

Independent

Member APNS & CPNE

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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 35 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.

According to the Medical Superintendent of Mastung hospital, Dr Nisar Ahmed Baloch, at least 30 injured were brought in the hospitals where condition was critical. However the necessary treatment is being provided to the injured persons. Meanwhile, over 25 injured were moved to the Sandeman Provincial Hospital Quetta and Trauma Center where condition of three is stated to

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



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti distributing laptop amongst students during a ceremony at Govt Girls Postgraduate College.

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 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

Murtaza arguing that recent vacancies were strategic and that the Supreme Court should be consulted on the necessity of more judges.

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QUETTA: Provincial Health Minister, Bakht Muhammad Kakar along with Noorullah Musakhel, MS Civil Hospital are inquiring about health of Mastung bomb blast victims, at Civil Hospital in Quetta.

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 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.

He directed to the concerned authorities to provide best medical treatment to the injured children immediately. He also expressed grief with the families of those martyred in the blast. He said that we equally share the grief with the aggrieved families.

The Minister also said that terrorist elements are bent upon spoiling peace in the province. However, the provincial government would continue action against the peace enemies.

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Friday said Qatar would make an investment of \$3 billion in diverse sectors which would have a significant impact on the national economy and ultimately benefit the masses.

A delegation from Qatar would soon visit Pakistan to materialize the investment pledge, 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 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 government-to-government and business-to-business

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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 QBA delegation, led by Sheikh Faisal Bin Qassim Al-Thani, comprised leading Qatari business figures, each representing influential sectors within Qatar's economy.

The meeting was held during Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's two-day official visit to Qatar aimed at discussing deepening economic ties and exploring

new avenues for collaboration. 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; Chair-

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We would defeat terrorists through education & consciousness, pledges CM Balochistan

Sarfraz Bugti says we grieved over Mastung incident, but our resolve for elimination of terrorism not weakened; says wouldn't let our educational institutions deserted after getting afraid of such cowardly acts

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti has reiterated his government's resolve to defeat the terrorists through education and consciousness.

He said that although we are grieved over the incident of terrorism occurred in Mastung, but our resolve for elimination of terrorism has not been weakened and ultimately, we would fight terrorists.

The Chief Minister was addressing the ceremony of laptops distribution at the Government Girls Postgraduate College

here on Friday. Addressing the ceremony, Chief Minister reiterated to the terrorism act in Mastung and said that terrorists attacked the innocent children considering them soft target. He said that we would defeat the terrorists and wouldn't let our institutions deserted getting afraid of such cowardly acts of terrorism.

He said that we are providing educational opportunities to our intelligent students in the prestigious institutions of the world.

He also said that we want to give higher opportunities of education and progress by creating self confidence among them.

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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.

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.

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.

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 Productivity

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Governor Balochistan commends BRA for record tax collection

Independent Report
QUETTA: Governor of Balochistan, Jafar Khan Mandokhail, emphasized the critical role of tax revenue in a nation's economic framework, stating that it funds essential infrastructure, development projects, and social welfare programs.

He lauded the Balochistan Revenue Authority (BRA) for achieving a historic milestone by collecting PKR 27 billion in taxes for the first time in the province's history, applauding BRA Chairman Noor-ul-Haq Baloch and

his team for their relentless efforts in advancing developmental goals.

Governor Mandokhail made these remarks during a meeting at Governor House Quetta with BRA Chairman Noor-ul-Haq Baloch, also attended by the Governor's Principal Secretary, Hashim Khan Ghilzai. He recommended reducing tax slabs to encourage voluntary tax compliance, thereby boosting provincial revenues, fostering a business-friendly environment, and promoting investment and economic growth.

Opposition slams govt for increasing petrol, diesel prices

ISLAMABAD (INP): Opposition parties including the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Jamaat-e-Islami have strongly criticised the government for increasing the price of petroleum commodities, stating that it would further increase the burden on the already inflation-hit masses. Hours after surge in the petroleum prices, Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Emir Hafiz Naemur Rehman on

Friday demanded cut in the petroleum products prices. In a statement, the JI emir said the petrol price had been reduced below \$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.



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

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.

Governor Balochistan greet Hindu community on Diwali festival

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jafar Khan Mandokhail has congratulated the Hindu community on the Diwali festival.

In a felicitation message on eve of Diwali, the Governor said that we greet the Hindu community on their religious festival.

He said that all minorities enjoy religious freedom under 1973's constitution of Pakistan. He acknowledged the key role of Hindu community in development and prosperity of the province especially in trade.

He hoped that the community would continue to take wholehearted part in economic development and social stability of the province and country.

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.

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which have resulted in the loss of lives and damage to critical infrastructure.

Joint statement issued by PM Office Pakistan, Qatar leadership agree to enhance cooperation, high-level exchanges

ISLAMABAD (APP): The leadership of Pakistan and Qatar agreed to deepen cooperation, explore new horizons to strengthen bilateral ties underscoring the importance of high-level exchanges to enhance mutual understanding.

The bilateral ties were discussed during the two-day official visit of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to Qatar where he met Amir of the State of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani.

The two sides discussed key opportunities in a number of fields in Pakistan in the context of previous investment pledges. Key regional and global developments of mutual concern were also discussed, according to a joint statement issued by PM Office following the conclusion of his visit. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed his gratitude for the warm reception and generous hospitality, expressing his keenness to strengthen bi-

lateral relations and develop existing cooperation to broader horizons.

The prime minister expressed his appreciation for the continuous support provided by the State of Qatar to Pakistan in various fields, and highlighted investment opportunities in vital economic sectors in Pakistan. The meeting focused on strengthening bilateral relations between the two brotherly countries, with a particular emphasis on investment and trade, alongside discussions on cooperation in other fields.

The Amir of Qatar stressed the importance of fraternal relations between the two countries and the two sides' aspiration to enhance economic partnership, increase trade exchange, and promote investments. Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Qatar Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani also held a meeting with Prime Minister Shehbaz where the two sides discussed ways to enhance bilateral relations and explore vari-

ous avenues of collaboration in the areas of economy, trade, investment and cultural exchange. Prime Minister Shehbaz expressed his gratitude for Qatar's role in supporting economic development in Pakistan, praising the presence of a large Pakistani community in the State of Qatar that acts as a bridge linking the two countries.

The Qatari prime minister stressed the importance of Pakistan as a strategic partner in the region, expressing the Qatari side's commitment to deepen bilateral economic ties to serve the common interests of the two countries.

The two sides discussed regional and global issues, stressing the importance of peaceful solutions and cooperative efforts to address current challenges.

Prime Minister Shehbaz praised the diplomatic efforts and humanitarian initiatives of the State of Qatar to promote peace in the region, especially the role of the State of Qatar as a mediator regarding the Palestinian issue.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah exchanging views with a delegation of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) Sindh led by President, Maulana Abdul Qayoom Haleji and Allama Rashid Mahmood Soomro, Secretary General during meeting held at CM House in Karachi.

Pakistan pushes for halting outer-space's weaponisation, warns of 'devastating' fallout

NEW YORK (INP): Pakistan has called for boosting efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space, warning that any conflict that erupts in or originates from there "will not be confined to that realm."

"The fallout will ripple across all domains of life, with devastating consequences for us all: Even nations without space assets will not be spared," Pakistani delegate Gul Qaiser Sarwani told the General

Assembly's First Committee (Disarmament and International Security) in its thematic debate.

Sarwani, a counsellor in the Pakistan Mission to the UN, said that the risks and potential for conflict in or from outer space have deepened, as has a reliance on outer space in every aspect of daily life. The most glaring manifestation of these risks, he added, is an emerging arms race and the weaponization of outer

space.

The interplay between defensive and offensive capabilities, particularly the integration of missile defence systems with space-based technologies, are undermining strategic stability at both global and regional levels, the Pakistani delegate said.

"With modern warfare relying so heavily on space-based assets, there is a very real risk that conflicts on Earth whether on land,

Iranian ambassador praises Pakistan Navy for rescue of fishermen

ISLAMABAD (APP): Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan, Reza Amiri Moghadam on Friday extended heartfelt gratitude to the Pakistan Navy for its swift and dedicated response to a recent maritime emergency, where 23 Iranian fishermen were rescued from a fishing boat accident in the open sea.

In a message of appreciation, Ambassador Moghadam praised the Pakistan Navy's professionalism and commitment, emphasizing the longstanding spirit of mutual support between Iran and Pakistan in international rescue and humanitarian assistance efforts.

He highlighted that both nations have consistently upheld strong cooperation in search and rescue operations in international waters, cementing a history of solidarity and shared responsibility.

Reflecting on previous instances of collaboration, Ambassador Moghadam recalled a similar incident in March 2024 when the Pakistan Navy provided critical assistance by rescuing eight Iranian fishermen after a fire broke out on their vessel. He noted that this tradition of support is a testament to the enduring brotherhood between the two countries.

"The people of Iran are truly grateful for Pakistan's unwavering readiness to assist in times of need, exemplifying the close bonds and mutual commitment that Iran and Pakistan have cherished throughout their history," he said.

IHC told Delegation to visit US for Dr. Aafia's release

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday was informed about the details of a delegation sent to the USA for efforts to release Dr. Aafia Siddiqui from prison.

The delegation which is comprising Fouzia Siddiqui, Talha Mehmood, Anoshay Rehman and a doctor would hold meetings with US officials.

The IHC's Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan heard the case regarding the release of Dr. Aafia from prison in the US. Attorney General of Pakistan Mansoor Usman informed the court regarding the details of a four-member delegation to visit after the US elections.

Pakistan thrash India in Hong Kong Sixes match

Chairman PCB felicitates Pak team for victory against India in Hong Kong 6s

ISLAMABAD (INP): Asif Ali, Akhlaq Ahmed and Faheem Ashraf played important roles to down arch-rivals India while chasing down the 120-run target without losing a wicket.

With the victory against India, Pakistan has qualified for the quarter-finals after topping Group C.

Asif Ali played a whirlwind knock of 55 runs from 14 balls, which featured two fours and seven sixes. His opening partner Mohammad Akhlaq struck 40 off 12 with the help of three fours and four sixes.

Earlier in the day, Pakistan defeated the United Arab Emirates (UAE) by 13 runs after setting a target of 129.

Asif Ali and Mohammad Akhlaq both scored half-centuries to help Pakistan post an imposing total without losing a wicket. Akhlaq smashed 52 off 15 with six maximums, while Asif struck 50

off 14, laced with seven sixes.

While defending 128, Pakistan bundled UAE for 115 as Asif Ali and Aamir Yamin took two wickets each.

Pakistan since the inception of the Hong Kong Cricket Sixes in 1993 have won the tournament four times, while it has remained runners-up of the event five times, which includes qualifying for the final of the last edition held in 2017.

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman Mohsin Naqvi extended his congratulations to the Pakistan team on their victory against India in the Hong Kong Sixes Tournament.

Lauding the standout performances, he commended Asif Ali, Faheem Ashraf and Mohammad Akhlaq for their aggressive and impactful batting, which proved pivotal in securing the win.



KARACHI: Wrestlers in action during the Sindh traditional Wrestling Mah on the occasion of 233th Annual Urs of Hazrat Syed Mehmood Shah Bukhari held in Karachi.

Qatar pledges..

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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.

He said during the meeting, both sides reiterated to further strengthen the bilateral relations and enhance trade and investment in Pakistan.

Both countries have longstanding people-to-people relations which spanned over decades, he said lauding the hospitality extended by Saudi Arabia to the pilgrims from Pakistan during Umrah and Hajj.

He said the prime minister had thanked Saudi Arabia for hosting Pakistanis for Hajj and its crucial role for Pakistan's deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

During the recent visit of the prime minister, he said, delegation level talks were also held between both the sides that led to increase in the number of MoUs from 27 to 34, while volume of investment has also been enhanced to \$2.8 billion.

The minister said an additional investment of \$600 million would have a positive impact on the economy, and "we believe this is a major step towards attracting the foreign investment in mining, energy, agriculture, livestock, IT and Human Resource Development sectors of the economy."

He said the prime minister also spoke about the issue of Palestine at the conference in Riyadh, and condemned the oppression of unarmed Palestinians by Israel. PM Shehbaz Sharif had underlined the need for peace in Palestine which was imperative for global peace.

The prime minister has been fighting for the Palestinian cause at international level which is being acknowledged domestically and globally, the minister noted.

As regards the visit of the prime minister and his delegation to Qatar, he said this has great importance for the bilateral relations of the two countries which was reflected by the joint statement issued upon conclusion of the visit.

He said Qatar had hosted an art exhibition celebrating Pakistani artwork, putting up the masterpieces of Pakistani art on display from 1947 to the present. The exhibition featured renowned Pakistani artists and painters, including the acclaimed architect Nayyar Ali Dada.

The prime minister, he said, had expressed his gratitude for Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani and his sister Sheikhha Al-Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani for organizing such an exhibition in the honor of Pakistan.

The relationship between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the Emir of Qatar was further emphasized by the warm re-

Senate committee..

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A key provision adds a sub-clause to Section-II of the Practice and Procedure Act, mandating the inclusion of one senior judge and one judge nominated by the Chief Justice of Pakistan in relevant committees.

Moreover, the ordinance stipulates that public interest reasons must be provided before any hearings on matters, alongside provisions for prioritizing cases based on their filing order.

Additionally, the ordinance introduces sections 7A and 7B, ensuring that cases filed first are heard first and requiring documentation for all court cases and appeals.

In a related incident, during the Diwali celebrations, Chief Minister of Punjab, Maryam Nawaz, was hailed as a leader by minority member Dinesh Kumar, leading to a clash with Senator Humayun Mohmand, who suggested she sit on the government benches.

Dinesh Kumar expressed his allegiance to Maryam Nawaz, highlighting the growing political dynamics within the assembly.



QUETTA: A delegation led by Mir Zabid Reki meeting with Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti. Opposition Leader Mir Younas Aziz Zehri is also present.

43 NUST researchers ranked among world's top 2% scientists

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a significant achievement, 43 researchers from Pakistan's National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST) have earned spots among the world's top 2% of scientists, according to a 2024 report by Stanford University and Elsevier.

This marks a growing international recognition for NUST's research contributions, spanning fields like artificial intelligence, engineering, and cyber security. The prestigious ranking, which places NUST researchers among 100,000 top scientists worldwide, reflects the university's steady climb in global research standings.

Currently ranked 353rd globally and 64th in Asia by the QS University

Rankings, NUST has distinguished itself as a leading institution in Pakistan's higher education sector. This achievement is also part of a positive trend: NUST's representation among the world's top 2% scientists has steadily increased, with 9 researchers making the list in 2021, followed by 23 in 2022 and 31 in 2023.

The data for the ranking is compiled by Stanford University and published by Elsevier, using a composite index that considers a range of bibliometric factors.

These include citation counts, the Hirsch index (a measure of an individual scientist's productivity and impact), and citations across various authorship positions.

Hassan Zehri says: Martyrdom of children in the mustang blast heartbreaking

Independent Report HUB: Senior central leader of Pakistan Peoples Party, Provincial Advisor on Industries and Crafts and Spokesperson of President Asif Ali Zardari has expressed grief and sorrow while strongly condemning the Mustang blast.

In his statement of condemnation, he expressed a strong reaction to the loss of innocent lives in the incident and termed the incident as a cowardly act of terrorists and said that the martyrdom of innocent children, police personnel and others in the Mustang blast is very sad. Mir Hassan Zehri said that shedding the blood of innocent citizens is an insult to humanity.

In the statement said that brutalizing innocent citizens is not acceptable in any way. The martyrdom of children in the Mustang blast is heartbreaking. He instructed the medical staff that best medical facilities should be provided to the injured.

LHC strikes down ban on transfers and postings in Punjab

LAHORE (INP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) Friday struck down the notification banning the transfers and postings of government employees in Punjab.

Punjab government on March 1 in a notification banned the transfers and postings of the employees. Justice Asim Hafeez issued the eight-page verdict declaring the Punjab government's decision to impose a ban on transfers and postings of government employees as unlawful.

The ruling emphasized that civil servants and bureaucracy were subordinated, thus elevating the chief minister's authority, which disrupted the administrative balance of checks and balances.

The LHC bench observed that an overreach of executive power disturbs this balance and that misinterpretation of constitutional amendments raised questions regarding the admissibility of the petitions before constitutional benches. The court clarified that any decisions regarding appointments and transfers taken between the notification and the court's verdict will remain effective.



KARACHI: Members of Hindu Community are celebrating Diwali Festival held at Sawami Narain Temple located on Saddar Town in Karachi.

5 students & one..

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be critical. The emergency was already declared in the hospitals of Quetta and Mastung.

The Provincial Minister for Health, Bakht Muhammad Kakar and other concerned high ups reached the Sandeman Provincial Hospital and supervised the provision of medical treatment facilities to the injured of Mastung blast.

Later, some injured were shifted to the CMH Quetta.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti has condemned the bomb explosion in Mastung and expressed grief over martyrdom of a police cop and innocent children in it.

In a condemnation

statement issued here on Friday, the Chief Minister expressed sympathy and condolence with the bereaved families of martyrs.

He said that the terrorists targeted innocent children after the poor labourers now.

He said that the inhuman incident of bomb blast is condemnable. He said that the innocent children were targeted as the soft target by terrorists.

The Chief Minister pledged that the revenge of blood of the innocent children and persons would be taken. Mir Sarfraz Bugti stressed that the local people would also have to keep vigil on the terrorists in the urban localities.

He said that the menace of terrorism can be faced together.

Govt committed to..

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tion, 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. Ahsan Iqbal emphasized the need to expedite the transfer process for other provinces, directing that the transfer to Sindh be completed within the next five days.

Qatari..

Continued from page 1

man of Mansoor Jassim Al Thani Group Sheikh Mansoor bin Jassim Al Thani; CEO of Blue Salon Nabi 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.

During the meeting, both sides explored potential collaborations that could drive job creation, innovation, and sustainable development in both countries.

Members of the QBA responded positively to the prime minister's invitation, indicating their interest in expanding their investments into Pakistan's energy and infrastructure sectors. The importance of bilateral cooperation to bolster economic stability and growth within the region was underscored.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Minister for Commerce Kam Kamal Khan, Minister for Finance and Revenue Mohammad Aurangzeb and Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar were also present in the meeting.

We would defeat..

Continued from page 1

the province and for the purpose, we would extend full government patronage.

He exhorted the girl students to work hard and brighten the name of the country and province all over the world.

The Chief Minister mentioned that we want to make our youth educated and honourable persons of the society. But on the other hand, terrorists are making them suicide bombers by instigating them against terrorists.

The decision has to be made by the people and youth of Balochistan that what future they want, he insisted adding that we would defeat the terrorists through education and consciousness.

The Chief Minister urged the girl students to give clear message that youth of the province totally reject the terrorism and every subversive act.

He said that the terrorists sitting abroad instigate the youth of province in the name of its backwardness and use tactics to mislead them through social media.

He also said that an organized campaign is run against the state, as he referred to the propaganda made on social media about the alleged incident of sexual assault of a female student on occasion of the SCO.

That was a conspiracy to defame the country and nothing else, he added.

The Chief Minister on the occasion also referred to the Benazir

Bhutto Scholarship Programme launched for the first time in Balochistan for educational development. Under this programme, the wholehearted opportunities are being provided to the students to acquire higher education from Matric to Ph.D.

Extraordinary quota has also been allocated for the civilian martyrs and minorities under the programme, he maintained.

He on the occasion also said that biggest issue of Balochistan is corruption, and we have to eliminate it and bribery in order to get the fruits of development to common men.

He said that we have lot of expectations of bright future from our girls and we want to see them empowered.

He said that at the moment, five female deputy Commissioners and an Assistant Commissioner have been performing in the province, and they have proved their mettle as good administrators.

There would also come a day when the Chief Minister of the province would also be a female, he added.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister distributed the laptops among the girl students and also announced to establish hi-tech lab and provide 50 pink scooters and more laptops to the girls on merit.

Earlier, the Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durran appreciated the steps being taken by the Chief Minister for development of education in the province.

ADB conference highlights regional integration in digital era for leveraging trade for climate, health solutions

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Friday convened industry leaders and government officials at a pivotal conference focused on enhancing regional integration through digital trade, with an emphasis on addressing climate and health challenges.

The two-day conference has been organized by the ADB in collaboration with the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here at a hotel, said a press release.

The first day of the conference hosted Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Shazia Fatima Khawaja who highlighted significant growth of 25% in tech exports and government endeavours of providing financing to the youth to scale E-entrepreneurship initiatives and youth led startups.

The notable speakers at the second day inaugural session included Lyaziza Sabyrova, Regional Head, CWRD, ADB, Syed Aftab Haider, CEO of Pakistan Single Window (PSW), and Wahat Bastimiyev, CEO of Verigram.

In her opening re-

marks, Lyaziza Sabyrova, Regional Head, CWRD, ADB briefed the participants on CAREC program which was stated almost two decades with them vision to integration, reformation and transition in the central Asian countries' economies.

The program, she said helped in human development including education and health with broader focus on digitalization, gender and climate change.

Sayed Ashraf Siddiqui, Joint Secretary, Economic Affairs Division and CAREC National Focal Point in Pakistan said the role of technology is important to promote and enhance regional trade whereas the conference also intends to foster digital trade across the region.

It is also the foundation step of the implementation of the digital strategy 2030 that emphasizes upon the technology in promoting regional trade through reducing barriers and enhancing connectivity across various sectors, he said.

During the conference, Syed Aftab Haider emphasized the transformative power of technology in global trade. He noted the sig-

nificant growth of merchandise trade and the surging e-commerce landscape. "Digitalization is the way forward, encompassing both technology and procedures. Pakistan Single Window has implemented a digital platform across all land, air, and dry ports, significantly reducing the bureaucratic footprint," he said.

Verigram's Wahat Bastimiyev shared insights on Kazakhstan's digital landscape, highlighting a remarkable increase in non-cash transactions and the swift opening of bank accounts. "With internet penetration at 92% and cashless payments making up 89% of transactions, Kazakhstan is witnessing a banking transformation that can enhance cross-border e-payments," he noted.

The panel discussion featured prominent figures including Dr. Manzoor Ahmad, former ambassador, and permanent representative of Pakistan's Mission to World Trade Organization (WTO) who advocated for Pakistan's participation in modern trade agreements that prioritize gender and climate change.



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

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 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.

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.

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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,

especially among youth. "This series is a critical step to ensure parliamentarians are equipped to address digital misinformation effectively. By collaborating with UNDP, we're fostering a parliamentary response that keeps up with the pace of digital evolution," she remarked.

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.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecom Shazia 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 Attaullah 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 Amreen Jan and Principal Information Officer Mubashir Hasan also extended heartfelt congratulations to the newly elected office bearers and expressed the best wishes for them.

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.

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.

Siddiqui emphasized that the law will be equally applied to all prisoners, making no exceptions.

He also referenced the May 9 incident and said that politicians should not create instability in the country, specifically pointing out PTI's role in doing so.

Senator further emphasized the importance of impartial courts, urging them to make decisions based solely on constitutional laws, without bias towards individuals or institutions.

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: 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 patriotic. 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 (APP): 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.

Accused involved in rape case arrested

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.

Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi emphasized that all officers must be physically present in their respective areas to ensure close monitoring of security duties. He directed officers to conduct thorough checks on any suspicious individuals, vehicles, and motorcycles within their jurisdictions.

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.

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): Acting Chairman Syed Ali 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.



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.

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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.

The 'war on trash' and Quetta's dirty fate

By **Mohammad Hamza Shafiqat**

A war like any other has started, with two sides at play, and what stands at the crossroads is the capital of Balochistan. In this war, one side stands on the right while the other continues pursuing wrong group-centric interests and agendas. People are being fed fake news and false narratives while yellow journalism thrives on sensational, spicy news. Political representatives are being enticed into supporting the forces of the status quo while the bureaucracy continues to create hurdles. What is this war all about? What is to happen, and will it end in a Shakespearean tragedy? That is what we all yet to know.

The Metropolitan Corporation Quetta spends 90 million rupees per annum on solid waste and sanitation services in the city. According to a report from the University of Balochistan, MCQ is able to collect around 400 tonnes of garbage on a daily basis with the aforementioned amounts. However, the city produces more than 1,600 tonnes of garbage daily. This difference between production and disposal has resulted in an accumulation of 1,000 tonnes of garbage each day. A rough estimate by experts states that there are more than 2 million tonnes of garbage lying in the city. This can

be witnessed in both urban and rural areas. There are garbage heaps everywhere. Trash is seen in drainages as well as in the irrigation nullahs across the city.

The 800 permanent 'khakroobs' were unable to perform their duties because of their age and their "networking." This has resulted in the city being filled with filth with each passing day, further causing obvious damage to the city's environment and affecting the health of the people. Dengue, Congo, malaria, hepatitis, and respiratory infections are just a few of the rampant epidemics in the city. The kids do not have open areas anymore where they can play. WHO has also reported rising cases of stunting in children. The elderly are also suffering from the random garbage on the streets. The garbage is polluting the environment and also the sub-soil water storages.

What could have been done to clean the city and save its residents from a terrible situation? MCQ, like any other government department, came up with a solution of buying new machinery worth Rs1 billion. It also submitted a case for a further Rs1 billion to clear outstanding liabilities that have been accruing since the rise in POL prices. For the cleanliness drive, more land worth billions was proposed to be acquired, and more staff was to be hired to clean the city,

which would have cost the government more than a billion rupees adjusted over the next few years. How convenient, isn't it? Cleaning the city with a Rs5 billion grant. The cash-crunched treasury has already been raising objections about the unaccounted-for HR in MCQ. It was a bottleneck, and there appeared to be no visible solution for the city managers.

About 6 months ago, the Quetta Commissioner's Office and the Balochistan Public Private Partnership Authority's team were called by the Chief Secretary, and a briefing was prepared for the new Chief Minister. After a detailed discussion in the presence of various secretaries and ministers, the Chief Minister gave the go-ahead to explore the option of Public Private Partnership for solid waste management in Quetta. The Commissioner was given the charge of Administrator Metropolitan Corporation Quetta to ensure unity of command and to push through the reform agenda envisioned by the CM, CS, and the government. Top experts from all over Pakistan were gathered, and a legal team was hired from Karachi. Models from Lahore, Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Karachi, and even Istanbul were examined. It was learned that the Government of Punjab established a Waste Management Company in 2010,

and the first private contract was awarded after 4 years. The transition had been extremely difficult and was met with resistance from unions, pressure groups with vested interests, media, and the corporate employees. Karachi had a different model, but it required massive budgetary support from the Government. Therefore, city managers decided to learn from all models and develop their own indigenous model that would fit into the present system of governance without burdening the exchequer.

It was clear that Rs 90 million was not a sufficient amount for a city that roughly catered to 5 million people annually. It was therefore decided to hand over the machinery, workshops, and contingent staff to the private concessionaire to reduce the burden on MCQ and also on the private party. A recycling plant was amalgamated into the project to reduce pressure on dumping sites. It was also decided to impose a tax of Rs 8 per day per house so that door-to-door collection could be ensured, and "kachra kundis," or garbage tubs, could be cleared and converted into green areas and open spaces. The collection of tax has always been a challenge for municipalities. A city with over one hundred thousand trade shops only manages to collect from about 300 shops. This chal-

lenge led the managers to explore the option of selling carbon credits internationally in lieu of clearing open spaces and converting them into green areas. This would allow the private concessionaire to generate revenue for buying new machinery and modernizing solid waste management. During this phase, another issue arose. Some private contractors were already collecting Rs 500 from each house in Quetta in the name of door-to-door collection through young kids (often referred to as scavengers). They were taking away the green waste and recyclable materials to "kabaaris" and throwing away useless trash on the roads. It was decided to involve the police and magistrates as well to break this chain and take charge of the city's trash. The research to come up with a panacea for solid waste took 3 months. The Chief Minister himself chaired all meetings, coordinated all efforts with different departments, and pushed for the summary to be brought to the cabinet. The project document was generated by BPPPA, vetted by the Public Private Unit, examined by the Administrator MCQ, and then presented to the Public Private Partnership Authority's board, which is chaired by the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Planning.

A giant leap was made. International tender

was floated. The union started protesting. A few officers who were enjoying the benefits of the archaic model also jumped into the fray and sealed the MCQ offices. Attacks were made on the office of the commissioner. A few journalists and bloggers were also used to create chaos on the media front. Even writ petitions were filed in court. All that was handled, and a successful joint venture was accepted, with the inauguration taking place on the 14th of August 2024. It was hailed as a flagship project of the government. The transition toward the reformed model of JV started with it. Thirty percent of the area, along with staff, workshop, and machinery, has been handed over to the private concessionaire.

But this is when the war has entered its final phase. Unions, officials, and all status quo forces have joined hands to prevent the JV from succeeding. Intentionally, machinery is being damaged, drainage is being choked, the JV is being discouraged, and the office of the commissioner is being maligned almost on a daily basis.

It is now time for the people to decide. Do they want to let the archaic and inefficient system win, or do they want a new and clean Quetta? It will take a few months, but crossing this river of tears is essential. The 'War on Trash,' however, goes on!

Disunited legal community

Syed Shehryar Raza Zaidi

Ever since the passage of the 26th Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan, influential lawyers, one after the other, have come out to threaten a widespread lawyers' movement.

Notable lawyers leading the charge against the 26th Amendment have often been quoted as threatening a protest movement that would put the one led against Gen Pervez Musharraf to shame.

Yet, as the days have gone by since the amendment's passage, the realisation has set in — within the lawyers' community in particular and the public in general — that the much sought-after 'lawyers movement' may never really see the light of day. There is no denying the fact that the charge

against the dictatorship of Gen Musharraf was led from the front by Pakistan's legal community. Hundreds and thousands of lawyers continued to protest day in and day out — often at the risk of being mercilessly beaten by the law enforcement agencies — with the single aim of ensuring the 'rule of law' and 'judicial independence' in the country.

These protests did eventually come to fruition when the judges who had been deposed by Gen Musharraf, including a former chief justice, were restored to their rightful position, which led the way to the eventual ouster of the dictator.

The success of this 'lawyers' movement' is often seen as the golden period of unity of the legal community in this country. It was a time when the lawyers' community had

realised the progressive potential that it possessed to effect change. Yet, as the years went by, the lawyers took one wrong step after another. Intoxicated by their ouster of a military dictator and the restoration of democracy and an independent judiciary in the country, some lawyers ended up putting themselves over and above the law.

This meant that much like the police and the paramilitary forces, lawyers became a 'force' to be reckoned with. This newfound power, however, ended up being misused by some miscreants, with instances such as the ransacking of a hospital in Lahore, or the beating of assailants, or even judges, within court premises becoming the norm. As a result, lawyers who had once been respected for their role in the ouster of Gen Musharraf

and hailed as champions of the 'rule of law', now began to be dreaded for their nuisance value.

All this meant that the leadership of bar politics became a coveted prize, with candidates often spending upwards of hundreds of thousands of rupees, directly or indirectly, to ensure that they ended up winning their respective bar elections.

Even today, the yearly bar election cycles are in full swing; candidates are hopping from one election event to another, often to tables packed with the most succulent of food and the loudest of speeches. Yet, what seems to be missing at most of these election events is the idea which had united the lawyers in the first place, the idea of an 'independent judiciary' and the 'rule of law'.

The 26th Amendment

was in the works for at least a month, with repeated, often publicised meetings on a day-to-day basis between the political players. Everyone in Pakistan was aware of the design of the amendments, what was sought to be achieved and what was sought to be negated, and yet the lawyers' community stood by and watched — it was vocal but idle — as it was given effect. This stands in contrast to the boisterous role played by the lawyers after the illegal ouster of former chief justice of Pakistan Iftekhar Chaudhry by Gen Musharraf.

Some would argue that the aims and objectives of the 26th Amendment are as big an attack on the independence of judiciary as any attempts undertaken by Gen Musharraf, and yet the conspicuous absence of a vibrant legal response

was, and continues to be, alarming. The one reason glaringly obvious for the lacklustre nature of dissent is a divided bar. The cut-throat nature of bar politics post the lawyers' movement has meant that the legal community is now split into smaller groups. Each group is now loyal to its own objectives. This has meant that the once united legal front has become a divided legal picket, with each group wanting to fight its own battles lest it benefit the other group.

What has transpired at the Sindh High Court Bar Association, for example, is a real-time operation of the same in operation. The Sindh High Court Bar Association after the appointment of Chief Justice Yahya Afridi was quick to congratulate the top judge on his ascent.

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 me 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 academi-

cs 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.

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, however, 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 infamous for 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. Paradoxically 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

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 long-standing 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 ac-

tions 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

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.

Rs 10 lakh subsidy will be given on each tractor to 9,500 farmers under the scheme. "We want to enter a modern era of mechanisation of agriculture in Punjab," Maryam Nawaz Sharif observed. The CM termed the Green Tractor Program as relaunch of Nawaz Sharif's green tractor scheme for farmers in Punjab, after a lapse of 12 years. She inspected four types of green tractors to be given to the farmers, and also rode a tractor to review its features.

Maryam Nawaz described tractor driving as a pleasant experience. She was apprised by the

authorities concerned after the balloting. "Mohammad Yasin, son of Mohammad Ashraf of Okara, is the first farmer to get a green tractor.

Talib Hussain, son of Muhammad Hussain of Chakwal, is the second farmer, while Ghulam Akbar son of Haji Ghulam Hussain of Dera Ghazi Khan is the third farmer to get a green tractor."

She was further briefed that 339 farmers in Okara, 111 in Chakwal and 276 farmers in DG Khan will get green tractors under the scheme.

CM congratulated all farmers who got green tractors, and said, "Names of all lucky winners have been displayed on the portal of 'CM Punjab Green Tractor Scheme' and the website of Agriculture Department."



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



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

Murad informs Canadian envoy of Sindh govt initiative for upgrading city infrastructure

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, in his meeting on Friday with the Canadian High Commissioner Ms Leslie Scanlon, said that the provincial government, through the Karachi transformation project, was improving the infrastructure to make the city liveable and attractive for investment.

The meeting also included the Director General for South Asia in Ottawa, Canada, Marie Louise Hannan, and Daniel Arsenault, the Political, Economic, and Commercial Counsellor at the Canadian Embassy. The Chief Minister was accompanied by his Secretary, Raheem

Shaikh. During the meeting, Scanlon remarked that Karachi is a beautiful megalopolis with abundant investment opportunities. She noted that Canadian food chains currently operating in Islamabad and Lahore plan to open franchises in Karachi.

Shah emphasized that Karachi is the industrial hub of the country, and both the provincial and federal governments are working to establish more special economic zones.

He mentioned that the city's infrastructure, including industrial areas, is being developed using resources from the World Bank's Karachi Transformation Project,

along with Public-Private Partnership (PPP) initiatives.

Murad Shah outlined several key infrastructure projects, including the completion of the Malir Expressway, the dualization of the Northern Bypass, and the construction of a road connecting the Seaport to the Korangi Causeway, which will link to the Malir Expressway. Additionally, he mentioned the opening of a new link road that connects the National Highway with the Motorway, facilitating easier transportation of goods to the interior of the country.

During the discussion, the Chief Minister

highlighted his government's investment in seawater desalination for drinking water and the treatment of domestic waste to meet both domestic and industrial needs. They also addressed issues of marine and environmental pollution, with Shah stating that treatment plants are being established to responsibly discharge treated sewage and industrial waste into the sea. He shared that his government planted millions of mangroves along the coastline, enabling the earning of carbon credits, and expressed plans for the development of another deep-sea port at Keti Bandar.

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.

In an interview with a private news channel, he highlighted the province's growing instability and the government's inadequate response.

"The provincial government has failed to ensure peace in the region," Governor Kundi stated.

Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur was solely engaged in political gatherings and protests, showing little interest in

addressing the province's core issues, he added.

Governor Kundi said that the federal government should prioritize establishing peace, as the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have made immense sacrifices for stability. He said that without immediate intervention, peace and stability in the province would be at continued risk.

He further said that sustainable peace would enable significant growth and development opportunities within the province.

When asked about the potential for the governor's rule in KP, he dismissed any such possibilities.



KARACHI: Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Sindh President, Haleem Adil Sheikh addresses to media persons during press conference, at Insaf House in Karachi.

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.

Presiding over the 16th syndicate meeting of Rawalpindi Medical University, he highlighted government's commitment to promoting high-quality research in medical universities and ensuring transparency in financial operations. He highlighted that the Punjab government is dedicated to providing quality education in government medical universities.

At the meeting, officials presented the

agenda, which included approval for building upgrades and medical equipment for Holy Family Hospital. Rawalpindi Teaching Hospital received authorization to make payments to the National Institute of Health, while Benazir Bhutto Hospital in Rawalpindi was permitted to acquire new anesthesia workstations. The meeting was attended by Parliamentary Secretary Zia Ullah Shah, Additional Secretary Finance Sidra Saleem, Deputy Secretary Hammad-ur-Rab, Vice Chancellor of Rawalpindi Medical University Prof. Muhammad Umar, as well as faculty and syndicate members.

At the meeting, officials presented the

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.

Under the leadership of Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has become the first province in the country to undertake this initiative.

The signing ceremony took place at the Chief Minister's House in Peshawar, where officials from Pakhtunkhwa Energy Development Organization (PEDO) and the private company NetRecon inked the agreement in the presence of Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur.

In the first phase, a 40-kilometer-long 132/220

kV transmission line will be laid from Matiltan to Madian.

This project, estimated to cost 8 billion rupees, is expected to be completed within a year and a half.

The transmission line will deliver electricity generated from the 84 MW Matiltan Hydropower Project and other provincial projects in Swat to the national grid, or at discounted rates to local industries.

Upon completion of the first phase, the provincial government is projected to earn an annual revenue of 7 billion rupees.

In the second phase of the Swat Corridor Transmission Line project, an additional 80-kilometer line will be extended from

Madian to Chakdara. Currently, numerous high-capacity hydropower projects are underway under the provincial government in Swat.

Ali Amin Gandapur said that this transmission line project is crucial for the sustainable development of the province.

He labeled it as one of the provincial government's flagship projects and a significant achievement. The project is expected to bring transformative changes in the energy and industrial sectors in KP. Through this transmission line, the provincial government will be able to supply electricity at lower rates to local industries, thereby attracting more investors to the province.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Local Government Zeeshan Rafique and Chief Secretary Punjab Zahid Akhtar Zaman addressing Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners vide Video Link.

Diwali celebrations spectacular display of fireworks Governor House

KARACHI (APP): A grand Diwali celebrations were held here at the Sindh Governor House on Thursday night with the participation of a large number of people belonging to the Hindu community, international artists already present in the city to participate in the World Cultural Festival, Consuls General of different countries, and the Gold Medalist of world bodybuilding event 'Mr. Universe Competition' Ramiz Ibrahim.

Governor Sindh also cut the cake with the Hindu community representatives. In the

ceremony, a spectacular display of fireworks was also performed.

Addressing the Diwali festival, Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori said that Diwali is one of the festivals celebrated internationally before the arrival of the New Year, which is considered a symbol of joy, love, and happiness for the Hindu community.

He congratulated the Hindu community on the festival of Diwali.

He said Pakistan is a bouquet, we all are its beautiful flowers and this bouquet will always be fragrant."

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, here on Friday. Rashid Nasrullah met the officers and discussed departmental matters. Administrator Aslam Ramey gave a detailed briefing to the Special Assistant about the working of the department.

The Special Assistant reviewed the performance of various projects of the Zakat and Ushr department in detail. Rashid Nasrullah said that

the Zakat amount should be provided to the beneficiaries timely and without any delay. A briefing on digitization of data and professional training was also given by the department.

Rashid Nasrullah further said that transparency and impartiality are the top priorities of the Punjab government. Through the media, philanthropists should also be encouraged to give Zakat. Pakistani nation actively participates in welfare works. All resources will be provided for the improvement of the department, he added.

CS visits Bannu, reviews preparations for anti polio campaign

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Secretary (CS) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry on Friday visited Bannu Division and chaired a meeting to review ongoing measures for the polio eradication campaign.

The meeting was also attended by Inspector General of Police Akhtar Hayat Khan, Commissioner Bannu Division, Muhammad Abid Khan, Regional Police Officer Imran Shahid, Deputy Commissioner

Bannu Abdul Hameed Khan, District Police Officers and other relevant officials. During meeting, participants were briefed about security status in Bannu Division and challenges faced in the polio eradication campaign. Addressing the meeting, Chief Secretary emphasized that polio prevention is a national responsibility urging departments and administration use resource for success of anti-polio campaign.

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.

In her message, she remarked, "The lamp of Diwali awakens love", expressing her joy in interacting with Hindu families during the special Diwali celebrations.

The CM announced the launch of a Special Minority Card for minority communities on December 20 and the establishment of a "Minority Virtual Police Station" under the Mahfooz Punjab Vision initiative, aimed at enhancing support and security for minorities.

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, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Friday.

He said 100 grams hashish, 40 grams ice and 30 grams intoxicated tablets were recovered from an accused arrested near Jadon Hotel in Manshra.

The arrested accused confessed to selling drugs to the students of educational institutions. 670 grams heroin-filled capsules were recovered from a passenger going to Sharjah at Lahore Airport.



HYDERABAD: President Jamiat Ulama-e-Pakistan Sahibzada Abulkhair Muhammad Zubair and Pir Ghulam Muhammad Sohoo and other leaders laid the Labaik Ya Palestine March and public meeting in Hyderabad. Leaders of various political and religious parties also participated in the rally.

Energy Minister takes important decisions in Sindh Coal Authority meeting

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Energy Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah on Friday made important decisions in the Sindh Coal Authority (SCA) meeting held under his chairmanship.

Director General SCA Haq Nawaz Shar, MD Tharcoal Energy Board Tariq Ali Shah and other officers also participated in the meeting, said a statement.

The minister said the TharLodges managed by the SCA will be outsourced for the quality and best accommodation and food facilities for local and foreign investors in Thar. However, he said that its ownership will remain with the Sindh government.

The minister directed Energy Department Mosaad Ahmed Khan to review all the legal points in this regard and submit his suggestions. He added that a Rules and Regulation Committee should be established for the

promotion and recruitment of employees and to ensure merit and transparency.

He said that the problems related to SCA's budget and other aspects will be resolved and added that there is a need to work on coal bracketing.

Nasir Shah directed that Thar Airport is the pride of the Sindh government and the country's first provincial-level airport and further improve it and standardize the services. The services of Civil Aviation Authority experts should be taken and the high authorities of civil aviation should be contacted in this regard, he said.

Nasir Shah directed that steps should be taken to auction all the disabled vehicles of SCA after fulfilling all the legal requirements.

He directed that training courses should be organized for all DDOs to familiarize them with SPPRA and other laws.

Minister Arora meets family of assault victim

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Minorities Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora met the parents of a 6-year-old girl in Faisal Town on Thursday night, who fell victim to an assault the other day.

He assured them of complete protection and justice.

SP Model Town Akhlaqullah Tarar informed the minister that the main accused, who had attempted to assault the minor girl sexually, had been arrested. He said further legal action would be taken after the medical report was received by the police.

A case was registered on the complaint of the girl's parents. The minor girl was a student at a private school located in Faisal Town B Block, where a sweeper attempted to assault her.

The minister directed SHO Faisal Town to collect information about employees in all schools in the area to avoid any such incident in future.



HYDERABAD: For the first time in the history of Pakistan, an aircraft transported by road from Karachi has reached Hyderabad. The aircraft will be used for training students studying at the Civil Aviation Training Institute.

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.

In an exclusive interview with a private news channel, he said Pakistan's economy has received a significant boost of \$2.2 billion thanks to five Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) signed with Saudi Arabia,

which have now become concrete contracts.

This development is expected to bring in substantial investments and create new job opportunities in various sectors, including industry, agriculture, IT, education, health, petroleum, mining, energy and food, he mentioned.

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.



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

Foreign investors taking keen interest in Pakistan for investment: Qaiser

ISLAMABAD (APP): Leadership of Saudi Arabia after meeting with PM Shehbaz Sharif, has decided to increase the trade volume with Pakistan, he said.

In reply to a question, he said the credit goes to premier Shehbaz Sharif, for creating investment environment in this part of the region.

Economic cooperation of Gulf countries with Pakistan would have positive impact over the life of the people of this country, he said.

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 percent 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. The Parliamentary Secretary for Railways stated that negotiations are ongoing with the Reko Diq Mining Company, which is anticipated to significantly boost freight revenue for the railways.



PESHAWAR: A vendor sells warm caps, socks for children on his handcart at Church Road, attracting customers as the temperature gradually drops in the city.

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 scams 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

SBP to announce monetary policy on November 4

ISLAMABAD (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) will announce Monetary Policy on November 04 in a meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC).

The MPC will meet on Monday, November 04 to decide about the Monetary Policy, a press release issued by SBP said.

The SBP will announce the Monetary Policy decision in a press statement on the same day after the MPC meeting, it added.

Sargodha Chamber welcomes Pak-Saudia agreements

SARGODHA (APP): Sargodha Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Khawaja Yasir Qayyum has described the recent agreements between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia as a milestone for Pakistan's economy.

Talking to the media, he said the agreements would lead to developmental projects, job creation, and an increase in investment. Particularly, investment in the energy, agriculture, and IT sectors will bring significant changes to Pakistan's industrial development.

Khawaja Yasir stressed that the agreements would provide the local business community with access to global markets and play a key role in stabilizing the national economy.

Rupee gains 15 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee on Friday appreciated by 15 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.70 against the previous day's closing of Rs 277.85.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 277.25 and Rs 278.75 respectively.

The price of Euro increased by 29 paise to close at Rs 301.97 against the last day's closing of Rs 301.68, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen came down by 01 paise.



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



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

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 in the upper house meeting on Friday, he said, due to the policies of the government, the kibar rate has fallen to 13.5 percent

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.

ADB offers support for carbon credits reduction initiatives

ISLAMABAD (APP): Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Friday offered Capital Development Authority (CDA) support and expertise in the ongoing projects for earning carbon credits and emissions reduction initiatives.

Country Director Asian Development Bank (ADB) Emma Fan said in a meeting with CDA chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa here and both sides discussed avenues for mutual collaboration.

Chairman CDA warmly welcomed Country Director ADB and highlighted CDA's commitment to advancing sustainable urban development through ADB's technical support and expertise.

During the meeting, Chairman CDA emphasized CDA's strategic shift from the

auction of assets to sustainable development models, with a particular focus on the Public Private Partnership model.

He urged the need for ADB's expertise and technical support to effectively manage various proposals for joint ventures.

Country Director ADB affirmed ADB's support to Islamabad's development goals, offering technical expertise for key projects.

It was briefed that the hiring process for international consultants and transactional advisors for the projects is underway to ensure the successful execution of these projects.

Chairman Randhawa commended ADB's support for CDA and expressed his commitment to a close working partnership.



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

Governor calls for enhanced trade relations between Pakistan & Afghanistan

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, on Friday stressed the need for joint efforts to boost trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan that will usher new era of development in the region.

Governor Kundi said that strengthening trade relations would have a positive impact not only on the country's economy but will bring real change in the region.

He said this during a meeting with an eight-member delegation led by Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi, Senior Vice President of the Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The delegation, which included Director Muhammad Farooq and Coordinator Imtiaz Ahmad Ali, discussed key issues such as Afghan transit trade, taxes on imports and exports, and various obstacles faced in cross-border commerce.

They appealed to the Governor for support in resolving these challenges.

Governor Kundi praised the efforts of the Joint Chamber and assured the business community of his full cooperation in facilitating trade.

He acknowledged the vital role that traders play in the national economy and stressed that the country's development and prosperity are closely linked to the success of the business sector.

Meanwhile, Zahra Aslam, Director General of the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, called on Governor Faisal Karim Kundi at the Governor's House to discuss ongoing welfare projects and initiatives aimed at public benefit in the province.

Zahra briefed the Governor on various BISP schemes, the distribution of funds, and efforts to alleviate poverty in remote areas.

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 percent, 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 Rs 24.117 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.

The three top trading companies were Silk Bank Limited with 62,534,221 shares at Rs 0.94 per share.

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 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.

Rana informed that 31 companies had applied for the assembling of the 4-wheeler plant on which work was under progress.

He added that the government was determined to promote energy efficiency and transition to clean technologies in the automotive sector.



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

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

ISLAMABAD: Atif Ikram Sheik, 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%.

Further, President FPCCI sought elimination of 1.85% cess on temporary imports meant for re-export and machinery imported by exporters to protect SMEs from corrupt FBR practices.

"Implementing these measures will safeguard Pakistan's export sector, particularly SMEs, and prevent them from being exploited by corrupt FBR officials," he emphasized.



FAISALABAD: Traders displaying fresh peanuts at Grain Market to selling and attract the customers in the city.

FII concludes with global launches, initiatives

RIYADH (APP): The eighth edition of the Future Investment Initiative (FII) concluded on Friday under the theme "Infinite Horizons: Investing Today, Shaping Tomorrow."

According to SPA, global leaders, investors, and innovators attended the event, which was held from October 29 to 31 and explored a wide range of topics and unveiled several significant initiatives.

The FII Institute Chief Executive and Board Member Richard Attias highlighted the event's role in breaking traditional boundaries and expanding the potential of human achievement.

He emphasized the importance of addressing urgent global priorities such as governance, healthcare, and

the cost of living. Conference sessions explored the concept of megaregions — large, interconnected economic zones — as new centers of opportunity. They discussed the role of capital in supporting these economic hubs through innovative solutions and infrastructure investments. Experts also explored the transformative power of artificial intelligence (AI), which is projected to contribute \$13 trillion to the global economy by 2030.

World leaders and decision-makers shared insights into initiatives aimed at addressing critical challenges and improving the lives of citizens. The FII witnessed the launch of several groundbreaking initiatives.

ECC approves supplementary grant of Rs 1.8bn for overhaul of engines of 2 VVIP aircrafts

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chaired a meeting of the Economic Co-ordination 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, till full disposal of imported wheat stock, and all seven wheat-deficient agencies/regions would lift the wheat as per their committed demand during the Food Year 2024-25.

The ECC however directed that the wheat to be picked up by agencies/regions be tested beforehand for purpose of quality and fitness for consumption.

The ECC considered and approved a proposal from the Ministry of Interior for grant of a Technical Supplementary Grant amounting to Rs. 252.711 million against the same amount surrendered by the Ministry of Housing and Works, for allocation to Capital Development Authority to ensure uninterrupted provision of civic services at the Prime Minister's Office (Public), Prime Minister's Office Internal and Prime Minister's Staff Colony.



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.

The Acting President

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, cli-

mate 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 emphasised the need to position Pakistan internationally as a competitive and forward-thinking nation, while also ensuring that every citizen benefited from the fruits of our policies.

Syed Yousuf Raza

Gillani said that bureaucracy 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.

14 sick kids dead Parachinar crisis deepens as main highway closure enters third week

PARACHINAR (INP): Three weeks after the main road closure in Parachinar, severe shortages of food, fuel, and medicine have led to a worsening crisis.

According to the hospital sources, another child has died due to the lack of timely medical treatment, increasing the death toll to 14 in the past three weeks.

Residents remain confined to their areas as the unrest continues. For five consecutive days, educational institutions have also remained closed, and internet shutdowns are causing difficulties for students attempting online classes.

Social leader Mir Afzal Khan told the media that citizens have started a sit-in, pledging to continue un-

til the main road is reopened, while MNA Hameed Hussain from the area has called for the road to be reopened and made safe for public transport.

Private Education Network Chairman Muhammad Hayat Khan reported that schools have been closed for five days due to fuel shortages. Students expressed frustration to the media, noting that the month-long suspension of 3G and 4G services is disrupting online classes.

Kurram District Deputy Commissioner Javed Ullah explained that the roads were closed due to security concerns following an October 12 attack on passenger vehicles in the convoy.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Revenue Mir Asim Kurd Gailu meeting with Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail.

Governor flays Mastung blast, grieved over loss of lives in act of terrorism

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has strongly condemned the tragic bomb blast occurred near a school in Mastung, which claimed lives of innocent children and a police cop.

In a condemnation statement issued here on Friday, the Governor expressed deep grief and sorrow over the incident of terrorism and stressed that the anti social elements involved in the attack don't

deserve any clemency. He urged the law enforcement agencies to bring those involved in the incident to court of justice by apprehending them at the earliest. He issued special directives to provide best medical treatment facilities to the injured of blast.

The Governor also expressed sympathy and solidarity with the families of those martyred and injured in the act of terrorism saying that we equally share the grief with them.

Jatak slams Mastung tragedy; terms incident as proof of education enmity of terrorists

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Member of Executive Committee and Provincial Minister for Agriculture, Mir Ali Madad Jatak has condemned the Mastung tragedy in strong words.

In a condemnation statement issued here on Friday, the Provincial Minister said that targeting students of school in Mastung is a clear proof of the education enmity.

Ali Madad Jatak said that women and children are not targeted in our tribal tra-

ditions, and as such this incident is against our norms. He said that the enemy elements are playing heinous game to appease their foreign lords. However, they would suffer failure at every front, he asserted.

The Minister said that those involved in the act of terrorism would not be spared at all.

He expressed sympathy with the bereaved families of the students and the police cop who were martyred in the terrorists attack.

Ali Hassan Zehri says: All possible measures will be taken for better education of male and female students

Independent Report
HUB: The central senior leader of Pakistan Peoples Party, Spokesman of President Asif Ali Zardari and Provincial Adviser for Industry and Crafts Mir Ali Hassan Zehri has taken action after a school clerk in Zhob lost the examination fees of 878 female students in gambling.

Taking notice of the situation, it has been said that the future of the students should not be damaged due to non-payment of fees on time.

He said that the clerk involved in the incident should be really punished so that no one can do such a heinous act in the future. Spokesperson President Asif Ali Zardari and Advisor to Industry and Crafts of Balochistan Mir Ali Hassan Zehri announced to pay a fee of 25 lakh rupees in a personal capacity. It should be remembered that

the school clerk in Zhob had lost lakhs of rupees of the examination fee of hundreds of students in gambling, after which a dire situation had arisen.

Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that he does not want the educational activities of 878 students to be disturbed, he added that he will take all possible steps for the development and prosperity of Balochistan and for the better education of male and female students.

He said that people who play with the future of students do not deserve any kind of concession and strict action will be taken against all the elements who are part of this heinous act so that such incidents can be discouraged and any individual.

Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that we will not let our children's future be ruined by incompetence.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti along with Provincial Ministers, MPs and Parliamentary Secretary of Minority Affairs Sanjay Kumar cutting cake on the eve of Dewali.

No Urgency for 27th Amendment: Advisor on Legal Affairs

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister's Advisor on Legal Affairs, Barrister Aqeel Malik, said on Friday that the government was not in a hurry regarding the 27th constitutional amendment.

Talking to a private news channel, he said that the amendment would move forward with the support of all political stakeholders.

He said that the 27th constitutional amendment was under consideration with broad political consensus as its guiding principle.

He said that the amendment will incorporate demands from political allies, including MQM's call for empowered local governments under Article 140-A. ANP's suggestion

to rename KP province was also will be incorporated, while civil society and Bar association input will also be welcomed in the amendments, he said.

Answering a question, he said that the need for more judges, explaining that the current number was insufficient after the 26th Amendment.

"Increasing judges is necessary to address the backlog of cases and form constitutional benches, ultimately to provide relief to the people," he said.

Malik predicted that discussions on the 27th amendment could continue into next year, given the government's ongoing diplomatic commitments and upcoming visits from foreign delegations.

Ghazala prays for early recovery of President from fracture

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly, Ms Ghazala Gola has expressed sorrow over the reports of fracture caused in the foot of President Asif Ali Zardari.

In a statement issued here on Friday, the Deputy Speaker said that it grieved her to hear about the fracture in foot of the President Zardari.

She prayed for the early recovery of Asif Ali Zardari from the fracture. She also expressed best wishes for his best health.

Naqvi strongly condemns explosion in Mastung

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Friday strongly condemned an explosion near Civil Hospital Chowk in Mastung, which claimed the lives of three children and a police officer.

In a statement, he expressed his deep sorrow over the death of children and a police officer and shared his heartfelt condolences, standing in solidarity with the bereaved families. He denounced the incident, saying, "No words are enough to condemn the incident of targeting innocent children."

He described the attack as an "act of brutality," adding that "targeting children is a heinous crime that no one should tolerate."

NA Speaker inquires health of President Asif Zardari

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Friday telephoned Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari to inquire about the health of President Asif Ali Zardari. The Speaker expressed his best wishes for the President's swift recovery and conveyed his prayers for his health, said a news release.

Bilawal Bhutto informed the Speaker about the current health condition of his father, President Asif Ali Zardari, and mentioned that doctors have advised him to rest.

He expressed gratitude to the Speaker of the National Assembly for his kind wishes and prayers for the President's well-being.

Nazeer asks individuals included in ECL to submit review before committee

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarrar Friday asked the individuals included in the ECL list to submit a review to the committee, which will make a decision based on merit.

Responding to calling attention notice regarding placing the names of several Members of the National Assembly on the Exit Control List (ECL), Provisional National Identification List (PNIL) and Passport Control List (PCL), he said that the Cabinet's sub-committee conducts reviews of names to include or exclude on the ECL in accordance with the 1981 law.

The minister said that names have been removed from the ECL after individuals filed a review to the committee.

He said that the rate of removal of names from the ECL list is not less than 65 to 70 per cent among all requests for revision.

He said that the names of individuals declared absconders in criminal cases are added to the list under relevant legal provisions. Currently, approximately 4,000 names are on the ECL, most of whom are absconders.

The Law Minister said that while there is a right to travel under Article 15 but the same article also clarified that this right is subject to the law.

He said that many members of the opposition during the previous PTI government, who are now on treasury benches were placed in the list in the ECL at that time.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Education Raheela Durrani, Secretary Saleh Nasar enquiring about the health of Mastung blast victims at Trauma Centre.

PSO faces financial crisis as receivables reach Rs. 800bn

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan State Oil (PSO) is grappling with a severe financial crisis, with total receivables ballooning to Rs. 800 billion.

The company's profitability has been severely impacted by the financial crisis, with the largest share of receivables has to be paid by the Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL).

The sources said that the SNGPL owes PSO Rs. 515.28 billion, while the Hub Power Company Limited (Hubco) has to pay Rs. 14.80 billion to it.

According to sources the energy sector owes PSO Rs. 189 billion, and Pakistan International Airlines owes Rs. 29.25 billion.

The sources said that the PSO also owes pay-

ments to local refineries for imported petroleum products. The PSO has also sought Rs. 50 billion from different ministries.

Earlier in September, it was reported that the import bill for RNLG (Regasified Liquefied Natural Gas) has surpassed Rs 506 billion, while Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) owes PSO Rs 506 billion for LNG supply.

The power sector's dues have also crossed Rs 186 billion, adding to PSO's financial woes. whereas, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) owes PSO Rs 28.75 billion.

The drop in of the rupee rate has resulted in an additional burden of Rs 88.84 billion on the government.

Targeting innocent children is insult to humanity: Samina

Independent Report
QUETTA: Chairperson Standing Committee for Human Rights Senator Samina Mumtaz Zahri has expressed her anger and grief over the martyrdom of many people including children in the terrorist attack in Mastung. In her statement condemning the explosion in strong terms, she said that the terrorists involved in the incident have no religion or nation. Terrorists are devoid of humanity and targeting innocent children is not brave in any way. Terrorists are cowards and targeting innocent civilians is a cowardly act. In her condemnation statement, she expressed a strong reaction to the loss of innocent lives in the incident and said that the martyrdom of innocent children, police personnel and others in the Mustang blast is very sad. Senator Samina Mumtaz Zahri said that the blood of innocent children will go in vain and the terrorist elements involved in the incident will be sent to hell soon.

She expressed her condolences to the families of the martyred children and others and said that the entire nation is an equal participant in the grief of the families of the martyrs and the injured.

Senator Samina Mumtaz Zahri has said that targeting innocent citizens and children with terrorism is a cowardly and despicable act.

ATC provides copies of GHQ attack case to PTI founder, indictment on Nov 8

RAWALPINDI (Online): Judge Amjad Ali Shah of Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Rawalpindi has provided copies of GHQ attack case to PTI founder Imran Khan but the copies could not be provided to former foreign minister Shah Mehmood being in Lahore jail.

These copies will be distributed among the remaining accused.

The copies of case have been provided to 102 accused including former chairman PTI in Adiala jail. The copies have already been provided to Umar Ayub, Zartaj Gul, Raja Basharat, Sadaqat Abbasi, Raja Rashid Hafeez, Wasiq Qayyum Abbasi, Sheikh Rashid and Col (Retd) Ajmal Sabir.

The copies of case have yet to be provided to 23 accused persons.

All the accused will be indicted after distribution of copies of case among them.



QUETTA: Inspector General Police Balochistan Muzzam Jah Ansari carrying coffin of police official martyred in Mastung blast after offering funeral prayer.

Quetta dwellers praise beefed-up cleanliness operation in Quetta

QUETTA (APP): Quetta dwellers lauded the beefed-up cleanliness operation underway in day and night shifts and the collection of door-to-door garbage to make Valley City the cleanest urban center of the country. Residents of the provincial capital city have also hailed the efforts of Quetta Municipal Corporation (QMC) officials especially the Administrator Quetta who made the best arrangements for cleaning the city.

Kaleem Ullah, a shopkeeper in Liaquat Bazar said that the initiative taken by the Quetta administration to operate the sanitation services on a public-private partnership basis has brought improvement in the civic life of the capital city of the province.

With the efforts of Commissioner Quetta Division Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat while talking to APP said that the Balochistan government had been given nod to operate the solid waste management in provincial capital on public private partnership.

A housewife residing in Satellite Town Quetta said, since the last two months the sanitary workers were collecting garbage on time. An official of Quetta Waste Management Company said the cleanliness drives were being carried out in every area of the city on regular basis and the Quetta Waste Management Company was ensuring the collection and disposal of garbage in every area of the provincial capital.

The cooperation of the residents of the city was among the key factor which has made this operation a success, he requested. Residents of the city have also been requested not to through garbage at open spaces so that desired results can be achieved. Administrator Quetta Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat while talking to APP said that the Balochistan government had been given nod to operate the solid waste management in provincial capital on public private partnership.



QUETTA: Members of Baloch Students Action Committee are holding protest demonstration for recovery of Baloch missing persons, at Quetta press club.