



"With the support of all stakeholders and experts, we will develop a curriculum that aligns with 21st-century requirements"

Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor
Ahsan Iqbal

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State showing great restraint against PTI rioters: Tarar



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Tuesday said that the state was showing great restraint against the protesters from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf.

Talking to media, the minister said that the spouse of founder of PTI Bushra Bibi had come with a plan to fuel violence and get the protesters killed in clashes with the law enforcement agencies so that they could take advantage of the situation.

"Mercenaries have been brought to the front and they want to use children of the poor people", he remarked.

He said that it seemed the PTI leadership wanted to achieve the objectives of May 9 arson again. He asked who should be held responsible for the blood of martyrs of police and rangers.

The minister stated that the protesters wanted to sabotage the visit of the President of Belarus who was in Pakistan. He made it clear that no body would be allowed to disrupt the peace of the capital city. "The state will not allow to fulfill the targets of the rioters", said the minister.

He pointed out no one came out to participate in the PTI protest from Balochistan and Sindh. "These rioters want to hamper the process of progress and development in the country," he said adding the efforts of anti-national elements will not be successful.

Economic stability contingent upon political stability: Sheikh



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, emphasized on Tuesday that achieving economic stability is contingent upon political stability. Talking to a private news channel, the minister highlighted the government's repeated efforts to resolve political issues through dialogue.

He noted that multiple attempts were made in the past, including offering consultations on a proposed "charter of economy," but these initiatives faced resistance. "The founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) opted for a path of disruption rather than peace," said Sheikh.

Minister stressed the urgent need to attract foreign investors, pointing out that the current political and security situation has deterred investment and severely impacted local businesses. Sheikh also criticized PTI for organizing protests during key economic and diplomatic activities.

He reiterated the government's commitment to fostering stability and creating an environment conducive to investment and growth. DNA



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko in a delegation level talk between Belarus and Pakistan at Prime Minister's House.

Pakistan, Belarus agree to promote bilateral ties through high-level exchanges, institutional cooperation

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Belarus on Tuesday, expressing satisfaction at the current positive trajectory of bilateral relations, agreed to maintain the momentum through regular high-level engagement and institutional cooperation.

The bilateral relations were discussed during the delegation-level talks between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko, who is currently on a three-day official visit to Pakistan. The talks are reflective of the excellent bilateral relations between Pakistan and Belarus, according to a PM Office press release.

The two sides discussed the full spectrum of bilateral relations as well as important regional and global developments.

The two leaders reaffirmed the shared commitment of both countries to the deepening of their political dialogue, strengthening inter-parliamentary exchanges and, in particular, enhancing bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

Prime Minister Shehbaz and President Lukashenko also witnessed the exchange of several important agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) aimed at fostering closer collaboration between Pakistan and Belarus in key sectors.

The agreements and MOUs encompassed cooperation in environmental protection, disaster management, halal trade, audit institutions, financial intelligence-sharing, vocational education and science & technology.

One of the key outcomes of the meeting was the signing of the "Roadmap for Comprehensive Cooperation between Pakistan and Belarus for 2025-2027," which outlines a strategic framework for enhancing economic ties through high-level meetings, inter-governmental commissions, and targeted collaborative initiatives.

In the talks, both sides emphasised the importance of regional economic integration and connectivity, and agreed to improve the legal frameworks needed to facilitate bilateral economic collaboration. The Belarusian president appreciated the efforts by Prime Minister Shehbaz to take the bilateral relations to new dimensions and expressed his country's full cooperation in this regard. He also invited PM Shehbaz to visit Belarus as it would further expand the relationship. Accepting the invitation, the prime minister said that during his visit, the MOUs will be formalized into agreements. He also issued instructions to the ministers concerned to take necessary steps in this regard as soon as possible.

Later, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko witnessed exchange of some 15 different memoranda of understanding, treaties and agreements intended to augment bilateral cooperation in different sectors.

The MOUs and Agreements signed between Belarus and Pakistan included roadmap for cooperation between Belarus and Pakistan, MoU between the Ministry of Commerce Pakistan and Ministry of Anti-Monopoly Regulation of Belarus on Electronic Commerce Cooperation, Agreement on Science and

Technology Cooperation between National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, MoU in field of accreditation between Pakistan National Accreditation Council of Pakistan and Republican Unitary Enterprise Belarus, and MoU on cooperation between the Committee of State Control of Belarus and Office of the Audit General of Pakistan.

It also included MoU between department of Financial Monitoring of the state control committee of Republic of Belarus and Financial Monitoring Unit Government of Pakistan, MoU between Pakistan Customs, FBR and State Customs Committee of Belarus, Agreement between National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and Pakistan Academy of Sciences, Agreement between Govt. of Pakistan and Govt of Belarus on International Road Transport, MoU on cooperation in the field of Environmental protection between Ministry of Natural Resources Belarus and Ministry of Climate change Pakistan, MoU between Ministry of Emergency Situations of Belarus and NDMA Pakistan in fields of prevention and elimination of emergencies, MoU between NAVTTC Pakistan and Educational Institution of Belarus, Treaty between Republic of Belarus and Republic of Pakistan on extradition, MoU on cooperation between DRAP, Ministry of National Health Services Pakistan and Republican Unitary Enterprise Belarus for expertise and Tests in health services, and MoU for cooperation in Halal Trade between Pakistan Halal Authority Ministry of Science and technology and Belarusian Halal Standardisation and Certification Center of Belarus.

PM, COAS attend funeral prayers of Shaheed security personnel



ISLAMABAD: Funeral prayers of three Rangers officials, who embraced Shahadat yesterday during the ongoing protest, were offered at Chaklala Garrison, on Tuesday.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Deputy Prime Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, Minister for Information Attaullah Tarar, Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir, NI(M), senior serving military and civil officials attended the funeral, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

"Pakistan cannot afford any chaos and bloodshed for achieving vested political purposes. These acts of violence are unacceptable and highly condemnable which are bordering the limits of restraint by the Law Enforcement Agencies. The entire nation pays homage to the martyred Rangers soldiers and all those police officials who have embraced shahadat and those who are injured during these riots", the press release quoted the prime minister as saying. Naik Muhammad Ramzan Shaheed (age; 47 years, resident of District Karak), Sepoy Gulfam Khan Shaheed (age; 29 years, resident of District Rawalpindi) and Sepoy Shah Nawaz Shaheed (age; 33 years, resident of District Sibi) had embraced shahadat during yesterday's incident.

The bodies of Shuhada had been taken to their native hometowns where they would be laid to rest with full military honour. PR



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and President of Belarus H.E Aleksandr Lukashenko exchanging joint communique.

Interior Minister visits D-Chowk to review security arrangements

No more dialogue with PTI, says Mohsin Naqvi



"You are all soldiers of Pakistan, and you have to deal with the miscreants according to the law."

IG Islamabad Police, Chief Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, and other relevant officials accompanied the Minister.

Meanwhile, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday said that the government has decided that there will be no more dialogue with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday visited D-Chowk to review the security arrangements upto Shaheed Millat Chowk.

Despite the ongoing shelling by miscreants, Mohsin Naqvi reached Shaheed Millat Chowk and met with the personnel on duty.

The Interior Minister stood by the personnel during the shelling, boosting their morale, urging them to bravely counter the miscreants.

He individually met with the personnel of Rangers, FC, Police, and Sindh Police, appreciating their enthusiasm. The personnel on duty chanted slogans of "Pakistan Zindabad".

Talking to the personnel, Interior Minister said:

Addressing a press conference at D-Chowk the minister said that a meeting headed by Prime Minister Shahbaz Shahrif has decided that the area has to be kept clear and avoid bloodshed but it should be very clear to PTI leadership that there will be no more dialogue with PTI. He said that the government wants to facilitate the residents of Islamabad and for this reason, internet service remained unblocked but the other side is armed and continuously attacking the law enforcement agencies to disrupt the peace and order in the city.

He said that the entire nation and media witnessed that the protesters wanted bloodshed but the government avoided it.

Speaker National Assembly Arrives in Moscow

MOSCOW: Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq arrived in Moscow today along with a six-member parliamentary delegation. At the airport he was received by Vice Chairman of the Russian State Duma Mr. Alexander Babakov.

Honourable Speaker arrived in Russia at the invitation of Russian State Duma Chairman H.E. Mr. Vyacheslav Volodin.

In his comments on his expectations about the visit, Mr Sadiq noted that Pakistan wants to have excellent relations with Russia, which are already developing in a very positive way. The Speaker also plans to invite his Russian counterpart Mr. Vyacheslav Volodin to visit Pakistan.

The delegation led by the Honourable Speaker



includes Mr. Abdul Qadir Patel, Syed Rafiullah, Mr. Sher Ali Arbab, Dr. Muhammad Farooq Sattar, Rana Muhammad Hayat Khan., DNA

Security forces kill three Khwarij terrorists



RAWALPINDI: The security forces killed three Khwarij terrorists by thwarting their attempt to infiltrate through Pak-Afghan border on Monday night in general area of Hassan Khel, North Waziristan District. "Movement of a group of khwarij, who were trying to infiltrate through Pakistan-Afghanistan border, was picked up by the security forces in general area Hassan Khel, North Waziristan District. Own troops effectively engaged and thwarted their attempt to infiltrate. Resultantly, three Khwarij were sent to hell, according to a news release by Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR). Pakistan has consistently been asking the Interim Afghan Government to ensure effective border management on their side of the border. The interim Afghan Government is expected to fulfil its obligations and deny the use of Afghan soil by Khwarij for perpetuating acts of terrorism against Pakistan, it further said. Pakistan's cuisine Security Forces of Pakistan are determined and remain committed to secure its borders and eliminate the menace of terrorism from the country. PR

Ahsan vows educational reforms to meet 21st-century needs during PML-N tenure

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal expressed a strong commitment on Tuesday to reform Pakistan's memorization-based education system and develop a world-class curriculum during the current tenure of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government.

"With the support of all stakeholders and experts, we will develop a curriculum that aligns with 21st-century requirements," he said while addressing the National Curriculum Summit titled "Empowering the Future by Reviewing Existing Curricula to Integrate Skill and Technology," organized by the National Curriculum Council (NCC) and the Inter-Board Coordination Commission (IBCC).

The minister said the government was pursuing a goal of equipping the country's youth with modern education, enabling them to compete internationally and contribute to national development. Ahsan Iqbal also expressed a desire to establish a state-of-the-art Teachers' Training

Center to improve education quality and produce skilled professionals who meet contemporary needs.

The Ministry of Education has already been tasked with this initiative. He said the PML-N government had initiated this project during its previous tenure but was unable to complete it due to political instability. The center, in collaboration with provincial education departments, is expected to be the best in South Asia, providing students with high-quality education focused on enhancing critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving and teamwork.

"It will be a paradigm shift from memorization-based education," Iqbal said, adding that the initiative would also reform the existing examination system. Ahsan Iqbal stressed that memorization-based education was outdated in the modern era, where innovation and creativity were essential for development. He said the country could not achieve progress and prosperity without improving education standards and developing human resources. DNA

FM highlights govt's comprehensive policy framework aimed at enhancing tax revenues

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, held a meeting with a delegation of the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) led by Dr Andreas, Chairman IASB. The delegation included Jianqiao Lu, Member IASB, Farukh Rehman, President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (ICAP), and Mr. Rana Usman Khan, Chairman of the Asia-Oceania Accounting Standards Group. Ashfaq Tola, Chairman of the Reforms and Resource Mobilization Commission of Pakistan (RRMC) and senior officers from the Finance Division also attended the meeting.

The Finance Minister highlighted the government's comprehensive policy



framework aimed at enhancing tax revenues through improved documentation and financial transparency. He emphasized the importance of standardizing financial regimes to align with global practices, which are crucial for fostering investor confidence, both domestic and international. He reiterated the government's commitment to ensuring policy continuity to create a conducive environment for

sustainable economic growth. Dr Andreas acknowledged Pakistan's leadership in adopting international accounting standards and commended the country for being an early follower of global practices. He expressed appreciation for the support provided by ICAP in advancing these efforts, emphasizing the role of professional organizations in promoting financial transparency

and capacity building. The Minister stressed that transparency and standardization are essential to attract investment and build confidence in Pakistan's economic framework. The participants discussed the challenges and opportunities associated with the implementation of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) in Pakistan. Mr. Farukh Rehman and Mr. Rana Usman Khan shared insights into how ICAP and the Asia-Oceania Accounting Standards Group are contributing to strengthening financial reporting systems.

The meeting concluded with a mutual commitment to further strengthen Pakistan's financial documentation and reporting practices in line with international standards. INP

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A strategic reset

BY DR RAASHID WALI JANJUA

A strategic reset in Pak-US relations is essential to forge a mutually beneficial relationship on a long-term basis. Due to the transient nature of past security and containment projects, a community of US sceptics has gained ground in Pakistan, encouraging fiery populist rhetoric by political actors seeking to gain a few brownie points with the electorate. The US, often dubbed the 'neighbour of every country' due to its global reach and influence, holds a significant position in world affairs. It is, therefore, counterproductive for Pakistan to sour relations with such an omnipresent neighbour. US-Pakistan relations need to transcend the outdated client-protégé mould and steer clear of the global power competition that dominates the geopolitical landscape today. The US must also reevaluate its tendency to view US-Pakistan relations through the lens of its ties with China and India. This approach risks a significant loss of geopolitical influence in a region that serves as a crucial bridge between South and West/Central Asia. The American strategic community must also realistically assess India's capability to act as a regional gendarme on behalf of the US. India's aspirations for strategic autonomy, coupled with its limitations in standing up to a vastly superior China and militarily strong, nuclear-armed Pakistan, should concern US policymakers. With a sanctioned Iran and an unstable Afghanistan obstructing connectivity options to West and Central Asia, the US cannot afford to leave this geopolitical terrain open for China and Russia's expanding influence. Both nations are actively making inroads into the region, which could come at the expense of US interests. The question then arises: what US interests could justify treating South Asia as strategically vital, despite the current trend of prioritising East Asia and the Asia-Pacific? These interests largely stem from the need to counter China's strategic ambitions, which are underpinned by its economic and infrastructural connectivity initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). South and West Asia, rich in untapped mineral and natural resources, hold tremendous economic potential. Any investor with the right technological and financial resources could gain a significant advantage in the region. The unrest in post-JCPOA Iran and the Middle East have exposed the strategic vulnerabilities of the US and its allies in West Asia. This vulnerability is compounded by the absence of a significant US presence in South and Central Asia. The US's investments in Asia-Pacific alliances like AUKUS, QUAD, and IPEF may not suffice when tensions escalate, especially given India's reluctance and inability to confront China. The biggest challenge for the US and Pakistan is to develop a new, sustainable model of engagement that converges on both strategic and economic interests. Strategically, this model could include cooperation on counterterrorism, counter-narcotics, and nuclear non-proliferation. Economically, it could involve linking the Asia-Pacific trade and economic grid with BRI. By promoting Indo-Pak rapprochement and fostering East-West connectivity – linking India, Pakistan, and Central Asia – projects like the TAPI Pipeline (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India Pipeline) and CASA-1000 (Central Asia-South Asia electricity transmission and trade project) could be operationalised. These initiatives would provide substantial opportunities for US private sector involvement in mega infrastructure projects. Two clear advantages could accrue to the US from such connectivity initiatives. First, they would provide the US private sector access to the rare earth mineral resources of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Second, they would grant the US significant economic leverage over Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the Central Asian States, undercutting the overwhelming economic dominance of global competitors like China and Russia. Realising these geopolitical and economic dividends, however, requires a departure from the neoconservative strategic mindset that currently favours a decoupling approach. Instead, the US should move beyond George Kennan's strategy of containment and embrace Eliot Cohen's engagement strategy, focusing on narrow and specific interests. The newly elected Trump administration should resist the influence of anti-Pakistan advisers. Strategic engagement with Pakistan would provide the US with greater leverage vis-à-vis China and India, while broadening its options for engagement in Central Asia. Pakistan, with its population of 240 million – 64 per cent of whom are under 30 – is an important player in the region. The young, bilingual cohort is better poised to integrate into US academic and work cultures. Furthermore, the Pakistani diaspora in the US, including 13,000 doctors, presents an invaluable asset for fostering stronger ties. Pakistan offers attractive economic opportunities for US investors in sectors such as agriculture, energy, mineral resource exploration, and information security. The US remains Pakistan's largest export market, and both countries have been signatories to the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) since 2003. This agreement has the potential to significantly boost bilateral trade and investment. Pakistan could expand its exports to the US to \$5 billion over the next three to five years in industries such as textiles, food, and information technology. Additionally, the US could assist Pakistan in diversifying its borrowing sources by facilitating multilateral guarantees from partners like Qatar and Saudi Arabia. On the climate front, a regional climate fund aimed at fighting climate change could serve as a concrete manifestation of the potential for collaboration between the two nations. The Pakistani diaspora in America could play a pivotal role in facilitating capital investments back into Pakistan. Currently, around 80 American companies operate in Pakistan, and despite challenging economic and political circumstances, none have reported losses. However, Pakistan must improve its corporate dispute resolution mechanisms and regulatory environment while encouraging the entry of US commercial banks to attract further investment.

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Asghar Soomro

Passing tests, failing systems

Much of Pakistan's public discourse remains fixated on the issue of out-of-school children (OOSC) and the challenge of bringing them into the formal system – but what of those who manage to stay in school until the intermediate level? Do we have a clear understanding of what they have truly achieved in terms of knowledge and skills? How can we be sure that these students have learned what they set out to learn, rather than merely passing their time with little to show for it? Take the recent pre-entrance test (PET) at the University of Sindh, Jamshoro, as a case in point. The university conducted a phased-wise pre entrance test (PET) for students, vying for spots in its 70 departments under bachelors/undergraduate programme for the 2024-25 academic year. Of the 21,988 registered candidates, 19,491 appeared for the test, including 4915 female candidates – slightly more than 25 per cent of the total. Remarkably, around 85 per cent of the candidates become eligible for the admission. Yet, this statistic comes with a significant caveat: the university has set the minimum passing threshold at just 30 out of 100 marks, acknowledging that most candidates struggle to clear a relatively simple test covering English, General Knowledge, General Science, Arithmetic, and IQ. The University of Sindh, however, is not the top choice for the academi-

cally proficient or financially privileged; those students typically pursue seats at medical and engineering universities. Analysis of the registered candidates reveals that many come from the 15 districts affected by floods, poverty and poor governance, with a significant number hailing from Dadu, Sanghar, and Naushero Feroz. While it is encouraging to see the commitment of these students and their parents to higher education, a pressing concern remains: how do we address the gaps in their knowledge, skills and confidence so they can keep pace with more advantaged peers? A crash course covering essential skills such as English language proficiency, critical thinking, gender awareness, IT skills, and research capabilities would be an excellent step forward, helping students to transition into independent learners. In fact, such a course should be mandatory for all rural students before they begin their degree program. This would help bridge the educational gap that many of these students face due to limited access to learning opportunities and quality instruction. Additionally, an induction program focused on mindful interactions with fellow female students and appropriate public conduct could be highly beneficial. Such a program would help students understand how to engage respectfully and avoid actions or language that could be perceived as inappropriate or offensive. These foundational social skills would serve students well, enhancing their experience at the university and supporting their personal and professional growth beyond it. Access to quality higher education in Sindh is quite limited. According to the Sindh Higher Education Commission (SHEC), Karachi hosts 9 of the province's 27 public universities, while the remaining 18 serve all of the remaining Sindh. In the private sector, out of 32 operational universities, most are in Karachi, with a few in Hyderabad and only one in Tando Mohammad Khan. This urban concentration of resources makes it neither easy nor affordable for student from rural areas – particularly young women – to study in Karachi. Thus, for many, university of Sindh becomes the destination of choice by necessity, as it is both welcoming and affordable. The unsatisfactory performance of students on the entrance test highlights systemic flaws, especially in the assessment and examinations process. Regrettably, a large majority of teachers in the profession lack both competency and motivation to fulfil their roles effectively. Far from adapting their teaching methods to meet students' needs, many teachers fail to conduct regular assessments or facilitate deep understanding of the concepts. As a result, cheating has become a pervasive issue, from schools to the examination boards. Bureaucratic inertia compounds the problem, with officials unable or unwilling to reform a system badly in need of accountability. The culture of cheating and vested interests runs so deep that even students who have secured A-1 & A and grades resort to dishonest practices.

A recent example is the MDCAT (Medical and Dental College Admission) Test, where exam papers were leaked, leading to the court intervention and cancellation of results. This not only causes mental anguish for deserving students but raises a grave concern for society as well: when parents push their children to become doctors through cheating and manipulation, do they consider the risks such doctors will pose to public health? Another troubling example is the Sindh Public Service Commission, which, for perhaps the first time in its history, was ordered to suspend operations due to widespread allegations of violating merit in its selection process. Isn't this a heartbreaking reflection of society's moral decline? While the Sindh's annual education budget has steadily increased – reaching Rs454 billion this fiscal year – the returns on this substantial investment remain disappointing. A cost-benefit analysis is urgently needed to assess the effectiveness of these expenditures. Without a comprehensive overhaul of the education system, including alignment with the market and modern demands, Sindh risks producing graduates unprepared for the workforce, stalling both provincial and national progress. Radical reforms are essential, lest the province's investment in education continue to flow, quite literally, through a sieve.

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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

History of Pakistan



WAPDA lost its monopoly over generation after Pakistan entered into an agreement in 1989 with a consortium of foreign firms to produce power from giant oil-fired plants located at Hub, near Karachi; the plants were completed in 1997. Great progress, however, has been made in the development of the hydroelectric potential of Pakistan's rivers. A giant hydroelectric plant is in operation at the Mangla Dam, on the Jhelum River in Azad Kashmir (the part of Kashmir under Pakistani administration). Another such source is the giant Tarbela Dam, on the Indus River. Pakistan has three nuclear power plants, the Karachi Nuclear Power Plant (completed 1972), the Chashma Nuclear Power Plant-1 (2000), and the Chashma Nuclear Power Plant-2 (2011). The Chashma plants are at Kundian, Punjab. Nuclear power pro-

vides only a tiny proportion of the country's total energy production. Mining and quarrying account for a small percentage of GDP and of total employment. Manufacturing, however, constitutes a healthy proportion. The beginning of the main industrialization effort dates to the cessation of trade between India and Pakistan in 1949, soon after the two countries gained independence. Initially it was based on the processing of raw agricultural materials for domestic consumption and for export. This led to the construction of cotton textile mills—a development that now accounts for a large part of the total employment in industry. Woolen textiles, sugar, paper, tobacco, and leather industries also provide many jobs for the industrial labour force. The growing trade deficit in the mid-1950s compelled the government to cut down on imports, which encour-

aged the establishment of a number of import-substitution industries. At first these factories produced mainly consumer goods, but gradually they came to produce intermediate goods and a range of capital goods, including chemicals, fertilizers, and light engineering products. Nevertheless, Pakistan still has to import a large proportion of the capital equipment and raw materials required by industry. In the 1970s and early '80s Pakistan set up an integrated iron and steel mill at Pipri, near Karachi, with the financial and technical assistance of the Soviet Union. A new port, Port Q sim (officially Port Mu ammad Bin Q sim), was built to bring iron ore and coal for the mill. Initially Karachi was the centre of Pakistan's industrialization effort, but in the late 1960s and early '70s Lahore and the cities around it began to industrialize rapidly. Karachi's ethnic problems in the late 1980s and early '90s accelerated this process, and Punjab increasingly became Karachi's competitor in industrial output. Major manufactured products include jute and cotton textiles, cement, vegetable ghee, cigarettes, and bicycles. Although the country still imports most of its motor vehicles, some Pakistani firms have entered into contracts with foreign companies to produce automobiles, motorcycles, and industrial tractors domestically. Finance contributes a relatively small value to GDP, though its growth rate in the late 20th and early 21st centuries has been considerable. Pakistan has a variety of state banks, state-run banks (though more-recent trends have been toward privatizing these), scheduled (i.e., commercial) banks, private banks, and foreign banks.

To be continued....

Showbiz

Rachel Platten ready to 'shine' at Thanksgiving after years of anxiety

Rachel Platten reflects on her depression: 'It's quite a miracle that I made it through it'

Rachel Platten is grateful and looks forward to celebrating Thanksgiving after dealing with mental health issues during the past few years. The Fight Song hitmaker went through a "very dark time" in her life but that is changing for the holidays this year. "I remember feeling so scared that my chronic pain would act up or that I wouldn't make it through the night because of anxiety or something," she told People Magazine in a recent chat. After years of fighting with mental health, the 43-year-old is ready to rock the Thanksgiving Parade in New York on November 28th. "A couple years ago, I couldn't imag-



ine being out in public, let alone on a float in front of millions of people on national TV," the Girls crooner admitted. "But look at me now. I was able to make it out of all that pain and instead, I get to shine and be in front of millions of people on Thanksgiving." The Emmy award winner enthused about healing from depression, calling it a "miracle". "It's quite a miracle that I made it through it and that I am here and that I'm so strong," she said. Platten also explained that even though "same emotional waves" still take hold of her, she now has "tools like therapy and journaling" to help her out.

Tech

VPN demand soars amid stricter social media curbs in Pakistan

The use of virtual private networks (VPNs) has surged dramatically across Pakistan in the wake of stricter social media restrictions. According to Top10VPN, an independent platform specialising in VPN reviews, the demand for these services in Pakistan rose by an astonishing 102% on November 25, compared to the average daily demand over the previous 28 days. This significant spike highlights a growing reliance on VPNs to circumvent increasing digital restrictions. VPN demand escalated further on November 26, reaching 213% above the baseline. The spike came amid reports that authorities had restricted WhatsApp media sharing in advance of Pakistan Treer-e-Insaf's (PTI) protest demonstrations. WhatsApp, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and other platforms are facing disruptions in Pakistan, showed Downtoaster.com, a website that reports when there's a disruption on social platforms or websites. Citizens have expressed frustration over the



disruptions as there's no official version yet as to why the access is restricted. The social platforms work better when they're accessed after activating VPNs. The government had confirmed that they planned on disrupting internet services in areas with security concerns, but there was no comment about social media platforms. As people are accessing social media platforms via VPN, they're also facing another hurdle: slow Internet. Internet services have been disrupted in several cities across Punjab, including Multan, Rajanpur, Gujrat, and Dera Ghazi Khan. Residents in these areas are reporting difficulties in accessing online services.

Health

US top court rejects appeal against graphic anti-smoking images

The US Supreme Court declined on Monday to decide whether federally mandated warnings on cigarette packs that graphically illustrate the health risks of smoking violate the free speech rights of tobacco companies opposed to the labels. The justices turned away an appeal by RJ Reynolds and other tobacco companies of a lower court's ruling that found that a set of health warnings required by the US Food and Drug Administration did not violate the rights of the companies under the US Constitution's First Amendment. The action by the justices means the lower court's ruling stands. The rule was adopted by the agency in 2020 during Donald Trump's first presidential administration. The FDA required that warnings about the risks of smoking occupy the top 50% of cigarette packs and top 20% of advertisements. The regu-

lation is technically in effect, but the FDA has generally withheld enforcing it amid legal challenges. The set of 11 warnings include depictions of feet with amputated toes, a baby whose fetal growth had been stunted, and a woman with a large protrusion in her neck caused by cancer, along with written descriptions of various health risks. RJ Reynolds, which is part of British American Tobacco, ITG Brands, which is part of Imperial Brands IMBL, Liggett, which is part of Vector Group, and other tobacco companies sued in 2020 to challenge the warning labels. The companies claimed, among other things, that the health warnings violated their free speech rights by compelling the companies to endorse the US government's anti-smoking message through images they said misrepresented or

exaggerated health consequences of smoking. US smoking rates have fallen dramatically in the past six decades, from 42.6% of American adults in 1965 to 11.6% in 2022, according to the American Lung Association. But, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, smoking still causes more than 480,000 US deaths annually. The FDA said the warnings were justified by the US government's interest in promoting greater understanding of the health risks from smoking, and reducing confusion and deception. The agency argued that the illustrated warnings were necessary because text-only warnings failed to deter teenagers from smoking. US District Judge J. Campbell Barker in Tyler, Texas, in 2022 blocked the regulation, finding that the graphic warnings violated First Amendment protections.



دین الدین گراف

اسلام آباد

بدھ 27 نومبر 2024ء

پی ٹی آئی احتجاج، شریپندوں نے ریجنرز

اہلکاروں پر گاڑی چڑھادی، 4 شہید

اسلام آباد (سٹاف رپورٹر) اسلام آباد میں پاکستان تحریک انصاف کے احتجاجی مظاہرے کے دوران سری نگر ہائی وے پر شریپندوں نے ریجنرز اہلکاروں پر گاڑی چڑھا دی جس سے 4 ریجنرز اہلکار شہید جبکہ 5 ریجنرز اور 2 پولیس کے جوان شہید زخمی ہو گئے۔ سیکورٹی ذرائع کے مطابق ایک گاڑی پر چڑھنے والوں سے آہنی ہاتھوں سے نمٹا جانے کا جبکہ انتشار پھیلانے والوں کو موقع پر گولی مارنے کے واضح امکانات دے دیئے گئے ہیں۔



اسلام آباد، وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف اور بیلا روس کے صدر مشرک کلامہ پر دستخط کر رہے ہیں

پاکستان اور بیلا روس، مستقبل کے لائحہ عمل کیلئے مسجدیگی سے ملکر مباحثے، وزیر اعظم

پاکستان اور بیلا روس کا سائنس و ٹیکنالوجی، مالیاتی کا مینٹرنگ، انٹرنیشنل روڈ ٹرانسپورٹ، مٹی لائڈنگ،

دہشتگردی کی فنانسنگ اور دیگر شعبوں میں تعاون بڑھانے پر بھی اتفاق

اسلام آباد (سٹاف رپورٹر) پاکستان اور بیلا روس نے سائنس و ٹیکنالوجی، مالیاتی مینٹرنگ، انٹرنیشنل روڈ ٹرانسپورٹ، مٹی لائڈنگ، دہشتگردی کی فنانسنگ اور دیگر شعبوں میں تعاون بڑھانے پر بھی اتفاق کیا ہے۔ وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف اور بیلا روس کے صدر مشرک کلامہ نے ایک مشترکہ اعلامیہ جاری کیا ہے جس میں دونوں ممالک کے درمیان مختلف شعبوں میں تعاون بڑھانے کے لیے اقدامات کیلئے مل کر کام کرنے کی عہد دہی کی گئی ہے۔



اسلام آباد، پی ٹی آئی کارکنوں پر ڈی چوک پر شہنشاہ کی جاری ہے

بجٹ خسارہ ختم کرنے کیلئے، حکومت آزاد کشمیر نے وفاقی سے 25 ارب روپے کی گرانٹ مانگ لی

آزاد کشمیر حکومت رواں سال 13 مئی سے آئے اور بجلی پر خصوصی سبسڈی فراہم کر رہی ہے۔ بجٹ خسارہ ختم کرنے کے لیے وفاقی حکومت سے 25 ارب روپے کی گرانٹ مانگ لی ہے۔

آزاد کشمیر حکومت رواں سال 13 مئی سے آئے اور بجلی پر خصوصی سبسڈی فراہم کر رہی ہے۔ بجٹ خسارہ ختم کرنے کے لیے وفاقی حکومت سے 25 ارب روپے کی گرانٹ مانگ لی ہے۔

خواتین کے حقوق کا تحفظ ہماری ذمہ داری ہے، گورنر بلوچستان

گورنر بلوچستان جنجوعہ خان نے کہا کہ انسانی حقوق کی پاسداری کے لیے خواتین کے حقوق اور تحفظ سے کسی معاشرے کو غافل نہیں ہو سکتا۔

پی ٹی آئی قافلے ڈی چوک پہنچ گئے، فوج تعینات، شریپندوں کو دیکھتے ہی گولی مارنے کا حکم

پی ٹی آئی قیادت خون خراب نہیں بلکہ مذکرات چاہتی تھی مگر وہ خفیہ ہاتھ سب پر بھاری ہے، اسلام آبادی اہم علاقوں پر ریجنرز، ڈی چوک میں فوجی دستے تعینات، 100 سے زائد پولیس اہلکار زخمی ہو گئے

اسلام آباد (سٹاف رپورٹر) نامہ نگار کے پی ٹی آئی قیادت خون خراب نہیں بلکہ مذکرات چاہتی تھی مگر وہ خفیہ ہاتھ سب پر بھاری ہے، اسلام آبادی اہم علاقوں پر ریجنرز، ڈی چوک میں فوجی دستے تعینات، 100 سے زائد پولیس اہلکار زخمی ہو گئے۔

پولیس اور سیکورٹی فورسز کو نشانہ بنانا دہشتگردی ہے، بلاول بھٹو

اسلام آباد (سٹاف رپورٹر) چیئر مین پی ٹی آئی بلاول بھٹو نے کہا ہے کہ ان کے خلاف دہشتگردی کی فہم کی جا رہی ہے۔

ڈی چوک جانے کا فیصلہ بشری بی بی کا ہے: سیر مشرف

اسلام آباد (نامہ نگار) وزیر اعلیٰ پنجاب شہباز شریف نے کہا ہے کہ ان کے خلاف دہشتگردی کی فہم کی جا رہی ہے۔

پیٹرولیم مصنوعات کی قلت کا خدشہ، وزارت پیٹرولیم کا نوٹس

اسلام آباد (سٹاف رپورٹر) پی ٹی آئی احتجاج کے باعث وفاقی دارالحکومت اسلام آباد میں پیٹرولیم مصنوعات کی قلت کا خدشہ پیدا ہو گیا ہے۔

بشری بی بی کا بانی پی ٹی آئی کی بات ماننے سے انکار

اسلام آباد (سٹاف رپورٹر) بانی پی ٹی آئی الہیہ بشری بی بی نے شہر کی بات ماننے سے انکار کر دیا۔

شہید ریجنرز اہلکاروں کی نماز جنازہ ادا، وزیر اعظم کی شرکت

وزیر اعظم، وزیر داخلہ، وزیر اطلاعات، چیف آف آرمی اسٹاف جنرل عامر منیر سمیت وفاقی و صوبائی حکام نے شرکت کی۔

پی ٹی آئی احتجاج، شاہراہوں کی بندش سے لاہور میں ایشیائے ضروریہ کی قلت

لاہور (نامہ نگار) ڈیک، وفاقی دارالحکومت میں پاکستان تحریک انصاف (پی ٹی آئی) کے چلنے والے احتجاج کی وجہ سے شاہراہوں کی بندش کے باعث لاہور میں ایشیائے ضروریہ کی قلت کے ساتھ ساتھ شہر کی دیگر شاہراہوں کی بندش سے بھی پی ٹی آئی کی جانب سے احتجاجی کارروائیوں کا سلسلہ جاری ہے۔

پی ٹی آئی بارے دو ٹوک فیصلے کا وقت آ پہنچا، مزید تاخیر مہنگی پڑے گی، عرفان صدیقی

پاکستان کی 77 سالہ تاریخ میں کوئی ایسی جماعت ہے جس نے صوبائی طاقت کے ذریعے وفاقی پرنسپل کی ہونے والی صورت کو تسلیم نہیں کیا۔



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President, PM laud security forces for foiling infiltration attempt



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday lauded the security forces for successfully foiling an infiltration attempt by terrorists of Fitna-al-Khawarij on Pak-Afghan border near North Waziristan. The president appreciated the security forces for taking timely action against terrorists of Fitna-al-Khawarij, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

He also lauded the bravery of security forces for sending three Khawarij to hell during the action, adding Pakistan's valiant security forces were always ready to protect the country's borders. Pakistan's cuisine. The president reiterated commitment to complete elimination of terrorism, and protection of country's borders. While the prime minister commended the officers and personnel of the security forces for successfully thwarting an attempt by terrorists to cross from Afghanistan into Pakistan in North Waziristan.

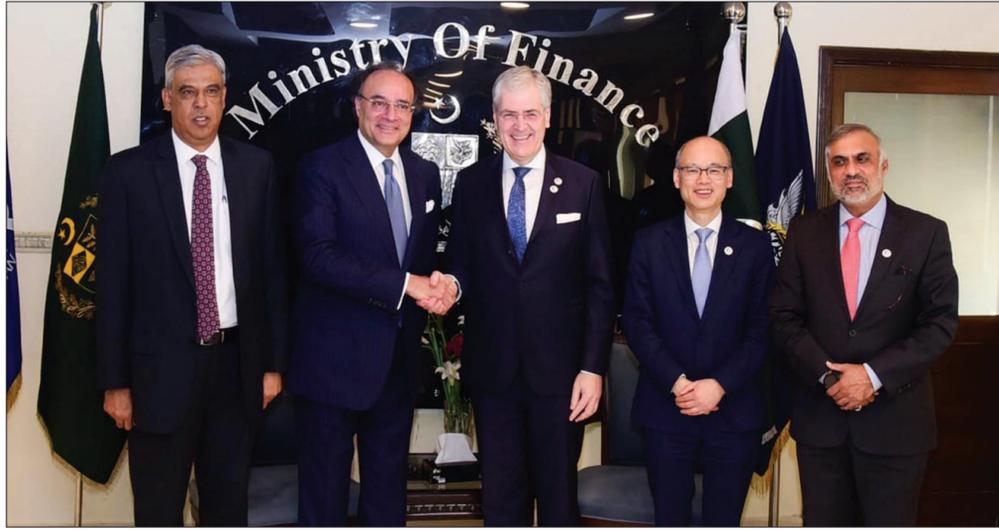
He praised the professionalism of the officers and personnel for sending three Khawarijites to hell, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The prime minister also reaffirmed to continue the fight against terrorism till it was completely eradicated from the country.

He said the officers and personnel of Pakistan Army, who were guarding the country's frontiers, away from their loved ones, deserved appreciation.

Amir Muqam condemns attack on Rangers, police personnel

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFRON Engineer Amir Muqam strongly condemned the attack on Rangers and police personnel on Srinagar Highway by miscreants. Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs paid tribute to four martyred Rangers personnel and police constable Mubashir, said a press release. Amir Muqam expressed heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the families of the martyrs. Engineer Amir Muqam prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured personnel. Nation salutes the martyred personnel, Amir Muqam.

Federal Minister paid tribute to police constable Mubashir, who was martyred in the violence of protesters near Hakla.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, held a meeting with a delegation from the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB), led by its Chairman, Dr. Andreas, at the Finance Division.

Pakistan, China sign 13 MoUs on fostering joint ventures in animal fodder, fruits, vegetables processing sectors

BELJING: Pakistani and Chinese companies on Tuesday signed 13 memorandums of understanding (MoUs) valued at US\$ 250 million on fostering joint ventures and investment partnerships in the animal fodder and fruits and vegetables processing sectors. Pakistan Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi witnessed the signing ceremony held at the conclusion of a day-long B2B Matchmaking Meeting on Animal Fodder and Fruits and Vegetable here.

Pakistan Embassy Beijing, in collaboration with the Board of Investment (BOI), successfully hosted the third in a series of sector-specific B2B matchmaking meetings.

This event, focused on fostering joint ventures and investment partnerships in the animal fodder and fruits and vegetables processing sectors. The event featured insightful presentations, individual B2B meetings, networking opportunities, and the signing of 13 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) valued at approximately USD 250 million. Over 150 productive B2B meetings, including 30 virtual engagements, took place, providing a robust platform for Pakistani and Chinese companies to explore partnerships and expand trade in these priority sectors.

In his remarks, Ambassador Khalil Hashmi highlighted the strong trade ties between Pakistan and China and emphasized the strategic importance of agriculture and food processing sectors.

He noted that the event underscored Pakistan's ongoing efforts to bolster its trade relationship with China, focusing on creating



opportunities for direct connections and long-term partnerships. Ambassador Hashmi also underscored Pakistan's position as a leading producer of a variety of fruits, vegetables, and animal products, pointing out the country's vast agricultural resources. He highlighted Pakistan's investor-friendly policies, such as 100% foreign equity ownership, zero tariffs on plant and machinery imports, and profit repatriation, as compelling incentives for Chinese companies to explore joint ventures.

Reflecting on the agriculture sector's immense potential, the Ambassador emphasized the growth of Pakistan's animal fodder industry, including a 12 percent surge in maize production from 2017 to 2022, and the expansion of its poultry feed market, now valued at USD 2 billion. Similarly, he praised the fruits and vegetables processing sector for its contribution to value-added manufacturing, noting a substantial vegetable yield and a vibrant export portfolio including processed juices, jams, and

pickled foods.

The presence of Mayor Liu Jianjun of Weifang, Shandong Province, added further significance to the occasion. Mayor Liu underscored the growing agricultural cooperation between Pakistan and Weifang, especially in the aftermath of Ambassador Hashmi's earlier visit to the city.

Mayor Liu lauded the Embassy of Pakistan for their efforts in facilitating such impactful engagements and emphasized the importance of fostering deeper ties in agriculture and food processing.

Wang Qihui, Deputy Director-General of the Department of Asian Affairs at MOFCOM, also commended the initiative and expressed confidence in the outcomes of the B2B meetings. He highlighted the event's role in building trust and providing a meaningful platform for Pakistani and Chinese entrepreneurs to develop their businesses further.

Commercial Counsellor, Gulam Qadir in his presentation highlighted investment potential in animal fodder, fruits and vegetables processing sectors in Pakistan.

The B2B matchmaking meeting is part of a larger initiative, following Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit to China earlier this year. Upcoming sector-specific events include focus areas such as textiles on 4-5 December, surgical instruments on 20 December and plastics in early January 2025. These initiatives aim to sustain the momentum of Pakistan-China collaboration and facilitate high-impact engagements across various sectors. APP

WB appreciates govt's reform initiatives, assures continued support

ISLAMABAD: Country Director World Bank, Najy Benhassine here on Tuesday appreciated the government's reform initiatives and reiterated the bank's commitment to assisting Pakistan in addressing economic challenges and achieving its developmental objectives.

During a meeting with Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, the WB Country Director assured continued support from the bank in key areas identified during the meeting.

The meeting was also attended by the Finance Secretary and senior officers of the Finance Division, according to press release issued by finance ministry.

During the meeting, the federal minister highlighted the importance of collaboration with the World Bank to support Pakistan's economic reforms and development agenda.

He appreciated the World Bank's financial and technical assistance across various sectors and reiterated the government's commitment to fiscal discipline, sustainable growth, and efficient resource utilization.

Discussions focused on the establishment of a robust and transparent tax policy framework to enhance revenue mobilization and improve compliance while ensuring equitable taxation.

The World Bank team also offered technical assistance to streamline the budget-making process, adopting modern practices to improve transparency and accountability in public financial management, an effective debt management mechanism to ensure fiscal sustainability and reduce risks.

Issues related to Agricultural Income Tax Regime and GST harmonisation in coordination with provinces and enhanced focus on active role of National Tax Council also came under discussion.

The Finance Minister expressed gratitude for the WB's support and reaffirmed the government's resolve to implement reforms aimed at sustainable economic progress.

Aleem Khan grieved over loss of Rangers personnel

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Privatization, board of Investment, and Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan, on Tuesday expressed profound grief over the tragic loss of Rangers personnel in an incident on Srinagar Highway.

The incident claimed the lives of several Rangers personnel, including Punjab Police, Constable Mubashir, while injuring over a hundred law enforcement officials, said a press release.

The minister condemned the event as a national loss, expressing heartfelt condolences to the families of the martyrs. Aleem Khan said, "My heart is deeply saddened to hear about the martyrdom of security forces' Jawans. This is a great loss for the nation, and we stand with the bereaved families during this difficult time."

7th Maritime Security Workshop commences



LAHORE: Seventh edition of the Maritime Security Workshop (MARSEW-7) aimed at enhancing knowledge and understanding of maritime security, geopolitical dynamics in the broader Indian Ocean region and the Blue Economy besides exploring Pakistan's untapped maritime potential commenced on Tuesday at Pakistan Navy War College. The workshop was inaugurated by the Commandant of Pakistan Navy War College, Rear Admiral Azhar Mahmood, said a news release issued by the Directorate General of Public Relations (Pakistan Navy).

MARSEW is a national-level forum organized under the auspices of the Pakistan Navy, with the theme "Secure Seas, Prosperous Pakistan." The workshop seeks to highlight the challenges and opportunities in Pakistan's maritime sector and its critical role in supporting the national economy. This forum provides a shared platform for participants from the public and private sectors, including senators, parliamentarians, senior bureaucrats, maritime industry professionals, business leaders, academia, think tanks, and media representatives, to deliberate on pressing national maritime issues. A total of 38 participants from the public, pri-

vate, and military sectors are taking part in MARSEW-7.

In his welcome address, Rear Admiral Azhar Mahmood outlined the purpose of the workshop, emphasizing the need for Pakistan's intelligentsia to shift its strategic focus towards the sea. He highlighted the developments in the broader Indian Ocean region and their implications for Pakistan's national security.

The Commandant also addressed the wide-ranging challenges faced by the Pakistan Navy and its unwavering commitment to safeguarding the nation's maritime interests.

The workshop is structured in two phases: the first phase comprises academic sessions at the War College, while the second phase includes a field tour of various naval commands and coastal installations along the Makran Coast. Participants will also visit Gwadar Port to witness ongoing development projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Since its inception in 2017, the Maritime Security Workshop has been held annually at Pakistan Navy War College. It plays a vital role in fostering an integrated approach to developing Pakistan's maritime sector and advancing the Blue Economy.

Irfan Siddiqui questions PTI's status as political party due to its involvement in lawlessness

ISLAMABAD: Senator Irfan Siddiqui, the parliamentary party leader of PML-N in the Senate and chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, on Tuesday questioned PTI's status as a political party due to its involvement in terrorism, lawlessness, and anti-Pakistan actions. In a statement shared on his social media plat-

form X, Siddiqui said the time has come for clear and decisive action regarding PTI, warning that any further delay could be very costly. Siddiqui stressed that PTI's actions, especially after May 9, 2023, have gone too far, and it is now time for a clear and decisive decision regarding the party's status.

Soon, a decision must be made on whether a group that fosters insecurity, lawlessness, sedition, corruption, murder, destruction, and an anti-Pakistan agenda deserves to be recognized as a "political party." He emphasized that Pakistan has never seen a political party that has waged war against the federation using provincial power, resulting in the deaths of officials and injuries to hundreds. "In Pakistan's 77-year history, which political party has used provincial power to wage war against the Federal government, open fire, deploy tear gas, kill several officials, and injure hundreds?" APP

Army deployed in Islamabad as PTI anti-govt campaign turns violent

Islamabad calls in army under Article 245 amid PTI protest violence

ISLAMABAD: Amid escalating violence during Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) protest, the federal government has deployed the army in the capital. The Interior Ministry issued a notification invoking Article 245, allowing the military to assist in maintaining order and deal with the miscreants with an iron hand. The notification also grants the army authority to impose curfew wherever necessary to curb lawlessness. Sources indicate that security forces have also been authorised to shoot miscreants and troublemakers on sight. They said that all necessary measures are being taken to counter terrorist activities by disruptive and extremist elements. All the miscreants are also being identified to bring them to justice. The decision follows a tragic incident on Srinagar Highway, where PTI miscreants reportedly drove a vehicle into Rangers personnel, resulting in the martyrdom of four Rangers and injuries to five others, along with two police officers. Agencies

Gilani stresses need to strengthen Pakistan, Saudi Arabia trade ties between

ISLAMABAD: Senate Chairman Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani on Tuesday emphasized the need to strengthen trade ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in key sectors such as textiles, agriculture, and technology to achieve shared prosperity.

During his official visit to Saudi Arabia, Gilani, accompanied by his delegation, held separate meetings with the Speaker of the Saudi Shura Council and the Saudi Arabia-Pakistan Friendship Group, according to a news release. "I deeply appreciate the warm reception and hospitality extended by the Speaker of the Shura Council," he said during the meetings. Discussions centered on bilateral cooperation, trade relations, and critical issues such as Palestine and Kashmir. "This visit reflects the strong brotherly ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia," he added.

Gilani called for enhanced institutional collaboration, increased delegation exchanges, and stronger people-to-people connections between the two nations.

He urged joint efforts by Saudi Arabia and Pakistan to resolve the issues of Palestine and Kashmir while advocating for the rights of Muslims worldwide.

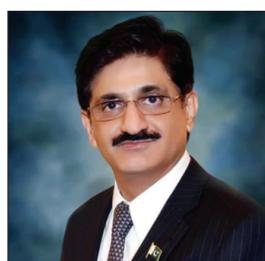
"The global community must raise its voice against the ongoing atrocities in Palestine and Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK)," he stressed.

He called for practical solutions in line with United Nations resolutions and international laws. Highlighting severe human rights violations by Indian forces in IIOJK and Israeli forces in Palestine, Senate Chairman urged the global community to address these urgent issues. INP

Sindh Govt committed to transforming police into an efficient, technology-driven force: Murad

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has reiterated his government's commitment to transforming the Sindh Police into an efficient, technology-driven force to enhance public safety and foster trust in law enforcement among the people of Sindh.

He said this while addressing the participants of the 51st Specialised Training Program and the 27th Initial Command Course for Assistant Superintendents of Police (ASPs) at the CM House. The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, Home Secretary Iqbal Memon, PSCM Agha Wasif, IG Police Gulam Nabi Memon, and others. The CM said that the Sindh Police, established in 1843, is the oldest police organisation in the subcontinent and is undergoing significant modernisation to tackle contemporary law enforcement challenges. He said, "With a sanctioned strength of 162,000 personnel, Sindh Police is the second-largest force in Pakistan, dedicated to crime prevention, detection, and maintaining law and order." CM discussed several key initiatives aimed at enhancing the police force's capacity and efficiency. One impor-



tant project in Sindh, he mentioned, was the Smart Surveillance System (S4 Project), which involves installing surveillance cameras at 40 toll plazas across the province. "This system is intended to provide real-time monitoring at critical entry and exit points, improving response times and situational awareness while streamlining police operations using advanced intelligence tools," he said. According to the CM, the Karachi Safe City Project is designed to significantly enhance the Sindh Police's capabilities, ensuring greater public safety in Pakistan's largest city. Discussing the government's focused efforts against crime, Murad Shah

mentioned the Sindh Habitual Offenders Monitoring Act, 2022, which allows for the electronic tagging of habitual criminals involved in street crimes such as robbery, extortion, and vehicle theft.

He explained that GPS-enabled anklets and bracelets will enable real-time monitoring of offenders, promoting safer neighbourhoods across the province.

Talking about budget allocations for the police department, he stated that significant funds have been earmarked to strengthen key departments within the police force. "The Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) has received Rs 2.7 billion, the Special Branch Rs 1.2 billion, and the Investigation Branch Rs 600 million for investigation costs," he said and added that incentives for Investigating Officers (IOs) who secure convictions have been included. Around Rs 6 billion has been allocated for police stations, with Station House Officers (SHOs) now granted Drawing and Disbursing Officer (DDO) powers. To support police personnel and their families, the Sindh government has introduced a health insurance program valued at Rs 4.961 billion. "An

enhanced Shaheed (Martyr) Package has been implemented, increasing compensation from Rs.10 million to Rs.23 million, ensuring continued salary payments until the age of retirement, and providing two government jobs for the family of the deceased," the CM said.

Talking about the importance of skill development, Murad Shah said that his government is investing in training programs for police officers, prosecutors, and judges to ensure the effective implementation of laws and policies. He said capacity-building initiatives are underway to prepare personnel for modern challenges and to maintain law and order.

The Sindh government's comprehensive approach reflects a commitment to transforming the Sindh Police into a modern, efficient, and technology-driven force, the CM said and added that these initiatives are expected to improve public safety and foster confidence in law enforcement among the people of Sindh.

With ongoing reforms and investments, the Sindh Police is well on its way to becoming a model law enforcement agency in Pakistan, he concluded.