



"Due to the day and night hard work and efforts of PM Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, the inflation had fallen to record low"

Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture
Attaulah Tarar

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Armed Forces fully capable of safeguarding motherland's territorial integrity, sovereignty: COAS



RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M) affirmed that the Pakistan Armed Forces, with the resolute support of the nation, are fully capable of safeguarding the territorial integrity and sovereignty of our beloved motherland against the entire spectrum of threats.

In his interaction with the participants of field training exercise near Narowal, Sialkot, he emphasized the critical importance of maintaining constant preparedness to counter any potential threats posed by adversaries, said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release. The COAS visited troops participating in a field training exercise near Narowal and Sialkot. He was given a comprehensive brief on the objectives and conduct of the exercise, which aimed to refine professional skills and battlefield procedures essential for addressing emerging operational challenges.

During the exercise, integrated fire and maneuver operations were conducted by various elements, including Armour, Infantry, Mechanized Infantry, Artillery, Air Defence, Army Aviation and Anti-Tank Guided Missile units. The exercise also demonstrated the effective employment of electronic warfare capabilities and information operations designed to disrupt enemy communications and counter disinformation strategies in a modern battlefield environment.

The COAS spent the day in the field alongside the troops, commending their training standards, operational readiness, and high state of morale. Earlier, upon his arrival at the exercise area, the COAS was welcomed by the Commander Gujranwala Corps and the Inspector General of Training and Evaluation. PR



RIYADH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in the family photo of the One-Water Summit being held.

PM underscore need for strong political will, global leadership to tackle water crisis

RIYADH: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday underscored the need for strong political will, and global leadership to overcome the water crisis posing existential threat to the nations around the globe. The prime minister, addressing the One Water Summit on the Margins of United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP-16) under the theme "Restore, Preserve, and Adapt" here expressed his profound gratitude to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, France, and Kazakhstan, as well as the World Bank for organizing the timely summit, to deliberate upon, one of humanity's most pressing challenges: water security. He said that water was the lifeblood of the planet; a cornerstone of economic development, food security, and environmental sustainability. "This life-sustaining resource, however, is coming under increasing stress. Nearly half of the world's population is facing, water scarcity, for at least part of the year. Billions remain, without clean drinking water, as water pollution, is rising, at alarming levels," he added. The prime minister underlined that the water resources were fast depleting and degrading which was displacing millions, and causing, unprecedented destruction. "This is not a distant threat, but an alarm bell, for collective action. Pakistan is no stranger to these challenges. Our rivers, glaciers and aquifers are increasingly vulnerable to the

impact of climate change, and population growth," he said. He apprised the leaders at the summit that Pakistan was still grappling with the 2022, catastrophic floods, that caused, widespread damage, to its water resources and irrigation sector, in addition to affecting, millions of lives and livelihoods. At the same time, he said droughts posed an equally potent threat to the country. "Nearly 70% of our land consists of arid and semi-arid areas, and around 30% of our population, is directly affected by drought-like conditions. Projected temperature increases in Pakistan, are significantly higher, than the global average," he added. Prime Minister Shehbaz highlighted that such catastrophic disasters and challenges were likely to scale up further in the absence of concerted international actions as it was one of the top ten countries, most vulnerable due to climate change. Commenting on the transboundary water management, he said that water transcended political boundaries, connecting nations and fostering shared ecosystems. "Pakistan, therefore, attaches great importance to transboundary cooperation. The Indus Water Treaty, which governs, the sharing of the Indus Basin's waters, is one example of such an arrangement." He added that the treaty witnessed unprecedented challenges in the recent years, due to a

number of factors, including construction of upstream dams, whereas its effective functioning was key to maintaining regional peace and stability. The prime minister also shed light on the 'Recharge Pakistan' initiative that aimed to address, climate induced, flood risks, and mitigate drought impacts, through ecosystem based adaptations. "We are also finalizing a 'National Drought Plan' that identifies, the most drought affected areas, and proposes, effective response mechanisms, to mitigate, the impact of drought in these areas," he said. The prime minister proposed a six-point agenda at the global level to overcome water-related challenges. He advocated for the need of international cooperation and collaboration, to "ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all", as provided for in the SDG-6, exchange of knowledge and expertise, as well as transfer of technologies on innovative water management on priority, adequate funding for climate-resilient infrastructure, and overcoming financing gap—a critical challenge for climate vulnerable countries, frameworks for transparency, data sharing, and regional cooperation, to avoid conflicts, and promote water sharing, investment in skills development, research, and institutional strengthening, to tackle water challenges, at national and global levels and finally, a strong political will, and global leadership, to overcome the water crisis.

PTI trying to hoodwink masses through false narrative of bodies: Tarar

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaulah Tarar said on Tuesday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf was trying to hoodwink the people through fake narrative and lies. Lambasting Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, in a media talk, he said that the party was creating a false narrative of firing on the protesters. He once again challenged the PTI to present a single piece of evidence showing a law enforcement agencies personnel firing bullets directly on the protesters.

"There is not a single video in which law enforcement agencies person can be seen directly firing upon protesters. They have all kinds of videos but there is no video evidence (of direct firing) as this never took place", he maintained. The minister said that a video of a man running away in which he was saying that he hit by a gunshot, went viral.

Attaulah Tarar said the same person in another video was claiming that he had got an injury on his hand. However when in the video, he opened the bandage on his hand no bullet mark was visible on his hand. Tarar stated that the PTI was defaming the state through their concocted stories based on lies.

The PTI is spreading lies about bodies and different leaders were giving different figures of fatalities ranging from a dozen to 4000. A senior leader of the PTI Lateef Khosa claimed that over 150 bodies were lying at his residence.

He said even the PTI Chairman, Barrister Gohar remarked that there were only 12 bodies and all other claims were bogus. He said there was no dead, if the PTI had any dead bodies they should present in front of the media. Taking a dig on the PTI, he said these bodies were found on Tik Tok, Facebook, X, WhatsApp and other social media platforms, but in reality, there were no dead bodies.

He said the PTI was trying to hoodwink the nation through its lies and misleading statements. He said that it was unfortunate that such people form political parties who had no sense. He also pointed out four Rangers personnel and a police officer were martyred, but no one from the PTI expressed sympathy with the bereaved families.

The PTI miscreants target security forces and police personnel but later claim of make hue and cry of killing of their party workers. The minister said that on social media, it was claimed that Jam Amanullah, a boy from Khanpur was killed in law enforcement agencies firing.

Now his father Jam Tahir has issued a video in which he clarified that his son was alive and sitting beside him in his home. He also made it clear that neither United States nor United Kingdom could allow armed rioters to protest outside White House and 10 Downing Street.

About the economic situation, the minister said that due to the prudent policies of the government, inflation has fallen to a 70-month low which was a manifestation that Pakistan's economy was growing. He said that foreign exchange reserves have exceeded \$ 11 billion mark and Consumer Price Index was going down every month. DNA

Finance Minister directs swift action on cartels, offers full support to CCP

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, has directed the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) to expedite its inquiries and investigations into cartelization and collusion practices.

The minister assured CCP of the government's complete support and resolve to discipline markets, promote best practices and foster competition. The federal minister visited the CCP head office today to receive a comprehensive briefing on the Commission's performance. Chairman CCP, Dr. Kabir Ahmed Sidhu, briefed the minister on ongoing inquiries, provided details of significant cases pending in courts, and outlined recent initiatives to strengthen the CCP. The briefing was attended by CCP members Saeed Nawaz, Salman Amin and Abdul Rashid Sheikh, along with senior management. Senator Aurangzeb expressed his appreciation for the Commission's efforts but stressed the importance of adopting modern technologies, including chatbots and data analytics, to monitor and detect cartelization and collusion. He assured CCP of the government's full support, including budgetary provisions to digitalize the Commission's operations and implement international benchmarking practices to strengthen its capabilities.

"The government is determined to discipline the markets and stop illegal practices at any cost. The Commission has the full backing of the government, and we expect the ongoing inquiries to be completed swiftly. However, it is crucial that the due process is followed, and there is no harassment," the minister stated. Dr. Sidhu urged the minister that there was a backlog of 567 cases involving penalties worth PKR 74 million. Over the past year, the Commission has made significant progress by recovering PKR 100 million in penalties and resolving 73 cases in courts. He provided details of the number of pending cases, with around 200 in the Supreme Court, 179 in the Competition Appellate Tribunal, and 146 in various high courts. DNA

Pakistan, France agree to enhance cooperation in diverse sectors

RIYADH: Pakistan and France have agreed to enhance cooperation through business-to-business contacts in the areas of agriculture, livestock, Information Technology, skills development and clean drinking water. An understanding to this effect reached at a meeting between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and French President Emmanuel Macron on the sidelines of the One Water Summit in Riyadh, today. Both the leaders reiterated the shared desire of two sides to remain closely engaged on all regional and global issues of mutual interest. Expressing satisfaction at its positive trajectory, the two leaders exchanged views on the full spectrum of Pakistan-France relationship, including political, economic, trade and investment, as well as cooperation at multi-lateral forums, including the United Nations. In his remarks, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stressed upon the need to further strengthen mutually advantageous economic and trade ties between the two countries and encouraged France to take advantage of investment opportunities in Pakistan, especially in areas of climate adaptation and renewable energy.

Everyone has to work together to improve the law & order situation: Mohsin Naqvi

Directs the full implementation of foolproof security plan for the protection of Chinese citizens

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Senator Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi chaired the important meeting of the National Action Plan Coordination Committee in Islamabad. During the meeting, it was decided to enhance coordination between NACTA and the provinces. Interior Minister said that a National Fusion Center has been established for effective coordination. According to the briefing, 206 terrorists have been killed in 7984 intelligence-based operations till October this year. During the meeting, it was decided to take comprehensive measures to prevent the activities of banned terrorist organizations on social media. In this regard, with the cooperation of PTA, the accounts of terrorist groups will be blocked, while the provinces will take steps under a comprehensive strategy to stop the usage of illegal SIMS. The top officials of all relevant institu-



tions, including PTA, were directed to present an effective mechanism in the next meeting. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi condemned the recent incidents of terrorism in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He emphasized that full cooperation will be provided to improve the professional capabilities of the Counter-Terrorism Forces in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to deal with terrorism, adding that the police and Frontier Constabulary will be strengthened.

We are concerned over the escalating hostilities in Middle East, wherein Israel has endangered regional peace & security: Ishaq Dar

MASHHAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar has said that we are concerned over the escalating hostilities in the Middle East, wherein Israel has endangered regional peace and security. The people of Palestine, Lebanon and the wider region deserve to live free from fear and violence. This was stated by Ishaq while addressing the 28th Meeting of ECO Council of Ministers (COM) in Mashhad city of Iran on Tuesday. Ishaq Dar said "It is an honour for me to represent Pakistan at the Twenty Eighth ECO Council of Ministers Meeting in the sacred and the holy city of Iran, Mashhad, the city of Hazrat Emam Reza A.S. may Allah's blessings be upon him and his noble family". Ishaq Dar said "On behalf of the Pakistan

delegation and on my own behalf, I would like to convey our profound gratitude to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Governorate of Mashhad for extending such a warm hospitality and hosting the event in a befitting manner". Ishaq Dar said "I would like to express our deepest appreciation to the distinguished Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Syed Abbas Araghchi, the current Chair, for having ably led this body during his tenure, under the very apt and relevant theme of "Enhanced and Resilient ECO Region through expansion of Intra-Regional Trade" - emphasizing the true spirit of basis of cooperation of this organization". Ishaq Dar said "Though he has joined this organization fairly recently, I would also like to extend, my appreciation to



Ambassador Dr. Asad Majeed Khan, the Secretary General of the ECO, and a very able diplomat, for his commitment to infuse a renewed vigor and spirit in this

Organization". Ishaq Dar said "At the outset, I would like to convey our strongest condemnation over the Israeli genocide in Gaza

and its aggression in Lebanon. We are concerned over the escalating hostilities in the Middle East, wherein Israel has endangered regional peace and security. The people of Palestine, Lebanon and the wider region deserve to live free from fear and violence. Pakistan reiterates its call to uphold peace and security in the region, safeguard Lebanon's sovereignty and put an end to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Palestine". Ishaq Dar said Pakistan views ECO as a vital and invaluable platform for our regional countries, owing to shared history, cultural and linguistic affinities, common values and, subsequently, a mutual destiny. He said that ECO was founded with high hopes and great ambitions. The Treaty of Izmir envisaged a closely knit fraternity of member states, in an integrated, inter-

connected and prosperous region. Congruity of the member states provides an excellent opportunity to advance our collective interests in a befitting manner. Ishaq Dar said we are thankful to the Almighty for blessing our countries and the region with enormous resources. However, regrettably, we have a yet long way to go to realize the spirit and objectives of the Treaty of Izmir, by harnessing its full potential and bring tangible benefits to the ECO community, he said. Ishaq Dar said as suggested by the Islamic Republic of Iran, the theme of the year 2024 "Enhanced and Resilient ECO Region through expansion of Intra-Regional Trade" is not only a theme but a guiding principle for all of us that the progress and prosperity of the ECO region is hinged upon expansion of Intra-Regional Trade.

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Streamlining WASH

DR SHAFQAT MUNIR AHMAD AND ALI REHMAT

As a signatory and adopter of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including Goal 6, Pakistan recognises access to water and sanitation as a fundamental human right essential for dignity, health, hygiene, and development. Despite this commitment, the water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) sector faces significant challenges, particularly during humanitarian crises, hindering its ability to deliver effective services. Technical and financial constraints, compounded by fragmented institutions, inadequate budgetary allocations, mismanagement, lack of transparency, and limited cross-sector collaboration, exacerbate inefficiencies. Efforts at decentralisation have often fallen short, and weak monitoring systems and insufficient focus on water resource management further impede the effective delivery of WASH services. Tracking WASH expenditures presents another major challenge due to the absence of a unified financial monitoring and reporting system. Provinces and administrative units manage WASH services independently, resulting in fragmented data collection and inconsistent reporting nationwide. The absence of standardised tracking mechanisms also obscures the financial contributions of various stakeholders, including government agencies, donors, NGOs, the private sector, and households. To address these challenges, the World Health Organization (WHO) introduced the TrackFin methodology under the Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking Water (GLAAS) initiative. TrackFin provides a standardised approach for gathering and analysing financial data, enabling countries to better understand their WASH financing landscape and make informed decisions regarding planning, programming, and resource allocation. Complementing this effort, National WASH Accounts establish a comprehensive monitoring and tracking framework that captures both financial and non-financial data within the WASH sector. This framework quantifies financial flows, such as budget allocations, expenditures, and funding sources, while also evaluating service accessibility, quality, and the health impacts of WASH interventions. In Pakistan, the Ministry of Climate Change (MoCC) is charged with policy formulation, standard setting, reporting, and coordinating the country's regional and international commitments on WASH. To enhance institutional arrangements, the MoCC established a WASH Strategic Unit in 2018. However, there is currently no unified regulatory or monitoring body responsible for conducting monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and comprehensive reporting on WASH activities. Based on the successful implementation of TrackFin in more than 20 countries including Bangladesh and Nepal in South Asia, there is a need to establish a National WASH Account for Pakistan using the TrackFin methodology. The experiences from these countries demonstrate how robust WASH accounts can enhance financial tracking, improve resource management, and lead to the development of effective policies in the WASH sector. Developing a National WASH Account in Pakistan would rely on a range of stakeholders at the federal, provincial, and district levels. A National Steering Committee for the WASH Account has been proposed in a policy brief of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI). This needs to be established, comprising representatives from provincial governments, AJK, Gilgit-Baltistan, and federal ministries such as climate change, finance, water, health, planning, development, and special initiatives, along with federal and provincial SDG units, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, provincial bureaus and other relevant agencies. This committee, to be led by the WASH Unit at the Ministry of Climate Change, will provide strategic direction, approve methodologies, and ensure coordination across ministries and provinces. To enrich the process, the committee will invite sector experts from academia, NGOs, and development partners to share their knowledge and experience in WASH and financial tracking. Using the TrackFin methodology, the committee will oversee data collection, analysis, and reporting, develop technical guidelines, and provide training opportunities. The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics can play a key role in managing WASH-related financial and operational data. By leveraging existing data collection frameworks, such as the Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement (PSLM) Survey, the PBS can include WASH-specific financial indicators, capturing expenditure data from government bodies, NGOs, donors, development partners, and households. The WASH Unit at MoCC can also manage WASH Account-related functions for the federal territory. At the provincial level, administrative units play a vital role in identifying, planning, and implementing WASH policies, as well as allocating and utilising budgets within their jurisdictions. Following the 18th Amendment, provinces gained greater autonomy, enabling them to address sector-specific challenges more effectively. For instance, school WASH policies can now be tailored to local needs, addressing urban water quality issues or rural sanitation challenges, particularly in provinces such as Punjab and Sindh. This decentralised approach allows policies to be more relevant to local populations, increasing the likelihood of their success and ensuring the long-term sustainability of WASH initiatives in schools and communities. To ensure effective data collection and transparency at the local level, District WASH Committees should be established in all districts. These committees would involve local governments, communities, and NGOs in collecting WASH-related data, fostering a collaborative approach that enhances accountability. NGOs operating within the districts would contribute their data, helping to create a comprehensive local database. This district-level data would then be linked to the provincial level and ultimately integrated into the National WASH Account at the federal level, providing a unified and transparent overview of WASH expenditures and activities across Pakistan.

The writers work at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Islamabad.



Hassan Baig

A climate crossroads in Baku

emergency we are facing." The European Union, the US, and other wealthy nations are meeting with representatives from less developed countries to craft a detailed programme to phase out fossil fuels and address climate change. However, achieving tangible success remains an uphill battle. Pakistan is among the countries most severely affected by climate change, consistently ranking among the top ten most vulnerable nations. The catastrophic rains of 2022 impacted 33 million people and caused economic losses exceeding \$30 billion. Pakistan has actively participated in COPs to address the devastating effects of climate change. At COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in 2022, Pakistan successfully championed the establishment of a historic Loss and Damage Fund. At COP29, the country introduced its first National Climate Finance Strategy (NCFs), a framework designed to mobilise climate finance for adaptation and mitigation efforts. The strategy outlines a comprehensive approach to climate-related investments, international financing, and the mobilisation of domestic resources to tackle the challenges posed by climate change. The NCFs aims to enhance resilience through climate financing, enabling Pakistan to better cope with climate-related disasters. The strategy aligns with Pakistan's climate policy goals, including a 50 per cent reduction in emissions by 2030, with 35 per cent of this reduction relying on international financing and 15 per cent through domestic means. If adopted by developed nations, this approach could serve as a model for other less developed countries, representing a win-win solution for global climate action. While the secretary's efforts are praiseworthy, it is imperative to remind her and the provincial governments to address pressing domestic issues, such as the economic toll and health hazards caused by smog.

The government has yet to incentivise the transition from high-emission vehicles to cleaner electric vehicles (EVs). Additionally, promoting renewable energy solutions, particularly solar power, is crucial for a country like Pakistan, where solar energy represents a viable and sustainable alternative. Pakistan has sought approximately \$1 billion from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) under the climate finance category, following a \$7 billion bailout package under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF). The Economic Affairs Division has also secured a \$500 million climate finance agreement with the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Despite these efforts, institutional capacity remains a significant challenge. For instance, Pakistan's climate authority is not yet functional, and other disaster management authorities lack the capacity to address climate challenges effectively. There is an urgent need to build the capacity of these institutions to tackle the looming threat of climate disasters. The wealthy nations of the world are yet to fully acknowledge the importance of providing adequate climate financing to poor and vulnerable countries. At COP29, delegates from nearly 200 nations noted the conspicuous absence of key global leaders, creating a void in the commitment to addressing climate challenges. The potential return of Donald Trump has further fueled a sense of apprehension, casting a shadow over the future of climate financing. For many climate activists, this situation represents a bleak reality where climate issues are losing political priority. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) must be empowered to safeguard humanity and the planet from the catastrophic effects of global warming. World leaders and governments must recognise the urgency of addressing climate change as a top priority to avert widespread disaster and destruction.

The mechanisms of COP must be strengthened to ensure the effective implementation of decisions made at these conferences. Climate financing to phase out fossil fuels should be a central focus, with the Global North taking the lead in supporting the Global South to reduce emissions and mitigate climate impacts. Major emitters like the US, the European Union, China, India, and the UK must spearhead these efforts. However, the capitalist-driven policies of oil-producing nations, especially those with vast reserves of oil and gas, continue to hinder progress. These nations, primarily part of the Global North, must contribute significantly to climate financing to support the Global South. The reluctance of OPEC+ countries to transition away from fossil fuels due to economic interests poses a significant challenge. Striking a balance between their economic concerns and the urgent need for a fossil fuel-free environment is critical. There must be a firm resolve at the UN level to enforce the decisions made at COP conferences. The sanctity of these decisions must be upheld, with consequences for those who violate them. Given that the stakes involve the survival of humanity, climate action must be pursued with the urgency of a war effort. Violators of climate agreements should face stringent penalties. The decisions to mitigate climate impacts should be implemented with the same rigour as those made by the UN Security Council. The road ahead is fraught with challenges, but the stakes are too high to falter. All nations must prioritise climate action, forge stronger alliances, and commit to a sustainable future. Only through collective resolve and immediate action can we hope to address the existential threat posed by climate change.

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Today in History

History of Pakistan



However, in 1971, after the country had experienced more than two decades of turbulent politics, the eastern region seceded and established itself as the independent state of Bangladesh. In the aftermath of that event, Pakistan (now reduced to the former West Pakistan) faced a number of political and economic problems and uncertainties about its future. Several seemingly irreconcilable domestic conflicts have left their mark on the politics of Pakistan. The first of these occurred at the highest levels of leadership, involving the key political actors from the political parties, the higher bureaucracy, and the upper echelon of the armed forces (notably the Pakistani army). Con-

tinuations in Pakistan have been less about limiting the power of authority and more a legal justification for arbitrary action. The country's several constitutions reflected more the pre-eminence of the person holding the highest office than the restrictions imposed on authority, and the national government consistently has been more personalized than institutionalized. The viceregalism of the colonial past has haunted Pakistan from its inception, and struggles for power are therefore more personal than constitutional. In addition, given the ever-present external threat posed by India, the military not only improved and modernized its fighting capability, but it also felt compelled to intervene in the country's political affairs when it perceived that civilian

leadership was unable to govern. The result has been several military administrations (1958-69, 1969-71, 1977-88, and 1999-2008), which ruled Pakistan for roughly half of its history. A second conflict has taken place between regional groups. The regions that originally made up Pakistan had to be fitted into a design not of their own choosing. The different cultural and historical circumstances, as well as natural and human endowments of those regions, have tested the unity of Pakistan time and again; the loss of East Pakistan demonstrated the failure of Pakistan's leaders to orchestrate a workable program of national integration. Even after that event, Pakistan has had difficulty reconciling

claims. Punjab, being the largest and most significant province, has always been perceived as imposing its will on the others, and even attempts at establishing quotas for governmental and nongovernmental opportunities and resources have not satisfied the discontented. The demands for an independent Sindh Desh for the Sindhis and a Pakhtunistan for the Pathans, and the violently rebellious circumstances in Balochistan in the 1980s and since 2002, illustrate the nature and depth of the problem of national integration. Because these various struggles have been directed against centralized authority, they have merged with the democratic struggle.

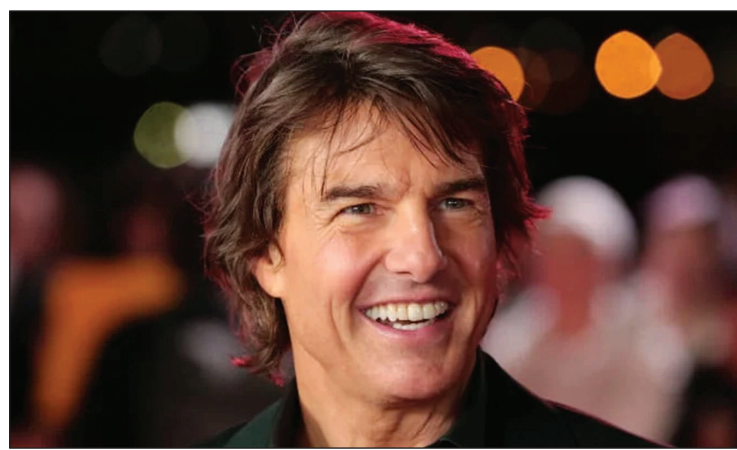
To be continued.....

Showbiz

Tom Cruise sets eyes on thrilling new collaboration with Doug Liman

Tom Cruise collaborates with director for explosive new project

Tom Cruise is gearing up for a supernatural thriller, Deeper after Doug Liman confirmed his appearance in the project. During New York City screening of the documentary Gaucho Gaucho, Liman opened up to Showbiz411 about finally being able to explore the 'horror' genre. According to Deadline, Liman told the outlet, "I have never done one, and neither has Tom." Serving as a sequel to Edge of Tomorrow, the film has been on the table since 2016 and has constantly evolved with time. The director had previously stated that he would only consider moving forward with the project if the story surpassed the original. In an exclusive sit-down



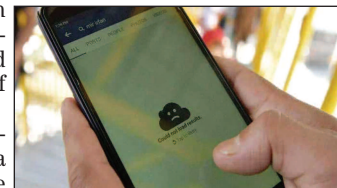
with The Hollywood Reporter, Liman shared his stance on a follow-up film to the Edge of Tomorrow. He told the publication at the time, "I hadn't watched it in years, but I've started re-watching it this year. I recently re-watched the movie with the studio. I've watched it with Tom Cruise. I'm going to re-watch it with Emily Blunt. 'So the good news is that I'm like, 'Wow, it's a really good movie,' but the bad news is that I'm like, 'Wow, it's a really good movie. I only want to do a sequel if I can do it better.' 'But I'm trying to do that, so there's hardly a day that goes by that I don't spend a little bit of time figuring out how to do it and do it better.'"

Tech

Why are media files facing issues on WhatsApp?

As users across Pakistan continue to face internet hindrances, resulting in difficulties with browsing, as well as downloading and sharing media files, Sajjad Mustafa Syed, chairman of the Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA), has hinted at "possible surveillance" of social media platforms. "If a message is being delivered on WhatsApp but a picture is not, it is possible that monitoring is underway," he said in a statement. Reports indicate that both WiFi and mobile data services were experiencing severe slowdowns, making it nearly impossible for users to send or receive media files, such as images, videos, and voice notes on popular platforms like WhatsApp. The incumbent government has officially confirmed that the government was upgrading its 'web management system' as it carried

out multiple tests of its internet firewall, with the first and second trials conducted in July and August, respectively. On both occasions, the trials slowed down internet speeds and disrupted digital platforms. However, no specific reason has come to light for recent internet disruptions featuring slow internet speed. These internet issues were confirmed by Downtetector.com which showed Gmail outages spiking at around 9am today (Tuesday). Meanwhile, the P@SHA chairman — in a statement today — also rejected the notion of information technology (IT) companies leaving Pakistan due to slow internet speed, saying: "Not a single company has left the country." He said that full-time IT workers were not facing an issue as there was not a problem with fixed-line internet.



Eating More Plant Than Animal Protein May Cut Your Heart Disease Risk

Diets with a higher ratio of plant to animal protein may be beneficial for cardiovascular health. New research published in The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition found that those who ate the highest ratio of plant-based protein to animal-based protein had a 19% lower risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD) and a 27% lower risk of coronary heart disease (CHD) when compared with those who ate the lowest ratio of plant to animal protein. "The average American eats a 1.3 plant-to-animal protein ratio. Our findings suggest a ratio of at least 1:2 is much more effective in preventing CVD. For CHD prevention, a ratio of 1:1.3 or higher should come from plants," Andrea Glenn, lead author of the study and a visiting scientist in the Department of Nutrition at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, said in a press statement.

In undertaking their study, the researchers examined 30 years of data on heart health, diet, and lifestyle of nearly 203,000 males and females. The participants were enrolled in the Nurses' Health Studies I and II as well as the Health Professionals' Follow-up study. Participants were asked to report on their diet every four years as part of these studies. From this data, the researchers calculated the participants' daily protein intake in grams, including both plant and animal protein. The researchers adjusted for the health history of the participants, as well as lifestyle and socioeconomic factors. They found that the participants who ate a higher ratio of plant to animal protein had the lowest risk for cardiovascular disease and coronary heart disease. They found those reductions were even greater in

those who ate more protein overall. Whilst the risk reduction of cardiovascular disease began to plateau at a 1:2 ratio of plant to animal protein, the reduction in coronary heart disease risk continued to reduce with higher ratios of plant to animal protein. The researchers say the reduction in risk for those diseases is likely due to replacing red or processed meat with plant protein sources like nuts and legumes. These plant proteins are often associated with higher amounts of healthy fats, fiber, antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals. They have also been found to improve cardiometabolic risk factors like inflammatory biomarkers, blood pressure, and blood lipids. "Most of us need to begin shifting our diets toward plant-based proteins," Frank Hu, MD,



Health

روزنامہ اشرفیہ

دی اشرفیہ گراف

اسلام آباد

جنوبی کوریا کے صدر نے ملک میں مارشل لا لگا دیا

سیول (ما نیٹرنگ ڈیسک) جنوبی کوریا کے صدر یون سئک پوئل نے ملک میں مارشل لا لگا دیا۔ اس کے تحت سختی سے نگرانی کی جائے گی اور ملک میں کوئی بھی احتجاجی سرگرمی کی جائے تو سختی سے دبانے کا حکم دیا گیا ہے۔

بدھ 04 دسمبر 2024ء

پانی کے وسائل کو محفوظ بنانے کیلئے اہم اقدامات کرنا ہونگے: وزیر اعظم

پاکستان موسمیاتی تبدیلی سے سب سے زیادہ متاثر ہوا، 2022 کے سیلاب نے پاکستان میں بہت تباہی مچائی، 2023 پر سعودی ولی عہد محمد بن سلمان کو شاندار الفاظ میں خراج تحسین پیش کیا

پنجاب کے سرکاری ملازمین کیلئے پنشن میں سالانہ اضافہ ختم

لاہور (بیورو رپورٹ) پنجاب کے محکمہ پنشن کے سرکاری ملازمین کے لیے سالانہ اضافہ ختم کر دیا گیا ہے۔ وزیر اعلیٰ پنجاب محمد شہباز شریف نے اس بارے میں ایک پریس کانفرنس میں کہا کہ حکومت نے اس بارے میں فیصلہ کر لیا ہے کہ ملازمین کے پنشن میں اضافہ ختم کر دیا جائے گا۔

پنجاب میں سوا 8 بجے سے پبلک سکول کھولنے پر پابندی کو ٹھیکیشن جاری

لاہور (بیورو رپورٹ) پنجاب میں سکولوں کے کھولنے کے لیے پبلک سکولوں کو 8 بجے سے کھولنے کی اجازت دی گئی ہے۔ وزیر اعلیٰ پنجاب محمد شہباز شریف نے اس بارے میں ایک پریس کانفرنس میں کہا کہ حکومت نے اس بارے میں فیصلہ کر لیا ہے کہ پبلک سکولوں کو 8 بجے سے کھولنے کی اجازت دی جائے گی۔



ریاض، وزیر اعظم شہباز شریف "دن وانڈرٹرسٹ" سے خطاب کر رہے ہیں

ٹیکس اور وصولیوں کے درمیان کو آرڈی نیشن، بہتر بنانے کا فیصلہ، امن کیلئے ملکر کام کرنا ہے، وزیر داخلہ

نی نی اے کے تعاون سے دہشت گرد گروہوں کا انہدام اور قانونی امور کی روک تھام کیلئے اقدامات کئے جائیں گے، محسن نقوی

اسلام آباد (ضلع رپورٹر) وفاقی وزیر داخلہ محمد نواز خان نے کہا ہے کہ انہدام اور قانونی امور کی روک تھام کیلئے اقدامات کئے جائیں گے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ حکومت نے اس بارے میں فیصلہ کر لیا ہے کہ پبلک سکولوں کو 8 بجے سے کھولنے کی اجازت دی جائے گی۔



تہذیبی فریڈم ڈیپارٹمنٹ کے ملازمین نے سرکاری سکولوں میں سکولوں کے کھولنے کے لیے پبلک سکولوں کو 8 بجے سے کھولنے کی اجازت دی گئی ہے۔

فیک نیوز پر 5 سال قید یا 10 لاکھ روپے جرمانے کی سزا ہوگی، سماج سیکرٹری ائم ترمیمی بل تیار

اسلام آباد (ضلع رپورٹر) وفاقی حکومت نے سماج سیکرٹری ائم ترمیمی بل تیار کیا ہے۔ اس بل کے تحت 5 سال قید یا 10 لاکھ روپے جرمانے کی سزا ہوگی۔

کراچی (بیورو رپورٹ) وزیر اعلیٰ پنجاب شہباز شریف نے کہا ہے کہ حکومت نے اس بارے میں فیصلہ کر لیا ہے کہ پبلک سکولوں کو 8 بجے سے کھولنے کی اجازت دی جائے گی۔

سٹاک ایکسچینج میں تیزی، ایٹریکس 11 لاکھ 4 ہزار پوائنٹس کی تصفیہ کار پار گیا

کراچی (بیورو رپورٹ) سٹاک ایکسچینج میں تیزی دیکھی گئی ہے۔ ایٹریکس 11 لاکھ 4 ہزار پوائنٹس کی تصفیہ کار پار گیا ہے۔



لاہور، وزیر اعلیٰ پنجاب مریم نواز اختر پنجاب پروگرام کی افتتاحی تقریب سے خطاب کر رہی ہیں

میرے پاس اب بھی ایک آخری پتہ ہے، عمران خان

لاہور (بیورو رپورٹ) عمران خان نے کہا ہے کہ میرے پاس اب بھی ایک آخری پتہ ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ حکومت نے اس بارے میں فیصلہ کر لیا ہے کہ پبلک سکولوں کو 8 بجے سے کھولنے کی اجازت دی جائے گی۔



ایران، نائب وزیر اعظم اسحاق ڈار سے تازہ گفتگو کے دوران عمران خان سے مل کر رہے ہیں

سیاستی عدم استحکام نے ملکی معیشت کو نقصان پہنچایا، احسن اقبال

اسلام آباد (بیورو رپورٹ) احسن اقبال نے کہا ہے کہ سیاستی عدم استحکام نے ملکی معیشت کو نقصان پہنچایا ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ حکومت نے اس بارے میں فیصلہ کر لیا ہے کہ پبلک سکولوں کو 8 بجے سے کھولنے کی اجازت دی جائے گی۔

پی ٹی آئی لاشوں پر جھوٹ پھیلا کر ریاست کو بدنام کر رہی، عطا اللہ تارڑ

قوم کو بے رحمی سے بھونڈا مذاق کیا جا رہا ہے، ایک بھی لاشیں، اگر ہوتی تو سامنے آ جاتی کوئی کہتا ہے، وزیر اطلاعات

اسلام آباد (ضلع رپورٹر) وفاقی وزیر اطلاعات و نشریات عطا اللہ تارڑ نے کہا ہے کہ پی ٹی آئی نے لاشوں پر جھوٹ پھیلا کر ریاست کو بدنام کر رہی ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ حکومت نے اس بارے میں فیصلہ کر لیا ہے کہ پبلک سکولوں کو 8 بجے سے کھولنے کی اجازت دی جائے گی۔

صوبے کے حالات غلط پالیسی سے خراب ہوئے، علی امین گنڈاپور

نوجوان نسلی ہی مہاراجہ، مستقبل تعلیم کے لیے کوئی معاشرتی نہیں رکھنا، حکومت

صوبے کے حالات غلط پالیسی سے خراب ہوئے، علی امین گنڈاپور نے کہا ہے کہ صوبے کے حالات غلط پالیسی سے خراب ہوئے ہیں۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ حکومت نے اس بارے میں فیصلہ کر لیا ہے کہ پبلک سکولوں کو 8 بجے سے کھولنے کی اجازت دی جائے گی۔

سیاستی عدم استحکام نے ملکی معیشت کو نقصان پہنچایا، احسن اقبال نے کہا ہے کہ سیاستی عدم استحکام نے ملکی معیشت کو نقصان پہنچایا ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ حکومت نے اس بارے میں فیصلہ کر لیا ہے کہ پبلک سکولوں کو 8 بجے سے کھولنے کی اجازت دی جائے گی۔

پی ٹی آئی کو دشمن ملکی سے سپورٹ مل رہی ہے، سعید غنی

پاکستان کو قوم کی حمایت سے پاکستان مخالف ہر سازش کو ناکام بنا دیں گی، آری چیف

پاک فوج قوم کی پر عزم حمایت سے ملکی دفاع اور سلامتی کو لائق کسی بھی خطرے سے نمٹنے کی صلاحیت رکھتی ہے، جنرل عامر منیر

پاکستان کے دفاع اور سلامتی کو لائق کسی بھی خطرے سے نمٹنے کی صلاحیت رکھتی ہے، جنرل عامر منیر نے کہا ہے کہ پاکستان کی فوج قوم کی پر عزم حمایت سے ملکی دفاع اور سلامتی کو لائق کسی بھی خطرے سے نمٹنے کی صلاحیت رکھتی ہے۔

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اسرائیلی حملوں میں مزید 11 لبنانی شہید، حزب اللہ کا بھرپور جواب

پارلیمنٹ کا اجلاس بلا کر لاپتہ افراد کو مستحل کیا جائے، آئینی بیچ

لاپتہ افراد واپس آنے پر کئی بھی ثنائی علاقہ جات میں آرام کے لیے گئے تھے، جشن جلال مندوخیل کے ریمارکس

اسلام آباد (جنرل رپورٹر) پارلیمنٹ کے اجلاس بلا کر لاپتہ افراد کو مستحل کیا جائے، آئینی بیچ نے کہا ہے کہ حکومت نے اس بارے میں فیصلہ کر لیا ہے کہ پبلک سکولوں کو 8 بجے سے کھولنے کی اجازت دی جائے گی۔

انٹرنیٹ بند کر کے نوجوانوں کو بے روزگاری اور جمہوری آزادیوں کو قید کیا جا رہا ہے، حافظ نعیم

دینا بھر میں آئی ٹی سیکٹر بلندیوں کو چھو رہا ہے، ہمارے ہاں آئے روز فائر وال نصب کرنے کے تجربے ہوتے ہیں

انٹرنیٹ بند کر کے نوجوانوں کو بے روزگاری اور جمہوری آزادیوں کو قید کیا جا رہا ہے، حافظ نعیم نے کہا ہے کہ حکومت نے اس بارے میں فیصلہ کر لیا ہے کہ پبلک سکولوں کو 8 بجے سے کھولنے کی اجازت دی جائے گی۔



اسلام آباد، امیر جماعت اسلامی حافظ نعیم الرحمن خدمت فاؤنڈیشن کے تحت انٹرنیشنل ڈے پروگرام کا افتتاح کر رہے ہیں

اسرائیلی حملوں میں مزید 11 لبنانی شہید، حزب اللہ کا بھرپور جواب

غزہ میں یہودیوں نے فوج کے 24 گھنٹوں میں مزید 50 سے زیادہ فلسطینی شہید کر دیے

اسرائیلی حملوں میں مزید 11 لبنانی شہید، حزب اللہ کا بھرپور جواب نے کہا ہے کہ اسرائیل نے لبنان میں حملوں کو جاری رکھا ہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ حکومت نے اس بارے میں فیصلہ کر لیا ہے کہ پبلک سکولوں کو 8 بجے سے کھولنے کی اجازت دی جائے گی۔

راج درخشاہتوں کی وصولی میں 10 دسمبر تک توسیع کر دی، وزارت مذہبی امور

افراد کا ہوا تھا کوہِ نور سے زائد درخواستیں وصول ہونے کی صورت میں فریڈم آف ریجن کیلئے کی جائے گی، سندھ پارلیمنٹ کی 10 دسمبر تک توسیع کر دی گئی ہے



تعمیراتی کاموں کے لیے تیار کردہ کونکریٹ کے ڈھانچے میں بچے اور بچیاں شریک ہیں

Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong calls on Bilawal Bhutto

ISLAMABAD: Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong arrived at Zardari House in Islamabad to meet Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Tuesday. The visiting dignitary and Bilawal discussed bilateral relations between China and Pakistan. The two sides also discussed ways to increase social and cultural exchanges between the two countries. Former foreign minister Hina Rabbani Khar was also present during the meeting.

The meeting comes more than a month after the Chinese ambassador urged Islamabad to crack down on terrorist groups targeting Chinese nationals in the country. "Top priority should be the security of the Chinese personnel in Pakistan because they come to Pakistan to participate in Pakistan's development," Jiang Zaidong told journalists at a press conference at his residence at the Chinese Embassy.

"They [Chinese] are innocent and they don't deserve this kind of sacrifice and their families do not deserve this kind of tragedy," the envoy added. The ambassador said during the recent visit of the Chinese premier the Pakistani leader made commitments that the government would crack down on terrorism and effectively safeguard the security of Chinese personnel, institutions and projects. Responding to the Chinese ambassador's remarks, Pakistan said they were "perplexing" and contrary to established diplomatic traditions between the neighbors. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Muntaz Baloch said at a weekly news conference in Islamabad that the government was dedicated to ensuring the security of Chinese nationals, projects, and institutions in Pakistan.

IMF program proceeding smoothly, govt ensuring successful completion

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) program is proceeding smoothly as the government remains fully committed to meeting all the conditionalities and ensuring the successful completion of the 37-month program in close coordination with the fund's representatives.

A press statement issued by the Ministry of Finance on Tuesday reaffirmed that the Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb has consistently emphasized upon the government's continued commitment to macroeconomic reforms.

In a recent briefing to the National Assembly Standing Committee on Finance, the minister reiterated that adhering to the IMF program is critical for achieving lasting macroeconomic stability. Any speculation regarding "hiccups" in the program's implementation is based on one's subjective interpretations and lacks credible evidence.

The government remains focused on maintaining economic stability and fulfilling all obligations under the IMF program with diligence and transparency, aiming to lay the foundation for stronger, sustainable and inclusive growth, it added.



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Pak's economic growth is now a testament of progress amid certain elements disrupting the continuity of policy: Ahsan Iqbal

Says peace, political stability, policy consistency & continuous reforms are the four pillars of a successful nation



VOM Report

KARACHI: The Institute of Business Administration (IBA) Karachi hosted the 4th World Islamic Finance Forum (WIFF) at Mövenpick Hotel, Karachi, under the theme "Islamic Finance: Innovation, Climate Finance & Sustainable Growth."

The event brought together prominent policymakers, industry leaders, and academicians to discuss the critical role of Islamic finance in shaping a sustainable and ethical global economy. Key attendees included Dr. Akbar Zaidi, Executive Director of IBA Karachi; Irfan Siddiqui, CEO of Meezan Bank; Akif Saeed, Chairman SECP; Saim Ullah, Deputy Governor, State Bank of Pakistan; and Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal, as the special guest of the event. The forum marked a significant milestone with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Dr. Akbar Zaidi and Irfan Siddiqui, CEO of Meezan Bank, to foster collaboration in research, training, and capacity-building for advancing Islamic finance.

Saim Ullah, Deputy Governor SBP, discussed the central bank's initiatives to expand Islamic finance. "Islamic finance provides a disciplined framework by identifying and eliminating irresponsible financial practices," he stated. He highlighted that SBP's Standing Committee on Transformation is advancing compliance and has requested transformation plans from private banks. "Transitioning public debt into Shariah-compliant instruments remains a significant challenge," he added. Akif Saeed, Chairman SECP, called for innovation in Islamic finance. "The integration of fintech with Islamic finance principles offers unparalleled opportunities for expanding financial inclusion and addressing global sustainability challenges," he remarked.

Federal Minister Ahsan Iqbal addressed the forum, emphasizing Pakistan's commitment to climate action and sustainable growth. "For Pakistan, climate action is not a choice but an imperative. Ranked among the top 10 nations most vulnerable to climate change, the devastating floods of 2022 caused economic losses exceeding \$30 billion," he stated. The Minister outlined key governmental initiatives: Issuance of Pakistan's First Green Sukuk worth \$500 million, funding renewable energy projects and reducing reliance on fossil fuels. Targeting a 60% renewable energy share by 2030, aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He further emphasized the critical role of economic stability. "Peace, political stability, policy consistency, and continuous reforms are the four pillars of a successful nation," he said. Highlighting Pakistan's economic recovery, he noted the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) surpassing the 100,000 milestone, a testament to investor confidence, he added. "Certain elements in the country don't want economic and political stability, and as soon as PSX crossed the milestone, they marched towards Islamabad to cause instability and chaos. This resulted in a hit on PSX as it fell by 3,500 points." He further stated, "We are grateful that the public supported us in 2022 when we had to take tough measures to meet IMF conditions which the previous government didn't fulfill. Now, the people of Pakistan are happy as we have avoided calls of bankruptcy and have saved ourselves from becoming an example like Sri Lanka."

Pakistan, Russia discuss expansion of bilateral connectivity



MOSCOW: Minister for Energy Sardar Awaiz Ahmad Khan Leghari and Russian Minister for Transport Mr. Roman Starovoyt, in a meeting held here Tuesday, positively assessed the prospects of expanding bilateral connectivity which would not only benefit Pakistan and Russia but also the entire region.

Sardar Awaiz Ahmad Khan Leghari is on a visit to Moscow to co-chair the 9th session of Pakistan-Russia IGC, said a press release. Sardar Awaiz Leghari appreciated the growing level of cooperation between Pakistan and Russia. "The two sides took stock of all bilateral cooperation projects in the transport sector including road, rail and air, it further said. Both sides agreed to continue contacts and enhance cooperation. Awaiz Leghari also invited Russian minister Starovoyt to visit Pakistan."

Ambassador of Turkiye calls on Khawaja Muhammad Asif



ISLAMABAD: Irfan Neziroglu, Ambassador of Turkiye called on Minister for Defence and Defence Production, Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Tuesday. Khawaja Asif extended a warm welcome to visiting dignitary and expressed satisfaction over common understanding on regional and global geo-political situation, said a press release.

The Minister stated that Pakistan and Turkiye enjoy exemplary fraternal relations based on common faith, culture, values, civilization and historical linkages, mutual trust and support. He appreciated Turkiye's strong support for Pakistan on multiple foras.

He also stated that enhanced defence cooperation is an important aspect of our bilateral relationship, characterized by Joint projects, Joint Exercises and Military Training.

Both sides acknowledged the strong relationship between two countries and committed to further expand collaboration in the mutually beneficial fields.

Govt. committed to addressing freelancers' challenges, promoting IT growth: Shaza



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja, on Tuesday reaffirmed the government's commitment to addressing the challenges faced by freelancers and fostering the growth of Pakistan's IT and telecommunication industry.

During a meeting with Pakistani freelancers and influencers, she praised them as true representatives of the promising future of Pakistan's digital economy.

She emphasized their role in positioning the country as a global hub for talent, innovation, and creativity. The meeting was also attended by IT Secretary Zarar Hasham Khan. President of the Pakistan Freelancers Association, Tufail Ahmed Khan, and Chairman Ibrahim Amin participated via video link. The minister outlined ongoing efforts to equip youth, freelancers, students, and professionals with digital skills and tools to seize opportunities in both international and local online markets. She highlighted the DigiSkills program, which is training young individuals in cutting-edge digital competencies.

She also discussed the progress on the National Fiberization Plan, aimed at improving connectivity across the country to ensure high-quality telecom services. She stressed the importance of responsible internet use and reiterated the government's focus on promoting digitization. She noted with optimism the steady increase in Pakistan's IT exports. The meeting concluded with a Q & A session, during which freelancers shared their feedback and suggestions.

Minister hosts Chinese delegation to foster collaborative healthcare, skill develop initiatives

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development convened a meeting with a Chinese delegation to explore collaborative opportunities in the realms of healthcare and skill development.

Chinese delegation lead by Ms Scarlet, head, OPH, Healthcare project presented a comprehensive proposal by GAREA Group, a renowned provider of integrated solutions for digital products and services in primary healthcare, said a press release.

The proposed project endeavors to provide affordable healthcare services to remote areas through the strategic deployment of AI-based cloud computing, thereby reducing costs and enhancing access to accurate diagnoses. A notable feature of the project is the introduction of a portable diagnostic machine, capable of diagnosing 7-8 types of diseases, which will significantly reduce transportation costs and increase accessibility. Furthermore, the project's digital platform will enable seamless communication between patients, doctors, and medical stores.

We are concerned over the...

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Ishaq Dar said "However, It is a matter of great concern that the ECO region, comprising an area of 8 million square kilometers and half a billion population - roughly 15% of the World population, has intra-regional trade of, unfortunately, less than 8% of region's aggregate, and only about 2% in global trade, which is in stark contrast to other regional groupings such as the EU where the intra-regional trade stands above 70%, and the ASEAN, where it is around 23%."

Ishaq Dar said that ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) is a landmark intra-regional preferential trade agreement, which was conceptualized exactly in line with the founding and fundamental goals of the organization; to create amenable and conducive conditions for promotion of sustainable economic development of the region, aiming at joint welfare and well-being of member states. He said that ECOTA that primarily aims to

lower tariffs in our region over an agreed timeframe provides an excellent platform for the promotion of our region's economic interests by trade promotion and facilitation. Despite a considerable period since its inception, it is yet to see day light of implementation. So far, only five member states have signed the agreement.

Ishaq Dar said as the coordinating country on ECOTA, Pakistan attaches great importance to its early implementation. We would urge all member states to take a broader and more holistic view of the matter and join us in the earliest implementation of ECOTA.

Ishaq Dar said "ECO Vision 2025", adopted during the 13th ECO Summit in Islamabad in 2017 is a key document that guides us towards increasing intra-regional trade; strengthening regional connectivity; operationalizing the major ECO transport corridors; coordinating efforts to achieve energy security and sustainability; increasing inter-regional trade including increasing contribution of ECO countries in the global trade, and finally promoting tourism. SABAH

PVMA calls for edible oil policy, seeks govt's support for trade, local production

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Vanspati Manufacturers Association (PVMA), led by its Chairman Sheikh Umer Rehan, on Tuesday held a meeting with Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan, highlighting critical challenges facing the edible oil industry and proposing measures to enhance its sustainability and global competitiveness.

During the meeting, Sheikh Umer Rehan underscored the urgent need for a comprehensive edible oil policy to address Pakistan's heavy reliance on imports, which currently account for 90 percent of the country's edible oil consumption, said a press release issued here. "A robust policy is essential to boost local production and shield the economy from global market disruptions," he emphasized.

Rehan expressed concern over Indonesia's new legislation mandating that 40 percent of palm oil be diverted to biodiesel production. He explained that this policy has disrupted global supplies, causing price hikes that significantly impact Pakistan, the third-largest importer of palm oil globally. "The rising prices and reduced availability of palm oil from Indonesia pose severe risks to

Pakistan's food security and local industries," he warned. The chairman called on the government to leverage Pakistan's status as a major importer to negotiate favorable terms with global suppliers. He also urged a reduction in import duties and taxes on edible oil sourced from Malaysia and Indonesia to stabilize prices for local consumers.

The PVMA proposed expanding export opportunities for Pakistani edible oil products to markets in the Middle East and the United States



through sea routes. Highlighting barriers in the existing Free Trade Agreements (FTA) and Preferential Trade Agreements (PTA) with Malaysia and Indonesia, Mr. Rehan called for a reduction of at least 50% in import duties on soybean and sunflower during Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's upcoming visit to these countries. Minister Jam Kamal Khan encouraged the PVMA to submit a detailed proposal within two to three days to address these issues and enable negotiations during the PM's visit.

He assured the industry of the government's full support in resolving challenges and promoting growth. He also asked the association to include proposals for devising an edible oil policy to reduce Pakistan's dependency on palm oil imports from Malaysia and Indonesia. Sheikh Umer Rehan also proposed a pilot project to produce edible oil from rice husks, a byproduct often wasted in Pakistan despite its extensive rice production. He cited neighboring countries successfully utilizing this method and urged Pakistan to adopt similar initiatives to reduce dependency on imports and improve self-reliance.

Concluding the meeting, the PVMA chairman presented a shield to Minister Jam Kamal Khan as a gesture of gratitude. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening the edible oil sector through policy reforms, innovative projects, and international cooperation. This engagement highlights the federal government's recognition of the edible oil industry's pivotal role in Pakistan's economy and the importance of addressing its challenges for long-term sustainability. DNA



ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf exchanging views with Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan, Irfan Neziroglu at Naval Headquarters.

Everyone has to work together...

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He underscored that everyone has to work together to improve the law and order situation. He said that along with increasing capacity, the police of all provinces should be equipped with modern technology. Interior Minister announced to fulfill the needs of law enforcement agencies on a priority basis and directed all agencies to submit a report on their requirements to the Interior Ministry within seven days. He highlighted that NACTA will play a leading role in the fight against terrorism, reforms have been initiated in NACTA, and the original role of NACTA is being restored. During the meeting, the arrangements made for the security of Chinese citizens were also reviewed.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi directed the full implementation of the foolproof security plan for the protection of Chinese citizens. He further said that Coast Guards will be strengthened to prevent narcotics smuggling in coastal areas. Furthermore, the meeting also reviewed the progress on the decisions made for counterterrorism including the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Authority in Islamabad. National Coordinator NACTA Khalid Khattak gave a detailed briefing regarding the implementation of the decisions of second review meeting. Federal Secretary Interior, National Coordinator NACTA, IGs of all provinces, IG Railways Police, Commandant Frontier Constabulary, IG Islamabad Police, and senior officials of the Ministry of Interior and law enforcement agencies also attended the meeting. SABAH