

Independent

dailyindisb@gmail.com Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah www.dailyindependent.com.pk Islamabad

Vol. XIV No. 261 Reg. mails-B/ID-445 Saturday November 09, 2024, Jamaadi ul Awwal 06, 1446 A.H. Ph: 2158688, 2158997 Pages 4: Rs. 12

PM unveils three-month electricity relief package for winter season

Package offers household consumers a flat rate of Rs26.07 per unit for additional electricity use in Dec-Feb; PM believes package will "ensure that industries and business will run smoothly and our economy will be strong."

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday unveiled a three-month Electricity Relief Package for the winter season providing a relief of up to Rs26.7 per unit for domestic, Rs15.5 for industrial and Rs22.71 for commercial consumers.

The prime minister, addressing an event to commemorate the birth anniversary of Allama Muhammad Iqbal being celebrated on November 9 here, told the gathering of ministers, students, and artists that the relief package would remain in force from December 2024 to February 2025.

"Under the package, the domestic consumers will get a relief of up to Rs 26.7 per unit for their power consumption surpassing 200 units of the protected category. It will help them save Rs11.42 to Rs26 per unit in the three months of winter," the prime minister said.

Similarly, the industrial sector will save 18-37% or

Rs 5.27 to Rs 15.5 per unit under the package to help boost industrial production, growth and livelihoods. The commercial consumers will be given a 34-47% saving or Rs 13.46 to Rs 22.71 per unit subsidy in the package.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the package would stimulate a quantum jump in the country's economic progress by boosting agriculture, industrial productivity, business activity and exports.

He said that the commitments and vision of the current government were being translated into actions through the relief package that would become the harbinger of improved economic resilience.

Besides thanking the IMF for permitting the government to announce the package, he also commended the cabinet members and relevant senior officers for their efforts and teamwork in working out the relief package.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif witnessing exchange of MoUs between Pakistan and Abu Dhabi Ports.



ISLAMABAD: The Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan/Chairman Supreme Judicial Council Justice Yahya Afridi presiding over the meeting of Supreme Judicial Council at Supreme court of Pakistan.

Despite PTI's tactics for chaos, economy on path of growth now: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Friday said the national economy had not only been stabilised but now it was on the path of growth despite Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf tactics to create disorder and chaos.

Addressing a press conference, he said economic stability and growth had now started to benefit common man. He said the price of wheat and flour and petroleum products had markedly decreased in addition to reduced electricity tariff.

Currently, all economic indicators were positive and foreign exchange reserves had crossed \$ 11 billion mark, besides enhanced foreign remittances, he added.

He said that the Prime Minister was working day

and night to improvise the economy and milestones achieved on the economic front were the outcome of



his efforts. He said a United Arab Emirates delegation would be visiting Pakistan to discuss prospects for investment.

He said due to the efforts of the Prime Minister, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Qatar were investing in Pakistan whereas Azerbaijan had also announced 2 billion dollars investment in Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmad Babar Sidhu called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Amir Muqam slams PTI's self-serving agenda

PESHAWAR (INP): Federal Minister Engr. Amir Muqam Friday strongly condemned Ali Amin Gandapur's statements as "irresponsible" and lambasted the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party for prioritizing Imran Khan's personal interests over the welfare of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa citizens.

In an exclusive interview with a private news channel, Engr. Amir Muqam stated that PTI's sole agenda is to secure Imran Khan's release from jail, however, he emphasized that Pakistan is an independent nation with its own constitution and laws, where individuals like Imran Khan must face the courts and accept accountability for their actions.

Ali Amin Gandapur is an irresponsible individual who has consistently demonstrated a habit of blam-



ing and blackmailing others, he further added. His behavior is unacceptable and unbecoming of a public figure, particularly someone holding the office of Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, he criticized.

I urge Gandapur to reflect on his behavior and take corrective measures to address these concerns as people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa deserve better leadership and it is our collective responsibility to hold public figures accountable for their actions, he added.

Gillani urges nation to renew pledge to follow Iqbal's teachings for better Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Acting President, Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani urged the nation to renew its commitment to follow the teaching of Allama Iqbal, the ideological founder of Pakistan, and work for the unity, peace and prosperity of Pakistan.

In his message on the Birth Anniversary of Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal (November 9th), the Acting President called for embodying Allama's ideals amid continued strides for building a better future for the country.

"On this Day, we pay tribute to the services and legacy of Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal, Pakistan's national poet, whose vision and thoughts kindled the spirit of independence among Muslims of the Subcontinent. A philosopher of the East, Iqbal's ideas paved the way for the creation of an independent country. His address at the annual session of the All-India Muslim League in 1930 was an interpretation of the demand of Muslims to safeguard their rights," Gillani said.

Air Chief calls on Prime Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmad Babar Sidhu on Friday called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif here.

In the meeting, they discussed the professional matters pertaining to the Pakistan Air Force, according to a PM Office press release.

ATC accepts bail plea of PTI founder in May 9 related 4 cases

LAHORE (Online): Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Lahore has accepted bail plea of PTI founder in 4 cases related to May 9 incident.

Bail pleas from PTI founder in four cases including torching PML-N office in Lahore came up for hearing in ATC Lahore Friday. The court while rejecting the plea of PTI founder lawyers for giving more arguments said to counsel Suleman Safdar "you have already given your arguments. Time will be wasted by giving the arguments repeatedly. Now there should be decision on bail pleas.

SJC decides to meet monthly for clearing backlog

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) decided on Friday to meet monthly for clearing the backlog more efficiently.

It was also agreed that in case of frivolous complaints against judges, action would be taken against the complainants in accordance with the law.

A meeting of the Supreme Judicial Council was held here under the chairmanship of Chief Justice of Pakistan/Chairman Supreme Judicial Council, Justice Yahya Afridi. The meeting was attended by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Aamir Farooq, Chief Justice Islamabad High Court and Justice Muhammad Hashim Kakar, Chief Justice High Court of Balochistan.

The council took up for consideration various agenda items. The council discussed in detail the is-

sue of rule-making of the Council and establishment of its Secretariat.

The Council agreed to the proposal of the Registrar and decided that rule making process of the Council should be undertaken and a draft should be placed before the Council in the next meeting. The Council authorized the chairman to hire the services of a competent individual with proven ability to work as Secretary of the Council for three months who would be tasked to assist the Council in conducting its meetings, oversee rule making exercises, and firm up infrastructure and human resource requirements of the Council's secretariat. The Council also discussed the agenda items regarding amendments in the code of conduct of Judges under Article 209(8) of the Constitution and the letter of six judges of Islamabad High Court.

US won't interfere in Pakistan's internal affairs: Khawaja Asif

Says Pakistan having desire for balanced relations with US

ISLAMABAD (INP): Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said on Friday that the United States will not interfere in Pakistan's internal affairs.

Expressing his thoughts while talking to a private television channel, Khawaja Asif lashed out at the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), saying, "Some of the people are causing uproar that US President-elect Donald Trump will release their leader [PTI founder]."

"There is no probability of any pressure from the

US in the matters pertaining to the PTI founder," Asif stated.

Speaking about Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Nawaz Sharif, Asif said: "Nawaz Sharif had never kowtow to the United States."

"Pakistan is having a desire for the balanced relations with the United States," he said.

Asif maintained: "Releasing anybody or taking somebody else is merely a story."

JCP nominates all judges of SHC for Constitutional Benches

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) on Friday nominated all existing judges of Sindh High Court (SHC) as judges of constitutional benches for expeditious disposal of the existing huge backlog of cases.

This arrangement will remain effective until 24th November 2024. The matter will again be taken by the commission on 25th November. The second meeting of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan, constituted under the 26 Constitutional Amendment, was held in the Supreme Court here.

The meeting was

chaired by Mr. Justice Yahya Afridi, Chief Justice of Pakistan/Chairman of the JCP to consider a single point agenda of formation of a Constitutional Bench within the High Court of Sindh. Following an extensive and thoughtful exchange of views, the commission unanimously endorsed the proposal put forth by Chief Justice of the High Court of Sindh, Mr. Justice Muhammad Shah Siddiqui that all the existing Judges of the High Court are nominated to be the Judges of Constitutional Benches for expeditious disposal of the existing huge backlog of cases.



ISLAMABAD: H.E. Brig General Hojjatollah Qoreishi Deputy Minister for Defence of Islamic Republic of Iran called on Minister for Defence & Defence Production, Khawaja Muhammad Asif in federal capital.

Pakistan, AD Ports sign MoUs for collaboration in rail, airport, maritime sectors

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Abu Dhabi Ports Group on Friday signed four Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) to enhance collaboration in multiple fields including rail, airport infrastructure and maritime shipping and logistics.

The MoUs were signed as a high-level delegation of UAE investors led by UAE Minister of State for Foreign Trade Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif here, according to a PM Office press release. The prime minister witnessed the exchange of MoUs relating to the ministries of maritime affairs, aviation, railways and Federal Board of Revenue with the Abu Dhabi (AD) Ports Group.

As per MoUs, Pakistan and AD Ports Group will explore potential collabora-

tion in customs, rail, airport infrastructure and maritime shipping and logistics sectors.

The MoUs are aimed at improving digital customs controls, developing dedicated freight rail corridors, upgrading Pakistan's maritime fleet and marine services, and Pakistan's international airports.

In the meeting with the delegation, the prime minister expressed gratitude to UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum for their steadfast support to Pakistan. He underlined that the fraternal Pakistan and UAE ties were rooted in shared history and culture.

The prime minister highlighted the comprehensive economic partnership between the two nations across sectors such as trade,

energy, and investment, which had contributed to growth and prosperity in both countries.

Prime Minister Shehbaz highlighted that the visit demonstrated the commitment of the UAE government to further enhance its investment footprint in Pakistan.

He underscored that the investments by the UAE would play a crucial role in boosting Pakistan's economy.

Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi thanked the prime minister for the warm welcome and hospitality. Showing his satisfaction at the existing investments of AD Ports in Pakistan, he expressed keen interest to further expand investment in Pakistan in shipping, ports efficiency enhance-

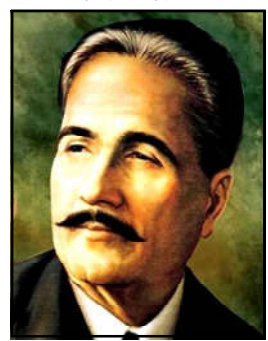
ment, logistics and digitization of customs.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior, Mohsin Naqvi visiting Cascade Facilitation Center, at Diplomatic Enclave in Islamabad.

Iqbal Day to be observed today

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: The nation will observe Iqbal Day on Saturday (today) to honor



the 147th birth anniversary of the renowned poet, Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal. The government has declared a public holiday nationwide to celebrate the day.

Born in Sialkot on November 9, 1877, Dr. Iqbal is fondly remembered as the "Poet of the East."

This special occasion promises to unite the nation in celebration, with public offices, educational institutions, and businesses shutting their doors to mark Iqbal Day. It's a day of great national enthusiasm, especially for school students, who find various creative ways to pay tribute to this literary legend. From crafting Iqbal Day charts to delivering heartfelt speeches and reciting his poetry, the spirit of unity and inspiration is everywhere.

Govt establishes first-ever "Cascade" service center to streamline services for foreign nationals

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Friday inaugurated the state-of-the-art "Cascade" service center in Islamabad's Diplomatic Enclave, a facility aimed at providing a range of essential services to the diplomatic community and foreign nationals under one roof. This is the first time such a comprehensive service center has been established in the history of the Diplomatic Enclave, aligning with the government's focus on enhancing the convenience and safety of diplomats and foreign residents.

According to Minister Naqvi, the Cascade service center will offer over a dozen services for foreign nationals and diplomats, eliminating the need for them to navigate multiple offices across the capital.

Among the services available are the issuance and renewal of driving licenses, character certificates, police verification, reporting of missing persons, and tenant registration. These services are expected to significantly ease administrative processes for diplomats and international visitors, providing them with faster, centralized access to essential resources.

Furthermore, the Cascade center will also facilitate foreign citizens by offering additional services like registration for foreigners, domestic staff, and volunteers, vehicle verification, and access to copies of First Information Reports (FIRs). Minister Naqvi emphasized that these services are intended to streamline processes and improve the overall experience for foreign nationals residing in or visiting Islamabad. "This service center is a reflection of our commitment to creating a secure, welcoming environment for diplomats and international visitors," said Naqvi during the inauguration ceremony.

He added that the initiative aligns with the vision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to prioritize the comfort and security of foreign representatives. Naqvi also shared that over 1,500 police and FC personnel, along with 20 dedicated police vehicles, are stationed at the Diplomatic Enclave to ensure the highest standards of security. In his address, Naqvi stated, "Beautifying the Diplomatic Enclave and the entire capital is part of our mission, as we look to project Islamabad as a modern, secure, and visitor-friendly capital."

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

IHK resolution

If the Indian state is serious about its democratic credentials, then it should listen to the voices emanating from held Kashmir's legislature calling for a restoration of the region's special status.

On Wednesday, IHK's assembly, which was elected last month after a decade, passed a non-binding resolution calling for the safeguarding of the disputed territory's "identity, culture and rights".

Though the resolution, piloted by the pro-India National Conference, which now rules IHK in a coalition with Congress, made no explicit reference to Article 370, the message to Delhi was clear. "The assembly has done its job," said Omar Abdullah, IHK's chief minister. Mr Abdullah had during the election campaign pledged to restore Article 370, discarded by India in August 2019, as well as the held region's statehood.

Last month's election results, as well as the recently passed resolution, clearly show that the people of held Kashmir are not happy with New Delhi's snatching of their limited autonomy, and want India to reverse these dubious moves. The Indian prime minister has said statehood would be restored, though other members of his cabinet have said Article 370 is 'done' and 'dead'.

While statehood, and the unity of held Kashmir — India has broken up IHK into two union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh — are important, the special status granted to the disputed territory under Articles 370 and 35A must also be restored. If most of India's north-eastern states can continue to have a special constitutional status, to protect their culture and diversity, why is the BJP-led government being so rigid when it comes to occupied Kashmir?

Post-Aug 2019, there has been a conscious effort to change IHK's demographic profile, and obliterate its unique identity. That is why nearly all political forces there — from pro-independence parties to those in New Delhi's good books — are united in their demand for a restoration of the held territory's special status.

Along with meeting a key demand of the Kashmiri people, reinstating the aforesaid articles would also help improve India's ties with Pakistan. After the Modi government made its controversial move to strip IHK of its unique status, bilateral ties quickly nosedived. Therefore, if the BJP administration were to shed its rigidity on the matter and listen to the Kashmiris, it could pave the way for the resumption of the political process in IHK, along with removing a key obstacle in improving ties with Pakistan.

Hardliners in New Delhi may be telling themselves that the Kashmir question has been resolved, but the reality suggests otherwise. The IHK assembly resolution, in fact, offers New Delhi a face-saving option to restore Kashmir's autonomy, as the administration can say it is only responding to popular demand. Should India choose to ignore this demand, disaffection in IHK will only increase.

Islamic learning

Ghulam Shabbir

Man's superiority over all creatures lies in his faculty of creative knowledge, which the heavens, despite their heights, the mountains, and the earth, despite its vastness, refused to take on (Quran 33:72). This points to the faculty to discern the properties of things and give them 'names' (2:31). This is man's inherent capability to unravel the mysteries of the universe and employ the same for his mastery over nature. Thus his mastery of the universe was a foregone conclusion. What matters most is to wield this mastery responsibly, for knowledge is a double-edged sword, prone to be used both for salutary and destructive ends.

Therefore, man's real test lies in 'mastering' that mastery of the universe. So, 'al-amana' or the 'trust' which the universe trembled to bear, according to late Islamic scholar and thinker Fazlur Rahman, was to discover the laws of, and thus achieve mastery over, nature or in the Quranic terminology, to know the 'names' of all things and then use this mastery — under the human initiative — to create a positive world order.

To the Quran, all knowledge — intellectual, scientific or intuitive — comes from God. It sets high value on knowledge and excludes no category of learning whatsoever, with the overriding principle that this knowledge should be utilised through proper and constructive channels. Man's essential task is to reconstruct a scientific picture of the objective reality and employ the same to create a healthy moral order. So, to engage in scientific pursuit without harnessing it for the creation of a just moral order — to

know the 'names' without utilising them — would be, in the words of the Quran, 'abath' or a vain, dangerous, indeed Satanic pursuit.

Pristine Islam combined metaphysics and social reality — the Holy Prophet's (PBUH) religious experience concerned both monotheism and socioeconomic justice. With an inherent symbiotic relationship, both monotheism and socioeconomic reforms assume fusion and flow like a seamless singular stream from the inner unity of the Quran and the immaculate conduct of the Prophet. Closer examination reveals that it was not monotheism but rather its entailing social reforms that invoked a vehement reaction from the Makkani oligarchy for they were least bothered by the monotheism of the Hanifs — certain Makkans who arrived at monotheism through self-deliberation — not linked with social reforms.

Islam, unlike the ancient world, combined metaphysics and social reality. Earlier, the streams of pure intellect and transcendentalism had flowed independently despite the coexistence of Jews and Greeks for a considerable period of time at Alexandria. To Christianity, excepting the gospels, everything was futile.

Islam focused on the fusion of religious and positive knowledge; it made history a field of divine activity to objectify moral values.

The Quran inspired Muslims to pursue all branches of knowledge irrespective of the dichotomy of the sacred and the profane and to utilise the same for the benefit of mankind.

Born out of a violent break with its past, the modern West will seek no negotiation with any spiritual system or moral ideology. In such

a situation, what else but the Quran can steer the world out of its crisis? For Islam was the only genuine movement in history which ethically 'oriented' the raw materials of history rather than compromised with them under the convenient cover of secularism. Later, vested interests broke the fusion of metaphysics and social reality. Orthodoxy's nexus with dictators led to the dichotomy of state and religion, while many Sufis' neutrality to social phenomena triggered 'personal-ism' at the cost of collectivism. Ever since, orthodox religious knowledge is quarantined in the ma-dressah, having no organic link with the positive knowledge of the external world.

The world of Islam in contradistinction to the 'material' West and the 'spiritual' East stands as a 'gold median community' (2:143) tasked with arbitrating their conflicts. On this premise, Iqbal has said: "Although we [Muslims] are coiled up in ourselves like a bud; should we perish, the whole garden [of the world] must perish."

Dr Fazlur Rahman similarly challenged the West along the lines that you can ignore the law of gravity but Islam cannot be ignored. Muslims have become prisoners of the past and if they do not take the initiative to rediscover Islam, their future is bleak.

Muslims owe it to themselves and to the world at large to recover the fusion of moral values and social phenomena by the crystal-clear Weltanschauung of the Quran.

This would be a potent step for them to assume the steering wheel of history. For how long must the Muslim faith remain in the grip of the past? -- Courtesy Dawn

Which ideology?

Aasim Sajjad Akhtar

Of all the congratulatory messages which poured in from the world's political leaders when it became clear that Donald Trump had, in the end, quite comfortably defeated Kamala Harris in the US presidential election, the tweet by Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari stood out.

The young scion of the PPP called Trump's victory an anti-war vote, reflecting the desire of the US electorate for global peace.

The reference was obviously to Palestine and the ongoing Israeli genocide which has been backed unflinchingly by the Biden-Harris administration. But Trump did not win because he is anti-war. Some voters may have punished Harris over Palestine, but the Democratic Party's failings extend beyond foreign wars. Bilawal's pleasantries about a peaceful future for the world were also hyperbole because Trump is anything but a man of peace.

The real quandary is making sense of how Bilawal, who claims to be 'progressive', is making common cause with an arch-conservative in Trump.

Let there be no mistake: Trump is not about to dismantle the huge military-industrial complex that undergirds US imperialist power across the world. Among other things, Trump is firmly committed to Zionism, and is unmistakably anti-China.

But it is also not to be understated that Trump has spouted consistent rhetoric about unnecessary spending on wars abroad — his slogan of 'Make America Great Again' reflects a relatively insular vision involving less war-making around the world, blocking immigration, and generating industrial

jobs by rolling back outsourcing and offshoring.

The far right thrives on slogans, of course. Trump did not do a lot of things he had claimed he would during his first term. But this is all the more reason for us to think about why certain slogans continue to garner him — and many other similar political leaders — the support that they do. The fact that a far-right Republican leader is able and willing to call for a rollback of America's foreign wars is an indicator of how muddled the contemporary ideological landscape has become.

Ideological confusion is reaching fever pitch in this country too. Look no further than Bilawal and the PPP — a leader and party that still claims, every once in a while, to be committed to leftist ideals. When election season rolls around, the slogan 'roti, kapra aur makan' magically reappears. Even the word 'socialism' sometimes drips off the tongue of PPP leaders. The party also burnishes its other 'progressive' credentials like its opposition to the weaponisation of religion and its unparalleled commitment to democracy.

But these claims have virtually no connection to the PPP's actual politics. At present, the PPP and PML-N are competing to prove their loyalty to the military establishment. The PPP runs the Balochistan government which is presiding over the continuing brutalisation of Baloch youth. A few weeks ago, the Sindh government ordered a violent crackdown against progressives who were protesting the mob lynching of a doctor in Umerkot, Sindh.

Earlier, Ali Wazir — who is now doing rounds in Punjab's jails — spent months incarcerated under the watch of the

Sindh government. And as far as Pakistan's internal class war is concerned, the PPP makes no bones about the fact that it is far more committed to the IMF, big landed families, real estate moguls and other profiteers than it is to the proverbial worker and peasant.

Let's take this analogy back to America. The preliminary details about who voted for Trump and Harris are remarkable insofar as they confirm that the Democratic Party — with its comparatively pro-labour history — has largely abandoned the working class, the latter voting in significant numbers for Trump. Even non-white Latino and Black working people rejected the Democratic Party despite Trump's persistent anti-immigrant rhetoric.

Once upon a time, to be on the left meant to oppose unbridled capitalist profiteering, imperialist wars and to stand with the lower orders of society. Today, it is the far right that is rhetorically aligning itself with such positions, and successfully tapping into the rage of working people by peddling hate. Meanwhile, the historic social-democratic parties who could once claim to represent the class rage of the lower orders are left only to appeal to a vacuous identity politics and lament the racism and misogyny of the right. Is there still the possibility of an ideological politics of a left-progressive vintage that reclaims class and imperialism from the hatemongers while also offering meaningful horizons on other pressing matters like the ecological crisis? We must hold out the hope that there is, but such a politics will only crystallise when the so-called 'pro-gressive' old guard is exposed and displaced by genuinely anti-establishment forces. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Govt resolved to achieve \$25 bln IT exports target in three years: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday highlighted the government's efforts to promote the telecommunications sector, reiterating his resolve to meet the target of \$25 billion in IT exports in the next three years.

The prime minister, in a meeting with a five-member delegation of VEON Group led by Chairman Augie K Fabela here, said that the government was taking measures to introduce 5G internet service to provide fast and reliable internet

connectivity even in remote areas. The 5G services would also help the government realise its vision of Digital Pakistan, he added. The telecommunications sector had a significant role in promoting a cashless and digital economy, he said and lauded the services of VEON Group's subsidiary Jazz in Pakistan's telecommunications and financial technology sectors, according to a PM Office press release.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that the government was willing to collaborate with VEON

Group in IT, digitisation and artificial intelligence.

The members of the delegation appreciated the government's efforts for economic stability and said that Pakistan had become an important investment destination for the IT and telecom sector.

Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunications Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Ali Pervaiz Malik, Coordinator to PM Rana Ehsan Afzal and relevant senior officers attended the meeting.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of VEON Group calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Pak-Malaysia agrees to renegotiate bilateral FTA in near future: Malaysian HC

ISLAMABAD (APP): On Friday, the High Commissioner of Malaysia, Dato' Mohammad Azhar Mazlan said that Malaysia and Pakistan have agreed to renegotiate the bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and the renegotiation process will start soon.

The High Commissioner said that from Pakistan's side Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan will shortly participate in the dialogue process in this

regard to renegotiate the bilateral FTA and there will be a also discussion between the two countries on other economic and trade issues. He said this at an event hosted by the high Commission of Malaysia, Islamabad which was attended by more than 50 prominent Pakistani industry leaders and stakeholders. The event was organized as a follow-up to the recent official visit of the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Anwar

Ibrahim to Pakistan in October 2024, with a particular focus on enhancing trade, investment, and business collaborations between the two countries.

The Free Trade Agreement (FTA) for Closer Economic and trade ties between Pakistan and Malaysia was signed on November 08, 2007 at Kuala Lumpur Malaysia and this Agreement is the 1st bilateral FTA between two brotherly Countries and members of OIC.

Finance Minister says: Digitization, key requisite for driving economic growth

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, on Friday described digitization of economy as a key requisite for driving economic growth and mobilizing ample resources for growing development requirements to end country's reliance on persistent financing.

He made this statement during a meeting with a delegation of Veon Group at Finance Division, according to press release issued by finance ministry.

The delegation was led by Augie K. Fabela, founder and chairman of the Board Veon Group, Kaan Terzioglu, Group CEO VEON, Ms. Marine Babayan, Group Director of Corporate Affairs VEON and Aamir Ibrahim, CEO Jazz, were also present.

During the meeting, the minister reiterated the government's resolve for tax reforms with a focus on people-processed technology and end-to-end digitalisation to enhance transparency, plug leakages and improve services.



RAWALPINDI: A shopkeeper arranges garlands and festive decorations, ready to welcome customers seeking to celebrate in style as the wedding season kicking off in the twin cities.

Ambassador Hashmi sees tremendous opportunity for Pak trade growth at CIE

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan's Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi, emphasized the immense potential for Pakistani businesses to expand their reach in China through the ongoing 7th China International Import Expo (CIE) held in Shanghai.

He highlighted the Expo as an invaluable platform for developing countries like Pakistan to showcase their products and establish connections with Chinese consumers and businesses.

Over two dozen Pakistani companies are present at this year Expo, showcasing a range of traditional handicrafts,

textiles, and agricultural goods, including well-known rice and clothing brands he told China Economic Net (CEN).

Ambassador Hashmi underscored that China economic approach, which combines openness with shared prosperity, provides a powerful avenue for Pakistani companies, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). As the e-commerce industry is making an increasingly significant contribution to China GDP, the ambassador urged Pakistani businesses to explore online platforms to boost their visibility and sales within this expansive market.

CCP issues report on state of competition in Power Sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has officially released its detailed research report titled "State of Competition in the Key Markets in Pakistan: Power Sector." The report highlights the significant presence and impact of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) on competition within the power sector, offering strategic insights for fostering a more competitive market environment, said a press release issued here.

Kabir Ahmed Sidhu, in his message emphasized the critical role of a competitive power sector in driving economic growth and ensuring affordable energy for consumers. "This report is a testament to CCP's commitment to promoting fair competition and addressing market inefficiencies in every sector of the economy," he stated. The report outlines the structural, regulatory, and strategic challenges faced by the Pakistan's power sector, which has long been dominated by SOEs.



LAHORE: A delegation of Traders from Lahore led by its leader Azmat Shah meeting with Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan.

Gold prices increase by Rs.2,000 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The price of 24 karat per tola gold increased by Rs.2,000 and was sold at Rs.278,800 on Friday compared to its sale at Rs. 276,800 on last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs.1,715 to Rs.239,026 from Rs. 237,311 whereas the price of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs. 219,107 from Rs. 217,535, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

KP Govt inks agreement with BoK, AMB for provision of loans

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Department of Youth Affairs on Friday signed agreement with Bank of Khyber (BoK) and Akhtar Microfinance Bank (AMB) for provision of interest free loans to youth under Ehsaas program.

In this regard, a ceremony was held at the Chief Minister House here in which the Chief Minister launched the online portal.

According to a press release issued by the CM Secretariat, the three billion rupees Ehsaas Youth Program was a three-year project.

This program consisted of two phases, it said adding that one billion and ten crore rupees had been allocated in the current budget for the first phase.

Under the program, Rs one million to Rs five million interest-free loans would be given to clusters of three to five youth between the ages of 18 and 35 which would be repaid under a flexible schedule of eight years.

The second phase of the program would be launched in collaboration with Akhtar Microfinance Bank, which would cost Rs two billion.

Rupee gains 21 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee on Friday appreciated by 21 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.73 against the previous day's closing of Rs277.94.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 277.30 and Rs 278.80 respectively.

The price of Euro increased by 03 paise to close at Rs 298.94 against the last day's closing of Rs 298.91, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

LHC orders to close markets at 8pm in Punjab

LAHORE (Online): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Friday issued orders for closing markets across Punjab at 8pm and stopping entry of cars, buses and other heavy traffic to Lahore in connection with eradication of smog.

Justice Shahid Karim of the LHC conducted hearing of the case regarding eradication of smog and air pollution in Lahore.

The court remarked "Trucks and trailers are the biggest contributors of smog. Dolphin police and police men be deployed for controlling traffic. On every hearing we kept on saying government to take steps

to control smog. Emission of smoke by heavy traffic is cause of smog.

Justice Shahid Karim remarked if notices have been issued to buses then as to why they have not been stopped from entering into city. Fine amounting to Rs 50000 be imposed on smoke emitting buses.

How can the vehicle go on road without fitness certificate. Transport department should take steps. The court remarked we are taking these steps to help government. Government is perhaps not seeing court's orders with good looks.

If there is pressure of government on DC and others then they will work.



LAHORE: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, poses for a group photo with officials of the Punjab Social Protection Authority during his visit to the Punjab Social Protection Authority (PSPS).

ATC fixes Nov 16 for indictment of PTI founder, others in GHQ attack case

RAWALPINDI (Online): Judge Amjad Ali Shah of Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Rawalpindi has fixed November 16 for indictment in GHQ attack case due to non completion of attendance of all the accused including PTI former chairman, former foreign minister and others. The court distributed copies of case among the remaining accused persons and adjourned the hearing of the case.

The court has reserved judgment on acquittal plea of former federal minister Sheikh Rashid which is likely to

be announced on next hearing.

Under the orders of court Jail administration presented report on telephonic contact between PTI founder and his sons.

Umar Ayoub, Zartaj Gul, Raja Basharat, Shibli Faraz, Sadaqat Abbasi, Raja Arshid Hafeez, Wasiq Qayyum Abbasi, Col (Retd) Ajmal Sabir, federal and provincial ministers, members of assemblies and other accused including PTI founder were to be indicted on Friday. But indictment could not be framed due to non holding of hearing of case in jail.



LAHORE: The Officers of 36th Senior Management Course from 16 different departments led by Chief Instructor NEPA Islamabad, Dr. Samreen Zahra in a group photo with Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor House.

Kundi says Bushra, Gandapur running parallel govts in KP

LAHORE (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi Friday visited the Punjab Social Protection Authority (PSPA) and discussed its issues.

PPP Central Punjab General Secretary Hassan Murtaza, Vice Chairperson PSPA Jahan Ara Wattoo, CEO PSPA and others were present. Vice Chairperson Jahan Ara Wattoo briefed the governor about the Punjab Social Protection Authority and its functioning. She said that the department run many programmes for poor,

transgender and elderly people with the support of the Punjab government. She also briefed him about Punjab Social Economic Registry, Nayee Zindagi Programme, Punjab Human Capital Investment Project and other programmes. The governor appreciated the initiatives by the department and promised of his full support. Kundi said that he was very happy to come to the Punjab Social Protection Authority. "It is a very important program of the Punjab government for the welfare of the poor.

Benazir Income Support Program is also running successfully and in this context the Punjab government is taking it forward by creating Punjab Social Security Authority," he maintained.

He also congratulated the entire PSPA team, announcing rewards for them and also appreciated the Punjab government for supporting such departments. Talking to media persons, the governor said, "If supporters believe that the PTI founder is not involved in any wrongdoing then he will be

released." He said that provincial governments are supporting their poor people, adding that Balochistan is also watching it. "There should be a healthy trend in the provinces. Roads are blocked in Parachinar due to which medicines could not reach there. We all should focus on law and order in the provinces instead of other issues," he added.

The governor said that two governments were running in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, one of Bushra Bibi and the other of Ali Amin Gandapur.

Horse & Cattle Show kicked off in Peshawar

PESHAWAR (APP): The first-ever three-day cultural show in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's history commenced formally at the Sher Khan Stadium in Peshawar and will continue from November 8 to November 10.

Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur inaugurated the event organized under the auspices of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sports Department here on Friday.

The ceremony was attended by Corps Commander Peshawar Lt. General Umar Ahmad Bukhari, Provincial Sports Minister Syed Fakhar Jahan, Ministers Meena Khan Afridi, Fazal Hakim

Khan, Pakhtunyar Khan, Commissioner Peshawar Riaz Khan Mehsud, Secretary of Sports Matiullah Khan, DG Sports Abdul Nasir, members of the assembly, senior government officials, athletes, and numerous spectators who enjoyed a variety of entertaining activities.

The show commenced with a free-fall jump and an air gliding display which captivated the audience. The event also featured traditional music and dance performances presented by bands of Frontier Corps North parties while dog and camel races and a horse dance display were also part of the first day events.



PESHAWAR: A paratrooper commander presents the national flag to Chief Minister KP, Ali Amin Gandapur, at a horse and cattle show organized by the Directorate General of Sports Khyber Pakhtunkhwa at Col. Sher Khan Stadium.

Iqbal's philosophy: A beacon of light nation

PESHAWAR (APP): Amidst challenges of changing world dynamics in education, politics, economy, societal and other arena of life, the vision of great leaders provide a beacon of light for nations to compete internationally and pave way for their progress and prosperity.

Revered and visionary leaders like Allam Dr Muhammad Iqbal with their philosophical and acumen, cover major aspects of human life, providing a path to successful future and build a nation to excel indigenously and earning laurels globally.

Born on November

09, 1977 at Sialkot in Sheikh Noor Muhammad's family, Allama Muhammad Iqbal became a great visionary poet and philosopher who dreamt a separate homeland for the Muslims of subcontinent that appeared on world map in the shape of Pakistan.

With the meanings of his name 'Good Fortune,' Allama Iqbal's birthday is celebrated on November 09 every year, symbolizing a rare moment of opportunity to benefit from his teachings and reach a respectable pinnacle after treading on his footsteps. Allama Muhammad Iqbal, a luminary in literature, religion, philosophy and

politics, also known as 'Poet of the East' is honored world over with colleges and universities within the country and abroad having dedicated departments teaching 'Iqbaliat.'

"Iqbal's poetry transcended borders, making him a respected figure from Asia to Middle East and Europe to America. His ability to inspire and awaken Muslim youth in British India was a glaring testament to his genius," said Prof. Dr Naushad Khan, former Vice Chancellor, Islamia College Peshawar. "He also carried forward the renaissance movement started by great educationist, Sir Syed

Ahmad Khan. Struggle for a separate homeland for Muslims of sub-continent waged by Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was also a vision of Allama Iqbal revealed at Allahabad address in 1930," he said.

Dr Naushad said, Allama Muhammad Iqbal had sparked the flame of resistance against colonialism, encouraging Muslims to stand up for their rights and identity through peaceful struggle. "His poetry often delved into profound symbols like 'Shaheen' (eagle), the concept of Khudi (Self) the relationship between Allah and humanity and propagation of true spirit

of Islam, as outlined in the Holy Quran." The iconic poet in his book *Aras e Khudi*, explained 'selfhood' significance with an aim of a person's self-realization, believing in one's own abilities and mutual coexistence.

Dr Khushad also refers to five key attributes of Dr Iqbal's Shaheen—farsightedness, fearlessness, independence, contemplation and resilience, noting these qualities as reflective of his belief in self-empowerment and a sense of responsibility toward collective wellbeing.

"Iqbal's intellectual journey through English, Arabic, Urdu, and Persian literature, combined with

his exposure to Greek and German philosophies, shaped his unique worldview," he said.

"His philosophy and poetry even after 147 years, remains a beacon of light for Muslims around the world, instilling a positive hope and direction for their goals of a better and prosperous future."

As Allama Iqbal's philosophy was not limited to political or social concerns, Professor Dr Muhammad Younas Khan, Chairman, Pakistan Studies Department at ICP sees it as deeply humanistic and solution based with the great poet also advocating for peace.

International News

Nearly 70% of verified Gaza war dead women and children, UN rights office says

GENEVA: The U.N. Human Rights Office said on Friday nearly 70% of the fatalities it has verified in the Gaza war were women and children, and condemned what it called a systematic violation of the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law, including distinction and proportionality.

The U.N. tally since the start of the war, in which Israel's military is fighting Hamas militants, includes only fatalities it has managed to verify with three sources, and counting continues.

The 8,119 victims verified is a much lower number than the toll of over 43,000 provided by Palestinian health authorities for the 13-month-old war. But the U.N. breakdown of the vic-

tims' age and gender backs the Palestinian assertion that women and children represent a large portion of those killed in the war.

"A systematic violation of the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law, including distinction and proportionality," the U.N. rights office said in a statement accompanying the 32-page report.

"It is essential that there is due reckoning with respect to the allegations of serious violations of international law through credible and impartial judicial bodies and that, in the meantime, all relevant information and evidence are collected and preserved," United Nations High Commissioner for Human

Rights Volker Turk said.

The office of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu did not immediately respond to a request by Reuters for comment on the report's findings.

Israel's military, which began its offensive in response to the Oct. 7, 2023 attack in which Hamas fighters killed about 1,200 people in southern Israel and seized more than 250 hostages, says it takes care to avoid harming civilians in Gaza. It has said approximately one civilian has been killed for every fighter, a ratio it blames on Hamas, saying the Palestinian militant group uses civilian facilities. Hamas has denied using civilians and civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, as human shields.



Newly appointed German Finance Minister Joerg Kukies stands next to Transport and Justice Minister Volker Wissing, and his predecessor, Christian Lindner.

German chancellor urged to call vote after coalition collapses

BERLIN: Germany's embattled Olaf Scholz faced heavy pressure on Thursday to quickly call elections after his unruly coalition collapsed just as Donald Trump celebrated his return to the White House.

The centre-left chancellor has vowed to cling on in a minority government for now, and to ask for a confidence vote in

January that would likely lead to snap elections in March. But the conservative opposition is pressing to hold the key vote next week rather than next year, at a time when Germany is suffering economic distress and global volatility.

Christian Democrats (CDU) leader Friedrich Merz, whose alliance with Bavaria's CSU is leading in opinion polls.

Pentagon pledges 'orderly' transition of power to Trump

WASHINGTON: US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin told troops in a memo released on Thursday that the Pentagon was committed to an orderly transition to the incoming administration of Donald Trump, and that the military would not get involved in politics and was ready to carry out "all lawful orders".

Trump was elected president on Tuesday, capping a remarkable comeback four years after he was voted out of the White House and ushering in a new US leadership likely to test the resilience of democratic institutions at home and relations abroad. During an interview last month, Trump was asked if he was expecting "chaos" on Election Day and he appeared to suggest the military could be deployed against citizens.

Yoon Suk Yeol says Seoul-Washington alliance will strike back if North Korea attempts nuclear attack

SEOUL: South Korea President Yoon Suk Yeol said the country was prepared in its alliance with the United States to strike back if North Korea attempted a nuclear attack against it, Newsweek reported on Friday. Yoon also said South Korea could rely on US nuclear weapons to defend the country and did not need its own, according to the US magazine.

"I believe that it would be irrational for them to decide to wage a nuclear attack against the Republic of Korea and

should they do so the nuclear-based ROK-U.S. alliance will immediately strike North Korea with the US nuclear weapon," Newsweek cited Yoon as saying. North Korea flexed its military muscle with the test of a huge new solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile dubbed Hwasong-19 on Oct. 31, amid accusations from Washington and Seoul that it has deployed troops to aid Russia in Ukraine.

Yoon, a conservative, has taken a harder line than his recent predecessors on North Korea.

Greece, Turkey to keep talking on maritime boundaries agenda, ministers say

ATHENS: Greece and Turkey still disagree on the extent of issues needing to be tackled over the designation of their maritime boundaries but talks will continue, the Greek and Turkish foreign ministers said after meeting on Friday.

Neighbours Greece and Turkey, NATO allies but historic foes, have long been at odds over issues including where their con-

Lebanon says 3 killed, UN peacekeepers wounded in Israel strikes

SIDON: The Lebanese army said an Israeli strike on a vehicle near a checkpoint in the southern city of Sidon on Thursday killed three people and wounded troops and UN peacekeepers.

"The Israeli enemy targeted a car while it was passing through the Awali checkpoint," the main northern entrance to Sidon, the army said.

Indonesia preparing scenarios to anticipate Trump's policies

JAKARTA: Indonesia has prepared scenarios to anticipate the impact of potential policies from US president-elect Donald Trump, a finance ministry official said on Friday. The head of the ministry's fiscal policy agency, Febrio Kacaribu, said the scenarios were designed not only to mitigate negative impacts, but also to find opportunities under a Trump administration. He did not provide further details.

Putin praises Trump, says Russia is ready for dialogue

SOCHI: Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday (Nov 7) congratulated Donald Trump on winning the US election, praised him for showing courage when a gunman tried to assassinate him, and said Moscow was ready for dialogue with the Republican president-elect.

In his first public remarks since Trump's win, Putin said Trump had acted like a real man during an assassination attempt on him while he was speaking at a campaign rally in Pennsylvania in July.

"He behaved, in my opinion, in a very correct way, courageously, like a real man," Putin said at the Valdai discussion club in the Russian Black Sea resort of Sochi. "I take this opportunity to congratulate him

on his election."

Putin said remarks Trump had made during the election campaign about Ukraine and restoring relations with Russia deserved attention.

"What was said about the desire to restore relations with Russia, to bring about the end of the Ukrainian crisis, in my opinion this deserves attention at least," said Putin.

Trump said during campaigning that he could bring peace in Ukraine within 24 hours if elected, but has given few details on how he would seek to end the biggest land war in Europe since World War II.

The 72-year-old Kremlin chief gave just one note of caution: "I do not know what is going to happen now. I have no clue."

Facing Trump's return, EU confronts economic challenges

BUDAPEST: Confronted with the return of Donald Trump, EU leaders on Friday are set to commit to deeply reform Europe's economy and tackle challenges highlighted by a blockbuster report.

Ex-European Central Bank head Mario Draghi was tasked last year with preparing the report that would steer the direction of the next five years of the EU's executive arm.

The big takeaway? Europe must invest up to 800 billion euros (\$863 billion) more a year to avoid falling further behind the United States.

But with Germany mired in political turmoil, divergent national interests and bitter disagreements over how to face the challenges ahead, there is no guarantee that the EU will be able to step up to the mark.

If the European Union does not take heed of his

report's recommendations published in September, Draghi warned the 27-country bloc would face a "slow agony" of decline.

His report has taken on greater urgency, experts say, with Trump's resounding comeback on Tuesday's US election.

On the campaign trail, Trump repeatedly professed his love for tariffs and threatened to punish Europe for taking advantage of the United States with higher duties. "The Draghi report itself, in a way, becomes even more interesting and urgent in relation to this outcome," said Ian Lesser, vice president at the German Marshall Fund of the United States think tank.

There is a lot in Draghi's 400-page tome for the leaders to digest before lunch. Besides his call for more investment to improve economic output, Draghi controversially called for common borrowing.

UN panel adopts four Pak resolutions on strengthening regional, world peace

UNITED NATIONS (INP): A key committee of the United Nations General Assembly has adopted Pakistan's four annual disarmament-related resolutions aimed at underpinning regional as well as international peace and security.

Three of these resolutions, adopted yesterday by the 193-nation Assembly's First Committee (Disarmament and International Security), received overwhelming support from member states even as the global non-proliferation and disarmament regime is facing challenges. The texts are expected to come up for endorsement by the General Assembly next month.

The resolutions deal with regional disarmament, conventional arms control at regional and sub-regional levels as well as Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) in the regional and sub-regional context.

The resolutions titled, "Regional disarmament" and "Confidence-building Measures in the regional and sub-regional context" were adopted by consensus.

The text titled, "Conventional arms control at the

regional and sub-regional level" received 179 votes in favour, with India voting against, the only country to do so, and its ally — Israel — abstained.

The overwhelming support for the resolution reflected the international community's acknowledgement of Pakistan's advocacy for conventional arms control, restraint and balance in defence capabilities of States located in the same region or sub-region.

Diplomats at the UN have expressed appreciation for Pakistan's initiatives, over the years, to promote the goals of regional disarmament, conventional arms control, and Confidence Building Measures (CBMs). The resolutions, they noted, recognize the significance of and complementarity between regional and global approaches to arms control, disarmament and confidence building to promote international peace, security and stability.

The resolution on conventional arms control at regional and sub-regional levels acknowledges that the preservation of a balance in States' defence capabilities strengthens peace and stability.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif waving the Pakistani flag at a ceremony to celebrate Allama Muhammad Iqbal's Birthday.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Housing & Works, Mian Riaz Hussain chairing the 36th Executive Board Meeting of the Federal Government Employees Housing Authority in federal capital.

Pirzada orders formation of committee to resolve FGEHA plot disputes

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Housing and Works Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada on Friday directed the formation of a committee with members from FGEHA, CDA, Finance and Law division to resolve the longstanding FGEHA plot disputes through amicable negotiations.

Chairing the 36th Executive Board Meeting of Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) at the Ministry of Housing & Works in Islamabad, the minister instructed that FGEHA's

claims with Capital Development Authority (CDA) and other federal institutions be resolved through direct discussions, rather than engaging in costly litigation, in accordance with the Prime Minister's directives.

The auction of commercial plots in sectors 24-B, 25-B, 19-C, and Scheme 33 at Gulzar-e-Hijri, Karachi, as well as the remaining plots to be allocated by CDA to FGEHA in sector I-8, and the 10% under the Islamabad Land Disposal Regulations, were also discussed.

Skill development program NAVTTC empowers 71,618 marginalized youth in Sindh, Balochistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Under the Prime Minister's Youth Skill Development Program (PMYSDP), the National Vocational & Technical Training Commission (NAVTTC) has successfully provided skill development training to 71,618 marginalized youth across the underdeveloped regions of Sindh and Balochistan from 2020 to 2024.

According to official sources, a total of 49,888 youth in Sindh and 21,730 youth in Balochistan benefited from skill scholarships, enabling them to gain valuable technical expertise and improve their employment prospects. The program aimed at uplifting youth in these regions and fostering inclusive growth.



ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Jane Marriott addressing the 10th Islamabad Literature Festival at Federal Capital.

Rubina Khalid says: BISP sets target to achieve youth employability through upcoming Benazir Hunarmand Programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid Friday said that BISP has set a target to create employment opportunities for the youth of the country by imparting them skill-based training.

"BISP would soon launch a new initiative 'Benazir Hunarmand Programme' to impart skill-based training to the youth for their employability, enabling them to contribute positively to the country's economy", she said during a press conference, along with the senior officials.

Rubina Khalid said,

"Pakistan is a country having major chunk of youth population which is directionless. This is the high time to focus on positively engaging their energies towards constructive purposes and create job opportunities for them".

Under the Benazir Hunarmand Programme, women beneficiaries and their children will be given skill-based training to improve their economic conditions and create space for new participants in the program.

The chairperson said that BISP is an internationally acclaimed and largest

Speaker, Dy Speaker condole death of Khizar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker of the National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, on Friday expressed deep sorrow over demise of Khizar Hayat Haraj, father of Member of National Assembly Raza Hayat Haraj.

In his condolence message to Raza Hayat Haraj, the Speaker extended heartfelt sympathies with family, and said it was a irreplaceable loss of a parent as a profound grief for the family.

He offered condolences to Raza Hayat Haraj and his family, sharing their sorrow during this difficult time.

Ten outlaws arrested; weapons, drugs recovered

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police apprehended 10 outlaws involved in different criminal activities including drug peddling, and possessing illegal ammunition from their possession on Friday.

A police spokesperson said that the ICT Police Karachi Company, Golra, Phulgran, Tarnol, and Shams Colony police stations teams took legal action against the accused involved in drug peddling and possessing illegal weapons.

He said the police teams also arrested six accused namely Parvaiz, Shah Rukh, Amir Shahzad, Sardar Adnan, Aziz Islam and Farhan Ullah and recovered 1,773 liquor bottles, 900 gram hashish, 530 gram heroin and two 30 bore pistols with ammunition from their possession.

Senate body urges disciplinary actions against SSP Kashmir

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate Standing Committee on Rules of Procedure and Privileges on Friday urged the disciplinary actions against the SSP Kashmir for not receiving telephone call of Senator Saifullah Abro, who submitted Privilege Motion against SSP.

The meeting chaired by Committee Chairman Senator Taj Haider, in reference to the Privilege Motion submitted by Senator Saifullah Abro against the SSP Kashmir, Abro stated that he attempted to contact the SSP over 50 times, including notifying the SSP's office, but received no response, said a press release. He expressed concern over the daily kidnappings in the region,

emphasizing that Kashmir has become a hub for criminal activity. In the last three days alone, 10 people have been abducted, he added. He further apprised the committee of a case in which a local police inspector demanded a ransom of Rs 10 million and four iPhones for a victim's release. The senator emphasized that this incident is part of a disturbing pattern of lawlessness in the region, where such heinous crimes have become alarmingly frequent and remain unaddressed by local authorities.

Taj Haider recommended that the Committee escalate the matter to the Sindh chief minister and urged for disciplinary action against the SSP Kashmir, given the seri-

ousness and frequency of such incidents. He also advised that the recommendation be shared with the IG and relevant officials.

Senator Saifullah Abro, supporting this approach, suggested that the Committee address the issue with the Establishment Division, noting that criminal activity in these four districts is damaging Sindh's reputation.

Additionally, the Privilege Motion moved by Senator Saadia Abbasi in the Senate on 09-09-2024 addressed an article titled 'The Stealth Cost of Legislature' published in Daily Dawn, authored by the Assistant Chief (Policy) of PIDE, Islamabad, with the presence of both the former and current Vice Chancellors of PIDE.

IGP Islamabad holds khuli katchery

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: According to the details, the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, held a Khuli Katchery at the Central Police Office Islamabad, a public relations officer said.

During the katchery, he listened to the issues of citizens and police officers and issued directives on the spot for their resolution.

He said that resolving citizens' issues on merit is

to resolve the citizen grievances on merit within the stipulated time frame and report back to the Central Police Office.

He directed all SDPOs and SHO to adhere to the designated office hours and prioritize resolving citizens' issues.

On this occasion, the IG Islamabad said that the Islamabad Police are taking various measures for the facilitation of citizens. The daily holding of Khuli



our top priority. Negligence and carelessness in duties will not be tolerated. Any citizen facing any issue related to the police can come to the Khuli Katchery. My office is always open for my citizens, the IGP said.

IG Islamabad further directed the concerned of-

Katchery helps in resolving issues on a priority basis, he added.

Moreover, all zonal officers and SHO are directed to meet citizens during the designated office hours and resolve their issues promptly and on merit.

Azerbaijan celebrates Victory Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): Azerbaijan celebrated Victory Day on Friday, a national commemoration of resilience, independence, and the return of its territories.

Azerbaijan Embassy celebrated the day to mark the end of conflict, the restoration of lands, and new paths to peace in the region.

According to a press release issued by Azerbaijan embassy, the Victory Day is more than a celebration for Azerbaijan; it represents the nation's journey towards sovereignty and growth.

Since gaining independence, Azerbaijan has faced military aggression, occupation, and ethnic cleansing by Armenia, as well as the challenge of nearly one million displaced people.

Despite efforts toward peace, Azerbaijan always maintained that it would not accept occupation of its lands.

The conflict reignited on September 27, 2020, when Armenia launched attacks on Azerbaijani civilians and military forces.

Azerbaijan responded by launching a counter-offensive, marking the start of what is now called the Patriotic War. This struggle led to a pivotal victory, ending decades-long occupation and restoring Azerbaijan's territorial integrity under the leadership of President Ilham Aliyev.

This victory also enforced four UN Security Council resolutions, unimplemented for years, confirming Azerbaijan's sovereignty and the return of displaced communities to their homes. With the liberation of its lands, Azerbaijan committed to advancing peace and stability in the region.

On September 19-20, 2023, Azerbaijan conducted operations to remove the last remaining Armenian armed forces in the Garabagh region, effectively ending the presence of illegal forces. Azerbaijan now calls on Armenia to approach the peace process constructively, recognizing the new reality for sustainable regional stability.

Govt. envisions new era of economic, cultural revival for country: Musadik

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Petroleum, Dr. Musadik Malik, said on Friday that the government's vision is to comprehensively transform Pakistan, encompassing not only economic progress but also cultural, social, and artistic growth.

"Our approach is holistic, embracing every facet of society, from the economy to art, sports, Sufi traditions, and religious culture," he said.

While speaking to a private news channel at Pakistan Cultural Week at the annual Riyadh Season, he said that the country was progressing steadily to-

wards its goal of standing among the world's great nations.

Dr. Malik urged the youth to remain hopeful. "The spirit of Pakistan is connected to its youth. This is a transformational time for the country, an era of progress in economy, IT, and investment," he added.

Our children should focus on skill-based education, as the world is advancing with modern learning techniques," he said. The minister highlighted the importance of skilled education, encouraging young people to pursue modern educational paths that are globally competitive.



ISLAMABAD: Secretary of the National Heritage and Culture Division, Hassan Nasir Jami, addresses during the opening ceremony of the 'Annual Ten-Day Folk Festival Lok Mela' at Lok Virsa in the federal capital.

Iqbal inspired unit, self-determination among Muslims: Ayaz

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Friday while paying a rich tribute to Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal his poetry served as a beacon light for Muslims, encouraging them to pursue their goals with determination.

In his message on his 147th birth anniversary, he said that Muslims of the sub-continent under the visionary leadership of Allama Muhammad Iqbal succeeded in achieving a separate homeland. He added that Allama Iqbal's message emphasizes unity, discipline, and faith, and by following his teachings our

country can overcome the current challenges.

The Speaker urged the younger generation to draw inspiration from Iqbal's thoughts and to play a constructive role in the socio-economic development of the country.

He emphasized that the best way to honour Allama Iqbal's legacy is by promoting justice, tolerance, brotherhood, and discipline in society. Additionally, he highlighted the importance of incorporating Iqbal's teachings into the educational curriculum to educate the generations to come with his profound ideas and vision.

ICT Police SPs hold open courts in Mosques to address citizen grievances

ISLAMABAD (APP): Following special directions from the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, Zonal SP's held a Khuli Kachehri (open court) in mosques across the city on Friday to address public grievances.



A public relations officer told APP that these Khuli Kachehris were attended by citizens and senior police officers. He said that the open courts are being held per the IGP's directive to ensure early redressal of public complaints across the city. At the beginning of each session, citizens shared their grievances and offered suggestions for improvement.

The Zonal SPs issued on-the-spot directives to address these issues and assured participants that their feedback would be considered.

The police representatives emphasized that these open courts are an essential step in strengthening the relationship between the police and the community. They highlighted that the police are committed to resolving citizens' issues and that public cooperation is vital for effective policing.

Additionally, the Zonal SPs briefed participants on the Islamabad Police's ongoing crackdown against drug trafficking, land grabbing, and other criminal activities.

They encouraged citizens to be vigilant in their neighborhoods and report any suspicious activities to law enforcement. The participants expressed gratitude to the IGP Islamabad for organizing these Khuli Kachehris.



Senator Palwasha Mohammad Zai Khan, Chairperson Senate Standing Committee on Information Technology and Telecommunication presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament Lodges Islamabad