



Pakistani pilgrims stuck in Iraq have returned home safely through two Iraqi airlines

Prime Minister
Shehbaz Sharif

[/asian_telegraph](#)

[/theasiantelegraph](#)

[/company/theasiantelegraph](#)

[theasiantelegraph.net](#)

Price Rs 8 | Pages 4

Scrutiny process of INGOs will be completed within 15 days, says Mohsin Naqvi

Says all relevant documents of the INGOs will be examined

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi chaired a meeting of the Special Committee for INGOs at the Ministry of Interior.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Secretary Ministry of Interior, Additional Secretary Economic Affairs Division, DG Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Consultant Ministry of Law, and other relevant officers. During the meeting applications regarding the rejection of INGOs registration and renewal of MOUs were reviewed.

Interior Minister said that a detailed review of each application will be conducted, and all relevant documents of the INGOs will be examined.

He further stated that INGOs should also cooperate with the Ministry of Interior and provide relevant documents in a timely manner. He said that the scrutiny process will be completed within 15 days, and all applicants will be informed accordingly. SABAH

37 terrorists killed in Khyber IBOs: ISPR



RAWALPINDI: At least 37 terrorists have been killed and 14 others wounded in the ongoing intelligence-based operations of Pakistan Army in the Tirah area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa,

the military's media wing said on Saturday. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement that the security forces have been conducting extensive intelligence-based operations (IBOs) in the Tirah area of Khyber on the reported presence of terrorists since Aug. 20.

On midnight of 28 and 29 August, Pakistan Army troops effectively engaged the khwarij' locations where after an intense fire exchange, 12 khwarij of Fitna-Al-Khwarij were killed, as per ISPR.

These operations have resulted in major setbacks to Fitna-Al-Khwarij and its affiliates, and so far, thirty-seven terrorists have been sent to hell, while fourteen terrorists have suffered serious injuries, it added.

The IBOs will continue till peace in the area is restored and khwarij is eliminated, as the security forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism from the country, said ISPR. PR



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi chairing the meeting of Special Committee for INGOs.

Pakistan's talented youth are a guarantee for the country's bright future: PM Shehbaz

Expresses the govt's commitment to channeling the energy of youth in a positive direction by providing ample sports opportunities

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has expressed the government's commitment to channeling the energy of youth in a positive direction by providing ample sports opportunities.

PM Shehbaz Sharif made these remarks during a meeting with five-year-old Sufyan Mehsum from Dera Ismail Khan, who recently set a Guinness World Record, in Islamabad on Saturday.

The Prime Minister praised Sufyan Mehsum for bringing honor to Pakistan and his family by setting a Guinness World Record at such a young age. He directed Rana Mashhood, Chairman of the Youth Program, and other relevant officials to expand sports activities for the youth.

PM Shehbaz Sharif said Pakistan's talented youth are a guarantee for the country's bright future and praised their efforts in making the nation proud in the field of sports. Speaking on the occasion, Sufyan Mehsum expressed his confidence in further enhancing Pakistan's reputation as a future scientist.



During the meeting, the Prime Minister also conversed with Sufyan Mehsum in his native Pashto. He also spoke with Sufyan's father, Irfan Mehsum, who holds over 100 Guinness World Records and runs a training academy in Dera Ismail Khan. Irfan Mehsum briefed the Prime Minister about his academy and the successes of its athletes.

The meeting was also attended by Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaulah Tarar Advocate, Minister of State for IT Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Program Rana Mashhood, and the Prime Minister's Coordinator for Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam.

There would be no talks with the PTI until its founder Imran Khan apologises for the events of May 9: Ahsan Iqbal

Says Punjab govt has started providing relief to people of province in electricity bills through Rs 46 biln package

LAHORE: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Secretary General Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhry has said that there would be no talks with the PTI until its founder Imran Khan apologised for the events of May 9.

A consultative meeting of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) was held in Lahore on Saturday chaired by PML-N President and former prime minister Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif to review relief measures being taken by the federal and Punjab governments.

While talking to media persons after the meeting Ahsan Iqbal rebuked the PTI, claiming they had caused more damage than terrorists had done and questioned how any dialogue could take place with such people. He also condemned the former ruling party's approach, particularly its insistence on demanding 'receipts' from opponents.

The minister also highlighted that the country is currently facing an undeclared war, with enemies attempting to destabilise the nation through terrorism and internal conflicts.

Also, according to Ahsan Iqbal, Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met JUI-F Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman. "The prime minister also plans to engage with other political leaders as well," he said.

Discussing the PML-N meeting, Ahsan Iqbal revealed that rising electricity prices was a key topic of discussion. The party leadership stressed the importance of resolving the energy crisis to provide relief to the public, he added.

He also noted that the local government system was part of the party's manifesto. Ahsan Iqbal said the Punjab government has started providing relief to people of province in electricity bills through Rs 46 billion package. He said Nawaz Sharif advised to complete reforms in local bodies law as it was part of party's manifesto. He said the PML-N Government is working on removing shortcomings of power sector. The Minister said the government will bring down power tariff in coming two years.

To a question, Ahsan Iqbal said that Pakistan needs peace and continuity of policies for progress. He said unemployment rate and inflation has been lowered due to policy measures introduced by the government.

Ahsan Iqbal also expressed satisfaction over performance of the stock market. SABAH

Govt to conduct 50% sector trade via Gwadar Port: Qaiser Shaikh



KARACHI: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Shaikh while announcing the development of Gawadar Port has said that the federal government has decided to conduct 50 percent of public sector trade through it. Talking to media persons at Karachi Press Club on Saturday, he said that said the Secretary General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) will visit Pakistan next month. He said the IMO conference will be important for the improvement of Pakistan's maritime sector. He said the paper regarding regulation of ship-

ping lines will be ready soon for which several meetings have been held.

Qaiser Ahmed Shaikh said that for development and employment in Balochistan, 50 percent of public sector trade has been decided to be done through Gawadar port. He said the trade deficit has also been reduced.

He said that the Karachi Port was using 60 percent of its capacity and there was a huge investment going on with Merck's Shipping Line which has indicated an investment of two billion dollars. He said in June 2022, there was an import of 80 billion rupees and but now import have now reduced to 57 billion rupees.

The Minister Maritime Affairs further stated said no new port was being built in the country immediately. He said a memorandum of understanding worth 2 billion dollars will be signed with the European company Mgs next month.

Qaiser Ahmed Shaikh announced one million rupees for Karachi Press Club. Chairman Port Qasim Authority (PQA) Hassan Nasir Shah was also present on the occasion. INP

Tarar decries journal's failed attempt to damage Pakistan's relations with China



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaulah Tarar on Saturday said that "The Diplomat" magazine in its article had tried unsuccessfully to spoil Pakistan's relations with long-time friend China.

In his reaction to the article published in the journal through his account on X, Tarar maintained: "This is yet another failed attempt to damage Pakistan's relations with its time-tested friend China. These attacks on our foreign policy will never succeed."

He said that the impression given in the article was based on false opinions which did not reflect the sentiments of the people of Pakistan. APP

Green legacy: Ethiopian ambassador leads cleaning drive at Trail 5

ISLAMABAD: Special Envoy and Ambassador of Ethiopia, Dr. Jemal Beker on Saturday spearheaded a cleaning drive at the Trail 5 to purge the Margala Hills of trash posing serious threat to the wildlife in the National Park.

The drive, jointly organized by the Ethiopian embassy GhoomLay and Studio One, was launched as a part of the Ethio-Pakistan Fraternity Under the Green Legacy Initiative of the Prime Minister of Ethiopia Dr. Abiy Ahmed.

Individuals from the all walks of the life including government officials, diplomatic community, civil society, youth and media participated in the cleaning drive, which was aimed at fostering Ethio-Pakistan fraternity by pursuing joint efforts for better future of both the countries.

Talking to the media on the occasion, Dr. Jemal Beker said today's gathering was meant to send a message that mass mobilization of the human and financial resources was a solution to resolve the contemporary and new normal challenges such as climate change. He said, "Ethiopia is building a green economy by planting more than



40.5 billion seedlings of fruits, vegetable and fodder in the last five years that has created jobs and ensured food security in Ethiopia. The record breaking plantation was undertaken under the Green Legacy Initiative which is inspired from Medemer philosophy of our Prime Minister which advocates for mass mobilization and alignment of the resources". "We have launched this Green Legacy Initiative in Pakistan as I personally went to all the cities of Pakistan and mobilizing all segments of the society to mitigate the serious threat of climate change," he said, urging the youth to be on forefront for such an important cause. — VOM Report

Abdul Aleem Khan assured by Chinese Group to put heavy investment by establishing new industry especially in Renewable Energy Sector

Says investors from other countries, including China will be ensured by the provision of extraordinary facilities for investment in Pakistan

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Privatization and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan was assured by Chinese Group to put heavy investment by establishing new industry especially in Renewable Energy Sector.

Chairman of China's business group Hexing Electrical Liangzhang Zhou along with the delegation in which it was told that it would be first industry of its own kind in Pakistan in which the inverters & batteries would be manufactured with big investment. Abdul Aleem Khan welcomed the deci-

sion of the Chinese company and said that there are vast opportunities for investment in Pakistan, substantial results can be derived out of it in the current circumstances with the best business environment. He said that investors from other countries, including China will be ensured by the provision of extraordinary facilities for investment in Pakistan. Abdul Aleem Khan added that establishment of new factories will increase the rate of employment and export in the country and once again boost the economy as well. Abdul Aleem Khan said that the transfer of industries from China to Pakistan and the establishment of new factories on a



large scale would be very welcome step. Assuring full cooperation to the Chinese business delegation, the Federal Minister said that Pakistan values the investment

from China and will take the relevant Ministries on board to make this step possible for which stakeholders will also be consulted. Federal Minister Abdul

Aleem Khan said that after the recent visit of the Prime Minister to China, many business enterprises are engaging through Joint Ventures with the business community of Pakistan, which is an expression of the full confidence of Chinese investors and the business community in Pakistan.

In the meeting, the head of the Chinese group, Liangzhang Zhuo was assured by Federal Minister for Privatization and Investment Board, Abdul Aleem Khan about his commitment to act as a goodwill Ambassador for China's investors. Abdul Aleem Khan said that the establishment of factories in the electrical sector with foreign investment will be a precursor to the

country's development because there is immense potential in Pakistan, our institutions will also participate fully in the investment from China and bilaterally cooperation and business activities will strengthen the eternal relationship of friendship between both countries. He said that projects like power plants in the industrial sector are the most important need of the hour for national development. In the meeting, CEO of Hexing Group Xu Guoneng and Director of Sales Ma Zuo teng also briefed the Federal Minister on their investment plan in Pakistan. Director HR Europe of Hexing Group Junaid Hussain threw light on the proposed projects and activities of his group.

Editor-in-Chief: Amna Munawwar Awan
 Editor: Muhammad Hasam
 Office # 408, 4th Floor, Evacuee Trust,
 Agha Khan Road, F-5/1 Islamabad
 Phone: + 92 51 8354964

An Olympics tale for the ages

I HUSSAIN

Epic moments often have a way of sneaking up on us and Arshad Nadeem's Olympic record-breaking javelin throw of 92.97 meters was no exception. Pakistan got its first individual gold medal in the Olympics thanks to him. This is a singularly monumental achievement that brought a rare moment of collective joy to millions of people in Pakistan. Nadeem's journey from the small town of Mian Channu in Khanewal district reads like the stuff of legends. Born into a humble family, he did not have access to the support system given to talented athletes in many other countries. But because of his raw talent allied with personal characteristics of grit, perseverance, and a laser-like focus on the end goal he was able to achieve his Olympic dream. In the pantheon of Pakistani sports heroes only one other name stands as tall – Jehangir Khan the squash legend who was unbeaten in 555 matches from 1981 to 1986. If squash had been an Olympic sport back then, Jehangir Khan would undoubtedly have won at least one Olympic gold medal if not more. (Squash will be included in the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles). But here's a reason to celebrate Nadeem's feat as even more astonishing. Jehangir Khan had role models to emulate and guide him such as his father Roshan Khan who was himself a British Open squash champion; he was also related to the legendary squash champions and brothers, Hashim Khan and Azam Khan, who dominated the world of squash in the 1950s and early 1960s. Nadeem had no such examples to emulate. With no role models in sight, he carved his path from sheer will and a bit of luck. He had initially taken to cricket wanting to become a fast bowler but his father and then his coach, Rasheed Ahmed Saqi, nudged him towards the javelin. It would not be farfetched to say that most Pakistanis are unaware of javelin throwing as a sport. After all, there are very few athletic grounds in the cities where one can go and watch sprinters or high jumpers let alone javelin throwers. If we know anything about javelin throwing, it is from watching movies of ancient Greek and Roman warriors in battle.

Arshad Nadeem is now deservedly reaping the financial rewards of his awesome achievement. As the prize money rolls in, here's hoping that he gets the right advice to protect his name, image, and even that magic number – 9297 – so he's the one reaping the rewards, not some opportunistic merchandiser. Critics often scoff at Pakistan's paltry Olympic representation – seven athletes from a country of 240 million. This critique is, however, misplaced. Where in Pakistan can the average person learn how to swim or play tennis? Excluding private clubs and hotels, there are scarcely any public access swimming pools or tennis courts available to youth that I am aware of. Take a city like, say, Sydney, Australia, where there are likely enough swimming pools and tennis courts in community centers and government-funded schools to serve at least 1 out of 100 of its residents. Compare that to Karachi where the ratio of available swimming pools and tennis courts to the population is at most 1 to 10,000 residents. If the comparison were to include the availability of coaching facilities and training equipment, the contrast would be even starker. Given the lack of access to facilities by the population, how and where can Pakistani children go to learn swimming or start playing tennis? World-class players start from as young an age as five or six which is quite common in richer countries. Consider the case of one of the all-time greats in tennis, Serena Williams, who started playing tennis when she was four. Also, Tiger Woods, regarded as one of the greatest golfers ever, was swinging a golf club when he was just three. So, there should be no surprises about the dearth of track and field athletes, swimmers and tennis players at the Olympics from developing countries like Pakistan. Which is why a special mention must be made of all those besides Arshad Nadeem who represented Pakistan at the Olympics – Faiza Riaz, Ghulam Mustafa Bashir, Gulam Joseph, Kishmala Talat, Ahmed Durrani, and Jehanara Nabi. All of them deserve our thanks and wishes for an even brighter future. Cricket is popular in Pakistan because it can be played anywhere – whether open streets or back alleys – and requires minimal equipment. That is why we have an abundance of talent in cricket. But there are sports other than cricket that Pakistanis can also excel at.

The country was once a hotbed of hockey talent that was admired and feared by rivals, but that moment has passed. While other countries improved their skills by leaps and bounds by investing in their players and their infrastructure, we rested on our laurels through a sense of complacency. Hockey certainly doesn't get the time and attention from our sports administrators that it once did. This needs to change. Football, the world's favourite sport, is an afterthought in Pakistan. There is plenty of domestic talent but it needs nurturing. Take a walk in a local park (and there are very few that allow football practice) and see some of the shoeless kids kicking a football with impressive power. However, since these kids are mainly from poor families they will likely be expected to join the labour force to help support their kin which would end any ambitions they may have harbored about becoming footballers. If we wish to become a serious contender in football on the international stage, we should develop grassroots football talent by selecting youth to train at football academies with their schooling expenses being borne by the local administration. However, needy parents would need to be compensated through some monthly stipend for letting their children continue with their education and also train as footballers instead of working and earning to support the family. For instance, promising 12-13-year-olds could be supported for an initial period of two years after which further support would be contingent on their skill development and their commitment to furthering their football playing abilities. This support could be provided for two-year periods and reevaluated at the end of each two years till the trainee is 18 years old. After this, they would either be able to join leagues sponsored by local entrepreneurs or go on to higher education if this is what they want. Of course, this vision requires more than just wishful thinking. It demands real investment in infrastructure, coaching, and a shift in how we value sports other than cricket.

The writer is a group director at the Jang Group. He can be reached at: iqbal.hussain@janggroup.com.pk



DAOUD KUTTAB

Why US-led Gaza truce talks are doomed to fail

The powerful US and Israeli media machines keep claiming that Hamas is the party that consistently rejects Gaza ceasefire proposals. However, a careful reading of the group's official statement shows that it has accepted US President Joe Biden's earlier proposal, which the UN Security Council also approved.

The problem that has been dogging any breakthrough is a lack of trust. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been constantly moving the goalposts and always blaming Hamas for rejecting ceasefire proposals. US and Arab mediators largely begin with the proposed Israeli text and then offer it to Hamas in an effort to get the group to take the blame for its rejection. A well-known Palestinian analyst, Nasser Laham, wrote this week that, over the last 40 years, the US has failed every time it has tried to mediate between the parties in the Middle East. This is largely because America cannot be a strong ally with Israel and at the same time an honest broker.

The major sticking point at this juncture is important. Hamas, as well as all Palestinians and actually the entire world, wants this war to end. Any proposal that leaves out an end to the war and

an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza will ultimately be rejected. Wars end with a ceasefire that is well observed, an exchange of prisoners and a sincere effort aimed at tackling the root causes of the violence. Netanyahu, who is hobbled by a corruption case and a mandatory, neutral investigation into Oct. 7, does not want to end the war without his version of a victory, which includes the annihilation of a deep-rooted Palestinian

resistance movement and the unilateral release of Israeli soldiers and civilians. The Americans and many well-respected Israeli experts and retired military officials keep telling him that this will not happen. Unable or unwilling to force Netanyahu to accept this reality, the US has partially adopted the Israeli PM's obstinance by offering proposals that delay a decision to end the war. The American proposal says, "trust us." But how can Palestinians trust a country that is physically supplying the weapons that are being used against them? No wonder protesters outside the Democratic National Convention zeroed in on the need to put a stop to Amer-

ica's supply of weapons to Israel if Washington wants to be accepted as an honest broker. Palestinian Hamas leaders cannot and will not trust the US because it has repeatedly failed to deliver on what it has publicly stated about wanting to end the war, while it has still signed a \$20 billion military deal and continues to supply the weapons and ammunition that are being used to kill Palestinian civilians. The UN Charter's Chapter VII deals with what to do with parties that refuse to implement binding resolutions agreed by the UNSC. If the members of the UNSC are serious about wanting an end to the war, they can simply pass a resolution that details steps to this end and that does not include any vague wording about allowing the Israeli army to stay in Gaza. Such a resolution, which would include a prisoner exchange, an observation mechanism for its

implementation and a path to the globally accepted two-state solution, should also include a mention of Chapter VII sanctions on any party that refuses to implement its provisions. The US, whose president began the current process with a proposal that both Israel and Hamas accepted, should want to make sure that both parties mean what they say by agreeing on a text that the global community can support and which will end this carnage.

At present, the negotiation process that Washington participates in has little chance of success, so long as the US alone is calling all the shots and is regularly only doing so after getting Israel's approval on what is offered. The time has come for a global ceasefire offer that is fair and that clearly includes an immediate end to the war and an Israeli military withdrawal from Gaza. Continuing the current process is playing into the hands of the Israeli prime minister, whose interests are focused on his own political survival. Allowing Israel to continue with its unending revenge war is a formula for disaster and an invitation for the widening of a conflict that everyone wants to end immediately.

Daoud Kuttab, an award-winning Palestinian journalist, is a director of Community Media Network. X: @daoudkuttab

Disclaimer: Views expressed by writers in this section are their own and do not necessarily reflect The Asian Telegraph's point-of-view

Today in History

History of Pakistan



Jinnah had worked hard to mollify competing and ambitious provincial leaders, and Liaquat, himself a refugee (muhajir) from India, simply did not have the stature to pick up where Jinnah had left off. Liaquat was eager to give the country a new constitution, but such an undertaking was delayed by controversy, particularly over the distribution of provincial powers and over representation. Although what had been East Bengal (and became East Pakistan) contained the majority of Pakistan's population, the Punjab nevertheless judged itself the more significant of the Pakistani provinces. The Punjabis had argued that East Bengal was populated by a significant number of Hindus whose loyalty to the Muslim country was questionable. Any attempt therefore to provide East Bengal with representation commensurate to its population would be challenged by the Punjab. Although Jinnah had voiced the view that Muslims, Hindus, Christians, and all

religious denominations were equal citizens in the new Pakistani state, Liaquat could not neutralize this controversy, nor could he resolve the issue of provincial representation. Forced to sell his vision to the people of Pakistan directly, Liaquat engaged in a number of public speaking engagements, and it was at such a meeting, in Rawalpindi in October 1951, that he was killed by an assassin's bullet. Nazimuddin assumed the premiership on Liaquat's death, and Ghulam Muhammad took his place as the governor-general. Ghulam Muhammad, a Punjabi, had been Jinnah's choice to serve as Pakistan's first finance minister and was an old and successful civil servant. The juxtaposition of these two very different personalities—Nazimuddin, known for his piety and reserved nature, and Ghulam Muhammad, a staunch advocate of strong, efficient administration—was hardly fortuitous. Nazimuddin's assumption of the office of prime minister meant the

country would have a weak head of government, and, with Ghulam Muhammad as governor-general, a strong head of state. Pakistan's viceregal tradition was again in play. In 1953 riots erupted in the Punjab, supposedly over a demand by militant Muslim groups that the A madiyyah sect be declared non-Muslim and that all members of the sect holding public office be dismissed. (Special attention was directed at Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, an A madiyyah and Pakistan's first foreign minister.) Nazimuddin was held responsible for the disorder, especially for his inability to quell it, and Ghulam Muhammad took the opportunity to dismiss the prime minister and his government. Although another Bengali, Muhammad Ali Bogra, replaced Nazimuddin, there was no ignoring the fact that the viceregal tradition was continuing to dominate Pakistani political life and that Ghulam Muhammad, a bureaucrat and never truly a politician, with others like him, controlled Pakistan's

destiny. Meanwhile, in East Bengal (East Pakistan), considerable opposition had developed against the Muslim League, which had managed the province since independence. This tension was capped in 1952 by a series of riots that sprang from a Muslim League attempt to make Urdu the only national language of Pakistan, although Bengali—the predominant language of the eastern sector—was spoken by a larger proportion of Pakistan's population. The language riots galvanized the Bengalis, and they rallied behind their more indigenous parties to thwart what they argued was an effort by the West Pakistanis, notably the Punjabis, to transform East Bengal into a distant "colony." With a Punjabi bureaucratic elite in firm control of the central government, in March 1954 the last in a series of provincial elections was held in East Bengal.

To be continued....

Showbiz

Taylor Swift remains silent amid Blake Lively's controversy: Here's why

Taylor Swift explains why she didn't want to get involved in the ongoing Blake Lively's drama

Taylor Swift has recently showed no support to her best pal Blake Lively after she faced criticism for her tone-deaf behaviour with a journalist in a resurfaced interview. A source spilled to DailyMail.com that Taylor didn't "want to get involved because she feared it might negatively impact her own image". The source told the outlet, "When it comes to the wave of bad press around It Ends with Us, Taylor did not want to get involved." "She has stayed clear of drama, including anything political, and she knew that this was not going to go well if she jumped in to defend her," shared an insider.



However, the source mentioned that Blake "completely understood Taylor's perspective, and knows the singer will always be there for her as a best friend and mentor". Blake understood this and knew she had to navigate this on her own. Taylor will always be there for Blake in her role as a best friend and mentor," said an insider. The source noted, "Taylor was there to help her through production of It Ends With Us and was flattered to be included in the soundtrack." Meanwhile, Taylor seemingly showed her support for Blake by celebrating a birthday bash for the actress at singer's Rhode Island home last week.

Tech

PTA announces VPNs registration for 'uninterrupted operations'

ISLAMABAD: Registration of virtual private networks (VPNs) under "one window" operations was announced by the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) in order to facilitate businesses of software houses, call centres, freelancers and foreign missions/embassies for their legitimate, secure and uninterrupted operations, a statement from the authority said. It added that it is an ongoing activity which is being continuously streamlined by PTA, MoIT, PSEB and P@SHA. Over 20,000 IPs have been registered for VPNs since 2020, the telecom regulator added. Moreover, the regulator also said that the one window operations were available at PTA and PSEB websites. Earlier this month, amid reports of ban on virtual private networks, PTA clarified that it was whitelisting VPNs through a "automated process" to ensure the smooth and secure functioning of IT services and online businesses. The clarification came after PTA Chairman Hafeezur Rehman, in a briefing to

the Senate's Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat, confirmed that the PTA was whitelisting VPNs after which only selected proxy networks will be available in Pakistan. Subsequently, the PTA said: "No such action has been taken and all kinds of blocking is undertaken only under the directions of government of Pakistan in accordance with legal frameworks and guidelines." Additionally, earlier on Wednesday, the authority said that the ongoing internet disruption across the country is likely to continue for over a month as the submarine cable, which caused degradation of the services, was expected to repair by early October. Notably, the internet disruptions faced strong criticism from netizens and information technology (IT) sector, attributing the prevailing internet slowdown and limited connectivity to the purported testing of an internet firewall to rein in social media, which is equipped with filters to block unwanted content from reaching a wider audience.

Health

KP reports third mpox case pushing Pakistan's total tally to four

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has reported its third monkeypox case pushing Pakistan's total count to four after a passenger was detected with the virus upon his return to the country from abroad. The KP director public health, while conforming the province's third case, said that the Public Health Laboratory has confirmed monkeypox in the patient, hailing from Orakzai. He has been shifted to Peshawar's Services Hospital after showing symptoms at the airport. The development comes as the Federal Ministry of Health issued strict guidelines provisioning screening, isolation and other preventive measures, including thermal scanning, at all international airports across the country in light of the threat posed by the recent global outbreak of the monkeypox virus. Meanwhile, the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority

(PCAA) has also directed all airlines flying into Pakistan from abroad to adopt preventive measures against monkeypox at the airports. Furthermore, the CAA has been made responsible for facilitating the implementation of health measures and is ensuring compliance with the standard operating procedures (SOPs) by carrying out regular inspections and audits. Whereas the Border Health Services (BHS) — working as the lead agency responsible for the overall coordination and management of mpox-related operations at international airports — is managing the isolation and safe transportation of suspected mpox cases to designated medical facilities. The directives came after a new form of the virus triggered global concern because it seems to spread more easily through routine close contact. A case of the new variant was con-

firmed on August 15 in Sweden and linked to a growing outbreak in Africa, the first sign of its spread outside the continent. As per the World Health Organisation (WHO), mpox is a viral disease related to the now-eradicated smallpox virus and can spread through any close contact and through contaminated materials like sheets, clothing and needles. Initial symptoms of the disease include fever, chills, muscle pain, swelling of the glands, exhaustion, headache and muscle weakness which are often followed by a painful or itchy rash with raised lesions that scab over and resolve over a period of weeks. It is to be noted that out of the four mpox cases reported in Pakistan, three have been reported in KP's Mardan, Nowshera and Orakzai. However, none of the cases were domestic and were detected in passengers returning from abroad.



Sindh Chief Minister approves Rs500 mln for IT certificate programs

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah has approved PKR 500 million to launch certificate programs in nine IT fields as part of the Poverty Alleviation Program. The initiative aims to provide industry-relevant training to students and professionals across the province.

During a memorandum of understanding (MoU) signing ceremony, Chief Secretary Asif Haider Shah, IT Secretary Noor Ahmed Samoo, Chairman of Higher Education Commission (HEC) Professor Tariq Rafi, and other senior officials were present. The IT Secretary briefed the Chief Minister that NED University will conduct IT courses for Karachi and Tharparkar divisions, Mehran University for Hyderabad, Mirpur Khas, and Shaheed Benazirabad divisions, while IBA Sukkur will offer courses for Sukkur and Larkana divisions. Initially, the program will train 10,000 young people, with the Sindh IT Department releasing PKR 500 million for this purpose. The courses will cover various fields, including Java, Python, Database Administration, Graphic Design, E-commerce, Digital Marketing, Web Development, Mobile Application Development, and Data Science.

According to IT Secretary Noor Ahmed Samoo, the courses will last two months, with classes held five days a week, from Monday to Friday. Each group will consist of 30 to 35 participants. The program will be conducted in two phases: the first phase will focus on IT certification, and the second phase will offer incentives to the most talented students. All participants will receive their certificates in person at designated centers.

At the end of the meeting, an MoU was signed between the Sindh IT Department, NED University Karachi, IBA Sukkur, and Mehran University Jamshoro to facilitate the training program.

Nawaz vows to bring inflation down

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz president Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on Saturday vowed to steer the country out of inflation.

During a suddenly called meeting of the PML-N at the party's Model Town Secretariat, which was attended by bigwigs of the party, Sharif hinted at giving relief to commercial consumers of electricity like the one given to domestic consumers for the months of Aug and Sept by reducing Rs14 per unit in power bills. "We won't let anyone derail the progress the country is making under the PML-N government. We will not allow anyone to make bad decisions anymore," he added.

He blamed the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan for throwing the country in inflationary quagmire.

Govt paid nearly one trillion rupees in capacity payments to IPPs since 2015

ISLAMABAD: The government has reportedly paid nearly one trillion rupees in capacity payments to 26 gas, RLNG, and RFO-based Independent Power Producers (IPPs) over the past decade, starting from 2015. According to documents cited by Business Recorder, these IPPs were established under power generation policies from 1994 and earlier, as well as from 1994 and 2002.

Gas and RLNG-based power plants received a total of Rs. 536.30 billion in capacity payments over ten years. Among the recipients were Kabirwala Power, which received Rs. 14.271 billion; Liberty Dharki Power Limited, Rs. 25.5 billion; Roush Pak Power Limited, Rs. 60 billion; Uch Power Limited, Rs. 77.314 billion; Uch-II, Rs. 120.137 billion; Foundation Power, Rs. 37.9 billion; Sapphire, Rs. 39.377 billion; Saif Power, Rs. 38.80 billion; Orient, Rs. 39 billion; Engro Powergen, Rs. 35.373 billion; and Halmore, Rs. 48.374 billion.

Other significant payments included Rs. 205.034 billion to Hub Power Company Limited,

Rs. 167 billion to Kot Addu Power, Rs. 15.087 billion to Kohinoor Energy, Rs. 52.081 billion to Lalpur Energy, Rs. 50.834 billion to Pakgen Limited, Rs. 17.833 billion to Saba Power Limited, Rs. 43.173 billion to Atlas Power, Rs. 26.882 billion to Attock Gen, Rs. 46.216 billion to Liberty Power Tech Limited, Rs. 53.909 billion to Narawal Energy Limited, Rs. 41.420 billion to Nishat Chunian Power Limited, and Rs. 39.791 billion to Nishat Power Limited.

During a meeting chaired by Senator Mohsin Aziz, Senator Shibli Faraz questioned the substantial payments made to Roush Power Limited, Uch Power, and Hubco Power.

Officials from the Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA-G) explained that the payments were made based on the production capacity of these plants. They further stated that detailed capacity payment records have been provided to the committee, but the remaining ten years of data are being retrieved from older records. They have requested one month to gather and present these figures to the committee.

Ambassador of Vietnam wishes for continuing friendship, cooperation with Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Vietnam to Pakistan, Pham Anh Tuan, during the celebration of the 79th anniversary of Viet Nam National Day, wished for the friendship and cooperation between Viet Nam and Pakistan with a continuation to flourish in the future.

On September 2nd, 1945, President Ho Chi Minh, the great leader of Viet Nam, read out the immortal Declaration of Independence, giving birth to a new Viet Nam – the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, which is now the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, he said.

The Ambassador of Vietnam to Pakistan, Pham Anh Tuan expressed these views while addressing 79th anniversary of Viet Nam National Day here in Vietnam embassy. He said that at that very moment, Viet Nam was named on the world map and the country has entered a new era – the era of national independence, the era the Vietnamese people became the real masters of their country, society and their own destinies.

The envoy said that over the past 79 years, the people of Vietnam have devoted their lives, efforts and wis-

dom towards national independence, freedom and happiness for all the people of Vietnam.

On this occasion, "I believe that the potential of development between Vietnam and Pakistan remains high, and the Embassy of Vietnam in Pakistan will continue to work closely with Pakistani friends to expand this relationship," he said.

It has now been 52 years since the day Vietnam and Pakistan established the diplomatic relation.

The Ambassador said that over the past 52 years, the friendship and

cooperation between the two countries has been developed in multifaceted factors such as politics, economic cooperation, trading relations. We also share a common interest in developing our countries and integrating into the regions and the world for the benefit of our people.

Nowadays, bilateral trade relations between the two countries emerges as one of the most outstanding fields of the cooperation and the two-way trade volume between Viet Nam and Pakistan reached \$ 705 million in 2023 and within the first six months

of 2024, this volume is approximately 402 million, an increase of 28% compared to the same period last year. It is expected to reach \$ 900 million in 2024.

He said that beside this, the number of delegation exchanges for business and visits has been increasing year by year and the two countries have signed a number of treaties and agreements, which create legal framework for further promoting the cooperation for mutual interest.

"Our cooperative mechanism includes the Joint Intergovernmental Committee, Trade Commission, and Bilateral Political Consultation between the two Ministries of Foreign Affairs. In order to raise the trading relation, I suggest the two sides may coordinate to hold the activities of promotion of trade and investment such as trade fairs, exhibition, forum, exploration."

"We welcome and will do the utmost to create favorable conditions for all businessmen of Pakistan doing business with Vietnam, especially in the fields of cotton, production of pharmaceutical, surgical instruments and information technology which are the strengths of Pakistan," he said.



ISLAMABAD: A mesmerizing view of clouds swirling over Faisal Mosque in the Federal Capital, creating a striking backdrop against the iconic architecture. APP

Syed Ali Geelani was a great leader & his commitment to the right to self-determination for people of J&K was unyielding: President Zardari

Says Pakistan will continue to provide moral, diplomatic & political support to Kashmiri brothers & sisters for their just cause

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has said that Syed Ali Shah Geelani was a great leader and his commitment to the right to self-determination for the people of Jammu and Kashmir was unyielding.

This has been stated by President Asif Ali Zardari in his message on the 3rd Death Anniversary of iconic Kashmiri leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani being observed today (Sunday).

"Today, we are observing the third death anniversary of the iconic Kashmiri leader, Syed Ali Shah Geelani. We pay tribute to his heroic struggle for the rights of the oppressed people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). For decades, he was a beacon of hope and resistance, inspiring countless Kashmiris to stand firm in their quest for self-determination. His tireless efforts and sacrifices for the just cause of the Kashmiri people will forever be etched in our hearts and minds," President Asif Ali Zardari said.



President Asif Ali Zardari said that Syed Ali Shah Geelani was a great leader and his commitment to the right to self-determination for the people of Jammu and Kashmir was unyielding. Despite being subjected to house arrests and incarcerations by the Indian Occupation Forces, he continued to raise his voice for the people of IIOJK. His personal hardships, including years of confinement, could not break his spirit or deter him from his mission.

President Asif Ali Zardari said that Geelani Sahib remained focused on the ultimate goal, and never allowed the attention of the

Kashmiri people to be diverted from the pursuit of their fundamental right to self-determination. The legacy of Syed Ali Shah Geelani is a powerful driving force that continues to inspire the people of IIOJK. His leadership and unwavering stance against oppression have left a lasting impression on the people of IIOJK, President Asif Ali Zardari said.

"Today, we reaffirm the resolve to not let the sacrifices of Syed Ali Shah Geelani and countless others go in vain. We will continue to advocate for the realization of the people of IIOJK's right to self-determination as enshrined in the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions. I assure my Kashmiri brothers and sisters that Pakistan will continue to provide moral, diplomatic, and political support for their just cause," President Asif Ali Zardari said.

"As we remember Syed Ali Shah Geelani, we must learn from his exemplary courage and unwavering commitment to freedom and justice. May Allah Almighty shower His blessings on Syed Ali Shah Geelani. Ameen!" President Asif Ali Zardari concluded.

654 Pakistani pilgrims stranded at Baghdad Airport

ISLAMABAD: As many as 654 Pakistani zaireen (pilgrims) are currently stranded at Baghdad Airport on Saturdays as two aircrafts of Iraq Airways which were scheduled to fly them back home have developed a technical fault. According to a statement released by the Foreign Office in Islamabad, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Aviation and Pakistan's Embassy in Iraq are in contact with Iraqi authorities and Iraq Airways for early repatriation of the stranded Pakistanis. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar has directed the ambassador of Pakistan in Baghdad to look after the stranded Pakistanis and to facilitate their early return. The embassy has provided meals and facilitated their temporary stay in Baghdad. The return of these zaireen is expected to start tonight. The first of these flights is expected to take off from Baghdad at 2200 hrs (Iraq local time) 1200 am PST. "We expect all stranded passengers to return by 31 August 2024," the Foreign Office statement added.

Not in favour of talks with PTI: Kh Asif

LAHORE: Federal Defence Minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Khawaja Asif on Saturday opposed holding talks with the opposition Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). The PML-N leader these remarks while speaking to reporters after attending the party huddle at Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) Model Town secretariat. When asked whether he was in committee for dialogue with PTI through Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) and head of opposition alliance Tehreek Tahafuz Aeen-e-Pakistan (TTAP) Mahmood Khan Achakzai, Khawaja Asif categorically denied, saying that he was not part of any such committee. Responding to a question about the future of PTI founder Imran Khan, Asif said that he was not a soothsayer who could predict the future of anyone.

Anti-state forces directly involved in Balochistan violence: Rana Sanaullah

SHEIKHUPURA: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs, Rana Sanaullah has said that the anti-state forces are directly involved in Balochistan violence and they will be dealt with iron hands. The SAPM on Saturday along with Law Minister Azam Nazir Tarar visited Rana Farm House Muridke to condole the death of Rana Afzal Hussain, elder brother of Federal Minister Rana Tanveer Hussain and father of MNA Rana Ahmed Ateeq Anwar. Talking to media on the occasion, Rana Sanaullah said that those involved in creating anarchy and lawlessness in Balochistan would have to face the consequences. He said that no directions have been given for afflicting the founder Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in jail. The SAPM said that PTI founder holds press conference on every court's appearance and the government hasn't stopped him to do so. Rana Sanaullah paid tribute to services of late Rana Afzal Hussain saying that the deceased was a tolerant and tolerant person whose death has caused a great political loss to the party. INP

Renovation work at Jinnah Convention Center near completion

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) is racing against time to complete the renovation work at the Jinnah Convention Center, with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) meeting just around the corner.

Chairman CDA, Muhammad Ali Randhawa, visited the centre on Saturday to review the progress of the ongoing work. Accompanied by Dr. Hafiz Khalid, Member Engineering, and other officers, Randhawa was briefed on the swift completion of the renovation work, which is being carried out in multiple shifts, 24/7. The renovation work includes the upgrade of the main hall, committee rooms, flooring, repairs, painting, glasswork, furniture, and carpets. Additionally, landscaping, tree plantation, horticulture work, and lighting are being done to enhance the visual appeal of the centre. Randhawa emphasized that the purpose of the renovation is to provide an excellent hosting venue for the SCO meeting and other international events. With the SCO meeting scheduled to take place soon, the CDA is working tirelessly to meet international standards and ensure a successful event.

Punjab Assembly speaker calls on CM Maryam

LAHORE: Punjab Assembly Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan on Saturday called on Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz at her office.

During the meeting, Khan congratulated the CM for giving relief to inflation-hit people in their electricity bills. The duo discussed overall political situation as well as development projects in Punjab. Punjab CM said that relief in electricity bills was made possible after the proposed bill in reduction was approved by the Punjab cabinet, adding that, unlike previous government, money was being spent on people



during her tenure. Khan appreciated the efforts of the CM in addressing genuine issues of the people of Punjab.

Legal fraternity of Pakistan committed to ensuring an efficient & speedy justice system in the country: Justice Shahid Waheed



WASHINGTON: Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Rizwan Saeed Sheikh on Saturday received a high-level delegation headed by Justice Shahid Waheed, a senior judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

The delegation included Justices of the High Court of Lahore, Sindh, Peshawar and Islamabad, Judges of the District Judiciary and Additional Attorney General. Mrs. Martina Polásek, Secretary General of the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) at the World Bank, Zamrak Khan and members of Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP) of the US Department of Commerce were accompanying the delegation. The delegation is currently visiting the United States to interact with their counterparts with a focus on exchange of knowledge and expertise in strengthening domestic and cross-border dispute settlement environment, improving contract enforcement, reducing court backlog, and

ensuring efficient and effective access to justice for all Pakistani citizens, businesses, and investors.

Welcoming the delegation, Ambassador Rizwan Saeed Sheikh highlighted the upward trajectory of Pak-US relations and underscored the significance of high level exchanges between Pakistan and the United States towards strengthening multifaceted ties and capacity building for better service delivery and dispensation of justice. Appreciating such high level exchanges as a great example of G2G cooperation, Ambassador Rizwan Sheikh underscored the need for enhancing frequency of such interactions at various levels to improve justice system and undertake legal reforms.

Justice Shahid Waheed in his remarks, observed that it was a journey of hope and dream. He emphasized that the legal fraternity of Pakistan was committed to ensuring an efficient and speedy justice system in the country.