

QUETTA VOICE

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Afghan nationals entering Pakistan at Pak-Afghan border Chaman:

PSX, rupee surge after IMF review success

KARACHI: The Pakistan Stock Exchange's (PSX) benchmark index and rupee recorded gains on Thursday, a day after the government and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reached a staff-level agreement paved the way for Pakistan to receive \$700 as part of the Stand-by Agreement.

Treasury Finance said the index reached an "all-time high" today after crossing the \$7,000 milestone. Meanwhile, the PKR gained 76 paise or 0.29pc against the dollar in the interbank market after the recording consecutive losses in 17 sessions. The State Bank of Pakistan said the rupee closed at Rs287.38. The IMF funds to be issued are a second tranche of the nine-month bailout package and are subject to approval from the IMF's executive board, the lender said in a statement yesterday. This will bring total disbursements under the \$3bn package, approved in July, to almost \$1.9bn. The IMF had called upon the authorities to restore full return to the market-determined exchange rate and highlighted risks that may arise because of geopolitical tensions, rise in commodity prices and difficult global financial conditions, and advised the authorities to continue efforts to build resilience. It had also pointed out that the timely disbursement of committed external support remains critical to support. **NEWS DESK**

105,000 Illegal Immigrants Repatriated via Pak-Afghan Border, Chaman

Syed Ali Shah:

QUETTA: In an update by Balochistan's Caretaker Home Minister, Captain (R) Zubair Ahmed Jamali, over 105,000 illegal immigrants have been repatriated through the Chaman border since the initiation of a nationwide crackdown on November 1st. The minister assured that the repatriation process, aimed at all communities, is being conducted with utmost respect. Despite concerns about misbehavior, an inquiry has been launched into 17 reported cases, with justice served and action taken against responsible authorities.

Inquiry Launched: 17 Cases of Misbehavior Addressed in Balochistan Immigration Crackdown

In response to a question about some incidents of misbehavior with refugees, Mr. Jamali informed that the government has ordered an inquiry into 17 such cases. "Justice served and action taken against the responsible policemen", he said.

The Balochistan Caretaker Home Minister said the federal and provincial governments were determined to ensure a



Balochistan Caretaker Home Minister, Captain (R) Zubair Ahmed Jamali

respectable repatriation of the illegal immigrants to their countries. "This crackdown is not against any specific community", he clarified.

Beyond Borders: Balochistan's Commitment to Security and Fair Elections

Captain (R) Zubair Ahmed Jamali said a crackdown was also launched against the elements involved in smuggling in the province. "We realize that the job of many is linked with smuggling but the government

has decided to bring an end to this", Zubair Jamali stated.

The Minister warned that action would be taken against the elements involved in smuggling from borders. He also mentioned that the sale of petrol and diesel would not be allowed in the population. "Security of our citizens comes first", he said.

The minister informed that the caretaker government was taking a number of measures to address the issues faced by the people of Balochistan. "We would also ensure free and fair elections", he said.

4 militants, including 'high value terrorist', killed in Peshawar operation: ISPR

RAWALPINDI: Four militants, including a "high value terrorist", were killed by security forces during an operation in the general area of Badaber in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Peshawar district, the military's media affairs wing said on Thursday.

In a statement, the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said an intelligence-based operation was conducted in the area on the reported presence of terrorists. It said the troops effectively engaged the militants' location and four terrorists were "sent to hell" including a "high-value terrorist, terrorist commander Samiullah alias Shenay, terrorist commander Salman alias Ahmed, terrorist Imran alias Muhammad and terrorist Hazrat Umar alias Khalid".

The militants were "highly wanted by law enforcement agencies", the ISPR said. "Weapons, ammunition and explosives were also recovered from the slain men, who remained active in various terrorist activities, including extortion and targeted killings in the area," it added.

In another operation today, an "intense exchange of fire" took place between terrorists and army troops in the Kulachi area of the Dera Ismail Khan district.

According to the ISPR, Lance Naik Muhammad Ejaz Khan,

a 34-year-old resident of Kashmir, embraced martyrdom during the operation.

It said that sanitisation of the surrounding areas was being carried out to neutralise any other terrorists found in the area. "The security forces of Pakistan are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism from the country," the statement added.

Pakistan has witnessed an uptick in terrorist activities in recent months, especially in KP and Balochistan, after the banned militant Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan ended its ceasefire with the government in November last year.

On Wednesday, seven terrorists were killed by security forces in an operation in the Tank district. Last week, a Pakistan Army officer and three soldiers were martyred in an IBO in the Tirah area of KP's Khyber district while terrorists attacked the Pakistan Air Force's heavily guarded M.M. Alam Base on November 4.

On Nov 3, 17 security personnel were involved in an ambush, bomb blasts and security operation in Gwadar, Dera Ismail Khan and Lakki Marwat.

In September, data compiled by the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies said the number of militant attacks in August was the highest tally for monthly strikes in almost nine years. **NEWS DESK**

Bilawal urges nation to 'give someone new a chance' in upcoming general elections

Abbottabad: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhatto-Zardari on Thursday called on the public to give someone new a chance in the February 8 general election instead of choosing the same prime minister for the "second or 14th time".

"Instead of making someone the prime minister for the second or 14th time, we should give a chance to someone who hasn't been given the chance before," he said while addressing a PPP workers' convention in Abbottabad. The former foreign minister said "new politics" would have to be pursued to transform Pakistan into a modern nation.

"We will have to make old politicians sit at home," he said. "Now the time has come that you all rest now," he said. "Termining 'old politics' and decisions taken in backdoor rooms the country's people should give a chance to the PPP, the party that thinks about the future," he said. **NEWS DESK**

He said the solution to the country's problems lay in serving the public with the right intention, ideology, manifesto and will. "I am only looking at the public. I want to become the laada (favourite) of the public," Bilawal said. Commenting on his tenure as the foreign minister, he said that he had proved that youngsters performed when they were given a chance to deliver. "If you give us a chance, I promise you that I will never disappoint you and I will serve you day and night," he told the people attending the convention. He said 70 per cent of Pakistan's population was comprised of youngsters below the age of 30. "We now need to think about whether we will vote for septuagenarians and leave our only think of themselves or if we should give a chance to the PPP, the party that thinks about the future," he said. **NEWS DESK**

Firing On Chaman Phatak Quetta Leaves One Person Dead

Staff Reporter:

QUETTA: One person was killed in a firing incident in the Chaman Phatak area of the city on Thursday evening.

Police sources said unknown accused opened fire and killed a person on the spot. The attackers escaped unhurt from the spot.

Police reached the spot and shifted the dead body to the civil hospital Quetta. Police launched an investigation into the incident.

The motive behind the at-



tack could not be ascertained immediately.

Panic prevailed in the area and shopkeepers pulled down their shutters after the firing incident.

Balochistan Strengthens Anti-Corruption Drive with Islamabad Visit

Dawood Ahmed:

ISLAMABAD: Senior officials from the Anti-Corruption Establishment Balochistan (ACEB) have successfully concluded a three-day study visit to key government agencies in Islamabad, marking a pivotal step in the implementation of the "Strengthening Institutional Capacity of Anti-corruption Balochistan" project.

This initiative, funded by the U.S. Embassy's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) and executed by Accountability Lab, aims to enhance the anti-corruption efforts in Balochistan.

ACEB Officials Engaged With FIA

During the visit, ACEB officials engaged with counterparts from the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), the Anti-Money Laundering Department (AML/D) of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), and the Financial Monitoring Unit (FMU). The primary objectives included strengthening institutional ties, fostering inter-agency coop-

eration, and facilitating the exchange of crucial information to combat corruption and financial crimes effectively.

Discussions revolved around the establishment of a Financial Investigation Unit (FIU) at ACE Balochistan, with the project aiming to align it with international standards.

Officials Participated in Dialogues With FIA, SECP, FMU

ACEB officials actively participated in dialogues with FIA, SECP, and FMU, seeking insights and best practices in financial investigations.

Mr. Kamran Bashir, Deputy Director of Investigation at ACEB, emphasized the significance of the study visit, stating, "This collaboration is a significant step in our commitment to combating corruption effectively." He expressed gratitude for the support from INL and Accountability Lab in enhancing ACEB's capacity to combat financial crimes.

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Renewed drilling begins to rescue 40 men trapped in Indian tunnel for fifth day

Uttarakhand: Rescue workers renewed efforts on Thursday to reach 40 men trapped inside a collapsed highway tunnel in India for the fifth day, making slow progress as they began drilling through rock and soil debris.

Authorities said they were confident an advanced drilling machine flown in from New Delhi would speed up the rescue in the northern state of Uttarakhand.

The plan is to drill and create space for a pipe that can be used by the trapped men to crawl to safety.

Drilling had penetrated about 3 metres (10 ft) of debris by on Thursday morning, officials said, adding that they had to cover a total distance of about 60 metres. The machine can drill

through about 2-2.5 metres of rock per hour, Ranjit Sinha, the state's top disaster management officer, said.

Two of the trapped construction workers were treated for nausea and headache as they endured a fifth day confined to a small space behind the rubble, officials said.

"There is electricity, water and we are sending food. The new machine which is more powerful and speedy, is deployed," V K. Singh, federal deputy minister for road transport and highways, and a retired army chief, told reporters at the site.

"Our priority is to save them all. The morale of people trapped inside is high. We are very optimistic of bringing them out," he said.



Singh said Indian agencies involved in the rescue effort were consulting experts in Austria, Norway and Thailand, but did not elaborate.

Asked about local media reports which said India had consulted Thai experts involved in the 2018 rescue of 12 boys trapped in a cave complex, Uttarakhand Chief

Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama said "Technical experts who have dealt with such situations in foreign countries have also been consulted."

The 4.5 km (3 mile) tunnel is part of the Char Dham highway, one of the most ambitious projects of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government. The \$1.5 billion project aims to connect four Hindu pilgrimage sites through 890 km (550 miles) of roads.

Since the tunnel collapsed, the trapped men have been supplied with food, water and oxygen via a pipe and they are in contact with rescuers via walkie-talkies.

"Two of them, who complained of nausea and minor headache, were given medicines through the pipe and are fine

now," Arpan Yaduvanshi, a local police officer said.

Local media reported that a six-bed makeshift hospital had been put in place near the tunnel to cater to any medical attention the men might need once they are rescued.

Authorities have not said what caused the tunnel to cave in but the region is prone to landslides, earthquakes and floods. The highway project has faced some criticism from environmental experts and some work was halted in January after hundreds of houses along the routes were damaged by subsidence.

The federal government has said it employed environmentally friendly techniques in the design to make geologically unstable stretches safer. **NEWS DESK**

Pakistan Re-elected to UNESCO Executive Board for 2023-27 terms

PARIS (INP): Pakistan has been re-elected to the Executive Board of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) with highest number of votes in the group.

According to details, Pakistan's Permanent Delegation to UNESCO based in Paris, France in a statement said Pakistan was re-elected for the term 2023-2027.

"We are thankful to member States for their support and trust. Pakistan will continue to work together with all member states in advancing our shared objectives," a statement issued from Paris said.

The statement said it was a matter of im-

mense pride to have been entrusted with the responsibility to serve on the Executive Board.

"Pakistan will avail this opportunity to continue to contribute to the policymaking, development of norms, advancement of global priorities, and effective oversight of programs and activities of the Organization," it said.

The statement emphasized that Pakistan values the crucial role of UNESCO as a universal forum to promote the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind and advancement of global peace and development through education, science, culture and communication.

"As an ardent advocate of multilateralism, Pakistan will endeavour to strengthen our collective efforts at UNESCO, including by building bridges across regions and forging consensus on key issues for tangible outcomes and impact on ground," it said.

The statement highlighted that as a partner, Pakistan would continue to extend proactive support for the SIDS Operational Strategy and Global Priorities: Africa and Gender Equality.

"Pakistan's re-election is a testament to its longstanding support for and constructive role at the United Nations," it said.

Int'l institutions need to investigate Israel's aggression as war crimes: FO

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Foreign Office (FO) of Pakistan has said that the international institutions need to investigate aggression of Israeli forces on unarmed civilian population of Gaza as war crimes.

Speaking during a weekly press briefing on Thursday, Foreign Office Spokesperson Muntaz Zahra Balch said that the Israeli aggression in Gaza continues for over a month unabated. She said that the Israeli army was committing atrocities on Palestinian people.

Attacks on hospitals were a serious violation of international humanitarian and war laws, she added. The FO spokesperson said that Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakhar has strongly condemned.



ISLAMABAD: Astronaut amira Saleem called on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Present conditions are self-inflicted wound, laments Nawaz Sharif

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan's currency, economic and the system has devastated, and the process increased by five-fold, former prime minister Nawaz Sharif said on Thursday.

"Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's supreme leader was addressing officials of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) today.

"It is our responsibility and duty to emancipate the people from price hike and poverty," Nawaz Sharif, who returned from self-exile in London on October 21, addressing to businessmen said.

"People want education, health facilities and development," he said. "It is their right, and it is responsibility of the state to provide these facilities," PML-N leader said.

Nawaz claimed that Pakistan was become 24th largest global economy between 2013 to 2017. "We kept the US dollar static at Rs 104 rate for four years. The dollar would have dropped to Rs40 to 50 if our policies and development process were not interrupted," he claimed.

"Today we are desperate for one billion dollars, it is self-inflicted harm we committed to us," he said. "These miserable conditions are consequence of our own decisions," he lamented.

"The policy rate has soared to 22 percent, which was 25 during our tenure," he added.

"Who can do business at 20 percent rate," he questioned.

"We have ourselves committed excesses with the Parliament and prime ministers," Nawaz Sharif said. "See, who was handed over the country, economy and all systems suffered devastation." "Those who were paying Rs 1,000 monthly electricity bill, now paying 15,000 rupees," he said. "Prices of everything, have soared by five-fold," he added.



USA: A meeting between Chinese President Xi Jinping and US President Joe Biden took place in Florida State, California.

UK Parliament rejects motion seeking ceasefire in Gaza

LONDON (INP): The UK Parliament has voted against a motion urging for an "immediate" ceasefire in the ongoing conflict in Gaza.

The motion, put forward by the Scottish National Party (SNP) as an amendment to the King's Speech, aimed to call on London to "join the international community in urgently pressing all parties to agree to an immediate ceasefire".

With 125 members

of parliament (MPs) voting in favour and 293 against, the ruling Conservatives Party and the main opposition Labour Party's leadership made it clear that they would not support the motion.

Before the vote, Labour introduced its own motion, which was rejected by the majority of the chamber.

The Labour amendment proposed humanitarian "pauses", arguing that a ceasefire could un-

Lahore motorway closed for traffic due to dense smog

LAHORE (INP): The motorway authority on Thursday closed Lahore to Sheikhupura M2 for traffic due to dense smog which rendered the driver's visibility.

Motorway spokesperson said that Hajj 2024 will be digitally managed solely for the purpose of safe travel and ensure public safety.

The motorway police advised the citizens to avoid unnecessary travel meanwhile, if necessary, the diver must use front and rear fog lights as the visibility is affected due to dense smog in Lahore.

Earlier, the Lahore-Multan Motorway and other sections were closed for traffic due to dense fog early Monday morning.

As per details, the sections of Lahore-Multan from Faisalpur to Jarhanwala and Lahore motorway from Lahore to Sambrial are closed

ing three people and injuring five others.

"Due to dense fog, many vehicles collided with each other near Qadirabad toll plaza," the police said.

The deceased also included women and children, police say. On being informed of the accident, a team of Rescue 1122 reached the spot, providing first aid to the injured and shifted them to a nearby hospital.

Lahore DHA accident: Probe reveals underage driver 'intentionally' rammmed car into family

LAHORE (INP): Teenage suspect, Afnan Shaqat, who was involved in the deadly road accident in Phase-VII of the Defence Housing Authority (DHA), has intentionally rammmed his car into the family, it learnt Thursday.

The collision, which occurred near Defence Phase 7, resulted in the tragic loss of six family members. Those who lost their lives were identified as Rukhsana Bibi (45), her son Husnan (25), daughter-in-law Ayesha (23), her son-in-law Sajjad (30), four-month-old grandson Huzafa, and her granddaughter Anaya (4).

Rafaqat, along with other relatives, was returning from his son's laws' residence in two cars. They had just reached DHA Phase VII, when a reckless car driven by Afnan collided with the vehicle carrying six family members, including his wife, son, daughter-in-law, and their two children.

The suspect was alone in the car when people rescued him and handed over to the police. He was sent on medical remand by judicial magistrate at Cantonment Courson Wednesday.

Teenage suspect, Afnan Shaqat, who was

Asad Qaiser sent to jail in corruption case

SWABI (INP): A judicial magistrate in Swabi on Thursday sent PFI leader Asad Qaiser to jail on a 14-day judicial remand in an alleged corruption case.

Qaiser, who is accused of corruption in the procurement of equipment for Gajju Khan Medical College, was arrested from Bani Gala, Islamabad, on Nov 3. Judicial magistrate Muhammad Khalil heard the case and handed over Qaiser to judicial remand in the corruption case. Earlier on Monday,

Reduction in expenses: Pakistan unveils Hajj policy 2024

ISLAMABAD (INP): Religious Affairs minister Hajj Saad on Thursday announced the 2024 Hajj policy.

Aneeq Ahmed said that Hajj 2024 will be digitalized where Hajis will have to pay Rs75,000 extra. Aneeq Ahmed told media persons that the caretaker cabinet approved the groundbreaking Hajj policy yesterday, marking a paradigm shift in the pilgrimage experience.

Aneeq Ahmed said that last year's Hajj cost Rs11075000 but this year's Hajj will cost 1075000.

Minister of Religious Affairs said that residences for pilgrims are found in good places in both Holy cities.

The Hajj Secretary clarified that the cost of

to secure minimum airfare, with the savings earmarked for pilgrims' accounts.

Digitizing the Hajj process.

To embrace digital advancements, the Ministry of IT played a pivotal role in digitizing the Hajj process.

A dedicated app for Hajj 2024 will provide a streamlined experience for the pilgrims.

MILITARY ENGINEERING SERVICES TENDER NOTICE

1. The office of Commander MES (Army)-Al Quetta, Command & Staff College Quetta invites sealed tender for the under mentioned work in light of PPR rules 13 (i) of 2014:-

Ser.	Name of Work	Sanction Cost
a.	Const / Repair / Maint of Resid / Non Resid accom Abnormal Repair works and Allied / Misc Facilities at Command & Staff College and Infantry & Tactics Quetta	200 Million
b.	TC / DC B&R for Minor / Maint / Deposit works for at Command & Staff College and School of Infantry & Tactics Quetta	300 Million
c.	TC E&M of Internal / External Electric supply Items, Internal / External Water supply Items & Sul Gas supply Items for at Command & Staff College and School of Infantry & Tactics Quetta	300 Million

2. The contractors are required to submit their application to Commander MES (Army) Command & Staff College Quetta for issuance of tender documents along with their complete credentials. The applications shall be scrutinized and the tender documents will only be issued to the firms who have sufficient experience in the relevant field and satisfy other special conditions required for the job and area. Tenders will be issued to the scrutinized contractors. The tender must be received in the accepting office by 01 December 2023 till 1100 hours and will be opened at 1200 hours on the same date.

NOTE:- Contractors shall provide certificate that they are not involved in any type of litigation with Government Department in the Court of Law and that no special report of Directorate of Inspection and Evaluation (E-In-C's Branch/GHQ) is required.

3. All contractors will certify in writing that they are registered with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) and will submit a copy of their registration. Contractors not registered with PEC are ineligible to apply.

4. Firms / contractors who are enlisted with MES in categories 'D' may apply for work.

5. Firms / contractors not borne on approved list of MES will furnish their applications along with statement of previous experience giving details of work executed during last two years and those in hand, on the proforma appended below:-

Ser.	Name of works executed during last two years	Amount of works (Rs)	Time allowed in months	Date of commencement	Date of completion	%age progress of work in hand and supply materials

6. Desirous contractors may present at the time of opening of tenders.

7. The accepting officer reserves the right to accept or reject the tender. Rejected tenders will be deal with a para 3 (i) PPR rules. Incomplete applications shall not be entertained.

8. Detail of work can be obtained from this office on any working day at 0900 to 1400 hours if required.

PRO No.994/16-11-2023 EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING DIVISION QUETTA. www.dprgob.pk @dpr_gob @dpr_gob @dprbalochistan

LESCO detects 282 power pilferers during anti-power theft crackdown

LAHORE (INP): The Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) detected a total of 282 connections from where power consumers were pilfering electricity in all its circles of five districts during anti-power theft crackdown.

LESCO spokesman told the media on Wednesday that the company had submitted applications to the police stations concerned for registration of FIRs against 268 electricity thieves, out of which 176 cases were registered, while 24 accused were arrested.

The anti-power theft operations against electricity thieves are being conducted on the directives of the Federal Power Division and the LESCO Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Engineer Shahid Haider is supervising these operations.

The LESCO chief vowed that the operations would continue without discrimination until the complete end of electricity theft. The electricity pilferers as well as the LESCO officers and employees who facilitate them are also being brought to justice.

On the 68th consecutive day of anti-power theft campaign, the spokesman added, large agricultural and commercial consumers were also found involved in electricity theft and all of them were also disconnected and charged with detection units.

Among the seized connections 20 were commercial, 02 agricultural and 260 domestic, and all these connections were disconnected and charged with a total of 307,574 units as detection bill

amounting to Rs 13.186 million.

He explained that LESCO charged Rs 298,000 as detection bill against 6,800 units to an electricity pilferer in Shahdara Lahore, Rs 295,000 fine in the form of detection bill against 5,700 to another customer stealing electricity in Begum Kot area, Rs 200,000 detection bill against 3,780 units to another power thief in Green Town Lahore, and Rs 150,000 as detection bill to an electricity thief in Batapur.

During the 68 days of grand anti-theft campaign, the spokesman mentioned, the LESCO detected pilferage on 26,125 power connections and submitted 25,847 FIR applications against electricity thieves in the relevant police stations out of which 24,998 FIRs have been registered.



GENEVA: Federal Secretary Health Iftikhar Ali Shalwani represented the Government of Pakistan, during 50th board Meeting at Geneva Headquarter.

IHC extends restraining order for police to arrest Sheikh Rashid in Sindh cases

ISLAMABAD (INP): Islamabad High Court on Thursday extended till January a restraining order asking authorities not to arrest Awami Muslim League chief and former federal minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed.

The court did not give a specific date until which the restraining order will be applicable.

Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri of Islamabad High Court conducted hearing of cases registered against Rashid at Sindh's Mochko police station and Lesbela.

The court, while issuing notice to SSP, Investigation Kemari, summoned him in personal capacity on next date of hearing.

During proceedings, the court asked SSP Kemari why operations in the case were

made despite IHC orders.

The IHC also issued non-habable arrest warrants for complainant in the Lesbela case.

The investigation officer told the court that report had been sent to dismiss the case registered in Lesbela. A letter had also been sent to the department in this regard. Justice Jahangiri, during proceedings, remarked, "Sheikh Sh's seclusion (China) is still haunting you, in Sindh too, 7-AIA has been invoked against you."

An officer of Sindh police told the court that investigation in the case was complete and challan had to be submitted in the court.

He said the former investigation officer (IO) had added Section 7-AIA in the case perhaps due to some political issue.

He said in his opinion FIR should not have been registered. He further told the court if he was dealing with the case, he would dismiss the FIR.

He said he had been transferred, and a new officer, after taking charge, would appear before the court to pursue the case. On this, the assistant attorney general requested the court not to make the statement of police officer part of the record. The assistant attorney general said he had told the

whole truth in plain words. Justice Jahangiri remarked that he was not going to make the statement of police officer part of proceedings because it could cost him his job. The court then adjourned hearing of the case till January.

Rupee continues upward trend against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistani Rupee opened the trading session with another slight increase of 64 paisas against the US Dollar, as per the interbank exchange rate.

For the past couple of days, the American currency has been on a decline against the Rupee, as Pakistan negotiated with the International Monetary Fund about the next instalment in the \$3 billion loan programme.

On Thursday morning, the session began with the Rupee being traded at Rs287.50 after gaining 64 paisas against the Dollar in the interbank market.

On Wednesday, the Pakistani Rupee opened the trading session with a slight increase of 27 paisas against the US Dollar, as per the interbank exchange rate. The Dollar opened the trading session

with a rate of Rs287.60 in the interbank market, as per currency dealers.

At around noon, the local currency showed a rate of Rs287.80, after an increase of 7 paisas in the interbank market.

The US Dollar closed Wednesday's trading session at Rs288.14 after a minor fall against the Rupee.

In the open market, however, the Dollar depreciated against the Pakistani Rupee. It was being sold at Rs289.5 and bought by customers for Rs286.5.

On Tuesday, the US Dollar opened the trading session with a value of Rs287, as the interbank exchange rate saw a slight dip of 55 paisas.

In the interbank trading, the Dollar closed at Rs 287.87 on Tuesday. Since October 16, the American currency has appreciated

by Rs 11.04.

In the open market, the US Dollar remained unchanged at Rs289. Since October 16, it has gone up by Rs12.

The American currency has continued its sharp upward trend over the past couple of weeks, while Pakistan on Wednesday successfully negotiated a staff-level agreement (SLA) with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The agreement, subject to approval by the IMF's Executive Board, marks a significant stride in the implementation of Pakistan's economic program supported by the IMF stand-by arrangement (SBA) amounting to \$3 billion.

Upon approval, Pakistan is set to receive a disbursement of around \$700 million, bringing the total disbursements under the programme to nearly \$1.9 billion.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs the 7th meeting of Apex Committee of SIFC.

PTDC played key role in promoting country's tourism: Official

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) has played significant role for promotion of the tourism industry through marketing of country's natural landscape, history, culture and archaeological sites besides providing facilities to tourists.

Interacting with media, an official of PTDC said on Thursday that the corporation was working effectively according to the vision of the tourism sector as a national priority in a sustainable and acceptable manner, taking full advantage of regional and international trends and developments.

He said the PTDC was projecting the country as a tourist

friendly destination in bringing Pakistan amongst top five tourist destinations of Asia and marketing of tourist places at home and abroad through tourism show and exhibitions to generate revenue. Tourism sector was contributing a lot to national exchequer as well, he added.

The PTDC official said that the tourism organization was to act as a catalyst in encouraging the private sector to play active role in tourism promotion and development. It was developing infrastructure and services within the country to facilitate the tourists. He said it has already established Tourist Information Centers (TIC) at various airports to provide accurate information to foreign and local tourists.

He said that Minister of State for Tourism, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Youth Affairs Wasi Shah had unveiled that TIC would set up at Gawadar International Airport to facilitate the tourists about their destination. He said that PTDC with collaboration of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) has kicked off an effective cleanliness campaign at various parks of the federal capital to ensure neat and clean environment to attract large number of tourists in a healthy ambience.

The PTDC official said the campaign launched aimed at ensuring clean environment to urge the tourists to maintain cleanliness at tourist spots of the capital city as a number people.

CDNS achieves Rs 515 bln targets in terms of fresh bond

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has achieved a target of Rs 515 billion in terms of fresh bonds in the current fiscal year, i.e. from July 1 to 15th November September.

The CDNS surpassed the annual target and achieved the target of Rs 1.6 trillion in fresh bonds in the current fiscal year, said a senior official of CDNS on Thursday. He said this was Rs 200 billion additional annual targets than the target of Rs 1300 billion for the previous financial year 2021-22. "The CDNS has set a reviewed saving target of Rs 1.4 trillion for the current financial year (2021-22) which will promote savings

culture in the country," he said.

In view of the current market trend in the country, the ambitious target had been set to further improve the savings culture, he said. He said that work was being done on institutional reforms in CDNS and new reforms and innovations were being introduced.

"At this time Automated Teller Machines (ATM) has also been introduced in CDNS which will provide enough facilities to the users," he added.

Replying to a question, the official said the CDNS had collected an investment of Rs 16 billion in the month of July 2023-24 through Islamic investment bonds.

He added that the directorate has set a target of Rs 75 billion for the new financial year 2023-24 for Islamic finance bonds. Replying to a question, he said the CDNS's aim was to introduce new dimensions in the Islamic finance sector.

He informed that CDNS had reviewed and set a target of Rs 60 billion in the fiscal year 2022-23 for Islamic investment to introduce the new products in the market.

"Islamic finance has a very important role in the global financial sector at this time, and a large part of the economy of many major countries currently includes Islamic finance," he added.



ISLAMABAD: Officials of the ACEB pose for a photo with officers of other agencies in Islamabad

Govt needs to reach an accord with IMF to boost investor confidence: Shahid Rasheed

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt said on Thursday that the government deserves compliments for the success of the IMF review and the staff-level agreement.

Despite strong criticism, the government did not take the path of cheap fame but took the tough decisions that were necessary to save the country, he said.

In a statement issued here, Shahid Rasheed Butt said that after the approval of the IMF's executive board, Pakistan will get seven hundred million dollars,

which will stabilize the value of the rupee and increase the confidence of investors.

After receiving the second tranche of a short-term loan of three billion dollars from the IMF, the total amount received so far by Pakistan will be al-

most 1.9 billion dollars, he added.

He said that Pakistan has achieved most of the IMF targets, but the exchange rate and other issues remain unresolved, which will be hampered out soon.

The IMF has also said that in the context of the global situation, the prices of food items, etc., may increase while it may be difficult to take loans; therefore, Pakistan should take steps to improve resilience and stabilize its economic foundations, he informed.

The business leader said that proper implementation of the federal budget has brought continuity in policies.

At the same time, timely adjustments in electricity and gas prices have helped the government improve its fiscal situation.

Now the pressure on the IMF, the total amount received so far by Pakistan will be al-

masses, he said, adding that Pakistan has promised to create job opportunities through investment, improve social assistance programs, and try to ease inflation.

Shahid Rasheed Butt said that the financial condition of the country is improving due to an increase in the price of oil, gas, and electricity and a reduction in expenditure. In contrast, taxation on retailers and the property sector will further improve matters.

The government and IMF have also agreed to reduce the electricity price and cut the circular debt in the electricity and gas sectors,

which is now 4 percent of the GDP and has become a significant threat to the people and the economy.

A number of issues have also been agreed upon, including transparency in the foreign exchange market and anti-corruption measures.



PESHAWAR: Farmers busy in work on their field on the Charsadda road.