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All govt digital platforms must be made more effective in line with contemporary needs: PM

Says transition of federal ministries to e-office systems is one of the most significant reforms to date and directed that its use be ensured across all subordinate departments and state-owned enterprises

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Monday, highlighting the government's priority of facilitating citizens in accessing public services, directed that all government digital platforms must be made more effective in line with contemporary needs.

The prime minister chaired a review meeting on ongoing reforms at the National Information Technology Board (NITB) and the progress of Islamabad Technology Park's construction, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The prime minister directed NITB to focus on providing citizens with easy, efficient, and modern digital services.

He emphasized that all relevant institutions must work in a coordinated manner to ensure timely, transparent, and accessible digital services.

He noted that the transition of federal ministries to e-office systems was one of the most significant reforms to date and directed that its use be ensured across all subordinate departments and state-owned enterprises.

Ministers Ahsan Iqbal, Ahad Khan Cheema, Dr. Musadik Masood Malik, Shaza Fatima Khawaja and senior officials from relevant institutions attended. The prime minister further asked the acceleration of digitization process in government institutions, including the digitalization of records of all public properties at the earliest.

The meeting also reviewed progress on Islamabad Technology Park's construction. Expressing displeasure over delays in the completion of Islamabad Technology Park, the prime minister directed that construction must be expedited and the park be made operational on a priority basis, with its management fully outsourced.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif minister chairs a review meeting on ongoing reforms at the National Information Technology Board (NITB) and the progress of Islamabad Technology Park's construction



ISLAMABAD: PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar (left), KP CM Sohail Afridi (centre) and PTI leader Asad Qaiser address press confernce

PTI reiterates demand for Imran's medical treatment at hospital

ISLAMABAD, (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has reiterated that the party's founder, Imran Khan, be shifted to hospital for proper medical treatment in consultation with his doctors and family.

Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar said that the party had repeatedly demanded that Imran be shifted to hospital, stressing that receiving medical treatment is his fundamental right.

The PTI chairman said it had been acknowledged before the Supreme Court that the PTI founder's blood pressure had risen and that he was taking medication. He said the party had not received any information from an independent source about Imran's current health.

The presser came hours after Adiala jail authorities submitted a report to the Supreme Court, stating that the PTI founder had received treatment from top ophthalmologists of Islamabad and Rawalpindi for his eye condition and one of his eyes had almost returned to normal.

The report said the former prime minister and his wife had been meeting every Tuesday under jail rules, with 84 meetings held so far.

It added that lawyer Salman Safdar had met former premier Khan on February 10 and April 4, 2026. "We have repeatedly said that we do not politicise the health of the PTI founder," he said.

Barrister Gohar also demanded access for Imran Khan's family and doctors, saying that meetings with the former prime minister had been stopped for several months.

He said Aleema Khan and Imran's other sisters had the right to meet him.

"There is nowhere written that they cannot speak outside after meeting him," Gohar said.

Urging the authorities to "stop this game of cat and mouse", he demanded that access to the PTI founder be restored, adding that access to him had been blocked since last October.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi also expressed concern over Imran's health, saying that a "worrying" report regarding his condition had emerged.

Afridi said he would hold a detailed meeting with Imran Khan's personal doctor and announce the party's course of action after the consultation.



Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain meets Ambassador of Egypt to Pakistan H.E. Dr. Ihab Mohamed Abdelhamid Hassan.

Anti-Corruption Establishment registers case over alleged underpricing of Irrigation Department assets

QUETTA,(VoM Report): The Anti-Corruption Establishment Balochistan has registered a case over the alleged auctioning of valuable government assets, vehicles, and heavy machinery belonging to the Balochistan Irrigation Department at extremely low prices, while the scope of the investigation has also been expanded.

During the operation, geologist/deputy director Talha Bugti was arrested, while raids are continuing at various locations to arrest other alleged suspects.

According to sources, criminal proceedings were initiated by the Anti-Corruption Establishment Balochistan after allegations emerged of irregularities in the auction of valuable government vehicles and heavy machinery belonging to the Balochistan Irrigation Department, including the alleged fixing of low prices for the assets and a possible loss of millions of rupees to the national exchequer. Sources said the investigation is examining the basis on which government vehicles and heavy machinery were auctioned at extremely low prices compared with their actual value, as well as the role played by the relevant officers and employees of the Irrigation Department in the entire process.

Talha Bugti Arrested; More Arrests Expected

According to sources, geologist/deputy director Talha Bugti has been arrested during the investigation into the alleged irregularities. Anti-Corruption Balochistan teams are conducting operations at various locations to arrest other individuals named in the case or allegedly involved in the matter.

Initial Investigation Claims Important Evidence Found

President Zardari felicitates Indonesian leadership on Independence Day

ISLAMABAD, (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday extended felicitations to the President of the Republic of Indonesia Prabowo Subianto, the Government and the people of Indonesia on their Independence Day, annually observed on August 17.

The president, in his letter to the Indonesian president, stated that this historic occasion commemorated the spirit, resilience and determination of the Indonesian people as well as the leadership of the nation's founding fathers in their struggle for freedom and independence.

President Zardari highlighted that Pakistan and Indonesia enjoyed close and friendly relations founded on shared history, mutual trust, common faith and cooperation at bilateral, regional and international levels. He noted that over the years, the two countries had continued to expand collaboration across a wide range of areas.

PM Shehbaz thanks Trump for remarks supporting Makkah Defence Agreement

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday appreciated President of the United States Donald Trump for his remarks in support of the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement recently signed between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye. "Deeply appreciate President Donald Trump's kind words of support on the signing of the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement," the prime minister wrote on his X timeline responding to President Trump's post on his social media platform Truth Social. Prime Minister Shehbaz said that together with the brotherly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Turkiye, Pakistan would continue to play a constructive role in ensuring the defence of our own countries as well as the entire region. The prime minister reiterated the appreciation for President Trump for his "courageous and decisive" leadership, which helped avert a nuclear catastrophe in South Asia and saved millions of lives during the Pakistan-India war in May last year. "Durable peace is the most essential prerequisite for a bright and prosperous future for our peoples," he remarked.

Earlier, President Trump said in a post that he was "very happy" to see that Saudi Arabia, Turkiye, and Pakistan had recently and finally signed the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement.

He said that the Agreement showed how the Middle East was coming together, and how countries would finally be able to defend themselves in a more meaningful way. Conveying his congratulations to the leadership of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye, President Trump said, "This is a big, bold and important first step – Wow."

Gilani underscores importance of interfaith harmony

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Former Minister of State for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Pir Muhammad Amin-ul-Hasnat Shah, called on Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani at his residence on Monday.

The meeting provided an opportunity for an in-depth exchange of views on the overall political, social and religious situation in the country, with particular focus on promoting interfaith harmony, tolerance and social cohesion.

Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani underscored the vital importance of interfaith harmony, mutual respect and tolerance in promoting peace, brotherhood and unity in society.

He said that fostering understanding and harmony among followers of different faiths and schools of thought was essential for ensuring peace, stability and national cohesion, as well as for creating an environment conducive to economic development and prosperity. The Chairman Senate paid tribute to Pir Muhammad Amin-ul-Hasnat Shah for his valuable political, social and religious services.

Pakistan refiner Cnergyico expands US crude imports amid Hormuz disruption

ISLAMABAD, (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan's largest refiner Cnergyico is buying more US crude as Islamabad seeks to diversify the country's energy supplies after disruption caused by the Iran war exposed its dependence on Gulf routes.

Pakistan also wants to increase imports from the US to help narrow its trade surplus and secure reductions in trade tariffs imposed by President Donald Trump.

Cnergyico, which first bought US crude last year, is also considering spot purchases against longer-term contracts with Vitol and other suppliers based on "pricing, reliability and supply security", Vice Chairman Usama Qureshi told media.

Cnergyico imported about 8.1 million barrels of US crude over nine months.

Yemen's Houthis strike Saudi naval vessels, arms depot

SANAA, (Agencies): Yemen's Ansar Allah group, also known as the Houthis, claimed on Monday that its forces had targeted several Saudi naval vessels – along with a weapons depot – in a wide-ranging missile and drone barrage.

In a statement posted on Telegram, Houthi spokesperson Yahya Saree said a Saudi amphibious transport ship and several accompanying naval vessels had been successfully struck in an aerial attack involving "a number of" ballistic missiles

Describing the missile strike as "precise," Saree said that several of the targeted ships had been sunk – while the rest had caught fire – as a result of the attack. Houthi forces also targeted a Saudi weapons depot in the Sahn al-Jin camp, located in Yemen's central-eastern Marib province, with multiple drones, he added.

As of publication, the claims had not yet been confirmed by the Saudi authorities. Trump threatens to bomb Oman if it 'gets in the way' of US-Iran negotiations

US President Donald Trump on Monday threatened military action against Oman if it interferes with US-Iran negotiations, while saying Washington is in direct contact with officials from Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). "If Oman gets in the way, we'll bomb the shit out of them," Trump told Fox News when asked about Oman's role in negotiations involving Iran and the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran said Saturday that it had reached an agreement with Oman on a shipping route map for the Strait of Hormuz following weeks of technical negotiations.

Turning to Iran, Trump said Tehran should raise a "white flag of surrender," adding: "They're good poker players, but they're dying." He also confirmed that Washington has a backchannel with the IRGC. "We have a backchannel with the IRGC. We are speaking directly with the IRGC officials in Iran," Trump said.



ISLAMABAD: Former Minister of State for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Pir Muhammad Amin-ul-Hasnat Shah, called on Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani

Citizens demands permanent streetlight maintenance system in Quetta

QUETTA (ANN): Due to malfunctioning streetlights on important roads and streets in various parts of the provincial capital, including Jinnah Road and Shahrah-e-Iqbal, citizens are facing severe difficulties at night. The darkness on important and busy roads has also raised serious concerns about public safety.

According to residents, streetlights on numerous roads and streets in the city have remained out of order for a long time, causing difficulties for pedestrians, women, elderly people and motorcyclists at night. The dark roads are also increasing the risk of traffic accidents, while citizens say they feel unsafe. Citizens said that the condition of major roads in the provincial capital also raises questions about the performance of the administration. Despite claims of development projects worth millions of rupees, they questioned who should be held responsible for the problems faced by the public if even a basic facility such as streetlights is not functioning.

The malfunctioning streetlights in central areas such as Jinnah Road and Shahrah-e-Iqbal are particularly concerning because large numbers of citizens travel along these roads day and night. The lack of adequate lighting at night is not only causing inconvenience to citizens but could also provide criminal elements with an opportunity to take advantage of the situation. Citizen groups have demanded that the Chief Minister of Balochistan, the Administrator of Quetta and other relevant senior officials take immediate and strict notice of the matter. They called for an emergency survey of all faulty streetlights across the city and demanded that they be restored immediately. Citizens warned that if the lighting system on major roads and in residential areas is not restored immediately, public difficulties will increase further. They demanded that, instead of merely carrying out paperwork, practical measures be taken.

Balochistan makes significant progress in field of immunization coverage

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Balochistan has made significant progress in the field of immunization coverage. According to the independent survey TPVICS Round 3 conducted by Aga Khan University, immunization coverage in Balochistan has reached 56.6 percent, an increase of 19 percent compared with the past.

According to the Balochistan Health Department, this significant improvement in immunization coverage is the result of the joint and continuous efforts of the Balochistan Health Department and the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI). The achievement reflects the effectiveness of ongoing government measures to protect children in the province from various diseases.

Provincial Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar expressed satisfaction over the significant increase in immunization coverage and appreciated the performance of the Balochistan Health Department and EPI teams.

In his statement, the Provincial Health Minister said that a healthy and prosperous Balochistan is our dream, and all available resources are being utilized to turn this dream into reality. He said the government is taking comprehensive measures to provide basic health facilities to children and the public and protect them from preventable diseases. Bakht Muhammad Kakar said, "We have resolved to secure our future and make our new generation healthy, strong, and beneficial for the country and nation." He said the improvement in immunization coverage is a practical manifestation of this commitment. He further said that the progress achieved in the field of immunization in Balochistan has been made possible due to the strong leadership of the Chief Minister of Balochistan, better governance, effective monitoring, and the provision of additional resources to the health sector. The Provincial Health Minister expressed his determination that efforts would be further accelerated to improve immunization coverage, extend health facilities to remote areas, and protect children from deadly diseases.

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Breaking up with plastic

Punjab's governance is either drastically overconfident or highly efficient, judging from its claim to declare Rawalpindi completely 'single-use plastic free' by June 2026. Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz has been attempting to implement a permanent ban on polythene bags that contribute to plastic pollution since 2024. After thousands of inspections, confiscations, notices, fines and FIRs throughout the span of almost two years, complete plastic elimination perhaps seems like an achievable goal for her government in at least one district.

Like clockwork, a province-wide reminder of the single-use plastic ban makes its annual rounds ahead of World Environment Day - June 5. Similarly, this year, the Punjab Environment Protection Agency (Punjab-EPA) has vowed to follow through with anti-plastic laws and regulations under the direction of the Punjab CM, notably emphasising on eco-friendly alternatives.

Although this has been a script oft heard yet sparsely executed in Punjab, this time, the self-assured promise arrives after surprisingly consistent efforts by the EPA. In 2025 alone, the agency confiscated over 400,000kg of plastic bags; and in the first four months of 2026, more than double that amount. Judging by numbers alone, EPA's claim might not be merely overconfidence - which would be a welcome change.

But in order to ensure that this ban does not die out as soon as the sword of penalties stops hanging above the heads of distributors, it is equally important to introduce eco-friendly alternatives at the same pace at which single-use plastic is being withdrawn. For a society so heavily dependent on 'shoppers' in their daily routines, effectively changing the choices people make every day must come, yes, compulsorily - but it must also come easy. When polythene bags are refused, and eco-friendly alternatives such as jute or paper bags are provided as a substitute, people are more likely to comply rather than simply being frustrated.

Power of building bridges

Majid Ehsan

From ceasing a deadly war to attempting a permanent peace between two archrivals carrying decades of grievances against each other is a significant accomplishment. Strategically, Pakistan has demonstrated to the world that, if given the opportunity to mediate with sincerity of purpose and trust, it can deliver. This is in addition to the fact that Pakistan itself remains among the worst affected countries, both economically and in terms of its diplomatic sensitivities and vulnerabilities in Iran and the Gulf region.

Pakistan's position as a bridge between competing interests, rather than being confined to rigid alignments, has been widely acknowledged and appreciated. A brief review of mediations carried out over the last forty years highlights the uniqueness of this case. In the past, mediations were either undertaken by superpowers to secure dominance and expand their spheres of influence or carried out with their strong backing to exert diplomatic pressure and economic leverage.

In contrast, this mediation involves a superpower and its post-Cold War's oldest adversary, facilitated by a country with no covert intent, but driven by its own geostrategic and economic imperatives.

If the conflict continues, the stakes for Pakistan are immediate and serious. Our economic recovery remains highly vulnerable to external shocks. Oil price volatility and fluctuations in remittances from the Gulf alone are capable of disrupting the entire recovery framework. In this context, it would not be an overstatement to say that Pakistan's proactive diplomatic role is less a choice and more a necessity.

Pakistan is, in effect, redefining the significance of mediation in a transitional phase of the changing world order. As this conflict between the United States and Iran may well be among the last major confrontations under a fading unipolar system, Pakistan's efforts could be seen as early indicators of mediation practices in an emerging multipolar order.

In all that's happening, what are the tangible gains for Pakistan? In my view, the most important dividend lies in enhanced diplomatic credibility. A sincere and meaningful role in easing tensions reinforces Pakistan's standing as a responsible stakeholder in regional stability. Seen against the backdrop of a fragmented international system, this positions Pakistan as a credible advocate of peace and strengthens its voice in existing and emerging multilateral forums.

Secondly, while mediation should not be framed as a bargaining exercise for economic gains, it can create space for reorienting economic relationships within and beyond the region. A stabilising role in ending a dangerous conflict provides Pakistan with a legitimate opportunity to seek greater economic cooperation, particularly in energy and regional trade connectivity. It also strengthens the case for international support aimed at economic cooperation, not as a concession, but as recognition of constructive engagement.

Thirdly, Pakistan's efforts underline that, in a changing geopolitical environment, maintaining working relations across divides enhances policy flexibility and reduces overdependence on any single axis. In a fluid and transitional global order, such balance is a strategic asset.

Internally, the dividends are equally important. A lasting peace would reduce spillover risks, including sectarian tensions, border instability, and broader uncertainties affecting regional balance. Equally, this external relevance must be used to put our own house in order. Improving law and order through consistent application of the rule of law, meaningful reform in governance, and fostering political harmony and unity across all segments are vital steps that require immediate attention.

Beyond these immediate considerations lies a more subtle opportunity. Pakistan's role in facilitating dialogue between two adversaries reinforces a principle it has consistently advocated at regional and international forums: that engagement, not confrontation, remains the only sustainable path to conflict resolution. It is time to recognise the relevance of this principle in the context of South Asia as well. If India is to draw any lesson from developments in its immediate neighbourhood, it is that peace and stability cannot be secured without meaningful dialogue. If peace, rather than hegemony, is the priority, then India should see value in Pakistan's demonstrated commitment and resume sustained engagement, not as a concession, but as a shared responsibility. Stability in South Asia, like that in the Gulf, cannot be achieved in the absence of dialogue.

In a world of divergent interests, Pakistan's ability to build bridges is itself a form of power. These moments must be used to strengthen diplomatic credibility, accelerate economic recovery, put our own house in order, and renew our commitment to dialogue, both beyond and within South Asia.

Big business of bad advice

M. Hamid Zaman

In the last few days in Pakistan, I have been speaking to aspiring students who are eager to pursue higher education abroad. While one can debate whether the pastures are actually greener abroad or not, there is no question that an ever greater number of students are not thrilled about the local offerings. This is particularly true for students who are interested in basic or applied sciences and see limited opportunities in the country beyond one or two institutions. But that is not the only reason for them to seriously consider options outside the country. I heard palpable anxiety about the economic future of the country, amplified by voices in their own networks that is encouraging them to leave. There are, of course, lots of reasons why that chorus of voices is getting louder, and whether everything in that chorus is worth listening to.

The desire to find stability, seek opportunities for intellectual development, follow dreams of spending a life in pursuit of knowledge are natural. I am all too familiar with that desire, for I chose that path and live that life. What is, however, unacceptable is for individuals (and businesses) to exploit these desires and create unethical practices offering dubious advice at an astronomical price. There is now a whole industry of consultants that have seemingly made themselves indispensable. It is now assumed that landing an admission offer is next to impossible without the 'support' of these consultants. The services range from basic conversation to 'building a profile' that would attract the attention of admissions officers. For the right price, some consultants are willing to write students' essays that create an impression that the applicant basically cured cancer, or created a new battery that would solve the country's energy crisis. There have been instances of manipulating transcripts as well. All available in the free market of admission consulting.

While I was familiar with some of these practices, the continued expansion and even higher prices came as a surprise. Just as disturbing was the quality of the advice that was being given. In my conversations with aspiring students (and their parents), I learned that students are being told that in addition to extracurriculars, they must have strong community service, and that working at a non-profit was no longer enough; they should have their 'own NGO'. I do not even know where to begin – the scale of absurdity and unethical nature of creating an NGO just for a college application is something I am unable to fathom. To 'look good' for a particular major, students are told to do internships that are basically a farce. The list is long and each item can be arranged with the right price.

Since my conversations, I have been wondering about two things. First, where does this leave our students and their parents? Those I spoke to were anxious and overwhelmed. There is no longer any emphasis on curiosity. It was all about sharpening the 'profile'. I felt sad, and angry, at the exploitation of someone's desire to get quality education.

But I also wondered, in a society where regulatory practices are severely lacking, what should we do? I hope we can do two things. First, awareness generation by those who have worked in higher education domestically and abroad, to point out the deeply flawed advice and unethical practices that many consulting services are providing. Second, to offer better alternatives. I am familiar with some friends and colleagues in the US and Europe who are offering free consultation services to students to help them with their applications. Those services are few and often targeted to those who are at the bottom of our socio-economic structures. This is indeed very good, but there are many in the middle who are unable to afford the high price tags and are then told that they have no chance unless they liquidate some essential assets. They too need support. Perhaps the call to action is for me, and people like me, to mentor and guide, and give honest advice.

Food for thought

Naseer Memon

A Protracted blockade of the Strait of Hormuz has imperilled global food security. UN Secretary-General António Guterres has warned that if the disruption continues "through mid-year", 32 million individuals will be "pushed into poverty". Another 45m, he said, would face extreme hunger as fertiliser stocks run low and crop yields fall. More ominously, if severe disruptions persist to the end of the year, "we confront the spectre of a global recession with dramatic impacts on people, on the economy, and on political and social stability".

While impacts of hindered oil and gas supply were instant, repercussions of fertiliser shortages have yet to unfold. According to the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), 27 per cent of global oil exports, about 20pc of LNG trade and up to 30pc of global fertiliser exports move through the Persian Gulf. Global food supply chains are deeply linked with energy markets, maritime movement and regional stability. Fossil fuel powers tube wells, agriculture machinery, cold storage, the food-processing industry and food transport.

More importantly, fertiliser has a direct bearing on grain production. The 2007-2008 global food price upheaval raised cereal prices, pushing an estimated 100m people into hunger and stoked food riots in more than 15 countries. The Russia-Ukraine war caused disruption in Black Sea shipping routes and escalated global wheat prices by 55pc in just a few weeks.

According to Signal Group, a shipping services company, 20pc of the world's fertiliser originates in the Gulf, while the region supplies 46pc of urea. The Qatar Fertiliser Company alone supplies 14pc of the world's urea. After Qatar's LNG facilities came under attack, Qatar Energy ceased its output. Consequently, the world's largest urea plant also halted operations. The LNG crisis led India to curtail output in three of its own urea plants. Bangladesh also shut four of its five fertiliser factories.

In a catastrophic move, China, the world's largest fertiliser producer, banned fertiliser exports in March to meet its domestic needs. The impact of the ban can be gauged from the fact that last year, China contributed 25pc of the global output of fertiliser and exported more than $13 billion of this critical agri-input. Several countries, including Vietnam, Myanmar, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Philippines and Indonesia, import substantial quantities of their fertiliser from China. According to IFPRI, "the combined effect of China's export ban and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz will inevitably rattle the global fertiliser market and food security".

The problem of fertiliser shortfall is compounded by spiralling shipping costs. The rate for a 40-foot (around 12 metres) container for the West Coast India-Middle East route, was assessed at $3,400 — representing a 1,136pc price increase over the original amount — within two weeks after the war.

Asian countries are likely to encounter a menacing situation as they receive 35pc of Gulf urea exports — 53pc sulphur and 64pc ammonia. The Gulf's fertiliser exports are vital for India, Brazil, China, Morocco, the US, Australia and Indonesia. India, contributing about 40pc of world's rice exports, relies heavily on the Middle East for inputs, importing more than 40pc of its urea and phosphate fertilisers from the region. Brazil, which exports about 60pc of the world's soyabean, almost entirely depends on imported fertiliser. It receives nearly half of its fertiliser imports through the Strait of Hormuz.

A shortfall in rice supply seems inevitable this year as the planting acreage is set to dec-line across Asia because of the fertiliser deficit and soaring fuel costs. Indonesia estim-ates its rice harvest area will shrink by 10.6pc. Additionally, the El Niño weather system has been predicted in the region, which is likely to create hotter and drier conditions in the latter half of the year.

Requiem for Stalin's spirit

Jawed Naqvi

Joseph Stalin's spirit has been showing up at diverse places in recent days, amused, perplexed and despondent. One could see him chortling at the toast King Charles raised to the Anglo-Saxon brotherhood at the White House. He looked saddened to see one of his more erudite followers and among the gentlest of 'Stalinists' you would meet saying adieu to admirers in Delhi.

Stalin's spirit has looked despondent and shocked at his followers in Iran, the Mujahideen-i-Khalq, who are siding with Israel as Western stooges against the country's battle with imperialism. And he didn't look too pleased with the election verdict in crucial Indian states whose results were still coming in on Monday and where comrades sworn to Stalinism as their creed just helped Hindu fascism consolidate its hold over India.

Mamata Banerjee lost West Bengal to Narendra Modi on Monday. He was enabled in the task by the secular left led by the CPI-M. Mamata Banerjee offered the doughtiest challenge to Hindu fascism among all the opposition parties. Rahul Gandhi is also a leading challenger to Modi, but far too many of his Congress colleagues look poised to desert him at the first temptation from the ruling classes — Judas pretending to be Nehruvian activists. A woman candidate for the communist party, which together with the BJP sought Mamata's arrest for any number of frustrated charges, was canvassing with a singular message in her Bengal constituency. The CPI-M's view of Mamata was so shocking that I recorded the message on the phone to be sure I had heard it right. The woman was lying to her voters: "We believe that if Trinamool is defeated, the BJP is de---f-eated automatically." At the last count as I write, the BJP was leading in 192 out of the state's 294 seats with Mamata's Trinamool Congress trai-ling at 95. Mamata has questioned the count, but it would be a stretch to see the leads reversing.

A solitary CPI-M candidate was likely to get one seat, if at all, and the Congress, likewise, one. Rahul Gandhi also uncharacteristically laid into Mamata during the campaigning, describing her rule as terrorism. The comment may have put paid to the future of the perennially fractured INDIA bloc opposition. Everyone who has ruled West Bengal needed an iron hand, given the state's history of militant agitations.

The late Mubashir Hasan, who helped found Pakistan Peoples Party as a left-of- centre hub, visited West Bengal during CPI-M's rule. As a perceptive former administrator in various Bhutto ministries, Hasan put his finger on the button. He told me he saw little that was Marxist about the communist party's rule in Kolkata. "All you need is a strong cadre and the police with you, as is the case here. And you are invincible as long as you don't make an error of judgement." The CPI-M ruled Kolkata with an iron hand for a record 34 years until it hit an ideological sandbar and wooed corporates against the people's will to rural regions of Singur and Nandigram. Left rule ended in 2011.

India's communist party was born in 1925. In 1946, the party turned to armed struggle and waged guerrilla warfare against feudal satraps in the Nizam's territory of Telangana abutting Hyderabad. Its best songs and poetry and creative juices flowed in this period. The idea was to launch a rural-based movement à la China. But in 1951, Stalin summoned its leaders and said their conditions were different from Mao's. There was no USSR in the neighbourhood to provide a lifeline or sanctuary to guerrillas. Besides, the network of railways and a battle-hardened army would enable the colonial state to crush the movement with ease. Stalin advised his Indian comrades to suspend the Telangana movement and join the national democratic mainstream.

The party obeyed and won enough seats (16) in the first elections to become the main parliamentary opposition to Nehru in 1952. It went on to establish the world's first elected communist government in Kerala in 1957. So far, so good. Stalin would be happy with this less-discussed preference for bourgeois democracy if the time so dictated. He had little clue, though, that Indian comrades would one day shore up Hindu nationalism, hitching their anti-Congressism with Hindutva forces. The slide started with coalition state governments in 1967.

'Violation on one front is violation on all fronts,' Iran's Araghchi on Lebanon ceasefire

Monitoring Desk

TEHRAN: Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Monday that the ceasefire between Tehran and Washington is "unequivocally a ceasefire on all fronts, including in Lebanon".

"Its violation on one front is a violation of the ceasefire on all fronts. The US and Israel are responsible for the consequences of any violation," he wrote on X.

The top diplomat's comments come after Netanyahu announced that he had ordered his military to strike Beirut's southern suburbs.

Iranian parliament speaker and lead negotiator Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf had called out the US on Monday for breaching its ceasefire with Iran, including by continuing its blockade of Iranian ports and failing to restrain its ally Israel from escalating attacks in Lebanon.

"The naval blockade and escalation of war crimes in Lebanon by the genocidal Zionist regime are clear evidence of US noncompliance with the ceasefire," Ghalibaf wrote in a post on X. "Every choice has a price, and the bill comes due. It will all fall into place," he added.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi said on Monday that Iran and Oman are the only two countries that have a right to "exercise sovereignty" in the Strait of Hormuz.

In comments carried by Iran's IRIB broadcaster, Gharibabadi said Iran has implemented a new process for "controlling traffic and navigation" in the waterway but arrangements are coordinated with Oman.

He said Iran has urged Oman to "not give in to" threats from the US after Trump threatened to "blow up" the country if it does not "behave just like everybody else" with respect to the strait.

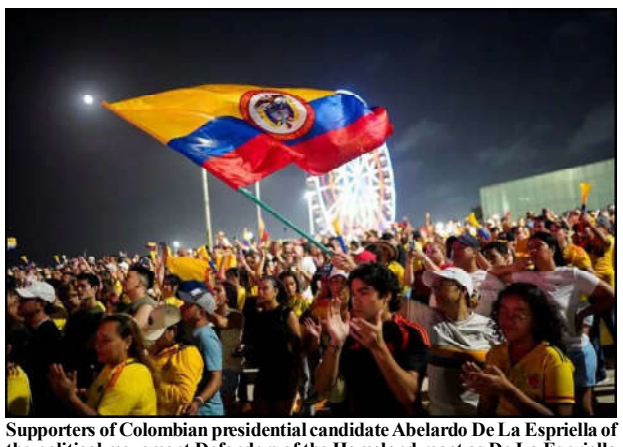
Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei has said on Thursday that any deal with the US to end the war must include guarantees for a ceasefire in Lebanon, where Israel has expanded its attacks and invasion despite a truce in mid-April, according to Al Jazeera.

Speaking at a news conference, Baghaei said: "We insist that a ceasefire in Lebanon is an essential condition for any deal aimed at ending the war."

Baghaei also said Iran is not currently engaging in talks with the US on the details of its nuclear programme, according to Al Jazeera.

"We know when it is necessary to act on nuclear matters," Baghaei said. "No negotiations have taken place on the details of the nuclear file. At this stage, our priority is ending the war."

Baghaei also accused the US of having violated the ceasefire, "including this morning". He said, "Iran will take whatever measures we deem necessary to defend Iran's national security."



Supporters of Colombian presidential candidate Abelardo De La Espriella of the political movement Defenders of the Homeland react as De La Espriella addresses them after the results of the first round of the presidential election, in Barranquilla, Colombia.

Indian PM Modi meets Myanmar military gov't leader in New Delhi

Monitoring Desk

NEW DELHI: India says it will continue engaging with Myanmar after Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke with Min Aung Hlaing, the leader of the country's military government, in New Delhi.

Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri told reporters on Monday that India's policy is "not intended to be a commentary on the internal political arrangements" in Myanmar and that New Delhi believes engagement is the best way forward.

Western nations have sought to isolate Myanmar's military rulers since they overthrew the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi in a 2021 coup that triggered a crackdown on opponents and a brutal civil war.

The conflict began when the country's army leader, Min Aung Hlaing, ousted the government and detained civilian leaders, including Nobel Peace Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi. Some critics and human rights groups have said Min Aung Hlaing's visit to India risks lending legitimacy to the military-backed government.

"We have always proceeded on the principle that sustained dialogue is what is important," Misri said, adding that isolating Myanmar would be counterproductive.

"History has shown that disengagement doesn't give us any results that are better than engagement."

The visit is Min Aung Hlaing's first to India since he was sworn in as president in April following an election that critics say was designed to cement his hold on power. His last visit to India was in 2019, when he served as Myanmar's military chief.

He arrived in India on Saturday, first in the eastern state of Bihar, with a visit to the Buddhist pilgrimage site of Bodh Gaya, where believers say that the Buddha attained enlightenment.

India shares a 1,643-kilometre (1,020-mile) border with Myanmar and a maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal.

Philippine president, Rubio discuss 'peace, security' in South China Sea

Monitoring Desk

NEW YORK: Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr and United States Secretary of State Marco Rubio early Monday discussed "peace and security" in the disputed South China Sea.

In a phone call, Marcos and Rubio discussed a range of bilateral economic and security priorities, including "efforts to advance peace and security in the South China Sea." The disputed waters of minerals-rich South China Sea have seen the Philippines and China regularly engage in verbal clashes due to overlapping maritime claims.

Philippines is one of the oldest military allies of the US in the wider Asia-Pacific region with a mutual defense agreement.

According to the office of Marcos, the two sides discussed "critical regional and economic priorities, as well as bilateral trade matters."

Rubio also reaffirmed US "commitment to developing the Luzon Economic Corridor and exploring ways to address the energy challenges in the region," said the State Department.

The Luzon Economic Corridor is a trilateral initiative of the US, Japan, and the Philippines, according to details shared by the US Embassy in Manila. It also engages their partners, including Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Italy, South Korea, Sweden, and the United Kingdom — to "catalyse mutual economic growth, create jobs, strengthen connectivity, and improve transport and logistics, energy, and digital infrastructure."

Separately, Chinese Coast Guard Monday conducted "law-enforcement patrol" in waters east of Taiwan in "response to Japan and the Philippines' unilateral announcement of maritime delimitation talks in the area," state-run Xinhua News reported.

In a joint statement last week following talks between Philippines President Marcos and Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi in Tokyo, the two countries agreed to begin formal negotiations on delimiting the maritime boundaries of their exclusive economic zones and continental shelves.



Demonstrators participate during a protest against a U.S.-backed Ebola quarantine plan on the establishment of a 50-bed facility at a Kenyan air force base that was intended to host Americans exposed to Ebola, in Nanyuki town.



Director-General of the World Health Organisation Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus tours the Evangelical Medical Center (CEM), one of the facilities at the forefront of the response to the Ebola outbreak during his visit to coordinate the response to the Ebola outbreak.

Israel urges south Beirut residents to leave as strikes intensify

Monitoring Desk

BEIRUT: The Israeli military has called on residents of the southern suburbs of the Lebanese capital Beirut to flee.

In a message in Arabic on X, a military spokesman said that people should leave their homes for their own safety.

If the Hezbollah militia continues its attacks on Israeli cities and towns, the Israeli army will respond with attacks on targets in Beirut's southern suburbs, the message said.

This is the first such evacuation call for this area since a ceasefire came into effect in mid-April.

Israel had already announced new attacks on Hezbollah targets in the Dahiyeh suburbs, prompting many residents to flee the area from the morning. The suburbs are an important Hezbollah stronghold as well as being a densely populated residential area. Many buildings in the area have already been destroyed in the current conflict.

Lebanese President Joseph Aoun said earlier on Monday he intends to continue talks with the Israeli government despite the escalating tensions between Israel and the Shiite militia Hezbollah.

Israeli and Lebanese representatives are set to meet on Tuesday in Washington for direct talks to end the fighting. However, Hezbollah is not a party to the talks, and the conditions for an effective ceasefire are not promising.

Israel has expanded its ongoing offensive in the south and is advancing further north, while Hezbollah has stepped up its attacks on northern Israel.

Former Syrian general under al-Assad faces torture trial in Vienna

Monitoring Desk

SYRIAN: Two senior security officials from the former Syrian government of ousted ruler Bashar al-Assad are on trial in Austria, accused of torture, grievous bodily harm and sexual assault, the prosecution at Vienna's regional court said on Monday.

The defendants allegedly mistreated detainees themselves and gave orders for others to do so, the prosecutor said.

The former intelligence general is the highest-ranking representative of the former Syrian government to have been arrested in Europe, according to human rights organization the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR). The Berlin-based ECCHR and other organizations including Amnesty International are supporting the prosecution in the case, the prosecutor said.

De La Espriella, senator Cepeda set for heated Colombia runoff

Monitoring Desk

BOGOTA: Right-wing Colombian lawyer Abelardo De La Espriella and leftist senator Ivan Cepeda will head to a June presidential runoff after Sunday's tight vote, in a contest so far dominated by voter concerns over security and the economy, to which each candidate has populist solutions.

The two men were close in vote tallies in the first round of the contest.

Mobile Internet shutdowns

Putin orders PM and FSB security service to ensure key services

Monitoring Desk

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin has ordered the prime minister and director of the Federal Security Service (FSB) ensure access to key medical, information and payment services during periods when mobile internet service is limited.

Russia has this year sometimes shut down mobile internet services and cracked down on foreign messenger , forcing millions to turn to VPNs as part of what Putin's opponents say is an attempt to shore up domestic control after four years of war.

In a list of orders published on Sunday by the Kremlin, Putin ordered the and the FSB to "ensure the uninterrupted operation of the most important services" during periods of "limited operation of the Internet".

The order said that Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin and FSB Director Alexander were to report back by July 1 on their progress. Putin has cast disruption to Internet and communications as a painful, but sometimes essential security measure needed to to prevent terrorist and Ukrainian drone attacks. But he has said that should be allowed access to vital online services during such periods.

UK wins court case over collapsed Rwanda asylum deal

Monitoring Desk

GRAVELINES: The UK will not have to pay Rwanda millions of pounds over the collapsed asylum agreement that was cancelled by Keir Starmer shortly after he took office, an international court has ruled. The Rwandan government had sought to sue the UK for more than £100m, saying it had breached the terms of the deal.

Signed by the previous Conservative government, it was meant to see the UK pay Rwanda to host asylum seekers who had arrived illegally in the UK. Lawyers representing the UK during the three-day hearing in the Netherlands.

Nepal PM seeks UK, China role against India's interference in its areas

KATHMANDU (INP): Nepalese Prime Minister Balendra Shah's call for Britain and China to intervene in the Kalapani-Lipulekh-Limpiyadhura dispute exposes growing resentment, as observers noticed, against India's habit of dictating terms to its smaller neighbors.

Addressing Nepal's Parliament, Shah admitted both Kathmandu and New Delhi had "encroached" on each other's territory and urged third-party mediation.

"We have had talks with Britain, not only with India and China. Britain should also show concern," he said, linking the row to the 1816 Sugauli Treaty signed under British India.

India's Ministry of External Affairs has not responded to Shah's remarks or to Nepal's invitation to London. The dispute flared in 2020 after New Delhi inaugurated a road through Lipulekh Pass for the Kailash Mansarovar yatra, prompting Nepal to release a revised map incorporating Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiyadhura and later enshrine it in its constitution.

Analysts said the episode reflects a pattern: India routinely intervenes in the internal and foreign policy matters of Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives under the garb of "regional stability", while rejecting multilateral mechanisms when its own actions are questioned.



Smoke billows from an Israeli airstrike on the southern Lebanese village of Arnoun. Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel, ordered the military to attack targets in the southern suburb of Beirut.

US and Iran trade strikes, Kuwait comes under fire as diplomacy drags on

Monitoring Desk

TEHRAN: The United States and Iran said they had both carried out strikes on military targets, and each accused the other of acting aggressively as omatic efforts to end the three-month US-Israeli war on Iran drag on.

The US military said it had, over the weekend, struck Iranian air defences, a ground control station and two drones that were threatening ships after "aggressive Iranian actions".

WHO chief to meet Congo president, as group warns Ebola likely spread

Monitoring Desk

KINSHASA: The head of the World Health Organization was due to meet with Democratic Republic of Congo's president on Monday to discuss the country's Ebola outbreak, which an aid agency warned was likely much than official figures reflect. The outbreak, already the third-largest on record, persisted for weeks undetected, say health officials, who now behind the curve and struggling to bring it under control.

Arriving in Congo last week, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus called for more international support to stop the disease's spread before he travelled to Congo's Ituri province where the first cases were confirmed.

In a joint statement on Sunday night, the WHO and the Congolese government acknowledged it was "a challenging time" and that they were working to improve surveillance, testing and care for patients. "Persistent challenges include early detection and isolation of cases, contact tracing, safe and dignified burials, robust infection prevention and control in health facilities.

Nigeria's Obi to run for president again after opposition split

Monitoring Desk

LAGOS: Nigerian politician Peter Obi said he would run for president again in January after winning his party's nomination, setting up another contest incumbent Bola Tinubu and a divided opposition.

Obi was declared winner of the Democratic Congress primary on Sunday, less than a month after quitting an alliance that had tried to set up a single opposition challenger.

The acceptance from Obi - who came third in the last election after galvanizing young voters - hit hopes among some opposition backers that he might return to the coalition. It prepares the ground for a re-run of 2023's three-way contest that is likely to whether public anger over rising living costs and insecurity can translate into votes against Tinubu, or whether the anti-government vote will once again be split.

"We must address insecurity with resolve and urgency, for no nation can thrive while its citizens live in trepidation," Obi said in a statement late on Sunday.

Nigeria is grappling with overlapping security crises that stretch far beyond the jihadist insurgency in the northeast, where Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province waged a conflict for more than 15 years.

In the northwest, heavily armed gangs known locally as bandits carry out mass kidnappings for ransom and raids on villages and schools, while north-central states have also seen recurring violence linked to disputes over land and grazing routes.

Voters will also be focused on Tinubu's economic reforms, including the removal of fuel and subsidies and ending currency controls.



An apartment building and houses in Odesa, Ukraine damaged by a Russian drone strike.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The **Assistant Director Local Govt & Rural Dev Dept Pishin** is pleased to invites sealed percentage based **Electronic bids** as per the prevailing rates by B-CSR 2026 (amended up-to-date) from interested firms/suppliers/contractors having valid registration with PEC, Income Tax and BRA for the following BSDI Phase-III scheme where the time limit for mentioned projects is 30th of June, 2027. **Note: In all procurements of GOB whether through Electronic or Manual Bid submission, it is mandatory for all bidders to get registered at Electronic Public Procurement System of B-PPRA GOB.**

S.#	DESCRIPTION OF WORK	TENDER AMOUNT
01	Construction of WSS Yaro, Cadet College, Kamalzai and HDPE Pipeline Nauabad Pishin **(TSE-2627081167423)**	54.00 Million

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules – 2014. **Eligibility of Bidders:** Presence in Active Tax Payer List. The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan The bidding firm must have completed similar nature of works as per bidding documents. Balochistan Revenue Authority Registration is required Turn-over of up to 70% of estimated cost amount in 01 subsequent previous year showing financial capacity of the firm. Latest Bank certificate of the Firm from Scheduled Bank Registration with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) C5 or above in Relevant Category and Specialized Code as mentioned in bidding documents Bidder must provide affidavit confirming no conflict of interest not blacklisted not debarred no major litigation no nonperformance in last 05 years and no failure to sign contract in Pakistan or any international agency The bidder must have undertaken/completed at least 3 projects (≥80% similar activities; maintenance, patchwork & rehabilitation excluded), each costing ≥50% of estimated cost, undertaken within the last 05 years. No subletting/subcontracting. The bidding firm must submit the tender fee of **Rs. 2,000/-** in the form of cash deposit slip in NBP **A/C:4157218156** NBP ADLG Pishin **Procedure of Procurement:** Single Stage Two envelope procedure will be adopted. **Bid Security:** The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of **Deposit at Call** of **03%** specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. **Tender Documents:** The NIT & Bidding Document can be obtained/Downloaded electronically from **www.bppra.gob.pk.** **Last Date of bid submission:** Bid can only be submitted electronically latest by **2nd Sept, 2026** till **09:00 AM** through supplier dashboard **Tender opening:** The tender opening will be carries out on same day at 10:00 AM on EPPS System. **Address:** Deputy Commissioner Complex, District Pishin

DPRQ/PRQ No.844/17-08-2026

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SCP explores collaboration with UK judicial institutions for professional development of judges, bar

ISLAMABAD, (APP): The Chief Justice of Pakistan on Monday received the Mr. Justice Martin Griffiths, Judge of the High Court of England and Wales (King's Bench Division), here at the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

Justice Griffiths, who is currently visiting Pakistan, is a member of the International Committee of the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple, United Kingdom, and chairs the Wales Training Committee of the Judicial College.

Justice Muhammad Shafi Siddiqui, Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb, Judges of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, the Director General and Director, Federal Judicial Academy, the President, Supreme Court Bar Association of Pakistan, and the Director, Legal Education, Pakistan Bar Council, were also present on the occasion.

The discussions focused on strengthening institutional collaboration between Pakistan and the United Kingdom, particularly in the areas of judicial training, professional development and capacity building.

The possibility of developing structured collaboration between the Federal Judicial Academy and the Judicial College of England and Wales for judicial education and training of judges was discussed. The participants emphasised the value of sharing training methodologies, institutional experience and best practices to further strengthen judicial capacity and professional development.

The meeting also explored opportunities for collaboration between the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple and Pakistan's legal profession for capacity building, particularly in advocacy training, continuing legal education and professional development of lawyers.

In this context, Justice Griffiths' role as a member of the International Committee of the Inner Temple was noted.

The Chief Justice appreciated the opportunity for engagement with the judicial and legal institutions of the United Kingdom and expressed the hope that the discussions would lead to practical and sustained institutional cooperation in the fields of judicial education and professional capacity building.



ISLAMABAD: Honorable Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Pakistan Justice Yahya Afridi presenting souvenir to Mr. Justice Martin Griffiths, Judge of the High Court of England and Wales (King's Bench Division), at the Supreme Court of Pakistan



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Program Rana Mashood Ahmad Khan called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif

Senate offers Fateha for martyrs of ongoing security operations

ISLAMABAD, (APP): The Senate on Monday offered Fateha for those who embraced martyrdom during ongoing security operations in different parts of the country, paying tribute to the sacrifices of security personnel, who lost their lives in the line of duty.

The Fateha was offered during the 363rd session of the Senate, presided over by Chairman Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani.

Senator Atta-ur-Rehman led the prayer and prayed for the departed souls of the martyrs. He also prayed for patience for the bereaved families.

He prayed for the peace and stability of Pakistan.

Commitments made to transporters to be fulfilled at all costs: Aleem

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan on Monday assured goods transporters that no unjustified challans would be issued by the Motorway Police, while stressing strict compliance with axle-load, speed and other prescribed traffic regulations.

Addressing a reception hosted by the All Pakistan Goods Transporters Alliance in his honour following the successful conclusion of negotiations between the government and transporters, the Federal Minister said all commitments made to the transporters would be fulfilled at all costs, said a press release.

The transporters accorded a warm welcome to Abdul Aleem Khan upon his arrival at the reception, showering flower petals and chanting slogans in his support. President of the Goods Transporters Alliance Malik Shehzad Awan presented him a traditional Sindhi Ajrak and thanked the government for accepting their demands.

Addressing the reception, Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had assigned him the special task of chairing the Committee constituted to resolve the transporters' issues which had successfully completed its mandate.

Abdul Aleem Khan appreciated the sincerity and sense of responsibility demonstrated by the leadership of the Goods Transporters Alliance.

He said that negotiations continued for 9 days, with the two sides holding discussions for several hours each day and ultimately reaching a successful agreement.

He termed the successful negotiations a highly commendable development.

Greener Pakistan guarantee of healthy, secure, prosperous future: Ayaz

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has said that trees are indispensable for environmental protection, maintaining ecological balance and ensuring a clean, healthy environment and the survival of life on earth.

Pakistan is facing serious challenges, including climate change, rising temperatures, water scarcity, environmental pollution and floods. To effectively address these challenges, promoting tree plantation and increasing forest cover must be made a national priority.

He expressed these views in his message on the occasion of National Plantation Day, observed across the country on August 18 every year.

Ayaz Sadiq said that trees not only help keep the air clean, provide oxygen and absorb carbon dioxide, but also play a vital role in preventing soil erosion, facilitating the absorption of rainwater into the ground, protecting water resources and promoting biodiversity.

He said that unchecked deforestation and the reduction of green cover adversely affect the land's capacity to absorb water, consequently increasing the risk of flooding during heavy rains. Ayaz Sadiq stressed that protecting forests, safeguarding rivers and natural waterways, and undertaking large-scale plantation are essential measures to reduce flood risks and strengthen ecosystems.

The Speaker emphasized that plantation is not merely about planting trees; ensuring their proper care, protection and healthy growth is equally important. He urged the public, particularly the youth, to actively participate in plantation campaigns and consider the protection and care of planted saplings a national responsibility.

Ayaz Sadiq stressed the need to further strengthen the measures being taken by the government for environmental protection, promotion of forests and mitigation of the impacts of climate change.

He said that the success of plantation campaigns requires the federal and provincial governments, local governments, educational institutions, the private sector and civil society to work together through a coordinated and joint strategy.

He emphasized that, alongside increasing forest cover, integrated measures are essential to protect existing forests, restore natural waterways and ensure effective water management in order to address the impacts of climate change and secure a safe environment for future generations.

Ayaz Sadiq said that Parliament is committed to legislation aimed at protecting the environment, addressing the impacts of climate change and ensuring the effective and sustainable use of natural resources.

He said that environmental protection is not the responsibility of any single institution or government but a collective responsibility of all. Every citizen should play their part by planting more trees, protecting them and keeping the environment clean.



ISLAMABAD: A 23-member delegation of Group No. 10 of the 54th Common Training Programme of the Civil Services Academy, Lahore, visiting Islamabad as part of a study tour, visited the Federal Constitutional Court of Pakistan

Alleged loss of millions to national exchequer under investigation

QUETTA, (VoM Report): One of the most important aspects emerging from the investigation is whether, if the government assets were actually auctioned at prices significantly below their actual value, the national exchequer suffered a substantial financial loss as a result.

According to sources, Anti-Corruption officials are also examining whether any individual or group allegedly received financial benefits through the auction process and, if so, which officers or employees were involved.

According to Anti-Corruption sources, the investigation is not limited to a single individual. The entire auction process within the Balochistan Irrigation Department and the role of all individuals associated with it are being examined.

Government documents, auction committee records, machinery valuations, advertisements, stages of the bidding process, and information concerning successful bidders are also being made part of the investigation.

Following the action by the Anti-Corruption Establishment Balochistan, the matter has gained further significance. According to sources, more arrests are expected as the investigation progresses. However, final responsibility will only be determined after completion of the investigation and presentation of the evidence before the relevant legal forum.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law & Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar chairs a meeting of the committee reviewing the Right of Way provisions under the Pakistan Telecommunication (Re-organization) Amendment Bill 2026, with Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima and senior officials of the Ministry of Law & Justice and Ministry of IT & Telecommunication in attendance

Pak-China B2B cooperation opening new avenues for investment: Haroon

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Advisor to the Prime Minister on Industries and Production and Federal Minister Haroon Akhtar Khan on Monday said Pakistan-China Business-to-Business (B2B) cooperation was opening new avenues for investment, technology transfer, local manufacturing and export growth.

The minister made these remarks while chairing a meeting to review progress on Pakistan-China Business-to-Business (B2B) cooperation and the implementation of Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) signed between businesses of the two countries, said a news release.

Senior officials from all relevant ministries, departments, government institutions, and stakeholders attended the meeting. Speaking on the occasion, Haroon said that the Prime Minister's visit to China and the Pakistan-China B2B conferences had opened new avenues for economic cooperation between Pakistan and China.



QUETTA: Senior Member Board of Revenue Qambar Dashti called on Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Nosherwani.

DC Quetta holds open court to address citizens' complaints

QUETTA, (VoM Report): An open court was held under the chairmanship of Quetta Deputy Commissioner Mehrullah Badini, where citizens directly apprised the district administration of their problems, complaints, and difficulties.

The Deputy Commissioner listened attentively and patiently to the citizens' complaints and issued necessary instructions to officers of the relevant departments for their immediate resolution.

The primary purpose of the open court was to make direct communication between the public and the district administration more effective, provide citizens with an accessible platform to voice their complaints, and accelerate the process of resolving public issues by government institutions.

On the occasion, citizens presented problems related to various sectors, including basic civic facilities, sanitation, roads and drainage, water supply, encroachments, revenue-related matters, provision of government services, and other administrative complaints.

Quetta Deputy Commissioner Mehrullah Badini assured citizens that the timely resolution of public complaints is among the top priorities of the district administration. He directed the relevant officers not to merely record the issues presented at the open



court as complaints, but to take practical steps toward resolving them and provide updates on progress within the stipulated period.

He stressed that negligence, delay, or unnecessary obstacles in resolving public issues would not be tolerated. All relevant departments should work with mutual coordination and effective cooperation to provide relief to citizens and ensure permanent and workable solutions to their complaints.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner said that the district administration is utilizing all available resources to resolve the problems faced by the public. He said the administration is striving to ensure that citizens do not have to make unnecessary visits to government offices; instead, their complaints and problems should be heard at their doorstep and resolved effectively.

He said open courts are an important means of reducing the gap between the public and the administration and facilitating the prompt resolution of problems.

Mehrullah Badini further said that serving the public and providing timely relief to citizens is a fundamental responsibility of the district administration. He said the administration is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities in this regard and that, through open courts, the direct identification of public issues and monitoring of their resolution will continue.

PML-N wins 25 AJK seats, eyes two-thirds majority as Rana Sanaullah announces govt formation

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) (PML-N) has announced that it would form the next government in Azad Jammu and Kashmir after securing the highest number of seats in the recently completed election process.

Addressing a press conference, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah said PML-N candidates had already won 25 seats and expect their total strength to reach around 33 seats after the allocation of special seats, bringing the party close to a two-thirds majority in the 53-member legislative assembly.

He said the three phases of the election had been completed and voters have given PML-N a mandate to lead the region. According to party estimates, 36 seats were required for a two-thirds majority in the full house. He expressed confidence that upcoming elections on seven remaining seats could help the party achieve that target. He said elections could not be held earlier on six seats because of the security situation, while voting on one seat was postponed following the death of a candidate and would now take place through a by-election.

PML-N leader linked the election outcome to their campaign message of development and public services. He said party leader Nawaz Sharif had appealed directly to voters in Muzaffarabad and Mirpur, asking them to support PML-N for the future progress of Azad Kashmir and to strengthen its relationship with the federal government.

During the campaign, the party also highlighted projects and public initiatives carried out by the Punjab government under Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif. Leaders said they wanted to implement similar development programs in Azad Kashmir and claimed the election result reflected public support for that vision. The party thanked voters across Azad Kashmir for supporting its candidates and pledged to fulfill commitments made during the election campaign.

Martyrs of Ziarat sacrificed their lives to uphold peace in Balochistan: Dummar

ZIARAT, (VoM Report): Under the auspices of Haji Noor Muhammad Khan Dummar, a spiritually uplifting and dignified Quran recitation and Khatm-e-Quran ceremony was held in Ziarat today on the occasion of the Chehlum of the martyrs of the Ziarat tragedy. The purpose of the gathering was to offer special prayers for the reward of the deceased, their forgiveness, and elevation of their ranks.

Provincial Minister for CMD and Chairman of the Balochistan Food Authority, Haji Noor Muhammad Khan Dumarr, and Deputy Commissioner Abdul Quddus Achakzai specially attended the ceremony. The minister recited verses from the Holy Quran and raised his hands in prayer for the elevation of the ranks of the martyrs of Ziarat, their forgiveness, and their attainment of a high place in Jannat-ul-Firdous. He also prayed for patience, courage, and steadfastness for the grieving families of the martyrs.

District President Abdul Sattar Kakar, Tehsil President Habibullah Panezai, religious scholars, tribal and political leaders, government officials, elders, and a large number of local residents attended the ceremony. The participants collectively recited the Holy Quran, took part in the Khatm-e-Quran, and paid rich tribute to the great sacrifices of the martyrs of Ziarat. Provincial Minister Haji Noor Muhammad Khan Dumarr said that the martyrs of Ziarat sacrificed their lives to uphold peace in Balochistan, the honor of the state, and the rule of law. "The nation will never forget their sacrifices." He said that such spiritual gatherings held in memory of the martyrs are not only a means of conveying reward to the deceased but also a practical expression of solidarity and devotion toward their families. At the conclusion, a collective prayer for the forgiveness of all the martyrs of Ziarat was offered. Prayers were made to Allah Almighty to accept the sacrifices of the martyrs, elevate their ranks, and grant their bereaved families the strength to bear this tragedy with patience. Special arrangements for langar were made for the participants, and food was distributed at the end.

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