

# Independent

Member APNS & CPNE

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Quetta

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## PM underscore need for strong political will, global leadership to tackle water crisis

*Says our duty to ensure that these rivers, lakes and aquifers that have nourished civilisations for centuries must not be reduced to tales of the past; Also underscored the importance of ensuring the sustainable management of water resources worldwide*

RIYADH (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday underscored the need for strong political will, and global leadership to overcome the water crisis posing existential threat to the nations around the globe.

The prime minister, addressing the One Water Summit on the Margins of United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP-16) under the theme "Restore, Pre-

serve, and Adapt" here expressed his profound gratitude to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, France, and Kazakhstan, as well as the World Bank for organizing the timely summit, to deliberate upon, one of humanity's most pressing challenges: water security.

He said that water was the lifeblood of the planet; a cornerstone of economic development, food security, and environmental sustainability.

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RAWALPINDI: Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir during the field training exercise near Narowal and Sialkot.

## Chairs 8th Senate meeting of Turbat University: Governor Balochistan calls for making serious measures to stop brain drainage

Independent Report QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has underlined the need to make serious decisions for stopping brain drainage.

He said that our very qualified and experienced Ph.D scholars would not go to abroad leaving the public sector universities by ensuring timely payment of salaries and providing necessary facilities to them.

Otherwise, brain drain would cast negative impacts on educational standard and research output. This can also affect the process of inspiring new students to get admissions in the higher educational institutions.

The Governor was chairing meeting of the 8th Senate meeting of University of Turbat here on Tuesday.

Those who were present in the meeting were

included judge of Baloch High Court, Mr Justice Shaoukat Rakhsani, Vice Chancellor of Turbat University, Professor Dr Gul Hasan, Principal Secretary to Governor, Hashim Khan Ghilzai, Engineer Ahmed Farooq Bazi from Higher Education Commission, besides the representatives of Education and Finance departments.

The Governor expressed satisfaction over the performance of University of Turbat. However, adding he stressed to bring more improvement in it.

He said that quality education is the best source of changing lives of the people and their bright future.

He said that the universities are not mere places of learning but are also major centers of creative ideas, modern approach and solution to the collective issues.



ISLAMABAD: H.E. Irfan Neziroglu, Ambassador of Turkey called on Minister for Defence & Defence Production, Khawaja Muhammad Asif.

## FIA identifies 924 social media accounts in 'anti-state propaganda' crackdown

QUETTA (APP): Federal Investigation Agency's (FIA) Cyber Crime Wing in Balochistan has launched a significant crackdown against individuals involved in anti-state propaganda on social media. Under the leadership of Director Imran Mahmood, the operation has gained momentum, identifying 924 suspicious social media accounts over the past three months.

The accounts flagged by the agency include 487 on Facebook, 190 on TikTok, 147 on Twitter, 88 on Instagram, and 12 on other platforms. Details of these accounts have been forwarded to the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), which has already blocked 312 accounts.

The Cyber Crime Wing established a dedicated

team to monitor and analyze social media activities, using advanced technology to track suspicious behaviors across various platforms, including Facebook, X, and TikTok. Investigations are underway into 14 cases registered against individuals linked to these activities. The FIA also revealed that 28 social media applications could be exploited by anti-state elements for propaganda and anonymous communication.

Director Imran Mahmood emphasized the agency's commitment to combating such activities, stating that no leniency would be shown to those undermining the state's interests. "All available resources are being deployed to apprehend the culprits," he said.

"This life-sustaining resource, however, is coming under increasing stress. Nearly half of the world's population is facing, water scarcity, for at least part of the year. Billions remain, without clean drinking water, as water pollution, is rising, at alarming levels," he added.

The prime minister underlined that the water resources were fast depleting



RIYADH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in the family photo of the One-Water Summit.

## Armed forces fully capable of safeguarding territorial integrity, says COAS

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M) affirmed that the Pakistan Armed Forces, with the resolute support of the nation, are fully capable of safeguarding the territorial integrity and sovereignty of our beloved motherland against the entire spectrum of threats.

In his interaction with the participants of field training exercise near Narowal, Sialkot, he emphasized the critical importance of maintaining constant preparedness to counter any potential threats posed by adversaries, said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release.

The COAS visited troops participating in a field training exercise near Narowal and Sialkot. He was given a comprehensive brief on the objectives and

conduct of the exercise, which aimed to refine professional skills and battlefield procedures essential for addressing emerging operational challenges.

During the exercise, integrated fire and maneuver operations were conducted by various elements, including Armour, Infantry, Mechanized Infantry, Artillery, Air Defence, Army Aviation and Anti-Tank Guided Missile units.

The exercise also demonstrated the effective employment of electronic warfare capabilities and information operations designed to disrupt enemy communications and counter disinformation strategies in a modern battlefield environment.

The COAS spent the day in the field alongside the troops, commending their training standards, operational readiness, and high state of morale.



ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi chairing National Action Plan's Coordination Committee meeting.

## Interior Minister chairs key meeting 206 terrorists killed in 7984 IBOs till October

Govt for enhancing coordination between NACTA, provinces

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi chaired an important meeting of the National Action Plan (NAP) Coordination Committee in Islamabad on Tuesday. During the meeting, it was decided to enhance coordination between the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) and the provinces. The minister said that a National Fusion Center has been established for effective coordination.

According to the briefing, 206 terrorists have been killed in 7984 intelligence-based operations till October this year. During the meeting, it was decided to take comprehensive measures to prevent the activities of banned terrorist organizations on social media. In this regard, with the cooperation of Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), the accounts of terrorist groups will be blocked, while the provinces

will take steps under a comprehensive strategy to stop the usage of illegal SIMs. The top officials of all relevant institutions, including PTA, were directed to present an effective mechanism in the next meeting.

The interior minister condemned the recent incidents of terrorism in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He emphasized that full cooperation would be provided to improve the professional capabilities of the Counter-Terrorism Forces in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to deal with terrorism, adding that the police and Frontier Constabulary would be strengthened. He underscored that everyone had to work together to improve the law and order situation. He said that along with increasing capacity, the police of all provinces should be equipped with modern technology.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan, Secretaries and senior officers of all departments attending dinner hosted by Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti.

## Doors of CM House are open for special persons: "Kumak Programme" to be redesigned & expanded for support of persons with disabilities: Chief Minister

Announces 100 percent increase in educational scholarships for persons with disabilities; ramps to be established in all government buildings; pink scooters to be provided to special women

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti has announced wholehearted patronage of the persons with disabilities adding that the "Kumak" Programme would be expanded for support of the persons with disabilities. He said that this programme would be redesigned and improved further.

He said that that doors



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti addressing a ceremony held in connection with World Disable Day.

## Missing persons case: Regular or joint session of parliament be summoned and matter be resolved: SC

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) constitutional bench while issuing notice to Attorney General (AG), interior ministry and other respondents and summoning reports from all respective institutions in missing persons case has observed regular or joint session of parliament be summoned and the problem be resolved.

Justice Jamal Mandokhail remarked nation and court are looking to parliamentarians. In my view the case of missing persons is very important. The cases of missing persons are running in high

presided over by Justice Amin ud Din Khan took up the case for hearing Tuesday.

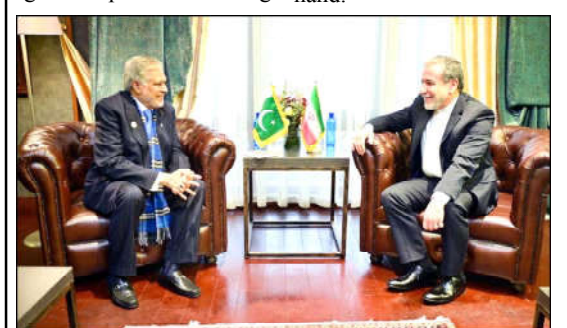
SC constitutional bench

## PTI trying to hoodwink masses through false narrative of bodies: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Tuesday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf was trying to hoodwink the people through false narrative and lies.

Lambasting Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, in a media talk, he said that the party was creating a false narrative of firing on the protesters.

He once again challenged the PTI to present a single piece of evidence showing a law enforcement agencies personnel firing



MASHHAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar holds meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Aragchi on the sidelines of ECO, Council of Ministers meeting.

## GoB spokesman explains news about "under age" candidate of Usta Muhammad

Independent Report

QUETTA: The spokesman, Government of Balochistan, Shahid Rind has explained the news gone viral on the social media about low age of a candidate appeared for job in Education Department Usta Muhammad.

In an official statement issued here on Tuesday, the spokesman said that Education Department has conducted investigation about the story, according to which, the candidate namely Muhammad Jameel son of Abdul Latif qualified

for the junior drawing master on merit. The date of birth of candidate is actually 20th September, 1999, but it was written as 2009 by typing mistake in the documents compiled at the district level, he added. In this regard, all the documents were scrutinized by Education Department. However, all the documents are present for evidence, which can be checked. He said that there are clear directives of the Chief Minister Balochistan that no compromise would be made on merit.

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Pakistan's blind team becomes T20 World Cup champions

Captain Ali with 72, Safdar with 47 help Pakistan clinch the title, remaining undefeated throughout tournament.

MULTAN (INP): Pakistan clinched trophy of the Blind T20 Cricket World Cup after beating Bangladesh by 10 wickets in the final at the Multan Cricket Stadium on Tuesday. Batting first, Bangladesh put a modest total of 139 on the board for the loss of seven wickets, with Arif Hussain emerging as the top scorer with 54 runs. Pakistan bowler Babar Ali took three scalps, whereas Motiullah and Mohammad Salman grabbed one wicket apiece. Pakistan blind team reached the target of 140 in merely 11 overs without

any hurdle. Openers Nisar Ali (72) and Mohammad Safdar's (47) unbroken partnership guided the Green Shirts towards a 10-wicket win. This victory marks a historic achievement for Pakistan, as they lift the Blind T20 World Cup for the first time in the tournament's history. The competition, which began in 2012, had seen India dominate the previous editions, with the Men in Blue winning the title in all three previous tournaments. The first edition, played in India in 2012, saw India defeat Pakistan by 29 runs in the final. The second edition in 2017 also saw India triumph, this time by 9 wickets against their neighbours. The third edition, held in India in 2022, again saw India take the trophy, this time beating Bangladesh in the final. However, this year, Pakistan broke the trend, lifting the trophy in the fourth edition of the Blind T20 World Cup, which took place in their home country. Their victory over Bangladesh not only ended India's dominance but also marked a milestone in the history of blind cricket. Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman Mohsin Naqvi congratulated the

Pakistan blind cricket team on winning the T20 World Cup final. "The players demonstrated exceptional performance throughout the tournament and achieved the honour of becoming T20 World Champions," said Naqvi. Praising the team's efforts, Naqvi highlighted the outstanding batting performances by captain Nisar Ali and Muhammad Safdar that secured the victory in the final.



MULTAN: Pakistan Blind Cricket Team poses for a group photo with a trophy after their victory against the Bangladesh team during the 4th Blind T20 cricket World Cup 2024 played at Multan Cricket Stadium.



RIYADH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif meets President of France Emmanuel Macron on the sidelines of One-Water Summit

PM underscore need for strong political will...

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"Nearly 70% of our land consists of arid and semi-arid areas, and around 30% of our population, is directly affected by drought-like conditions. Projected temperature increases in Pakistan, are significantly higher, than the global average," he added. Prime Minister Shehbaz highlighted that such catastrophic disasters and challenges were likely to scale up further in the absence of concerted international actions as it was one of the top ten countries, most vulnerable due to climate change. Commenting on the transboundary water management, he said that water transcended political boundaries, connecting nations and fostering shared ecosystems. "Pakistan, therefore, attaches great importance to transboundary cooperation. The Indus Water Treaty, which governs, the sharing of the Indus Basin's waters, is one example of such an arrangement." He added that the treaty witnessed unprecedented challenges in the recent years, due to a number of factors, including construction of upstream dams, whereas its effective functioning was key to maintaining regional peace and stability. The prime minister also shed light on the "Recharge Pakistan" initiative that aimed to address, climate induced, flood risks, and mitigate drought impacts, through ecosystem based adaptations. "We are also finalizing a 'National Drought Plan' that identifies, the most drought affected areas, and proposes, effective response mechanisms, to mitigate, the impact of drought in these areas," he said.

The prime minister proposed a six-point agenda at the global level to overcome water-related challenges. He advocated for the need of international cooperation and collaboration, to "ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all", as provided for in the SDG-6, exchange of knowledge and expertise, as well as transfer of technologies on innovative water management on priority, adequate funding for climate-resilient infrastructure, and overcoming financing gap—a critical challenge for climate vulnerable countries, frameworks for transparency, data sharing, and regional cooperation, to avoid conflicts, and promote water sharing, investment in skills development, research, and institutional strengthening, to tackle water challenges, at national and global levels and finally, a strong political will, and global leadership, to overcome the water crisis.

Regular or joint session of...

Continued from page 1
Justice Naem Afghan remarked the motive for recording statements of the recovered persons was this if any one from army is involved then it should be written to GHQ for their court martial. If other institutions are involved then order for initiating proceedings against responsible persons be issued. If any case of missing persons has to be made example then be courageous. Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Javed Iqbal said missing persons issue has been discussed in the cabinet and cabinet has constituted sub-committee which will present its recommendations to cabinet. Government wants to address missing persons matter finally. Justice Jamal Mandokhail remarked the issue of missing persons will not be resolved through making statements. Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar questioned missing persons commission has made how many recoveries so far. Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi remarked has missing persons commission any data who made the persons missing. Did the missing persons who returned tell

who lifted them. Justice Jamal Mandokhail remarked the missing persons tell nothing when they return. They say they had gone North-east areas for rest. Advocate Latif Khosa said country has become deep state. Justice Jamal Mandokhail said to Latif Khosa not to talk about politics in the court. The regular or joint session of parliament be summoned and the problem be resolved therein. Counsel Aitzaz Ahsan said parliament has no judicial powers. Justice Musarrat Hilali remarked "Khosa Sahb people of your PTI were also lifted. Latif Khosa said yes PTI people were also lifted. Justice Musarrat Hilali questioned did they tell on return who lifted them. Justice Naem Afghan remarked people ruin and vilify state in some cases of missing persons. War of independence is also running in the name of missing persons. No one is ready to stand in system. Faisal Siddiqui said 350 persons went missing after assurance from Attorney General (AG). State officials are disobeying previous orders of court. Barrister Aitzaz Ahsan said the missing persons who have been recovered from anchor homes be summoned. Justice Amin ud Din remarked we will call them too.

Pakistan's pride: Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali decorated with SK Presidential Award for agricultural innovation

ISLAMABAD (PR): In a significant recognition of his contributions to the fields of Agricultural science, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), has been awarded the Presidential Award by the South Korean government. The prestigious ceremony took place in Seoul, where Korean Prime Minister, H.E Han Duck-soo presented the award to Dr. Ali, underscoring the importance of his work in advancing scientific knowledge and technological innovation in agriculture. Dr. Ali stands out as the only scientist among the recipient to receive this distinguished recognition, making him the sole recipient in the field of science and technology. Dr. Ali's achievement is particularly noteworthy, as he stands out as the only Pakistani scientist to receive this accolade in a highly competitive international context. A reception was also held by PARC to commemorate the prestigious award. Agricultural scientists from across the country participated in the ceremony. The speakers from scientific community congratulated and commended Dr. Ali for achieving this honor on behalf of the institution and the nation as a whole. In his address, Chairman PARC expressed gratitude to the government of the Republic of Korea for this recognition as well as for its continuous support of Pakistan's agriculture sector. He also acknowledged the contributions of the scientists and researchers of PARC in achieving this honor. Dr. Ali also emphasized at elevating research standards to bring the international research institutions. Throughout his career, Dr. Ali has achieved significant milestones in agricultural science. In his recent work, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali established state-of-the-art National Institute for Genomics and Advanced Biotechnology (NIGAB), a high-tech center at NARC. As a leading scientist he continued his research work and developed four (04) high yielding and longer shelf-life banana varieties, four genome-based rice varieties and numerous crop varieties. Dr. Ali, as Chairman, PARC has done tremendous efforts in high-tech scientific infrastructure development like establishment of Pakistan's 1st speed breeding facility at NARC, country's first aeroponic facility for disease free indigenous potato seed production, hi-tech farm machinery institute, and so many other diverse research initiatives including CRISPR-Cas, innovative animal breeding techniques, DNA recombinant vaccine development and identification of novel genes for economically important traits. Remarkably, Dr. Ali has also been recently awarded with Sitara-e-Imtiaz (S.I) by the government of Pakistan in recognition of his countless contributions in the field of agricultural science.

Advertisement for agricultural services in Balochistan, including contact information for the Deputy Director Agriculture (On Farm Water Management) Loralai.

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Muqam reviews progress of development projects in GB

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFRON, Engr Amir Muqam on Tuesday reviewed the progress of development projects in GB and to resolve their problems on priority basis. The meeting held on the special instructions of the prime minister and was attended by Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan, Chairman

WAPDA Gen (Retd) Sajjad Ghani, GB Ministers and other senior officials, said a press release. Decisions were taken on important issues in the meeting and a comprehensive strategy was formulated to ensure timely completion of various development projects in Gilgit-Baltistan. The meeting directed to issue the tender for the water scheme within two months, while it was decided to complete the tender for the sanitation and sewerage scheme in four months. The federal minister instructed the authorities concerned to complete the tenders of the schemes under PC-1 under the approved development projects within two months and to submit Revise PC-1 immediately so that the projects could be approved by the Ministry of Planning and Development soon.

"Kumak Programme"....

Continued from page 1
for them in next financial year's budget. These and similar other views were expressed and announcements made by Chief Minister while addressing the ceremony arranged marking the International Day of Persons with Disabilities by the Social Welfare Department here at a local hotel on Tuesday. The Advisor to Chief Minister for Social Welfare, Wali Muhammad Noorzai, Commissioner Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat, Director General NADRA, other high ups of Social Welfare Department, representatives of civil society and persons with disabilities along with their families participated in the ceremony. Besides the non-governmental organizations working for rights of the special persons including persons with disabilities participated in the ceremony. The theme was: "amplifying the leadership of persons with disabilities for an inclusive and sustainable future." The Chief Minister maintained that the special persons are important part of our society, and as such they would not be left alone and all out facilities would be provided to them. He said that he fully realizes that how much pain and agony, they face in the society. He on the occasion directed to remove all the speed breakers to facilitate the persons with disabilities.

Advertisement for Annual Rate of Contracting, detailing procurement rules and application procedures for various construction items.

Tender Notice for Executive Engineer Buildings ZhoB, including details of construction work and bidding procedures.

Advertisement for Annual Rate of Contracting, detailing procurement rules and application procedures for various construction items.

Notice Inviting Tender for construction of farm ponds and development of dug wells, including technical specifications and bidding details.

# Minister hosts Chinese delegation to foster collaborative healthcare and skill development initiatives

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development convened a meeting with a Chinese delegation to explore collaborative opportunities in the realms of healthcare and skill development.

Chinese delegation led by Ms Scarlet, head, OPH, Healthcare project presented a comprehensive proposal by GAREA Group, a renowned provider of integrated solutions for digital products and services in primary healthcare, said a press release.

The proposed project endeavors to provide affordable healthcare services to remote areas through the strategic deployment of AI-based cloud computing, thereby reducing costs and enhancing access to accurate diagnoses. A notable feature of the project is the introduction of a portable diagnostic machine, capable of diagnosing 7-8 types of diseases, which will significantly reduce transportation costs and increase accessibility. Furthermore, the project's digital platform will enable seamless communication between patients, doctors, and medical stores. Reports will be directly shared with doctors on the panel, and prescriptions will be shared with medical stores, facilitating the direct delivery of medication to patients. This initiative has already yielded promising results in Indonesia, where it has augmented doctors' earnings by increasing the daily patient check-up ratio from 8 to 37.

The Minister expressed unequivocal support for the initiatives, underscoring the government's unwavering commitment to equipping individuals with advanced skills to meet the evolving demands of the global labor market. The delegation also introduced the three levels of certification: Huawei Certified ICT Associate (HCIA) 2 week course, Huawei Certified ICT Professional (HCIP) 1 month course, and Huawei Certified ICT Expert (HCIE) 6 months course. The Minister acknowledged the project as a significant investment from China's Ministry of Education and reiterated the government's focus on skill development as a vital catalyst for economic growth.

The meeting culminated in a consensus to formalize the partnership through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between OPH and the Ministry of Health. This MoU will serve as a foundational framework for coordinated efforts, aligning both ministries toward shared objectives of skill development and healthcare advancement. The Minister reaffirmed that such partnerships are instrumental in upgrading the skillsets of Pakistanis, thereby enhancing their competitiveness in the global job market.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Chaudhry Salik Hussain, met with a Chinese delegation led by Ms. Scarlet, Head OPH Health Care Project.

# Pak to lead global dialogue on Space Applications with ICAST 2025

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) and the Institute of Space Technology (IST) Tuesday announced the International Conference on Applications of Space Science and Technology (ICAST 2025), scheduled to take place from November 18 to 20, 2025, at the IST.

This groundbreaking conference is set to become the largest gathering of space science and technology experts ever hosted in Pakistan, bringing together renowned global leaders, visionary researchers, and pioneering industry professionals under the theme "Space for Sustainable Development."

ICAST 2025 represents the fusion of the rich legacies of IST's International Conference on Aerospace Science and Engineer-

# HIU teams arrested 229 murder suspects in 11 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police's Homicide Unit (HIU) police teams resolved 99 murder cases in the past 11 months including 21 blind murder cases and arrested 229 culprits.

The police spokesperson on Tuesday said that HIU police teams had completed the investigation of 99 murder cases and forwarded complete challans to the relevant courts.

DIG Syed Ali Raza assigned special tasks to the Homicide Unit, to resolve murder cases and provide justice to victims' families. He said that it was the responsibility of police to arrest the killers of innocent people and provide justice to the bereaved families.

He directed to give priority to investigation of murder cases and book the culprits. He also directed all SDPOs and SHOs to further enhance their professional capabilities for combating crimes and ensure the protection of life and property of citizens.

# British envoy, CDA Chairman, explore collaborative avenues

ISLAMABAD (APP): British Deputy High Commissioner Matt Cannell met with Muhammad Ali Randhawa, Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), here on Tuesday to discuss areas of mutual interest and opportunities for enhanced cooperation.

Chairman Randhawa warmly welcomed Mr Cannell and highlighted Islamabad's commitment to fostering partnerships with the UK. During the meeting, he underscored the importance of collaboration in education, healthcare, climate change, and sustainable urban development.

The Chairman also emphasized the need to strengthen people-to-people connections and social sector initiatives.

# Chairman CDA meets with investors to discuss open auction of hotel plots

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), Muhammad Ali Randhawa, on Tuesday met with a delegation of investors here to discuss the upcoming open auction of prime hotel plots in Islamabad.

During the meeting, Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa highlighted the critical need for international-standard five-star hotels in Islamabad to cater to the growing demand for hospitality services.

He emphasized that this initiative would play a pivotal role in enhancing the city's capacity to host national and international events, and tourism, thereby boosting the local economy and global recognition of Islamabad as a premier destination.

To address this, CDA is offering five-star hotel plots for open auction, marking a significant opportunity to promote the hotel industry and meet the increasing demands for high-quality accommodations in the city.

The investors were given a detailed briefing regarding the specific hotel plots being offered for auction, plots number 6 and 8, located in Sector F-5, one of Islamabad's most sought-after and prime locations.

These plots present an ideal opportunity for investors to develop world-class hotels, commercial centers, and service apartments, which will not only cater to the growing demand for luxury accommodation but also contribute to the expansion of Islamabad's business and tourism sectors.

Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa further outlined the investor-friendly terms that have been introduced to encourage participation in the auction.



ISLAMABAD: Artist brief about her art work to chief Guest Jamal Shah, renowned visual artist and cultural icon during exhibition titled "A Flight of Two Half Birds" Travelling Solo Exhibition by Amna Walyat Opens at PNCA National Art Gallery.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Chairman Senate Sayedaal Khan calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

# Google strengthens commitment to Pakistan's digital economy, online safety

ISLAMABAD (APP): Google's Government Affairs and Public Policy Lead for South Asia Kyle Gardner on Tuesday called on Minister of State/Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Digital Media Fahd Haroon, at his office to discuss ongoing and future efforts to support Pakistan's digital economy and address key challenges related to online safety and cybersecurity.

According to a news release, Gardner outlined Google's continued investment in Pakistan's digital ecosystem, emphasizing the company's commitment to fostering economic growth, security, and innovation. Gardner also highlighted the importance of collaboration between the public and private sectors to address pressing issues such as online safety, digital literacy, and the protection of cultural values in the rapidly evolving digital landscape.

After the points discussed, among other topics of interest, the conversation also covered challenges related to cybersecurity, including the protection of users from cyber threats, as well as ongoing efforts to ensure that online platforms support a safe, secure, and respectful digital environment. "We are committed to working closely with the Pakistani government and local stakeholders to build a safer and more inclusive digital ecosystem that fosters innovation, respects cultural values, and enhances the overall digital experience for users across the country," said Kyle Gardner. Both parties expressed their continued support for initiatives aimed at enhancing digital literacy, increasing access to information, and promoting the responsible use of technology in Pakistan.

# PPP committed to create an equitable society for PWDs: Bilawal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has reaffirmed his party's unwavering commitment to creating an inclusive and equitable society for Persons With Disabilities (PWDs).

In a message on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, he highlighted that his party has always been at the forefront of advocating for the rights of marginalized communities, including PWDs.

Endorsing the 2024 theme, "Amplifying the leadership of persons with disabilities for an inclusive and sustainable future," he emphasized the importance of recognizing the leadership and contributions of PWDs in building a better Pakistan.

"From ensuring job quotas to implementing inclusive education policies, we have consistently worked to empower PWDs and integrate them as equal contributors to society," he said.

He urged that providing equal opportunities and access to public infrastructure, healthcare, and education for PWDs is not just a legal obligation but a moral duty of any progressive society.



ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Human Rights Mrs. Saba Sadiq attended and delivered a speech in an event organized by the Ministry of Human Rights to commemorate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities at NIRM.

# ECP unveils framework to enhance gender inclusion in electoral process

ISLAMABAD (APP): Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Tuesday unveiled the "Gender Mainstreaming and Social Inclusion Framework" (GMSIF) to promote gender equality and inclusivity in elections.

The framework, which will be in effect from 2024 to 2028, focuses on marginalized communities, aiming to ensure a more inclusive electoral process.

Omar Hamid Khan, Secretary of the Election Commission of Pakistan, stated that the newly launched "Gender Mainstreaming and Social Inclusion Framework" (GMSIF) is the first of its kind in the Asia-Pacific region, aiming for full gender and social inclusion in the electoral process.

Nighat Siddique, Additional Director General of the Gender Wing, explained that the main goal of the project is to make the electoral process more inclusive and accessible for women, minorities, people with disabilities, and transgender individuals.

The framework involves reviewing and revising electoral laws, policies, and procedures.

# PRCS marks Intl Day of Persons with Disabilities

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) joined the global community in observing the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, celebrated under the theme, "Amplifying the leadership of persons with disabilities for an inclusive and sustainable future."

In his message on this occasion, Chairman PRCS Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari emphasized the importance of fostering inclusivity and empowering individuals with disabilities to take on leadership roles. "At PRCS, we believe that no one should be left behind. Persons with disabilities are integral to our society, and their voices, leadership, and contributions are essential to building a sustainable and inclusive future. Guided by the principle of 'Nothing About Us Without Us,' PRCS is committed to creating opportunities and removing barriers so they can lead their lives with dignity and purpose," he stated.

The PRCS has been at the forefront of supporting vulnerable populations, including persons with disabilities, through its comprehensive Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI) program. From providing assistive devices and livelihood support to organizing awareness sessions, the PRCS is actively working to alleviate the challenges faced by individuals with physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities.

# SC dismisses petition against rejection of nomination papers of presidential candidate

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) constitutional bench while dismissing the petition against rejection of nomination papers of presidential candidate, Asghar Ali Mubarak has imposed fine amounting to Rs 20000 on him.

A 6-member SC constitutional bench under Justice Amin ud Din Khan took up for hearing the case against rejection of nomination papers of presidential candidate Asghar Ali Mubarak.

Justice Jamal Mandokhail remarked "you filed petition under 184/3. What public interest is involved therein."

Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar remarked why did you not resort to high court.

Justice Amin ud Din Khan remarked the petition has become infertile now.

The court dismissed the petition filed by petitioner Asghar Ali Mubarak with fine. The court ordered the amount of penalty be deposited in national treasury and receipt be presented in the court.

# IHC stays action against ex-DG NAB

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday stopped the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) from taking legal action against its former Director General (DG) Shahzad Saleem on alleged misconduct and served notices to respondents.

IHC's Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir heard the case against initiation of inquiry and charge-sheet against former DG NAB on alleged misconduct.

The petitioner's lawyer prayed to the court to stop the bureau from taking legal action against his client and declare the inquiry against him as illegal.

The court stopped the action of NAB against the petitioner till the judgment on the case and also served notices to NAB for December 16.

The court also sought a complete inquiry report and para-wise comments against the plea. The petitioner's lawyer said that the bureau had already conducted an inquiry into the matter previously and closed it.

# FIA foils fake visa scam at I'bad airport, arrests key suspects

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Immigration Unit carried out a major operation at Islamabad International Airport, successfully preventing two passengers from traveling abroad using forged documents. The suspects, identified as Wajid Ali and Irfan Khan, were attempting to board flight QR633 to Poland with counterfeit visas affixed to their passports. Forensic analysis conducted by the Second Line Office revealed that the visas lacked essential security features, confirming their fraudulent nature. The suspects, residents of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, were immediately offloaded and handed over to the Anti-Human Trafficking Circle.

# PWDs need facilities to tackle pertaining challenges

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of the Pakistan Disabled Foundation, Shahid Memon underscored the need for the provision of all required facilities to persons with disabilities (PWDs) to tackle challenges around.

Addressing the participants here on Tuesday on the eve of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, he stressed that for the reduction of troubles in the lives of PWDs, "it is need of the hour to facilitate them in importing duty-free vehicles like motorcycles, etc."

He said that concessions should also be given to the physically challenged people who wanted to travel by plane, railway, and public transport.

He also highlighted the issues faced by PWDs in banks and called to take immediate steps to eliminate those.

# Livestock insurance scheme launched for leopard conservation in Pak

ISLAMABAD (APP): World Wide Fund for Nature-Pakistan (WWF-Pakistan) and Jubilee General Insurance Company Limited signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to protect common and snow leopards in Pakistan and improve local livelihoods, here on Tuesday.

The initiative is designed to address human-wildlife conflict, especially between the local communities and leopards in the northern areas of the country, where it will offer insurance coverage to livestock owners. The pilot programme will be implemented in select parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), where attacks on livestock by wildlife have become a major cause of conflict, threatening both the livelihood of local communities.



ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf exchanging views with Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan, Irfan Neziroglu at Naval Headquarters.

# IGP Islamabad says: Protection of life and property of citizens is of utmost priority

ISLAMABAD: According to details, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi chaired important meetings at the Central Police Office (CPO) Islamabad. DIG Security/Headquarters Muhammad ensuring transparency and merit.

He directed the officers to recruit educated youth who are dedicated to serving as part of the police force, in order to ensure the safety of citizens' lives and property and to provide them with all necessary facilities.

He also reviewed the performance of Safe City Islamabad. The DG Safe City briefed IGP Islamabad about the overall performance of the Safe City Command and Control Centre.

He said that the efficiency of Safe City should be increased, and maximum technical support should be provided to the Investigation Wing.

# Proportional representation proposed to enhance political equity

ISLAMABAD (APP): The participants of the Grand National Dialogue, held on Tuesday, proposed adopting proportional representation to promote political inclusivity, strengthening local governments, and ensuring the equitable distribution of public resources through provincial NFCs. The event, which included a seminar and the launch of the book Grand National Dialogue, brought together ten Dialogue partners who had engaged in discussions on eleven critical national issues over the past two years. The book encapsulates the collective insights and recommendations of renowned experts, academics, think tanks, and young students from all provinces.

This intellectual endeavor culminated in the publication of the book Grand National Dialogue, a compilation of the shared wisdom of prominent sectoral specialists, academic figures, members of the think tank community, and a diverse cohort of students from across Pakistan.

Presided over by former Foreign Minister and Foreign Secretary Ambassador Inam ul Haq, the event was organized by the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI), said a press release.

The opening session featured a summary of the takeaways of the Grand National Dialogue and the formal book launch followed by two working sessions of debate on the eleven topic that included Political & Governance System, National Identity and Cohesion, Foreign Policy, economic Security, Extremism/Militancy, Population Control & Food Security, Water Security, Education, Health Security, Energy & Power Security, and Climate Change. The dialogue partners like LUMS, ISSI, IRS, Health Services University, IUI, Pakistan Council for Research on Water Resources (PCRWR), and COMSATS University Islamabad raised several important points during the working sessions, including the need for implementation of national counter extremism policies, establishment of Pakistan Revenue Board, raising of health and education spending to the UN and WHO recommended 5%.





## Ahsan congratulates PSX for stellar 60% growth in 2024

KARACHI (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal, on behalf of the Prime Minister, congratulated the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on achieving over 60% growth in 2024.

Speaking at the PSX gong striking ceremony on Tuesday, Ahsan Iqbal lauded the exchange's performance, stating it showcased Pakistan's resilience and economic potential.

During his address, Ahsan Iqbal emphasized the importance of four key factors for national development: peace, political stability, consistent policies, and commitment to reforms. He noted that without creating

a conducive ecosystem, even the best intentions would be futile. "Pakistan needs these four pillars more than ever," he stressed. Reflecting on Pakistan's long-term goals, Ahsan Iqbal underlined the need to honor the vision of Q u a i d - e - A z a m Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Allama Iqbal as the nation approaches its centenary in 2047. "We cannot afford to lag behind economically," he said, calling for strategic progress.

He highlighted the shift from the political ideologies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the economic competition of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The minister also announced the forthcoming National Economic

Transformation Plan, emphasizing the need for export-led growth and the branding of "Made in Pakistan" products. He noted that no Pakistani company currently exceeds a \$2 billion valuation, stressing the importance of connecting with global supply chains for economic survival.

Recounting past achievements, Ahsan Iqbal recalled that when the PML-N assumed office in 2013, the country faced severe crises, including terrorism, energy shortages, and target killings in Karachi. He added that the PML-N restored peace, controlled load-shedding, and advanced the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project.



KARACHI: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Prof Ahsan Iqbal addressing to gong striking ceremony during the visit at the Pakistan Stock Exchange PSX.

## Pakistan, Russia discuss expansion of bilateral connectivity

MOSCOW (APP): Minister for Energy Sardar Awaiz Ahmad Khan Leghari and Russian Minister for Transport Mr. Roman Starovoyt, in a meeting held here Tuesday, positively assessed the prospects of expanding bilateral connectivity which would not only benefit Pakistan and Russia but also the entire region.

Sardar Awaiz Ahmed Khan Leghari is on a visit to Moscow to co-chair the 9<sup>th</sup> session of Pakistan-Russia IGC, said a press

release.

Sardar Awaiz Leghari appreciated the growing level of cooperation between Pakistan and Russia.

The two sides took stock of all bilateral cooperation projects in the transport sector including road, rail and air, it further said. Both sides agreed to continue contacts and enhance cooperation.

Awaiz Leghari also invited Russian minister Starovoyt to visit Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State/Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Digital Media Fahd Haroon meeting with Kyle Gardner, Head of Public Policy and Government Affairs, Google South Asian Markets.

## ICCI, OBF-UK agree to coordinate business events to boost exports

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation from the Overseas Business Forum-UK (OBF), led by its Chairman Farooq Khan, visited the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) on Tuesday.

The delegation was warmly welcomed by ICCI President Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, Senior Vice President Abdul Rehman Siddiqui, Vice President Nasir Mahmood Chaudhry, and other ICCI members, said a press release.

The meeting focused on strategies to enhance Pakistan's exports, with the aim of improving the country's foreign exchange earnings.

Both parties agreed to

jointly organize business events that would showcase Pakistan's export-oriented products and facilitate business-to-business (B2B) meetings.

To ensure smooth coordination, the ICCI and OBF-UK decided to appoint focal persons for the respective tasks.

President Nasir Qureshi highlighted that ICCI is one of Pakistan's leading chambers, with over 10,000 members representing various industries and businesses.

He emphasized the Chamber's role in bridging the gap between the business community and government officials, working towards the country's economic.

## Shaza Fatima says: Govt providing opportunities to youth in IT, other Sectors

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja, on Tuesday reaffirmed the government's commitment to providing opportunities for youth in various sectors, including IT.

Digitization would reduce bureaucratic hurdles and significantly enhance efficiency in the country she said while speaking at the UNDP Digital Skills Graduation Ceremony for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa youth.

She highlighted the pivotal role of young people in national development.

She said that the government is offering a range of IT courses to equip students with essential skills.

The minister said training programs are being conducted to familiarize youth with diverse IT-related fields, encouraging them to contribute to society through dedication and hard work. The minister underscored the government's dedication to advancing the IT sector by leveraging all available resources.

She stressed that digitization remains a top priority, aiming to provide online access to services to streamline processes and

boost productivity.

She also highlighted the importance of specialized courses, such as cloud computing and artificial intelligence, in driving the digitization agenda. She elaborated on the "One Patient, One ID" initiative, explaining that patients' medical records would be accessible online, enabling healthcare providers to retrieve their complete history using their ID card.

She said that the system would help save a patient's entire medical record, which would be accessible across all hospitals operating in the federal capital.



RUSSIA: Pakistani Federal Minister for Power Sardar Awaiz Ahmed Khan Leghari meets Russian Minister for Transport Mr. Roman Starovoyt on the occasion of 9th session of Pak-Russia IGC.

## Secretary General visits SAARC agriculture centre

DHAKA (PR): The Secretary General of SAARC Ambassador Md. Golam Sarwar visited today Dhaka-based SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC) and received briefing on the Centre's activities, accomplishments and future plans. SAC Director Dr. Md. Harunur Rashid and his team welcomed the Secretary General at the Centre.

In his briefing, the

research and information network in SAARC Member States; exchange of regionally generated technical information to support innovation; collection and dissemination of information on proven agricultural technologies and effective farm practices as well as development and introduction of emerging frontier technologies in agriculture sector.

## Rupee gains 11 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani rupee on Tuesday appreciated by 11 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.86 against the previous day's closing of Rs 277.97.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 277.40 and Rs 278.90 respectively.

The price of Euro decreased by 2 paise to close at Rs 291.97 against the last day's closing of Rs 291.99, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).



GUJRANWALA: Ambassador of Indonesia, Rahmat Hindarta addresses to business community during his visit to Gujranwala Business Centre (GBC), in Gujranwala.

## OICCI organizes conference for empowerment of PWDs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) here on Tuesday hosted its second Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Conference on the occasion of the International Day for Persons With Disabilities (PWDs).

The event convened a diverse group of CEOs, HR heads, business leaders, and policymakers for impactful discussions advocating for the inclusion of the PWDs in the workforce.

Themed "Amplifying the Leadership of Persons with Disabilities for an Inclusive, Sustainable Future" the event highlighted the imperative for businesses to adopt accessible and inclusive workplace practices. In his opening remarks, OICCI Managing Committee member Ahmed Khan Bozai, emphasized the importance of addressing

systemic barriers that hinder PWD inclusion. He stated, "True inclusion goes beyond breaking barriers—it's about building a workplace culture that values the strengths of every individual. When businesses embrace diversity, they not only unlock innovation but also create environments where everyone feels they truly belong and can contribute meaningfully."

The conference focused on four key areas for fostering inclusion: addressing barriers to PWD employment, improving HR policies and recruitment practices, enhancing accessible workplace infrastructure, and strengthening national policies through public-private partnerships. These key areas provided a roadmap for businesses to overcome challenges and implement sustainable strategies.

## Gold prices increase by Rs 700 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The price of 24 karat per tola gold increased by Rs 700 and was sold at Rs 275,200 on Tuesday against its sale at Rs 274,500, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also went up by Rs 600 to Rs 235,940 from Rs 235,340 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat gold increased to Rs 216,278 from Rs 215,728.

## PTCL partners with Mumtaz city to empower 2,000 homes with flagship high-speed internet

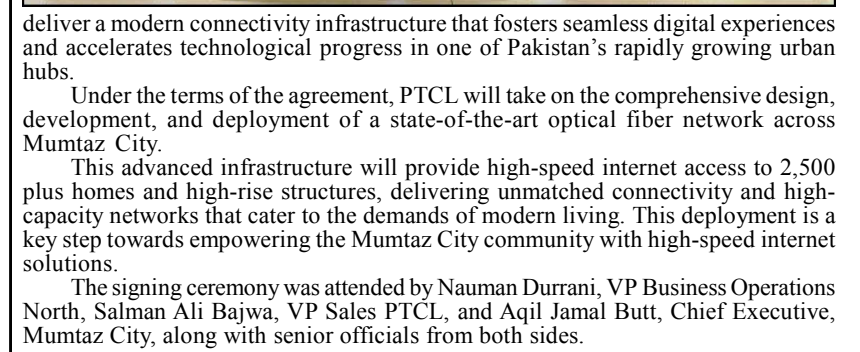
ISLAMABAD: Country's leading ICT services provider, Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) has signed a strategic agreement with Mumtaz City to revolutionize connectivity for its residents and businesses through its premium and flagship internet service, Flash Fiber.

This collaboration highlights the shared vision of PTCL and Mumtaz City to deliver a modern connectivity infrastructure that fosters seamless digital experiences and accelerates technological progress in one of Pakistan's rapidly growing urban hubs.

Under the terms of the agreement, PTCL will take on the comprehensive design, development, and deployment of a state-of-the-art optical fiber network across Mumtaz City.

This advanced infrastructure will provide high-speed internet access to 2,500 plus homes and high-rise structures, delivering unmatched connectivity and high-capacity networks that cater to the demands of modern living. This deployment is a key step towards empowering the Mumtaz City community with high-speed internet solutions.

The signing ceremony was attended by Nauman Durrani, VP Business Operations North, Salman Ali Bajwa, VP Sales PTCL, and Aqil Jamal Butt, Chief Executive, Mumtaz City, along with senior officials from both sides.



## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Four ships, MSC Silavana-VIII, DM Bea, Iolaos and Pacific ERA carrying Container, Palm oil, Coal and MO Gas, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Liquid Cargo Terminal, Pakistan International Bulk Terminal and FOTCO Terminal respectively on Monday. Meanwhile another containership "Maersk Newark" also arrived at outer anchorage on today Morning. Nine ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them two ships, MSC Silavana-VIII and AL JASRA left the port on today morning, while three more ships, YANNIS PITTAS, ABDULLAH M and ANACOLUS are expected to sail on today afternoon. Cargo volume of 94,501 tonnes, comprising 51,676 tonnes imports cargo and 42,825 tonnes export cargo carried in 2,321 Containers (270 TEUs Imports).

## Railways earn Rs. 33b in five months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways has achieved an unprecedented earning of over Rs. 33 billion during the initial five months of the current financial year 2024-25 with the untiring efforts of the department, despite facing several financial challenges.

"The department has earned this revenue from passengers and freight trains, while surpassing the target through the consistent efforts and hard work of the Railway workers," official sources in the Ministry told APP.

Pakistan Railways has achieved a historic financial milestone through generating Rs. 33 billion revenue over the past five months, reflecting a 14 percent year-on-year growth compared to Rs. 29 billion during the same period last year.

"This marks an incremental gain of over Rs four billion, attributed to enhanced operational

efficiency and strategic revenue optimization," the sources revealed.

The robust performance follows a record-breaking financial year 2023-24, during which Pakistan Railways earned Rs. 88 billion in revenue, a 40 percent increase from Rs. 63 billion in the previous year.

The sources said Pakistan Railways surpassed its initial revenue target of Rs. 73 billion, earning Rs. 47 billion from passenger trains, Rs. 28 billion from goods vehicles, and over Rs. 13 billion from land and other sources.

About the Main Line-1 (ML-1), they highlighted that groundwork for the ML-1 project, a key infrastructure initiative, is set to commence by next year, signaling long-term growth and profitability for the organization.

"This achievement is a testament to the hard work of our employees.



Director highlighted that the Centre is dedicated to addressing the challenges related to low productivity, livelihood, impacts of climate change, transboundary diseases, and trade barriers in agriculture, among other priority domains.

Renamed in 2007 from the earlier SAARC Agricultural Information Centre, SAC is mandated to work to promote agricultural research and development as well as transfer of agriculture technology in the region. The Centre is facilitating

## PSX stays bullish, gains 1,284 more points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 1,284.13 points more points, a positive change of 1.24 percent, closing at 104,559.07 points as compared to 103,274.95 points on the last trading day.

A total of 1,766,474,377 shares were traded during the day as compared to 1,556,252,523 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 56.624 billion against Rs. 47.097 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 465 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 271 of them recorded gains and 160 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 34 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were Energico PK with 246,707,903 shares at Rs 6.72 per share, WorldCall Telecom with 89,419,070 shares at Rs 1.47 per share and Hascol Petrol with 87,024,698 shares at Rs.14.68 per share.

## Muzzammil terms CPEC's 2nd phase catalyst for economic growth

PESHAWAR (APP): educationist Dr Khalid Khan, Professor Dr Gulzar Jalal, President of the Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry Rabia Basri and China Window Administrator Amjad Aziz Malik.

The speakers shed light on CPEC's strategic importance and the opportunities it brings to uplift the nation's economy.

In his address, Muzzammil Aslam stressed the importance of leveraging the expertise of Chinese investors and industrialists to expedite Pakistan's journey toward sustainable development.

"Factories in the Rashkai Economic Zone are already operational and their positive impacts will soon be evident."

Director highlighted that the Centre is dedicated to addressing the challenges related to low productivity, livelihood, impacts of climate change, transboundary diseases, and trade barriers in agriculture, among other priority domains.

Renamed in 2007 from the earlier SAARC Agricultural Information Centre, SAC is mandated to work to promote agricultural research and development as well as transfer of agriculture technology in the region. The Centre is facilitating



QUETTA: A delegation of Traders of Thana Road meeting with Central President Anjuman-e-Tajiran Balochistan Abdul Rahim Kakar.

## France's Macron, Saudi crown prince sign strategic partnership, call for Lebanon elections

**Monitoring Desk**  
RIYADH: French President Emmanuel Macron and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman signed a strategic partnership on Monday aimed at deepening bilateral ties and de-escalating conflict in the Middle East, including Lebanon, where the two leaders called for presidential elections. The French leader arrived in Saudi Arabia on Monday for a three-day state visit just as a political crisis threatens to topple the French government.

After a meeting with Prince Mohammed, the de facto ruler of the oil-rich Gulf kingdom, Macron's office announced the signing of a new partnership aimed at improving cooperation in "defence, energy transition, culture, mobility between the two countries". The two leaders also "agreed to make every effort to contribute to de-escalation in the region", including helping to consolidate the fragile ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon.

"Together, they called for the holding of presidential elections in Lebanon

with the aim of bringing the Lebanese people together and carrying out the reforms necessary for the stability and security of the country," the statement from Macron's office said.

Macron touched down in Riyadh in the afternoon, where he was greeted by an honour guard of sword-bearing servicemen and celebratory cannon fire as he disembarked from his plane.

He did not comment on the political situation in France as he arrived.

Macron's visit began as France's less than three-month-old minority government faced the prospect of being forced out by a vote of no confidence in the coming days.

The far-right National Rally party said it would vote to oust Michel Barnier's government after the prime minister used an executive tool to push through a social security budget bill without parliamentary approval.

The left-wing is also expected to back the motion, which could be held as early as Wednesday. If

successful, it would oust the government that was appointed in September after snap polls.

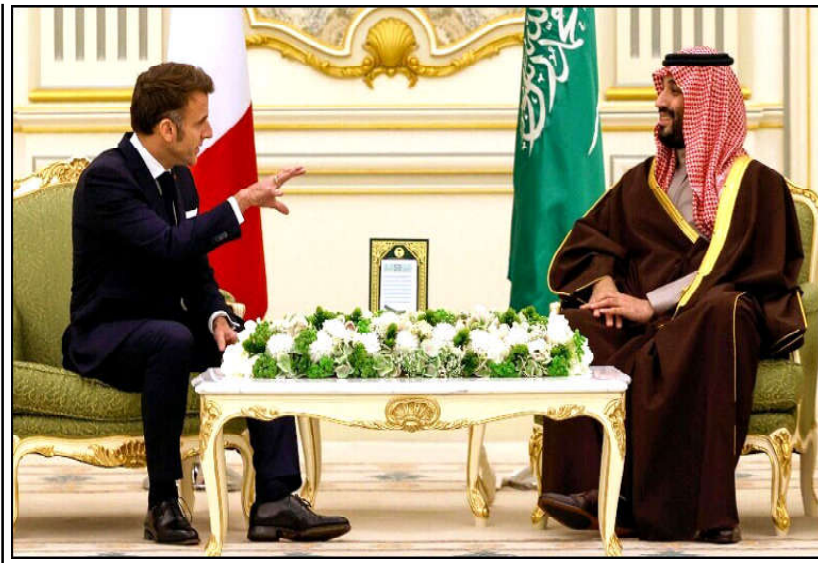
Macron's three-day stay also coincides with a flare-up of violence in Syria, where anti-government rebels have seized Aleppo, the country's second-largest city.

The fighting in Syria follows France's brokering of a ceasefire in neighbouring Lebanon, where Israel has been fighting Hezbollah.

Macron's state visit is the first by a French president to Saudi Arabia since Jacques Chirac in 2006, cementing what the presidency calls a "very close relationship".

In 2021, Macron became one of the first Western leaders to meet Prince Mohammed in Saudi Arabia after the 2018 murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi at Riyadh's consulate in Istanbul.

The French president and Prince Mohammed will see how they "work together" on the conflicts shaking the region, with Lebanon at the "heart of the discussions".



French President Emmanuel Macron meets with Saudi's Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman during an official visit in Riyadh.

## ICJ opens hearing on climate change

**Monitoring Desk**  
THE HAGUE: The future of the planet is at stake during hearings at the top United Nations court, a representative for Vanuatu said on Monday, opening a historic case that aims to set a legal framework on how countries should tackle climate change.

More than 100 countries and organisations are set to present before the International Court of Justice over the next two weeks, the highest number ever.

"The outcome of these proceedings will reverberate across generations, de-

termining the fate of nations like mine and the future of our planet," said Vanuatu's representative for climate change, Ralph Regenvanu.

"This may well be the most consequential case in the history of humanity," Regenvanu told the 15-judge bench in the panelled hall of the Peace Palace in The Hague.

Activists hope the ICJ opinion will have far-reaching legal consequences in the fight against climate change, impacting ongoing court cases as well as domestic and international legislation.

## Putin is 'not interested in peace,' says NATO chief

**Monitoring Desk**  
ATHENS: NATO's new chief on Tuesday drew a grim picture of Russia's leadership, saying that President Vladimir Putin is "not interested in peace."

Referring to the Ukraine war that Russia launched in February 2022, Secretary General Mark Rutte said: "He is pressing on, trying to take more territory. Because he thinks he can break Ukraine's resolve."

"Ukraine is entering another crucial winter. And Russia's aggression shows no sign of abating."

## South Korea President Yoon declares martial law, slams domestic opponents

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol declared martial law in a surprise late-night TV address on Tuesday, slamming domestic political opponents and sending shockwaves through the country.

Yoon said opposition parties had taken the parliamentary process hostage. He vowed to eradicate "shameless pro-North Korean anti-state forces" and said he had no choice but to take the measure to safeguard constitutional order. Yonhap news agency cited the military as saying activities by parliament and political parties would be banned, and that media and publishers would be under the control of the martial law command.

Yoon did not cite any specific threat from the nuclear-armed North, in-

stead focusing on his domestic political opponents. It is the first time since 1980 that martial law has been declared in South Korea. South Korea has had a series of authoritarian leaders early in its history but has been considered democratic since the 1980s.

The Korean won was down sharply against the US dollar. A central bank official said it was preparing measures to stabilise the market if needed. South Korea's parliament, with 190 of its 300 members agency, passed a motion requiring the martial law declared by President Yoon to be lifted, live TV showed. Finance Minister Choi Sang-mok has convened an emergency meeting among top economic officials, his spokesman said in a text message.

## Ukraine says it will not accept any alternatives to full membership in NATO

**Monitoring Desk**  
ISTANBUL: Ukraine on Tuesday said that it will not accept any alternatives to Kyiv's full membership in NATO, pointing to the "failure" of the 1994 Budapest Memorandum which will mark the 30th anniversary since its signing later this week.

"With the bitter experience of the Budapest Memorandum behind us, we will not accept any alternatives, surrogates or substitutes for Ukraine's full membership in NATO," a Ukrainian Foreign Ministry statement said.

It said that Kyiv is convinced that the only real security guarantee for Ukraine is its membership in NATO, adding that inviting the country to join the alliance will deprive Moscow of its "illusions about the possibility of hindering Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration."

The statement argued that not providing Ukraine

with effective security guarantees in the 1990s was a "strategic mistake" that Russia "exploited" and that the Budapest Memorandum failed to prevent the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

"Failure of the Budapest Memorandum to fulfill its functions has led to a catastrophic increase in security threats not only for Ukraine, but also for other countries and regions, including Europe, the Euro-Atlantic area, Central and Southeast Asia, the Middle East and international peace and security in general," it further said. The ministry also defined the Budapest Memorandum as a "monument to short-sightedness in strategic security decision-making."

"It should serve as a reminder to the current leaders of the Euro-Atlantic community that building a European security architecture at the expense of Ukraine's interests



South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol delivers a speech to declare martial law in Seoul, South Korea.

## Thailand, Malaysia brace for fresh wave of floods as water levels ease

**Monitoring Desk**  
KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia and Thailand are facing a second wave of heavy rain and potential flooding this week, authorities said on Monday, even as some displaced residents were able to return home and the worst floods in decades began receding in some areas.

Since last week, 27 people have died and more than half a million households in the neighbouring Southeast Asian countries have been hit by torrential rain and flooding that authorities say have been the most severe in years.

The immediate situation has improved in some areas and water levels have eased, according to government data on Monday.

## In pivot from India, Nepal PM seeks economic support from China

**Monitoring Desk**  
NEW DELHI: Nepal's veteran communist politician KP Sharma Oli, returning as the country's prime minister this year for a fourth time, sought to kick-start infrastructure projects with Beijing this week amid a pivot away from India's sphere of influence.

Oli arrived in China on Monday for a four-day visit, his first to a foreign country since his July swearing-in, and breaking tradition by not making New Delhi, with which Kathmandu has centuries-old ties, his initial port of call.

Oli has so far been greeted by familiar pledges of assistance, but no new investment.

The nine deals that Nepal signed with China on

Tuesday had been previously agreed.

During Oli's meeting with President Xi Jinping on Tuesday, the Chinese leader reiterated that China would help Nepal transform from a landlocked country into a "land-linked" one, and would continue to support Nepal's economic development "to the best of its ability", according to Chinese state media.

Kathmandu, which signed up for Xi's Belt and Road Initiative aimed at building China's infrastructure and trade links with the rest of the world, says no project has yet been implemented since an initial pact was inked in 2017, despite being keen to break ground on projects.

## White House defends Biden pardoning son as criticism mounts

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: The White House said on Monday that President Joe Biden pardoned his son Hunter in part to protect him from future persecution from political opponents, but his move drew fierce criticism, with some Democrats saying it undermined public trust in the rule of law.

Biden, a Democrat whose term ends on January 20 when Republican President-elect Donald Trump takes office, signed an unconditional pardon

for Hunter Biden on Sunday and said he believed his son had been selectively prosecuted and targeted unfairly by the president's political opponents.

Biden said in the past that he would not pardon his son, including to ABC News in June when he was asked if he would rule it out and replied "yes." His surprise move was panned by his Republican political opposition, but also by Democrats who said it eroded trust in the judicial system.

## Russia claims it took control of 2 more settlements in eastern Ukraine

**Monitoring Desk**  
ISTANBUL: Russia on Tuesday claimed that it took control of two more settlements amid its ongoing offensive in eastern Ukraine. Russian forces captured the village of Romanivka, about 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) south of the city of Kurakhove, a key stronghold of Ukrainian forces in the Donetsk region that houses a thermal power plant, according to a Defense Ministry statement.

## Ghana's economic crisis looms over impending elections

**Monitoring Desk**  
GHANA: After serving in Ghana's police force for over three decades, pensioner Emmanuel Ameyemegah had a clear retirement plan: invest part of his pension benefits in government bonds, complete the construction of his house, and buy a car. All was going according to plan until Jan 6, 2023, when he received a call from his bank that Ghana was restructuring bonds he held.

"I started sweating," said Ameyemegah, 63, recalling the uncertainty and fear that gripped him and other bondholders. The retired chief inspector is one of thousands of Ghanaian private.

## Vietnam court upholds death sentence for tycoon Truong My Lan in \$12bn fraud case

**Monitoring Desk**  
HO CHI MINH: A court in Vietnam on Tuesday upheld a death sentence for real estate tycoon Truong My Lan after rejecting her appeal against a conviction for embezzlement and bribery in a high-profile \$12 billion fraud case, state media reported.

Lan, the chairwoman of real estate developer Van Thinh Phat Holdings Group, was sentenced to death in April for her role in what was Vietnam's biggest financial fraud case on record.

The High People's Court in southern Ho Chi Minh City determined there was no basis to reduce Lan's death sentence, reported online newspaper VnExpress.

If Lan is able to return three-quarters of the money embezzled while on death row, it is possible the sentence could be commuted to life imprisonment, the report said.

She is one of the most famous business executives and state officials jailed in the communist country's lengthy anti-graft campaign known as "Blazing Furnace".

"The consequences Lan caused are unprecedented in the history of litigation and the amount of money embezzled is unprecedentedly large and unrecoverable," the prosecution was quoted as saying at the appeal hearing by state-run online newspaper VietnamNet.

## Yemen's Houthis say targeted Israel with missile

**Monitoring Desk**  
SANAA: Yemen's Houthi rebels said they fired a missile at central Israel on Sunday (Dec 1), as Israeli forces announced they had intercepted a "projectile".

The Iran-backed rebels "carried out a targeting operation against a vital target" in the Tel Aviv area using a "hypersonic missile", a Houthi statement said.

An Israeli armed forces statement said: "One projectile launched from Yemen was intercepted by the IAF prior to its crossing into Israeli territory."

## Iraqi militias to 'reinforce' pro-Assad forces

**Monitoring Desk**  
AMMAN: Hundreds of fighters from Iraqi militias crossed into Syria on Sunday night to help Damascus take back Aleppo from anti-government fighters who seized the city last week. Over 300 fighters, primarily from the Badr and Nujabaa groups, crossed late on Sunday using a dirt road to avoid the official border crossing, two Iraqi security sources said.

"These are fresh reinforcements being sent to aid our comrades on the front lines in the north," a senior Syrian military source said, adding the fighters had crossed in small groups to avoid air strikes.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said on Monday Syria's military was capable of confronting its opponents but, referring to the regional militia groups Tehran backs, he added that "resistance groups will help and Iran will provide any support needed".

Syrian government and Russian warplanes intensified attacks on Monday in areas held by fighters belonging to the Hayat Tahrir Al Sham (HTS) group in the northwest.



Supporters of Georgia's opposition parties gather to protest against the new government's decision to suspend the European Union accession talks and refuse budgetary grants until 2028, in Tbilisi.

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DPM Dar stresses effective implementation of ECO trade agreement for regional prosperity

MASHHAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Tuesday urged the member states to ensure effective implementation of the Economic Cooperation Organization Trade Agreement (ECOTA) to help strengthen regional security and economic prosperity through mutually beneficial intra-regional trade.

trast to other regional groupings such as the EU where the intra-regional trade stands above 70%, and the ASEAN, where it is around 23%," the deputy prime minister said addressing the 28th Meeting of ECO Council of Ministers (COM) being hosted here.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of Task Force established in view of recent law and order situation.

CM expresses discontentment over implementation on projects of Health & Education sectors

Bugti directs high ups to ensure speedy work on development projects make sure transparency and public requirements in public sector development programme; directs to prepare comprehensive strategy for 5 year development projects

Independent Report QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti has expressed discontentment over implementation on the projects of Health and Education departments and directed to ensure speedy work on the projects making sure transparency and public requirements in the public sector development programme (PSDP).

Those who were in attendance were included the Provincial Minister for Planning and Development, Mir Zahoor Ahmed Buledi, Provincial Minister Finance, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani, spokesman of Provincial Government,

Shahid Rind, Chief Secretary, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Principal Secretary, Babar Khan, Additional Chief Secretary Development, Hafiz Abdul Basit, Secretary Finance, Imran Zarkoon and other concerned high ups.

The meeting was about the development projects and allocated resources for them by the high ups of Planning and Development Department.

The meeting was agreed on five-year development projects for Washuk district. It was directed to prepare comprehensive strategy in this regard.

Addressing the meeting, Chief Minister directed to improve the PSDP of last year by removing variances.

In addition to this, needs must be ensured in the PSDP anyway, the Chief Minister directed maintaining the resources allocated for projects should be made compatible ending wrong traditions of the past.

He also directed to introduce the modern technology for review of the transparency in PSDP besides keeping strict vigil on its all stages.

He conveyed to the P&D Department not to make any scheme based on personal gains or commission part of the PSDP.

He warned that stern action would be taken against any "babu" (official) who was found any irregularity.

He stressed that the benefits of development must reach common men of the province.

PM for punishing rioters who martyred LEAs personnel, damaged public properties

ISLAMABAD (APP): The prime minister said that a world-class anti-riot force would be raised in the country to meet the contemporary requirements. By establishing a forensic lab, the Islamabad Safe City would be upgraded to international standards for which all necessary resources would be utilized.

The prime minister, chairing the meeting of the task force formed to investigate the riots in the November 24 sit-in in the federal capital, said that the progress on legal action against the rioters would be reviewed weekly.

He said the attack on Islamabad by the insurgents during the official visit of the Belarusian president caused great embarrassment for the country.



ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary leader of PML-N and Provincial Minister for Communication and Works Mir Saleem Ahmed Khosa and social worker Attullah Khosa in a group photo with Federal Minister for Commerce and Industry Jam Kamal Khan

Cochlear implant surgery starts in ENT Unit, Head & Neck Surgery Dept of SPHHQ

Independent Report QUETTA: The Cochlear implant surgery has been started in the ENT Unit-III, Head and Neck Surgery department of the Sandeman Provincial Headquarter Hospital Quetta (SPHHQ) here.

The Provincial Minister for Health, Bakht Muhammad Kakar formally inaugurated the rare facility of the cochlear implant surgery in the SPHHQ.

Two surgeries of the cochlear implant were conducted for the first time in history of Balochistan.

The senior ENT specialist, Professor Dr. Muhammad Umar Farooq performed the successful surgeries of cochlear implant along with his team in the ENT Unit-III of the major teaching hospital of Quetta.

The Provincial Minister for Health



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti giving away shield to DR NADRA Balochistan Kashif Iqbal during a ceremony held in connection with World Disable Day.



KARACHI: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Prof Ahsan Iqbal addressing at the opening ceremony of the World Islamic Finance Forum hosted by IBA.

Sindh Coastal Highway to help developing coastal belt, impeding sea erosion: Ahsan

KARACHI (APP): The Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal, during a visit of Sindh Coastal Highway on Tuesday, said that the project would help addressing the issue of sea intrusion and opening growth avenues in coastal areas of the province.

The federal minister inspected the construction process of Sindh Coastal Highway at Gharo and also received a briefing from the officers concerned.

The minister while talking to media at the occasion, said that federal government was working for development of coastal areas of Sindh in collaboration with the provincial government.

The project has been initiated by the Sindh government and federal government has pledged to complete a 37 kilometer section of the highway, he said and added that sea has eroded thousands acres of land in coastal areas of Sindh and the project will play a significant role in preserving the land from sea intrusion.



HONG KONG: Federal Ombudsman Ijaz Ahmed Qureshi addressing International Ombudsmen Conference 2024 on eve of 35th anniversary of establishment of Ombudsman office

Wafaqi Mohtasib addresses International Ombudsman Summit- 2024 at Hong Kong

Ombudsmanship has taken firm roots in Pakistan; Calls for greater sharing of experiences and best practices amongst Ombuds Institutions

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: The Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman), Mr. Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi has said that addressing maladministration and protection of human rights is inextricably linked to good governance, accountability and inclusivity.

He was addressing the International Ombudsman Summit - 2024 in Hong Kong organized on the eve of the 35th anniversary of the establishment of the Office of the Ombudsman in Hong Kong, China. Mr. Qureshi, who is the current President of the 47-member strong Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA), said that the United Nations, too, recognizes the importance of the institution of Ombudsman in strengthening democracy, good governance and the rule of law.



BANGKOK: Senator Bilal Ahmed Khan Mandokhail and Senator Afnanullah Khan representing Pakistan in Global Health Security Conference.

Levies force foils WAPDA cable theft in Musakhel

Independent Report MUSAKHEL: Levies Force personnel from the Tungi Sar post have apprehended thieves involved in stealing WAPDA cables in the area.

The thieves were caught red-handed while loading the stolen cables onto a rickshaw. The operation was carried out on the directives of Deputy Commissioner Jamiluddin Mando Khel, who had received a complaint from WAPDA authorities. The Levies Force sprang into action, successfully foiling the theft attempt.

Deputy Commissioner Jamiluddin Mando Khel emphasized that maintaining law and order, and protecting citizens from thieves, is a top priority. He warned that no compromises will be made in dealing with criminals, and those found guilty will face severe punishment.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Health Bakht Muhammad Kakar talking with mediators after inaugurating cochlear implant surgery in the ENT Unit-III, Head and Neck Surgery department of the Sandeman Provincial Headquarter Hospital Quetta (SPHHQ).

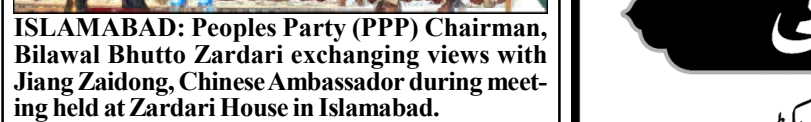
Registered on PCP CS directs secretaries to pay special attention on removing grievances of people

Independent Report QUETTA: The Chief Secretary Balochistan, Shakeel Qadir Khan has directed to all administrative secretaries to pay special on the file trekking system and removing public grievances registered on the Pakistan Citizen Portal (PCP).

The Chief Secretary also directed to address the pending and overdue cases immediately, besides ensuring completion of the development projects in province within the stipulated time. He said that the province would progress with completion of the development projects.

He said that it is top responsibility of the officers to work for the public welfare.

The Chief Secretary was presiding over meeting of the secretaries committee here on Tuesday. The meeting discussed about the file trekking system, IPMS, development projects and other important matters. The meeting was attended by the Additional Chief Secretary Development, Hafiz Abdul Basit, Additional Chief Secretary Home, Shahab Ali Shah, Ghulam Nabi Baloch, Senior Member Board of Revenue, Qambar Dashti and all secretaries of the provincial government departments.



ISLAMABAD: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari exchanging views with Jiang Zaidong, Chinese Ambassador during meeting held at Zardari House in Islamabad.

Govt mobilizing all available resources to resolve public issues, says Faisal Jamali

Independent Report QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Livestock Department, Sardarzada Faisal Khan Jamali had stated that the government is mobilizing all available resources to resolve the issues being faced by the people.

In this regard, it is wholehearted endeavour of the government to provide basic healthcare facilities and clean drinking water to the people besides establishing road network.

The Minister was speaking to the district officers during meeting in Usta Muhammad on Tuesday.

The district officers informed the Minister about the issues being faced by them.

Sardarzada Faisal Jamali exhorted the officers to perform their duties with dedication to resolve the issues being faced by general public.

He said that it is necessary for the officers to ensure their attendance at their respective duty places so that the people may not face any inconvenience to get their issues resolved.

He said that Usta Muhammad is facing issues because of the newly established district, but all efforts would be made to resolve them. He said that the buildings and manpower are needed for the district offices.

D-Chowk protest: ATC issues written order for arrest warrants of PTI founder & others

ISLAMABAD (Online): Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) Islamabad has issued written order in connection with arrest warrants of PTI founder, Ali Amin Gandapur, Bushra Bibi and others in the case related to D-Chowk protest.

Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra has issued one page order in respect of 96 accused persons.

Name of chairman PTI barrister Gohar is not included in the written order of arrest warrants while name of Ali Amin Gandapur is mentioned in the order.

Police has mentioned Ali Amin Gandapur as MPA instead of chief minister in their plea.

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Advertisement for Faatima Khwani featuring text in Urdu and English, including contact information and event details.