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PM greets Field Marshal on induction in Malaysia NDSC's Hall of Fame

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday congratulated Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir on his induction as a member in the Hall of Fame of Malaysia's National Defence Studies Centre.

The prime minister, in a social media post on his X timeline, said that the Field Marshal's resolute leadership during Marka-e-Haq, unwavering commitment to national defence, invaluable contributions to promoting peace, and enhancing Pakistan's international standing made this honour truly befitting.

He said that the distinction also reflected the enduring friendship between Pakistan and Malaysia.

"This recognition belongs equally to the brave men and women of our armed forces, whose courage, dedication and sacrifices safeguard our beloved homeland, and to the people of Pakistan, whose resilience and unwavering support remain our greatest strength.

JUI-F moves LHC after Fazl stopped from leaving Lahore residence

LAHORE (INP): The Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) on Tuesday moved the Lahore High Court (LHC) against the alleged confinement of its chief, Maulana Fazlur Rehman, at his Lahore residence, seeking his immediate release and restoration of his freedom of movement after police deployed a heavy contingent outside the premises.

The development emerged after JUI-F chief was reportedly prevented from leaving his residence in Lahore after Punjab police deployed a heavy contingent outside the premises, ahead of his scheduled address to lawyers at the invitation of the High Court Bar Association. "Fazl arrived in Lahore on Tuesday night and was due to address lawyers at the invitation of the LHC Bar Association. However, Punjab Police personnel has been deployed outside his residence to prevent him from leaving," the party said in a post on X.

According to JUI-F, police also deployed a heavy contingent in the housing society and at its main entrance, where a container was placed to block access.

Five militants killed in CTD operation

PESHAWAR (APP): The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Peshawar Region on Tuesday killed five suspected militants of the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in an intelligence-based operation in the Janna Khor Mera area of Bacha Khel in the jurisdiction of Badaber Police Station. However, TTP commander Taj Muhammad alias Sheenay, a resident of Tirah Valley in Khyber district, managed to escape along with two to three accomplices during the exchange of fire.

According to a CTD press release, the department had received credible intelligence tip off that the TTP commander, along with his armed associates, was present in the area and planning attacks on law enforcement agencies.

Acting on the information, heavily armed CTD teams immediately rushed to the location and strategically took positions to arrest the militants.

However, the suspects opened indiscriminate fire on the CTD personnel upon seeing them.



ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi called Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

PM reaffirms Federal Govt's support to eliminate terrorism, boost development in KP

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Tuesday, assured the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government of every possible federal government's support to completely eradicate terrorism, establish lasting peace and ensure public welfare in the province.

Paying tribute to the law enforcement agencies, the prime minister said that the sacrifices rendered by the brave security forces and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police in the war against terrorism would not go in vain.

The prime minister expressed these views during a meeting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi who called on him. Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi was also present on the occasion, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

He emphasized that the federal government would continue to extend full cooperation to implement the decisions taken during the Apex Committee's meeting aimed at eliminating terrorism.

Reiterating the Centre's commitment to the progress and prosperity of the province, the prime minister directed authorities to utilize all available resources to provide healthcare, education and other basic facilities to the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He placed special emphasis on improving social development indicators, particularly within the health and education sectors.

The prime minister also stressed the need to promote sports facilities across the province to provide youth with opportunities for positive engagement.

During the meeting, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi briefed the prime minister on the ongoing initiatives undertaken by his office and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Advisory Council to improve the overall law and order situation in the province.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday reaffirmed the federal government's commitment to extending all possible support for the development of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), the welfare of its people, and the provision of basic facilities.

He made these remarks during a meeting with Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Syed Iftikhar Gilani, at the Prime Minister's Office.

During the meeting, PM Shehbaz said Pakistan will continue its moral, political, and diplomatic support for the people of Kashmir until they achieve their right to self-determination.

Rewards of up to Rs250 million announced for information on most-wanted terrorists

QUETTA (6 AM Report): Balochistan Adviser on Home Affairs Babar Yousafzai has announced that the provincial government has offered rewards ranging from Rs500,000 to Rs250 million for credible and actionable information about most-wanted terrorists, emphasizing that eliminating terrorism and protecting citizens' lives and property remain the government's top priorities.

According to Yousafzai, rewards of Rs250 million each have been announced for credible information on Rehman Gul and Bashir Zeb, while substantial rewards have also been offered for information on other most-wanted terrorists.

He urged citizens to share credible information with the relevant authorities, assuring them that the identities of informants would remain strictly confidential and prompt action would be taken on actionable information.

He clarified that rewards would be paid in accordance with the rules and procedures prescribed by the Balochistan government.

Yousafzai emphasized that public cooperation was essential to combating terrorism and establishing lasting peace in the province, adding that citizens' support would help authorities strengthen counterterrorism efforts.



ISLAMABAD: Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan meeting with H.E Ms. Ruth Dreifuss, former President of the Swiss Confederation (1999), former Chair and current Steering Committee Member of Global Commission on Drug Policy.

Mahmood Khan Achakzai

Pakistan must avoid fighting foreign wars

LAHORE: Mahmood Khan Achakzai, Chairman of the Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP), head of the Tehreek Tahafuz-e-Aain Pakistan (TTAP), and Leader of the Opposition in the National



Assembly, has said that resolving the country's grave political, economic and law-and-order crises requires that national decisions be made through consultation among elected representatives of the people and all relevant political and democratic forces, rather than being left to a handful of individuals. He stressed that immediate constitutional and political reforms are essential to ensure constitutional supremacy, parliamentary sovereignty and the restoration of democracy.

Auditorium of the Lahore High Court Bar Association, Achakzai said that Lahore and its bar association had historically played an important role in the struggle for the Constitution and democracy. When such institutions fail to fulfil their constitutional and democratic responsibilities, the consequences are borne by society and the state as a whole.

He expressed serious concern over the law-and-order situation in various parts of the country. He said that unrest and bloodshed continued in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, and had now spread to Pakistan-administered Kashmir. Approximately 20 citizens were being killed by gunfire every day, he said. In these circumstances, the foremost responsibility of state institutions and political leadership was to protect the lives and property of citizens and establish peace in the country. Warning about emerging international developments, Achakzai said that the intensifying rivalry among major powers and their competing interests could once again push the region towards war and instability. Pakistan must learn from the lessons of history and avoid becoming a party to wars fought in the interests of other powers.

Uneven development cannot justify violence, separatism: CM Bugti

Overseas anti-Pakistan elements accused of influencing youth through social media; peaceful protest a constitutional right, armed activities unacceptable, CM tells 28th National Security Workshop

QUETTA (6 AM Report): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has said that uneven development and deprivation in the province cannot justify terrorism, violence or separatism, emphasizing that education, development, good governance, economic opportunities and effective public service delivery are key to addressing Balochistan's challenges.

Addressing participants of the 28th National Security Workshop on Tuesday, the chief minister alleged that anti-Pakistan elements based abroad were systematically using social media to influence Balochistan's youth against the state.

Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan briefed participants on ongoing development projects, administrative and governance reforms, and the province's overall situation.

CM Bugti said Balochistan was an integral part of Pakistan and that terrorism, whether perpetrated in the name of religion or nationalism, was unacceptable. Those involved in or supporting terrorism would be dealt with in accordance with the law, without discrimination, he added.

Acknowledging development disparities and deprivation, the chief minister stressed the need to understand Balochistan in its historical and socioeconomic context. He maintained that these grievances must be addressed through constitutional and democratic means and public welfare initiatives rather than violence and separatism.

"Peaceful protest and dissent are constitutional rights, but there is a clear distinction between peaceful political struggle and armed activities against the state," he said, emphasizing citizens' constitutional responsibilities.

Highlighting educational initiatives, CM Bugti said children from underprivileged working families in Balochistan were now studying at Aitchison College, Lawrence College and other prestigious educational institutions. The government was working to ensure equal access to quality education and development opportunities for every child.

He urged young people to distinguish propaganda from ground realities, emphasizing that their future lay in education, peace, development and constructive participation in national affairs rather than violence, extremism and hatred.

Paying tribute to the sacrifices of Balochistan's people and security forces for peace, the chief minister said their sacrifices would not be allowed to go in vain.

CM Bugti reiterated that improving ordinary citizens' living standards remained the government's foremost priority. He said practical measures were being taken to improve departmental performance, ensure effective completion of development projects, provide basic facilities and introduce administrative reforms so that the benefits of development reached the province's remotest areas.

Zeeshan Ali set for historic spaceflight today

BEIJING (INP): Pakistani astronaut Muhammad Zeeshan Ali is set to lift off on Wednesday aboard China's Shenzhou-24 spacecraft, becoming the first Pakistani in space and the first foreign astronaut to visit China's Tiangong space station.

The spacecraft is scheduled to launch from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre at 5:18 am Pakistan Standard Time (8:18 am Beijing Time), the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) announced on Tuesday, Gwadar Pro reported.

Ali will fly as payload specialist alongside Chinese astronauts Tang Hongbo, the mission commander, and Wu Yi, in the first joint flight of Chinese and foreign astronauts in China's crewed space programme.

The Pakistan Embassy in China hailed the mission as "a historic milestone in Pakistan–China friendship" in a post on X on Tuesday, extending its best wishes to the crew. The mission's logo features jasmine, Pakistan's national flower.

The mission will carry four China-Pakistan science projects in biotechnology and materials, CMSA spokesperson said, and Ali will conduct an in-orbit experiment on photosynthetic cyanobacteria during his short stay.

He will then return to Earth aboard the Shenzhou-23 spacecraft with Chinese astronauts Zhang Zhiyuan and Li Jiaying.

The flight follows a cooperation agreement signed by CMSA and Pakistan's Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) in Islamabad on 28 February 2025, the first time China selected and trained astronauts for another country.

Ali and fellow candidate Khurram Daud were selected in April 2026 and have since trained in China.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti addressing participants of the 28th National Security Workshop.

CJP, former Swiss President discuss criminal justice reforms, access to justice

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Yahya Afridi and former Swiss President Ruth Dreifuss on Tuesday discussed criminal justice reforms, prison overcrowding and measures to improve access to justice, particularly for vulnerable groups.

Ms. Dreifuss, former President of the Swiss Confederation and a member of the Steering Committee of the Global Commission on Drug Policy, called on the Chief Justice at the Supreme Court along with Chairperson of the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) Rabiya Javeri Agha and other members of the delegation.

The discussions focused on protecting the rights of women, children and persons with drug dependence, besides addressing barriers to accessing justice and challenges arising from overcrowding in prisons.

Mohsin Naqvi says:

'Terrorism, hate speech, incitement to violence & child abuse' govt red lines

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday said the government had four red lines for online content. i.e. terrorism, hate speech, incitement to violence and the sexual exploitation of children.

He was speaking at an international seminar, titled: 'Social Media Platforms and the Post-truth Era', organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) here.

He said Pakistan has paid for terrorism with lives and that platforms act on 47 per cent of the requests made by the counter-terrorism department. He said free speech should not be curtailed and that dissent, including against the government, must remain possible, but that it cannot shield those who cross these lines.

Naqvi said the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) has limited manpower, citing 61 personnel, including drivers and clerks, covering Punjab's population of about 140 million.

He said the Social Media Protection Regulatory Authority was set up to address this.



ISLAMABAD: Syed Amjad Ali Shah, President of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA), presenting a souvenir to the Hon'ble Mr. Ömer Kerkez, President of the Court of Cassation of Türkiye, at Supreme Court of Pakistan.

Pakistan, Turkiye reinforce judicial, cultural ties through wide ranging engagements

ISLAMABAD (APP): Building on the momentum generated by the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Bilateral Judicial Cooperation, the high-level judicial delegation from the Court of Cassation of the Republic of Türkiye, led by its President, Ömer Kerkez, undertook a series of institutional, professional and cultural engagements in Islamabad Tuesday, reflecting the depth and diversity of the longstanding relations between the two brotherly nations.

During its visit to the Supreme Court of Pakistan, the delegation participated in a sapling plantation ceremony, symbolising the enduring friendship between Pakistan and Türkiye and their shared commitment to nurturing these relations for future generations.

The delegation visited the Public Facilitation Centre of the Supreme Court, where it was briefed on various reform initiatives aimed at enhancing access to justice, improving judicial service delivery and facilitating court users through technology-enabled services.

The distinguished guests also visited the Supreme Court Museum, which showcases Pakistan's judicial history, legal heritage and the institutional evolution of the Supreme Court, offering an insight into the country's judicial traditions.

The delegation subsequently visited the Fundamental Rights Monument, an initiative designed to promote public awareness of constitutionally guaranteed fundamental rights and enhance community engagement.

Developed in the open space between the Supreme Court building and Constitution Avenue, the monument features large marble slabs etched and embossed with key words drawn from the fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan, highlighting the significance of constitutional values in public life.

Educational opportunities to be expanded for talented, deserving youth: Punjab CM

RAWALPINDI (INP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday said that laptops and merit-based scholarships were rewards for students' hard work and academic achievements, not government favours, reaffirming her commitment to expanding educational opportunities for talented and deserving youth.

Addressing the 12th laptop and merit scholarship distribution ceremony at Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi (PMAS-AAUR) as the chief guest, she congratulated the students and acknowledged the sacrifices of their parents and the efforts of the young achievers.

She said every child had the right to education and no student should be deprived of it merely because their parents could not afford the fees. The Honhaar Scholarship Programme, she added, was designed to support such deserving families.

The chief minister said every student had a story of struggle, with many overcoming financial difficulties and other challenges to continue their education. She expressed confidence in the country's future, saying the talented youth of Rawalpindi had strengthened her belief that Pakistan was in capable hands.

She said 30,000 students received scholarships in the first phase of the Honhaar Scholarship Programme, after which the number was increased to 50,000. Another 20,000 students benefited in the second phase, while scholarships were awarded to 53,488 deserving and talented students in the third phase.

The programme also covered matriculation and intermediate board position holders, while scholarships had been allocated for students from other provinces and regions.

Maryam Nawaz announced that the initial target of the laptop scheme would be increased from 40,000 to 112,000 to broaden access to modern technology and digital education.

At the Rawalpindi ceremony, 3,562 students enrolled in federally chartered universities in Islamabad were given 13th-generation Intel Core i7 laptops, while 451 students received scholarships worth a total of Rs.41.48 million under the Honhaar Scholarship Programme.

The chief minister said investment in the education and development of young people was an investment in the country's future.

Referring to her government's performance, she said it had completed 1,000 days in office and that her team had started working from the first day. She stressed that development initiatives required public cooperation and cited the Suthra Punjab Programme as an example of efforts to improve sanitation across the province.

She said 1,100 electric buses were operating in Punjab, including 80 in Rawalpindi, with fares fixed at Rs.20.

"The government aimed to expand the fleet to 5,000 electric buses across the province over the next two years", she added.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Syed Iftikhar Gillani calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Murad directs for expedited implementation of Karachi Safe City project

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has directed the Sindh Safe Cities Authority (SSCA) to strengthen the operational capacity of the Karachi Safe City Project, ensuring that modern surveillance technology translates into safer streets, effective policing and better protection for citizens.

Presiding over a meeting of the Sindh Safe Cities Authority at the CM House on Tuesday, the Chief Minister reviewed the project's progress, operational arrangements, financial requirements, institutional strengthening, and performance during January-October 2026.

The meeting was attended by Home Minister Ziaul Hassan Lanjar, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, Home Secretary Iqbal Memon, IG Police Javed Odho, PSCM Agha Wasif, Chairman P&D Najam Shah, Secretary Local Govt Waseem Shamshad, Secretary Excise Ali Ahamd Baloch, Secretary Finance Asghar Memon, DG SSCA Sarfraz Shaikh, DG PDMA Salman Shah, MPAs Syed Sarfaraz Shah, Ali Hassan Hingorjo, Ms Sumeta Afzal and others.

The Chief Minister said the Safe City Project was an important investment in modern, technology-driven policing and stressed that its infrastructure must deliver tangible results for the people.

He directed the Authority to ensure uninterrupted functioning and professional maintenance of cameras, communication networks, control rooms and other surveillance facilities.

DG Sindh Safe City Sarfraz Shaikh, briefing the meeting, informed that Phase-I, installed by the National Radio and Telecommunication Corporation (NRTC), comprises 300 pole sites and 1, 300 cameras, supported by 18 Points of Presence (PoPs), a Data Centre and a Network Operations Centre.

The CM considered and approved the revised six-month operation and maintenance proposal of Rs189.75 million, with an overall annual financial ceiling of Rs213.03 million, including spares and optical fibre charges. The project will commence on January 1, 2027.

The Chief Minister stressed that the agreement must ensure transparency, financial discipline and measurable performance, with no escalation in fixed costs, monthly verification of services and deductions for failure to meet agreed standards.

Reviewing operational performance, the meeting was informed that the system had helped trace and hand over 1, 631 vehicles, hand over 84 wanted persons to law enforcement agencies and provide 642 instances of digital evidence to investigating formations during the first ten months of 2026. Of the 751 evidence-search requests received from 23 formations, 642 were facilitated. The system also processed 408 vehicle-arming and 32 person-arming requests, while 52 vehicles were traced through arming alerts. Fourteen government vehicles were handed over to police stations.

BNP withdraws petition against PAC order for FIA

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday disposed of the case following the withdrawal of the petition of developer company of One Constitution Avenue, BNP challenging a 2023 Public Accounts Committee (PAC) order directing the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to investigate the matter.

Justice Inaam Ameen Minhas heard the petition filed by BNP against the PAC decision. CDA counsel Kashif Ali Malik and NAB Prosecutor Rafi Maqsood appeared before the court.

The PAC had directed the FIA and NAB to initiate action against BNP after the cancellation of the lease over non-payment of outstanding dues.

The company had challenged the committee's order before the high court.

During the hearing, Justice Inaam Ameen Minhas observed that a single-member bench had already issued a decision on the matter, followed by joint investigation team proceedings and a decision by the federal cabinet.

The judge asked the petitioner's counsel whether the company wanted to withdraw the petition or seek any further order from the court.

Governor reviews departmental performance, directs action against hoarders, fake news

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi has chaired a meeting of the Advisory Council to review the performance of provincial departments, service delivery, administrative affairs, ongoing development projects and progress towards achieving the 100-day and 180-day targets.

Members of the Advisory Council briefed the Governor on the performance of their respective departments, ongoing projects and future plans. The meeting reviewed measures aimed at improving governance and public service delivery across the province.

The Governor directed the authorities to take strict action against hoarders and those selling flour at inflated prices, and stressed transparent implementation of the transfer policy in government departments strictly on merit. He also called for legal action against individuals involved in spreading fake news and organised propaganda.

The meeting also discussed a proposal to construct a hospital near the motorway in Peshawar in collaboration with Peshawar Zalmi. Governor Kundi emphasised the need for effective measures for the restoration, preservation and beautification of the shrine of Rehman Baba.

Finance Adviser Tariq Mahmood Pasha briefed the meeting on the province's financial position and related matters, while Interior Adviser Kifayatullah informed participants about service delivery, progress on the Safe Cities Authority Bill, the Police Amendment Act and other proposed legislative reforms.

The Interior and Food Adviser also presented details regarding the province's wheat requirements, consumption, procurement from Punjab and PASSCO, and the existing wheat stocks.

KP information commission holds awareness session at Peshawar varsity

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Commission on Tuesday organized an awareness session on Right to Information (RTI) Law at Department of Journalism and Mass Communication University of Peshawar to orient students about their legal rights and importance of access to public information. Information Commissioner, Arshad Ahmed, Chairperson of the department Dr. Mehnaz Gul, faculty members and students attended the session. On the occasion, Director Communications KP Information Commission, Syed Saadat Jahan gave a detailed briefing on various aspects of KP Right to Information Act.

He said the law entitled every citizen to access public information held by government institutions. Citizens could use this legislation to obtain information from public bodies and play an effective role in ensuring transparency and accountability.

He further highlighted the importance of RTI law in promoting investigative journalism. He said journalists could obtain authentic and verified information from government departments under the law and use it to produce fact-based reports.

Addressing the students, Information Commissioner Arshad Ahmed said the primary objective of the legislation was to make government institutions accountable to the public. Responding to students' questions, he advised them to approach the Information Commission if any government department in the province refused to provide requested information.



Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah presides over Sindh safe cities authority meeting at CM House in Karachi.

Young police officers valuable asset of country, nation: Interior Minister

PESHAWAR (INP): Federal Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday visited the Federal Constabulary (FC) Headquarters and police lines in Peshawar, where he addressed a farewell ceremony for 34 police officers of the 49th Common who completed their posting tenure with the FC.

Addressing the officers, the interior minister said young police officers were a valuable asset of the country and nation.

He appreciated their dedication, enthusiasm and professional skills demonstrated during their service with the Federal Constabulary.

The interior minister said the nation had high expectations from young police officers and urged them to live up to public aspirations while discharging their professional responsibilities.

He asked them to take on their new assignments with renewed commitment and determination.

"Go to every possible extent to provide justice to the oppressed and never spare the oppressors under any circumstances," he emphasized.

Earlier, the interior minister inaugurated the Safwat Block at the FC Headquarters and visited its meeting halls, offices and gymnasium.

He also inspected newly inducted armoured vehicles and buses of the Federal Constabulary.

Inspector General Federal Constabulary Nazir Ahmed Gara briefed the interior minister on the institution's facilities, operational capabilities and ongoing initiatives.

Secretary Housing Danish Afzal visits WASA head office

LAHORE (APP): Secretary Housing Danish Afzal on Tuesday visited WASA Lahore Headquarters and reviewed the agency's ongoing development projects, operational performance and facilities being provided to citizens.

Managing Director(MD) WASA Lahore, Ghufran Ahmed welcomed the Housing Secretary and briefed him in detail on the agency's overall performance and ongoing projects.

During the briefing, the Secretary Housing was informed about WASA Lahore's 50 years of services, provision of water supply and sewerage facilities to citizens, and initiatives aimed at improving the agency's operational capacity.

He was also briefed on the progress of major projects, including the Tunnel Boring Project, Wastewater Treatment Plants, Surface Water Treatment Plants and other mega projects.

Secretary Housing Danish Afzal also visited WASA Lahore's Command and Control Room, where Director WASA Mudassir Javed briefed him on the modern monitoring system.

He reviewed the Rain Monitoring Dashboard, live cameras installed at underpasses and the online monitoring system for disposal stations.

He was also briefed on the mechanism for registering citizens' complaints, forwarding them to the concerned officers and ensuring their timely resolution.

DC inspects government institutions, development projects in Daska

SIALKOT (APP): Deputy Commissioner Owais Mushtaq on Tuesday visited Daska tehsil and inspected various government institutions and ongoing development projects to review public service delivery and facilities being provided to citizens.

During the visit, the deputy commissioner inspected the Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Daska, where he reviewed different wards, medical facilities, treatment arrangements and staff attendance. He also interacted with patients and their attendants to seek feedback about the quality of healthcare services.

He also inspected the ongoing construction work at Shahbaz Sharif Park on Canal Road and directed the concerned authorities to ensure timely completion of the project while maintaining construction standards.

Earlier, the deputy commissioner paid a surprise visit to Government High School Bheelo Mar, where he checked teachers' attendance and inspected classrooms, teaching activities, cleanliness and basic facilities available to students.

He also visited the office of the Principal Officer, Agriculture Department, Daska, and reviewed departmental affairs, staff attendance and administrative arrangements.

On the occasion, Owais Mushtaq directed the concerned departments to improve public service delivery and ensure the provision of quality healthcare and educational facilities to citizens.

He said field visits would continue to monitor the performance of government institutions and ensure transparency, quality and timely completion of development projects.

Assistant Commissioner Daska Saifullah Marwat, Additional Assistant Commissioner Daska Hamna and other local officials were also present.



NANKANA SAHIB: PML-N senior leader and MNA Hamza Shahbaz Sharif addresses a large gathering of Sikh Yatrees during celebrations marking the 557th birth anniversary of Baba Guru Nanak Dev Ji at Nankana Sahib.

Punjab govt committed to safeguarding minority rights, religious freedom: Arora

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Minister for Minorities Affairs, Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora on Tuesday said that the provincial government was committed to safeguarding minority rights, ensuring religious freedom and preserving the historical religious heritage of minority communities across the province.

Addressing the concluding ceremony of the 557th birth anniversary celebrations of Baba Guru Nanak Dev Ji at Gurdwara Janam Asthan, Nankana Sahib, he said Pakistan held exceptional spiritual significance for the Sikh community, as several of its most sacred religious sites were located in the country.

He added Pakistan was a sacred land for Sikhs and the Sikh community worldwide had a longstanding desire to visit its holy places, particularly Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur. The minister also urged India to immediately reopen the Kartarpur Corridor, saying Sikh devotees around the world wanted access to their sacred religious site to perform their religious obligations and pay homage to their spiritual heritage.

He said facilitating religious pilgrimages was essential for promoting inter-faith harmony, mutual understanding and people-to-people contacts between communities.

Appreciating the role of the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB), the provincial minister said the board was making efforts to protect minority religious places, restore historic Gurdwaras and provide facilities to visiting pilgrims.

He appreciated ETPB Chairman Qamar Zaman for ensuring arrangements for the accommodation, transportation, food, medical assistance and security of thousands of Sikh pilgrims attending the birth anniversary celebrations. He said the preservation of religious heritage and provision of facilities to pilgrims reflected the importance of religious freedom and peaceful coexistence.

The minister said the ETPB's efforts to protect, preserve and maintain minority places of worship would help safeguard the country's rich religious heritage for future generations.

He also appreciated the government and ETPB administration for facilitating Sikh pilgrims from across the world and making comprehensive arrangements for the successful conclusion of the birth anniversary celebrations.



Sindh Indus lawyers forum protests against new provinces and 27th constitutional amendment draft outside CM House in Karachi.

Eight killed, seven injured as vehicle overturns in Torghar: Police

PESHAWAR (APP): At least eight people, including a woman, were killed and seven others injured when a passenger vehicle overturned on Shah Tal Road in Torghar district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

According to Rescue 1122 Torghar spokesperson and police, the accident occurred at Gegani Kandao when a Datsun vehicle travelling from Shah Tal to Judba overturned on Tuesday. Soon after receiving information about the incident, Rescue 1122 teams rushed to the site, provided first aid to the injured and shifted them to a nearby hospital. Three of the injured were stated to be in critical condition.

Rescue sources said the accident occurred due to brake failure. The deceased were identified as Maulana Samiullah, Sakhimullah, driver Hakim Khan and Karim, among others. The injured included three women and a child. Meanwhile, Rescue 1122 Battagram ambulances and medical teams also launched immediate rescue operations to assist the victims.

Hamza Shehbaz urges stronger Muslim-Sikh ties at Guru Nanak celebrations

NANKANA SAHIB (INP): Punjab former chief minister Hamza Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday called for strengthening bonds of love and brotherhood between the Muslim and Sikh communities, saying all citizens, irrespective of their religion, enjoyed equal rights in Pakistan.

Addressing the concluding ceremony of the 557th birth anniversary celebrations of Baba Guru Nanak Dev Ji at Gurdwara Janam Asthan, he said the teachings of Baba Guru Nanak promoted love, peace, equality, selfless service and respect for humanity.

He said the message of love had become more important in a world facing conflicts, adding that dialogue and mutual understanding were essential to resolving disputes.

Hamza Shehbaz said Pakistan shared a deep-rooted relationship of love and reverence with the Sikh community, while its religious sites, including Nankana Sahib and Kartarpur, formed part of the country's shared heritage. "There is no word like minority in my dictionary," he said, adding that all citizens were entitled to equal rights.

Referring to the opening of the Kartarpur Corridor, he said Pakistan had extended its arms to welcome Sikh pilgrims and stressed the need to further strengthen ties between the two communities for future generations.

Recalling his family's association with the Sikh community, he said his late grandfather, Mian Muhammad Sharif, used to share stories of love and friendship between Sikhs and Muslims in Amritsar and Jati Umra.

He urged people to follow Baba Guru Nanak's teachings by sharing their resources, helping the needy and serving humanity. Wealth and official positions, he said, were temporary, while service to humanity earned lasting respect.

Welcoming Sikh pilgrims who had arrived from different parts of the world, he said any difficulties faced during their visit would be addressed. He said true success lay in being a good human being, irrespective of religion, and in showing compassion by sharing the sufferings of others. Minister of State for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Kheal Das Kohistani, Provincial Minister for Minorities Affairs, Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora, MNA Dr Shezra Mansab, Secretary EITB Nasir Mushtaq, Joint Secretary Ministry of Religious Affairs Kamran Farooq, Board Member Dr Mimpal Singh, and other officials attended the ceremony.

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Civilisational dialogue

Whenever representatives of Pakistan and India meet, even in multilateral settings, there is hope for a rekindling of ties. This is so because bilateral engagement is currently close to zero, mainly because of New Delhi's rigidity. But considering last year's armed conflict between both states, and the ensuing toxic atmosphere in South Asia, it is a welcome development that Climate Change Minister Musadik Malik travelled to New Delhi recently for the SCO Civilisational Dialogue Forum.

This was a multilateral meeting and there were no great expectations of a bilateral breakthrough attached to the visit. But the fact that it took place at all despite the state of ties is significant. Sometimes at such events, behind closed doors, representatives of both states can discuss small steps to improve relations.

Mr Malik brought up the issue of climate change threatening the whole region, while highlighting the common civilisational bonds that tie South Asia and Eurasia together — bonds which have unfortunately become hostage to the rigidity of some, particularly in the subcontinent. The minister also deserves praise for deftly handling pointed questions from the Indian media about 'terrorism' — apparently New Delhi's favourite refrain when it comes to Pakistan — as well as the IWT. Mr Malik said that he was in India for an SCO event; when the Indians would call him to discuss terrorism and other irritants, he would address these specifically, as Pakistan also had concerns.

Though there are no signs of the deep freeze in bilateral relations thawing anytime soon, engagements such as these can help bring down the temperature, and lower confrontational rhetoric.

The fact is there is no viable alternative to peace in South Asia, and only through a structured dialogue can both states address their concerns satisfactorily, and work towards a more peaceful future for all.

Of course the Indian side must stop issuing threats to Pakistan, and using adversarial language. While Pakistan has defended itself against Indian aggression in the past, and will do so again if threatened, the subcontinent's people deserve to live in peace, not eternal conflict.

When India is ready to engage Pakistan in a civil, frank and respectful dialogue, it will find this country ready to respond.

The mote in whose eye?

Jawed Naqvi

Terrified by Rahul and Priyanka's exposure to lurking harm as the siblings negotiate the remorseless world of Indian politics, Sonia Gandhi asks herself sagely in her memoir: "Is it because I understand even more clearly and only too well what is at stake, and the extent to which our adversary is ruthless and unprincipled? Our opponents have always used the garb of religion to further a regressive, right-wing agenda — only now, as their ideology has gained traction, they have become more hardened and violent."

In describing the right wing's propensity for violence as a dominant threat to democracy (and to her children), Gandhi reveals an ideological connect with Jawaharlal Nehru. It was Nehru who, soon after independence, would tell his advisers to worry about Hindu extremists rather than communists (who the advisers preferred to target) as the potential destroyers of his idea of secular democracy.

Nehru's ideas were carried forward by Indira Gandhi in her 1966-77 tenure. She was supported in the task by moderate communists. But she soiled her progressive credentials with the 1975 emergency.

The second tenure in 1980 saw her losing the left's support and it became an uphill toil for Indira to preserve Nehru's secular focus while Hindutva, emboldened by its camouflaged 1977 entry into mainstream politics, chipped away at the pillars of secular India, hollowing them out eventually. Rajiv Gandhi saw religion as the flavour of his time. Thus, a man not known for any regressive proclivities plunged headlong into the religious mire he would unwittingly deepen. By siding with Muslim reactionaries in the Shahbano alimony case, he found himself needing to balance the huge political error by appeasing right-wing Hindus in the Babri Masjid dispute. Clearly his advisers were up to no good and several of them proved it by crossing over to the BJP.

Rahul Gandhi can be vividly stern with the right wing at home while favouring a gentler diplomatic vocabulary for outrages abroad.

The ideological focus was blurred further by Manmohan Singh, who put Nehru's worldview in the loft and asserted instead that the biggest internal threat to the country came from the hard-line left, not, as Nehru had warned, from the Hindu right. Singh was regurgitating the traditionally anti-left propaganda of big businesses. They backed his vertical ascent and used the time to prepare the grounds for Narendra Modi's arrival. By the time Singh woke up and described Modi as a disaster for India, it was too late. His secular legacy was to have produced the Justice Sachar report about the miserable state Muslims live in, which nobody today wants to talk about.

As for Rahul Gandhi, for reasons best known to him, his fulminations in the US last week detracted from his mother's calling out the mass murder in Gaza as a genocide that India needed to oppose as its moral tenet. Sonia Gandhi stood out as a rare Indian leader to champion Palestinian rights in Modi's India. She slammed the government in an opinion piece in a major daily for humouring Israel with its loud diplomatic silence on Gaza. Like her mother, Priyanka too described the genocide as genocide. Rahul hesitantly uses the word to describe Gaza's nightmare but he is not averse to calling it out as genocide.

He offered a tame response instead to students in New York, reportedly saying one wrong could not be justified by another wrong, the reference being to Hamas as the trigger. In a world polarised by Israeli atrocities, Rahul thus embroiled himself in the notorious action-reaction trope used by right-wing groups mostly to justify targeting weaker quarries.

It is of course possible that being leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha requires Rahul to be less strident on the diplomatic circuit than his mother or sister are able to be. There's another likelier reason to be circumspect — the need to keep the US close. It has been suggested that since India's diplomatic ties with Israel were established in January 1992 within months of Rajiv Gandhi's assassination, he was somehow the impediment. What is less known is that while Rajiv maintained a formal non-alignment and pro-Palestinian posture, he did take incremental steps towards engagement with Israel. A significant example was that an Israeli tennis team was allowed to tour India in 1987.

Rajiv also yielded to American Jewish leaders ostensibly to get more traction for India in Washington. It resulted in the elevation of the Israeli vice-consul in Bombay to the rank of consul, followed by indirect contacts in Washington and New York in 1988. But despite the limited outreach, he continued to publicly criticise Israeli policies — such as condemning the 1985 attack on PLO offices in Tunis — and maintained support for Palestinian rights. That could be a key difference between Rahul Gandhi and his parents. What makes it curious is that he can be vividly stern with the right-wing establishment at home while favouring a gentler diplomatic vocabulary for outrages abroad.

Rahul's father, like him, also lived in tricky times. A standoff with China in Arunachal Pradesh melted into a handshake with Deng Xiaoping. Ties with Pakistan soured over India's military exercise close to its border, which Islamabad saw as a cover for invasion. Rajiv Gandhi dissolved the tensions by holding a memorable meeting with Benazir Bhutto in Karachi. Relations soured with the king of Nepal, Sinhala nationalists as well as Sri Lanka's Tamil separatists. Rajiv helped create Saarc in 1985 to thrash out the differences. Modi has shut that option.

Finally, a Pakistani student at the US event asked Rahul how ties could improve between the neighbours. Rahul could have recalled how he and Priyanka watched a cricket match in Karachi in 2004 while the two countries discussed terrorism. Why aren't those India-Pakistan matches played any longer? Rahul could have said that the IRA was furiously attacking British targets, keeping the Good Friday Agreement on the anvil for years. His idea of 'talks only after terrorism ends' sounds like Modi's foreign ministry statement. Or, perhaps it shows the right wing in Congress is alive and kicking, perhaps to Sonia Gandhi's chagrin.

Absenteeism woes

Parvez Rahim

Employers face multiple challenges while managing their businesses. Besides setting up the necessary infrastructure, the quality of manpower plays a key role in the success of an enterprise. The top operating companies in Pakistan, the numbers of which have shrunk substantially over the last 30 to 40 years, employed the best technicians and operators, who were much wanted by petroleum giants, such as Safco and Aramco.

Such workers are mostly committed to their company's interests in complying with safety policies and fulfilling job responsibilities. Regular attendance plays a crucial role in judging an employee's commitment to his job and organisation. In progressive companies, there is a provision of two weekly rest days, and between 20 to 25 days of annual leave against the statutory requirement of 14 days per annum. The quantum of other leaves in the law comprises 10 days of casual leave, 16 days of sick leave, and around 15 days of festival-related holidays per year. The total number of leaves and holidays is approximately 165 days, leaving just 200 days of work in a year. Despite this time off, if an employee is absent from work without approval, they should be disciplined.

Excessive absenteeism exists in industrial and commercial undertakings across the world. The most common reason that is given is sickness. Illness can be feigned; no doctor can ascertain whether the absence was in any way related to a disease. Employees also miss work because of social, cultural and economic reasons. Many are absent because the work is either unrewarding and hazardous or stressful. An employee's grave personal issues, too, can have a negative impact on their attendance.

Other key causes of absenteeism include a heavy workload, long hours, and high-pressure tasks coupled with the expense of commuting. Chronic illness, injury, and anxiety make sick leave necessary, as does lack of childcare or eldercare. Workers who feel unappreciated or disconnected from company goals are too discouraged to show up, while bullying and lack of support from supervisors make the workplace unsafe.

Employers should identify the causes of absenteeism.

Chronic absenteeism is the consistent absence of an employee from the workplace. This prevents them from carrying out their duties in a timely and productive fashion, which violates a company's personal or sick leave policy. The hidden costs of absenteeism include overtime for those who cover for absent employees, temporary hiring costs, and the low morale or reduced productivity of those who have to work harder for someone chronically absent. Meanwhile, when such absentees return to the office, they spend the first few days in either catching up, or attending to pending work.

According to Standing Order 15 of the Industrial and Commercial Employment (Standing Orders) Ordinance, 1968, "habitual absence without leave or absence without leave for more than ten days" constitutes misconduct. An employee guilty of misconduct may be dismissed from employment if the charge against him is proven in the domestic inquiry held to investigate the allegation.

However, employers are often advised to proceed against errant employees gradually. The former should first explore the causes of an employee's absenteeism and, if possible, try to correct inconvenient factors within their organisations. If such an exercise alleviates the absenteeism of an employee, counselling sessions can then be instituted to address stress and anxiety for all. The result will not only be improved overall attendance but also a content and productive workforce. Introducing incentive schemes for employees who maintain an exemplary attendance record also goes a long way in encou-raging people to be present in the office.

Delaying the inevitable

Arifa Noor

The PPP is worried, very worried. Since the talk of the new provinces began, it has been the only party (in government) to take the 'rumours' seriously, in public as well as otherwise; the Noonies would rather ignore the matter. It struck back with vehement rejections and heated speeches in Sindh.

And then last week, Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari took the proverbial bull by the horns. At a speech at the Karachi Press Club, not only did he push back against the idea of new provinces, he also created shock and awe by what he said on other issues. He questioned the award of the reserved seats of PTI to other parties; he expressed concern over the state of the judiciary and even alleged the 27th Amendment had been passed by force. He then also called Imran Khan a political prisoner and said both the PTI head and Maulana Fazlur Rehman needed to be wooed rather than pushed away.

The speech did not go down well, it seems. Within minutes, Atta Tarar, the information minister of the federal government that is yet to own the new provinces officially was on television, to criticise BBZ. Others followed suit, though neither the prime minister nor anyone from the Sharif family spoke up. And no one was willing to spare BBZ.

The next day came a number of interviews in which it seemed at times that the PPP chairman was walking back on his earlier harshness. For instance, when asked to explain his comments on the 27th Amendment, BBZ argued that he meant it was passed by brute majority of the government. Then he called Mohsin Naqvi 'bhai' after having described him as the minister of everything a day before.

Some feel the PPP, since the meeting with the president, has accepted the inevitable.

But the explanations didn't prove enough; soon came the news that the prime minister and interior minister met Asif Ali Zardari, the president, and the press release after their interaction said that any future amendments would be passed with consensus as had happened in the past. Released by the presidency, this press release provided a stamp of legitimacy to the 26th and 27th Amendments, and a contradiction of what BBZ had said.

This is not the first time it has appeared to outsiders that BBZ has been put in his place by his father, but the frequency with which this happens is now more a case of the father and son playing good cop/bad cop as have the Sharif brothers for decades. That it ends up making the son seem mercurial doesn't seem to bother the party.

Since then, the war of words between the government and the PPP has dialled down a wee bit on television, but on social media, it continues unabated. And the culprits are not just the anonymous accounts. A senior cabinet member such as Khawaja Asif has posted provocatively on X, leading to angry reactions from senior PPP leaders.

However, the ceasefire hasn't put an end to the larger 'debate' on new provinces. And neither has it really clarified the position of the parties in power on the matter.

For instance, some feel the PPP, since the meeting with the president, has now, like the N, accepted the inevitable. After all, no one thinks the N in Lahore is too happy with the idea but it realises the futility of pushing back. This is lent credence by the statements of Rana Sanaullah, who continues to insist the proposal has not been discussed by the government. But it is perhaps too simple to assume an easy capitulation despite what the country continues to be 'told'.

Journalists with sources and contacts in the highest echelons of power continue to inform us that new provinces are as real as climate change. With their access to the hallowed halls of power, they are privy to some information on how the provinces may go forward, despite the resistance from the PPP.

The first step is a referendum. That Atta Tarar defended this idea in his video talk that followed BBZ's press conference means there is some truth to the matter; since then Rana Sana has also agreed that a referendum might be the way forward.

In addition, a story in The News has also explained the referendum votes will not be counted nationally but provincially. The Constitution also allows parliament to lay down the procedure "for the holding of a referendum and the compiling and the consolidation of the result of a referendum" in Article 48.

Obviously, some Doubting Thomases continue to point out that a referendum cannot override the need for the provincial assemblies to pass a resolution in favour of new provinces with a two-thirds majority. And while it continues to be a hurdle, some experts, such as Malik Ahmed Khan, the Punjab Assembly speaker, are of the view that once the people have spoken, it should be given more weight than the voice of the representatives of the people. Perhaps he knows how this will translate legally and constitutionally, but it does seem to suggest that the hurdles have been or are being worked out.

But this is what one side is telling us at a time when hybridity afflicts us. And the parties' disquiet is not entirely hidden. The PPP is more vocal but the N remains coy. And till they are on board the hybrid train, they will have a say. In parliament, in creating a consensus and so on.

It seems that at the moment, their instinct might be to stretch the process out by debating the finer points of the question and how it will be conducted. Consider that in a recent speech BBZ emphasised the need to focus on the economy instead of creating new problems. Beyond that, can this issue strike another blow to the hybrid system? Most probably.

The missing link

Dr Niaz Murtaza

Rulers who don't bring power closer to people via strong local bodies want us to believe that they will now bring power closer to people via more provinces. So, the false idea of making many provinces as a cure for our many ills is back with a bang.

Months after it first emerged, the bang is still more noise than a clarion call of reason. I have seen three key reports against it, but none in its favour.

Support — strong on rhetoric but weak on evidence — comes mainly from ministers and friendly analysts. One minister cites Afghanistan's 34 units. That's odd as Afghanistan helps us avoid the blushes of being last in South Asia on key governance metrics. It's a unitary state whose units lack legislative powers and elected bodies. We have 150-plus stronger units (districts) which have elected bodies, at least as per the law.

Some cite unitary France's 18 units. They too lack legislative powers. Counting them is easier than proving they cause its progress. It has democracy and civilian sway, unlike us. These key parts of the causal chain are not cited in our French politics lessons.

Rulers also ignore the proven merits of local bodies. These offer no instant cure. But with higher democracy and civilian sway present, they bring power closer to people globally. And when the two aren't in place, nothing usually does that. But they remain our missing link between power and the powerless.

Most of us don't have elected local bodies, they being absent in Gilgit-Baltistan, Quetta, Punjab and Islamabad and now KP due to emergency rule. Even when and where they exist, they are too weak to fix problems.

Provinces often delay their elections for long but dissolve them early. Elections are often held on non-party basis; local officials often lack a public mandate, as in Punjab, and seats for weak groups are often hogged by elites. Citizens have little say in what they do, little recourse when they fail and little voice in how they spend money. Uneven council sizes and missing tiers weaken them further. Local tasks are split among local bodies and many higher-level agencies. Local heads often lack effective control as vague supervisory powers allow interference from above. Weak coordination and capacity gaps further hamper them. Such split and bureaucratic control is high in Islamabad, Sindh and Punjab.

The setups closest to the people have the least powers.

Provinces first make voters wait for local bodies. They later make local bodies wait for cash. They only spend about five per cent of our total state funds, much lower than in many similar states. They depend heavily on provincial funds and can't legally and practically collect much cash locally. For example, over 95pc of their funds come from such transfers in Sindh. It is often hard to see how provinces divide money across districts, but easy to see that favoured districts get more cash per head.

So, the setups closest to the people have the least powers. Would rulers who have kept local bodies so weak for so long empower new provinces? Their new capitals may be closer, but still out of reach of the masses.

The aim behind dividing provinces may be to make them powerless like local bodies and actually move power away from the people. What provinces have done to local bodies, the centre may now do to the provinces. So, the masses will have one more government level between them and real power.

Deep divisions within a setup held together tightly by its strong fear of PTI and its weak mandate make the division of provinces dicey. Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari's diatribes exposing its electoral misdeeds and warning against forcing matters via a referendum emitted shockwaves. Our new troi--ka — the president, prime minister and interior minister — representing all key parts of the hybrid regime, soon agreed on talks. Perhaps those fond of force have shelved it, for now.

The PPP was largely mum when judges, the opposition and activists faced abuses. It has reacted strongly, now that it's at the receiving end of the stick. Even though it opposes the idea for the wrong reason — the fear of losing the golden goose of Karachi — the right reasons do exist.

PML-N supports this latest demand of powerful quarters via ministers, but the Sharifs stay mum. Perhaps it wants strong promises of extended patronage before giving top-level support. But it, too, may be forced to speak up when it eventually faces problems.

While our hybrid rulers continue to play self-serving games, a nuclear-armed state of nearly 250 million inches closer to multifaceted crises given their misrule. Uninterrupted democracy and civilian sway are the only way to avoid doom.

PM orders expediting customs clearance, immigration, other operations at airports

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday directed the relevant authorities to expedite customs clearance, immigration and other operations at Pakistan's airports.

Chairing the weekly review meeting on the affairs of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), the prime minister directed that smart scanning systems should be made operational at all international airports across Pakistan at the earliest.

He expressed hope that the visits of the Chairman FBR to Karachi and Lahore, and his meetings with traders and industrialists there, would yield positive results for the country's trade, exports and investment.

Following the recent inquiry into bonded warehouses, which revealed tax irregularities by oil marketing companies, the prime minister directed that action be taken and recoveries made without any discrimination.

During the meeting, it was informed that with the assistance of relevant institutions, smart scanning systems were being installed at Pakistan's major international airports. Through these systems, passengers' luggage will be automatically directed to either the Green Channel or the Red Channel.

The meeting was further informed that work was also underway on a modern cargo tracking system, which will help control the sales tax gap and smuggling.

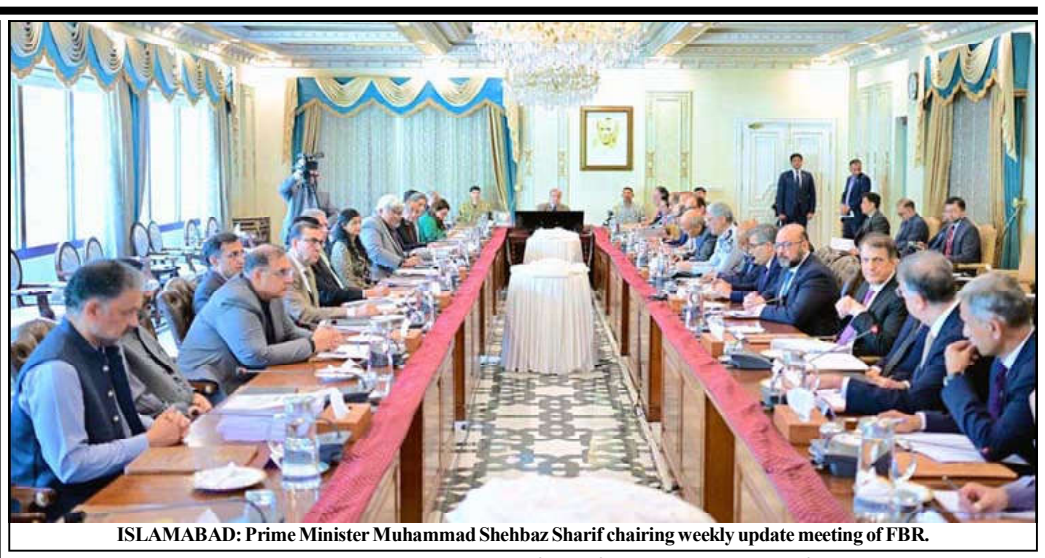
Through the cargo tracking system, the transportation of goods, from loading to delivery, will be connected to a single digital system. This system will comprise e-bilty, a risk management system, field enforcement and an analytics dashboard.

A steering committee is also being formed to ensure the effective implementation of this system, which will include provincial representation.

The meeting was informed that, on the Prime Minister's instructions, an audit of the bonded warehouses of oil marketing companies had revealed irregularities amounting to Rs. 24.4 billion. Legal procedures are being followed in this regard, and recoveries are underway.

The meeting was further informed that the Indus Collectorate had started operations at bridges over the River Indus across the country. A total of 856 staff members have started serving in this enforcement collectorate, which has so far conducted 302 operations and seized illegal goods worth Rs. 1, 849 million.

It was informed that, to improve sales tax recovery in the country, separate zones for sales tax were being established in the country's four major Taxpayer Units (TPUs) in Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad and Multan.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairing weekly update meeting of FBR.



Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chairing a follow-up meeting to review progress on the revamping and restructuring of Pakistan Railways, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamabad.

Romanian wheat boosts Pakistan's food security

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan has received another major shipment of Romanian wheat, bringing total imports from Romania to 273, 603 metric tonnes in five consignments, as the two countries strengthen agricultural trade ties and Pakistan diversifies its sources of essential food supplies.

The bulk carrier MV Alex arrived at Port Qasim on Monday, November 23, carrying 54, 983 metric tonnes of Romanian wheat for Punjab, according to a Romanian Embassy press release. The shipment is part of the Trading Corporation of Pakistan's (TCP) efforts to supply wheat to Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh.

Earlier, on Saturday, November 21, the MV Zhong Chang arrived at Karachi Port carrying approximately 50, 000 metric tonnes of Romanian wheat for Punjab. According to the Karachi Port Trust (KPT), the vessel berthed at berths 13 and 14.

Before the latest arrival, four TCP shipments carrying more than 200, 000 metric tonnes of Romanian wheat had reached Pakistan. Two consignments were allocated to Punjab, one to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and one to Sindh. The MV Alex carried the third consignment for Punjab.

Romanian Ambassador Dr Dan Stoenescu said the shipments demonstrated the practical benefits of bilateral trade, providing Pakistan with an additional source of wheat amid pressure on international markets.

He said the five consignments also offered Romania a foundation for developing longer-term trade relations with Pakistani buyers.

Jam invites global investors to explore Pakistan's Agri-Food potential at FoodAg 2026

KARACHI (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan, emphasizing the country's potential as a major player in the global agri-food market, invited international investors and business communities to explore investment opportunities in Pakistan's agriculture and food sectors, particularly in processing, packaging, branding and livestock.

The Federal Commerce Minister was addressing the inaugural ceremony of the fourth edition of International Food and Agro Exhibition (FoodAg) Pakistan 2026, organized by the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) at Sindh Governor House late Monday night.

The ceremony was attended by Sindh Governor Syed Muhammad Nihal Hashmi, Coordinator to PM for Industry and Commerce Rana Ihsan Afzal Khan, members of parliament, foreign diplomats and business delegates as well as leadership of REAP, FPCCI, KCCI, LCCI and other trade and industrial associations and chambers.

The Federal Commerce Minister, at the occasion, welcomed international delegates and visitors and conveyed the special regards of the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Highlighting Pakistan's rich agricultural heritage, the federal minister observed that the region had sustained agricultural production for nearly 4, 000 years, owing to the Indus River and the ancient Indus Civilization.

He noted that the global agricultural landscape was continuously evolving, with changing market dynamics, emerging ideas and new requirements shaping international trade. He emphasized the importance of incorporating global experiences, suggestions and innovations into Pakistan's trade exhibitions.

Jam Kamal highlighted that FoodAg provides an important platform for connecting international buyers with Pakistani producers, particularly small-scale businesses that otherwise face difficulties in accessing international markets. He stressed that smaller businesses, including those operating in smaller cities, should have the same opportunities to connect with international buyers as businesses in major commercial centres.

Emphasizing the growing importance of sustainability and regulatory compliance in international trade, he noted that global buyers increasingly require detailed information about every stage of production, while new laws and regulations were becoming essential considerations for exporters. He underscored the need for Pakistani producers to adapt to these changing requirements to remain competitive in international markets.

The Federal Minister also identified emerging opportunities in olive oil, aquaculture, pink salt and meat processing, while highlighting Pakistan's competitive advantage in the global halal food market as a Muslim-majority country. He observed that halal food requirements were expanding across international markets, including countries such as Hong Kong. He further highlighted Pakistan's role in facilitating regulatory requirements for around ten countries through the presence of relevant regulatory bodies.

Shaza stresses need for stronger cybersecurity amid rising digital threats

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja Tuesday said that cybersecurity challenges were rising rapidly, making it essential to strengthen the country's digital security infrastructure and raise public awareness.

Addressing the Opening Ceremony of PAK-CRYPT – International Symposium on Cybersecurity 2026 ("Advancing Cybersecurity Innovation, Research and Skills Development") at Air University, Islamabad, she said that every aspect of modern life was now connected with cybersecurity.

She said that the government had invested billions of rupees in the National Cyber Security Academy and National Cyber Security Centre and introduced policies to strengthen the country's cybersecurity framework.

She expressed the hope that the Higher Education Commission (HEC) would establish similar cybersecurity operations centres in other universities.

The minister said that the government had passed the Digital Nation Pakistan Act and established the relevant authority, while work was underway on digital governance under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

She said that out of Rs3.7 billion in government payments made over the past few months, 92 per cent had been processed digitally. She added that the government was also working on establishing a national data registry.

Shaza Fatima said that the government was moving towards digital transformation under the prime minister's Digital Nation Pakistan vision. "The government is now operating through e-office, and government operations have become digital," she said.

She said that developments in cybersecurity across the world over the past month had raised serious concerns and highlighted the need for stronger protection.

NA body discusses Petroleum Levy & Climate Support Levy Amendment bill 2026

ISLAMABAD (INP): The National Assembly's standing committee for petroleum Tuesday discussed the Petroleum Levy and Climate Support Levy Amendment bill 2026.

Petroleum Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik said that the proposed amendment has been aimed at ensuring timely recovery of petroleum levy and climate support levy during the standing committee meeting chaired by Mustafa Mehmood.

Minister said that currently Rs. 80 per litre levy imposed over petrol and diesel. "Local refineries also bearing burden of the petroleum levy," he said.

Proposed legislation will ensure that refineries will deposit the petroleum levy before the product move out of the gate.

"The recovery of levy before the product move out of the gate will be a burden over refineries," Naveed Qamar said. "Refineries won't accept this new decision happily," PPP member said.

It wouldn't have better to consult refineries before this legislation, he questioned.

"Except two refineries none have objected over the proposed procedure," minister replied. "Refineries should deposit petroleum levy timely in the state exchequer," he said.

"With this new procedure, the government money wouldn't remain deposited with refineries," he said.

"Fines will be imposed over refineries in case of delay in depositing the government levy," he added.

Practical measures to make Gwadar an industrial, commercial hub: GIEDA

Establishment of new factories, infrastructure development and investor facilitation discussed; emphasis placed on creating employment opportunities for local communities

GWADAR (6 AM Report): The Gwadar Industrial Estate Development Authority (GIEDA) has reaffirmed its commitment to transforming Gwadar into an industrial and commercial hub through the establishment of new factories, infrastructure development and promotion of private investment.

A meeting held at GIEDA, in line with the provincial government's vision, reviewed industrial development, investor facilitation, prospects for establishing new industries and upcoming development projects.

Director Finance Waqas Ahmed Lasi, General Manager Estate Muhammad Hashim and Electrical Engineer Aziz attended the meeting.

Participants emphasized the need for practical measures to accelerate industrial growth, improve infrastructure and provide necessary facilities to investors.

The meeting underscored that industrial development in Gwadar would create employment opportunities for local communities, attract private investment, stimulate business activities and contribute to Balochistan's overall economic development.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain, meets a high-level Brazilian delegation to discuss strengthening bilateral cooperation in agricultural trade, livestock, dairy development, fisheries and investment.

BRA Chairman

Tax system to be more transparent, streamlined and legally compliant

Abdullah Khan chairs taxation review meeting; input tax adjustment, legal and technical matters, and administrative efficiency discussed

QUETTA (6 AM Report): Balochistan Revenue Authority (BRA) Chairman Abdullah Khan chaired a meeting to review measures aimed at enhancing transparency, streamlining tax procedures, ensuring legal compliance and improving revenue collection and administrative efficiency.

The meeting was attended by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa-based taxation expert and legal adviser Fazal Amin, BRA members and relevant officials.

Participants reviewed taxation procedures, compliance with legal requirements and key technical and administrative matters, with particular emphasis on input tax adjustment.

The meeting also discussed measures to clarify and improve taxation procedures, ensure adherence to applicable laws and strengthen the overall performance of the tax administration.

Participants reaffirmed their commitment to developing a more transparent, organized and legally compliant taxation system in Balochistan.



Warm clothes demand surges on Gondlanwala road in Gujranwala amid winter cold wave.

Abhi Microfinance Bank makes debut on PSX under Ticker symbol ABHI

KARACHI (APP): Abhi Microfinance Bank officially commenced trading on the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Tuesday under the ticker symbol 'ABHI', marking a significant milestone in the evolution of Pakistan's financial services sector.

The occasion was marked by a Gong Ceremony at PSX, attended by Commissioner, Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), Zeeshan R. Khattak; Chairman PSX, Ruhail Muhammad; Managing Director and CEO PSX, Farrukh H. Sabzwari; Chairman Abhi Microfinance Bank, Atif Riaz Bokhari; Co-Founder and CEO of Abhi (Pvt.) Limited Omair Ansari; along with representatives and senior management of CDC, NCCPL, Arif Habib Limited, Topline Securities, Growth Securities, PSBA, investors representing Vostok Emerging Finance (VEF) and Speedinvest, and members of the financial community.

The successful listing, according to a statement issued here, follows the Bank's Initial Public Offering (IPO), which comprised 132 million ordinary shares, with 75% allocated to institutional investors through book building and 25% to the general public.

The book-building portion was oversubscribed by 1.6 times, while the public subscription achieved 100% subscription, it stated, adding that the shares were offered at the Strike price of PKR 15.50 per share. The IPO raised Rs 2.05 billion and attracted participation from institutional, retail and foreign investors.

Farrukh H. Sabzwari, welcoming the Abhi Microfinance Bank to the PSX, stated that the ceremony marked the 14th listing of the current calendar year and the 6th of the fiscal year, reflecting the continued momentum of Pakistan's capital market.

Abhi's journey highlights the innovation taking place within Pakistan's financial services sector, he said and added that with continuous growth of Pakistan's capital market while maintaining strong disclosure standards.

PSX stays bullish, gains over 1, 068 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a bullish trend on Tuesday, with the benchmark KSE-100 Index gaining 1, 068.42 points, a positive change of 0.60 percent, to close at 178, 542.28 points against 177, 473.86 points recorded in the previous trading session.

The ready market witnessed a trading volume of 644.770 million shares, compared to 551.451 million shares traded in the previous session. The traded value of the ready market stood at Rs23.066 billion, up from Rs22.500 billion a day earlier.

Meanwhile, total market capitalisation increased to Rs19.385 trillion from Rs19.254 trillion recorded in the previous session.

Out of 498 companies that traded in the ready market, 281 posted gains, 195 suffered losses, while 22 remained unchanged.

WorldCall Telecom led the volume chart with 77.200 million shares, followed by TPL REIT Fund I with 41.429 million shares and TPL Properties with 31.620 million shares.

Among the top gainers in the ready market, Pakistan National Shipping Corporation surged by Rs47.44 to close at Rs672.01, while Sapphire Textile Mills Limited advanced by Rs25.86 to settle at Rs1, 550.37.

CDNS realizes Rs 700b in first five months, sets Rs1.53trln target for FY27

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has realized Rs700 billion between July 1 and November 23, achieving its target for the period and positioning itself to pursue an ambitious resource mobilisation target of Rs1.53 trillion for the fiscal year 2026-27.

The strong performance reflects sustained investor interest in government-backed savings schemes and the institution's efforts to strengthen domestic savings, broaden its investor base and provide accessible investment opportunities to citizens, official sources said.

The annual mobilisation target forms part of the government's broader strategy to channel household savings into formal investment avenues while offering secure options for individuals seeking financial stability and long-term planning.

CDNS is also focusing on improving operational efficiency, enhancing service delivery and expanding access to its savings products through improved digital services.

A key area of focus is the expansion of Shariah-compliant investment opportunities to attract investors seeking financial products aligned with Islamic principles. The institution has been gradually strengthening its presence in the Islamic finance segment by diversifying its investment offerings.

For fiscal year 2025-26, CDNS had set a mobilisation target of Rs60 billion for Islamic savings instruments. Earlier, during fiscal year 2024-25, it had fixed an overall mobilisation target of Rs1.65 trillion, including Rs170 billion from Islamic investment products.

The institution has demonstrated a strong mobilisation record in previous years. During fiscal year 2023-24, CDNS surpassed its target of Rs1.7 trillion by mobilising Rs1.742 trillion. It also achieved its Rs1.6 trillion target in fiscal year 2022-23.

In fiscal year 2021-22, the institution initially set a target of Rs1.3 trillion, which was later revised upward to Rs1.4 trillion amid favourable market conditions and improved resource mobilisation.

Officials attributed the institution's performance to institutional reforms, better customer services and initiatives aimed at making National Savings schemes more accessible and attractive to investors.

With Rs700 billion already mobilised during the first five months of FY27, CDNS is now working towards achieving its annual target of Rs1.53 trillion.

Balochistan will never back down from contributing to national defense: CM Bugti

CM lays foundation stone of modern sports complex in Nawa Killi, Quetta; orders immediate construction and completion within one year, warns against bureaucratic hurdles and praises Health Minister Bakht Kakar's services

QUETTA (6 AM Report): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has said that Pakistan's needs will always take precedence and Balochistan will never hesitate to contribute its resources or make sacrifices for national security, defense and stability. He warned that unnecessary delays and bureaucratic hurdles in public welfare projects would not be tolerated, emphasizing that providing sports and recreational opportunities to youth was essential to promoting constructive activities.

He made these remarks on Tuesday while addressing the groundbreaking ceremony of the state-of-the-art Mir Sarfraz Bugti Sports Complex in Nawa Killi, Quetta, within the PB-29 constituency.

The chief minister said Pakistan had recently fought a war against a much larger adversary, while Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa continued to face complex security challenges. He paid tribute to the security forces for their sacrifices, saying the provincial government and people of Balochistan deeply valued their services.

Bugti said he generally preferred attending inauguration ceremonies of completed projects, but the Nawa Killi Sports Complex had faced delays of six to seven months due to land-related issues and bureaucratic hurdles, prompting him to personally attend its groundbreaking ceremony.

Appointing the Commissioner Quetta as head of the project's task force, the chief minister ordered the immediate commencement of construction and its completion within one year.

He directed the secretaries of Sports and Communication and Works to increase the project's financial allocation, assuring that the government would provide the required funds. He warned that further obstacles would not be tolerated and officials found negligent would face action.

Bugti emphasized that developing sports facilities would help nurture young talent and steer youth away from negative activities. He said the government was committed to providing opportunities through education, sports and healthy recreational activities.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti unveiling the plaque to inaugurate Nawa Killi Sports Complex.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Commodity Management Department and Chairman Balochistan Food Authority Haji Noor Muhammad Dummar listening the problems of the people in his office.

Will not support Balochistan's division, creation of new provinces: MPAs

QUETTA (ANN): Members of the Balochistan Assembly have opposed proposals for the creation of new provinces, urging the federal government to prioritize addressing Balochistan's longstanding deprivation, ensuring its rightful share of financial resources and providing basic facilities.

Speaking separately, MPAs Mir Rehmat Saleh Baloch, Mir Zabid Ali Reki, Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman Baloch and others said they would not support any proposal to divide Balochistan or establish new provinces.

They said Balochistan's population continued to face unemployment and inadequate access to education, healthcare and clean drinking water, arguing that discussions about new provinces were diverting attention from pressing public issues.

The lawmakers warned that creating new provinces amid Pakistan's economic difficulties and mounting debt could further increase administrative and financial expenditure.

They alleged that longstanding discriminatory treatment by the federal government had contributed to Balochistan's underdevelopment and sense of deprivation.

The MPAs demanded that the federal government ensure Balochistan's rightful share of financial resources and development funds to improve basic facilities, reduce unemployment and promote socioeconomic development.

Reiterating their opposition to Balochistan's division, the lawmakers emphasized that the federal government's priority should be safeguarding the province's legitimate rights and addressing its longstanding problems.

Modern training, technology can strengthen agriculture & livestock sectors: VC Kakar

LORALAI (6 AM Report): University of Loralai Vice Chancellor Engr. Prof. Dr. Ehsanullah Kakar has said that modern knowledge, practical training and technical skills can strengthen the agriculture and livestock sectors and promote regional economic development.

He urged farmers and local entrepreneurs to benefit from the large grants program to expand their businesses and stimulate economic activity.

He expressed these views while addressing the third certificate distribution ceremony of the Livestock Farmer Field School Program and an introductory session on the large grants program as chief guest at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) field office in Loralai. Deputy Director Livestock Abdul Rahim Niazi, Divisional Forest Officer Zubair Ahmed, FAO representatives and other officials attended the ceremony. Dr. Aminullah briefed small and medium-sized entrepreneurs on grant opportunities, eligibility criteria, application procedures and submission deadlines.

The vice chancellor appreciated the efforts of the FAO and European Union in enhancing the technical and professional skills of local farmers.

Development benefits must not be limited to specific areas or groups: Zarak

Public service and regional development are the primary objectives of politics; efforts underway to address water, electricity, gas, education, healthcare and employment issues

QUETTA (ANN): Balochistan Assembly member Sheikh Zarak Khan Mandokhail has said that the benefits of development must not be confined to specific areas or groups, emphasizing that all citizens should have equal access to basic facilities and development opportunities without discrimination.

Speaking to various delegations, he said the primary objectives of politics were public service, addressing citizens' grievances and regional development, while providing better educational and employment opportunities to young people was an urgent need.

He said elected representatives were entrusted with conveying public concerns to legislative forums and playing an effective role in resolving their constituents' problems.

Sheikh Zarak Khan Mandokhail said he was fully aware of the challenges facing his constituency and was coordinating with relevant departments to address issues related to clean drinking water, electricity, gas, education, healthcare, roads and employment. He added that efforts were underway to identify and implement development projects based on public needs.

The MPA described public representation as a significant responsibility and reaffirmed his commitment to meeting public expectations, improving basic facilities and promoting equitable development.

AI, modern technology essential for effective parliamentary affairs: Tahir Shah Kakar

QUETTA (6 AM Report): Balochistan Assembly Secretary Tahir Shah Kakar has said that adopting artificial intelligence, modern technology and digital systems is essential to improving parliamentary efficiency, modernizing administrative procedures and enhancing officers' professional capabilities. He expressed these views while inaugurating a four-day training workshop organized by the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) at the Balochistan Assembly Committee Room.

Kakar said the program was designed for mid-career Grade 17 and 18 officers who would play an important role in managing the Assembly Secretariat's administrative and parliamentary affairs.

He emphasized that trained officers would not only perform their duties using modern technology but also serve as master trainers to guide other officials.

The workshop will provide practical training in artificial intelligence applications, e-office, e-parliament, e-filing, drafting parliamentary questions, adjournment motions, calling attention notices, resolutions and standing committee affairs. Special attention will also be given to various stages of legislation and the effective use of digital technology in parliamentary proceedings.

PIPS Director PDP Taj Muhammad, Director General Information Technology Muhammad Nazir Khan and Balochistan Assembly Secretariat officers attended the opening day of the workshop. Participants reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening institutional capacity, improving administrative transparency, accelerating official procedures and enhancing the quality of parliamentary services through modern training programs.

Curbs on press freedom unacceptable, nationwide protest to continue: Afzal Butt

QUETTA (ANN): Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) President Afzal Butt has announced an intensification of the nationwide protest movement against restrictions on press freedom, the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA), forced layoffs and closure of television channel bureaus in Balochistan. He said protests would be held in Lahore and other cities following Karachi and Quetta, culminating in a decisive sit-in in Islamabad until the Charter of Demands was accepted.

He expressed these views while addressing the concluding session of a two-day protest camp organized by the Balochistan Union of Journalists (BUJ) outside Quetta Press Club on the PFUJ's call. Despite freezing temperatures, journalists and media workers remained at the protest camp for 27 consecutive hours.

Afzal Butt said the struggle for freedom of expression and access to information was not limited to journalists but concerned the constitutional rights of Pakistan's 250 million citizens. He said the PFUJ had consistently resisted restrictions on press freedom since 1950.

Rejecting PECA, he said journalists' organizations opposed fake news, irresponsible journalism and character assassination but would not compromise on constitutionally guaranteed freedoms. He urged parliamentary parties to engage with journalists' representatives to resolve the issue.

No negligence in anti-polio campaign will be tolerated: DC

NASEERABAD (6 AM Report): Deputy Commissioner Naseerabad Varender Lal has said that polio eradication is a collective national responsibility and no negligence or shortcomings during the upcoming anti-polio campaign will be tolerated.

Chairing a meeting to review preparations for the December anti-polio campaign, he directed the Health Department and relevant institutions to ensure that no eligible child in the district remained unvaccinated.

The meeting was attended by SSP Naseerabad, District Health Officer Dr. Ayaz Hussain Jamali, Medical Superintendent Dr. Habibullah Pindrani and officials of relevant departments.

Participants reviewed preparations for the upcoming campaign, previous campaign performance, challenges faced by field teams, access to children, parental refusals and difficulties in sensitive areas.

Digital technology to improve municipal services, institutional efficiency: Rauf

QUETTA (6 AM Report): Secretary Local Government and Rural Development Abdul Rauf Baloch has said that modern digital technology will be utilized to improve municipal institutions' efficiency, ensure transparency and enhance the quality of public services.

He expressed these views while chairing a meeting to review the department's preparations for effective participation in Digital Balochistan Expo 2026, in line with Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti's vision for digital transformation.

The meeting was attended by Administrator Metropolitan Corporation Quetta Bashir Barech, Deputy Secretary Ilyas Baloch, departmental focal person Taha Junaid and Section Officer Mukhtiar Zehri.

Abdul Rauf Baloch directed officials to formulate a coordinated strategy to effectively showcase the department's ongoing projects, digital facilities and innovative initiatives at the expo.

He emphasized that the department's digital progress and citizen-oriented services should be prominently highlighted to raise public awareness about modern municipal facilities.

The secretary said the department was taking practical measures to promote digital governance, improve public service delivery and safeguard citizens' fundamental rights.



TURBAT: Additional Chief Secretary Development Zahid Saleem, Secretary Health Mujeeb-ur-Rehman Panezai, Special Secretary Health Shehak Baloch, Secretary Agriculture Dawood Khan Khilji and other during Teaching Hospital Turbat.

Indiscriminate action against substandard, adulterated food sellers to continue: BFA

QUETTA (6 AM Report): The Balochistan Food Authority (BFA) has sealed one baking unit, fined 17 businesses and issued corrective notices to 58 establishments during a crackdown against food safety violations across six districts. According to a BFA spokesperson, inspection teams conducted operations in Quetta, Loralai, Dera Murad Jamali, Sibi, Qilla Saifullah and Khuzdar, detecting milk adulteration, harmful food coloring, expired products, poor hygiene and unsafe food storage. In Quetta, a baking unit was sealed over serious hygiene and food safety violations, while several bakeries, baking units and milk vendors were fined. On-the-spot milk testing revealed adulteration with skimmed milk powder and excessive water.

Action was also taken against businesses in Khuzdar, Dera Murad Jamali and Sibi over expired products, unhygienic conditions, unsafe storage and operating without food business licenses.

In Killa Saifullah, a joint operation with the district administration and police resulted in fines against two milk vendors and two baking units, while five establishments received corrective notices.

Inspection teams also provided guidance on food safety, licensing and registration, including safe food preparation and storage practices at the World Food Programme's school meals processing unit. The BFA spokesperson emphasized that compliance with hygiene standards, quality ingredients, safe storage and licensing requirements was mandatory, adding that indiscriminate action against food safety violators would continue to safeguard public health.

Profiteering will not be tolerated, exam transparency must be ensured: Fida Baloch

CHAMAN (6 AM Report): Additional Deputy Commissioner Chaman Fida Baloch has said that profiteering, overcharging and violations of official price lists will not be tolerated, warning that legal action will be taken against violators. He also directed officials to ensure transparency, merit and discipline in the ongoing eighth-grade board examinations.

During visits to various markets, the additional deputy commissioner reviewed prices of flour, LPG and other essential commodities. He directed shopkeepers to strictly follow official prices and prominently display approved price lists.

Cancel eighth-grade board exams, probe alleged irregularities: PSF

QUETTA (ANN): The All Pakistan Private Schools Federation Balochistan has demanded the immediate cancellation of eighth-grade board examinations and an impartial investigation into alleged widespread cheating, mobile phone use and the provision of cheating materials to students by examination staff. In a joint statement, provincial organizer Nazar Bareech, Muhammad Jafar Khan, Maulvi Jilani Al-Badri, Gul Muhammad Mastoi, Haq Nawaz Shah and other federation leaders warned of province-wide protests if the alleged corruption and examination irregularities were not addressed.

They said the Assessment Commission was originally established to evaluate primary and middle-level education, identify shortcomings and improve educational standards. However, it was subsequently given the role of an examination board in Balochistan, making fifth- and eighth-grade examinations compulsory.

Following a province-wide campaign by the Balochistan Private Schools Grand Alliance, compulsory fifth-grade board examinations were abolished, while eighth-grade examinations remained mandatory.

The federation alleged that certain officials and individuals associated with the publishing industry were involved in examination irregularities, including the distribution of study materials modeled on examination papers before the exams. It also raised concerns over alleged irregularities in paper marking and result preparation. The leaders said widespread cheating was undermining educational standards, compromising merit and jeopardizing students' futures.

AC Zeb

Basic school facilities essential for quality education

LORALAI (6 AM Report): Assistant Commissioner Bori Ahmed Zeb Kakar has said that providing basic facilities, rehabilitating school buildings and ensuring a clean and safe learning environment for female students are essential to promoting quality education.

He expressed these views while inaugurating Government Girls Primary School Sheenabad in Ragha Zangiwal following its rehabilitation and renovation.

Obaid Tareen and Deputy District Education Officer Loralai Abdul Razzaq were also present.

The renovation of the school building and construction of a new washroom were completed under the Education Support Program (ESP) with UNICEF's assistance.

The assistant commissioner inspected the renovated building and newly provided facilities, appreciating the efforts of the organizations involved.

He emphasized that special attention should be given to improving government schools and providing basic facilities to ensure a better learning environment for children. The ceremony acknowledged the collective efforts of the Education Support Program, UNICEF, Parent-Teacher School Management Committee.

End unannounced gas load shedding, improve pressure amid severe cold: Citizens

QUETTA (ANN): Unannounced gas load shedding and low pressure have worsened across Quetta and other cold regions of Balochistan as temperatures continue to drop, severely disrupting residents' daily lives.

Residents said extremely low gas pressure and frequent supply disruptions had made even cooking and heating water difficult, particularly during morning, evening and nighttime hours.

Women, children, elderly citizens and students are reportedly facing considerable difficulties due to inadequate gas supply amid the harsh winter conditions.

Residents said the growing demand for gas during winter, coupled with unannounced outages and low pressure, had further aggravated their problems. They stressed the need for immediate measures to ensure uninterrupted supply as temperatures are expected to drop further.

All available resources being utilized for journalists' welfare: Nek Muhammad

NASEERABAD (6 AM Report): Deputy Director Divisional Information Office Naseerabad Nek Muhammad has said that the Balochistan government is utilizing all available resources to address journalists' grievances, ensure their welfare and strengthen journalistic institutions in line with Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti's vision. He expressed these views during a visit to the newly constructed District Press Club Jaffarabad, completed with financial assistance from the provincial government.

District Press Club President Dhani Bakhsh Magsi welcomed him, while local journalists Ismail Jakhrani, Shahid Ali Abro and Muhammad Nawaz Khosa were also present.

Briefing the deputy director, Magsi said the provincial government had provided Rs20 million through MPA Hadia Nawaz Behrani for the construction of the press club, designed to meet journalists' professional requirements.

The building features a press conference hall, the president's office and two additional rooms on the ground floor, while three bedrooms on the first floor provide accommodation for visiting journalists.



QUETTA: Commissioner Quetta Division Zeeshan Lashari inspecting the Sheikh Manda station of Jinnah Peoples train at airport road.

President reaffirms resolve to end violence against women

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari has reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls, emphasizing that safeguarding women's rights is essential to upholding human rights as a whole.

In a message on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and the 16 Days of Activism, being observed on November 25, he said the day also marked the beginning of the 16 Days of Activism, which conclude on Human Rights Day, December 10.

"Together, these observances remind us that the protection of women's rights is fundamental to the protection of human rights, " he added.

The president said the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan provides a clear foundation for this responsibility. Article 14 guarantees the dignity of every person, Article 25 establishes equality before the law and Article 34 directs the State to ensure the full participation of women in all spheres of national life.

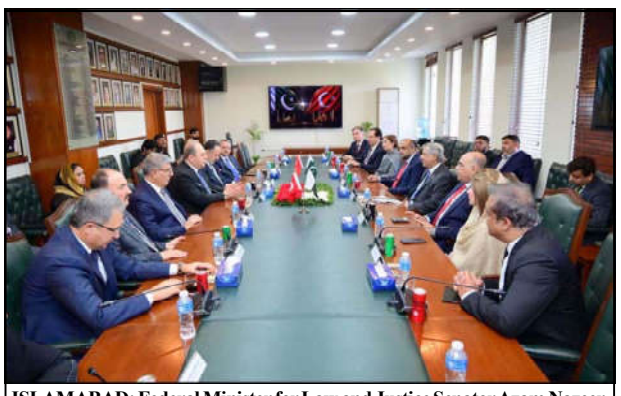
As a State Party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Pakistan has also undertaken international obligations to protect women from discrimination and violence and to ensure that those responsible are held accountable, he added.

"This commitment also has an important place in our political and constitutional history. The Constitution of 1973, adopted under the leadership of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, established equality before the law and called for the full participation of women in national life, " President Secretariat Media Wing, in a press release, quoted President Zardari, as saying.

Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto carried this principle forward and gave practical expression to it through initiatives such as the establishment of the First Women Bank and women police stations, aimed at expanding women's economic opportunities and improving their access to public services, he added.

The president observed that their contributions remind them that equal rights must be reflected in the opportunities available to women and in their ability to seek protection and justice.

He further mentioned that Pakistan had taken important steps to strengthen its legal and institutional framework in this regard. Legislation addresses workplace harassment, acid attacks, offences committed in the name of honour, rape and anti-women practices, adding Pakistan has taken steps to strengthen its legal and institutional response to violence against women.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar holds a meeting with Mr. Omer Kerkez, President of the Court of Cassation of the Republic of Türkiye, Ambassador of Türkiye Dr. Irfan Neziroglu and members of the Turkish delegation to discuss strengthening bilateral judicial and legal cooperation.

No compromise on quality of dev. projects: Khosa

Road construction, rehabilitation and timely completion of projects prioritized to improve connectivity and promote development in underserved areas

QUETTA (ANN): Balochistan Minister for Communications and Works Mir Saleem Khosa has said that the provincial government is improving road infrastructure to bring underdeveloped and remote areas into the national development mainstream, emphasizing that no compromise will be made on the quality and transparency of development projects.

Speaking to various delegations, the minister said road construction, rehabilitation and timely completion of ongoing development projects were among the government's key priorities.

He said roads played a fundamental role in socio-economic development, adding that measures were underway across various districts to improve road networks and address transportation difficulties faced by residents.

Mir Saleem Khosa said improved connectivity would facilitate travel and promote trade, agriculture, business, education and healthcare. Public needs and recommendations from local communities would be prioritized in development projects.

The minister said relevant authorities would be directed to ensure effective monitoring, quality standards and transparency in project execution, reiterating the government's commitment to equitable development and improved basic facilities across Balochistan.



MUSCAT: Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik attended a ceremony organized by Pakistan School Muscat as the Chief Guest to celebrate the 56th National Day of Sultanate of Oman.

All available resources to be utilized for timely resolution of public issues: Dummar

Delegations from Ziarat, Harnai and Sanjavi meet provincial minister, highlight regional grievances; assured of prompt action through relevant departments

QUETTA (6 AM Report): Provincial Minister for Commodity Management Department and Chairman Balochistan Food Authority Haji Noor Muhammad Khan Dummar has said that public service and the timely resolution of citizens' grievances remain his top priorities, assuring that all available resources will be utilized to address the problems facing residents of Ziarat, Harnai and Sanjavi.

He expressed these views during meetings with various public delegations from the three areas at his office in the Civil Secretariat, Quetta.

The delegations apprised the provincial minister of various regional issues and difficulties faced by local communities.

Dummar listened to their grievances and assured them that practical measures would be taken in coordination with the relevant authorities to address their concerns.

He emphasized that every possible effort would be made to ensure the effective and timely resolution of public issues through the concerned departments.

Harnai Focal Person Haji Baz Muhammad Dummar, Personal Secretary Musa Kakar and Staff Officer Kamal Akhtar were also present.

Three militants linked to Zargul alias Uncle group killed in operation

BANNU (INP): Security forces, Bannu Police and the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) killed three militants linked to the Zargul alias Uncle group during a major joint operation in different areas of Bannu district.

The operation, titled Operation Sarbulandi, targeted militant hideouts in Gharira Shah Jahan, Kangar and adjoining villages, according to a statement issued by the Director Public Relations, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police.

The joint forces also recovered weapons and ammunition and detained several suspected individuals and alleged facilitators during the operation.

Police officials said the slain militants belonged to a local faction of a banned militant organisation led by Zargul alias Uncle. One of those killed was reportedly his nephew.

PTI founder moves IHC seeking live streaming of 190mn pound case appeals

ISLAMABAD (INP): A significant development has emerged in the £190 million case as Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan has approached the Islamabad High Court (IHC), seeking live streaming of hearings on his appeals against the sentence. Imran Khan, through his lawyer, has filed an application in the Islamabad High Court, requesting the court to order the live broadcast of proceedings on the appeals.

The petition urges the high court to allow live streaming to promote the principles of justice, transparency and public confidence in the judicial system.



ISLAMABAD: Panelists participate in a discussion during the annual meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) International Network for Nuclear Security Training and Support Centres (NSSC Network).

Govt aims to ensure opportunities for youth to progress by sports, education, healthy pursuits: CM

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Tuesday said that incumbent provincial government aims to ensure that young people have opportunities to progress through sports, education and healthy pursuits. He expressed these views while addressing a ceremony held to lay the foundation stone for the state-of-the-art 'Mir Sarfraz Bugti Sports Complex' in Nawan Killi (PB-29).

The Chief Minister said that the needs of Pakistan always take precedence, he affirmed that for the sake of the country's defense, national security, and stability, Balochistan would not hesitate to make any sacrifice including contributing from its own resources and requirements.

He said that Pakistan has recently fought a war against an adversary many times its own size, while simultaneously grappling with a complex security situation in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a struggle in which security forces are making unparalleled sacrifices.

The Government of Balochistan and the people of the province hold these sacrifices in high regard and would not shy away from any sacrifice required for the defense of the nation, he said.

The Chief Minister noted that while he generally prefers to attend the inauguration ceremonies of completed projects, he decided to personally attend the foundation-laying ceremony for the Nawan Killi Sports Complex due to the delays and complications surrounding it.

Ready to accept working journalists' legitimate demands: Shahid Rind

QUETTA (6 AM Report): Balochistan Chief Minister's Adviser on Information and Political Affairs Shahid Rind has said that the provincial government is ready to accept the legitimate demands of working journalists and introduce legislation in consultation with journalists' organizations to protect their employment and professional rights.

Addressing the Balochistan Union of Journalists (BUJ) protest camp in Quetta, Rind assured journalists of the provincial government's support in pursuing the reopening of closed television channel bureaus. He said that although the provincial government lacked the authority to compel private television channels to maintain their bureaus, Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti had consistently raised his voice in support of affected journalists.

Rind offered to accompany the chief minister and journalists' representatives to meet Federal Information Minister Attaullah Tarar to address the issue.

Expressing concern over the presence of part-time journalists in the profession, he invited the BUJ and Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) to formulate legislative proposals reserving four key newspaper positions—editor, subeditor, reporter and photographer—for full-time professional journalists.

He stressed the need to establish clear criteria for working journalists, criticizing the practice of government employees simultaneously holding editorial positions.

Regarding the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA), Rind clarified that his reservations over the relevant demand were personal and did not necessarily reflect the provincial government's position.

He maintained that the government had no objection to responsible, evidence-based journalism, identifying fake news and baseless character assassination on social media as major challenges.

No negligence in healthcare delivery will be tolerated: Bakht Kakar

QUETTA (ANN): Balochistan Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar has said that no negligence in providing basic healthcare services will be tolerated, adding that practical measures are underway to upgrade hospitals, provide modern medical facilities, ensure medicine availability and maintain the attendance of doctors and medical staff across all districts.

Speaking to various delegations, the minister said providing quality healthcare closer to people's homes and reducing the need for residents of remote areas to travel to major cities for treatment were key government responsibilities.

He said a healthy society was the foundation of a developed Balochistan, emphasizing that special attention was being given to modernizing public hospitals and ensuring free or affordable medical treatment.

Bakht Muhammad Kakar stressed that public grievances could only be addressed through practical measures rather than announcements. He said relevant authorities had been directed to promptly resolve public complaints and improve treatment facilities for patients at government hospitals.

The health minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to strengthening healthcare services across Balochistan and ensuring accessible, affordable and quality medical treatment, particularly in remote and underserved areas.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister's Adviser on Information and Political Affairs Shahid Rind addressing on journalists protest camp outside QPC.

PM takes notice of recent statements by ministers, directs cabinet members to avoid point-scoring

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday took notice of recent public statements by ministers and directed the members of federal cabinet to refrain from making political remarks against one another. The prime minister, in a statement, emphasized that the federal government's entire focus remained on public welfare initiatives and development projects. He said the government was continuing its journey from economic stability towards sustainable economic growth.

"By the grace of Almighty Allah, Pakistan has achieved several significant successes at the international and diplomatic levels, " the prime minister said adding that the federal government had always promoted a politics of development and progress.

Directing federal cabinet members to avoid issuing statements against one another, the prime minister said that matters among cabinet members should be resolved through mutual understanding and consensus.

He observed that public statements against fellow ministers create a negative impression and divert attention from the government's development agenda.

The prime minister appreciated the performance of federal ministers and stressed that their focus should remain exclusively on public service and national development.

AI-based testing system introduced to ensure merit, transparency: CM

QUETTA (6 AM Report): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has said that an artificial intelligence-based testing system has been introduced for the first time in the province to ensure merit-based recruitment and transparency, reaffirming his government's commitment to digital transformation, institutional reforms and equal development opportunities for youth.

Addressing the inauguration ceremony of the National Telecommunication Corporation (NTC) Data Center in Quetta on Tuesday, the chief minister described the establishment of Balochistan's first data center as a significant milestone in the province's technological advancement.

He appreciated the federal government and NTC for establishing the facility, emphasizing the need to align Balochistan with global advancements in artificial intelligence and digital technology.

"Our generation has witnessed the journey from writing tablets to digital tablets," Bugti said, highlighting the rapid pace of technological advancement.

The chief minister emphasized that merit, transparency and effective measures against corruption were essential to bringing Balochistan's youth into the national mainstream and providing them with equal opportunities for development.

He said the provincial government was promoting institutional reforms and modern technology to enable young people to advance based on their abilities.

Bugti directed the Secretary of Information Technology to strengthen coordination with NTC and the federal government to ensure the digitization and secure storage of data across all provincial government departments.

Highlighting the importance of official information and government communications in the context of national security, he stressed that the highest security standards must be maintained to protect government data.

No compromise on citizens' safety; necessary resources to be provided to police: Shoaib

QUETTA (6 AM Report): Balochistan Minister for Finance and Minerals Mir Shoaib Nosherwani has said that protecting citizens' lives and property and ensuring lasting peace in Kharan and across Rakhshan Division are among the provincial government's foremost priorities, assuring all possible support and resources to strengthen police capabilities. Inspector General of Police Muhammad Tahir Khan directed officials to intensify patrolling and surveillance, while a high-level meeting decided to increase police strength, improve infrastructure and enhance operational capacity to curb street crime in Kharan.

These views were expressed during a high-level law and order meeting chaired by IGP Muhammad Tahir Khan and attended by Provincial Minister Mir Shoaib Nosherwani, Additional IGP Operations and other senior police officials.

DIG Rakhshan Division Abdul Hai Baloch participated via video link and briefed the meeting on the prevailing law and order situation, street crime and security challenges, particularly in Kharan district.

The meeting reviewed manpower shortages, resource constraints and infrastructure deficiencies faced by Kharan police. Key decisions were made to increase police strength, enhance professional capabilities, improve infrastructure and provide essential operational resources. The IGP directed relevant officials to take effective measures to prevent crime and ensure public safety. Matters relating to political gatherings, sit-ins and protest activities in Kharan were also discussed.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti offering Dua after inaugurating of the National Telecommunication Corporation (NTC) Data Center in Quetta.

Pakistan, China to develop maritime training institute in Gwadar

GWADAR (INP): Pakistan is seeking to develop specialised maritime and engineering education in Gwadar through a partnership with Chinese institutions, with a new technical institute planned to train local youth for work in port and maritime industries.

The proposed Pakistan Overseas Engineering and Technology Institute will focus on training professionals in marine engineering, navigation, shipping technology and port operations, according to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Tuesday. Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry said that training should match maritime industry needs. He was speaking at a pre-board meeting of the Gwadar Port Authority (GPA), which reviewed development projects and initiatives aimed at strengthening technical education and human resource capacity in the port city.

GPA Chairman Noorul Haq Baloch informed the meeting that GPA, Pak-China Technical and Vocational Institute (PCTVI), University of Gwadar and China's Qingdao Harbour Vocational and Technical College had signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to establish the proposed institute. The agreement provides a five-year cooperation framework covering 2026-2030, under which the partner institutions will collaborate on academic programmes.

Azam Tarar says:

Balancing freedom of expression with citizens' dignity vital in digital age

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar on Tuesday emphasized the need to maintain a constitutional balance between freedom of expression and access to information and the protection of citizens' privacy, honour, reputation and dignity in the digital era.

Addressing an international seminar titled "Social Media Platforms and the Post-Truth Era", organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), the minister said rapid technological advancements allowed fake news to spread within seconds, with consequences that could not be undone once the information was disseminated.

Referring to the Constitution, he said Articles 4, 9 and 14 guaranteed the protection of life, liberty, honour, reputation and dignity, while Articles 19 and 19-A subjected the rights to freedom of expression and access to information to reasonable legal restrictions aimed at protecting personal privacy, national security and institutional integrity.

Citing international examples, Senator Tarar said the European Union, the United Kingdom and regional countries had introduced stringent regulations to protect citizens, particularly women and children, from online misinformation.

He said Pakistan had revamped its regulatory framework following 18 months of consultations with journalists, experts and representatives of global technology companies, including Meta and the Asia Internet Coalition.

The minister said that the process included the establishment of the Social Media Regulatory Authority and reforms to the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA), aimed at aligning international standards with Pakistan's security and societal requirements.

He maintained that social media platforms could not absolve themselves of responsibility, adding that international law recognized the primacy of domestic legislation. He urged digital platforms to ensure the immediate removal of content that was prima facie false, scandalous or harmful to individuals' reputation and privacy.

Senator Tarar acknowledged the challenge of keeping parliamentary legislation aligned with rapidly evolving digital trends and reaffirmed the government's commitment to building a safe digital environment where children, women and all citizens could feel protected under the law.

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