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Qatar pledges to invest \$3bn in Pakistan: Atta Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Shehbaz Sharif who charted the country on path of economic progress. The minister recalled signing of 27 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), amounting to \$2.2 billion investment, during the successful visit of a high-level Saudi delegation, led by Minister for Investment Sheikh Khalid Bin Abdul Aziz Al Faleh, a few weeks ago which included fruitful



DOHA: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in a group photo with a delegation of Qatar Businessmen Association.

PM invites Qatari businessmen to invest in Pakistan's energy, infrastructure

DOHA (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday met a delegation of the Qatar Businessmen Association (QBA) where he highlighted numerous opportunities in Pakistan's energy, infrastructure, and finance sectors, presenting the country as an attractive investment destination. The meeting brought together key representatives from Pakistan and influential members of Qatar's business community, emphasizing shared goals for strengthening trade, investment, and economic partnerships. Notable QBA members present included Vice Chairman & CEO of Al Mana Group Saad Bin Omar Bin Hamad Al-Mana; Executive Director of Mannai Corporation Khalid Ahmed Al Mannai; Chairman MENA & Chief Country Officer of Deutsche Bank Salah Mohammed Jaidah; Chairman of Mansoor Jassim Al Thani Group Sheikh Mansoor bin Jassim Al Thani; CEO of Blue Salon Nabil Abu Issa; and Director of Sendian Group Yousuf Ebrahim Al-Mahmoud. Each of these delegates expressed interest in Pakistan's economic landscape, particularly in upcoming projects in energy, technology, and infrastructure development.

said the minister while addressing a news conference which mainly highlighted the substantive economic gains achieved by Pakistan with the recent visit of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to Saudi Arabia and Qatar. He congratulated the whole nation on the foreign policy and economic achievements made by Pakistan under the leadership of Prime Minister of government-to-government and business-to-business meetings. "In a follow-up of that visit, the prime minister has had very productive meetings in Saudi Arabia that also included his meeting with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on the sidelines of the eighth session of the Future Investment Initiative (FII) in Riyadh," Tarar noted.

Senate committee okays increase in SC judges to 25 amidst debate

ISLAMABAD (INP): Senate Standing Committee on Law and Justice has approved a proposal to increase the number of Supreme Court judges from the current count to 25, including one Chief Justice and 24 judges. The committee members debated on the rational to increase judges' number in the apex court as there treasury benches members advocated need for additional judges to manage the high case backlog in the Supreme Court. Senator Hamid Khan and Senator Kamran Murtaza opposed the increase, with Senator Murtaza arguing that recent vacancies were strategic and that the Supreme Court should be consulted on the necessity of more judges. Senator Hamid Khan raised concerns over financial constraints and suggested focusing on the efficiency of existing resources, particularly as Pakistan faces economic challenges. On the other hand, Senator Shahadat Awan voiced strong support, noting that with an estimated 60,000 pending cases, at least 21 judges are essential. Senator Abdul Qadir further argued that Pakistan's growing population and rising crime rates necessitate a larger judiciary, pointing out that the current number of judges remains unchanged since 1995. He highlighted that vacancies persist in the provincial high courts as well. The 26th constitutional amendment and international comparisons were also discussed, with committee members contrasting Pakistan's judicial system with those of countries like England, Bangladesh, India, and Indonesia.



ISLAMABAD: Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan, called on Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Govt committed to provide more resources for Balochistan's development: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal Friday said that the Federal Government was committed to utilising all resources for the development of the Balochistan province. Responding to a question during the ongoing 343rd session of the Upper House, he informed that a total of 200 PSDP projects were underway in Balochistan, with an estimated cost of 1429 billion rupees. He said an amount of 130 billion rupees had been earmarked for the PSDP in 2024-25 while more allocation of funds would be ensured for the uplift of the Balochistan projects. However, he stressed the importance of improving the administrative capacity of provinces for better service delivery of funds and resources after allocations. Meanwhile, Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain replying to a question told the House that restructuring of the Utility Stores Corporation was underway to make it more viable in terms of business and its day-to-day operations. The Minister said that during the restructuring, the rights of the utility Stores' employees would be safeguarded. Ahsan Iqbal here on Friday chaired a high-level meeting to review the progress on the transfer of Pak Public Works Department (Pak PWD) projects to provincial governments under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP). The meeting was briefed by the Additional Secretary of Housing and Works on the progress of the project transfer, according to press release issued by planning ministry. According to the update, all Pak PWD projects allocated to Punjab have been successfully handed over to the provincial government.



Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, chaired the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) at the Finance Division in Islamabad.

Terrorists target innocent children in Mastung: 5 students & one police cop among 9 martyred, 33 injured in Mastung blast

CM pledges to take revenge of blood of innocent children & persons, fight terrorism together

Independent Report QUETTA: As many as nine persons including five students and one police cop were killed while 33 others - mostly children - got injured in a remote control bomb explosion near a Girls High school in Mastung city on Friday morning. The reports reaching here suggested that the remote control explosive device was planted in a motorcycle near the Girls High school which went off with a big bang. As a result of the blast, five children, a police constable and a passerby were killed while 33 others - mostly children - injured. Two of the injured succumbed to serious wounds in the hospitals. Soon after the blast, the police, local administration and rescue teams reached the spot of explosion and started rescue operation. The bodies of deceased children and others and injured persons were shifted to the local hospitals of Mastung including District Headquarter Hospital and Nawab Ghous Bakhsh Memorial Hospital for treatment.



QUETTA: A view of damage vehicle at blast site near a school in Mastung district.

Opposition slams govt for increasing petrol, diesel prices

ISLAMABAD (INP): \$67 barrel internationally while stressing that the government should also lower the petrol by Rs30. He criticised the government for imposing petroleum levy of Rs60 by saying that it was unfair that the people had to pay extra money for the purchase of oil. He claimed that economic activity would be generated once the petroleum levy would be lifted. "The government had failed to privatise the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) that's why it was venting its frustration on the people," he remarked.

Single line in SC order can prolong cases for up to 18 years: CJP

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Yahya Afridi, has stated that even a single line in a Supreme Court order can sometimes result in cases being prolonged for up to 18 years. He assured that in his rulings, he would avoid any observations that might lead to the reopening of cases. Chief Justice Afridi's remarks came during a hearing of a land dispute case, presided over by a two-member bench he led. During the session, the petitioner's lawyer requested a written directive from the court, suggesting that they be advised to approach the relevant forum. In response, Chief Justice Afridi explained that while hearing an appeal against objections raised by the Registrar's Office, he observed that a single statement from the Supreme Court could result in cases extending unnecessarily. He emphasised that no such observation would be made in his rulings that could lead to further litigation at lower levels. Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan added that petitioners have the option to approach the relevant forum without a written directive from the court. Following this, the court denied the request for an observation to approach an alternative forum.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain chaired 22nd Board of Directors meeting of SMEDA.

Govt approves amendments to anti-Terrorism Act

ISLAMABAD (INP): The federal government has approved amendments to the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997, to address escalating security threats in Balochistan. Sources confirm that the Ministry of Interior presented the proposal during a recent federal cabinet meeting, emphasizing the need for enhanced legal measures in light of the province's security challenges. The Ministry of Interior briefed the cabinet on the evolving security landscape in Balochistan, pointing out that insurgent and terrorist networks have become increasingly coordinated. The cabinet was informed of the recent violent incidents across the region, which have resulted in the loss of lives and damage to critical infrastructure. Ministry sources stressed that current laws do not adequately address these integrated threats, necessitating stronger legal tools to enable a more effective response. The approved amendments grant expanded authority to the Pakistan Army, Civil Armed Forces, and law enforcement agencies, allowing them to detain individuals suspected of terrorist activities proactively. These amendments also include changes to Section 111EEE of the Anti-Terrorism Act, which will provide security forces with legal protection for preemptive action against potential threats. Additionally, the amendments will allow for the formation of Joint Investigation Teams (JITs) composed of intelligence and law enforcement agencies.

PM expresses gratitude to Amir of Qatar for warm hospitality

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday expressed his heartfelt gratitude to Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani for his warm hospitality during his two-day visit to Qatar. "My sincere gratitude to Your Highness for your exceptionally warm hospitality!", he wrote on X in response to post written by Amir of Qatar. "Pakistan deeply cherishes and values its special friendship with Qatar," he added. In his post, Amir Tamim Bin Hamad emphasized the growing relationship, stating, "Today, I discussed with PM Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif the prospects for expanding bilateral cooperation in various fields."

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chaired a meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet on Friday. The meeting was attended by Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain, Minister for Power Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari, Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Mr. Ali Pervaiz Malik, Governor SBP (virtual) and Chairman SECP (virtual), along with Federal Secretaries and senior officers from the concerned Ministries and Divisions. The ECC considered a proposal from the Ministry of National Food Security & Research for allocation of domestic and imported wheat stocks of PASSCO among wheat-deficient agencies/regions for Food Year 2024-25. The ECC discussed the issue threadbare and decided that domestic and imported wheat would be allocated and released by PASSCO based on allocation ratio decided by ECC on 1st February 2024.



Senator Umer Farooq, Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Petroleum presiding over a meeting of the Committee at Parliament House.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Seeking investment

Saudi Arabia has agreed to increase its promised investment in Pakistan by another \$600m to \$2.8bn, with Riyadh signing seven more MoUs during Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's just-concluded visit to that country.

A Saudi delegation, led by the Saudi investment minister, had concluded 27 MoUs worth \$2.2bn in Islamabad last month. The decision to boost the volume of Saudi investment in Pakistan was made after Mr Sharif's "very productive" meetings in Riyadh. According to the Saudis, some of the MoUs have resulted in exports from Pakistan in agriculture and other sectors. After his Saudi visit, the premier reached Doha to woo Qatari investors to Pakistan. For over a year, Pakistan has been chasing official and private investments in state-owned enterprises, agriculture, oil and gas exploration, the aviation industry, mining and other sectors of the economy. Initially, we were told that three friendly Gulf nations — Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar — had pledged to invest \$25bn each in Pakistan over the next five years. The previous Shehbaz Sharif government also set up the military-backed Special Investment Facilitation Council to provide 'prospective' Gulf investors some comfort on policy consistency.

As time passed, Islamabad continued to adjust its Gulf investment expectations downward to more realistic levels. Even then, only a fraction of what was promised has actually flowed into Pakistan: a small Emirati investment in Karachi's port infrastructure and the Saudi acquisition of shareholding in a Pakistani oil marketing company. Contrary to officials' claims, no Qatari or other investors from these countries have shown an interest in PIA or Islamabad airport, which the government is struggling to disinvest. In fact, the Saudi announcement to increase its promised investment in Pakistan coincided with all but one bidder pulling back from the process of the airline's sale. Potential Chinese investment under CPEC's second phase also appears a distant possibility because of security concerns. China is upset not only over the terrorist attacks against its nationals working in Pakistan but also the narrative built around the power plants set up under the CPEC plan. The one-sided revisions in their contracts being imposed on private power producers and their vilification is not helping investor confidence either. With our investment climate deteriorating amid a worsening balance-of-payments crisis and political instability, we have seen several foreign companies exit the Pakistani market in recent years. We can appreciate the PM touring one country after another to sell Pakistan's 'unrealised economic potential' to bring in the foreign investment needed to shore up our shaky international reserves and accelerate economic growth. But these efforts will be fruitless unless he first focuses on crucial structural and policy reforms in areas that directly affect investors. Indeed, policy consistency and sanctity of contracts top the list of these reforms.

Language tyranny

Zubeida Mustafa

Since an education emergency was declared in Pakistan — for the second time — education has entered the public discourse with a bang. Seminars are being held frequently while the media has been addressing the issue much more than before. But nothing is changing on the ground. In this bleak scenario, comes a heart-warming announcement.

Baela Raza Jamil, the dynamic CEO of Idara-i-Taaleem-o-Agahi (ITA) has been awarded the Global Education Medal for the Asian region. It is to Baela's credit that she is one of the rare ones in the education sector in Pakistan who has walked the talk and her undertakings have had an impact on millions.

She launched the Pakistan Learning Festival that has been an informal learning experience for thousands of children since 2011. She set up ASER (Pakistan) in 2008 to test children's learning outcome all over the country. Of late, she has made her debut as a publisher of children's books. What is important is her inclusive approach vis-à-vis the indigenous languages in her scheme of things.

It is unfortunate that Baela's recommendations on various educational problems have failed to move our policymakers with whom she has constantly engaged. An issue that has bothered her for decades now — Baela understands my concern — is that of the language of education. It appears that government, society, educationists, school managers and even parents have joined hands to 'tyrannise' the child and sacrifice the joys of childhood at the 'altar of the English language'.

Some government functionaries and academics now discreetly concede that an overwhelming majority of teachers are not proficient in English and that affects their pedagogic performance. Yet no initiative has been taken to change the ambivalent language policy that is in place.

Neither is there any advocacy campaign to create awareness of the stupidity of imposing the English language on young children in the initial phase of their schooling. Not being familiar with it they are overawed by it. If the mother tongue or the language of the environment is used in early childhood and a few years of primary education, children will find school to be a friendly and welcoming place. The transition to another language will be painless when the change-over is gradual and takes place at an appropriate stage when the student is psychologically and mentally ready for it.

ever, were inadvisably left to their own devices.

Today, under the unwritten orders of a district education officer, English is the medium of instruction in specified public sector schools in District South of Karachi. We shall never know about the disastrous impact of this policy because the ever-obliging examination board is infamously producing desired results that are not a valid assessment of candidates.

As a consequence, education has lost all credibility. The focus is now on quantity. The 26 million out-of-school children in Pakistan have become a scourge for the country. Pa-radoxically in this dismal scenario, language — the divider between the rich and the poor — finds no mention. And it will not. Our neoliberals and their backers know very well that the fast-growing inequity in our society has been spawned by our market-driven education system in which the rich attend upscale elite schools while the poor go to the tottering public sector and low-fee private institutions which cannot teach English. Who benefits from this class-ridden system? Of course the neo-liberals, who thrive in the globalised world of today. We cannot say we have not been warned. One has to read Robert Phillipson (Linguistic Imperialism), Paulo Freire (Pedagogy of the Oppressed), Antonio Gramsci's views on language and education, and of course, Dr Maria Montessori (The Absorbent Mind).

Those in a position of power have also managed to create a paradoxical condition of coercion and consent that ensures that there is no public resistance to the language policy in vogue. — Courtesy Dawn

There is something seriously wrong with the hybrid pedagogy which allows the teacher to speak in Urdu, while the books are in English, and the students are expected to speak, read and write in English. This pattern will continue until the language factor is taken into account. It may be added that the child will be dumbed and will rote learn and never be able to think critically.

The fact is that we are regressing. Until last year, Sindh had, relatively speaking, a sane language in education policy: the medium of instruction in all public sector schools was Sindhi and Urdu in areas inhabited by Sindhi and Urdu speakers respectively. Each community learned the other's language as a compulsory second language. The private schools, how-

Anti-polio efforts in Gaza

Muhammad Moazzam Tauheed

Polio remains endemic in only two countries: Pakistan and Afghanistan. Despite global efforts, both nations still struggle with transmission, driven by misinformation, rumours, and conspiracy theories. Claims that the polio vaccine causes infertility or is part of foreign plots have fuelled vaccine hesitancy, preventing parents from vaccinating their children and delaying eradication. Anti-vaccine narratives, often spread by groups with local influence, lead many to refuse vaccinations, putting entire communities at risk.

In contrast, regions that have successfully eradicated polio, such as Africa, Europe, and the Americas, do not experience the health crises predicted by conspiracy theorists. Instead, these countries benefit from healthier populations, free from the dangers of polio-induced paralysis.

Despite ongoing conflict, public health efforts in Gaza have managed to overcome vaccine opposition. In July, after reports emerged of polio strains found in Gaza due to damage to infrastructure and the destructive effects of war, the Israeli army began vaccinating soldiers in Gaza to prevent the spread of polio. Meanwhile, Palestinian officials, organisations, and resistance factions encouraged the public to vaccinate and reject conspiracy theories. Palestinians, despite longstanding oppression and political challenges, have prioritised public health by supporting vaccinations.

Reports from independent sources, such as the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor, indicate that Israeli actions have hindered vaccination efforts

in Gaza. Nevertheless, both Palestinians and Israelis acknowledge the importance of polio prevention.

This raises a critical question: if Palestinians facing severe challenges can overcome scepticism and embrace polio vaccination, why does hesitancy persist in Pakistan and Afghanistan? Global eradication efforts have demonstrated the power of vaccination, reducing polio cases by over 99 per cent worldwide. Both the inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) and the oral polio vaccine (OPV) are proven safe and effective, with extremely rare complications.

Nations that have eradicated polio do not face the health crises feared by anti-vaccine groups. Instead, they reap the benefits of a polio-free population, while unvaccinated communities continue to suffer from polio's devastating impact. Given these facts, it is essential to ask: if polio-free regions thrive without the feared complications, what continues to fuel vaccine hesitancy in Pakistan and Afghanistan? Vaccine resistance remains a significant barrier, leaving children vulnerable to this preventable disease.

The presence of polio in these countries underscores the urgent need to combat misinformation and prioritise the people's well-being. Addressing vaccine hesitancy requires tackling deep-seated mistrust and educational gaps.

Education is critical in forming a foundation for accepting public health initiatives.

Despite facing occupation, an environment of apartheid, and conflict, the Palestinian territories maintain a high literacy rate of nearly 97 per cent, comparable to developed countries. In contrast,

literacy rates in Afghanistan and Pakistan are 37pc and 62pc, respectively.

Gender disparity in education is minimal in the Palestinian territories, where education for girls is robust, and female literacy nearly equals male literacy. However, in Pakistan and Afghanistan, particularly in the rural areas, significant gender gaps persist. This educational disparity also affects public health.

Palestinian families actively supported and participated in the polio vaccination campaign, with the World Health Organisation noting that Gaza's polio vaccinations exceeded targets. In contrast, efforts in both Pakistan and Afghanistan encounter numerous challenges, which include misinformation and logistical issues. Beyond delivering vaccines, it is crucial to improve sanitation, access to clean water, and nutrition to bolster immunity and reduce vulnerability to polio.

Combating vaccine hesitancy demands dismantling myths and conspiracy theories. In Pakistan, the government enforces strict tax policies, penalising non-filers and even blocking phone SIM cards. However, similar measures are not applied to polio campaigns. Incentivising families who vaccinate and penalising refusals may improve campaign outcomes.

Public health campaigns can succeed even in conflict zones when focused on protecting the population. By following Gaza's example, Pakistan and Afghanistan can strengthen their efforts, dispel misinformation, and ultimately join the ranks of nations that have eradicated polio. — Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

5 key MoUs with Saudi Arabia now concrete contracts, create jobs: Dr Musadik Malik

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Petroleum Dr. Musadik Malik is optimistic about the Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) signed with Saudi Arabia, predicting significant outcomes where around five of these MOUs have evolved into concrete contracts and transactions, which will likely boost employment and investment opportunities.

Dr. Musadik Malik further stated that some opponent had previously mocked the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) with Saudi Arabia, suggesting it was merely a routine practice with little tangible outcome. However, he emphasized that this time would be

different. "Now, people will see that these are not just MOUs on paper but actual transactions and investments materializing," Dr. Malik asserted.

He highlighted that around five of the MOUs have already translated into concrete contracts and transactions, paving the way for increased employment and investment opportunities in Pakistan, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have a long-standing "brotherly" relationship, sharing common interests, values and a shared foreign policy outlook, particularly in regional and international events, he added.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Six ships, GFS Ruby, Tucapel, PH Giang Minh, KS Camellia, Ginga Hawk and Sevilla Knutsen scheduled to load/offload Containers, Rice, Steel Coil, Chemicals, and LNG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Grain Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Engro Vopak Terminal and Engro Elengy Terminal respectively on Friday.

Meanwhile, three more ships, Singapore Bulker, Hafnia Topaz, and MT Bolan scheduled to load/offload Rice and Gas oil are also arrived at outer anchorage during last 24 hours.

Eleven ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them five ships, GFS Ruby, Tucapel, KS Camellia, Zarrar Hanif, and Arkas are expected to sail on Friday. Cargo volume of 189,543 tonnes, comprising 151,032 tonnes import cargo and 38,511 tonnes of export cargo carried in 2,327 Containers (1,600 TEUs Imports & 1,637 TEUs Export).



RIYADH: PAK Saudi Minister for investment Sh. Khalid Bin Abdul Aziz and Abdul Aleem Khan held meeting Musadaq Malik & senior officials joined.

Rana Tanveer says: EV's policy to be announced on Nov 30

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of Food Security, Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain on Friday told the Senate that the Electric Vehicle (EV) policy would be announced on November 30 to promote local manufacturing of EVs and ensure a sustainable transport system.

Replying to the question of Senator Zeeshan Khanzada in the 343rd session of the Upper House, the minister informed that the Engineering Development Board mandated for issuance of vehicles assembling and

manufacturing certificates had issued 51 certificates to produce two and three-wheeler EVs (motorcycles and rickshaws) in Pakistan.

He added that for the manufacturing of EV 4-wheeler, licences had been issued to two companies including Eco Green Motors Pvt Ltd and Regal Automobile Pvt Ltd.

The minister informed that 40 sites had been selected for setting up the Charging stations on the Motorway and a viable and acceptable electricity tariff had been fixed on which work would be started soon.

New policy being devised to boost local mobile phone exports, NA told

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Assembly was informed on Friday that a new policy for Mobile Device Manufacturing and Export is being devised to boost the exports of locally manufactured mobile phones.

In response to a question from MQM's Aminul Haq, Parliamentary Secretary for Industries and Production Shahid Usman informed the lower house of Parliament that 93 per cent of mobile handsets are assembled locally, highlighting the country's substantial domestic production capacity.

He noted that almost all major brands have set up local assembly operations, which has contributed to the industry's growth.

During the question hour, Parliamentary Secretary for Railways Muhammad Usman Awaizi informed the House that 820 new high-capacity wagons are being introduced to enhance the freight-carrying capacity of Pakistan Railways.

He also mentioned that the Thar-Coal connectivity project is in progress and will greatly benefit the railway freight sector.

Ali Pervaiz Malik says: Govt initiatives restore confidence of industrialists

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Finance, Revenue and Power Ali Pervaiz Malik has said that the government's measures have restored the confidence of industrialists.

Responding to the calling attention notice of Senator Zeeshan Khanzada on Friday, he said, due to the government, the kibar rate has fallen to 13.5 per cent

and as the inflation is decreasing, the interest rate is also decreasing.

Earlier, Senator Zeeshan Khanzada termed the recent reduction in the interest rate by the State Bank as insufficient and submitted a notice to draw the government's attention to this matter.

He said that when the dollar rate increases, everything becomes expensive. "We should give concessions to our industries on electricity

and raw materials and reduce interest rates. We have to adopt long-term policies. A tariff policy will also have to be made", he added.

The government, Khanzada aid, should prepare an electric vehicle policy, adding, measures should be taken to support the industries. Along with foreign investment, local industrialists should also be encouraged and interest rate should be reduced, he suggested.

PSX turns bullish, gains 1,893 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bullish trend on Friday, gaining 1,893.08 points, a positive change of 2.13 per cent, closing at 90,859.85 points as compared to 88,966.77 points on last trading day.

A total of 465,865,841 shares were traded during the day as compared to 546,274,609 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 23.089 billion against Rs24.117 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 430 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 220 of them recorded gains and 156 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 54 companies remained unchanged.

Atif Ikram says: Industries struggling to maintain their competitive edge in global markets

ISLAMABAD: Atif Ikram Sheikh, President Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), Friday urged the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) to reduce interest rates by at least 500 basis points in its upcoming meeting on November 4, 2024.

"With inflation easing to 6.9% in September and expected to remain between 6.0% and 7.0% for October, Pakistan's inflation is now at favourable levels.

This has created an unreasonably high real interest rate of 10.5% against the current 17.5% policy rate," he said.

"Industries are struggling to maintain their competitive edge in global markets, threatening export revenue and millions of livelihoods," he added.

According to him, global oil prices have plummeted to record lows, with Brent at around \$72 per barrel, significantly reducing Pakistan's import bill burden.

He believes this unique opportunity must be leveraged to benefit the industrial sector.

He further urged the government to restore the Freight Subsidy at a higher rate to meet GOP target prorata, i.e., 1.5 to 2% instead of 1%.



QUETTA: Chairperson Balochistan Revenue Authority Noor-ul-Haq Baloch meeting with Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

SECP alerts public to surge in number of fraudulent trading platforms

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) warns the public regarding a surge in fraudulent investment schemes being promoted on social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. These schemes are falsely presented as legitimate investment advisory services or training courses with the intent to deceive people into investing their money in these fraudulent schemes, said a press release issued on Friday.

These schemes often lure individuals by making false promises of extraordinary profits with minimal risk, offering so-called "insider tips" in exchange for membership fees or investment via the advertised platforms. To appear credible, the fraudsters frequently misuse the names, images, and logos of well-known business professionals, reputable companies, SECP, and the Pakistan Stock Exchange. Since August 2024, the SECP has been issuing public warnings to caution the public against these fraudulent schemes. Additionally, a pop-up warning message has been deployed on the SECP's

KP Governor says: KP govt's focuses on Politics not governance

ISLAMABAD (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Governor Faisal Karim Kundi said on Friday that the KP government has prioritized political activities over addressing the province's pressing issues.

LHC indicates for 2 days home work from home, closure of schools for 2-day

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has given indication for two days work from home in offices, closure of schools for two days and suspension of all commercial activities on Sunday in a week in view of smog.



PESHAWAR: A delegation of social activists of Christian Community meeting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi.

KP govt signs agreement for independent power transmission line

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has signed an agreement with a private company to lay down its own power transmission line.

ANF seizes 45 kg drugs in nine operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting nine operations recovered over 45 kg drugs worth Rs 4.5 million and arrested nine accused.

SACM reviews Zakat dept's performance

LAHORE (APP): Special Assistant to Chief Minister (SACM) Punjab for Zakat and Ushr Rashid Iqbal Nasrullah visited Administrator Zakat Punjab office and reviewed the performance of the department.

CM greets Hindu community on Diwali

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has extended heartfelt greetings to the Hindu community on the occasion of Diwali.

Nawaz Sharif's Green Tractor Scheme re-launched after 12 years: CM Punjab

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif launched Green Tractor Program by conducting digital balloting, here on Friday.



LARKANA: Member of Provincial Assembly (MPA), Sohail Anwar Khan Siyal is listening the problems of citizens during open court program held at Siyal House in Larkana.

Health minister says: Shift public hospitals to solar energy on the cards

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique announced on Friday that the government was planning to shift all public hospitals in the province to solar energy.

International News

At least 46 Palestinians killed in Israeli strikes, hospital hit, says Gaza ministry

Monitoring Desk CAIRO: At least 46 Palestinians were killed in Israeli military strikes across the Gaza Strip mostly in the north where one attack hit a hospital, torching medical supplies and disrupting operations.



The wreckage of vehicles are seen at a site damaged in the aftermath of Israeli strikes on Beirut's southern suburbs, amid the ongoing hostilities between Hezbollah and Israeli forces, Lebanon.

New Hezbollah leader says will accept ceasefire with Israel if terms 'suitable'

Monitoring Desk BEIRUT: Hezbollah's new leader Naim Qassem on Wednesday said the group would agree to a ceasefire with Israel under acceptable terms.

North Korea's Choe accuses US and South Korea of plotting a nuclear strike against her country

Monitoring Desk MOSCOW: North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui, in a Moscow meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, accused the United States and South Korea of plotting a nuclear strike against her country.

North Korea will back Russia until victory in Ukraine, foreign minister says

Monitoring Desk MOSCOW: North Korea will back Russia until it achieves victory in the Ukraine war, Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui said on Friday at talks in Moscow with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.

Russia fines Google more than all money in the world

Monitoring Desk MOSCOW: Russia has fined Google an eye-popping 20 undecillion rubles (\$2.5 decillion) for removing Russian state-run and government YouTube channels in the wake of the country's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

Americans helping Ukraine's war efforts say the US hasn't done enough

Monitoring Desk KHARKIV: Each time U.S. philanthropist Amed Khan returns to Ukraine, he begins by offering condolences for those killed in the war since his last trip.

Trump's remarks about women kick up firestorm

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: Donald Trump found himself at the centre of a firestorm on Thursday over sexist comments he made at a campaign rally.

Lebanon PM says hopes for ceasefire with Israel in 'coming hours or days'

Monitoring Desk BEIRUT: Lebanon's prime minister said US envoy Amos Hochstein had signalled during a phone call Wednesday that a ceasefire in the Israel-Hezbollah war was possible before US elections are held on November 5.

Brazil federal police concludes probe into Braskem salt mining disaster

Monitoring Desk SAO PAULO: Brazil's federal police said on Friday that 20 people have been formally accused following an investigation into a sinking ground disaster related to salt mining activities in Maceio.

Major interchange projects set to launch in Capital

ISLAMABAD (APP): On the special instructions of Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi two mega projects will be launched to solve the long-standing traffic problems in Islamabad, providing great convenience to the citizens of Islamabad and other cities. The foundation stone of Serena Chowk Interchange and F-8 Exchange Chowk Interchange projects will be laid on November 5. Serena Chowk Interchange will be completed in just 3 months instead of 10 months, with two underpasses and connecting roads. F-8 Exchange Chowk Interchange will be completed in just 4 months instead of 12 months, with one flyover, one underpass, and connecting roads.

The Interior Minister has directed the Capital Development Authority (CDA) to complete the projects within the stipulated time frame. The CDA had earlier set a deadline of 10 months for Serena Chowk Interchange and 12 months for F-8 Exchange Chowk Interchange. Mohsin Naqvi has approved the alternative

traffic plan before the start of construction work. He chaired an important meeting at the CDA, where the layout plans of Serena Chowk and F-8 Exchange Chowk Interchanges were reviewed.

Interior Minister directed that the relocation of various service lines from the interchange site be completed as soon as possible, and the projects be completed within the stipulated time frame by working 24/7. He emphasized the need for the best traffic management to maintain traffic flow, and a special unit has been formed for duty on the projects.

He said that the special unit's personnel will be deployed 24/7 around the projects to maintain traffic flow.

Mohsin Naqvi also directed comprehensive planning to improve traffic flow at Faizabad Interchange. He was given a detailed briefing on the construction of Serena Chowk and F-8 Interchanges, and Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad Sarfraz Virk briefed him on the traffic plan during the construction work.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of the participants of the 36th Senior Management Course (SMC) from the National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA), Karachi called on the Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Acting President for adopting international best practices to improve governance

Calls for digital governance, data-driven decision-making for better service-delivery

ISLAMABAD (Online): Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani has called for adopting international best practices, focusing on innovation, and using the latest technology to improve governance in Pakistan. He underscored the need for embracing digital governance, data-driven decision-making, and using artificial intelligence to improve service delivery.

He expressed these views while talking to the participants of the 36th Senior Management Course of the National Institute of Management, Karachi, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Friday.

Addressing the participants, the Acting President highlighted that Pakistan faced multiple challenges, including economic issues, high inflation, rising population, unemployment, climate

change, and social injustice. He said that bureaucracy needed to play a proactive and constructive role to help address various challenges faced by the country. He emphasized the need to position Pakistan internationally as a competitive and forward-thinking nation, while also ensuring that every citizen benefitted from the fruits of our policies.

Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani said that bureau-

cracy should build strong networks, both within the government and with external stakeholders, to find sustainable solutions to Pakistan's socio-economic problems. He stated that civil servants were required to be problem solvers, innovators, and leaders who could help the governments steer the country out of its present socio-economic and governance challenges.

PIPS, UNDP host digital democracy workshop for MPs of KP Assembly

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS), in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), successfully organized a "Digital Democracy" workshop at Serena Hotel, Peshawar, aimed at empowering parliamentarians from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly.

This workshop, part of an ongoing series, focused on equipping lawmakers with strategies to counter misinformation, understand digital trends, and enhance social media engagement for fostering informed public discourse, said a press release on Friday.

Director General (PDP&C) at PIPS, Samer Awais in her opening remarks highlighted the growing challenge of misinformation and disinformation, noting how emerging AI technologies are being used to spread inaccuracies that influence public opinion.

The workshop featured in-depth sessions led by digital experts, including Usman Zafar, Digital Specialist at UNDP, and Fakhar Kakakhel, Senior Journalist and Digital Media Trainer.

Zafar introduced the parliamentarians to the fundamentals of social media and its influence on information integrity. Kakakhel further expanded on the complexities of online information disorder, discussing verification techniques and conducting practical exercises on fact-checking to empower participants to identify and respond to false information confidently.

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ISLAMABAD: Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit Baltistan and SAFRON, Engineer Amir Muqam exchanging views with Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhary, President of Azad Jammu Kashmir during meeting held at Kashmir House.

Senate celebrates Diwali with cake-cutting ceremony hosted by Acting Chairman

ISLAMABAD (APP): Acting Chairman Syed Ali Farooq Khan hosted a Diwali cake-cutting ceremony on Friday to extend congratulations to Senator Danesh Kumar.

The event was attended by a diverse group of parliamentarians, including Senator Danesh Kumar, PML-N Parliamentary Party's Senator Irfan ul Haq Siddiqui, and other senior Senate officials.

In his address, the Acting Chairman said that Pakistan's respect for all faiths, communities, and sects, expressing warm wishes to Senator Kumar

and acknowledging the significance of Diwali for the Hindu community. Senator Danesh Kumar expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Acting Chairman and his colleagues, thanking them for their gesture of support and appreciation for his community.

Senator Danesh Kumar praised Punjab's Chief Minister for her presence at a Diwali function, encouraging other provinces to follow this example to promote unity, love, and brotherhood across Pakistan.

Federal employees' children New degree courses to be included in fee reimbursement scheme

ISLAMABAD (APP): State Minister for Finance Ali Pervaiz Malik informed the National Assembly on Friday that recently introduced degree programs, such as Business Data Analysis, will be incorporated into the fee reimbursement scheme for children of federal government employees under the Benevolent Fund.

In response to a calling attention notice from MNA Sabheen Ghoury, Malik explained that the Benevolent Fund operates

under its own trust and legal framework. Following the request to include new courses, the fund has submitted a proposal to the Higher Education Commission (HEC) for consideration. He further assured that the government is actively pursuing the matter with HEC to expedite the inclusion of these courses.

Addressing concerns regarding delays in reimbursements, he emphasized that steps would be taken to resolve payment issues promptly.

IHC removes objections on PTI founder bail plea in Toshakhana-2 case

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has removed objections from bail plea of PTI founder Imran Khan in Toshakhana-2 case besides directing registrar office to fix the plea for hearing again.

The objections were raised by registrar office. Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb remarked law will be implemented. The case of Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi is similar on law. Bushra Bibi has been bailed out.

He gave these remarks during hearing of the petition on Friday. Justice Miangul

Hassan Aurangzeb remarked there are objections from registrar office on your petition. The counsel for the petitioner said bail was granted to Bushra Bibi in this case. The same allegation rests with PTI founder.

Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb inquired she was woman and he is man. How can there be rule of consistency.

Registrar office has objection that the matter relates to September. But power of attorney relates to the month of July.



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information Technology and Telecom Shaza Fatima, Ambassador of Algeria Dr. Brahim ROMANI, Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed and others cutting a cake on the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the National Day of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria at a local hotel in the Federal Capital.

CDA chairman for coordinated efforts to resolve water challenges

ISLAMABAD (APP): Capital Development Authority (CDA), Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa on Friday emphasized the urgency of coordinated efforts among all stakeholders to resolve the critical water challenges facing the city.

The CDA chairman convened a meeting to address the pressing issues surrounding water resource management in Islamabad.

The meeting was attended by senior officers from CDA and representatives from WASA Rawalpindi, WAPDA, Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB), and other relevant departments.

Chairman CDA, Muhammad Ali Randhawa stated that this meeting marked the road map for the newly established "Islamabad Water" agency

after the recent approval from the cabinet.

The Director General (Water Management Wing), CDA presented a comprehensive administrative and financial overview of the city's water resources and outlined the existing shortfall.

He highlighted the disparity in water distribution from Khanpur Dam and urged to undertake corrective measures to ensure equitable distribution.

The Chairman, CDA directed to carry out a joint survey by KPK and Punjab irrigation departments, RCB, WASA Rawalpindi and CDA of the 18 km distribution canal from the Khanpur Dam to address water leakage, water theft, and overuse of the share while WAPDA would lead the survey.



ISLAMABAD: Volunteers distribute free food among poor people and daily wage laborers at Ghouri town Vip block.

Tarar congratulates newly elected office bearers of PBA

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attallah Tarar has felicitated the newly elected office bearers of the Pakistan Broadcasters Association (PBA), stressing that the free and active media is indispensable for strengthening the democracy.

The minister, in a news release, specifically congratulated PBA Chairman Mian Amir Mahmood, Senior Vice Chairman Salman Iqbal, and Vice Chairman Mir Ibrahim Rehman.

He also extended felicitation to other newly elected office bearers including Secretary General Shakeel Masood, Joint Secretary Ahmed Zuberi, and Finance Secretary Azhar Qazi.

Tarar noted that the media is a crucial pillar of the state, expressing the hope that the newly elected officials would play their due role for uplift of the media industry.

He said the government would continue its efforts for the freedom, development and promotion of the media institutions in the country.

Meanwhile, Federal Secretary for Information and Broadcasting Ambreen Jan and Principal Information Officer Mubashir Hasan also extended heartfelt congratulations to the newly elected office bearers and expressed the best wishes for them.

The Federal Secretary acknowledged the critical role of the PBA in provision of a correct information to the masses.

Muqam inquires about AJK president's health, wishes swift recovery

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan Engineer Amir Muqam, visited AJK President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry at Kashmir House on Friday to inquire about his health and wished him a speedy recovery with a bouquet of flowers.

Muqam assured that the federal government, under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, will continue its efforts to promote development and address issues in Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Amir Muqam reaffirmed Pakistan's steadfast support for the Kashmiris' fight for freedom. He committed to elevating the voices of the courageous Kashmiris on all platforms.

ATC sends Azam Swati to jail on judicial remand

ISLAMABAD (Online): Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) has sent PTI leader Azam Swati to jail on judicial remand in the light of high court orders.

Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra of ATC sent Azam Swati to jail on 14 days judicial remand.

Islamabad High Court (IHC) had nullified the physical remand of Azam Swati.

AIOU inaugurates first "Literary Society"

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Inauguration ceremony of "Literary Society" with a first session held on Friday at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU).

Syed Nasir Shah, DG Quality Assurance Agency, HEC was the Chief Guest while Professor Dr. Muhammad Khalid, Principal, Post Graduate H8 College Islamabad presided over the event. Guest speaker of the first session Prof. Dr. Abdul Aziz Sahir, Dean, Social Sciences and Humanities, AIOU, said in his address that when the British came to the subcontinent, they first captured literature and culture. The literature of the free nations remain alive and the nations that are slaves have no aesthetics.

IG Rizvi instructed the Dolphin and Ababel squads to increase patrolling in targeted areas of Islamabad. In addition, he ordered that security checks be strengthened at all entry and exit points of the city to effectively monitor movement.

Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi emphasized that all offi-

Senator Irfan says: Govt on right track, won't be derailed by PTI's conspiracies

ISLAMABAD (APP): Parliamentary leader of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senator Irfan Siddiqui Friday slammed the PTI's history of failed attempts to draw large crowds in Islamabad, said that the current government's progress can not be derailed by their conspiracy-driven attempts.

In an exclusive talk with a private news channel, he pointed out that PTI has a history of using propaganda and conspiracy theories for political gains.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi chairing a meeting in CDA Headquarters Islamabad.

GB stands with Kashmiri people in freedom struggle: spokesperson

ISLAMABAD (APP): Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) government spokesperson Faizullah Firaq on Friday said that GB people always stood with their Kashmiri people in their just freedom struggle.

Addressing a press conference here at National Press Club, he stated that GB ahead of all regions of Pakistan in the field of education as currently two universities were operational with hundreds of campuses across the region.

Firaq said, Gilgit-Baltistan has huge potential for tourism as it attracts hundreds of thousands of people towards the valley

to explore the scenic beauty and culture.

"Today the Independence Day of Gilgit-Baltistan is being celebrated in Islamabad, for which we are very happy" he remarked, noting that the people of GB are very hospitable. He urged the federal government to bring GB at par with other provinces for the welfare of the people.

He said the people of Gilgit-Baltistan need to be represented in the National Assembly and the Senate so that the problems and rights of the people can be resolved in a more amicable manner.

IG Rizvi holds meetings to enhance security of Capital

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police, under the chairmanship of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, convened a late-night meeting attended by senior command officials to assess the security situation and crime dynamics in the city. During the meeting, IG Rizvi directed an intensified crackdown on criminal elements across the city, a police spokesperson told APP.

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IRSA releases 117,500 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 117,500 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 63,900 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1528.30 feet and was 130.30 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 33,500 cusecs and 55,000 cusecs respectively.

The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1186.60 feet, which was 136.60 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet.



ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police have successfully apprehended an accused involved in a case of sexual abuse and obtained his remand from the relevant court for further investigation. A public relations officer told APP that, on 24 October 2024, the Bhara Kahu police team received a report from a victim's father who stated that his son was sexually assaulted by an accused.

Upon receiving the information, the Bhara Kahu police team registered case No.581/24, he said.

Senior police officers took immediate notice of the sexual abuse case and directed the officers to apprehend the culprits on a priority basis, he said adding that a specialized police team was formed under the supervision of the SSP Investigation, he added. He said that the special sexual offences investigation unit (SSOU) and Bhara Kahu police teams utilized all scientific and technical resources.

A police spokesperson told APP that IG Rizvi issued a severe warning that any major crime incident within an area will result in accountability measures against responsible officers.

IG Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi also instructed senior officers to meet regularly with their subordinates to understand their challenges and offer support.

He highlighted the importance of maintaining morale among officers and personnel to foster dedication in fulfilling their duties.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan witnessed the letter of intent signing ceremony between Prime Minister's Youth Programme and Social Innovation Academy.