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Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator
Muhammad Aurangzeb

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Price Rs 8 | Pages 4

DPM Dar lauds KSrelief's vital role in delivering humanitarian assistance

DPM chairs medical education committee meeting



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Tuesday praised King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center's (KSrelief) vital role in delivering humanitarian assistance, particularly in response to recent natural disasters in Pakistan, including floods and earthquakes.

He underscored that these new initiatives would focus on building and rehabilitating essential infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, and housing.

The deputy prime minister and foreign minister was addressing a signing ceremony held for a series of key reconstruction and rehabilitation projects, to be undertaken by the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSrelief), marking a significant step in strengthening Pakistan-Saudi humanitarian cooperation.

The ceremony was attended by a high-level delegation from KSrelief, led by Eng. Ahmed Ali Abdullah Al-Baiz, Assistant Supervisor General for Operations & Programs, who is currently on a visit to Pakistan, Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release. In his opening remarks, the deputy prime minister and foreign minister expressed his gratitude to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for their unwavering support to Pakistan during times of crisis.

He further noted that the collaboration between KSrelief and Pakistan has intensified over the years, with the humanitarian organization playing a pivotal role in various sectors including healthcare, food aid, and education.

Dar expressed confidence that this new phase of cooperation would further cement the ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia and ensure that those most in need receive timely and effective support. Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar Tuesday chaired the 3rd meeting of the medical education committee.

"The government is fully committed to ensure standardized & uniform medical education. The committee underscored that major reforms will be made to improve medical education in the country," a post on X said. APP



ISLAMABAD: PM Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a Federal Cabinet Meeting.

Cabinet approves establishment of PM's Relief Fund for Palestine, Lebanon

Gory tale of 2014-like sit-in not to be allowed to repeat at any cost: PM Shehbaz

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: The Cabinet in its meeting chaired by Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday approved the establishment of 'Prime Minister's Relief Fund for Palestine and Lebanon' to help the victims of Israeli brutalities.

It also issued necessary instructions to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) to open an account in this regard. Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal will oversee the relief operations for Palestine and Lebanon, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The cabinet was briefed by the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecom regarding the implementation of e-office in the federal ministries and institutions.

The meeting was informed that Pakistan's position in the United Nations E-Governance Development Index had improved by 14 places due to the government's measures to implement e-governance.

The meeting was further informed that the implementation of e-office was underway in all 40 divisions of the federal government while 100 percent e-office had been implemented in some ministries. The prime minister directed to further improve the implementation of e-office and asked for reviewing of the progress in this regard after two weeks.

The cabinet also accorded approval to the agreement for subsidies in the fisheries sector in the light of the decisions of the World Trade Organization.

On the recommendation of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, the cabinet approved the signing of an agreement to grant sister-ports status to the Gwadar Port, Pakistan and Shanghai Port, China.

It also approved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on bilateral political consultations between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Rwanda on the recommendation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

On the recommendation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the federal cabinet further approved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ghana on bilateral political consultations.

On the orders of the Chief Justice Balochistan High Court and on the recommendation of the Ministry of Law and Justice, the cabinet approved grant of jurisdiction to judicial magistrate-Gwadar and judicial magistrate Hub to hear anti-narcotics cases.

The meeting endorsed the decisions taken in the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Legislative Matters held on September 25, 2024 and the decisions taken by the Cabinet Committee on Chinese Investment projects in its meeting held on September 16, 2024.

The federal cabinet ratified the decisions of the Cabinet Committee on the Government Owned Enterprises held on October 1. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday calling the recent protest of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf a replica of the 2014 sit-in by

the party, vowed that the repeat of that "gory tale" would not be allowed at any cost.

"Such incidents are a replica of 2014-15 incidents when a sit-in was staged for months and was not called off despite the announcement of the Chinese president's visit to Pakistan without bothering about its impact on the country's image and national economy... We will not allow it to be repeated. We will not tolerate it at any rate, at any cost. This is my promise. I will not let it happen," the prime minister in his opening remarks at the meeting of the federal cabinet chaired by him.

The prime minister drew cabinet members' attention to an attack that took place near Karachi airport killing two Chinese engineers and injuring another, despite the government's all-out efforts to ensure their security. He apprised the meeting of his telephonic conversation with the Chinese ambassador in Islamabad and also a condolatory visit to the Chinese embassy where he reiterated his government's assurance to leave no stone unturned to make the security of Chinese national "unreachable."

Referring to the PTI protest, the prime minister said that the allegations were hurled against the government and attempts were made to create chaos at a time when the Chinese Premier was about to pay a bilateral visit and a Saudi delegation was also scheduled to visit Pakistan and MoUs and agreements worth \$2 billion are expected to be signed. The cabinet meeting offered Fateha for the security personnel martyred in different terrorist incidents.

SVI hosts two-day Islamabad Non-Proliferation Conference 2024



ISLAMABAD: The Strategic Vision Institute (SVI), Islamabad, hosted Islamabad Non-Proliferation Conference 2024, a two-day international event bringing together a distinguished group of scholars and experts from around the world.

The conference aimed at fostering constructive dialogue on global strategic issues and share Pakistan's policy perspectives, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, General Sahir Shamsah Mirza was the Chief Guest. The conference featured keynote addresses delivered by distinguished policymakers and practitioners from Pakistan including Former Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, General (R) Zubair Mehmood Hayat, Advisor National Command Authority (NCA), Lt. Gen. Khalid Ahmed Kidwai and Advisor, NCA, Lt. Gen. Sarfraz Sattar.

The participants included prominent international scholars from Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IMEMO RAS), Center for Energy and Security Studies (CENESS), Russia, China Institute of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR), China, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, US, Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), UK, Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO-University), Saint Petersburg State University, Shanghai University, Peking University, University at Albany, State University of New York and University of Birmingham.

This high-level conference not only reinforced Pakistan's commitment to global non-proliferation efforts but also emphasized the importance of strategic dialogue in maintaining regional and international security. PR

Consular services in Islamabad to remain suspended from Oct 14-17

ISLAMABAD: The consular services at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will remain suspended in Islamabad from 14-17 October on account of the security arrangements for the Council of Heads of Government Meeting of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

The liaison offices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and Gujrat will continue to offer consular services without interruption, a press release said.

SMEs sector holds \$40-\$60 billion export potential: Ahsan Iqbal



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday said that the Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) had the potential of \$40-60 billion export in the next 3 to 5 years.

Speaking at the 'Export-led Economy - Race to \$100 billion' ceremony, along with Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan, he said that the government would facilitate SMEs sector to achieve this potential target. The minister reaffirmed the government commitment to significantly increasing exports, setting an ambitious target of \$100 billion within eight years.

He stressed that achieving this target within eight years, would be beneficial, but in case of missing, it would pose significant challenges.

Ahsan emphasized the need to enhance production and leverage key sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, and information technology, mining, manpower and creative industries to drive

growth. In order to increase the exports, the government would collaborate with the relevant department/ministries to develop a dashboard, outlining a clear road-map for growth in these sectors, he added.

Similarly, he said that only 70 out of 500 companies on the Karachi Stock Exchange generated exports of around \$10,000, and big KSE companies earned billions in profit without contributing to dollar exports. To address this, he suggested for working on policies and incentives to encourage the private sector to contribute to the country's exports.

Jam Kamal Khan attributed Pakistan's export decline to various factors, including high interest rates, production costs, COVID-19, and the Ukraine conflict. However, he highlighted that the government had formulated a strategy to increase the country exports to \$60 billion.

He said that inflation and interest rates had come down consistently while the global investors were interested in investing in Pakistan.

"Investors confidence has restored after International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme", he remarked.

"In the past, the focus was on textiles, now the focus is on pharmaceutical exports", he added. He said: "Pakistan's economic future depends on significant increase in exports." APP

Naqvi to review SCO summit preparations and beautification of Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi chaired an important meeting at the Capital Development Authority (CDA) to review preparations and arrangements for the upcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit. The meeting also focused on the beautification efforts underway in Islamabad and other development projects. During the session, Minister Naqvi emphasized the need for extensive beautification of key areas, particularly the Red Zone and VIP routes.

He directed that attractive landscaping be implemented along major roads and instructed that the entire city be adorned with vibrant flowers and decorative lights in preparation for the international event. Minister Naqvi highlighted the importance of completing renovation work on the Jinnah Convention Center, assigning the task of finishing the project promptly.

He stressed the significance of hosting the SCO Summit, noting it as a reflection of the government's successful foreign policy efforts. "Special attention must be given to the beautification and cleanliness of Islamabad, with a focus on VIP routes and the Red Zone," said Naqvi. He added that these measures were vital to enhancing the city's appearance ahead of the summit. Security arrangements for the SCO Summit were also reviewed during the meeting. The Interior Minister gave clear directives to take firm action against illegal housing societies, stressing the importance of keeping Islamabad free from unauthorized constructions and encroachments.

Won't let go focus on ensuring structural reforms, FM tells foreign investors

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb said Tuesday that the government was focused on ensuring that Pakistan stays on the course of structural reforms in core sectors of economy, including energy, SOEs, privatization, taxation and rightsizing of government.

He said that in the past Pakistan has been seen as a single-tranche country but time has come to remove this perception and implement the structural benchmarks agreed under the programme with the foreign investors to ensure permanence to the macroeconomic stability. He made this observation while talking to a group of investors led by Barclays, who called on the Minister at Finance Division.

The Minister briefed the delegation on various policy interventions and initiatives implemented during the last 12 months to reform the economy and also gave them an overview of the growth and macroeconomic stability in key economic indicators, including twin deficits, stable currency, foreign exchange reserves, and inflation that remained "a big story throughout the year".

The Minister said the current macroeconomic stability was an outcome of a successful conclusion of nine-month IMF Stand-by Agreement, initiated by Prime Minister Shehbaz



Sharif and implemented with discipline, rigour and vigour by the caretaker administration, paving the way for a larger and longer EFF to bring permanence to the macroeconomic stability and implement structural reforms.

He highlighted a positive outcome of the macroeconomic stability for Pakistan was its ability to not only clear the Letters of Credit and Import backlogs by May and June last year, but also clear the payments of profits and dividends close to \$2 billion to foreign investors.

He said the new fiscal year had started on a clean slate and noted the continuation of macroeconomic stability in the first quarter with current account deficit remaining under control due to strong remittances, healthy RDA flows and exports showing positive trends in terms of diversification and a higher delta in IT exports and services as per August figures.

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Tuesday said the ban on the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) was imposed on the basis of evidence that showed its close contacts with the terrorist organizations and its involvement in a campaign against the country.

Talking to media, the minister brushed aside speculations about ban on PTM which has been declared a proscribed organization by the Federal Cabinet the other day.

He pointed out the PTM's past practices including burning of the flag of Pakistan, attack on Pakistani Embassies and their involvement in promoting a narrative against the country under the garb of protecting the Pashtuns.

Tarar said during the investigation into the attack on a Pakistani Embassy, it was

found that not only PTM workers were involved in this heinous crime, but also some citizens of Afghanistan.

The PTM has not only been in contact with the Tehreek-e-Taliban Afghanistan, but also the proscribed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (Fitna al-Khawarij), he added.

The minister said there is no restriction on anybody to protest or criticize, but nobody would be allowed to burn national flag, attack embassies and keep contacts with terrorist organizations.

"If an ideology is promoted among the youth on the basis of falsehoods that undermine the state's efforts and damage the ideology of Pakistan, such actions will not be tolerated," he said, adding any



political party found engaging with the PTM—whether through funding, opening joint accounts, or transferring money—would face the music.

The minister, while acknowledging the significant contribution of the Pashtuns

in Pakistan movement and establishment of an independent homeland, regretted some elements using the name of Pashtoons to malign Pakistan's security, integrity and sovereignty.

"Pakistan comes first as I reiterated time and again," he said, adding the ban on PTM was a lesson for the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) which believed that "there is no Pakistan without Khan". Tarar regretted the campaign run by the PTI about disappearance of Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur, who later claimed that he went into hiding by himself and crossed 12 districts to reach Peshawar.

He wondered how the CM KP felt afraid while passing through the districts in his

own province.

All political parties participated in a conference on Palestine yesterday and pledged to raise their voices in support of Palestinians at international forums, he said, regretting that only one party, "Tehreek-e-Intehar", chose not to stay away. He said one of its leaders from the US stated that they would not be attending the meeting. Ironically, they were able to run a campaign for Goldsmith in London, promoting him against Sadiq Khan in the mayoral election, but they could not take part in the All Parties Conference (APC) on Palestine issue.

The minister said the government is doubling its efforts to send aid to Lebanon and Palestine as Prime Minister Shehbaz

Sharif has already formed a committee in this regard and soon a relief account would be established for the purpose.

He said some elements were perturbed by the Pak-China friendship, but the PM had made it very clear that nobody would be allowed to destabilize Pakistan. "We are committed to Pakistan's prosperity, security and integrity," he stressed.

The minister said Pakistan is progressing and its economy is taking off with an increase in its foreign reserves, remittances and exports.

He said the inflation had been brought to 6.9 per cent from 32 per cent and the PM had instructed all the provinces to take steps to pass on its benefits to the masses. The minister asked the CM KP what has stopped him to take the needed steps to curb the inflation in the province. APP

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A walk in the park

SARMAD KHAWAJA

It is early Sunday morning in Fatima Jinnah Park. Washed by the rain, the air is cool. The park glows a white in the saffron light of the early sun. Walkers stroll unhurried in its rising light. Joggers jog. Crows peck at the trash cans. Pigeons coo in nearby trees. Well-groomed dogs take their keepers for a walk. You see and hear this daily – the interactions of flora, and fauna as you ramble along the park's grounds. Fatima Jinnah Park is an extraordinary place: a seven-hundred-and-fifty-acre paradise. In terms of scale, it is twice as big as Moscow's Gorky Park, and almost a match for New York's Central Park. Now that it has had four decades to establish itself its built structures have blended into the landscape. It has become an urban oasis, a small-scale ecological victory, the city's cooling mechanism. Its winding paths and manicured hedges create a breathtaking setting: along one path in its northern corner is a jacaranda neighbourhood which lights up in April with brilliant purple flowers.

You see and hear this daily – the interactions of flora, and fauna as you ramble along the park's grounds

The trees grow bigger and better as they age. Their canopies, now fifty feet or more across, give enough shade for a small village and plentiful perches for birds. Amidst the jacarandas is a string of tall yuccas, guarding over them like sentinels. Nearby is a clump of magnolias – the attention grabbers during May since their flowers are so richly scented. The bougainvillea have climbed up trees along the children's enclave, making a visual barrier with a collage of vibrant orange, crimson, and white flowers. But not all parts of the park are so poetic.

The sewage of people living upstream ruins a once-idyllic nullah dividing the park. The stench hovers over it like an invisible cloud. When you go near it, a constellation of insects surrounds you. Like the city's other nullahs, it is filthy flowing water reeking with waste and undoubtedly, a rich source of diseases downstream and upstream.

We need legislation like the American Clean Water Act of 1972 to stop sewage discharges into our nullahs, set water quality standards, clean up our waters nationwide, and make them swimmable and fishable. And we need a big dose of citizen activism, and parliamentary attention to tell the polluters enough is enough.

Otherwise, the Fatima Jinnah Park has a clean, spiffy look despite large spaces left to their devices, which is a boon. It's good to be left alone. The left-to-their-devices spaces are wild, enchanting accidental gardens, with hardy plants and biodiverse, having no planting scheme, and zero maintenance – a slice of what this place would look like had we not colonized it and called it Islamabad. Here trees, waist-high grasses, and wild bushes are in charge. In the rotting woods and decaying leaves are plentiful wildflowers.

It's a fine place to anchor for a while and spend your spare time: away from the daily churning, and chaos of neighbours, clamour of road anarchy, inescapable skirmishes with reckless drivers, and tyrannizing motorcyclists whizzing like guided missiles on roads, footpaths, and everywhere else.

The wheels roll along the park's borders, where traffic unceasingly pounds day and night. But inside Fatima Jinnah Park, it is calm – an ideal place to walk and engage in an inner dialogue, think through problems, and contend with the anger and sadness you may feel about the times. Or, air your plentiful grievances (to yourself), cauterize your psychic wounds, imagined or real, unravel the mysteries of national politics, refine your thoughts into hypotheses, and draw them out in op-ed articles for The News.

As you do so, you have uninterrupted views of Margalla Hills. While they remain the same, the city below keeps changing. Like many cities, Islamabad is 'a growing fusion of hope and despair'. And though not yet a Titan of cities like Karachi or Lahore, it is a melting pot like them taking in escapees from stricken landscapes of KP, Galiyat, Azad Kashmir, southern Punjab, interior Sindh, and Afghanistan seeking opportunity and wealth. Moving to the city is their first step 'to getting filthy rich in rising' Pakistan.

As migrants pour in, Islamabad expands. Expanding skyward along Fatima Jinnah Park's southern face gives the city its majestic skyline. Expanding outward, north-west towards Taxila, and south-east towards Rawat, gives it muscle. The high-rise buildings and new homes are symbols of prosperity, and wealth howsoever acquired.

But urban expansion has dire consequences: the concrete infrastructures, roads, and pathways uproot and demolish natural habitats and raise the temperature. Trees counter these harmful environmental effects, filter greenhouse gases, cool the surrounding concrete jungles, and improve our quality of life. This means we need more trees and parks like the Fatima Jinnah Park.

A lot of good can happen in any city when civic authorities recognize parks as a vital civic infrastructure and public good.

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Dr Naazir Mahmood

Psychology of care

In my previous column 'Psychology of colonialism' (Oct 1, 2024), there were discussions on how colonialism affected the psychology of colonized people in countries such as Pakistan. That was more of an academic discussion but on a personal level it triggered a thought process in me.

Here I share what I went through when my father was under treatment and then died on June 27 this year. Sharing these experiences may prove useful for many of us who are otherwise decent people but who end up unknowingly behaving in a certain manner that, rather than comforting, creates more discomfort for the concerned family. I have observed certain psychological traits people display while trying to be caring and offering condolences.

When we get to know that a friend or relative – or somebody in our friend's family – is ill or sick, first it is better to think about how close we are to that friend or relative. Here being close means meeting them frequently, visiting their home at will, and sharing with them your family matters. If you are just an acquaintance and know them from a distance, perhaps it is better to hold on to your urge to call. In this age when various messaging services are available, it is best to leave a message and ask for an appropriate time to call.

It is not necessary to immediately call them and inquire about every minute detail of the disease. There appears to be a wide cultural difference between countries. In Pakistan even highly educated people do not respect – or do not realize – the significance of personal space which

involves keeping a distance from people you are not fairly close to. When a family member is under treatment the patient and the carers have to visit doctors and hospitals frequently. In this situation when your phone starts ringing incessantly one has to either ignore it or respond briefly or even curtly.

In Pakistan, when the receiver does not accept a call, many of us tend to call repeatedly until the receiver responds. Then starts a detailed discussion about what the disease is, how it developed, what medicines are in use, which consultant or doctor is treating the patient, and so on. Then starts a series of recommendations about how to cure the disease; various alternative medicines come under discussion, and a wide range of possible solutions you get for free. In my father's case involving a hip joint replacement, the best surgeon in town was taking care of it. But there were many who raised doubts about the hospital itself, and then started citing cases that went wrong at that hospital, and how they had to take their patient to another clinic that was much better.

Some presented nightmarish scenarios with horrifying results; others expressed complete lack of confidence in the surgeon who belonged to a minority community and could 'spoil' the hereafter of the patient. They were more concerned about the hereafter rather than the here and now of the case. Some even questioned the possibility of a body being buried with a foreign object – an artificial hip joint that was not part of the body at birth.

If somebody in your family is suffering from an autoimmune disease, you end up explaining what that means and then the same person who did not have a clue about it suddenly becomes an expert on it with readymade pieces of advice. If because of the disease or any other

pressing situation you deactivate your social media, your friends and relative think that you owe them a detailed explanation on why you have not been posting lately. If you post a good quote or a couplet or a poem, people start jumping on conclusions about your mental state.

Comments appear such as 'I hope everything is alright', 'Is there something wrong?', 'you appear to be depressed', 'why don't you consult a psychiatrist', 'there is something that you are hiding'; and there are calls to see things right that may not be wrong in the first place. There is unbound curiosity or inquisitiveness to poke one's nose into everything that may not concern you directly. Many friends barge into your home to inquire about your or your family member's health without first taking permission to do so. Even if you repeatedly tell them there is no need for a visit, you get them anyway.

Then there are follow-up calls ad nauseam from remote relatives and friends living in faraway lands. When my father was on his death bed, a relative started taking his pictures and making his video. I was not there to stop him and my brother did not expect that he would post that video on social media. We had to call that idiotic relative of ours to remove that video which was in bad taste.

Finally when my father was no more, I immediately started receiving calls for condolences. From close friends it was comforting to know that they cared and offered help; but there were many more from those we hardly knew. The lesson is that you just send a message if you are not pretty close to the bereaved family rather than engaging them in a conversation about how the angel of death arrived and how the deceased breathed his last. We announced the date and time of the funeral on social media and various groups, still there were incessant calls about the time

and the location of the burial rites. On the day of the funeral too, it is better not to crowd the home since morning if the burial is in the evening. We had a steady stream of people who gathered since morning to condole and to say that they would not be able to attend the funeral due to other engagements. While you are busy in arrangements, you end up responding to endless calls and visitors who would have done better by just joining or not joining the funeral. After the funeral we announced the location and time for the soym, which means those who could not attend the funeral may come to offer condolences.

The next day of the funeral – when the entire family was exhausted and desperately needed some rest – our doorbells and phones were ringing since morning. There were many who could not wait for the third day or had some other engagement, finding it convenient to visit in accordance with their own comfort. The lesson is that if you can't attend the funeral, wait for the third day and attend the soym at the specified location and time, rather than crowding the home of the bereaved family on the second day.

These are some of experiences our family went through and the lessons I learnt. It is better to be caring and offer advice and condolences but there is a need to change our attitudes and behaviours while dealing with friends and relatives who are already under stress due to certain health issues in the family. Our friends and relatives do not owe us an explanation for deaths or diseases in their family. This is the lesson we as a society must learn.

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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

Pakistan

Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy, reiterated the Pakistan demand in clearer terms.

CABINET PLAN

In early 1946, the British Government sent a Cabinet Mission to the subcontinent to resolve the constitutional deadlock. The Mission conducted negotiations with various political parties, but failed to evolve an agreed formula. Finally, the Cabinet Mission announced its own Plan, which among other provisions, envisaged three federal groupings, two of them comprising the Muslim majority provinces, linked at the Centre in a loose federation with three subjects. The Muslim League accepted the plan, as a strategic move, expecting to

achieve its objective in not-too-distant future. The All-India Congress also agreed to the Plan, but, soon realising its implications, the Congress leaders began to interpret it in a way not visualized by the authors of the Plan. This provided the All-India Muslim League an excuse to withdraw its acceptance of the Plan and the party observed August 16, as a 'Direct Action Day' to show Muslim solidarity in support of the Pakistan demand.

In October 1946, an Interim Government was formed. The Muslim League sent its representative under the leadership of its General Secretary, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, with the aim to fight for the party objective from within the Interim Govern-

ment. After a short time, the situation inside the Interim Government and outside convinced the Congress leadership to accept Pakistan as the only solution of the communal problem. The British Government, after its last attempt to save the Cabinet Mission Plan in December 1946, also moved towards a scheme for the partition of India. The last British Viceroy, Lord Louis Mountbatten, came with a clear mandate to draft a plan for the transfer of power.

After holding talks with political leaders and parties, he prepared a Partition Plan for the transfer of power, which, after approval of the British Government, was announced on June 3, 1947.

EMERGENCE OF PAKISTAN

Both the Congress and the Muslim League accepted the Plan. Two largest Muslim majority provinces, Bengal and Punjab, were partitioned. The Assemblies of West Punjab, East Bengal and Sindh and in Balochistan, the Quetta Municipality, and the Shahi Jirga voted for Pakistan.

Referenda were held in the North-West Frontier Province and the District of Sylhet in Assam, which resulted in an overwhelming vote for Pakistan. As a result, on August 14th, 1947, the new state of Pakistan came into existence.

To be continued....

Showbiz

Emma Stone debuts her most daring style change to date

Emma Stone seemingly underwent a surprising transformation for her upcoming movie

Emma Stone, who has pulled off many different hair styles over the years, is set to surprise the audiences with a bold new transformation. The Oscar-winning actress, who is currently filming her upcoming movie, Bugonia, with director Yorgos Lanthimos, sparked frenzy with her latest appearance. Fans online are seemingly convinced that the actress has shaved her hair off for the role. The La La Land star was spotted in New York City on set and her fitted blue beanie hinted at the actress' major style change. The outing comes just days after Stone attended the 2024 New York Festival and an usual clip from the evening suggested the same. In a fan-captured video, while hugging



Kieran Culkin's wife, Jazz Charton, Stone was noted adjusting her wig. Bugonia is Stone's fourth movie with the Greek filmmaker. Back in May, during the Cannes Film Festival, Lanthimos spoke about teaming up again with Stone. "We have a great relationship. We just love working together," he told Associated Press. It is unclear how far along the filming has progressed as the details of the movie are still kept under wraps.

However, Indie Wire reported that the movie was filmed during the summer and it "follows an immature man who believes that a pharmaceutical executive is actually an alien and decides to kidnap him in order to stop an oncoming invasion."

Tech

How do Nasa astronauts vote from space?

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) astronauts at the International Space Station (ISS) have the chance to cast their votes in US general elections with the help of absentee ballots or early voting in coordination with the county clerk's office at their residential place.

The voting from space has been made possible through Nasa's Space Communication and Navigation (SCaN) Programme.

Moreover, votes cast in space travel through the agency's Near Space Network, which is managed by Nasa's Goddard Space Flight Centre in Greenbelt, Maryland. This process is similar to most data transmitted between the space station and the Mission Control Centre at Nasa's Johnson Space Centre in Houston.

Notably, the network connects missions within 1.2 million miles of Earth with communications and navigation services, including the space station, reported Nasa. Astronauts may fill out a Federal Post Card Application to request an absentee ballot just like any other American who is away from home.



When an astronaut fills out an electronic ballot aboard the orbiting laboratory, the document flows through Nasa's Tracking and Data Relay Satellite System to a ground antenna at the agency's White Sands Test Facility in Las Cruces, New Mexico. Nasa transfers the ballot from New Mexico to the Mission Control Centre at Nasa Johnson and then on to the county clerk responsible for casting the ballot. Additionally, the ballot is encrypted and accessible only by the astronaut and the clerk to preserve the vote's integrity.

Health

Pakistan reports four new polio cases, bringing this year's tally to 32

Pakistan reported four new cases of poliovirus, pushing the country's tally tally for the year to 32 as the paralyzing disease continues an upsurge. Pakistan is one of the two remaining polio-endemic countries in the world, along with Afghanistan, and the number of cases on a yearly basis had significantly dropped in the country, until the recent spike in cases.

Despite persistent vaccination efforts by the government for polio eradication, the country has been gripped by the crippling disease.

It is a highly infectious disease caused by virus mainly affecting children under the age of five years, who are malnourished or have weak immunity because of being under-vaccinated or not vaccinated for polio and other childhood diseases. The illness invades the nervous system and causes paralysis or even death. While there is no

Crippling disease tightens its grip over country despite persistent vaccination efforts by government

cure for polio, vaccination is the most effective way to protect children from this crippling disease. The resurgence of polio in the country presents a significant setback for the country's efforts to eradicate the disease, as officials work to bolster vaccination campaigns and raise public awareness about the importance of immunisation. The four new cases have emerged from three different regions. As per the details, two of the cases were reported from Jacobabad, one from Malir

and another from Dera Ismail Khan. The Pakistan Polio Programme has laid out a strategic plan to curb virus transmission, with the goal of halting its spread by mid-2025. The plan, developed in consultation with provincial authorities, focuses on reaching every child in high-risk areas, improving vaccination campaign quality and strengthening community engagement.

A recent mass vaccination campaign in September targeted 33 million children under five across 115 districts. Another round is scheduled to begin on October 28, with officials emphasising the need to reach mobile and migrant populations as well. However, a report by the Institute for Disease Modeling (IDM) has raised alarms about escalating wild poliovirus cases in Pakistan, fearing that the number could hit 55 to 65 by the end of 2024.



Concrete strategy in place to meet future energy demands: Awais

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Power Division Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari on Tuesday said that concrete strategy has been put into place to meet the future energy's demands of the country. "As energy always plays a key role in economy of the country so generation, transmission and distribution system of energy sector is being revamped on modern lines," he said while addressing a function here at National University of Science and Technology (NUST).

He said the environment friendly renewable energy was also being promoted in the country adding that around 17,000 megawatts (MW) were going to be added to the system by 2034. Generation, transmission and distribution were all part of the power sector but in the past the generation part has not been added in healthy manner means at least cost methodology. However, he said we were committed to adding generation on least cost methodology basis in the future.

He said issues with Independent Power Producers (IPPs) were being resolved amicably adding that he is grateful to IPPs for their cooperation to revise the contract condition.

He was of the views that the power has to be generated by the private sector and there should not be a single purchasers like Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA) in the country. There must be a competition which would not only help come down the prices of electricity but also create a competitive environment in the country.

Regarding, power distribution companies (DISCOs), the minister said that a sum of Rs 595 billion were budgeted every year just for their losses and power theft. "It is unbelievable, unacceptable and also not sustainable and we have Rs 600 billion extra to fund institution like NUST etc," he added.

He said good professional board member were being put in place in Board of Directors of these companies to run it in efficient manners. "It is none of the job of me, a secretary or additional secretaries etc to run these entities," he said. He went on to say that in next three years, three DISCOs would be privatized while two DISCOs with Rs 150 billion loss would be concessional model reforms.

Regarding transmission system, the minister said that earlier National Transmission and Despatch Company (NTDC) board was not working but now a senior advisor of LUMS was heading it. The NTDC would be bifurcated into three entities, he added.

No ECP meeting scheduled for Wednesday: Spokesperson

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has categorically denied the media reports claiming a meeting of the Commission is scheduled for tomorrow, on Wednesday.

The spokesperson for the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) clarified "no meeting of the Election Commission is summoned on Wednesday" and that any reports suggesting otherwise are completely baseless and false. APP

Pakistan, Azerbaijan relations grounded in deep rooted cultural, religious affinities: Gilani

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Tuesday said that Pakistan cherishes its fraternal relations with Azerbaijan which are grounded in deep rooted cultural and religious affinities. "Bilateral trade between the two countries has been witnessing a consistent increase in the last few years," the chairman Senate expressed these views in a meeting with ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov. He emphasized the need to further boost the trade linkages as there is huge scope for expanding trade ties in diverse sectors. He said that both countries enjoyed cordial relations at International forums which reflects the magnitude of love and respect that both the countries have for each other. He also expressed satisfaction that the highest level contacts between the two countries are going in the right directions and there is need to further explore avenues for bilateral cooperation through exchange of delegations.

He also emphasized for frequent exchanges at parliamentary and other levels to enhance people to people contacts.

The chairman Senate also expressed his well wishes for the people Parliament and leadership of Azerbaijan.

He also congratulated Azerbaijan on winning the bid to host COP29 in the beautiful city of Baku in November 2024.

He said that Pakistan will participate in this important event in a befitting manner. He also expressed his well wishes to his counterpart and extended invitation to visit Pakistan at a convenient.

The Ambassador thanked the chairman Senate for the warm welcome.

He also underscored the need for high level contacts and boosting corporation in diverse sectors. He said that Pakistan is an important country for Azerbaijan and we desire to further expand ties in different arenas. — VOM Report



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain chairing the meeting of Sugar Advisory Board.

President calls for rationalizing interest rates, supporting export-oriented industries



VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday called for providing a business-friendly environment by further rationalizing the interest rate, providing cost-effective energy and supporting export-oriented industries in order to improve country's economy. He urged the business community to invest in the country's stock exchange, besides focusing on industries that support small and medium enterprises and provide jobs to people.

The president expressed these views while addressing the 12th Federation of Pakistan Chambers and Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Excellence Awards ceremony, held at Aiwan-e-Sadr. The ceremony was attended by members of the business community, and senior government officials, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a

press release.

Speaking on the occasion, the president said that high interest rates were not beneficial for the country's economy and businesses. President calls for rationalizing interest rates, supporting export-oriented industries. He said that he would ask the government to consider reducing the policy rate to boost business activities, adding that a comprehensive approach was required to steer the country out of its economic challenges.

Recalling his previous tenure, the president highlighted that despite security challenges and the war on terror, his economic policy of supporting export-oriented industries and providing cost-effective energy led to an increase in the country's exports.

The president said that steps should be taken to provide cost-effective electricity, land and other facilities to help promote trade and industry.

He urged the business community and

entrepreneurs to continue actively contributing towards the economic transformation of the country.

President Zardari also appreciated FPCCI for awarding Excellence Awards to the country's top businesses to inspire healthy competition.

He urged FPCCI to provide its valuable input to help develop policies that promote exports and stimulate domestic industries. President FPCCI Atif Ikram Sheikh said that economic challenges were being transformed into opportunities.

Group Leader FPCCI Dr Gohar Ejaz said that the country's economy was improving, adding the business community was making efforts to enhance the country's exports.

President Zardari also distributed the 12th FPCCI Excellence Awards among members of the business community for their outstanding performance and contributions to the economy.

Govt to take all possible measures to protect country from disasters: Amir Muqam

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan and SAFRON Engineer Amir Muqam on Tuesday said that the incumbent government would take all possible measures to protect the country from disasters. The minister said in his statement, he said that today we are observing the 19th National Resilience Day in memory of the devastating earthquake of October 8, 2005, which caused hundreds of thousands of precious lives.

Expressing heartfelt sympathy to the families affected by the earthquake, Amir Muqam paid rich tributes to the people of Pakistan who showed courage during the devastating earthquake. Thousands of people lost their lives in the devastating earthquake whose grief cannot be forgotten till today, he added.

In the earthquake, the national institutions, responsible for reconstruction have played an exemplary role, Engineer Amir Maqam added.

The minister also appreciated the cooperation of the international community during the October 8, 2005 earthquake.

Delegation of Hutchison Ports Company calls on Qaiser Sheikh

ISLAMABAD: A high-level delegation from Hutchison Ports Company met with Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh to explore opportunities for expanding their operations at the South Asian Port Terminal within Karachi Port Trust (KPT). The meeting was attended by key officials, including Secretary Maritime Affairs Syed Zafar Ali Shah and Additional Secretary Umar Zafar Sheikh, according to a press release here on Tuesday.

During the discussions, the minister welcomed the Hutchison delegation and expressed the Ministry's unwavering support for their business initiatives. He emphasized the importance of effective terminal operations and assured the delegates of the government's commitment to facilitating growth in the maritime sector.

"The Ministry is dedicated to collaborating with Hutchison Ports to enhance the efficiency and capabilities of the South Asian Port Terminal," Minister Sheikh stated. "We recognize the vital role that Hutchison plays in the region and ready to assist in any way possible to ensure increase in business activity in port."

The meeting highlighted ongoing efforts



towards the management of KPT and Hutchison Ports, focusing on strategic improvements that benefit all stakeholders. The minister underscored the government's proactive approach to fostering a conducive environment for international maritime operations.

Hutchison Ports representatives conveyed their vision for growth and the potential to further enhance their service offerings at the terminal. The discussions laid the groundwork for a productive partnership aimed at elevating the terminal's operational standards. As the maritime industry continues to evolve, both parties expressed optimism about the future of their collaboration and the positive impact it will have on the regional economy.

Pakistan calls UN Pact for Future 'deficient' on addressing int'l disputes, including in Mideast, S Asia

UNITED NATIONS: A senior Pakistani diplomat told the UN General Assembly on Tuesday that the decisions of Pact for the Future, which world leaders adopted last month, were "severely deficient" on peace and security in addressing disputes and conflicts, such as those in the Middle East and South Asia, as he underscored the need for their resolution. "The failure to address the key ongoing disputes and conflicts, such as the ongoing genocidal war in Gaza and the wider conflict in the Middle East, conflicts in Europe, Africa or South Asia – none of these have been effectively addressed by the Pact," Ambassador Munir Akram said in a debate during which delegates expressed their views, hopes, disappointments and reservations on the Pact and its two annexes, the Global Digital Compact and the Declaration for Future Generations, which were approved at the Summit of the Future on Sept. 22. The Pakistan envoy said the pact also does not address the breakdown of arms control measures or the renewed, multi-dimensional global arms race.



"The UN's relevant institutions – the Security Council, the Conference on Disarmament, the Disarmament Com-

mission, and particularly this General Assembly – must address these realities which we face and which we must not dodge," he stressed. Ambassador Akram also called for redress of historical injustices against Africa and other developing countries, saying the UN's security architecture should not be blamed for this failure to promote peace or resolve conflicts. "This failure is due to the strategic ambitions and policies of some major and some minor powers," he said. "Efforts to achieve UN Security Council reform should not become a part of this strategic competition between rival powers, by seeking privileged positions for strategic allies on the Council, while ignoring the aspirations and positions of the vast majority of the General Assembly, which consists of small and medium states," Ambassador Akram said in an obvi-

ous reference to some major countries backing a few countries' candidature for permanent membership in an expanded Council, which now has 15 members.

"Such an approach would not strengthen the world order, it would erode it and Security Council reform should be accompanied by a revival of the General Assembly,"

As for the developing countries, the Pakistani envoy emphasized that the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) should not be linked to any other actions in the Pact.

"We look forward to the fulfillment of the commitments on development finance and reform of the international financial architecture, sovereign debt architecture review, trade and tax reform."

At the outset of his speech, Ambassador Akram spoke on behalf of a 16-member like-minded Group on issues arising from the Pact, which is aimed at strengthening the UN so that it delivers a better future for people. Besides Pakistan, the other members of the Group are Algeria, Bolivia, China, Cuba, Egypt, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Nicaragua, Russia, Sri Lanka, Syria, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe.

Ambassador Akram, speaking for the Like-Minded Group, regretted that the Pact did not mention sovereign equality, non-interference in internal affairs, and the right to self-determination of people, as well as colonization and foreign occupation as reflected in previously agreed UN initiatives and documents.

The Group also regretted that paragraph 18 diminishes the understanding of the additional nature of climate finance as specified in the Paris Agreement on climate change.

On Peace and Security, the Group said the Pact falls short in addressing the real threats and challenges, including their root causes, such as violations of the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, international law, geopolitical polarization and tensions, festering conflicts, and unresolved disputes.

On the critical issue of debt, the Group underscored the need for an urgent, comprehensive, inclusive, and transparent multilateral solution to resolve the ongoing debt crisis of a large number of developing countries. "The UN must play a central role in this process," the Group said, noting that the Pact does not guarantee this role. APP

KSRelief announces major public facilitation projects worth Rs 4 bln for Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSRelief) on Tuesday announced a series of key public facilitation projects worth Rs. 4 billion, aimed at rebuilding the communities in Pakistan, affected by natural disasters. During the 'Signing Ceremony for Joint Cooperation Programmes and Implementation Contracts for Educational, Health, Recovery and Rehabilitation Projects in Pakistan', Assistant Supervisor General of Operations at KSRelief, Engineer Ahmed Ali Al-Baiz signed four different joint cooperation programmes with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), National Commission for Human Development (NCHD), Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), and State Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (SERRA) and above all, eight different contracts for public facilitation projects were formalized.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan, Nawaf Bin Said Al-Malki, representative from NDMA, Chairman of PRCS, and representatives and country heads from various UN missions in Pakistan, were the special guests at the signing ceremony. These initiatives reflect KSRelief's commitment to sustainable recovery and long-term development for communities affected during different natural disasters in Pakistan. These projects cover various sectors, including housing, educa-

tion, health, WASH and disaster preparedness. One of the major efforts is the construction of the National Humanitarian Response Facility for NDMA, which will significantly enhance its ability to store and distribute relief supplies during emergencies. In total, 1,000 permanent houses for families displaced by the 2022 floods, will be constructed in a bid to provide safe housing for around 7,000 individuals in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Punjab. Each house is designed to offer two rooms, a kitchen, and a washroom, ensuring a dignified living environment for the affected families.

In addition, KSRelief will construct 300 Community Feeder Schools across Pakistan, particularly in underserved regions like Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. These schools, equipped with green energy solar power and clean drinking water facilities, will serve approximately 15,000 children, while indirectly benefiting over 100,000 people, including local communities and teachers. Upon completion, these schools will be handed over to the National Commission for Human Development (NCHD), ensuring long-term sustainability and management. KSRelief will also reconstruct four government schools in Azad Jammu and Kashmir for SERRA, which were damaged by the 2005 earthquake. These schools will provide a safe learning environment for 3,400 students and contribute to the region's long-term development. APP