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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs the Federal Cabinet meeting.

Takes key decisions in different sectors Federal Cabinet approves National Prevention of Violent Extremism Policy 2024

PM hopeful of further cut in policy rate after 'record decline' in inflation; Reduction in inflation to lessen common man's burden; Urges ministers to focus on fiscal growth after achieving initial milestone of economic stability

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Cabinet, on the recommendation of the Interior Ministry, approved the National Prevention of Violent Extremism Policy 2024 on Monday.

The cabinet also approved in principle the proposal of the interior ministry with respect to the establishment of Islamabad Central Business District Development Authority.

The meeting, on the recommendation of commerce ministry, authorized to file review petition against the Supreme Court of Pakistan's decision of lifting ban on the export of Monosodium glutamate (Ajinomoto).

The decision was taken in the light of the report of the expert's special com-

mittee that was formed to monitor the impacts of Monosodium glutamate on human health. The report had termed the Monosodium glutamate safe for human health. The committee was comprised of representatives from Pakistan Scientific and Industrial Research, National Agriculture Research Center, National University of Sciences and Technology, Institute of Food and Nutritional Sciences, Federal Ministry of National Food Safety and Research, Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority and Board of Investment.

The meeting of the federal cabinet was held here under the chairmanship of Prime Minister

Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. The cabinet, on the proposal of ministry of education and professional training also gave a go ahead to the renewal of the Memoranda of Understandings with respect to University of Cambridge, Saint Antony's College University of Oxford, University of Jordan, Pecking University China, University of Hydal Berg, and Pakistan Chairs in Germany.

Furthermore, the cabinet, on the recommendation of ministry of education and professional training approved nomination of Dr Habib ur Rehman and Dr Kamran Ansari as subject experts in the Board of

University of Engineering and Technology (UET) Lahore and the nomination of Dr Mumtaz Muhammad Shah and Dr Muhammad Ahmed Farooqui as subject experts in Board of Governors of Center of Excellence in Mineralogy, University of Balochistan Quetta.

The federal cabinet, on the proposal of ministry of law and justice and in line with Sindh High Court orders approved the amendment in the jurisdiction of special courts.

On the recommendation of ministry of law and justice and in line with Balochistan High Court orders, the cabinet also approved amendments in the jurisdiction of special courts (customs, taxation and anti smuggling) Quetta and Khuzdar.

Similarly, on proposals of ministry of law and justice and in line with orders of Peshawar High Court, Lahore High Court, Islamabad High Court, Sindh High Court, and Balochistan High Court, the cabinet authorized the additional session judges and other relevant courts to hear the cases under lawyers welfare and protection act 2023.

Earlier, speaking on the occasion, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif appreciated his economic teams' performance saying that the country's economy was on track to progress amid stringent clamp down on smuggling, plummeting inflation and doubled revenue collection that helped improve the eroding economy.

Currently held in Adiala Jail, Khan's health is reported to be stable. Jail sources indicate that there is no truth to the rumors claiming that the former prime minister has been transferred from Adiala Jail.

Prosecutor Amin Minhas confirmed that Khan will be taken on a seven-day physical remand on Monday for the six cases. The remand in the case registered by the New Town police station has already been completed, and the remand in the remain-

ing cases will be processed today.

Imran arrested in six additional cases, remand extended

RAWALPINDI (INP): Imran Khan, the founding chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and former Prime Minister of Pakistan, has been arrested in six more cases, according to authorities.

These arrests occurred on September 28, October 4, and October 5. Prosecutor Amin Minhas confirmed that Khan will be taken on a seven-day physical remand on Monday for the six cases. The remand in the case registered by the New Town police station has already been completed, and the remand in the remain-

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Inflation rate drops to 4.9% in November, lowest in 6.5 years

ISLAMABAD (APP): The core inflation measured by Consumer Price Index (CPI) decelerated further to 4.9 percent during November 2024 as compared to 7.2 percent recorded during October 2024, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported Monday.

According to PBS data, the CPI based inflation during the same month of last year (November 2023) was recorded at 29.2%.

On month-on-month basis, it increased by 0.5% in November 2024 as compared to an increase of 1.2% in the previous month and an increase of 2.7% in November 2023.

"Pakistan Inflation as measured by CPI has made another multi-year low,"

commented Advisor to Finance Minister on Economic and Financial Reforms Khurram Schehzad on X.

He said, the inflation was lowest in 6.5 years, impacts common man, businesses and government fiscal status.

He expressed the hope that such a low pace of inflation would result in more monetary easing, leading to further decline in cost of capital for businesses and industries and higher savings on debt servicing for the government resulting in improved fiscal balance in the coming months.

According to PBS data, CPI inflation Urban, decreased to 5.2% on year-on-year basis in November

2024 as compared to the 9.3% in the previous month and 30.4% in November 2023.

On month-on-month basis, it increased by 0.5% in November 2024 as compared to an increase of 1.1% in the previous month and an increase of 4.3% in November 2023.

CPI inflation Rural, increased by 4.3% on year-on-year basis in November 2024 as compared to 4.2% in the previous month and 27.5% in November 2023.

On month-on-month basis, it increased by 0.5% in November 2024 as compared to an increase of 1.5% in the previous month and an increase of 0.4% in November 2023.



QUETTA: Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PKMAP) Chief, Mehmood Khan Achakzai addresses to his supporters during public gathering meeting on the occasion of 51st death anniversary of the Shaheed Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai, in Quetta.

"Long live democratic Pakistan and Afghanistan": Chairman PkMAP describes Shahbaz's govt. as illegitimate

Mehmood Khan Achakzai says only way out of running Pakistan lies in supremacy of constitution and law; demands of rulers to release PTI founder immediately; threatens to launch protest movement

INDEPENDENT REPORT

QUETTA: The Chairman Pashoonkhaw Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) and head of the opposition alliance, Tehreek-e-Taha-fuz-e-Aayeen Pakistan, Mehmood Khan Achakzai said that we want such Pakistan where every nationality has equal rights. He said that only way out of running the country lies in supremacy of constitution and law.

He described the PML-N's Shahbaz Sharif government as illegitimate and as

such it has no right to rule the country. He said that we would launch movement against the government, which came into being through might and manipulation. He said that Pakistan would become best country in the world only when due rights are given to the all.

He said that it is unavoidable to give all nationalities due rights, as without it, the country can't run. He said that Pakistan would survive till the day of judgment only when all institutions of the country would

work under their respective jurisdictions. He said that this country is ours and it is our homeland, we can make our ends meet. The integrity of Afghanistan is linked with integrity of Pakistan. We should honour independence and sovereignty of Afghanistan.

The Chairman PkMAP was addressing the public gathering held under auspices of the party marking 51st death anniversary of the renowned Pashtoon nationalist leader, Khan Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai.



Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar has arrived in Mashhad, Iran. He was warmly received at the airport by Vice Governor General of Razavi Khorasan province Mohammad Ali Nabipour and Pakistan's Ambassador to Iran, Mudassar Tipu.

Committee formed to probe disinformation: Danyal Chaudhry

INDEPENDENT REPORT KARACHI: The Parliamentary Secretary of Information and Broadcasting Barrister Danyal Chaudhry on Monday said that a Committee on Disinformation had been formed to probe into issues related to spreading disinformation.

He said that the Committee would take strict action against those, who were in forefront of spreading disinformation specially belonging to parliamentary issues.

While talking to media persons, during his visit to Sindh Assembly leading a delegation of Young Parliamentarians Forum (YPF) including its President MNA Syeda Nausheen Iftikhar and General Secretary MNA Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani, he said that the Committee had power to pronounce 10 years sentence.

Danyal Chaudhry said that those, who were involved directly or indirectly in attempts to sabotage Parliament, sovereignty of the country, and its stability would be made accountable.

Meanwhile, YPF President Syeda Nausheen Iftikhar said that their purpose of visiting Karachi was to develop coordination with provinces and form YPF at provincial levels. She said that YPF was a chapter in which Speaker of National Assembly had been interested to take along the provinces and our parliamentarians.

The age limit for YPF was 44 and there were 64 Young Parliamentarians in the National Assembly. Nausheen said that the present era was of misinformation and disinformation and its impacts could be seen at national level whether those were processions or protests in which properties of

the country were damaged. She said that their focus was on youth engagement, their own skill development, public dealing, and social media to cope with the vibe set against institutions.

She was of the view that the formation of YPF in the provinces would also deal with the attempts of misleading the nation.

Earlier, upon their arrival, they were received by the Secretary of Sindh Assembly G.M. Umar Farooq.

Later, the delegation called on the Speaker Sindh Assembly Syed Awaiz Qadir Shah and visited various parts of the historic Sindh Assembly building.

In the meeting, Syeda Nausheen Iftikhar, engaged in productive discussions with the Speaker Syed Awaiz Qadir Shah and members of the Sindh Assembly, according to a PA communique.

CJP agrees to many requests of SCBAP for efficient dispensation of justice

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Chief Justice of Pakistan Mr Justice Yahya Afridi has agreed to early fixation of all types of bail applications soon after the filing, restoration of the chamber hearing to interim applications and many other steps requested by the Supreme Court Bar Association of Pakistan (SCBAP).

The President SCBAP, Mian Muhammad Rauf Atta, accompanied by the General Secretary, Mr. Salman Mansoor, met with the Chief Justice of Pakistan, Mr. Justice Yahya Afridi, to discuss challenges faced by the legal fraternity in ensuring efficient dispensation of justice at the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

The Chief Justice was acceded to many genuine requests of the Bar. He agreed to early fixation of all types of bail applications soon after the filing and to allow the request of restoration of the chamber hearing of the cases with regard to interim applications and stay matters.

CJP indicated that throughout the week, judges nominated by the Supreme Court would be hearing the cases in chamber. Following the SCBA leadership's request, the Chief Justice agreed to increase the number of judges assigned to chamber appeals to further expedite the process.

He also acceded to the request of the SCBAP that all applications requesting a video link would be entertained on the same day of the hearing of cases in the respective Registries.

DPM Dar arrives in Mashhad to attend ECO ministerial meeting

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Monday arrived in Mashhad, Iran to attend the 28th meeting of the Council Ministers of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). He was warmly received at the airport by Vice Governor General of Razavi Khorasan province

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ISLAMABAD: Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf exchanging views with Western Fleet Commander of, Rear Admiral Mansour Bin Saud Al-Juaid at Naval Headquarter.

Mortar explosion kills three seminary students in Bannu

PESHAWAR (APP): Three children of a local religious seminary were killed when a dumped mortar shell exploded in Janikhel area of Bannu on Monday.

Local police said three children namely, Zeeshan and Wahab, sons of Ubaid Ullah and Alamzeb, son of Jahangir, residents of Seen Langa were playing with a live mortar shell when it exploded with a big bang.

As a result, all the three children died at the scene. Bodies of the children were later shifted to hospital for medico legal procedure and dressing.

Govt forms Task Force to identify propaganda perpetrators

ISLAMABAD (INF): The Government has constituted a Joint Task Force (JTF) to identify Perpetrators involved in malicious propaganda against the state.

The Joint Task Force will identify individual groups and organizations involved in creating and spreading fake and misleading news.

The JTF has been constituted consequent upon recent incidents of terrorism and vandalism and a massive malicious campaign to discredit the state in general and security forces in particular.

Multiple domestic and foreign based media platforms are being used to perpetrate concocted, baseless and inciting news implicating State apparatus for committing serious human rights violations.

This campaign is aimed at creating serious law and order situation in the country and foment provincialism and ethnic cleavages for specific political interests. The JTF shall present its findings within ten days and bring perpetrators to justice at the earliest.



KARACHI: Parliamentary Secretary of Information and Broadcasting Barrister Danyal Chaudhry and Speaker Sindh Assembly Syed Awaiz Qadir Shah meet the YPF delegation, led by President Syeda Nausheen Iftikhar, to discuss YPF's role in legislative initiatives and youth engagement.

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

The ban question

Renewed talk about banning one of the country's largest political parties shows nothing but the impoverishment of democratic thought in the Pakistani power elite. Following the forcible eviction of the PTI's latest protest from the federal capital, some entities have once again taken to describing the party as a 'terrorist outfit' and are seeking its proscription. Thankfully, the PPP, JUI and some others have opposed the measure, calling it a bad idea.

Others, perhaps most surprisingly the ANP, have made no bones about the fact that they wish to see the PTI removed from the picture completely. However, the parties that want the PTI to be banned do not seem to realise that they are veering away from the very 'democratic' credentials they claim to possess.

The recent round of condemnations started with the Balochistan Assembly, which passed a resolution on Thursday amid an opposition walk-out calling to ban the party after its recent protests. Even by the sketchy standards of democracy in the province, this marked a new low. A similar resolution was also tabled in the Punjab Assembly, but this could not be passed with the same alacrity shown by the Balochistan Assembly, seemingly due to the PPP's opposition to the move.

Meanwhile, the federal cabinet considered imposing governor's rule in KP but again, saner minds seemed to have prevailed. None of this, however, is as disappointing for a student of Pakistan's political history as the fact that the heir of Khan Abdul Wali Khan, Aimal Wali, current chief of the Awami National Party, has also joined the chorus of those seeking a ban on PTI, going so far as to call it a "waste that should be disposed of".

Among Pakistan's mainstream political parties, only two have been formally banned. One was the National Awami Party, led by Wali Khan, which was proscribed in 1975 but then came back to life as the ANP. The other was the Awami League, and the disastrous consequences of banning it led to the secession of East Pakistan. After usurping power, the dictator Gen Ziaul Haq attempted to ban the PPP too, and was instrumental in carving some factions out of it, but Bhutto's party also endured.

This history shows that bans simply do not work. All parties make mistakes, and the state and the citizenry can sometimes clash in violent ways. But this cannot be used to justify denying the public their constitutional right to organise under whatever banner they wish.

Instead of resorting to such arbitrary calls, all parties must focus on contributing positively towards the country's political culture by working to mitigate the divisions that exist between them and focusing on a negotiated solution. That is the only viable path forward in Pakistan's case.

Slicing Syria

Zarrar Khuhro

As I write this, Syrian rebels are in control of half of the ancient and strategically vital city of Aleppo. In a rapid three-day advance that saw government forces melt away, the rebels captured town after town before entering Aleppo. This is not only the biggest rebel advance in almost a decade, it is also the only time rebels have assaulted Aleppo since 2012, when they seized control of eastern Aleppo before being subjected to a brutal siege by Russian and Syrian forces in 2016, which ended in their retreat.

The offensive has upended the fragile balance established since the Russian and Iranian intervention — aided by a large deployment of pro-Iran forces like Hezbollah, various Iraqi militia groups and also the Al Fatemiyoun and Al Zeinabiyoun militias — helped Bashar al-Assad's floundering Syrian Arab army (SAA) retain control over approximately 70 per cent of the country.

The rebels — an alphabet soup of groups with differing ideologies and composition — retained control of the rest of Syria and have enjoyed the support of a changing cast of regional actors, notably Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, which has carved out a 'buffer zone' in northern Syria, ostensibly as a defence against attacks by the Kurdish Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF).

The rebels have also received political and logistical support (along with not-so-covert military aid) from several Western powers, notably the US, which retains 900 soldiers in Syria, ostensibly to protest against a resurgence by the Daesh.

The current advance is being spearheaded by Hayat al-Tahrir Sham (HTS) along with smaller

groups and seemingly a not insignificant number of foreign fighters, such as Uzbeks and Chechens. Reports also seem to indicate that the SDF is cooperating with Russia and Assad's SAA, and while the fog of war is hard to penetrate, this would make sense given Turkey's support for the Syrian rebels.

Interestingly, the fall of Aleppo has also been welcomed by Taliban militant Hafiz Gul Bahadur, whose group hosted several Arab fighters in the past, some of whom went on to join HTS or its predecessor groups.

HTS has an interesting history: its leader, Abu Mohammed al-Golani, was the commander of Al Qaeda's Syria branch, and directed several bombing campaigns which targeted civilians as much as they did government forces. Since then, he has 'moderated' his stance enough to gain the tacit support (or at least end the opposition) of the US, which had designated HTS as a terrorist group. During Donald Trump's first presidency, the US acknowledged that HTS was no longer on its active target list.

This offensive comes at a time when none of Assad's allies — Iran, Russia or Hezbollah — have resources or troops that can be mobilised quickly to aid Assad's forces, which have often proven themselves incapable of fighting.

And it is no coincidence that this offensive — while undoubtedly planned well in advance — was launched just a few days after the Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire. Having lost a great part of its most senior leadership, and having suffered casualties and a serious depletion of their war material stocks, Hezbollah is in no position to aid Assad. Hezbollah also opened it

self up for infiltration and intelligence gathering by Israel due to their involvement in Syria and may eschew another such involvement so soon, even if they had the resources to manage it.

The same largely goes for Russia, which is bogged down in Ukraine, where its best generals and troops must, of course, be deployed at the expense of the hitherto quiet Syrian front. Now, while some Russian air assets are indeed being deployed, it may well be too little, and certainly far too late, to slow the advance. Strategically, the prospect of losing a chunk of Syria poses a dilemma for Russia, which relies on the Syrian port of Tartus, which is effectively Russia's only foothold in the Mediterranean, and allows the Russian navy to repair, refuel and resupply without having to resort to its Black Sea bases.

In effect, this advance opens up new fronts for Russia, Hezbollah and Iran. The obvious beneficiaries are Israel and the US.

Depleted by its war against Israel in support of Gaza, Hezbollah needs to keep its overland supply routes open in order to be prepared for the inevitable second round with Israel, and the advance directly endangers those routes.

Israel, meanwhile, is sitting pretty, having closed the Lebanese front and redoubled its destruction of Gaza. Tel Aviv has a long history of supporting anti-Assad forces and even evacuating Al Qaeda-linked forces to occupied Golan for medical treatment by Israeli army medics. In 2018, outgoing Israeli chief of staff admitted to having armed anti-Assad rebels after years of denials. The dismantling of the 'axis of resistance' remains the goal and this is just one more step towards that end. -- Courtesy Dawn

Education reforms

Muhammad Memon

Educational reforms in the country have, from the start, struggled with issues of inequality, access, quality, and relevance. Major challenges have included insufficient public spending on education, low literacy rates, gender disparity, an inadequate infrastructure, and poor delivery. The national education policy of 2009 was a landmark reform. It emphasised increasing literacy rates, improving quality, and addressing gender disparities. However, it was not fully implemented due to many hurdles.

Pakistan is committed to the Education for All initiative, which aims at providing quality education to all children, particularly focusing on girls, marginalised groups, and those living in rural areas. Pakistan also undertook higher education reforms, notably with the creation of the Higher Education Commission in 2002. The HEC was tasked with improving research, funding, and infrastructure for the universities. To bridge the gap between education and the workforce, Pakistan has focused on reforms to enhance technical and vocational education in order to improve employability and economic productivity.

The Federal Ministry of Education has introduced a curriculum and assessment reform through a systematic process to improve the quality of education. The HEC has introduced teacher education reform, which helped revamp pre-service teacher education in the country. In order to assure the quality of teacher education, the HEC introduced accreditation for teacher education programmes. The Inter-Board Coordination Committee has intro-

duced a grading scheme for the SSC and HSC examinations conducted by the Boards of Secondary and Intermediate Education in the country — again a positive step towards improving the quality of education. The respective provincial governments have also made a number of interventions for improving the quality of education, but their impact is yet to be determined.

Sindh has introduced teacher licensing managed by the Sindh Teacher Education Development Authority. Although it is at the initial stage, it will help professionalise teacher education and improve teacher quality. Like other provinces, Sindh has also introduced a cluster-based continuous professional development policy, replacing the ad hoc approach to in-service teacher education. A critical mass of human resources, including master trainers, guide teachers, and subject coordinators, has been developed. They will be responsible for teachers' continuous professional development. Under this policy, the subject coordinators have been playing a pivotal role in conducting classroom observations and formative assessments for coaching purposes. The Sindh government has plans to develop the accreditation framework and the continuous professional development qualification framework to promote quality teaching.

In order to fully transform the education system, reforms should focus on increasing public spending, which needs to be substantial in order to ensure that schools are well-funded and equipped with modern teaching resources. There should be a nationwide initiative to improve teacher training and professional development. This would raise the qual-

ity of instruction and improve student learning outcomes.

Education for girls must be a priority, especially in the rural and tribal areas. Incentive programmes, community engagement, and awareness campaigns will help resolve cultural barriers. Using technology for remote learning and optimising digital education platforms can reduce some of the geographical disparities in our education system. Given the country's cultural and regional diversity, educational reforms should be localised to meet the unique needs of each region, while ensuring alignment with the larger national educational goals.

Educational reforms are normally project-driven and funded by donors. Although there are some successes, the projects tend to function in isolation rather than integrating with the mainstream. Donor-driven projects normally take off late due to procedural matters. A thorough implementation plan seems to be the best solution for effective results.

The sustainability of education reforms and their impact have been a long-standing issue, which must be tackled. Any education reform must be part of the national/regional education development plan based on a needs assessment.

Pakistan has an opportunity to reshape its education system into one that meets the needs of all its citizens. A balanced approach, combining investment in infrastructure, teacher quality, curriculum and assessment reform, and technology integration, could provide the foundation for a more equitable and effective education system in the country. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

PM satisfied over pace of Pakistan-Saudi bilateral projects, cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday expressed his satisfaction with the progress in cooperation and investment projects between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, hailing the longstanding friendship between the two nations.

Chairing a review meeting, the prime minister highlighted that Pakistan's

collaboration with Saudi Arabia continued to grow across various sectors, underscoring the strategic partnership between the two countries. "Saudi Arabia has been a reliable partner in Pakistan's challenging times, and we are committed to deepening this cooperation," Prime Minister Shehbaz said.

The meeting also included a briefing on the remarkable progress of

bilateral investments.

The meeting was briefed about the progress on bilateral cooperation in various fields in the second meeting of the Pakistan Saudi Arabia Joint Task Force held in November.

It was informed that within a short span of time, both the countries had signed of 34 memorandums of understanding (MOUs), seven of which have already been formalized

into agreements. These agreements, valued at \$560 million. The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, Minister for Petroleum Dr. Musaddik Malik, and National Coordinator of the Special Investment Facilitation Council Lieutenant General Sarfaraz Ahmed.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting regarding KSAs Investments in various sectors in Pakistan, in Islamabad.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Aurangzeb held a meeting with Ms. Melinda Bohannaon, Director General for Humanitarian and Development at the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO).

Pakistan's regional exports increase 4.09% during Jul-Oct 2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's exports to the seven regional countries increased by 4.09 per cent in the first four months of the current fiscal year (2024-25) compared to the corresponding months of last year.

The country's exports to the regional countries including Afghanistan, China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, and the Maldives account for a small amount of \$1506.131 million, which is 14.33 per cent of Pakistan's overall exports of \$10,507 billion

during July-October (2024-25), State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported.

China tops the list of countries in terms of Pakistan's exports to its neighbouring, leaving behind other countries such as Afghanistan and Bangladesh. Pakistan carried out its border trade with farther neighbour Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, and Maldives.

Pakistan's exports to China witnessed a decrease of 14.58 per cent from \$952.385 million last year to \$813.441 million during last year.

Kisan Board Sialkot president appointed

SIALKOT (APP): With the approval of the Provincial President Kisan Board Punjab Central, Chaudhry Asmatullah Waryah has been appointed as the President of Kisan Board, district Sialkot.

On the appointment of Chaudhry Asmatullah Waryah as the President of Kisan Board district Sialkot, Jamaat-e-Islami District Ameer Chaudhry Imtiaz Ahmed Baryar, Sheikh Atique-ur-Rehman, Dr. Khalid Khalil, Muhammad Ramzan, Arif Mahmood Sheikh.

PCJCCI says: Chemical industry provides key linkages for products tech

LAHORE (APP): Chemical industry provides key linkages in terms of product technology to several industries, such as automotive, engineering, consumer durables, food processing and petrochemicals.

Globally, the chemical industry is one of the largest and fast-growing sectors; a market of about USD 4 trillion with over 70,000 products. Pak-China Joint

Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) Vice President Zafar Iqbal disclosed this in a think-tank session held here at PCJCCI Secretariat on Monday.

He mentioned that it is also recognized as the 'mother of industries' since it is vitally important for overall industrial development and self-reliance, being a major provider of raw material to almost all sectors.

PSX stays bullish, gains 1,917 more points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bullish trend on Monday, gaining 1,917.63 more points, a positive change of 1.89 per cent, closing at 103,274.95 points as compared to 101,357.32 points on the last trading day.

A total of 1,556,252,523 shares were traded during the day as compared to 915,509,804 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs

47.097 billion against Rs. 35.978 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 462 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 339 of them recorded gains and 85 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 38 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 213,514,857 shares at Rs 1.46 per share, Cnergyico PK with 196,907,321 shares at Rs 5.72 per share and Fauji Foods Limited.

Finance Minister apprises FCDO of structural reforms program

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Monday apprised the Director General of Humanitarian and Development at the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), Ms. Melinda Bohannaon of the government's stabilization and structural reforms program.

According to press release issued by finance ministry, during the

meeting with finance minister, Ms. Melinda Bohannaon was accompanied by Ms. Jo Moir, Development Director, and Louie Dane, Senior Economist.

Senior officers from Finance Division also attended the meeting, the statement added.

He outlined key initiatives, including the privatization agenda, pension reforms, and reforms in state-owned enterprises (SOEs).

He highlighted that the quarter 1 tax revenues (YOY) increased by 25.6% in FY 25.

Ms. Bohannaon appreciated the government's comprehensive reforms program and assured the full support to FCDO.

The Federal Minister further shared details about the upcoming ten year Country Partnership Framework with the World Bank (WB), noting that Pakistan will be the first country to enter such a framework.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Seven ships, MSC Positano, Cussler, SM Falcon, Tsukuba Galaxy, Al Jasra, Energy Centaur and Al-Diabi carrying Container, Palm oil, Chemicals, LNG Gas oil and LPG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Liquid Cargo Terminal, Engro Vopak Terminal, Engro Elengy Terminal, FOTCO oil Terminal and Sui Southern Gas Terminal respectively on Sunday. Meanwhile another containership 'MSC Silvana-VIII' also arrived at outer anchorage on today Morning.

DCs directed to ensure payments to sugarcane farmers within 10 days

FAISALABAD (APP): Divisional Commissioner Silwat Saeed has directed the deputy commissioners of Faisalabad division to take appropriate steps for payment to the sugarcane farmers within 10 days after purchase of the produce.

Chairing a meeting here on Monday, she said that the government is committed to save the farming community from exploitation. In this

connection, strict action would be taken if management of any sugar mills is found involved in exploitation of sugarcane growers, she warned.

She said that Punjab government has issued stringent directions for protection of farmers' right. If any sugar mill failed to ensure full payment to the sugarcane growers within 10 days, the premises of such sugar mills would be sealed.

Qaiser Sheikh lays foundation for two new public parks in Chinot

FAISALABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh laid foundation stone for establishment of two new public parks in Chinot on Monday and vowed his commitment to public service and urban development in the area.

Among the new public parks in the city included "Fatima Ladies Park" in Mohalla Mashki Shah and "Irfan Qaiser Sheikh Park" near Lorry Adda Chinot.

Addressing the foundation stone ceremony, the minister highlighted these projects as part of a broader initiative to create recreational spaces for the residents. "Parks and sports grounds contribute to a healthier and happier society", he said, adding that these facilities would enhance Chinot's urban landscape and quality of life. The minister also arranged an open court at his office in Chinot and heard public grievances relating to provision of civic amenities, utilities and health services.

He said that redressal of public problems was collective responsibility.



CHINIOT: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmed Shaikh, distributing sewing machines to the poor ladies while holding a "Khuli Kachehri" (Open Court).

Awareness campaigns vital to tackle climate challenges: Rana

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister's Youth Programme Chairman Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan has said that awareness campaigns are of utmost importance to tackle challenges of climate change.

He said this while addressing PM's Green Youth Movement Capacity Building Training on Climate Action Toolkit at Aiwan-i-Iqbal on Monday. He said that gym clubs in 137 public sector universities and green movement clubs had been set up, adding that more than 18,000 persons have been registered as club members. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also wrote a letter to the members to encourage them, he added.

Rana Mashhood said that after 137 public sector universities, private universities had also been contacted in this regard and there were 268 universities across the country. He said, "We are focusing to make gym clubs in all public and private universities by next year." Later, colleges and schools would be approached in this regard, he said and added that currently smog was the biggest health hazard.



LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif presides over the 1st meeting of Punjab Enforcement and Regulatory Authority.

KP cabinet decides to declare instigators in Kurram as terrorists

Decides to take decisive action in Kurram for lasting peace

PESHAWAR (APP): The 18th meeting of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provincial Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur on Monday decided to take decisive action in Kurram for lasting peace and declare the instigators in the area as terrorists.

The meeting was attended by cabinet members, Chief Secretary, Additional Chief Secretaries, and relevant administrative secretaries.

The cabinet decided to identify elements spreading hatred between two and put their names on Schedule IV and take strict legal action

against them under the law, said a press release issued here after the meeting. The cabinet was informed that so far 133 people have been killed in the area while 177 were injured. It was told that a Grand Jirga has been constituted to mediate and ensure a peaceful resolution to Kurram conflict. The Jirga would remain in the area until peace was fully restored.

Meanwhile the government would dismantle all the bunkers in the area as part of security measures and heavy weapons would be confiscated from civilians. Similarly, 65 security checkpoints would be

established on Kurram highway to ensure safe travel. The cabinet decided to ask the federal government to deploy Frontier Constabulary in the area.

The meeting took important decisions related to payment of financial assistance to the victims including the bereaved families and injured of the clashes.

Compensation to the owners of damaged properties would be made on the basis of an ongoing assessment and survey in the area. It was said on the occasion that an initial amount of Rs 380 million has been released for

compensation, with more funds to follow if needed. The government would facilitate the dignified return of displaced families to their homes.

The cabinet formed a committee comprising the Provincial Minister for Law, Adviser on Information, and relevant parliamentarians to oversee the entire process.

The cabinet also decided to provide bulletproof and bombproof vehicles to the civil administration and Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) in sensitive districts, including Kurram.

CM Punjab says: Punjab's first regulatory authority established to tackle inflation, encroachments

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif chaired the first official meeting of the Punjab Enforcement and Regulatory Authority (PERA) to address crucial issues such as inflation and encroachments, here on Monday.

During the meeting, the CM set a target to make PERA operational within three months.

The meeting also saw the approval of key matters related to the authority's establishment, appointments, regulations, and other procedures. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz directed that all appointments and hiring within PERA be carried out with complete transparency and merit. She also emphasized the need for an effective monitoring system for the authority's operations. Additionally, the formation of committees related to PERA was approved, and positions for the headquarters, divisions, districts, and tehsils were also approved. Each tehsil will have Sub-Divisional Enforcement Officers, Investigation Officers, Senior Sergeants, and Sergeants appointed.



LARKANA: Participants are holding awareness walk led by District Council Larkana Chairman, Aijaz Ahmed Leghari in connection of World AIDS Day organized by Bridge Consultant Foundation held at Arts Council in Larkana.

Speakers call for ending gender-based violence

LAHORE (APP): Punjab University Department of Gender Studies in collaboration with the United Nations Women and the Women Development Department, Punjab Chairperson Department of Gender Studies Prof Dr Ra'ana Malik, Secretary Women Development Department, Punjab Usman Ali Khan, Ms Saman and Nabila Malik from UN Women, Islamabad, faculty members and a large number of students were present.

In her address, Dr Ra'ana Malik emphasized the critical importance of rising voices against gender based violence in Pakistan. She highlighted the PU's commitment to fostering awareness and mobilizing change in society.

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CM condemns attack on police in D.I Khan

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur, strongly condemned the incidents of firing on a police mobile van and a check post in Dera Ismail Khan, resulting in the martyrdom of Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Mir Ghulam and injuries to other police personnel.

Expressing deep sorrow over the loss, the Chief Minister offered heartfelt condolences to the family of the martyred officer and prayed for the elevation of his rank in the afterlife.

Eradicating women harassment, drug trafficking in educational institutions vital: Governor

FAISALABAD (APP): Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that eradicating women harassment in educational institutions is most important to enable them to play their due role in national development freely.

He was addressing the 11th convocation of the University of Faisalabad here on Monday. Chairman Board of Governors Mian Muhammad Haider Amin, Vice Chairman BoG Dr Muhammad Hamza Amin,

Deans, Faculty, parents and a large number of students were present on the occasion.

The governor said that comprehensive policies are being framed to eliminate women harassment as well as clean educational institutions from drug trafficking. He said that some anti-state forces were hatching conspiracies against the society since it came into being. "Our enemies do not want us but we pay tribute to our armed forces who

are sacrificing their lives on borders to protect the homeland," he said.

The governor also paid rich tribute to the martyrs of law enforcement agencies.

He also extended warm congratulations to the teachers, graduating students and their parents.

"I appreciated the selfless efforts of parents who have overcome challenges to support their children's dreams," the governor said.

International News

56 people killed in stampede following clashes at a Guinea soccer match, authorities say

Monitoring Desk
CONAKRY: Fifty-six people were killed and several injured in a stampede at a soccer stadium in southern Guinea, following clashes between fans, Guinea's government said Monday.

Authorities are conducting an investigation to establish those responsible for the stampede on Sunday, Communications Minister Fana Soumah said in a statement read on national television.

Among the victims are several children according to local media and a coalition of political parties.

The stampede broke out on Sunday afternoon at the stadium in the city of Nzerekore during the final of a local tournament between the Labe and Nzerekore teams in honor of Guinea's military leader, Mamadi Doumbouya, Guinea's Prime Minister Amadou

Oury Bah said on the X platform.

"During the stampede, victims were recorded," Bah said, without giving details. The regional authorities are working to restore calm in the area, he added.

Local media reported that security forces tried to use tear gas to restore calm after the chaos that followed a disputed penalty.

"This (the disputed penalty) angered supporters who threw stones. This is how the security services used tear gas," Media Guinea, a local news website, reported. It said several of those killed were children while some of the injured being treated at a regional hospital are in critical condition.

Videos that appeared to be from the scene showed fans in a section of the stadium shouting and protesting the refereeing before clashes broke out as people poured onto the field.

People were running as they tried to escape from the stadium, many of them jumping the high fence.

Videos also showed many people lying on the floor in what looked like a hospital as a crowd gathered nearby, some assisting the wounded.

The National Alliance for Alternation and Democracy opposition coalition called for an investigation. It said the tournament was organized to drum up support for the "illegal and inappropriate" political ambitions of the military leader. Guinea has been led by the military since soldiers ousted President Alpha Conde in 2021. It is one of a growing number of West African countries, including Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso, where the military has taken power and delayed a return to civilian rule.



Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskiy and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz visit an exhibition of Ukrainian unmanned vehicles, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Kyiv.

ICC collected more evidence in last 18 months than it has in past 20 years, says chief prosecutor

Monitoring Desk
THE HAGUE: The International Criminal Court (ICC) has collected more evidence and information in the past 18 months than it has in the 20 years since it was founded, its chief prosecutor said on Monday.

Karim Khan emphasized the court's recent intense efforts during his address at the 23rd session of the Assembly of States Parties (ASP) to the ICC's Rome Statute.

The ICC has received the most evidence and documents in its history in the

last year, with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and victims submitting a large number of documents and evidence under Article 15 of the Rome Statute, he noted.

Of the 30 arrest warrants issued by the court, the chief prosecutor said 18 were issued within the last three years.

Stressing that the law must be applied equally to everyone, Khan said the protection that people on one side of the world enjoy is no different than that on the other.

Turkish foreign minister to participate in NATO meeting in Brussels

Monitoring Desk
ISTANBUL: Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan will travel to Brussels to take part in a two-day meeting of NATO foreign ministers starting on Tuesday.

According to Turkish diplomatic sources, the meeting in the alliance's headquarters will be held in three sessions.

In the first session, which will be attended by Jordan's King Abdullah II, the crisis in the Middle East and cooperation between NATO and Amman will be discussed.

Ex-NATO chief Stoltenberg suggests Ukraine could temporarily cede territory for peace

Monitoring Desk
BERLIN: Former NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has suggested that temporary territorial concessions to Russia could help establish a cease-fire in the ongoing Ukrainian conflict.

In an interview with German media outlet Table Briefings published on Monday, Stoltenberg emphasized that diplomatic negotiations and compromise could pave the way toward a cease-fire agreement.

"We need a cease-fire line, and of course ideally this (the Ukrainian part) should include all areas currently under Russian control. But we see that this may not be realistically achievable in the immediate future," Stoltenberg said.

"If the cease-fire line means that Russia contin-

Vanuatu urges top court to recognise climate change harms

Monitoring Desk
THE HAGUE: Vanuatu on Monday urged the United Nations' top court to recognise the harm caused by climate change in its judgment on the legal obligation of countries to fight it and address the consequences of them contributing to global warming.

Vanuatu, one of the small island states that has spearheaded the effort to get the World Court to give a so-called advisory opinion, was the first of more than 100 states and international organisations to give its views during two weeks of proceedings.

"We find ourselves on the front lines of a crisis we did not create, a crisis that threatens our very existence."

Cyclone Fengal toll rises to 20 in South Asia

Monitoring Desk
FENGAL: The death toll from Cyclone Fengal's fierce push through Sri Lanka and southern India reached 20 on Monday as downpours and flooding followed the storm's wake after its winds calmed.

Fengal made landfall in India's Tamil Nadu state on Saturday, bringing the highest 24-hour rainfall seen in 30 years to nearby Puducherry, before weakening to a normal low-pressure weather system by Monday morning. More deaths were reported in Sri Lanka after Fengal skirted the island na-

tion on Friday bringing intense rains that triggered landslides. Sri Lanka's disaster management agency said a total of 17 people had been killed in the country while nearly 470,000 others were taking shelter in temporary relief camps. India recorded three deaths from electrocution as a result of the storm, Tamil Nadu disaster management minister KKSSR Ramachandran told reporters late Saturday. He did not give further details on what caused the deaths, adding that damage from the cyclone was otherwise "minimal".

Indonesia, Canada sign comprehensive economic partnership

Monitoring Desk
JAKARTA: Indonesia and Canada on Monday signed a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) that aims to strengthen economic ties between the two G20 members, three years after negotiations began.

The agreement will take effect in 2026 and was signed in Jakarta by trade ministers of both countries.

Zelenskiy says Ukraine wants to retake territory under Russian control through diplomacy

Monitoring Desk
ISTANBUL: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy on Monday said Kyiv wants to retake its territory currently under Russia's control through diplomatic means.

"Our army lacks the strength to take back some territories, like Crimea. That is true. We do have to find diplomatic solutions," Zelenskiy said in an interview with Japan's Kyodo News.

He said a diplomatic solution to the issue can only be considered when Kyiv knows it is "strong enough" to prevent any further military actions by Russia.

Reiterating that support from partners for Kyiv is "not enough," Zelenskiy urged NATO to invite his country for membership talks as soon as possible.

He said the war that started in 2022 has entered a "complicated period," claiming about 12,000 North Korean soldiers have been deployed to Russia's border region of Kursk, which Ukraine invaded in August.

He argued it is "indisputable" that Russian President Vladimir Putin will use the North Korean soldiers as "cannon fodder" to reduce its own losses.

The Ukrainian president said he has information about casualties among North Korean soldiers on the front line, but did not provide specific numbers.

He said US President-elect Donald Trump and his incoming administration are aware of Ukraine's position and "victory plan," and that his team is studying the contents of the plan.

French claim of ICC immunity for Netanyahu has no legal basis: Ex-Greek foreign minister

Monitoring Desk
ATHENS: In the wake of international arrest warrants issued for Israel's prime minister and former defense chief, France joined a handful of countries saying they will not uphold the decision should the accused enter its territory.

Despite initially vowing to "adhere to its international legal obligations" after the International Criminal Court (ICC) warrants were issued more than a year into the country's genocidal war on Gaza, France's Foreign Ministry said last week that Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant had immunity to the court's decision. However, according to a former Greek foreign minister, France must backtrack on its position again, as it contradicts legal principles.

George Katrougalos, who is also a professor of international law, noted that the French government's reasoning is based on the fact that Israel is not a

party to the ICC's founding document, the Rome Statute, and this makes Netanyahu and Gallant immune to the court's order for their arrest. "We have not heard something like that from France when Russian President Putin has been indicted with an arrest warrant against him by the very International Criminal Court," Katrougalos told Anadolu. Russia, like Israel, is not a signatory of the Rome Statute. He emphasized that article 27 of the statute clearly states that there is no immunity for heads of state or government who are indicted or sentenced by the ICC, adding, "Exactly that was the mission of the ICC: Bringing heads of government, strong people, who have committed crimes, to justice."

On the potential legal consequences for states that do not comply with ICC decisions, Katrougalos warned that failing to implement such decisions would violate international law.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning & Development, Ahsan Iqbal chairs a high-level meeting to expedite immediate solutions for the Neelum Jhelum Hydropower Project.

NA body lauds NHMP for ensuring commuters road safety

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Assembly's Standing Committee on Communications on Monday lauded the National Highways and Motorways Police (NHMP) for ensuring road safety and excellence on country's roads aiming to facilitate and assist the commuters.

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of MNA Aijaz Hussain Jakhani to discuss agenda such as NHMP, Pakistan Post, the National Transport Research Center, enemy property cell and any other item with the permission of the chair, said a press release.

Inspector General (IG) NHMP apprised the committee that the National Highways and

Motorway Police (NHMP) oversees traffic regulation, safety, and security across 4,736 km of motorways and national highways, including key routes like M-1, M-2, M-5, N-5, and N-25. Established in 1997, NHMP enforces laws under the National Highway Safety Ordinance (NHSO) 2000, focusing on commuter assistance, traffic management, and Axle Load Control. With 9,098 officers currently serving out of 15,607 sanctioned positions, NHMP issued 13.3 million tickets and collected Rs 15.4 billion in fines from January to November 2024.

Under the Axle Load Control Regime, fines rose by 133 percent to Rs 4.26 billion. Over 1.6 million commuters received assis-

tance during this period. NHMP's Drivers Licensing Authority (DLA), following international standards, has issued over 144,000 licenses since 2014.

Modern initiatives like e-ticketing, cashless systems and vehicle tracking were transforming operations to ensure safer and more efficient travel for all road users. The committee members appreciated the work of Motorways Police.

The Pakistan Post, advancing connectivity and financial inclusion, the Director General (DG), briefed the committee that Pakistan Post Office Department (PPOD), with over 10,000 branches nationwide, continues to be a cornerstone of communication and financial inclusion.

IHC informed Govt will incur expenses of delegation visit to US in Dr Aafia Siddiqui case

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) has been informed that government will incur expenses in respect of the delegation which is going to US in connection with Dr Aafia Siddiqui case.

The court was further told that application has been moved by Foreign ministry for visas.

Additional Attorney General (AAG) told the court Monday that Prime Minister (PM) has approved the expenses in respect of the delegation which is going to US.

The petition regarding release and return of Dr Aafia Siddiqui to Pakistan came up for hearing in IHC

Monday. Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan took up the case for hearing.

Imran Shafiq counsel for Dr Fouzia Siddiqui and amicus curiae Zama Janjua appeared in the court.

AAG said in the court PM has accorded approval to the expenses in respect of the delegation going to US in regard to Dr Aafia Siddiqui case. Representative of ministry of foreign affairs said foreign ministry has sent application in connection with visas of delegation. It will be approved within a week. Representative of foreign ministry said in a statement that we are extending every possible help to Dr Fouzia Siddiqui.



QUETTA: Provincial Food Minister Haji Noor Muhammad Dumar listening problems of people.

Chairman PAC concerned about non provision of compensation to land affectees

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Chairman Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Asghar Ali Tareen has expressed concern over non-participation of Deputy Commissioners as well as non evacuation of the public lands and non provision of compensation amount to the affectees.

The Chairman PAC directed to write official letter to Chief Secretary for taking stern action against the concerned Deputy Commissioners on their absence from the committee's meeting.

He said that the Deputy Commissioners were provided opportunity to participate in the PAC's meeting twice, but they failed to do so.

The Chairman PAC was chairing meeting of the committee here on Monday.

The committee comprising Minister for Finance, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani and members of provincial assembly, Zabid Ali Reki and

Zamarkhan Achakzai observed that the people are in trouble due to non receipt of amount of their land, and expressed displeasure over not resolving their issues.

The committee stressed the need to distribute the compensation amount among owners of the land, whose cases are not in the court of law. The amount must be paid to them within six months, it was stressed further.

The meeting was attended by the senior Member Board of Revenue, Qambar Dashti, Secretary Board of Revenue, Nasrullah Tareen, Auditor General Balochistan, Shuja Ali, Additional Secretary PAC, Siraj Lehri, Additional Secretary Law, Saeed Iqbal, Chief Accounts Officer, Syed Idrees Agha, Deputy Commissioner Lasbela, Humaira Baloch, Deputy Commissioner Awaran, Ayesha Zehri, Additional DC, Killa Abdullah, Nasir Ahmed Langove and other concerned ADCs and Assistant Commissioners.



QUETTA: Vice Chancellor SBK Women's University Prof. Dr. Rubina Mushtaq distributing best performance certificate from Prime Minister among faculty and students under PM Green Youth Movement Program.

Ahsan Iqbal discusses legal matters to fix responsibility for NJHPP tunnel collapse

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Monday chaired a meeting on the Neelum Jhelum Hydropower Project (NJHPP) to finalize and present recommendations for immediate remedial measures aimed at the early rehabilitation and operationalization of the project. The minister also discussed legal issues with the Secretary for Law and Justice and the Attorney General for Pakistan to establish a strong legal basis against those responsible for the collapse of the tunnel, a news release said.

Additionally, the minister emphasized the internal accountability process concerning poor project management by WAPDA.

During the meeting, officials briefed the minister on the project's technical issues, stating that while some problems had been identified, accountability was still under investigation.

Ahsan Iqbal expressed serious concerns over the delay, highlighting that it

had hindered timely investigations and accountability. "From the outset, an accountability mechanism should have been in place to monitor progress and assign responsibilities, especially for a project of this scale," he remarked.

The minister directed that both approaches to the investigation be pursued, including engaging an international consultant and speeding up the completion of ongoing work, adding that all mega projects like Diamer-Bhasha Dam must be free of poor project management.

He stressed the need for an independent validation of NESPAK's work by international experts to avoid similar recurring issues in the future, and stated that the reform of NESPAK must be undertaken as a priority.

Referring to the Neelum Jhelum project's history, Ahsan Iqbal criticized the decision to launch the project without ensuring its financial closure in 2007. "The project was rushed, without proper planning, compromising

the long-term viability of this critical national project," he stated.

The meeting concluded with directives to expedite the investigation process and improve the TORs.

The minister suggested involving international experts as part of the investigative team led by Shahid Khan to ensure transparency and accountability.

He recommended that the consultant and contractor be given an opportunity to respond to the findings, ensuring that no party could claim they were not given the opportunity to clarify their position. "The public has the right to know who is responsible for the delays and financial losses of such a significant project," the minister emphasized. The meeting was attended by the Attorney General for Pakistan, Secretary for Law and Justice, Secretary for Planning and Development, Secretary for Water Resources, former Federal Secretary Shahid Khan, Member of Infrastructure.



ANKARA: Ambassador of Pakistan to Turkey Dr. Yousaf Junaid in a group photograph with Turkish dignitaries at an event organized by Pakistan Embassy to celebrate 77 years of Pakistan Turkey Diplomatic Relations.

Security forces, police deployed after ceasefire in restive Kurram areas

PESHAWAR (APP): Following a renewed ceasefire between rival groups in Kurram district, the personnel of security forces and police have been deployed in restive areas to maintain peace.

Deputy Commissioner Kurram, Javed Mehsood said on Monday, police and security forces have been deployed, and efforts to extend the

ceasefire to the other areas are ongoing. He said it is a much positive and encouraging development adding that the 11-day-long clashes and unrest had resulted in significant loss of lives and created immense hardships for the local population. The closure of main roads, including the Peshawar-Parachinar central highway and the Pak-Afghan Kharlachi border.

Country's registered voter count exceeds 132 million, says ECP

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has disclosed that over 132.2 million voters have been registered across the country, with 53.74% male voters and 46.26% female voters.

Breaking down the numbers further, the ECP's latest statistics stated that 71.1 million voters are male,

while 61.2 million are female.

The voter data reveals significant numbers across key provinces. Punjab has the largest voter base, with 75.3 million voters, including 41.2 million men and 35.1 million women.

In Sindh, the total electorate is 27.7 million, with 14.9 million men and 12.7 million women.



QUETTA: Director General NAB Balochistan Noman Aslam presenting souvenir to Commissioner Quetta Division Hamza Shafiqat during concluding ceremony of Sports Gala 2024 held in connection with International Anti-Corruption Day

Samad Gorgage says Health facilities to people among priorities of govt

QUETTA (APP): Parliamentary Secretary for Science and Information Technology Sardar Samad Khan Gorgage said that providing health facilities to the people is among the priorities of the government.

He said that in this regard, any kind of negligence would not be tolerated.

He said this while talking to the media during a surprise visit to Bolan Medical Hospital.

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leaders Sardar Akram Bangulzai, Alauddin Kakar and others were present on the occasion.

During the visit to the hospital, Bolan Medical Hospital (BMC) Superintendent Dr. Sultan Lehri briefed him in detail about

the facilities provided to the public in the hospital.

Parliamentary Secretary Samad Khan expressed satisfaction over the facilities provided to the patients in the hospital.

He said that the provincial government is utilizing all available resources to provide free medical treatment to the public in government hospitals.

"The government has introduced Balochistan Health Card for the poor people which is being fully utilized by the poor and deserving people," he said.

He said that to meet the shortage of doctors in hospitals, the government has decided to appoint more doctors on contract basis which would provide convenience to the public.

Iranian, Azerbaijan ministers meet Romina in Riyadh

ISLAMABAD (APP): Iranian Minister for Agriculture Gholamreza Nouri Ghezlezh called on Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam and discussed various issues of bilateral interest.

During the meeting held on Monday in Riyadh, capital city of Saudi Arabia, Iranian minister proposed different initiatives to work with Pakistan. PM's coordinator assured him to discuss this with her government and would convey to Iranian government regarding the initiatives. PM's coordinator apprised the Iranian agriculture minister about various initiatives launched by the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in agriculture, water, irrigation and energy sector for achieving food, climate, water, agricultural related sustainable development goals. Meanwhile, Azerbaijan's Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources, Mukhtar Babayev also held meeting with the PM's coordinator and discussed matters of bilateral interest in boosting climate resilience of both the countries.

Rohana Kakar transferred; Mansoor Qazi posted as DC Hub

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Deputy Commissioner Hub, Ms. Rohana Gul Kakar has been transferred and directed to report in the Services and General Administration Department (S&GAD).

This was announced in an official notification issued here the other day.

According to the notification, Mansoor Ahmed Qazi, serving as Additional Secretary Home Department, has been transferred and posted as the Deputy Commissioner Hub.

Police arrest absconder
SOHBATPUR (APP): A team of Shaheed Malik Muhammad Ali Police Station here on Monday arrested an absconder.

On the direction of IGP, Balochistan, the police under supervision of DSP, Circle, Abid Ali Bugti arrested the outlaw, Sabzal who was wanted in three different cases.

The police have started further investigation.



CHINIOT: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmed Shaikh, talking to the media persons.

AJK President calls for EU's effective role to help resolve lingering Kashmir dispute

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry has said that the European Union can play an effective role in resolving the lingering Kashmir dispute peacefully.

While speaking to Chaudhry Naseer Ahmed, Honorary Presidential Advisor for the European Union, at Jammu Kashmir House in the federal metropolis on Monday.

Terminating settlement of the long pending disputes as a key to durable peace in South Asia, Barrister Chaudhry said that it was high time that the Kashmiris living in Europe should gear up their efforts to sensitize global community about the early resolution of the Kashmir issue, which he said, was the root cause of tension and abuse of human rights in the region.

"It was quite encouraging that the European

Parliament keeps raising its voice from time to time on the ongoing human rights violations in occupied Kashmir", he said.

The European Parliament had also presented the Emma Nicholson report on the human rights situation in occupied Kashmir, expressing EU countries' grave concern over the widespread human rights violations in the region including enforced disappearances and discovery of unnamed mass graves", the president added.

President directed the Honorary Presidential Advisor for Europe Chaudhry Naseer Ahmed to play his proactive role to highlight the Kashmir issue and the ongoing atrocities in occupied Kashmir in the EU and the European Parliament.

Honorary Presidential Advisor for the European Union Chaudhry Naseer Ahmed, on the occasion, invited the President to visit Brussels, which he accepted.

Maintaining law & order is top priority of Govt: DC Ziarat

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ziarat Zakauallah Durrani on Monday said that maintaining law and order is the top priority of the government and vigorous steps were being taken in this regard.

He said that development is linked to law and order situation and the district of Ziarat would provide a peaceful and calm environment to the people.

He expressed these views while chairing a meeting regarding improving law and order situation in

Sanjawi area of Ziarat district Sanjawi.

Strict decisions were taken in the meeting to maintain law and order situation.

In the meeting, Deputy Commissioner Ziarat Zakauallah Durrani strictly directed that the officers should visit all schools and hospitals and the administrators of schools and hospitals should be alert and present the watchmen on duty at all times and take all necessary steps to avoid any unusual situation.



RIYADH: Iranian Minister for Agriculture Gholamreza Nouri Ghezlezh along with Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam after meeting.

3-day training program with digital agriculture census launched in Harnai

QUETTA (APP): Additional General Deputy Commissioner (AGDC) Harnai Arbab Saeed Ali Kasi formally inaugurated the three-day training program for the seventh and first digital agricultural census. Additional General Deputy Commissioner Harnai, Deputy District Education Officer Mushtaq Ahmed Tareen, Census District Coordinator Muhammad Imran Yousafzai Quetta and Census District Coordinator Harnai Ghulam Jelani Tareen participated in the

program. During the inauguration ceremony, the officers involved emphasized that the agricultural census is crucial for national development and effective planning. Therefore, all the participants should fully understand the technical aspects and usefulness of agricultural census and fulfill their responsibilities in the best possible way. In the meeting, it was further emphasized that all the participants should utilize their capabilities to achieve the desired results and make this process a success.

District Heads of line departments meet: DC Chaman directs all officers, staff to ensure attendance at their duty places

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Deputy Commissioner Chaman, Habib Ahmed Bangulzai has directed to all district officers and staff to ensure their attendance at their respective duty places and serve the general public to the best.

The Deputy Commissioner Chaman was chairing meeting of the district heads of line departments in his office on Monday.

All the district officers and other representatives of the departments were in attendance, and briefed about performance and ongoing development projects besides the problems and hardships faced by

them.

The Deputy Commissioner reviewed performance of the officers and discussed the same with the concerned.

He issued directives to resolve the issues immediately.

He also directed them to discharge their responsibilities in befitting manner and not leave any stone unturned in provision of all possible facilities to the people. He stressed that all officers should consider them public servants.

He warned that stern action would be taken against those committing negligence and carelessness in their duties.