

# Independent

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No new taxes for the upcoming year

## Govt presents Rs14.46 trillion relief, growth-oriented budget

Announces ad hoc relief allowance of 35% for grade 1-16 officers and 30% for grade 17-22; Okayed an increase in pensions by 17.5%; Increases the minimum wage to Rs. 32,000; Proposes an allocation of Rs950 billion for development; Country's defence and civil administration, Rs 1.8 trillion and Rs 714 billion would be provided respectively; No increase in duties on import of essential items;

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 15-month-old coalition government on Friday presented its second business-friendly, relief and development-oriented Federal Budget for the fiscal year 2023-24, with a total outlay of Rs14.46 trillion, aimed at coping with the inherited economic challenges and laying the foundation for a sustainable, inclusive and resilient economy.

The annual fiscal plan, put before the National Assembly by Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, contained radical and rigorous measures

to reduce the sufferings of the inflation-hit common man, transform the agriculture sector, promote Information Technology, increase exports and boost business activities. Unveiling the budgetary measures, the minister announced the government's major relief to increase the salaries of government employees from 30 to 35 percent on ad-hoc basis and 17.5 percent enhancement in the pensions of the retired persons realizing their financial hardships due to the increased inflation. There would be a

raise of 35 percent [ad-hoc relief] in the salaries of employees from Grade 1-16 and 30 percent to Grade 17-22 employees aimed at increasing their purchase power. Besides, the government fixed the minimum pension at Rs 12,000 and increased minimum monthly wage from Rs 25,000 to Rs 32,000 within the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). The minister said there was a proposal to enhance the pension of Employees' Old-Age Benefits Institution (EOBI) from Rs 8,500 to Rs 10,000.

### GDP to grow by 3.5pc, inflation to ease by 21pc in FY24: Annual Plan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The government has envisaged Pakistan's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to grow by 3.5 percent in the upcoming fiscal year 2023-24 (FY24) with projections of 3.5 percent for agriculture sector, 3.4 percent for industrial sector, and 3.6 percent for services sector.

The services sector is also expected to accelerate its growth to 3.6 percent in the period under review while investment to GDP ratio is expected to increase from 13.6 percent in 2022-23 to 15.1 percent in 2023-24.

The agriculture sector is expected to grow by 3.5 percent with expected contributions of important crops (3 percent), other crops (3.5 percent), cotton (3.5 percent), livestock (3.6 percent), forestry (3.6 percent) and fishing (3 percent).

According to the Annual Plan 2023-24, a budgetary document released by the Planning Ministry on Friday, the Large Scale Manufacturing (LSM) would grow by 3.2 percent, mining and quarrying by 1.2 percent, small and household manufacturing by 8.8 percent, slaughtering by 3.8

percent, electricity generation and gas distribution by 2.2 percent and construction by 1.5 percent.

Likewise the investment to GDP ratio is expected to increase from 13.6 percent in FY23 to 15.1 percent in FY24 while fixed investment is anticipated to grow from 11.9 percent in FY23 to 13.4 percent in FY24 while national savings rate is targeted at 13.4 percent of GDP. The wholesale and retail trade is targeted to increase by 2.8 percent, transport, accommodation and food services activities by 3.5 percent, information and communication by 5 percent, and financial and insurance activities by 3.7 percent.

Similarly the growth of real estate activities is expected to grow by 3.6 percent, public administration and social security by 3.2 percent, education by 3.0 percent, and human health and social work activities by 3.0 percent.

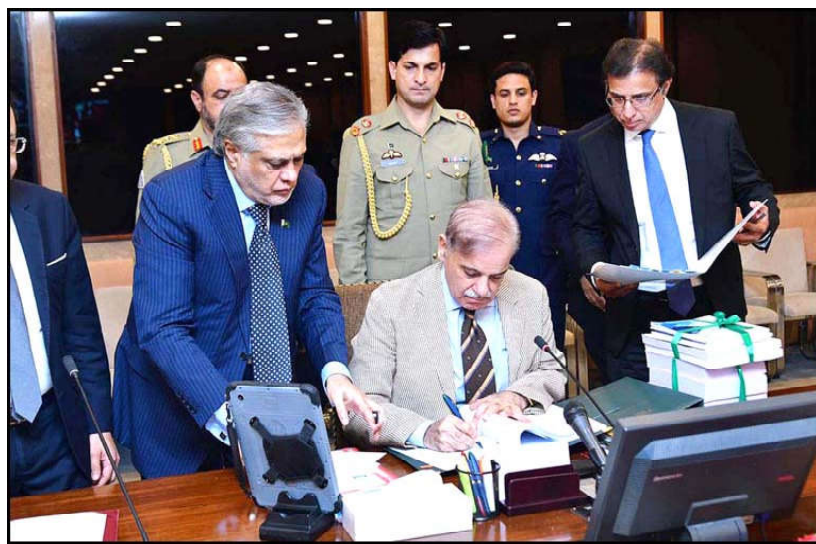
The country's inflation is targeted to go down from 25 percent in FY23 to 21 percent in FY24 while the per capita income in rupee term would increase from Rs 388,766 in FY23 to Rs 478,040 in FY24.



### Highlights of PSDP 2023-24

ISLAMABAD (APP): Following are the highlights of allocations under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) for various ministries and divisions for the fiscal year 2023-24 announced by the federal government here on Friday:

- Total outlay of the PSDP for the fiscal year 2022-23 is Rs 2,709 trillion.
- The share of the federal PSDP is Rs 1,150 billion while that of the provincial PSDP is Rs 1,559 trillion.
- Rs 5,450 million has been earmarked for Aviation Division.
- Board of Investment will get Rs 114,760 million.
- Rs 90,120 million has been earmarked for Cabinet Division.
- The Climate Change Division will get Rs 4,050 million.
- Rs 1,100 million has been earmarked for Commerce Division.
- Rs 360,390 million are allocated for Communication Division (other than NHA).
- Rs 3,400 million has been earmarked for Defence Division.
- Rs 2,000 million has been allocated for Defence Production Division.
- Rs 840 million are allocated for Establishment Division.
- The Federal Education and Professional Training Division will get Rs 8,500 million.
- Rs 3,220 million has been allocated for Finance Division.
- Rs 167,900 million has been earmarked for Provinces and Special Areas.
- The Higher Education Commission (HEC) will get Rs 59,700 million.
- Rs 40,680 million has been earmarked for Housing and Working Division.
- Rs 814 million will be provided to Human Rights Division.
- Rs 3,000 million has been earmarked for Industries and Production Division.
- Rs 2,000 million are allocated for Information and Broadcasting Division.
- Rs 6,000 million will be provided to Information Technology and Telecom Division.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif signing Budget 2023-24 documents after its approved by the Cabinet to be laid before the National Assembly.

### Hearing JI plea on Panama Papers Establishing offshore firms 'no crime' says SC judge

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Supreme Court's Justice Sardar Tariq Masood observed on Friday that establishing offshore companies is "no crime", while hearing a Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) plea seeking action against all 436 Pakistanis named in the 2016 Panama Papers.

On Nov 3, 2017, the JI had, through an application, reminded the court of its pending petition filed by party emir Sirajul Haq in August 2016.

The hearing today was presided over by a two-member bench comprising Justice Masood with Justice Aminuddin Khan. Advocate Ishtiaq was representing the JI in court.

During the proceed-

ings, the JI counsel requested the court to form a judicial commission to investigate those named in the Panama Papers. However, Justice Masood raised the question of how it could be done when other institutions existed to be approached for the matter.

Subsequently, the apex court adjourned the hearing for a month.

At the outset of the hearing, the JI counsel requested the apex court to constitute a judicial commission to further probe the Panama Papers case.

Justice Masood, while addressing the JI counsel, noted that the matter had been pending in the Supreme Court for the past seven years.

"Did you have to run a case against just one family? You had no interest in this case for the past seven years," he said.

The justice further asked the lawyer why he had "delinked his petition" and why he had "not taken such a big relief from the five-member bench" that was previously hearing the case in 2017.

Upon this, Ishtiaq replied, "We want that the 436 people named in the Panama [Papers] are also investigated." To this, Justice Masood asked, "Why do you want to bypass the law? Should we close down all other institutions? Do you want all decisions to be made by the Supreme Court?"

### IGP directs for inspection of police buildings

KARACHI (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon on Friday directed the officers concerned to carry out inspections of the buildings under the use of the police department including police lines and police quarters so that the expenses for their renovation could be estimated.

Addressing a meeting of Sindh Police's Estate Management and Development Department, he asked to compile and submit a report in this regard so that the budget could be allocated for buildings in the financial year 2023-2024.

He said all the buildings, residential quarters and others under the use of the police department should be renovated and brought up to standard level and special attention should be paid to those which were in dilapidated condition.

Earlier in a briefing, AIGP Estate Management informed about the renovation and repair expenses needed for the different buildings under the use of police. Additional IGP Finance and Welfare, DIGP Headquarters Sindh, DIGP Finance and AIGP Finance were also present in the meeting.

### President felicitates CPNE's new body for free media

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr. Arif Alvi on Friday congratulated Kazim Khan on his election as the Chairman of the Council of Pakistan Newspapers Editors (CPNE) Committee for free media. The president expressed confidence that the committee comprising prominent journalists would play a role in the promotion of freedom of the press and democratic values based on their experience and ability. He also felicitated other members of the committee including Ayaz Khan, Sardar Khan Niaz, Amir Mahmood, Irshad Ahmed Anif and Ejaz ul Haq.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Tessori addressing a seminar 'energy and environment'.

### Sharjeel urges authorities to take measures to ensure participation of students in exhibitions



Independent Report KARACHI: Minister for Information, Transport, and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon visited the ongoing exhibition by the Archaeology department at the Archives Complex in



Clifton, Karachi. During the visit, Provincial Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon reviewed the collection of ancient publications, rare newspapers, and journals preserved in the archives. He congratulated the Spe-

cial Assistant to the Chief Minister for Archaeology, Tariq Hasan, for organizing an outstanding exhibition.

Addressing the gathering, Information Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon emphasized the importance of such exhibitions for the younger generation. He stressed the need for the youth to comprehend the endeavors of their ancestors. Sharjeel Inam Memon urged authorities to take measures that would ensure the participation of students from schools, colleges, and universities in these exhibitions.

He further stated that the Sindh government will work to include the subject of archaeology in the curriculum, with the aim of providing the new generation a comprehensive understanding of the past.

### Sindh to present FY24 budget on June 10

KARACHI (INP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, who also holds the portfolio of Provincial Finance Minister, will present the Sindh budget for the next financial year 2023-24 on June 10.

A post-budget press conference is also planned for June 11.

Meanwhile, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar will present the federal budget for the next fiscal year today with a total outlay of Rs 13,800 billion.

Sources indicated that the budget size will exceed Rs 13,800 billion, while the budget deficit is expected to be more than Rs 6,000 billion, with expenses of Rs 7,300 billion allocated to pay debt.

Sources regarding the budget's framework re-

vealed that an estimated Rs 9,200 billion may be generated from tax revenue, while non-tax revenue may reach Rs 2,800 billion, while the Rs 1,300 billion could be allocated for subsidies.

The sources maintained that the developmental budget for the upcoming fiscal year is estimated at Rs 1,150 billion. Furthermore, the provinces are expected to receive Rs 5,244 billion from the national divisible pool, while defense expenses are estimated to exceed Rs 1,800 billion.

There is a possibility of a 20-30 percent increase in salaries for government employees in the upcoming federal budget, along with a 20 percent increase in pensions. Moreover, the govt likely to allocation over Rs 700 billion for pensions.



ISLAMABAD: Ms. Shazia Marri Federal Minister PA & SS and Chairperson Benazir Income Support (BISP) Programme witness the Contract Signing Ceremony between KfW (German Development Bank) and BISP.

### BISP-KfW ink MoU worth 27mln Euro to enhance poverty alleviation efforts

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) and KfW, a German Development Bank, have joined hands to enhance their efforts in alleviating poverty and supporting flood victims in Pakistan through signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) worth Euro 27 million. Secretary Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Amer Ali Ahmed, and Country Director of KfW, Sebastian Jacobi, signed the MoU at a ceremony held here on Friday.

The signing ceremony was witnessed by the Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and

Social Safety (PA&SS) and Chairperson of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Ms. Shazia Marri, Secretary PA&SS division and other officials of Benazir Income Support Programme. The MoU entails a generous contribution of 27 million euros from the German Bank to support the rehabilitation and cash assistance of flood victims in Pakistan.

One of the key provisions of the agreement is the allocation of an additional cash assistance amounting to Rs 30 million to the flood victims, aiming to provide immediate relief and address their urgent needs.



HYDERABAD: Business community listening the budget speech at Chamber of Commerce by Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar for the fiscal year 2023-24.

### Ahmed Jawad says: Budgetary measures for agriculture sector to help enhancing production

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan Business Forum lauded initiatives for agriculture sector, information technology and youth entrepreneurship in federal budget 2023-24. The Vice President Pakistan Business Forum Ahmed Jawad while talking to APP said that the conversion of 50000 agriculture tube wells on solar energy will not only reduce

the input cost for the farmers but it will also help reducing demand of electricity and imported diesel.

He said that exemption from duties and taxes on combined harvesters, rice planters, seeders and dryers, and import of certified seeds and saplings and 5-year tax exemption to agriculture based industries of rural areas.

### Armed Forces like all country will work in low budget: Khawaja

ISLAMABAD (Online): Federal defence minister Khawaja Asif said our armed forces all over country will work in low budget due to difficult economic situation. On Friday talking to media to question regarding budget he said as all country is facing difficult economic situation same as defence institutes are.



## Daily Voice of Masses Independent

### Stuck in the past

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar could have kept the Pakistan Economic Survey 2022-23 unveiling ceremony quite short. 'We blame everyone and everything but ourselves', would have neatly summarised the gist of most of what he had to say about his government's report card for the outgoing fiscal year.

It wasn't difficult to see why he felt a need to be so defensive. The numbers he had to share told a harrowing tale: most key targets were missed, the economy barely kept afloat, inflation had wrecked citizens' purchasing power, and everything pointed to the prospect of a continuing slowdown in the absence of any unforeseen stimuli.

Perhaps it would have been easier to sympathise had some self-appraisal and reflexivity been on display. After all, even in periods of severe crisis, one can find hope in knowing their future is in the hands of someone who is honest and forthright about the challenges that are being faced.

Instead, Mr Dar's speech remained politically angled. He mostly kept referring to the good days of his last stint in government, apparently seeking to persuade critics that his ability to manage the economy ought not to be judged on his recent performance but from his 'achievements' in his 2013-2017 tenure.

It was a rather facile line of argument, considering he had pushed out Miftah Ismail in the middle of the fiscal year knowing full well that the economy faced conditions vastly different from the last time he was in power.

Interestingly, Mr Dar refused to acknowledge Mr Ismail at all. When he referred to the stalled IMF programme — which, incidentally, he described as the "IMF drama" — Mr Dar conveniently 'forgot' that it had been successfully revived by his predecessor. Instead, he blamed his failure to negotiate with the IMF on the PTT's decision last year to freeze fuel prices, which he claimed had 'irrevocably' damaged the lender's trust. By failing to take any responsibility for the economy's sorry state, Mr Dar insulted the intelligence of those who were anticipating an appraisal of the government's economic performance in a crisis period.

There is no denying that this was a terrible year, with global crises triggered by the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the catastrophic floods that followed last year's monsoon ravaging our economy in unforeseen ways.

Mr Dar should have at least detailed the finance ministry's efforts to address the many challenges faced by the country in this period.

By avoiding that discussion, he only reinforced the perception that he has simply been bumbling from one crisis to another. His enduring fixation with the exchange rate — which made a cameo in his speech yesterday — also suggested that he has learned nothing from past mistakes. Is he the right man for the job? Today's budget may hold a definitive answer.

## Elderly challenges



Jan-e-Alam Khaki

The significance of older people has been recognised by the UN, which has declared 2021-2030 as the Decade of Healthy Ageing, seeking to lessen health inequities and "improve the lives of older people, their families and communities". In 2020, the number of people aged 60 and older outnumbered children younger than five. Between 2015 and 2050, the proportion of the world's population over 60 will nearly double from 12 per cent to 22pc.

According to UN estimates, by 2050, one out of six people in the world will be above the age of 65, up from one out of 11 in 2019. This indicates that, for the first time in history, older people will outnumber children below 14, says a British Council study. In 2050, two out of every three older persons will be residing in developing countries (UN, 2019). According to the British Council study, 7pc of the population (about 14 million) is over 60 in Pakistan, which is expected to reach 8.5pc and 12.9pc in 2030 and 2050 respectively.

What are the implications of these scenarios? The first is that more (older) people will need additional support, increasing dependency on younger ones, while they (the young) themselves are struggling to support their own families. Second, governments — already starved for resources — will face additional challenges to support this segment of their populations.

While the elderly's challenges may be numer-

ous, let us focus on three:

a) physical health; b) mental and emotional health; and c) generation gap. Incremental health deterioration in old age is fairly common. Various health issues, such as blood pressure, diabetes, dementia, eyesight weakness, hearing loss, arthritis and urological complications trouble many elders. Besides, mental and emotional issues, such as dementia, tension, even depression, may affect their life quality.

The second area seniors suffer has to do with emotional health. Emotional health issues, often less attended than physical, are triggered by many factors, such as loss of dear ones (for example, spouses), jobs or positions. Moreover, they generally lose their celebrated life engagements, particularly when they have enjoyed good jobs and meaningful careers.

The gap between the past and present becomes increasingly large, leading to loss of status. This experience then becomes almost incurable unless the seniors find alternative occupations. For example, I have been a university professor in a prestigious institute, worked in a senior position, and enjoyed a productive life. Now 72 and out of university, although I am living in a comfortable environment with relative ease, the loss of attention and affection I enjoyed is considerable.

The third area of seniors' challenges has to do with the generation gap. As we grow older, our ideas are often less respected, or not even listened to, as they (ideas) are seen as 'old-fashioned'. This inevitably leads to self-censorship, and culminates in reticence. The issue has been exacerbated particularly in the last 50 years due largely to fast-changing lifestyles, dominated by the technological, digital and knowledge revolu-

tion.

This (generation) gap is particularly pronounced with regard to bringing up grandchildren. Grandchildren develop highly emotional relations with their dada, dadi, nana and nani. When people ask me what I do nowadays, I jokingly say "Dada geeri", because I am the dada of twin grandkids (a boy and a girl). I also say I do "Nana geeri" as well, as my daughter is blessed with a baby girl. Interacting with grandkids is sheer joy.

Still another fault line between the older and newer generation is the way both think of bringing up children. Grandparents' way of bringing up kids in many areas tends to be different than their adult children's. This often leads to tensions and conflict where grandparents feel devalued and defeated. These areas of conflict, however, can be lessened, if not done away with, simply by talking, exchanging ideas, and agreeing to disagree with mutual respect and empathy. In sum, let us do everything possible to look after the elders at the individual, community and state level, ensuring their physical, emotional and social well-being. Indeed, the young ones are also going to join the elders; it is only a matter of time!

Finally, it is good to remind ourselves of Quranic advice to adult children of (older) parents. The Holy Quran says, "Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none but Him, and that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in thy life, say not to them a word of contempt [uffin], nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour. And out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say: 'My Lord! bestow on them Thy Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood'" (17:23-24). -- Courtesy Dawn

## Dead end budget



Aasim Sajjad Akhtar

Does anyone even take the finance ministry seriously anymore? With each passing year, this question becomes less and less rhetorical, as our notionally sovereign economy turns into a plaything of a militarised state apparatus, with far-away creditors and investors unanswerable to the 240 million people in whose name this country is run. There is arguably no bigger illustration of the sovereignty pantomime than the announcement of the federal budget. The man who will present it, Ishaq Dar, has been clear only about one thing since he took over the finance ministry hot seat: he is not able, let alone willing, to do very much. But it is lazy to argue that putting 'competent' men in charge would change the game.

Pakistan's political economy — militarised, financialised, ecologically destructive and anti-worker — is not propped up by one man and will not be undone by one man either. The story is old but we should never tire of repeating it, especially given how the military establishment is menacingly winding down Project Imran and reminding us that 'national interest' trumps all.

Within a few years of its formation, Pakistan became a Cold War outpost whose national security apparatus, like brethren front-line states Iran and Turkey, was funded and trained to defend Western interests in south-west Asia. Formal military aid from Washington started rolling in under the Mutual Assistance Programme in 1954, and the state subsequently

pleased its imperial patrons and indoctrinated the people that this aid would give us an edge in military competition vis-à-vis India. Military dictatorships in Pakistan have been propped up by geostrategic rents which have reinforced the India obsession. Meanwhile, our society and that of Afghanistan have been devastated by religiously inspired militancy, and what economist Kaiser Bengali calls non-combat defence expenditures have shot through the roof.

For the first three decades, there was some semblance of concern about the needs of the working masses, at least in part because all newly independent countries experienced some version of Third World economic nationalism which mandated the dismantling of neo-colonial economic structures.

There was some import-substitution industrialisation, some land reform, even some nationalisation. These policies reflected some degree of economic sovereignty. Since the 1980s, the IMF has told us what to buy and sell, when and where to cut public spending. It pulls the plug when it doesn't get what it wants. Similarly, the World Bank and Asian Development Bank tell us how to define and execute 'development' and happily pile on the debt for 'reforms' of their own choosing, including distasters like IPPs, which, since the mid-1990s, have become godfathers of the dysfunctional electricity/power sector.

In this period, Pakistan and many other postcolonial economies in Latin America, Asia and Africa have undergone a shift away from the production of real goods and services towards financialisation; private banking, real estate, insurance, alongside mining, agribusiness and other extractive corporate lo-

bies that have become the biggest fishes in an increasingly small pond. Traders and merchants have retained some share of the economic pie, especially in the informal sector, such that trade remains the primary livelihood option for the millions who exit agriculture yearly. Job-creating manufacturing continues to wilt rapidly. To take one example, almost 150,000 workers have lost their jobs over the past year in Faisalabad's textile sector alone.

Bear in mind that millions of young people join the job market every year. Many commentators have called attention to the alarmingly large numbers of highly skilled young people with relatively good prospects who now want to leave the country. And what of the vast majority of workers whose social mobility is limited and who now even face a struggle to get a low-paid job as a migrant worker in the Gulf?

I do not know if the PDM/PPP government is even bothered with such structural truths, because most of its outspoken representatives are absurdly cheering on state repression against the PTI. In any case, the budget announcement will not include mention of the real reasons we remain a virtual client state to global finance, or that the government seems helpless in the face of geostrategic rents drying up. We already know there is no will to shift away from sectors like real estate, invest in job-creating production or undertake redistribution of wealth.

So what we are left with is a boring rearguarding of the 'reform' rhetoric to please the IMF with a handful of 'pro-people' announcements. These will not fix hunger in bellies and brutalisation of bodies. In fact, the poverty of imagination is leading to a disastrous dead end. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Commerce News

### President directs LESCO to pay marriage grant to retired employee

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday directed the Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) to pay Rs 200,000 as a "marriage grant" to a retired employee for the marriage of his son who had been denied payment by LESCO.

The LESCO had denied the payment on the ground that he had applied for the grant after the expiry of the prescribed time limit of six months.

"We should take care of such people, who due to ignorance of the law or being unaware of the

benefits for which they might be eligible due to their service, are unable to benefit from them in time", the president said.

He regretted that the employee was not aware of his entitlement and found out from others that a marriage grant for his son was possible. He further held that it was the responsibility of government agencies to inform people about such benefits. President Alvi gave these remarks while accepting a representation filed by Muhammad Asif (the complainant) against the decision of the Wafaqi Mohtasib.

As per the details,

Muhammad Asif was an employee of LESCO and, after his retirement, he applied for the "marriage grant" in respect of his son. He was denied payment on the ground that his son's marriage was held on 02.12.2018 whereas the complainant applied for the grant on 08.12.2020 i.e., after the expiry of about 2 years. As per SOP regarding marriage grants, all applications should reach the office of the Chief Executive of LESCO within a period of six months from the date of marriage and a maximum of one year in special cases.

### Govt endeavors to invest in road, rail connectivity to promote transit trade

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Government along with the provincial stakeholders has been making efforts to invest in road and rail connectivity across the country, shaping various policies and plans to facilitate the transit trade thus boosting the country's economy.

Given its advantageous geographic location, Pakistan has the potential to grow its economy through transit trade and as part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) and Khyber Pass Economic

Corridor (KPEC) has tremendous potential of revenue generation through road and rail connectivity, said a performance review of 2022-23 budget issued here Friday.

The Pakistani transportation system needs modernization and the National Transport Master Plan is in the final stages of approval many actions under the policy and the plan are being already adopted and implemented. In recent years the work in the transport infrastructure projects was carried out in the districts of southern Punjab, southern KP.



LAHORE: An electrician busy to repairing room-coolers at his workplace in the Provincial Capital.

### HCCI terms federal budget 2023-24 people's, business friendly

HYDERABAD (APP): The business community has termed the federal budget for the fiscal year 2023-24 as people-friendly and said the federal government provided relief to all sectors including agriculture. Hyderabad Chamber of Commerce and Industries (HCCI) president Adeel Siddiqui while talking to APP said despite financial constraints the federal government presented a business-friendly budget in which the agriculture sector, traders, large-scale manufacturers, investors, youth as well as social sector were given unprecedented relief.

"Though next year's budget has a historical deficit of over 7000 billion rupees the government will try its best to cover it through drastic measures," the HCCI president hoped. Adeel Siddiqui said, "In the budget, along with the agriculture sector, a significant amount is being allocated to the energy sector and water reservoirs in the country." HCCI President said, "Bridging the budget deficit as per the budget estimates will be a challenge.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal visiting stalls during the Inauguration session of International EdTech Conference.

### Azhar Kiyani says; Macroeconomic stability, protection of vulnerable segments top priorities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Economy and Energy Bilal Azhar Kayani Friday said that macroeconomic stability to ensure financial discipline through effective policies and protection of vulnerable segments of the society was the topmost priorities in fiscal year budget 2023-24.

Talking to a private news channel, he said the budget would prove helpful to make the

country's economy strong by increasing exports.

Azhar Kayani said the government was making all out efforts to bring the country out of economic crises and all institutions were striving to give the Prime Minister's road map a reality.

He said several mega government schemes and packages dedicated to welfare of women and youth were initiated by Pakistan Muslim League-N.

### ESP 2022-23 reveals govt's success, predicts economic betterment: Experts

PESHAWAR (INP): The Economic Survey of Pakistan (ESP) 2022-23 has revealed the success of the government in various sectors during current fiscal year, the economic and financial experts said on Friday adding that it laid strong foundation to bring betterment in the national economy and increase exports in days to come.

According to Swabi University's Professor Dr Muhammad Naem, the ESP has signified that the present elected government despite

inherited economic and financial challenges, achieved significant progress and growth in various sectors including Information Technology, Tax, Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture sectors during fiscal year 2022-23.

He was of the view that it means that the national economy has started moving towards the right direction and continuity of economic and fiscal policies of the present government was imperative for repayment of all foreign loans.

### SBP to announce monetary policy on June 12

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) will announce monetary policy on Monday, June 12, 2023.

According to a statement issued here Friday, the central bank has announced to convene meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) on June 12 that would review the overall financial position of the country, economic indicators as well as performance of different internal and external sectors and decide about the Monetary Policy.

The central bank would issue the Monetary Policy Statement on the same day following the MPC meeting.

### PSX turns around to bullish trend, gains 217 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to a bullish trend on Friday, gaining 217.75 points, a positive change of 0.52 per cent, closing at 41,904.21 points against 41,686.46 points the previous day. A total of 164,835,239 shares were traded during the day as compared to 203,789,233 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 5.195 billion.

### Industrial sector projected to grow by 5.9% bases on LSM envisage growth of 7.4%

ISLAMABAD (APP): Industrial sector was projected to grow by 5.9% based on large scale manufacturing (LSM) envisaged growth of 7.4%.

According to the Annual Plan, Small and household Manufacturing grow by (8.3%), slaughtering (3%), mining & quarrying (3%), construction (4%) and electricity & gas distribution (3.5%). During 2022-23, the flood-induced supply shock severely affected industry and services sectors besides damaging critical transportation infrastructure.

Industrial sector also faced pressures as import

restrictions made it difficult to import essential raw materials, intermediate goods and machinery.

As a result, many factories either closed temporarily or operated below capacity. Moreover, increase in energy prices, higher cost of imported input due to currency depreciation, increased cost of working capital due to substantial increase in interest rates and political/policy uncertainties adversely affected the industrial sector.

Energy prices were increased due to reversal of part of the stabilization programme.



SIALKOT: Vice President Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sialkot, Sheikh Amir Majeed Sheikh addressing a press conference.

### Agriculture sector to grow by 3.5% in FY24

ISLAMABAD (APP): Agriculture Sector is expected to grow by 3.5% during the fiscal year 2023-24, according to Annual Plan released by the government here on Friday.

According to the plan, the growth would be achieved with expected contributions of important crops (3%), other crops (3.5%), cotton ginning (7.2%), livestock (3.6%), forestry (3%) and fishing (3%). However, it says, agricultural growth will be contingent upon expected favourable weather conditions, ample availability of water, certified seeds,

fertilizers, pesticides and agriculture credit facilities at affordable costs for revival of the crops. Moreover, increased productivity of livestock subsector is imperative for the revival of the sector. The revival of cotton and sufficient production of wheat will not only support growth momentum but will also ease out balance of payments pressures through lesser import requirements. During the outgoing fiscal year (2022-23), the agriculture sector was envisaged to grow by 3.9% in the Annual Plan 2022-23 given a strong crop sector performance of previous year.



# KP CM chairs meeting on budget preparation

PESHAWAR (APP): An important meeting regarding the preparation of the budget for the new fiscal year was held here on Friday with the caretaker Chief Minister (CM) of KP Muhammad Azam Khan in the chair.

Besides provincial cabinet members Hamid Shah, Barrister Feroz Jamal Kakakhel and Himayatullah, Chief Secretary (CS) Nadim Aslam Chaudhry, Additional Chief Secretary (CS) Zubair Asghar Qureshi, Secretary Finance Muhammad Ayaz and other relevant higher authorities attended the

meeting. The forum discussed and reviewed the preliminary outlines of the financial budget and annual development program for the fiscal year 2023-24.

The participants were briefed in detail about the budget estimates, annual development program and other important aspects of the proposed fiscal budget.

It was decided in the meeting that authorization for the budget of only the first four months of the new financial year would be obtained from the provincial cabinet. The forum also

discussed matters regarding the possible increase in the salaries and pensions of government employees.

It was decided in the meeting that the budget session of the caretaker provincial cabinet would be called after the presentation of new fiscal budgets by the federal and Punjab governments.

The forum decided to allocate the required funds for Sehat Card Scheme. It was agreed in the meeting that priority would be given to the ongoing development projects in the annual development program of the new fiscal year.

# Govt to award Rs.50k loan each to top 250 group projects: Wani

GILGIT (APP): Chief Secretary Gilgit-Baltistan Muihudeen Wani has said that the top 250 group projects (5 to 8 students) from various government schools across the region would be awarded loans of Rs. 50,000 each. In an official statement to the media, he said the loans would be distributed in collaboration with Karakoram Cooperative Bank Limited.

The purpose of the provision of loans was so that students could

further improve their initial work and come up with projects that could be scaled and were market-ready, Wani highlighted. The scalability and saleability must therefore be the essence of these projects, he stressed.

The chief secretary said, "The students have till the end of June to improve their projects and come up with innovative yet market-acceptable projects."

# Promotion given to 1,022 cops in Lahore

LAHORE (APP): The promotion board of the Lahore police net under the chair of Capital City Police Officer Lahore Bilal Siddique Kamyana at his office on Friday and approved promotion cases of 1,022 police officials. A total of 169 assistant sub-inspectors (ASIs) have been promoted to the rank of sub-inspectors, 453 head constables to the rank of ASIs, and 400 constables to the rank of head constables. Notably, 25 female police officers.



HYDERABAD: Members of Christian Community are holding demonstration in support of Pakistan Armed Forces, at Hyderabad press club.



FAISALABAD: Workers of Jamat-e-Islami (Youth Wing) are shouting slogans holding banner and flags during protest to show solidarity with Aafia Siddiqui, at District Council Chowk in City.

# ANF seizes 6.2 MT narcotics in five months

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while carrying out a comprehensive counter-narcotics campaign with the resolve to make Pakistan a drug-free country managed to recover nearly 6.2 MT of narcotics from urban areas during the last five months.

According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman, counter-narcotics operations were conducted in different parts of the country with a special focus on urban centre sanitization.

Special combing and intelligence-based operations resulted in substantial seizures in

# Chief Ombudsman AJK calls on AJK President

MIRPUR (AJK) APP: Chief Ombudsman Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Chaudhry Muhammad Naseem on Friday called on AJK President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry and presented to him the annual report carrying the performance of his institution. The Chief Ombudsman briefed the President, in detail the working conditions of his organization. On this occasion, President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry directed the chief ombudsman to take effective measures to solve the problems being faced by the people.

# LDA demolishes illegal constructions

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Development Authority (LDA) launched a grand operation against encroachment and illegal constructions on parking areas in the vicinity of Faisal Town (Akbar Chowk to Kotha Pind) Abu-ul-Hasan Isfahani Road, here on Friday.

department's teams conducted the comprehensive anti-encroachment operation in the area. During the operation, encroachments constructed on tire shops, pharmacy, restaurants, bakeries and other shops were demolished.

On the directions of Commissioner Lahore and LDA Director General Muhammad Ali Randhawa, the

# GB's budget has increased to 51bln in federal budget 2023-24: CS GB

GILGIT (APP): Chief Secretary Gilgit Baltistan Muihudeen Wani on Friday said that the regular budget of Gilgit Baltistan has increased to Rs. 51 billion in the federal budget for the fiscal year 2023-24, which was a significant rise from last year's Rs. 47 billion, representing an increase of approximately 8.5 percent.

# Governor KP meets leading politicians

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Haji Ghulam Ali Friday inaugurated a luxury home interior showroom based on modern furniture at Manshera Road Abbottabad besides meeting leading politicians and former members of the provincial as well as national assembly from Hazara Region.

The Governor inspected the furniture and other interior items made according to modern Turkish designs, local and international designs. Establishing the best of its kind home decor showroom is a great convenience for the local population.

The Governor was given a warm welcome by Faisal Habib, owner of Lux Home Interior Showroom and renowned businessman, Syed Safdar Zaman Shah and the business community of Abbottabad, Manshera, Bitgram. Former Member



MUZZAFFARABAD: Azad Kashmir school teachers are holding a banner shouting slogan during protest due to up gradation of teachers at Azadi Chowk.

# Court issues warning to NAB for submission of reference against accused in M6 land acquisition case

HYDERABAD (APP): The Accountability Court here on Friday issued a last warning to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) for submission of reference against the accused charged in the multi-billion M6 Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway land acquisition scam.

edge of the court that the reference in question had been drafted and, subsequently, submitted for review to the DG.

The court's Judge Mehboob Ali Dayo warned that the Director General NAB Karachi would be summoned if the bureau failed to submit report by next date of hearing on June 22.

The NAB's prosecutor brought in the knowl-

He gave his assurance to the judge that the reference would be submitted at the next hearing.

Meanwhile, the lawyer representing the accused argued that more than 6 months had passed but the bureau had still not submitted the reference.

During the hearing, the arrested ex-Deputy Commissioner Matiari Adnan Adnan Rashid, Ashiq Kaleri and others were produced before the court.

# International News

# Putin says Russian tactical nuclear weapons to be deployed to Belarus next month

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin said Friday that Moscow will deploy some of its tactical nuclear weapons to Belarus next month, a move that the Belarusian opposition described as an attempt to blackmail the West.

Putin said during a meeting with Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko that work on building facilities for the nuclear weapons will be completed by July 7-8, and they will be moved to the territory of Russia's neighbor and ally quickly after that. The move comes as

Ukraine has stepped up attacks in several sectors of the front line in what some observers see as the start of its long-expected counter-offensive.

Russia used Belarus' territory to send its troops into Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022, and has kept forces and weapons on the territory of its ally.

"Everything is proceeding as planned," Putin said in televised remarks as he hosted Lukashenko at his residence in the Black Sea resort of Sochi. "On July 7-8 the preparations of the relevant facilities will be completed and we will immediately

start the activities linked to the deployment of those weapons on your territory."

Tactical nuclear weapons are intended to destroy enemy troops and weapons on the battlefield. They have a relatively short range and a much lower yield than nuclear warheads fitted to long-range strategic missiles that are capable of obliterating whole cities.

Putin announced the planned deployment of the short-range nuclear weapons in Belarus earlier this year in a move widely seen as a warning to the West as it stepped up military support for Ukraine.



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko talk during their meeting at the Bocharov Ruchei residence in the resort city of Sochi, Russia.

# China warns Europe against official ties with Taiwan ahead of minister's visit

BEIJING: China urged Europe on Friday not to have any official exchanges with Taiwan or support "independence forces" ahead of a planned trip to the continent next week by Taiwan Foreign Minister Joseph Wu. Czech Foreign Minister Jan Lipavsky confirmed Wu was due to visit Prague next week, saying on Friday state officials were not expected to shift from their existing policy towards Taiwan.

cept the Vatican. Beijing regularly denounces any form of contact between Taiwanese and foreign officials, viewing it as encouraging global recognition of Taiwan's separate status from China.

Taiwan, which is claimed by China, has no formal diplomatic ties with any European country except the Vatican.

On Wu's Europe trip, which Taiwan's government has not officially confirmed, he is expected to speak at a think-tank event in Prague immediately after Czech President Petr Pavel. Reuters reported on Thursday. Asked about the visit on Friday, Czech Minister Lipavsky said he had "been informed" about Wu coming to Prague.



Honduras' President Xiomara Castro waves as she arrives in Shanghai, China.

# Honduran president begins first visit to China since breaking off ties with Taiwan

TAIPEI: Honduran President Xiomara Castro arrived in Shanghai on Friday on her first visit since China established ties with her nation, pulling it away from former diplomatic ally Taiwan.

Castro will meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping "to jointly plan for the future development" of ties, China's official Xinhua News Agency said. She will also attend the inauguration of Honduras' embassy in Beijing, according to state media.

Honduras established formal relations with China in March, becoming the lat-

est in a string of countries to break diplomatic ties with Taiwan. China sees self-governed Taiwan as a breakaway province, to be retaken by force if necessary, and prohibits its own diplomatic partners from having formal ties with Taipei.

Beijing has intensified its battle to win away Taiwan's diplomatic allies since independence-leaning Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen took office in 2016. Since then, China has managed to lure away nine of Taiwan's former partners with a campaign involving billions of dollars of investments.

# One U.N. peacekeeper killed and four injured in north Mali attack

MINUSMA: At least one United Nations peacekeeper was killed and four others seriously injured when their patrol was attacked in northern Mali on Friday, the peacekeeping mission MINUSMA said.

The incident took place near the town of Ber, in the region of Tombouctou - an area that has become a hotbed of jihadist activity over the past decade.

MINUSMA said on Twitter the patrol first encountered an improvised explosive device and was then hit with a direct fire attack.

It did not name perpetrators but said it was a "complex attack" and that updates on casualties would follow.

Islamist militants, some with links to al Qaeda and Islamic State, have been waging an insurgency in northern Mali since they hijacked a Tuareg rebellion in 2012.

# US, UK forge 'Atlantic Declaration' to counter new threats

WASHINGTON: The United States and Britain on Thursday announced a new strategic pact as their leaders rededicated the "special relationship" to counter Russia, China and economic instability.

In a White House summit, US President Joe Biden and Prime Minister Rishi Sunak discussed Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the lightning-fast evolution of artificial intelligence.

But Sunak came away empty-handed on Britain's ambitions for a post-Brexit free-trade agreement with

Washington, settling instead to tack along with Biden's plan to craft a new green economy through vast industrial subsidies.

An "Atlantic Declaration" adopted by the leaders aims to boost industry ties on defence and renewable energy, in the face of growing competition from China. "We face new challenges to international stability — from authoritarian states such as Russia and the People's Republic of China; disruptive technologies; non-state actors; and transnational challenges like climate change," the

declaration read.

As he welcomed Sunak to the Oval Office, Biden was asked by reporters if the "special" transatlantic relationship was in good shape. He gave a thumbs-up and replied: "In real good shape."

Both leaders concurred that the world economy was undergoing the biggest changes since the Industrial Revolution, in part driven by AI, which is bringing doomsday warnings that sentient machines could wipe out humanity unless governments coordinate a response.

# Ex-US president Donald Trump indicted in classified documents probe

WASHINGTON: Donald Trump said on Thursday he has been indicted over his handling of classified documents after leaving office, the US ex-president's most serious legal threat yet as a firestorm of criminal investigations imperils his bid for a second White House term.

The corrupt Biden administration has informed my attorneys that I have been indicted, seemingly over the boxes hoax," Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform as he broke

the bombshell news of a historic moment for the United States: the first time a sitting or former commander-in-chief has ever faced federal charges.

There was no immediate confirmation from the Justice Department regarding Trump's assertion.

A Trump attorney, Jim Trusty, told CNN his client has been indicted on seven charges including the willful retention of documents in violation of the Espionage Act, making false statements.

# Russia reports heavy fighting in Zaporizhzhia region of Ukraine

MOSCOW: Russia reported heavy fighting in the Zaporizhzhia region of southern Ukraine on Friday after saying it had repelled repeated attempts by the Ukrainian army this week to smash through the front line and drive a wedge through Russian forces. Russia's top military brass briefed President Vladimir Putin on Thursday that Russia had successfully repelled the attacks which Moscow says are part of an attempted major counter-offensive by Ukraine.

# UN agency says Myanmar has suspended int'l aid deliveries to cyclone-hit areas

BANGKOK: Myanmar's military government has rescinded its approval for international organizations to distribute food, shelter and medicines to thousands of residents of cyclone-hit areas in the country's west, a U.N. agency said Friday.

Cyclone Mocha hit the coastline of Bangladesh and Myanmar in mid-May with winds of up to 209 kilometers (130 miles) per hour. The damage was worst around the coastal city of Sittwe, the capital of Myanmar's Rakhine state, but was also severe as the storm moved inland into Chin state.

The military authorities also suspended travel authori-

zations for international humanitarian organizations, the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said in a situation report. It said the suspension of aid activities "could not have come at a worse time" because of the arrival of the annual monsoon season. The report did not say why the military government's Disaster Management Committee suspended the travel authorizations. Myanmar's military has long kept access to many parts of the country under tight restrictions, especially areas seen as sensitive because of tensions with ethnic minorities, as is the case with Rakhine, where a brutal counterinsurgency campaign in 2017.



People wear masks during the morning rush hour as smoke from wildfires in Canada affected New York.



## PM links economy with political stability

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said a country's sound economic growth was linked with its political stability.

"Without political stability, even billions of budget could not make a difference in improving the economic situation," he said at the cabinet meeting, which approved the budgetary proposals of the fiscal year 2023-24.

The prime minister said the common man was bearing the brunt of inflation, however, the government was taking steps to provide them relief in the budget.

The government, he said, accepted all the requirements of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and hoped that a staff-level agreement would be reached in near future.

Since assumption of power 14 months ago, he added, it had to deal with the challenge of IMF, post-flood situation and global inflation, he added.

He expressed satisfaction that the current deficit in 10 months was reduced to \$3.3 billion and hoped that the agriculture sector would boost.

The prime minister appointed Rohail Sheikh as his adviser and expressed the hope that he would fulfill his responsibilities with diligence.

The cabinet also accorded approval to the Finance Bill 2023.

Finance Minister Senator Ishaq Dar will present the budgetary proposals with an estimated outlay of Rs 14 trillion in the National Assembly in the evening.

This is the second

budget in 14 months being presented by the coalition government under the banner of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM).

The government in its Economic Survey unveiled on Thursday highlighted its significant economic gains in terms of improved external and fiscal indicators.

Even with a significant increase in debt servicing, the fiscal deficit reduced to 4.6 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in July-April FY 2022-23 against 4.9 percent for the same period last year, while the primary balance reverted from deficit to surplus. During the first 11 months of the outgoing fiscal year, the trade deficit was narrowed down by 40 percent and the current account deficit by 76 percent during July 2022-April 2023.



KARACHI: A delegation of Department of Yadgar-e-Ghalib Library meeting with Governor Sindh Kamran Tessori at Governor house.

## Sherry Rehman exhorts fishermen to avoid venturing in open sea amid Biparjoy cyclone

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Senator Sherry Rehman on Friday advised the fishermen in the coastal areas of the country to avoid venturing into the open sea due to prevailing tropical cyclone BIPARJOY formed over Southeast Arabian Sea.

In her message regarding the cyclone, the federal minister said as per the weather advisory issued by Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), Cyclone Biparjoy was moving towards north and northeast after changing its direc-

tion. Senator Rehman said the cyclone might move further towards Pakistan's Makran coast as it continued to change and it may intensify further.

She added that the fishermen were advised not to venture out into the open sea from Monday, June 12 until the system passes over the Arabian Sea. "Coastal areas may be affected due to high tides. All concerned authorities especially PDMA Sindh and Balochistan are advised to review the preparations. Ensure public safety for people living in coastal areas and create awareness among people."

## Commissioner chairs meeting regarding repair, maintenance of National Highway

HYDERABAD (APP): Commissioner Shaheed Benazirabad Division, Muhammad Abbas Baloch on Friday chaired a meeting regarding repair and maintenance work of the National Highway at his office here.

The meeting was attended by DIG Police Muhammad Younus Chandio, Additional Commissioner-2 Fayyaz Hussain Rahujo, General Manager SM Muhammad Ahmed, Director National Highway Authority Sukkur Saeed Ahmed, XEN

Provincial Highway SBA Abdul Majeed Panhiar and other concerned officials. Addressing the meeting, the Commissioner said that the road sector also received severe damage due to previous rains and floods due to which commuters are facing difficulties in traveling. The Commissioner instructed concerned officials to immediately start the repair and maintenance work on National Highway and other roads from Saeedabad to Halani to provide traveling relief to the public.



HYDERABAD: Peoples Party (PPP) Leader, Azam Kathian addresses to media persons during press conference, at Hyderabad press club.

## Ansar Burney says: Funds allocated for human rights projects to help strengthen HR system

KARACHI (APP): Ansar Burney Welfare Trust Chairman and Former United Nations Special Adviser on Human Rights Ansar Burney on Friday welcomed the amount allocated for the ongoing development projects of the Ministry of Human Rights, presented in the federal budget 2023-24 and said this would help in strengthening the human rights protection system in the country.

Talking to APP regarding the budget, he said the increase in the minimum wage of the workers was a good measure which would pro-

vide relief to the working class in this period of inflation. Ansar Burney said allocating funds in the next year's budget for the implementation of the Human Rights Awareness Program and Human Rights Action Plan would help not only to raise awareness about human rights but also to ensure the implementation of human rights throughout the country. Initiating new development projects for special children and women was the need of the hour, realizing that the present government has included special projects in the development programme.

## Governor enquires about health of ex-CJP Federal Shariat Court

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori on Friday enquired about the health of former Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Shariat Court Dr. Agha Rafiq Ahmed Khan at a local hotel. He also prayed for his early recovery.

## Rangers, Police arrest three street criminals in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): Sindh Rangers and police conducted a joint operation in Baldia town, apprehended three alleged street criminals involved in several robberies in Karachi on Friday.

According to the Rangers Spokesperson, the culprits identified as Noor Muhammad, Hammad Ahmed and Muhammad Asad was arrested from Karachi's Orangi Town area.

The security officials recovered two pistols, one motorcycle and multiple mobile phones from the possession of the arrested accused.

In the preliminary investigation, the culprits confessed about the multiple robbery incident as well as manipulating the IMEI number of the robbed mobile phones from the metropolis.

The culprit committed a robbery on May 19, 2023 in Madina Colony, Baldia Town, where a citizen named Gulzar Hussain was shot and injured when he resisted the robbery.

## ANF nabs eleven drug peddlers from airports

KARACHI (INP): The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) on Friday after a successful operation arrested a group of drug peddlers at the Islamabad International Airport.

According to the spokesperson of ANF, nine members of a family, including three women, were arrested by the ANF in an operation at the Islamabad International Airport. The suspects admitted the presence of drug-filled capsules in their stomachs. A total of 575 heroin and 159 ice-filled capsules have been recovered from the suspects, he said.

The spokesman further said the ANF arrested two suspects in another operation at the Jinnah International Airport in Karachi. 91 capsules filled with heroin were recovered from the stomachs of the passengers. The total weight of recovered heroin is 1.170 kg.

He added that the arrested persons belong to Peshawar, Mardan and Charsadda. Cases have been registered against them under the Anti-Narcotics Act.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjarani, MNA Muhammad Khalid Magsi and Senator Naseebullah Bazai called on the Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif. Federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazir Tarar was also present in the meeting.

## Parliamentarians say Govt increases salaries despite financial constraints

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a surprising and generous move, the government has announced a significant increment in the salaries of the employees, despite facing financial constraints.

The decision has been hailed by all sections of society, as it demonstrates the government's commitment to supporting the middle class and alleviating their financial burdens, said parliamentarians in the National Assembly on Friday.

According to the official announcement, the government has increased salaries by 35 percent for employees in Grade-1 to 16,

and by 30 percent for those in grade-17 and above. Additionally, the pension has been raised by 17.5 percent, benefiting retired government personnel. Furthermore, employees with wages would receive Rs.30,000. The decision to increase salaries and pensions comes at a time when many countries including Pakistan are grappling with economic challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath.

The parliamentarians said the increment in salaries and pensions is expected to have a positive impact on the lives of the

government employees and their families. With the rising cost of living, this move will provide much-needed relief and help mitigate the financial woes faced by the middle class and downtrodden segment of society, they added. Minister of Water and Power, Khurram Dastgir said an attempt has been made to keep the budget people-friendly as possible.

He said the increased salaries will enable them to meet their daily needs more comfortably, invest in education and healthcare, and contribute to the overall growth of the economy.

## Nawaz Sharif accepts request to lead party in general election

ISLAMABAD (Online): Interior Minister Rana Sana Ullah has said Nawaz Sharif has accepted the request to lead party in general election.

"He will return to Pakistan 60 to 90 days before election. If PML-N gets majority then Nawaz Sharif will decide about prime minister", he said this talking to media men before federal cabinet meeting.

He went on to say no political engineering is being done at present. Nor

any non political engineering is being done too. If one is going to some party on one's own then one cannot be stopped from doing so.

He indicated Nawaz Sharif will return to Pakistan before election. He will run election campaign. Mian sahb has to give the date for returning to Pakistan. No one can give date to Mian Sahb.

He remarked Mian Sahb has accepted the request to lead party election campaign.

## PTI's Ali Muhammad arrested once again

MARDAN (Online): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Ali Muhammad Khan was arrested once again on Friday right after being released on the orders of the Peshawar High Court (PHC) from a day earlier. The PTI leader's lawyer told reporters that the current arrest was made on corruption charges; he was subsequently transferred to the Toru police station. Yesterday, the PHC had order Khan's release after hearing a petition against his arrest under Section 3 of the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO).



GENEVA: Pakistan's delegation in the "Tenth Global Meeting of Inter-State Consultation Mechanisms on Migration (GRCP10) led by Federal Minister Sajid Hussain Turi.

## DHC Bangladesh invites business community to explore rice and cotton markets

HYDERABAD (APP): The Deputy High Commissioner (DHC) Bangladesh for Sindh and Balochistan in Karachi S. M. Mahboob Al Alam on Friday invited the business community of Sindh to explore the market in rice and cotton sectors of his country which had wider scope for business.

He moved such an invitation while addressing a gathering of the members of the Hyderabad Chamber of Commerce (HCCI) and In-

dustry, the HCCI spokesman informed here. He informed that Bangladesh had 40 billion dollars in foreign exchange reserves and added that due to effective policies, his country had progressed considerably in all sectors. Bangladesh had larger trade and industrial base which HCCI's members and businessmen of Sindh must explore, he added. He informed that his country now had 170 universities for imparting higher education.

## Newly Commissioned PNS Shahjahan arrives in Karachi

KARACHI (APP): The newly commissioned Pakistan Navy Ship (PNS) Shahjahan has arrived in Karachi that was commissioned on May 10, 2023 in a graceful ceremony held in Shanghai, China and attended by Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amdad Khan Niazi as chief guest.

During her maiden voyage to Pakistan, PNS Shahjahan visited Malaysia and participated in Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition (LIMA) along with other 30 participating countries, said a Pakistani Navy news release on Friday.



KARACHI: Pakistan Navy Ship Shahjahan arrives at Karachi Port.

## 5E to be game changer in Pakistan's economic development: Maryam

ISLAMABAD (Online): Information minister Maryam Aurangzeb said 5E will prove game-changer in Pakistan's economic development.

Exports, Water and food security, climate, energy, are pillars of equity turn around Pakistan. She said this new frame work will increase imports, and appreciate business and employment.

In statement on Friday information minister said Pakistan's development path will pave by promoting education, health and control over population. Cheap and uninterrupted provision of energy will speed up economy and business.

Climates will improve through water reserves and food security, she added. In information minister said youth will be developed through E-Pakistan. They will be empowered. She said GDP deficit decreased from 4.9% to

4.6% which proves government right policy. 76% decreased in current account deficit is the sign of right economic policy. 40.4% decrease in trade deficit expressed right economic steps. Trade deficit which was \$43.4 billion is now \$25.8 billion. This is the beginning of improvement, she added.

Import decreased by 29.2% which influenced the economic improvement. Imports decreased from \$72.3 billion to \$51.2 billion, which she called a step to betterment.

Further Maryam maintained that Rs.6210 billion tax collected which was 348.2 billion Pkr last year. Current fiscal year despite the target of 7 lacs, 9 lacs 12 thousand new tax payer were registered. This is proving of increase in tax net. 1.15 trillion Pkr was allocated for development budget which will increase economic activities in country.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Faisal Karim Kundi addressing a press conference at PPP Office.

## PPP's victory in AJK by-election reflection of people's confidence: Kundi

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety and Central Information Secretary of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Faisal Karim Kundi has said that victory of PPP in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) by-election with simple majority reveals the confidence and support of the people with the party.

While addressing a news conference in Islamabad on Friday, he felicitated the office bearers and workers of PPP for their hard work and sincerity that led to success in AJK by-election.

Faisal Karim Kundi said that the support of AJK people were with PPP yesterday, today and will remain in future. Criticizing PTI chief Imran Khan, he said that who used to claim that anyone given a ticket by him in the election will succeed can see how people of AJK supported PPP despite his video address.

"This is a clear message for those who were saying that PPP is only limited to Sindh province that political leaders from

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, and Gilgit-Baltistan are also joining PPP in a great number", he said.

The state minister commenting on the newly formed political party, said that PPP always welcomed democratic political parties. The SAPM also said that PPP has always advocated the stance of the people of Indian Illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) for their demand of holding a plebiscite. Regarding Minister for Foreign Affairs Bilawal Bhutto's recent visit to Iraq, the SAPM said that the joint statement between Pakistan and Iraq was a historic act and added that during his highly successful visit, he discussed with the high official important issues including visa exemption, provision of legal assistance to the prisoners, facilitation for the Zaireen and legalization of Pakistani workers.

Minister Kundi said fruitful discussions were also held regarding strengthening cooperation between the two countries in the trade, tourism, and health sectors.



KARACHI: People are filling their water cans from public tap as they facing shortage of drinking water in their area, at Malir area in Karachi.

## Cyclone Biparjoy could impact Pakistan coasts

KARACHI (INP): Tropical cyclone Biparjoy in the Arabian Sea, which turned into a Very Severe Cyclonic Storm (VSCS), has further intensified during the last 12 hours, the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) said Friday.

As per the latest alert, the Very Severe Cyclonic Storm (VSCS) Biparjoy, persisting with its intensity, slightly changed its course and slowly tracked in the north-northeast direction during the past 12 hours and now lies near Latitude 14.8°N & Longitude 66.5°E at a distance of about 1,120km south of Karachi.

The Met Office said that maximum sustained surface winds are 130-150 Km/hour gusts 160 Km/hour around the system center.

"The favorable environmental conditions (sea surface temperature of 30-32°C, low vertical wind shear & upper-level divergence) still supporting the system to intensify further," the Met department said.

The Met Office said

owing to a shift in upper-level steering winds, there is uncertainty in global models' opinion regarding the track forecast of the cyclone, with some taking it to the Oman-Pakistan western coast and others indicating towards the Indian Gujarat-Pakistan Sindh coast.

PMD's cyclone warning centre in Karachi is monitoring the system, it added. Meanwhile, recent weather reports from neighboring India said that Cyclone Biparjoy, located about 820km west of Goa, and likely to further intensify as it moves northwards.

Fishermen are advised not to venture in open sea from Monday, 12 June 2023 onwards till the system is over as the Arabian Sea conditions may get very rough/high accompanied with high tides along coast.

With its probable northeast track, the rain-understorm with some heavy falls & squally winds are expected in Sindh-Makran coast from 13 June night/14 June morning.