

# Independent

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Hub

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## Pak, Azerbaijan agree to enhance trade, energy cooperation, start Baku-Islamabad flights

Pakistan is committed to the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, says PM Shehbaz, appreciated the bravery of country's forces for fighting for Azerbaijan's rights

BAKU (Azerbaijan) (APP): Pakistan and Azerbaijan on Thursday agreed to enhance bilateral cooperation in the fields of energy, trade and aviation sectors to reflect the decades-old strong relationship between the two nations.

The bilateral relations were discussed at length in a meeting between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev here at Zugulba Palace.

The prime minister, accompanied by a high-level

delegation is on a two-day official visit to Baku at the invitation of President Aliyev.

At a joint press stakeout following their bilateral meeting, the two leaders told the media of agreeing to introduce flights of Azerbaijan airline between the two capitals, enhance number of military exercises, besides exploring the avenues of cooperation in the areas of energy, investment and education.

Prime Minister Shehbaz, who earlier visited

the mausoleum of Azerbaijan first president Haider Aliyev and the martyrs monument, spoke high of the President Ilham Aliyev's leadership to build the city's infrastructure and impressive horticulture.

Citing the "pleasant surprises" of neatness and beauty of Baku, the prime minister requested the Azerbaijan president to lend their experts in horticulture and waste management to Islamabad. He told the media per-

sions that during the "wonderful" discussion, there was a "total unanimity" of views on various bilateral and multilateral issues as the relationship was built on mutual trust and sincerity of purpose.

The prime minister said that the Pakistani flags all across Baku manifested the love between the two people.



BAKU: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev leading their respective sides at a delegation level meeting.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi getting his biometric verification for driving license at Islamabad Traffic Police F-8 Office.

## JJ, PPP clash after Wahab wins Karachi mayor election

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan People's Party's (PPP) candidate Murtaza Wahab appeared victorious in the election for Karachi mayor on Thursday after securing 173 votes and his rival, Jamaat-e-Islami's Hafiz Naeemur Rehman, got 160 votes as per unofficial results.

The voting for Karachi's new mayor started earlier in the day with elected members of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) City Council taking part in the process.

In the tight contest, Pakistan Peoples Party's (PPP) Murtaza Wahab and Jamaat-e-Islami's (JI) Hafiz Naeemur Rehman were facing each other with Salman Abdullah Murad of PPP and Saifuddin Advocate of JI contesting for the post of deputy mayor.

Clashes erupt between JI and PPP workers

Following the announcement of unofficial mayoral results, clashes erupted between workers of JI and PPP outside the Arts Council of Pakistan.

According to Express News, during the voting process, the situation outside the premises remained extremely tense. However, the police took control of it but as the results came out, the verbal altercation turned into clashes.

The workers of both parties pelted stones at each other, on which the police and Rangers took action to stop the quarrel. Moreover, law enforcers also detained several workers for pelting stones.

On the other hand, JI cried foul and alleged that the Sindh government has abducted 29 PTI members who were supposed to vote for Rehman in the election.

## Next budget's preparations delayed: BA's budget session deferred till June 19 as Finance Dept seeks "additional time"

QUETTA: The budget session of Balochistan Assembly scheduled to be held today (Friday) has been postponed till June 19, 2023.

According to an official notification issued here by the Balochistan Assembly secretariat on Thursday night, the budget session of the assembly has been rescheduled. As per the revised schedule, the Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has summoned the budget session at 04:00 PM on June 19, 2023.

As per the agenda, the budget for the financial year 2023-24 would be presented in the session of assembly. Meanwhile, the Provincial Minister for Finance, Engineer Zamrak Khan Achakzai told a section of press that the change in schedule of the budget session is due to non-preparation of the budget. Therefore, the Finance Department has sought more time for preparations of the next financial year's budget of the province.



QUETTA: Federal Secretary Communication and Chairman NHA Captain (Retd) Muhammad Khurram Agha and Chief Secretary Balochistan Abdul Aziz Uqaili attending a meeting to review progress on NHA projects in Balochistan

## President, first lady visit ITP office for driving license

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi and First Lady Samina Alvi on Thursday visited the office of Islamabad Traffic Police to process their driving licenses.

Both the president and the first lady went through the biometric verification as a prerequisite of the license.

The president also appreciated the ITP for their services to facilitate the citizens.

## UK appoints Jane Marriott as news HC to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (Online): Britain has nominated Jane Marriott as the new High Commissioner to Pakistan. Jane, the first female High Commissioner nominated for Pakistan, will take charge in mid-July, said British High Commission in a statement.

Before being nominated for Pakistan, Jane Marriott was the High Commissioner in Kenya from 2019 to 2023.

High Commissioner-designate Jane has extensive experience in diplomacy, internal, administrative and foreign affairs.

Jane Marriott has also held diplomatic responsibilities in Yemen, Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan. Designated High Commissioner Jane, also advisor to the late US Special Representative for Pakistan and Afghanistan Richard Holbrooke.

## On retirement from international cricket: CM appreciates services of Naheeda Khan for Pak women cricket team

Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo urges Chairman PCB to hire services of Naheeda Khan for improving women cricket in Balochistan

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo has highly appreciated the services of International female cricketer, Naheeda Khan belonging to Balochistan province for the Pakistani women cricket team.

In a message on the retirement of Naheed Khan from the International cricket, the Chief Minister said that her services for the national women cricket team are praiseworthy.

He also appreciated Naheed Khan for becoming a role model for the women of Balochistan and her excellent career.

Moreover, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo expressed best wishes for the future of Naheeda Khan and adopting the field of coaching in time to come maintaining his association with the game of cricket.

He believed that the courageous and talented Naheeda Khan would also prove her mettle in the field of cricket coaching.

He said that the support of her family for Naheeda Khan in cricket and that in a conservative society is unprecedented.

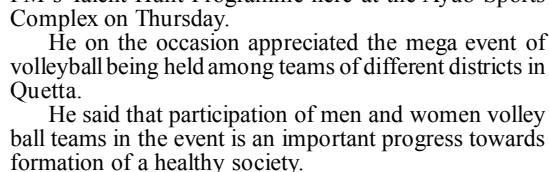
She wholeheartedly represented Balochistan at the national and international level, he commended.

## Governor Abdul Wali Kakar says Federal Govt. providing every possible facilities to youth of Balochistan

Independent Report

QUETTA: Appreciating the Prime Minister's Youth Talent Hunt Programme and Sports League started in the country including Balochistan, the Governor, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that the federal government is providing every kind of facilities to the younger generation. He said that the programme would become source of proper grooming of the new generation.

He said that we are proud of our national players and hoped that they would continue to brighten the name of the country and nation in future as well.



This and similar other views were expressed by the Governor while speaking at opening ceremony of the PM's Talent Hunt Programme here at the Ayub Sports Complex on Thursday.

He on the occasion appreciated the mega event of volleyball being held among teams of different districts in Quetta.

He said that participation of men and women volleyball teams in the event is an important progress towards formation of a healthy society.

## Fed. Secretary Communication satisfied on preparedness of NHA on account of Biparjioy

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Federal Secretary for Communications and Chairman National Highway Authority (NHA), Captain (Retd) Muhammad Khurram Agha has expressed satisfaction on account of the Cyclone storm "Biparjioy",

upcoming Monsoon and constructive/maintenance activities of the post flood of 2022.

However, he directed that required site machinery and human resource availability must be ensured at critical locations to cater for any emergency, ensure uninterrupted traffic flow round the clock.

He further directed that procurement process of reconstruction of damaged bridges in Balochistan must be expedited in order to ensure commencement and completion as soon as possible.

## PM greets Chinese President Xi Jinping on his birthday

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday extended his greetings to Chinese President Xi Jinping on his birthday.

"It is my great pleasure to extend heartfelt felicitations to H.E. President Xi Jinping on his birthday," the prime minister, who is currently on a two-day visit to Azerbaijan, wrote on Twitter.

He said under the dynamic leadership of President Xi, China had emerged as a global leader advancing international solidarity, peace and cooperation.

He said the "iron brotherhood" between China and Pakistan entered a new era of enhanced cooperation since his visit to Pakistan in 2015 and had been going from strength to strength ever since.

## Govt keeps petrol, diesel prices unchanged

ISLAMABAD (APP): Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Thursday said that the government decided to keep the existing prices of petroleum products remain unchanged for the next 15 days to facilitate the masses in the country.

The Minister in a press talk at PTV said Petrol would be available at Rs262 per litre, the price of high-speed diesel is Rs253, while the light diesel oil is Rs147.68, however, prices of kerosene oil have also been kept unchanged at Rs.164.07.

## Pak, Bosnia enjoy historic, friendly ties: Bilawal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Bosnia Herzegovina Sakib Foric paid a farewell call on Minister for Foreign Affairs Bilawal Bhutto Zardari here on Thursday and exchanged views on bilateral relations.

The minister said Pakistan and Bosnia Herzegovina enjoyed historic and friendly relations.

He appreciated the services of the Bosnian ambassador for enhancing relations between the two countries, during his stay in Pakistan.

## NA Speaker narrowly escapes in road accident

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker of the National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf had a fortunate escape from harm in an accident on Mandera-Chakwal Road while returning to Islamabad.

The unexpected presence of a cow startled everyone as the Speaker's car traversed the road. Despite the driver's swift reaction to avoid a potential collision, an unintended contact occurred with the escort cars accompanying the Speaker's vehicle.

Fortunately, by the grace of Allah, both Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf and his dedicated staff emerged from the accident unharmed.

## Review and appeal are two different powers: CJP

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Hayat Bandial has remarked there is basic difference between review and appeal.

He further remarked how should the scope of review be increased. The petitioners are of view that the scope of review be increased. But it should not be changed into appeal. The petitioners problem relates to the process of extending the scope. If government has to make review like hearing again then do it. You will have to adopt right legal way in this connection. Review and appeal are two different powers.

The CJP gave these remarks while presiding over a 3 members bench of SC during the hearing of petitions pertaining to Supreme Court judgment and review order here Thursday.

During the hearing of the case Attorney General (AG) Mansoor Usman Awan argued original powers of article 184 (3) were enhanced for enforcement of the rights in 1973 constitution. First decision under article 184 (3) came in Manzoor Elahi case.

Brothers of Manzoor Elahi filed petitions in Sindh and Balochistan. Manzoor Elahi was taken to tribal areas after his arrest. I will tell after reading the decision how the jurisdiction of 174(3) kept on increasing in the last years.

## Pak and Russia sign MoU on Exchange of statistical data between Customs

SAINT PETERSBURG (APP): Pakistan and the Russian Federation on Thursday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for cooperation between Pakistan Customs and Russia's Federal Customs Service on Exchange of Statistical Data on Mutual Trade.

Pakistan's Ambassador to Russian Federation Shafiqat Ali Khan signed the MoU on behalf of Pakistan Customs while Secretary Commerce Muhammad Saleh Farooqi witnessed the signing ceremony held here on the sidelines of Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum, a press release issued by the Ministry of Commerce said.

Minister of Trade and Investment at Pakistan's Embassy in Moscow, Shaukat Hayat Cheema, was also present on the occasion.

In order to implement



SAINT PETERSBURG: A group photograph of Pakistan's Ambassador to the Russian Federation, H.E. Shafiqat Ali Khan after signing the MoU between Pakistan Customs and the Federal Customs Service (Russian Federation) on the Exchange of Statistical Data on Mutual Trade while Secretary of Commerce, Muhammad Saleh Ahmed Faruqi also present on the occasion.



## No leniency should be shown to any culprit involved in events of May 9: CM Naqvi

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi chaired a meeting at his office on Thursday to review progress made so far on the legal proceedings against the culprits involved in the May 9 events.

The meeting decided that trial of the May-9 accused would take place in jail. Daily hearing of cases registered under the Anti-Terrorism Act would take place, and the relevant departments would be duly informed about the trial proceedings in jail. Consensus was reached in the meeting to expedite legal actions against the culprits involved in the events of May 9.

The CM instructed the police and prosecution department to present strong evidence against the accused and emphasised that no leniency should be shown to any culprit involved in the events of May 9, while innocent individuals should not be subjected to punishment. The CM also ordered to intensify efforts to apprehend the absconding culprits.

The participants were briefed that during investigation, 200 individuals were acquitted after being proven innocent, and strong testimonies were being presented against the culprits. The chief secretary, IG police, CCPO

Lahore, secretary prosecution, commissioner Lahore, and others attended the meeting.

Meanwhile, the meeting held under the chairmanship of caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi at his office decided in principle on Thursday to hand over the management of historic and cultural landmarks of the province to the Walled City of Lahore Authority (WCLA).

Recognising the mesmerizing allure and profound historical significance of Punjab's cultural heritage, the chief minister emphasised the imperative of restoring these architectural gems to their original magnificence.



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi presides over the meeting to review progress of taking action against the elements involved in 9th May vandalism.

## Gives Rs 4m cheque to HCBA Kundi demands cancellation of recent population census

**DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP):** Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Faisal Karim Kundi on Thursday demanded cancellation of recent population census conducted in Dera Ismail Khan Division.

According to a press release issued here, the minister wrote two letters to the Prime Minister and the Federal Minister for Planning and Development in support of the demand made by the political parties, social organizations and All Parties Conference (APC) held on June 7, against the results of the census in the division.

He demanded that the results of the census should be canceled immediately and action should be taken against the responsible persons involved, adding, the public complaints must be addressed.

Meanwhile, Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Faisal Karim Kundi here on Thursday gave a cheque worth Rs 4 million to the leaders of High Court Bar Association (HCBA).

According to a press release issued here, the minister, on behalf of the federal government, handed over the cheque to the recently elected

HCBA President Malik Hidayat Ullah Malana and General Secretary Waqar Alam in an event organized by the People's Lawyers Forum here at the High Court Bar.

The minister said the supremacy of law and impartial delivery of justice played a basic role in the development of nations. He said that an independent justice system was necessary for a developed, prosperous and stable Pakistan.

The mutual cooperation of the bar and the bench was indispensable for the improving the justice system, he added.



PESHAWAR: Ambassador of Turkey to Pakistan, Dr. Mehmet Pachaji and other visit Peds Cardiology Ward Up gradation in Peshawar Institute of Cardiology.

## Turkey envoy inaugurates Peds Cardiology Ward at PIC

**PESHAWAR (APP):** The Ambassador of Turkey to Pakistan, Dr. Mehmet Pachaji on Thursday inaugurated Peds Cardiology Ward at the Peshawar Institute of Cardiology here.

Speaking on the occasion he said that modern machinery has been provided to the hospital and hoped that the patients suffering from heart disease would now be able to get better health facilities.

## Man killed over resistance in dacoity bid

**MUZAFFARGARH (APP):** Unidentified armed outlaws looted cattle and killed a man for putting resistance at Mouza Pakka Naich in the jurisdiction of Saddar Alipur police station on Wednesday night. According to a police spokesman, unidentified armed robbers entered the farmhouse of Sharafat, a resident of Pakka Naich.

## LHC disposes of Aleema petition seeking details of cases registered against her

**LAHORE (Online):** In the light of IG Punjab report, Lahore High Court (LHC) has wrapped up Aleema Khan petition seeking details of cases registered against her. Justice Amjad Rafiq took up Aleema Khan petition for hearing Thursday whereby the petitioner had requested for providing to her details of all cases against her.

During the hearing of the case police authorities presented report in the court on behalf of IG

police. It was told in the report no case has been registered by Punjab police against Aleema Khan. One case is registered against Aleema Khan in Multan with reference to property.

The court was informed through the report Aleema Khan arrest is not wanted by Punjab Police at present.

The court disposed of the petition in the light of report presented by police on behalf of IG Punjab.

## ANF seizes 184 kg drugs in seven operations

**RAWALPINDI (INP):** Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in their ongoing operations against drug traffickers conducted seven raids across the country and managed to recover over 184 kg of drugs besides netting five accused including two Afghan nationals, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Thursday.

He informed that in an operation, 22.8 kg hashish was recovered from a vehicle intercepted near Motorway Toll Plaza

Islamabad. The recovered hashish was concealed in the CNG cylinder of a vehicle. During the operation, an accused resident of Peshawar was arrested. In another operation, two kg heroin and two kg Ice drug concealed in secret cavities of a vehicle were recovered.

The vehicle was intercepted near Sangjani Toll Plaza on G.T Road. Two Afghan nationals were also arrested on the spot.

## 11 dead, 1,229 injured in Punjab road accidents

**LAHORE (APP):** At least 11 persons were killed and 1,229 others injured in 1,186 road traffic crashes in Punjab during the last 24 hours.

As many as 690 seriously injured people were shifted to different hospitals, while 539 with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by the rescue medical teams.

The analysis showed that 597 drivers, 49 under-age drivers, 164 pedestrians and 479 passengers were among the victims of road traffic crashes.

# International News

## NATO sees no change in Russia's nuclear posture despite Belarus leader's claims

**Monitoring Desk**  
**BRUSSELS:** NATO sees no sign that Russia has changed its nuclear posture, the head of the military alliance said Thursday, after President Alexander Lukashenko claimed that Belarus has already received some tactical nuclear weapons from Moscow.

In an interview on state television on Tuesday, Lukashenko brashly warned that he wouldn't hesitate to order their use if Belarus faced an act of aggression. Russian President Vladimir Putin has said the weapons

will be deployed to Belarus next month and will remain under Moscow's exclusive control.

"We are, of course, closely monitoring what Russia is doing. So far, we haven't seen any changes in the nuclear posture that requires any changes in our posture," Stoltenberg told reporters before chairing a meeting of NATO defense ministers at the alliance's headquarters in Brussels.

NATO's secretive nuclear defense planning group is set to meet on Friday. The meeting has long

been planned and is not a reaction to recent developments, but the alliance is concerned about Putin's threats and his decisions to pull Russia out of important arms limitation treaties.

"Russia's nuclear rhetoric and messaging is reckless and dangerous," Stoltenberg said. "Russia must know that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought." He noted that "Russia has invested heavily in new modern nuclear capabilities and also deployed more nuclear capabilities."

## Arab countries account for quarter of Israeli arms exports

**Monitoring Desk**  
**JERUSALEM:** Israeli defence exports hit an all-time high of \$12.5 billion last year, with Arab countries that recently established ties accounting for nearly a quarter of purchase contracts, officials said on Wednesday.

The defence ministry, which oversees and approves the exports of Israel's defence industries, said one quarter of deals were for drone systems, with "missiles, rockets and

air defence systems" making up another 19 per cent. Ministry figures show total exports have doubled over the past nine years.

A breakdown of the regions to which the goods are exported showed a leap among Abraham Accords countries from \$853 million (nine per cent) in 2021 to \$2.96 billion (24pc) in 2022. The US-brokered Abraham Accords from 2020 saw Israel normalise ties with the United Arab Emirates.

## Iran tested suicide drone in Gulf, U.S. official says

**Monitoring Desk**  
**DUBAI:** Iran tested a suicide drone against a practice vessel in the Gulf and fired one other missile or drone without warning ships in the area, a U.S. official in the region said.

The one-way drone was launched on Wednesday from the Jask area of Iran 8-9 miles out to sea - within Iran's territorial waters - against a practice barge, the official said, citing U.S. intelligence data. "Essentially practicing hitting merchant vessels."



AZERBAIJAN: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and President of Azerbaijan inspecting guard of honor at Zugulba Palace.

## Greece hunts for survivors of migrant shipwreck, at least 78 dead

**Monitoring Desk**  
**KALAMATA:** Rescuers scoured seas off Greece on Thursday in a massive search operation, as hopes dwindled of finding survivors of a shipwreck that killed at least 78 migrants in one of Europe's deadliest such disasters in recent years. Reports suggested hundreds of people had packed the fishing boat that capsized and sank early on Wednesday in deep waters about 50 miles (80 km) from the southern coastal town of Pylos, while being shadowed by the Greek coast guard.

As dawn broke on Thursday, a coast guard vessel sailed into the nearby port city of Kalamata, transferring victims. After an official count, authorities

revised the death toll to 78 from 79. They said 104 people were rescued. They said it was unclear how many had been aboard, but were investigating one account from a European rescue-support charity that there could have been 750 people on the 20- to 30 metre-long (65- to 100-foot) boat.

The UN's International Organization for Migration said initial reports suggested up to 400 people were aboard. News portals Proto Thema and Skai TV reported that, according to witnesses, mainly women and children were in the vessel's hold.

Government officials said migrants on the boat, which had set off from the

Libyan port of Tobruk, had repeatedly refused offers of help from Greek authorities.

"It was a fishing boat packed with people who refused our assistance because they wanted to go to Italy," coast guard spokesman Nikos Alexiou told broadcaster Skai TV.

"We stayed beside it in case it needed our assistance which they had refused."

The search operation was due to continue until at least Friday morning, according to government sources. Chances of retrieving the sunken vessel were remote, they said, because the area of international waters where the incident occurred is one of the deepest in the Mediterranean.

## North Korea fires two missiles off east coast

**Monitoring Desk**

**SEOUL:** North Korea fired its first missile after two months off its east coast just less than an hour, AFP reported on Thursday citing the South Korean military.

The launching of two short-range ballistic missiles came after Pyongyang had warned of an "inevitable" response to military drills jointly staged by South Korea and the United States.

The two nations, in their response to the increasing threats from the nuclear-armed North, are jointly carrying out large-scale live-fire "annihilation" exercises.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said it detected the "two short-range ballistic missiles from the Sunan area into the East Sea between 19:25 and 19:37 (1025 to 1037 GMT)."

"We have stepped up monitoring in case of further provocations and are maintaining readiness in close coordination with the United States," it said, terming the launches as a "grave provocation" violating UN sanctions. The missile launches were also confirmed by Tokyo, saying that they had landed in waters within Japan's exclusive economic zone.



United States Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin, right, greets NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg during a meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group at NATO headquarters in Brussels.

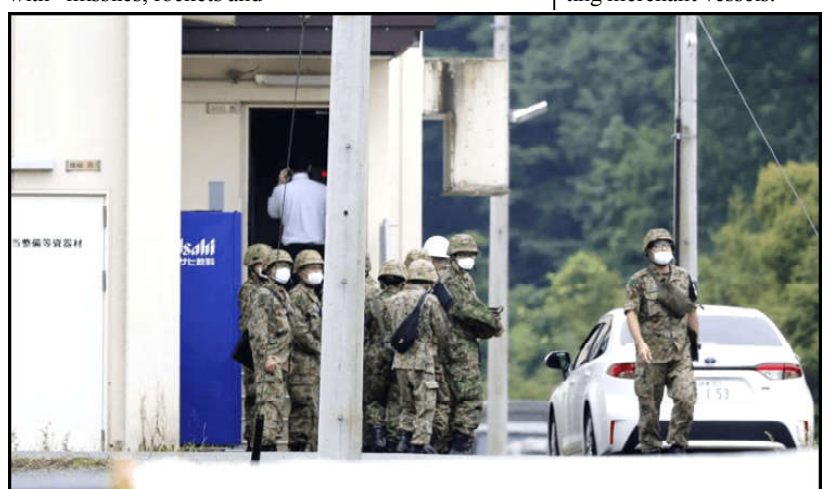
## US fighter jets deployed in Middle East to counter Russian aggression

**Monitoring Desk**

**WASHINGTON:** The United States Central Command (CENTCOM) has announced the deployment of F-22 Raptors to the Middle East due to a rise in unsafe and unprofessional behaviour by Russian aircraft in the region. The decision aims to demonstrate the US military's ability to swiftly reposition forces and deliver overwhelming power when necessary.

"Russian Forces' unsafe and unprofessional behaviour is not what we expect from a professional air force. Their regular violation of agreed upon airspace deconfliction measures increases the risk of

escalation or miscalculation," CENTCOM commander Gen. Michael "Erik" Kurilla said in a news release. "Alongside our partners and allies, we are committed to improving the security and stability in the region." The F-22 Raptors, hailing from Langley Air Force Base's 94th Fighter Squadron in Virginia, have been integrated with other Coalition forces on the ground and in the air. The move comes in response to Russia's repeated violations of agreed-upon airspace deconfliction measures, which pose an increased risk of escalation or miscalculation, according to CENTCOM Commander Gen. Erik Kurilla. In recent weeks,



Members of the Japanese Self-Defence Force (SDF) are seen around the shooting range where a teenage member of the SDF was arrested on suspicion of attempted murder after a shooting incident, in Gifu, Japan.

## US pushing India to seal drone deal

**Monitoring Desk**  
**WASHINGTON:** Ahead of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to Washington, the Biden administration is pushing New Delhi to cut through its own red tape and advance a deal for dozens of US-made armed drones, two people familiar with the matter said.

India has long expressed interest in buying large armed drones from the United States. But bureaucratic stumbling blocks have hampered a hoped-for deal for SeaGuardian drones that could be worth \$2 bil-

lion to \$3bn for years. US negotiators are counting on Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's White House visit on June 22 to break the logjam. Since the date for Modi's visit was fixed, the US State Department, Pentagon and White House have asked India to be able to "show" progress on the deal for as many as 30 armable MQ-9B SeaGuardian drones made by General Atomics, two sources said. Modi and Biden are also expected to discuss co-production of munitions and ground vehicles.

## Two killed in shooting at Japan army base

**Monitoring Desk**  
**TOKYO:** A new military recruit shot and killed two fellow soldiers and wounded a third at a training range in central Japan on Wednesday, the military said, with the 18-year-old suspect detained at the scene.

"During a live-bullet exercise as part of new personnel training, one Self-Defence Forces candidate fired at three personnel," the Ground Self-Defence Force (GSDF) said in a statement, confirming two deaths.

## Asset rich Pak can survive without IMF support: Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq dar on Thursday reiterated that Pakistan was an asset rich country and it could survive without any support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Briefing the Senate's Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue, the minister stated that the annual budget had been prepared without the Fund's consultation, whose reservations could be addressed, according to a press release.

He told the committee, which met with Senator Saleem Mandviwala in the chair, that the information

technology (IT), agriculture and SME sectors were 'drivers of growth' and exemptions given to those sectors were inevitable for the economic growth of the country, which currently stood at 0.29 percent.

He said the annual budget allowed freelancers to retain 35 percent of their revenue. Besides, freelancers earning \$ 2,000 were exempted from sales tax and they could also procure duty free hardware. He maintained that in the current fiscal year, a return of \$ 2.5 billion was expected from the IT industry, which would reach \$ 4.5 billion by next year. The exemptions were given to the industry

keeping in view its potential growth, he added. The minister said import restrictions were imposed to curb the massive inflows. The external debt of the country had increased from \$70 billion to \$100 billion in the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf regime, which was clearly an outcome of its financial indiscipline, he added.

He said expenditure bill should be made by keeping in view the external debt and import restrictions would be updated by June 30. Ishaq Dar said as far as prevention of illegal border trade was concerned, coordination among intelligence agencies and the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR).



KARACHI: Pak Navy rescue team evacuates local populace from Cyclone BIPARJOY affected areas.

## Senators call for Charter of Economy to steer country out of economic crisis

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senators on Thursday stressed the need for enhancing the country's revenue, besides inking the Charter of Economy (CoE) like Charter of Democracy (COD) to steer Pakistan out of the economic crisis.

They appreciated the government for announcing various incentives for the agriculture and information technology sectors, overseas Pakistanis and youth.

Taking part in the debate in the Senate, Saifullah Abro of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) said there were so many opportunities available in the country which could help generate revenue. The Guddu Thermal and Lakra Thermal power plants

could be rehabilitated with limited funds and could earn hefty revenue for the country, he added.

However, he alleged that the power sector was intentionally destroyed by representatives of Independent Power Producers (IPPs) setting in the every government. Such 'mafias' had vested interests and they never wanted rehabilitation of state-owned thermal powers, he added.

Senator Abro suggested that the government should allocate Rs 2.5 billion for the purchase of CT scan and MRI machines in two government own cancer hospitals in Larkana and Nawabshah from the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Rs 450

billion allocation. Many poor patients from both Sindh and Balochistan visited the two hospitals for their treatment, he added.

He was of the view that many lawmakers did not discuss the budget rather they resorted to criticizing their opponent political leaders.

Nuzhat Sadiq of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz termed the budget balanced challenging circumstances.

She said 30 to 35 per cent raise in the salaries and 17.5 per cent in the pensions of government employees was a big relief for them, she added.

Nuzhat said the government had also announced special incentives for overseas Pakistanis.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman NDMA Lt. General Inam Haider Malik presiding meeting with USARCENLTG Frank.

## Zubaida Jalal proposes 25 point economic manifesto for tackle financial crisis

QUETTA (APP) Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) has proposed a 25-point economic manifesto to the government, declaring that in the upcoming elections, we would support political party that would promise to get the country out of the current financial and administrative crisis.

The Economic Manifesto suggests that all stakeholders, politicians and bureaucracy must agree on a charter for the economy to save the nation from the worst financial crisis and mismanagement.

These views were expressed by PBF Balochistan Vice-Chairperson and Member National Assembly (MNA) Zubaidah Jalal while presenting a 25-point economic manifesto in front of the media on Thursday.

She said that "two important keys to get the country out of the economic crisis were increasing exports and expanding the tax base."

According to the Manifesto, investment in industrialization ensures revenue for the government, employment for the youth, and profit for the entrepreneurs, a win-win situation for everyone in the country so the government should prioritize industrialization first and real estate second.

Ahmed Jawad said that in the manifesto, 20 percent quota should be allocated for businessmen in national, provincial and district policies so that business circles have an opinion in policy making.

He said that the business forum also suggested creating links between industry and academia through a new curriculum and mandating universities to teach entrepreneurship. Besides, it demanded provision of plots in industrial estates in ten-year simple installments and establishment of fast-track arbitration centers in every district for settlement of business disputes, he mentioned.

## Khurshid says: Only solution to our problems is agriculture

ISLAMABAD (Online): During debate on budget of fiscal year 2023-24, member national assembly demanded special allocation to deal with climate change as Pakistan number third most vulnerable country to climate disasters.

Federal minister for water resources Khurshid Shah said that only solution to our problems is agriculture.

He said what happened on May 09, has never happened in the history, enemy has not made such damage.

Federal minister of water resources Khurshid Shah said required fund be provided to K-4 project so the project can be completed as soon as possible.

Federal minister for professional education Rana Tanvir Hussain said when we took over the government, economy was so worse that send a hair shuddered us.

## Pakistan, US agree to enhance cooperation in disaster management

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik held meeting with the delegation of United States Army Central (USARCENLTG) led by Lieutenant General Patrick D. Frank, Commanding General of USARCENLTG here at NDMA on Thursday.

The Chairman NDMA gave an overview of Pakistan's hazards and vulnerabilities, disaster management outlook and

structure of NDMA and its role in international relief assistance, a news release said. The interactive session also covered ongoing situation of Tropical Cyclone BIPARJOY at Arabian Sea and proactive preparedness to mitigate the possible impact of the cyclone at coastal areas of Pakistan.

He highlighted that Pakistan's resilience and adaptation make it worthy of support and recognition, especially when it has helped Türkiye and Syria.

## PM visits mausoleum of national leader Heydar Aliyev

ISLAMABAD (Online): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, who is on a two-day official visit to Azerbaijan, visited the mausoleum of the national leader of Azerbaijan, Heydar Aliyev in Baku on Thursday.

The Prime Minister paid glowing tribute to the services of the Azri national leader and laid floral wreath on the mausoleum.

## Govt working on 5-Es to boost exports, energy, job sectors: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal Thursday said that government was working on 5-Es to boost exports, energy, infrastructure, and job sectors besides taking steps for tackling environmental changes in Pakistan.

The young boys and girls would be provided opportunities for technical skills so that every institution could show progress in a befitting manner, he said while talking to PTV.

"We want to achieve fast growth to make Pakistan a prosperous state," he said. All available resources

would be utilized for benefiting people of all provinces, he added.

Commenting on transparency in the development budget, he said a portal had been developed to ensure transparency in the utilization of funds. He said that general public could click on portal to check transparency in the development projects. The minister said that Imran's party could not pay attention to many sectors during the period of four years.

He said the Pakistan Muslim League-N, had worked on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects.

## Pakistan urges UNICEF to boost efforts to meet needs of world's children in crisis situations

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Pakistan has urged United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to step up its efforts to address the needs of children in humanitarian crises, including natural disasters, conflicts and situations of foreign occupation.

Speaking in the UNICEF's Executive Board meeting, Pakistani delegate Hadiqa Qureshi also urged international donors to provide sustainable and adequate funding to UNICEF to enable it to fight the unprecedented impacts on children during the Covid-19 pandemic and those

stemming from conflicts and climate change.

The Executive Board reviews UNICEF activities and approves its policies, country programmes and budgets. It comprises 36 members, representing the five regional groups of member states at the UN. Its work is coordinated by a Bureau, comprising the President and four Vice-Presidents, each officer representing one of the five regional groups. "Despite all the challenges the world is facing today, we note with appreciation how UNICEF has responded to both human-made crises



BAKU: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif visits the mausoleum of National Hero and first President of Azerbaijan, Haider Aliyev. Prime Minister laid a floral wreath at the mausoleum.

## Call for introducing constructive reforms in Balochistan's health sector

QUETTA (APP): The provincial leader of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Shams Hamzazaon Thursday urged the Balochistan government to introduce constructive reforms in the health sector to bring the province at par with other provinces.

Talking to APP, the PPP leader stressed the need for taking prompt action for the provision of basic facilities, and cleanliness in the hospitals.

Hamzazaon said that the government should take stern action against the ghost and absent doctors and conduct inquiries against staffers and employees of the department for not performing their duties.

He requested the chief minister to take notice of

the poor condition and lack of facilities in the public sector hospitals of the province.

He regretted that the Balochistan government could not initiate its cleanliness drive and renovation of the government hospitals in the province.

Balochistan government, he said had promised to revamp the health sector on modern lines and provide equipment to fulfill the need of the hour but the situation was not conforming to the ground situation.

"The government should expedite efforts to ensure the availability of free medicines in public hospitals of the province as many people could not afford expensive medicines," he added.

## PN continues rescue, relief operation at cyclone affected areas of Sindh, Balochistan

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan Navy continued wide-scale Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADRR) Operations in far-flung coastal areas of Sindh and Balochistan.

In the recent developments, Pakistan Navy Emergency Response Teams in coordination with local administration carried out the evacuation of personnel and provided edibles to the aggrieved populace, a Pakistan Navy news release said.

The Pakistan Navy Emergency Response Teams have so far evacuated over 17,000 inhabitants from various coastal

areas of Keti Bandar, Kharo Chan, Shah Bandar, Baghan, Sujawal, Chuhar Jamali and Jati City. Additionally, 46 fishing boats of local populace of Ormara city have been provided shelter at Ormara Naval Harbour. PN Ships and Emergency Response teams are continuing patrolling at sea and in affected areas to efficiently respond to distress calls of seafarers. Pakistan Navy's ongoing Relief Operation in catastrophe-hit areas of Sindh and Balochistan is a practical manifestation of PN's resolve to provide every possible assistance to fellow countrymen in the hour of need.



QUETTA: Balochistan National Party (BNP) Leader, Sana Baloch expresses his solidarity with Members of Balochistan Government Teachers Association during their hunger strike for acceptance of their demands.

## DG Levies orders to cancel process of recruitment in Zhob district levies

By Mohib Tareen  
QUETTA: The Director General Levies Force Balochistan, Naseebullah Khan Kakar has ordered to cancel the process of recruitment in Levies force in Zhob district.

According to the reports, the DG Levies ordered the cancellation of recruitment process in Zhob levies on a video got viral on social media showing interference of some Levies personals in the physical test conducted for the recruitments.

The DG Levies expressed his displeasure over the interference of the

Levies personals in the recruitment process, which shows a sort of nepotism.

In his official order issued by the DG Levies, it was requested to the Commissioner Zhob Division to identify the Levies personals who were allegedly involved in sabotaging the process of recruitments.

The disciplinary action would also be taken against those found guilty in this regard, it was declared. The DG Levies said that the process of recruitment of Levies in Zhob would be rescheduled after inquiry into the matter.

## Masood appreciates Lindsey for role in Pak, US ties

WASHINGTON (Online): Pakistan's ambassador to the United States Masood Khan has appreciated the role of US Senator Lindsey Graham regarding strengthening Pak-US relations.

This appreciation was given during a meeting held in Washington.

Masood Khan also thanked Lindsey for strong advocacy and support for US flood relief assistance to Pakistan and said Islamabad will never forget this role during the difficult times of floods.

Both also expressed commitment to further strengthen Pak-US relations during the meeting.

## Pak, EU agree to enhance Parliamentary cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and the European Union have agreed to enhance parliamentary cooperation.

The understanding to this effect was reached during a meeting between Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar and EU Chair of delegation for relations with countries of South Asia Nicola Procaccini in Brussels.

The Minister of State

stressed that stability in South Asia is imperative for global peace, according to a statement received here on Thursday. Hina Rabbani Khar also held fruitful exchange with Rapporteur of Trade Monitoring Group for South Asia and member Sub-Committee on Human Rights Krah Max. She also met Vice President of European Parliament and Rapporteur of new GSP Plus Heidi Hautala.

## Pakistan army our red line: Overseas Pakistanis

LONDON (Online): Overseas Pakistanis have declared armed forces of Pakistan red line.

The overseas Pakistanis in England have said army is very strong institution of Pakistan. May 09 incident is preconceived conspiracy against the institutions. This is good that the conspiracy of these people has been exposed.

They held we are if army is. Army is red line of any country. Pakistan army is red line of Pakistan.

They observed miscreants attacked radio Pakistan. They too attacked PTV and parliament. Attack on military installations is unpardonable at all.

## Education Ministry approves new National Curriculum of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training has approved the new National Curriculum of Pakistan after seventeen years of the previous curriculum that was notified in 2006.

A notification in that regard has been issued by the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training.

The task of curriculum development for grades 9 to 12, was carried out in an inclusive manner. Relevant

stakeholders were taken on board with all the steps of curriculum development, the notification said.

An intensive consultation exercise was carried out with the stakeholders including policymakers, academics, practitioners, parents, and students from across Pakistan, it added.

For this purpose, not only policy dialogues were conducted across Pakistan but also a number of curriculum workshops were held to take feedback from the concerned.



GADDANI: DHO Dr. Qamar Ronjha briefed GOC Gwadar Major General Ahsan Waqas about medical camp set up under supervision of district administration

## UoG's syndicate decide to establish CPEC study center

QUETTA (APP): The University of Gwadar's third syndicate meeting was held at the higher education commission regional centre Quetta with Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Abdul Razzaq Sabir in the chair, a hand-out said on Thursday.

The syndicate besides a few new teaching departments decided to establish a CPEC study center and a Center for Marine Affairs and Marine Sciences.

The meeting among others was attended by syndicate members including UG's Pro Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Syed Manzoor Ahmed, Secretary Colleges & Higher and Technical Education Balochistan, Hafiz Abdul Majid Bohair, Registrar Dolat Khan, Director Finance Shafi Muhammad, acting Dean faculty of Management Sciences, Commerce and So-

cial Sciences Prof. Dr. Jan Muhammad and acting controller Examination Dr. Kambar Farooq.

The UG's registrar presented the agenda of the meeting before the house for deliberation and decisions.

The August forum discussed each agenda in detail and decided on important matters such as launching a new program and granting approval to regularize the services of contract employees who have fulfilled all recruitment procedures and completed their probation periods. The members deliberated and resolved all the immediate issues related to the academic, administrative, and finances of the university.

The house confirmed the minutes of the 1st meeting of the Syndicate, the 3rd meeting of the academic council.