



Five of the MOUs have already translated into concrete contracts and transactions, paving the way for increased employment and investment opportunities in Pakistan

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Govt committed to provide more resources for Balochistan's development: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal Friday said that the Federal Government was committed to utilising all resources for the development of the Balochistan province. Responding to a question during the ongoing 343rd session of the Upper House, he informed that a total of 200 PSDP projects were underway in Balochistan, with an estimated cost of 1429 billion rupees. He said an amount of 130 billion rupees had been earmarked for the PSDP in 2024-25 while more allocation of funds would be ensured for the uplift of the Balochistan projects. However, he stressed the importance of improving the administrative capacity of provinces for better service delivery of funds and resources after allocations. Meanwhile, Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain replying to a question told the House that restructuring of the Utility Stores Corporation was underway to make it more viable in terms of business and its day-to-day operations. The Minister said that during the restructuring, the rights of the utility Stores' employees would be safeguarded.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development, Ahsan Iqbal, chaired a meeting to review the progress on the transfer of Pak Public Works Department (Pak PWD) projects to provincial governments under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP).

Foreign investors taking keen interest in Pakistan for investment: Qaiser Sheikh

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh on Friday said that foreign investors are taking keen interest in Pakistan for investment in various sectors. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit to Saudi Arabia and Qatar, has been successful and several international companies are looking towards Pakistan for exploring business opportunities, he said while talking to PTV. Leadership of Saudi Arabia after meeting with PM Shehbaz Sharif, has decided to increase the trade volume with Pakistan, he said. In reply to a question, he said the credit goes to premier Shehbaz Sharif, for creating investment environment in this part of the region. Economic cooperation of Gulf countries with Pakistan would have positive impact over the life of the people of this country, he said.



DOHA: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in a group photo with a delegation of Qatar Businessmen Association. APP

PM Shehbaz invites Qatari businessmen to invest in Pakistan's energy, infrastructure

PM expresses gratitude to Amir of Qatar for warm hospitality

DOHA: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday met the delegation of the Qatar Businessmen Association (QBA) where he highlighted numerous opportunities in Pakistan's energy, infrastructure, and finance sectors, presenting the country as an attractive investment destination. The QBA delegation, led by Sheikh Faisal Bin Qassim Al-Thani, comprised leading Qatari business figures, each representing influential sectors within Qatar's economy. The meeting was held during Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's two-day official visit to Qatar aimed at discussing deepening economic ties and exploring new avenues for collaboration. The meeting brought together key representatives from Pakistan and influential members of Qatar's business community, emphasizing shared goals for strengthening trade, investment, and economic partnerships. Notable QBA members present included Vice Chairman & CEO of Al Mana Group Saoud Bin Omar Bin Hamad Al-Mana; Executive Director of Mannai Corporation Khalid Ahmed Al Mannai; Chairman MENA & Chief Country Officer of Deutsche Bank Salah Mohammed Jaidah; Chairman of Mansoor Jassim Al Thani Group Sheikh

Mansoor bin Jassim Al Thani; CEO of Blue Salon Nabil Abu Issa; and Director of Sendian Group Yousuf Ebrahim Al-Mahmoud. Each of these delegates expressed interest in Pakistan's economic landscape, particularly in upcoming projects in energy, technology, and infrastructure development. During the meeting, both sides explored potential collaborations that could drive job creation, innovation, and sustainable development in both countries. Members of the QBA responded positively to the prime minister's invitation, indicating their interest in expanding their investments into Pakistan's energy and infrastructure sectors. The importance of bilateral cooperation to bolster economic stability and growth within the region was underscored. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Minister for Commerce Kam Kamal Khan, Minister for Finance and Revenue Mohammad Aurangzeb and Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attallah Tarar were also present in the meeting. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif

on Friday expressed his heartfelt gratitude to Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani for his warm hospitality during his two-day visit to Qatar. "My sincere gratitude to Your Highness for your exceptionally warm hospitality!" he wrote on X in response to post written by Amir of Qatar. "Pakistan deeply cherishes and values its special friendship with Qatar," he added. "Pakistan's growth and development is inseparable from the growing relationship with Qatar," he added. "Today, I discussed with Pakistani Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif the prospects for expanding bilateral cooperation in various fields. The relations between our two countries are growing, and we are constantly looking forward to further developing them with our brothers in Pakistan." In another post, the prime minister thanked Chairperson of Qatar Museum Sheikhha Al-Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani in response to her post regarding the visit of PM Shehbaz Sharif. "Thank you Your Excellency! Your gracious gesture reaffirms the enduring bonds between our two nations," the prime minister said.

ECC approves supplementary grants, allows PASSCO to allocate wheat



ISLAMABAD: The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet here on Friday approved various Technical Supplementary Grants (TSGs) and also allowed that domestic and imported wheat would be allocated and released by PASSCO. According to press release issued by finance ministry, the ECC meeting was chaired by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb while among others, it was attended by Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain; Minister for Power, Sardar Awaiz Ahmed Khan Leghari; Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal; Minister of State for Finance and Revenue, Ali Pervaiz Malik, Governor SBP (virtual) and Chairman SECP (virtual), along with Federal Secretaries and senior officers from the concerned Ministries and Divisions. According to press release, ECC considered a proposal from the Ministry of National Food Security & Research for allocation of domestic and imported wheat stocks of PASSCO among wheat-deficient agencies/regions for Food Year 2024-25. "The ECC discussed the issue threadbare and decided that domestic and imported wheat would be allocated and released by PASSCO based on allocation ratio decided by ECC on 1st February 2024, till full disposal of imported wheat stock, and all seven wheat-deficit agencies/regions would lift the wheat as per their committed demand during the Food Year 2024-25," it added. The ECC however directed that the wheat to be picked up by agencies/regions be tested beforehand for purpose of quality and fitness for consumption. The ECC considered and approved a proposal from the Ministry of Interior for grant of a Technical Supplementary Grant amounting to Rs. 252.711 million against the same amount surrendered by the Ministry of Housing and Works, for allocation to Capital Development Authority to ensure uninterrupted provision of civic services at the Prime Minister's Office (Public), Prime Minister's Office Internal and Prime Minister's Staff Colony. The ECC considered and approved grant of a Technical Supplementary Grant to the tune of Rs. 1.8 billion to the Ministry of Defence for overhaul of engines of two VIP aircraft being utilized for state duties with the President and the Prime Minister of Pakistan. The ECC also took up and approved a proposal of Ministry of Interior for provision of Rs. 2.939 billion as Technical Supplementary Grant to Director General Immigration & Passports for purchase of two e-Passport Personalization systems and six desktop personalization machines for uninterrupted and smooth official business of the Directorate in the public interest. The ECC also approved a proposal of the Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives for transfer of Rs. 30 billion budgeted for FY 2024-25 under the "Flood Response Emergency Housing Project", to Finance Division as Technical Supplementary Grant for onward release to Government of Sindh as per Finance Division's release strategy for development budget and after authorization by the Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives. APP

Tarar asks individuals included in ECL to submit review before committee

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar Friday asked the individuals included in the ECL list to submit a review to the committee, which will make a decision based on merit. Responding to calling attention notice regarding placing the names of several Members of the National Assembly on the Exit Control List (ECL), Provisional National Identification List (PNIL) and Passport Control List (PCL), he said that the Cabinet's sub-committee conducts reviews of names to include or exclude on the ECL in accordance with the 1981 law. The minister said that names have been removed from the ECL after individuals filed a review to the committee. He said that the rate of removal of names from the ECL list is not less than 65 to 70 per cent among all requests for revision. He said that the names of individuals declared absconders in criminal cases are added to the list under relevant legal provisions. Currently, approximately 4,000 names are on the ECL, most of whom are absconders.

The Law Minister said that while there is a right to travel under Article 15 but the same article also clarified that this right is subject to the law. He said that many members of the opposition during the previous PTI government, who are now on treasury benches were placed in the list in the ECL at that time. He requested that the MNAs with inquiries submit their identity card information to the National Assembly Secretariat to verify their names in the list. He highlighted the efforts of the Cabinet's sub-committee, under his convenorship, to ensure transparency and fairness, and said that he had previously facilitated the removal of names of former Cabinet members now present in the House. The minister advocated for a collective effort to overcome traditional political practices, noting that the politics of victimization ended after the Charter of Democracy. He recalled that, in the past, leaders and members from both the PPP and PML-N had been listed on the ECL or the PNIL by PTI led government.

EV's policy to be announced on November 30; Rana Tanveer

ISLAMABAD: Minister of Food Security, Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain on Friday told the Senate that the Electric Vehicle (EV) policy would be announced on November 30 to promote local manufacturing of EVs and ensure a sustainable transport system. Replying to the question of Senator Zeeshan Khanzada in the 343rd session of the Upper House, the minister informed that the Engineering Development Board mandated for issuance of vehicles assembling and manufacturing certificates had issued 51 certificates to produce two and three-wheeler EVs (motorcycles and rickshaws) in Pakistan. He added that for the manufacturing of EV 4-wheeler, licences had been issued to two companies including Eco Green Motors Pvt Ltd and Regal Automobile Pvt Ltd. The minister informed that 40 sites had been selected for setting up the Charging stations on the Motorway and a viable and acceptable electricity tariff had been fixed on which work would be started soon. Rana informed that 31 companies had applied for the assembling of the 4-wheeler plant on which work was under progress. APP

Major interchange projects set to launch in Capital

ISLAMABAD: On the special instructions of Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi two mega projects will be launched to solve the long-standing traffic problems in Islamabad, providing great convenience to the citizens of Islamabad and other cities. The foundation stone of Serena Chowk Interchange and F-8 Exchange Chowk Interchange projects will be laid on November 5. Serena Chowk Interchange will be completed in just 3 months instead of 10 months, with two underpasses and connecting roads. F-8 Exchange Chowk Interchange will be completed in just 4 months instead of 12 months, with one flyover, one underpass, and connecting roads. The Interior Minister has directed the Capital Development Authority (CDA) to complete the projects within the stipulated time frame. The CDA had earlier set a deadline of 10 months for Serena Chowk Interchange and 12 months for F-8 Exchange Chowk Interchange. Mohsin Naqvi has approved the alternative traf-



fic plan before the start of construction work. He chaired an important meeting at the CDA, where the layout plans of Serena Chowk and F-8 Exchange Chowk Interchanges were reviewed. Interior Minister directed that the relocation of various service lines from the interchange site be completed as soon as possible, and the projects be completed within the stipulated time frame by working 24/7. He emphasized the need for the best traffic management to maintain traffic flow, and a special unit has been formed for duty on the projects. He said that the special unit's personnel will be deployed 24/7 around the projects to maintain traffic flow. — VOM Report

Qatar's \$3bln investment to have significant impact on Pakistan economy: Tarar

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attallah Tarar on Friday said Qatar would make an investment of \$3 billion in diverse sectors which would have a significant impact on the national economy and ultimately benefit the masses. A delegation from Qatar would soon visit Pakistan to materialize the investment pledge, said the minister while addressing a news conference which mainly highlighted the substantive economic gains, achieved by Pakistan with the recent visit of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to Saudi Arabia and Qatar. He congratulated the whole nation on the foreign policy and economic achievements made by Pakistan under the leadership of Prime Minister of Shehbaz Sharif who charted the country on path of economic progress. The minister recalled signing of 27 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), amounting to \$2.2 billion investment, during the successful visit of a high-level

Saudi delegation, led by Minister for Investment Sheikh Khalid Bin Abdul Aziz Al Faleh, a few weeks ago which included fruitful government-to-government and business-to-business meetings. "In a follow-up of that visit, the prime minister has had very productive meetings in Saudi Arabia that also included his meeting with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on the sidelines of the eighth session of the Future Investment Initiative (FII) in Riyadh," Tarar noted. He said during the meeting, both sides reiterated to further strengthen the bilateral relations and enhance trade and investment in Pakistan. Both countries have longstanding people-to-people relations which spanned over decades, he said lauding the hospitality extended by Saudi Arabia to the pilgrims from Pakistan during Umrah and Hajj. He said the prime minister had thanked Saudi Arabia for hosting Pakistanis for



Hajj and its crucial role for Pakistan's deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). During the recent visit of the prime minister, he said, delegation level talks were also held between both the sides that led to increase in the number of MoUs from 27 to 34, while volume of investment has also been enhanced to \$2.8 billion. The minister said an additional investment of \$600 million would have a positive impact on the economy, and "we believe this is a major step towards attracting the foreign investment in mining, energy, agriculture, livestock, IT and

Human Resource Development sectors of the economy." He said the prime minister also spoke about the issue of Palestine at the conference in Riyadh, and condemned the oppression of unarmed Palestinians by Israel. PM Shehbaz Sharif had underlined the need for peace in Palestine which was imperative for global peace. The prime minister has been fighting for the Palestinian cause at international level which is being acknowledged domestically and globally, the minister noted. As regards the visit of the prime minister and his delegation to Qatar, he said this has great importance for the bilateral relations of the two countries which was reflected by the joint statement issued upon conclusion of the visit. He said Qatar had hosted an art exhibition celebrating Pakistani art work, putting up the masterpieces of Pakistani art on display from 1947 to the present. The exhibition featured renowned Pak-

istani artists and painters, including the acclaimed architect Nayar Ali Dada. The prime minister, he said, had expressed his gratitude for Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani and his sister Sheikhha Al-Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani for organizing such an exhibition in the honor of Pakistan. The relationship between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the Emir of Qatar was further emphasized by the warm reception he received during his visit. To a query, the minister said Pakistan's economy is on the path to stabilization, adding inflation has come down to 6.9 per cent. The country had received record remittances, while the Interest rate have also been reduced with the investment was pouring in. Pakistan had achieved fiscal surplus after 24 years, he noted. On a question, he said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had a non-serious govern-

ment, pointing out their misadventures of the past, and asked about their performance in health, infrastructure and other sectors. He said the KP government had not taken any public service initiatives, for which the public would soon hold them accountable. To another query, he said meetings were held under the National Action Plan recently as the prime minister has been paying serious attention on the initiatives required to curb terrorism in the country. On the other hand, the PTI government had brought back the Taliban in the country and now its government in KP was not paying any attention to law and order. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister was not qualified to run the provincial affairs, he stressed. "Eradication of terrorism is the responsibility of the government and we are committed to eradicating terrorism," he remarked. APP

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The catastrophic implications of Israel's anti-UNRWA laws

On Monday evening, Israel's Knesset approved two bills essentially barring the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East from operating in Israel and severely curtailing its activities in Gaza and the West Bank. The new measures are expected to come into force within 90 days.

The Knesset's action was taken despite global appeals, including from the US and other friends of Israel, against this move. It is believed to be part of a larger plan to dismantle UNRWA and tighten the siege of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, deliberately increasing the suffering of the Palestinians in an attempt to force them to leave and to make the realization of a two-state solution more difficult.

If implemented, the new measures would have disastrous results for most of Gaza's 2 million beleaguered residents, as UNRWA is their only lifeline — as it has been for the past 75 years, since the organization was established by the UN in 1949. It is the main provider of education and health services in the Strip. In addition to Gaza, UNRWA is responsible for Palestinian refugees in the West Bank and beyond. In 2023, about 6 million people were registered with the relief agency and eligible to receive its assistance.

The votes were shocking. One bill barring UNRWA from operating in Israeli territory was approved with 92 votes in favor and just 10 against, while the other — curtailing its activities in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank by banning state authorities from having any contact with the agency — passed by 87 votes to nine. According to UNRWA officials, it will be almost impossible for the agency to work in Gaza or the West Bank if Israel stops issuing entry permits to those territories or allowing coordination with its security

forces. Since taking over the Gaza-Egypt border post and deploying its troops along the border in May, Israel controls all points of access to Gaza and the West Bank. Israel has already de facto curtailed UNRWA's activities in Gaza, where the population is facing starvation and dwindling supplies of medicines and vaccines. The new laws will make it worse.

Obstructing the work of UNRWA is a clear breach of the UN Charter. Member states have a duty to cooperate with the UN and its organs, especially those of a humanitarian, economic, social or cultural nature. Articles 1, 2, 55 and 56 of the charter, as well as many UN treaties and resolutions, make that duty unambiguous. There is a higher duty to refrain from obstructing their work. Failure to cooperate with UN agencies, let alone actively barring them from carrying out their duties, is thus a serious violation of the UN Charter. Chapter II makes membership of the UN itself conditional on respecting its charter.

UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini said in Riyadh on Wednesday that the bills were part of a larger effort by Israel to dismantle UNRWA, tighten the siege of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories and make a two-state solution more difficult. Israel has made the dismantling of UNRWA an objective of the war, "in defiance of the General Assembly and Security Council resolutions and of the International Court of Justice, including with a plan to replace UNRWA in East Jerusalem with settlements," Lazzarini said. He added that, in the past year, "at least 237 of our colleagues have been killed, many with their families," and nearly "200 of our buildings have been damaged or destroyed, killing hundreds of displaced people seeking UN protection."

Besides breaching the UN Charter,

Israel's action could trigger war crimes prosecutions, as it is likely that barring UNRWA from carrying out its duties will intensify the catastrophic conditions in Gaza, including starvation, with famine looming not far behind.

The US-based Human Rights Watch stated: "The Israeli government's use of starvation as a weapon of war has proven deadly for children in Gaza." It warned that children in Gaza have been dying from starvation-related complications. Doctors and families in Gaza have described children, as well as pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, suffering from severe malnutrition and dehydration, with hospitals ill-equipped to treat them.

The World Health Organization has also found "children dying of starvation" and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk said that Israel bore significant blame. He added that there was a "plausible" case that Israel was using starvation as a weapon of war in Gaza and that, if intent were to be proven, that would amount to a war crime.

International humanitarian law prohibits the starvation of civilians as a method of warfare. This prohibition is clearly spelled out in the Geneva Conventions' additional protocols and has become part of customary international law. In addition, Article 8 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court provides that intentionally starving civilians by "depriving them of objects indispensable to their survival, including willfully impeding relief supplies," is a war crime.

At the core of the request for arrest warrants against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant made by the International Criminal Court's prosecutor are allegations that the two were part of a plan to use "the starvation of civilians as a method of warfare" in Gaza.

Barring UNRWA from providing basic services will only add to the levels of starvation already observed in Gaza.

The international community should heed Lazzarini's call for help by using "all the political, diplomatic and legal tools" to reject Israel's attempts to dismantle UNRWA, sideline the UN and undermine multilateralism. This means that the bills need to be rescinded or their application put on hold. Secondly, he asked that UNRWA's role is safeguarded "today and during the inevitably long and painful transition between a ceasefire and the day after."

Late on Wednesday, the UN Security Council expressed "grave concern" over Israel's new legislation and "strongly warned against any attempts to dismantle or diminish UNRWA's operations and mandate, recognizing that any interruption or suspension of its work would have severe humanitarian consequences for millions of Palestinian refugees who depend on the agency's services and also implications for the region."

Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide said on Tuesday that Oslo was "initiating a UN resolution asking the International Court of Justice to clarify Israel's legal obligations to ensure that aid reaches Palestinians," adding that "UNRWA must survive. No country is above international law."

There is a special obligation on Israel's closest friends, such as the US, UK and Germany, to make sure that it rescinds the new legislation or suspends its implementation.

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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

It revived memories of their past greatness and promised future glory. They, therefore, responded to this demand immediately.

The British Government recognized the genuineness of the Pakistan demand indirectly in the proposals for the transfer of power after the Second World War which Sir Stafford Cripps brought to India in 1942. Both the Congress and the All-India Muslim League rejected these proposals for different reasons. The

principles of secession of Muslim India as a separate Dominion was however, conceded in these proposals. After this failure, a prominent Congress leader, C. Rajagopalacharia, suggested a formula for a separate Muslim state in the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress, which was rejected at the time, but later on, in 1944, formed the basis of the Jinnah-Gandhi talks. The Pakistan demand became popular during the Second World War every section of

the Muslim community. Organized under the banner of the All-India Muslim League. Branches of the party were opened even in the remote corners of the subcontinent. Literature in the form of pamphlets, books, magazines and newspapers was produced to explain the Pakistan demand and distributed widely. The support gained by the All-India Muslim League and its demand for Pakistan was tested after the failure of the Simla Conference, convened by the Viceroy, Lord

Wavell, in 1945. Elections were called to determine the respective strength of the political parties. The All-India Muslim League election campaign was based on the Pakistan demand. The Muslim community responded to this call in an unprecedented way. Numerous Muslim parties were formed making united parliamentary board at the behest of the Congress to oppose the Muslim League.

To be continued....

A dangerous precedent

SYED ALI WASIF NAQVI

Pakistan's tobacco industry is advancing a contentious plan to manufacture and export 10-pack cigarettes, commonly referred to as 'kiddie packs', to Sudan under a \$20 million deal. This plan also includes a long-term goal of establishing a tobacco manufacturing facility in Sudan.

Both Pakistan and Sudan are parties to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) and the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Tobacco Trade, international treaties that implicitly prohibit the production and export of kiddie packs due to the increased affordability and accessibility of cigarettes for children and other vulnerable groups that such packs represent. Despite these international commitments, the tobacco industry is now working with the Pakistani government to amend SRO 863(I)/2010, known as the Prohibition of Sale of Cigarettes to Minors Rules, 2010, to allow for the production and export of kiddie packs. This plan has met considerable opposition from health professionals and concerned African nations, who have written to Pakistan's prime minister urging him to halt the scheme. They argue that this agreement disregards both public health and children's rights, as it prioritizes economic gain over well-documented health concerns. The FCTC and the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products are foundational agreements intended to reduce global tobacco consumption and regulate tobacco trade. Article 16 of the FCTC explicitly mandates measures to restrict youth access to tobacco products, while Article 15 obligates signatory countries to prevent illicit trade in tobacco products.

By proceeding with the production and export of kiddie packs, Pakistan and Sudan risk violating both the letter and spirit of the FCTC. Kiddie packs, specifically designed to be more affordable, lower the barrier for children and young people to start smoking, which directly contradicts the objectives of the FCTC. Additionally, Article 8 of the protocol requires that tracking and tracing (T&T) stamps be applied to each pack, including features answering specific questions stipulated in the Protocol. It remains uncertain whether the tobacco industry will adhere to these international standards or if they will engage in practices that compromise the protocol's regulations. The proposed amendment to Pakistan's child protection laws to permit the production and export of kiddie packs raises serious ethical and legal issues, highlighting a willingness to protect Pakistani children while disregarding the health and safety of children in other countries. This selective application of protective measures is not only morally indefensible but also undermines the principle of shared global responsibility enshrined in the FCTC. Furthermore, it sets a dangerous precedent by placing economic considerations above public health and international legal obligations.

According to Pakistani law, any significant legislative or regulatory change requires a minimum 15-day consideration period, allowing time for thorough review and public consultation. This procedural safeguard appears to be absent in the case of kiddie packs, raising concerns about transparency and accountability in Pakistan's dealings with the tobacco industry. A similar deviation from procedural norms was evident in the passage of regulations for heated tobacco products (HTPs), where the mandatory review period was disregarded. This apparent urgency to amend child protection laws without proper scrutiny exposes the undue influence of the tobacco industry on government decisions, further compromising the integrity of the legislative process. The industry's actions reflect a prioritisation of profit over public health, particularly when targeting vulnerable populations in regions with potentially weaker regulatory standards. The Ministry of Commerce (MoC) in Pakistan had previously issued a Statutory Regulatory Order (SRO) allowing the export of 10-pack cigarettes, although this SRO remains difficult to trace. Even if such an SRO exists, it does not justify further amendments to child protection laws that would give additional leeway to the tobacco industry for kiddie pack production and export.

Moreover, the 10-pack cigarettes intended for export to Sudan may not meet other FCTC requirements, such as graphic health warnings (GHWs) and standard packaging regulations. Although Sudan is a signatory to the FCTC, lax enforcement and an absence of key regulations allow the tobacco industry to exploit public health for profits, undermining global efforts to standardize tobacco control measures. Pakistan's role in facilitating this export circumvents these essential public health standards and undermines collective health objectives. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) in Pakistan, as the custodian of the country's international treaties, has expressed opposition to any amendments that would allow for the production and export of kiddie packs. In contrast, the Ministry of Law has permitted this amendment, citing Article 13 of the FCTC, which addresses bans on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS). This selective interpretation of the FCTC ignores the Protocol's broader obligations and emphasizes the need for a consistent and comprehensive approach to tobacco regulation. It is essential that ethical and moral considerations guide such decision-making processes, ensuring that Pakistan's actions are in line with its international commitments. There is also a significant risk that kiddie packs manufactured for export could end up in local Pakistani markets if they fail to meet export standards. Historically, products that do not meet specific export requirements are often sold domestically at reduced prices, raising the likelihood that kiddie packs could become accessible to Pakistani youth, exacerbating domestic public health issues and further contradicting the stated purpose of the amendments.

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Showbiz

Lily Collins reveals her lifelong dream to perform on London's West End

Lily Collins shared that she grew up loving theatre and art



Lily Collins, known for her role in Emily in Paris, has recently talked about a dream which has been closer to her heart for years. The 35-year-old actress expressed her desire to perform on the West End stage, which is known as the heart of British theatre in London. While talking to WhatsOnStage, the Windfall star revealed, "The West End has been my dream, and I asked our writer if she could hold out and see if we can get it on the West End first, because my dream is the West End."

Collins shared that she grew up loving theatre and art, and have a special spot for London, the city where she was born. She also talked about seeing plays and music on Broadways, and wished to be a part of it.

"As a community, it's very specific - you either get the opportunity or you don't, and so I'm just going with the flow and trying to seize the moment. We'll see, but I'm just so focused on London, I love it here." However, Lily has always been an art lover and fans are excited to see if she will take on a West End role soon, bringing the charm and passion on the stage.

Tech

What exciting new feature is WhatsApp rolling out now?

WhatsApp is set to enhance user experience with a new automatic text formatting tool which is currently available for beta testers through the latest WhatsApp beta for Android 2.24.23.9 update.

According to WABetaInfo, the new feature in Meta's instant messaging app aims to improve message clarity by automatically underlining links, helping users easily distinguish them from standard text.

The upcoming update, which is available for download for beta testers on the Google Play Store, bolds group mentions to ensure key messages within chat bubbles don't go unnoticed by users.

Additionally, the update also introduces bold and underlined formatting for phone numbers, facilitating easier recognition and interaction with contact details shared in conversations. With the new feature, the app is also adding both bold and underline formatting to phone numbers, allowing users to quickly recognise and interact with phone numbers

Meta's instant messaging app is introducing a new feature which makes text more interactive for users

shared in chats and groups. The new feature makes text more interactive by underlining links and phone numbers, similar to how hyperlinks work on the web. When users encounter underlined links and phone numbers, they can quickly recognize these elements as clickable, prompting them to engage with the content more readily. The new automatic text formatting tool feature will be rolled out to even more people over the coming weeks.

Health

Fit kids have better mental and physical health. What's the best way to get them active?

The mental health benefits of exercise for adults are well known, easing depression and reducing anxiety. Now, emerging research highlights its rising importance for children's wellbeing. Staying active could be key to safeguarding and enhancing young people's mental health.

One in seven adolescents worldwide has a mental illness. As a result, parents and health-care providers are increasingly seeking effective prevention strategies. Evidence is accumulating to suggest one surprisingly simple approach: physical fitness. One recent study reveals even small improvements in fitness were linked to improved teen mental health. When adolescents improved their fitness by just 30 seconds on a running test, their risk of developing anxiety, depression, and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) dropped by 7-8%. This suggests something as

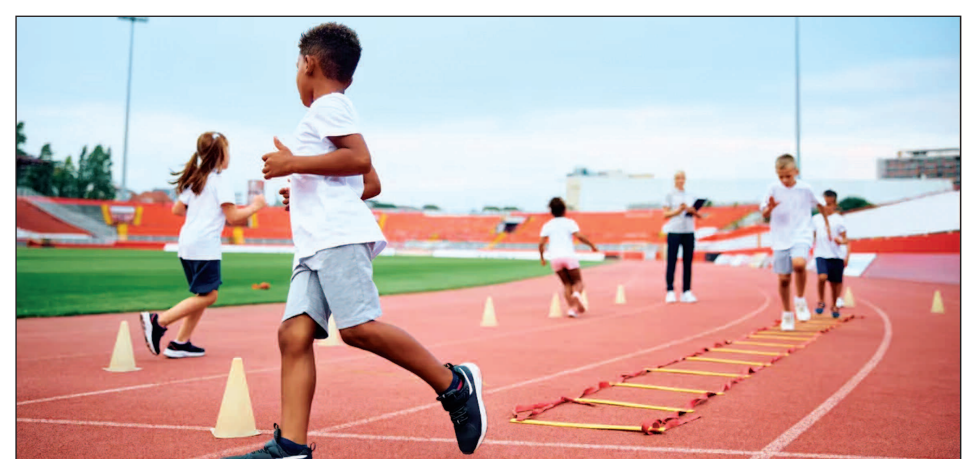
straightforward as regular exercise could play a crucial role in protecting young people's mental wellbeing. For parents and health professionals looking to support adolescent mental health, encouraging participation in team sports could also be an especially effective strategy.

A study of more than 17,000 teenagers revealed a powerful link between sports and mental health: teens who participated in sports clubs were 60% less likely to experience depression compared to inactive kids. This suggests team sports offer a unique environment for teens' mental wellbeing, combining physical activity, social connection and structured routines.

Physical activity can also sharpen kids' thinking and improve school performance: being active is associated with improvements in concentration, decision-making abilities, attention and academic

performance. Studies have also found positive links between physical activity and performance in maths and reading skills.

Even short ten-minute bouts of activity can have immediate positive effects on classroom performance. Adding more physical activity to the school day — rather than cutting it for academic subjects — can not only boost students' academic performance but also enhance their overall health and wellbeing. While there's no one-size-fits-all approach, experts generally agree it's never too early to encourage physical activity. The World Health Organisation recommends children aged 3-4 should engage in at least 180 minutes of physical activity daily, with at least 60 minutes being moderate to vigorous intensity: activities that cause kids to huff and puff, such as running or playing sports.



دی اینٹین سٹی گراف

اسلام آباد

ہفتہ 02 نومبر 2024ء

وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف کا صدر مملکت کونون، غیر متبرک دریافت کی

اسلام آباد (ذرائع کا خصوصی) وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف نے صدر مملکت آصف علی زرداری کو اپنی سربراہی کے دوران ایک بار ملاقات کرنے کا موقع فراہم کیا۔

آصف زرداری کی جلد صحت یابی کے لیے نئی نئی کوششوں کی گئی ہیں۔ وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف نے صدر مملکت آصف علی زرداری کو ملاقات کے لیے دعوت دی۔

آصف علی زرداری کی جلد صحت یابی کے لیے نئی نئی کوششوں کی گئی ہیں۔ وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف نے صدر مملکت آصف علی زرداری کو ملاقات کے لیے دعوت دی۔

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اسلام آباد، وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف سے قطر پرنس بین الدوسی الشیخ کا وفد ملاقات کر رہا ہے۔

وزیر اعظم کی قطری تاجروں کو پاکستان میں سرمایہ کاری کی دعوت

شہباز شریف نے کیونیا اے وفد کی ملاقات، تعاون کی نئی راہیں تلاش کرنے پر تبادلہ خیال، سرمایہ کاری بڑھانے میں دلچسپی

دوحہ (انٹریگ ڈیسک) وزیر اعظم محمد شہباز شریف نے قطری تاجروں کو پاکستانی معیشت کے اہم شعبوں میں سرمایہ کاری کی دعوت دی ہے۔ وزیر اعظم نے شیخ لیصل بن قاسم الشیخ کی سربراہی میں قطر پرنس بین الدوسی الشیخ (کیونیا اے) وفد کے وفد سے دو روزہ ملاقات کی، جس میں اقتصادی تعلقات کو مزید گہرا کرنے اور تعاون کو نئی راہیں تلاش کرنے پر تبادلہ خیال کیا گیا۔ وفد میں قطری سرگرم کاروباری شخصیات کے علاوہ معیشت کے بائزر شعبوں کے نمائندگان بھی شامل تھے۔

اسلام آباد (ذرائع کا خصوصی) وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف نے صدر مملکت آصف علی زرداری کو اپنی سربراہی کے دوران ایک بار ملاقات کرنے کا موقع فراہم کیا۔

آصف زرداری کی جلد صحت یابی کے لیے نئی نئی کوششوں کی گئی ہیں۔ وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف نے صدر مملکت آصف علی زرداری کو ملاقات کے لیے دعوت دی۔

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اسلام آباد، وفاقی وزیر منصوبہ بندی احسن اقبال کی زیر صدارت اجلاس جاری ہے۔

سیٹھ میں پریکٹس اینڈ ریویج

اسلام آباد (خلاف رپورٹ) سیٹھ میں پریکٹس اینڈ ریویج ٹرینی شروع کر دیا گیا۔

سیٹھ میں پریکٹس اینڈ ریویج ٹرینی شروع کر دیا گیا۔

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سیٹھ میں پریکٹس اینڈ ریویج ٹرینی شروع کر دیا گیا۔

سپریم کورٹ کے ایک جملہ لکھنے سے 18 سال کیسر چلے رہتے، چیف جسٹس حکم میں ایسا کیسوں لکھیں گے جس سے دوبارہ سول کورٹ میں کیس شروع ہو جائے

اسلام آباد (پرنس رپورٹ) سپریم کورٹ نے زین تازوں کی سپریم کورٹ میں حلف نامہ سے رجوع کرنے کی ہدایت جاری کرنے کی استدعا مسترد کر دی جبکہ جسٹس جی جی آفریدی نے سپریم کورٹ کے ایک جملہ لکھنے سے 18 سال کیسوں چلے رہے ہیں، حکم میں ایسا کیسوں لکھیں گے جس سے دوبارہ سول کورٹ میں کیس شروع ہو جائے۔

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کوشش ہے ٹیکس ٹیٹ ریوٹس میں حکومت نہیں چلا سکتے تین قبل

اسلام آباد (خلاف رپورٹ) وفاقی وزیر منصوبہ بندی احسن اقبال نے کہا ہے کہ کوشش ہے ٹیکس ٹیٹ ریوٹس میں حکومت نہیں چلا سکتے تین قبل۔

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مریم نواز بتائیں دستگیردی بڑا مسئلہ ہے یا اسموگ؟

پشاور (یورپورٹ) چیئرپرسن خٹکوں اور حکومت کے شہر برائے اطلاعات پریس سٹریٹ نے کہا ہے کہ مریم نواز کی دستگیردی بڑا مسئلہ ہے یا اسموگ؟

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اسرائیل کی غزہ پر وحشیانہ بمباری، 46 فلسطینی شہید، درجنوں زخمی

زیادہ تر شہادتیں شمالی غزہ میں ہوئیں، اسرائیلی بمباری سے طبعی سامان کو آگ لگ گئی، زخمیوں کے علاج معالجے میں مشکلات

غزہ (انٹریگ ڈیسک) غزہ میں اسرائیلی بربریت کا سلسلہ مندرجہ ذیل ہے۔

اسرائیل کی غزہ پر وحشیانہ بمباری، 46 فلسطینی شہید، درجنوں زخمی۔

اسرائیلی بمباری سے طبعی سامان کو آگ لگ گئی، زخمیوں کے علاج معالجے میں مشکلات۔

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عمران خان کی برطرفی میں امریکانے کوئی کردار ادا نہیں کیا، امریکی حملہ خارجہ

کچھ کہنا نہیں جن کا آپ حوالہ دے رہے تھے، ہم نہیں سکتے اس معلومات کو گزشتہ کرنے کے پیچھے کون ہے، پیٹریوٹک فورسز کا جواب

اسلام آباد (پرنس رپورٹ) امریکی حملہ خارجہ کے متعلق عمران خان نے کہا ہے کہ امریکانے کوئی کردار ادا نہیں کیا۔

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امید ہے انتظار کو 24 گھنٹے میں بازیاب کر لینگے، اٹارنی جنرل

اسلام آباد (پرنس رپورٹ) اٹارنی جنرل نے امید ہے انتظار کو 24 گھنٹے میں بازیاب کر لینگے۔

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مستونگ میں دھماکہ، 5 طلبہ سمیت 7 افراد جاں بحق، 23 زخمی

دھماکہ سے قریبی عمارتوں کے شیشے ٹوٹ گئے، پولیس موہاں تیار، رشوں کو بھی نقصان، پولیس اہلکار ایک راکٹر اور 5 طالب علم جاں بازی ہار گئے، زخمیوں میں بڑی تعداد میں سکول کے طلبہ شامل ہیں، پولیس حکام

اسلام آباد (یورپورٹ) مستونگ میں دھماکہ سے قریبی عمارتوں کے شیشے ٹوٹ گئے، پولیس موہاں تیار، رشوں کو بھی نقصان، پولیس اہلکار ایک راکٹر اور 5 طالب علم جاں بازی ہار گئے، زخمیوں میں بڑی تعداد میں سکول کے طلبہ شامل ہیں، پولیس حکام

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بلوچستان کے ضلع مستونگ میں دھماکہ کے بعد چینی گاڑی کا پتلا ٹکڑا دکھایا گیا ہے۔

آزادی میں غیر رجسٹرڈ سیاسی جماعتوں کو تنظیم متحجب کرنے پر پابندی

صرف رجسٹرڈ جماعتوں، تنظیموں، یونین ایسوسی ایشنوں کو احتجاج کا حق دینی کوششوں کی اجازت سے ہوگا، خلاف ورزی پر 3 سال یا سزا، آرٹسٹس فوراً نافذ ہوگا

اسلام آباد (یورپورٹ) آزاد کشمیر حکومت نے تنظیم متحجب کرنے پر پابندی لگانے کی اجازت سے ہوگا، خلاف ورزی پر 3 سال یا سزا، آرٹسٹس فوراً نافذ ہوگا۔

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عمران خان کو چلان کی نقول فراہم، صحت جرم سے انکار

میر انس سے کوئی تعلق نہیں کیونکہ میں تو گرفتار تھا، بی بی آئی، فروری 8 نومبر کو مامک کی جانے گی، چلان کی نقول ہمیں بھی

اسلام آباد (پرنس رپورٹ) عمران خان کی گرفتاری کے بعد ان کی صحت جرم سے انکار کیا گیا ہے۔

اسلام آباد (پرنس رپورٹ) عمران خان کی گرفتاری کے بعد ان کی صحت جرم سے انکار کیا گیا ہے۔

تمام ایتیز پورس پر پابندی

میتھیں نصب کرنا فیصلہ

تمام ایتیز پورس پر پابندی لگائی جائے گی۔

تمام ایتیز پورس پر پابندی لگائی جائے گی۔



اسلام آباد، وزیر اطلاعات و شریات عدالت طاہر تارڑ پریس کانفرنس کر رہے ہیں

آج دوبارہ الیکشن ہوں مولانا ایک سیٹ بھی جیت سکتے، علی امین گنڈاپور

انک جیل سے ہاؤنے والے سرکاری ملازمین کا شاندار استقبال کیا، ون اسٹیپ پریوشن کا اعلان، ایک ہفتے کی چٹھی بھی لے گی

اسلام آباد (یورپورٹ) وزیر اعلیٰ گلبرگ نے کہا ہے کہ آج دوبارہ الیکشن میں جیت سکتے ہیں۔

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سیٹھ سمیٹنے نے سپریم کورٹ میں

ججز کی تعداد بڑھانے کا عمل منظور کر لیا

سیٹھ سمیٹنے نے سپریم کورٹ میں ججز کی تعداد بڑھانے کا عمل منظور کر لیا۔

سیٹھ سمیٹنے نے سپریم کورٹ میں ججز کی تعداد بڑھانے کا عمل منظور کر لیا۔

احتجاج کریں گے سرکاری ملازمین کی ترقی کا نوٹس لیا جائے، طالب

اسلام آباد (خلاف رپورٹ) اسلام آباد کے سرکاری ملازمین کی ترقی کا نوٹس لیا جائے، طالب

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سیٹھ سمیٹنے نے سپریم کورٹ میں ججز کی تعداد بڑھانے کا عمل منظور کر لیا۔

Iranian ambassador praises Pakistan Navy for rescue of fishermen

ISLAMABAD: Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan, Reza Amiri Moghadam on Friday extended heartfelt gratitude to the Pakistan Navy for its swift and dedicated response to a recent maritime emergency, where 23 Iranian fishermen were rescued from a fishing boat accident in the open sea.

In a message of appreciation, Ambassador Moghadam praised the Pakistan Navy's professionalism and commitment, emphasizing the longstanding spirit of mutual support between Iran and Pakistan in international rescue and humanitarian assistance efforts. He highlighted that both nations have consistently upheld strong cooperation in search and rescue operations in international waters, cementing a history of solidarity and shared responsibility.

Reflecting on previous instances of collaboration, Ambassador Moghadam recalled a similar incident in March 2024 when the Pakistan Navy provided critical assistance by rescuing eight Iranian fishermen after a fire broke out on their vessel. He noted that this tradition of support is a testament to the enduring brotherhood between the two countries.

"The people of Iran are truly grateful for Pakistan's unwavering readiness to assist in times of need, exemplifying the close bonds and mutual commitment that Iran and Pakistan have cherished throughout their history," he said.

Algerian Embassy marks 70th National Day in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: The Algerian Embassy in Pakistan celebrated Algeria's 70th National Day on Friday with a gathering at Islamabad's local Hotel, bringing together diplomats, officials, and community members to honor the historic milestone.

The Algerian Embassy in Islamabad hosted an event to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Algeria's independence. The gathering commemorated Algeria's struggle for sovereignty and highlighted its journey since achieving independence. Diplomats, government officials, and representatives from various sectors attended, expressing solidarity and respect for Algeria's accomplishments.

Algerian Ambassador to Pakistan Dr. Brahim Romani shared reflections on the resilience of the Algerian people and their sacrifices during the fight for independence. He also touched on the progress Algeria has made over the past decades and emphasized the importance of fostering ties between Algeria and Pakistan. The event provided a platform for cultural exchange and dialogue, strengthening the longstanding relationship between the two nations. Attendees observed a moment of remembrance for those who contributed to Algeria's independence, while traditional Algerian music and food were shared to honor the country's heritage. The embassy reiterated its commitment to furthering cooperation between Algeria and Pakistan across trade, education, and cultural exchanges, marking this independence anniversary as a symbol of continued unity and collaboration between the two nations. APP

5 MOUs with Saudi Arabia now concrete contracts, create jobs: Musadik

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Petroleum Dr. Musadik Malik is optimistic about the Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) signed with Saudi Arabia, predicting significant outcomes where around five of these MOUs have evolved into concrete contracts and transactions, which will likely boost employment and investment opportunities. In an exclusive interview with a private news channel, he said Pakistan's economy has received a significant boost of \$2.2 billion thanks to five Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) signed with Saudi Arabia, which have now become concrete contracts. This development is expected to bring in substantial investments and create new job opportunities in various sectors, including industry, agriculture, IT, education, health, petroleum, mining, energy and food, he mentioned.

Dr. Musadik Malik further stated that some opponent had previously mocked the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) with Saudi Arabia, suggesting it was merely a routine practice with little tangible outcome. However, he emphasized that this time would be different. "Now, people will see that these are not just MOUs on paper but actual transactions and investments materializing," Dr. Malik asserted. He highlighted that around five of the MOUs have already translated into concrete contracts and transactions, paving the way for increased employment and investment opportunities in Pakistan. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have a long-standing "brotherly" relationship, sharing common interests, values and a shared foreign policy outlook, particularly in regional and international events, he added. DNA



RIYAD: Pak-Saudi Minister for investment Sh Khalid Bin Abdul Aziz and Abdul Aleem Khan & Federal Minister Musadaq Malik and senior officials.

Ambassador Hashmi visits Linyi, Shandong Province

BEIJING: Pakistan Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi, visited Linyi, Shandong province, China, and met with Mayor of Linyi Zhang Baoliang.

The two sides held extensive discussions to further deepen bilateral cooperation in various sectors and explore new avenues for enhancing trade and investment, particularly in developing logistics networks and training initiatives.

The Ambassador expressed Pakistan's keen interest in benefiting from Linyi logistics and customs operations expertise. The two sides also discussed cooperation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

Ambassador Hashmi underscored that enhanced partnership with Linyi would strengthen the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and contribute to shared prosperity through mutually beneficial initiatives. As part of his visit, Ambassador Hashmi visited several key facilities in Linyi, including the

Linyi Import Commodity City Mall, Linyi International Trade Centre, Linyi Trade City Holding Group, Linyi Port, and Linyi Logistics Park. He received detailed briefings at each site on the latest developments in trade facilitation and logistical infrastructure.

These visits underscored the strategic importance of Linyi in China's regional and global trade frameworks, highlighting how the city's advanced logistics capabilities can serve as a trade and economic cooperation model.

Linyi, located in Shandong Province, China, is renowned for its extensive trade and logistics networks. As one of China's largest logistics centers, Linyi plays a pivotal role in domestic and international commerce, facilitating the movement of goods across borders through its modern infrastructure, including Linyi Port and comprehensive logistics parks.

Linyi is a crucial player in China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), providing expansive opportunities for economic partnerships with countries like Pakistan. APP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain chaired 22nd Board of Directors meeting of SMEDA.

Acting president for adopting international best practices to improve governance



VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani on Friday called for adopting international best practices, focusing on innovation, and using the latest technology to improve governance in Pakistan. He expressed these views while talking to the participants of the 36th Senior Management Course of the National Institute of Public Administration, Karachi, who called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, here. The acting president underscored the need for embracing digital government, data-driven decision-making, and using artificial intelligence to improve service delivery. Addressing the participants, he highlighted that Pakistan faced multiple challenges, including economic issues, high inflation, ris-

ing population, unemployment, climate change, and social injustice. He said that bureaucracy needed to play a proactive and constructive role to help address various challenges faced by the country. He emphasized the need to position Pakistan internationally as a competitive and forward-thinking nation, while also ensuring that every citizen benefitted from the fruits of our policies. Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani said that bureaucracy should build strong networks, both within the government and with external stakeholders, to find sustainable solutions to Pakistan's socio-economic problems. He stated that civil servants were required to be the problem solvers, innovators, and leaders who could help the governments steer the country out of its present socio-economic and governance challenges.

The acting president advised the bureaucrats to adopt a service-oriented attitude, adding that government service required empathy, humility, and a genuine desire to improve the lives of others.

He said that the world was constantly evolving, and civil servants needed to evolve with it.

He said that civil servants should seek out knowledge, equip themselves with the latest skills and tools, stay informed about global trends and developments, and continue refining their skills.

"You must adopt ethical governance and treat the public humanely", he added.

Replying to a question, the acting president said that provinces had been given more rights and funds after the 18th Amendment and the NFC Award.

Asked about the 26th Constitutional Amendment, he said that it was the prerogative of the Parliament to amend the Constitution keeping in view the best interest of the country. He added that it was not appropriate for any other country to comment upon and interfere in our internal matters.

Talking about terrorist incidents in Balochistan, Acting President Gilani said that anti-Pakistan elements were against the development and prosperity of the province and were making deliberate efforts to discourage investors from investing in Pakistan.

He further stated that Balochistan was an important province and during his tenure as the Prime Minister of Pakistan, he initiated the Aaghaz-e-Huqooq-e-Balochistan and ensured its implementation in the province. He added that Balochistan was given more funds and royalties during his tenure.

Senate Committee discusses oil & gas drilling, third-party sales & local development efforts

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Petroleum presided over by Senator Umer Farooq, convened on Friday at Parliament House.

The meeting was attended by Senator Saadia Abbasi, Senator Manzoor Ahmed, Senator Mir Dostain Khan Domki, the Secretary of the Petroleum Division, and other senior officials from relevant departments. The Committee received a briefing on the total drilling activities for exploration and production carried out by oil and gas companies over the past three years.

The Committee Chairman inquired about the outcome of the wells that had not been drilled for six months. The Secretary of the Ministry of Energy, Petroleum Division Momin Agha emphasized that while the initial 2D and 3D surveys may have been completed, the process of maintaining a technical team and assessing potential opportunities is inherently time-consuming and requires careful consideration. Chairman Senator Umer Farooq further suggested that accurate details on each oil and gas company and their accomplishments be presented at the next meeting.

The recommendations of the Petroleum Division regarding third-party sales in the Badin-IV South Block were also discussed during the meeting. Members noted that numerous items have caused damage at the national level in Pakistan, having been sold through third parties. The officials stated that, based on the recommendations from the second inquiry, a request has been made to suspend activities in the Badin-IV South Block. The Committee Chairman, acknowledging the viewpoints of the members, suggested that the hearing date must be communicated and that the matter be discussed in detail at the next meeting.

Additionally, the development of the village of Ghurzandi in Tehsil Lachi, District, by MOL Company through CSR funds was discussed. The Chairman stressed the importance of utilizing these funds effectively, as the issue has been ongoing for a long time. He also noted that the completion of the road previously mentioned to him was stated to be 2 kilometers, but in reality, it was only 1 kilometer. The Additional Secretary of the Petroleum Division updated that political alignment or consensus is needed for the process to move forward. The Committee Chairman and members recommended that, given the suffering of the local population, any notable authority in the area should be appointed to expedite the resolution of this issue. SABAH



Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan witnessed the letter of intent signing ceremony between Prime Minister's Youth Programme and Social Innovation Academy.

ADB offers support for carbon credits reduction initiatives

ISLAMABAD: Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Friday offered Capital Development Authority (CDA) support and expertise in the ongoing projects for earning carbon credits and emissions reduction initiatives.

Country Director Asian Development Bank (ADB) Emma Fan said in a meeting with CDA chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa here and both sides discussed avenues for mutual collaboration. Chairman CDA warmly welcomed Country Director ADB and highlighted CDA's commitment to advancing sustainable urban development through ADB's technical support and expertise.

During the meeting, Chairman CDA emphasized CDA's strategic shift from the auction of assets to sustainable development models, with a particular focus on the Public Private Partnership model. He urged the need for ADB's expertise and technical support to effectively manage various proposals for joint ventures.

Country Director ADB affirmed ADB's support to Islamabad's development goals, offering technical expertise for key projects.

Maryam Nawaz conducts lucky draw for CM Punjab Green Tractor Scheme



LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister (CM) Maryam Nawaz on Friday launched 'CM Punjab Green Tractor Scheme' by conducting digital balloting in Lahore. "We want to enter a modern era of mechanisation of agriculture in Punjab," said Maryam Nawaz Sharif while conducting digital balloting. She said that the Nawaz Sharif's green tractor scheme has been relaunched in Punjab for farmers in Punjab after a lapse of 12 years. The chief minister said that Rs. 10 lakh subsidy will be given on each tractor to 9500 farmers under the scheme. She also inspected four types of green tractors to be given to the farmers to review their features.

After the balloting, Mohammad Yasin son of Mohammad Ashraf from Okara is the first farmer to get a green tractor. Talib Hussain son of Muhammad Hussain from Chakwal and Dera Ghazi Khan's Ghulam Akbar son of Haji Ghulam Hussain are the second and third winners respectively.

Maryam Nawaz was briefed that 339 farmers of Okara, 111 farmers of Chakwal and 276 farmers of Dera Ghazi Khan will get green tractors under the scheme.

The chief minister congratulated all farmers who got green tractors, and said that the names of all lucky winners have been displayed on the portal of "CM Punjab Green Tractor Scheme and the website of the Agriculture Department.

The list of successful farmers is also available in the offices of the Agriculture Department. Maryam Nawaz also announced to provide 1000 green tractors to wheat growers having 25-50 acres of land free of cost through balloting. INP

Muqam inquires about AJK president's health, wishes swift recovery

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan Engineer Amir Muqam, visited AJK President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry at Kashmir House on Friday to inquire about his health and wished him a speedy recovery with a bouquet of flowers. Muqam assured that the federal government, under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, will continue its efforts to promote development and address issues in Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Amir Muqam reaffirmed Pakistan's steadfast support for the Kashmiris' fight for freedom. He committed to elevating the voices of the courageous Kashmiris on all platforms, ensuring their right to self-determination was clearly heard to be by the world community. Amir Muqam assured the AJK President of steadfast support for the Kashmir issue and con-



demned the ongoing Indian atrocities in occupied Kashmir. The two leaders also talked about the current political situation in the country. AJK President Barrister Sultan Mahmood expressed appreciation to Federal Minister for his concern about his health.

Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry condemned India's ongoing violence and oppression against Kashmiris, stating that New Delhi's fraudulent elections in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir were meant to mislead the world. Chaudhry pledged to speak out strongly against Indian atrocities, aiming to expose its true nature globally, and emphasized the importance of finding a lasting solution to the Kashmir dispute.

Govt initiatives restore confidence of industrialists, says Ali Pervaiz Malik

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Finance, Revenue and Power Ali Pervaiz Malik has said that the government's measures have restored the confidence of industrialists.

Responding to the calling attention notice of Senator Zeeshan Khanzada in the upper house meeting on Friday, he said, due to the policies of the government, the kibar rate has fallen to 13.5 percent and as the inflation is decreasing, the interest rate is also decreasing.

Earlier, Senator Zeeshan Khanzada termed the recent reduction in the interest rate by the State Bank as insufficient and submitted a notice to draw the government's attention to this matter. He said that when the dollar rate increases, everything becomes expensive.

"We should give concessions to our industries on electricity and raw materials and reduce interest rates. We have to adopt long-term policies. A tariff policy will also have to be made", he added.

The government, Khanzada aid, should prepare an electric vehicle policy, adding, measures should be taken to support the industries. Along with foreign investment, local industrialists should also be encouraged and interest rate should be reduced, he suggested. DNA