Phase II, and to achieve the project's set objectives. The minister emphasised on the timely completion of mega projects, such as the ML-1 and the Karakoram Highway (KKH), directed that regular monitoring of these projects be conducted to ensure they are completed within the specified timeline.

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Delegation of teachers led by Voice of Balochistan visits Provincial Assembly

Independent Report
QUETTA: A delegation of the teachers led by the Voice of Balochistan visited the Provincial Assembly here on Thursday.

The members of delegation went round of the Assembly Hall and its other sections.

The Speaker Assembly, Earlier, Captain (Retd) Abdul Khaliq Khan Achakzai warmly welcomed the delegation.

Speaking to the delegation, Speaker said that

teachers are like the backbone for the development in society.

He said that teachers play important role in upbringing and education of the students.

The members of delegation discussed with the Speaker the ways and means for bringing improvement in the education sector. The Speaker of Provincial Assembly assured his cooperation to the teachers for educational development in the province.

Gilani extends greetings on Diwali festival

ISLAMABAD (APP): As Hindus celebrate their annual Diwali festival today, Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani extended greetings to the Hindu community in Pakistan.

The acting president, in his message on the day, said that the celebration Diwali festival by the Hindu community in Pakistan was the manifestation of the interfaith harmony and cultural diversity.

He said Diwali, being the festival of lights gave a message of peace, prosperity and pleasure besides symbolising the victory of light over darkness and good over evil.

The acting president said that the Constitution of Pakistan guaranteed religious freedom to all minorities, and called for collective efforts for the country's progress and prosperity.

PM pays tribute to Pak army personnel martyred in operation

DOHA (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday paid tribute to the personnel of the Pakistan Army who embraced martyrdom in an anti-terrorist operation in Bannu.

The prime minister, who is currently on a two-day official visit to Qatar, conveyed condolences to the bereaved families of martyred Major Atif Khalil, Naik Azad Ullah, and Lance Naik Ghazanfar Abbas, and prayed for the elevation of martyrs' rank in paradise.

"The entire nation salutes its martyrs. We are resolved to wipe out terrorism in all of its forms and manifestation from the country," the prime minister remarked.

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"The entire nation salutes its martyrs. We are resolved to wipe out terrorism in all of its forms and manifestation from the country," the prime minister remarked.

Bugti greets Hindu community on Diwali; says Govt believes in religious harmony

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has extended greetings to the Hindu community of Pakistan including Balochistan on their festive occasion, Diwali.

In a felicitation message issued here on eve of the Diwali, the Chief Minister said that the minorities enjoy complete religious freedom in Balochistan and the provincial government fully believes in the religious harmony.

He said that Diwali is such a festival that is celebrated by Hindu community with complete enthusiasm and fervour in the province.

The Muslims also participate in the joys of Hindu people.

The Chief Minister on the occasion also vowed to ensure implementation on the quota allocated for minorities in the government jobs. He said that the minorities are being provided all the rights according to the constitution of Pakistan. He said that Hindu community has always demonstrated the religious harmony in the province and they have proved the patriotism.

The Chief Minister also expressed best wishes for the Hindu community settled in Balochistan.

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Speakers express concerns over maternal mortality

QUETTA (APP): Speakers expressed concerns over the rising maternal mortality due to unsafe delivery is a vital issue, and stressed that accessible, safe reproductive healthcare must be a priority.

Speakers highlighted that health facilities nationwide must integrate contraceptive care services. "Lack of counselling is a major contributor to unsafe delivery, so it's essential to educate people about contraceptive options and make them widely accessible," they said while addressing a consultative session.

The speakers included Balochistan and Sindh Parliamentarian,

Bureaucrats, Health Practitioners and officials of the Population Council, said a news release.

Addressing the session, Dr. Pechuho highlighted the need to significantly increase the number of community health workers, underscoring how this shortage affects the quality and reach of healthcare. She also raised concerns about the National Finance Commission (NFC) Award, suggesting that it should better incentivize health and population welfare improvements by rewarding provinces with strong health indicators with legislative representation.

The event presented findings from the Population Council's national study, which highlights critical gaps in Pakistan's reproductive healthcare. The report is especially timely as Pakistan faces significant reproductive health challenges, with a population growth rate of 2.55% annually and stagnant contraceptive use.

Approximately 17.3% of women report an unmet need for family planning, leading to high rates of unintended pregnancies.

Country Director of the Population Council, Dr. Zeba Sathar stressed that while Pakistan has made healthcare advancements, ensuring women's access to family planning and safe reproductive health services remains critical.

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Sardar Yar Rind says: Grand jirga will be held on Nov 4 to commemorate the martyrs of Rind

Independent Report
SIBI: Senior Parliamentarian and Chief of Rind, Sardar Yar Muhammad Rind, emphasized that the key objective of their political efforts is to serve the people, address regional issues, and promote the development and prosperity of the Rind tribe across Balochistan and the country.

Speaking during discussions with various political and social figures of the Rind tribes, Sardar Rind highlighted that only those communities that unite and organize themselves according to their traditions and culture can progress towards prosperity. He mentioned that the Rind panel's political agenda focuses on the welfare of the Rind community and the resolution of pressing issues faced by local populations.

A grand jirga is set to be held on November 4 to commemorate the martyrs of Rind and address the challenges faced by the community. Participants from across Pakistan, including Balochistan, Sindh, and Punjab, are expected to attend.

In his remarks, Sardar Rind stated, "On November 4, we will pay tribute to the significant sacrifices made by our martyrs. The welfare of the Rind communities across the country and the resolution of their issues are paramount. We aim to convene grand jirgas to collectively establish a future roadmap and make crucial decisions."

He expressed that the current situation necessitates the Rind tribes to come together for meaningful decision-making, which will yield long-lasting outcomes for their communities. This collaboration will aid in addressing their difficulties and contribute to their overall development.

"Our political agenda is centered around serving the people and eradicating regional issues to enhance the welfare of the Rind tribes. We are committed to this cause through every possible forum," he affirmed. Additionally, he mentioned that preparations for the upcoming grand jirga in Shoran are complete, with various committees formed and responsibilities assigned.

ECP sets midnight deadline to end PB-08 Sibi by-election campaigns

QUETTA (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) announced on Thursday that campaigning for the PB-08 Sibi by-election on November 14 must end by midnight falling on November 12 and 13, and warned strict consequences for any violations. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) spokesperson in a statement urged political parties and candidates to adhere to the law and exercise self-restraint to ensure that the poll on November 14, 2024, is conducted in an orderly and peaceful manner.

The Commission warned that anyone violating these legal provisions may face imprisonment for up to two years, a fine of up to one hundred thousand rupees.

PNS saves stranded fishing dhow with 23 fishermen in Gulf of Aden

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Navy Ship ZULFIQAR while deployed on Regional Maritime Security Patrol rescued an Iranian Fishing Dhow AL MUHAMMADI with 23 fishermen onboard, stranded over 1200 Nautical Miles from its home port.

PNS ZULFIQAR promptly responded to distress call of Fishing Dhow AL MUHAMMADI. Upon communication with Pakistan Navy Ship, Fishing Dhow reported a seriously injured crew member as well defective engine and requested for necessary assistance.

PNS ZULFIQAR swiftly responded and dispatched its medical and technical teams which provided First Aid to the injured fisherman.

who had severely injured his hand while repairing the boat's engine.

Two more sick crew members were examined and provided medical assistance. In addition, ship's team also repaired the boat's engine.

Pak lodges complaint over attack on ex-CJP

LONDON (INP): In response to an attack on former CJP Justice (retired) Qazi Faez Isa's vehicle in London, the Pakistan High Commission has filed a formal complaint with the UK authorities.

PTI activists attempted to obstruct the former chief justice's vehicle, which belongs to the Pakistan High Commission, in London, even trying to smash its windows. They chanted slogans upon spotting Qazi Faez's car and ran alongside it.



QUETTA: A delegation of World Health Organization meeting with Advisor to CM for Women Development Dr. Rubaba Buledi.

Policies & legislative changes are essential at all levels to promote gender equality & rights: Rubaba

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Advisor to Chief Minister for Women Development Department, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi has emphasized that policy and legislative changes are essential at all levels to promote gender equality and rights in Balochistan.

She shared these thoughts during a meeting with a delegation led by Dr. Asfandyar Sherani, the provincial head of the World Health Organization. Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi stated Balochistan Governments' commitment to mainstreaming the

rights of women and children, aiming to provide equal opportunities to every individual in society.

Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi highlighted that joint efforts by parliamentarians, government and non-governmental organizations, and civil society are the key to creating a prosperous and equitable society. She further noted that workshops and training sessions are vital for promoting gender equality and ensuring the welfare of women.

The advisor also stressed the need to accel