

# Independent

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## PM resolves to crush every conspiracy against Pakistan and state institutions

**Denounces 'vile social media campaign' against COAS Asim Munir; Says Imran's 'trick of using proxies' badly exposed; Orders legal action against elements behind campaign.**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday vehemently condemned social media campaign about threats of an assassination attempt on Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir and expressed the resolve to crush every conspiracy against Pakistan and the state institutions.

The prime minister, in a press statement shared by PM Office Media Wing, said that on May 9 (Black Day) similar minds were involved in the conspiracy.

The prime minister directed the relevant authorities to take legal action against those involved in

such media campaigns inside the country and abroad.

"It is a clear message to 9th May planners, facilitators and handlers that conspiracy against Pakistan and its institutions will be crushed", he added.

He further termed the vile, malevolent and malicious media campaigns a result of the planning of miscreants, adding the conspirators had again become active against the political and economic stability in the country. The new media campaign was a part and parcel of that abhorrent campaign, which was launched against Shuhada, he maintained.

The prime minister observed that the media drive against armed forces and its chief did not fall within the domain of freedom of expression, but it was only a conspiracy, and it was a legal responsibility to eradicate such tendency with full strength.

He said the nation would foil such attempts in such a manner as it had frustrated the attempt on May 9 to stir violence and vandalism in the country.

The entire nation was standing behind its armed forces and its chief and resolved not to allow the dis-appointed and panicked elements to create new crises in the country.



GWADAR: View of huge fire flames rise from burning truck after traffic accident due to over speeding, at Makran Coastal Highway in Gwadar.

## 3 died as truck of diesel overturns, caught fire at Makran Coastal highway

**Independent Report**

GWADAR: Three persons including a driver and two aides were killed when a diesel-laden vehicle overturned and caught fire at the Makran coastal highway on Sunday morning.

According to the reports reaching here, the vehicle carrying Iranian diesel was on its way on the Makran coastal highway when it overturned at a sharp turn. Soon after the truck carrying the diesel overturned at the highway, it caught fire resulting in on

the spot death of all three persons on board.

Although the area levies and administration rushed towards the spot of accident, but it couldn't extinguish the fire until it put out by itself after sometime. Later, the bodies of ill-fated driver and two others were retrieved from the burnt vehicle and shifted to the nearby hospital. In the meantime, the flow of traffic remained suspended for hours at both sides of the highway from the spot where the accident occurred.

## Governor Sindh calls on President Alvi



KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori called on the President Dr. Arif Alvi at his residence here on Sunday.

According to a Governor House communique, the Governor felicitated the President on performing Hajj.

They also discussed ongoing projects in the Sindh province, cooperation of the federal government, measures pertaining to the restoration of metropolitan infrastructure and other issues of mutual interests.

Kamran Tessori, on the occasion, said that the development of the province through the cooperation of the federation was certain.

He said that steps were being taken to ensure the welfare of the people.

## Revolutionary steps being taken to promote Pak image, narrative globally: Marriyum

LAHORE (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Sunday that revolutionary steps were being taken to implement the vision and directive of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to promote the country's culture and heritage and its narrative through screen tourism.

She said this while addressing a ceremony after performing ground breaking of the site for cinema and inauguration of Classical Musical Research Cell, Digital Broadcast Training Lab and Podcast Studio here at the Radio Pakistan.

She said that through using platforms like Pakistan Television, Radio Pakistan, Lok Virsa and Pakistan National Council of Arts, the people especially, the youth could be connected with the country's heritage.

She said that infotainment and entertainment were highly required for people especially the younger generation because during the last four years, hatred and intolerance had been promoted in the country.

Marriyum said that it was a high time when people and especially youngsters should be provided an alternative through which they could engage themselves in positive activities.

She said that in 2017 and 2018, a foundation of the country's first culture policy and film policy was laid, adding that implementation of the policy was started in the 2018 budget which was given by PML-N government.

She said that unfortunately during the last four years, all institutions were ruined, PTV sports was handed over to A-Sports just to deteriorate the department and auction it later.

The minister said that for the first time, slogan was raised in the Parliament to auction PTV and Radio Pakistan buildings and these organizations. She said that those behind such slogans did not know the significance of national broadcasters and the country's heritage.



LAHORE: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb Inaugurating the foundation stone for the construction of cinema building of projects at Radio Pakistan Station building.

## Nawaz, Zardari have agreed on caretaker setup: Khurshid Shah

NEWSHERA (INP): Senior leader of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Federal Minister for Water Resources Syed Khurshid Shah has said that Nawaz Sharif and Asif Zardari have agreed on installing the caretaker setup in the country for general elections, and the polls will not be delayed even for a day.

The federal minister said that the government and the coalition partners were on same page in holding the general elections according to the constitution and law. The deal with IMF and the budget were the major achievements of the coalition government, he said.

Mr Shah said that transparent and impartial general elections were the only solution to the prevailing crisis. He said inflation had started decreasing in the country.

The federal minister said that the Pakistan People's Party had always brought the nation out of disappointments.

The census was conducted transparently and according to the rules in the entire country including Karachi and Sindh and the objections of Muttahida Quami Movement and Jamaat-e-Islami had been removed.

## Assemblies to dissolve on completion of tenure: Asif

SIALKOT (APP): Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif has said that preparations for general election have commenced and distribution of tickets will start soon.

He stated this while addressing a worker's convention at Union Council Neikapura, Sialkot on Saturday night.

Speaking at the convention, Kh Asif said that assemblies would be dissolved after completing their tenure. He said political parties of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) would adopt a plan of bringing a common candidate or seat adjustment for the general election. He said distribution of tickets and seat adjustment would commence soon.

The minister said the nation would get an opportunity to exercise its right to vote in upcoming election. He said voters were the source of power for political activists and leaders. He revealed that the reason behind the ouster of the former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief through no-confidence motion was his (PTI chief's) behaviour with his allies.

The defence minister lambasted the PTI chairman saying that he dissolved the KP and Punjab assemblies despite disagreement by his party members. He said the situation occurred due to Imran's political wrong decisions. He said the PTI chief made the last attack on the army.

## 302 pilgrims reach Quetta as PIA's Hajj flight operation starts from Saudi Arabia

**Independent Report**

QUETTA: The post Hajj flight operation of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) commenced from Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Quetta on Sunday. On start of the Hajj operation, two flights of the national flag carrier airlines were landed at the Quetta International Airport on Sunday morning.

In all 302 (151 each) pilgrims from the holy land by the two flights. The Airport Manager, Malik Mazhar Hussain, District Manager PIA, Abdul Ghaffar Khan Miankhail along with other PIA and Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) welcomed the pilgrims reaching Quetta by first two flights.

Moreover, a large number of relatives of the pilgrims were also present at the passenger lounge and outside the premises of airport building to receive their dear ones reached Quetta after performing the Hajj pilgrimage.

Mr. Miakhail informed on the occasion that while 302 pilgrims were brought to Quetta from the holy land on Sunday by two Hajj flights, the operation would remain continued till June 30, 2023.

Around 8,000 pilgrims would be brought by 47 flights to Quetta from the holy land, the District Manager told further.



QUETTA: Manager PIA Balochistan Abdul Ghaffar Miankhail receiving pilgrims as the post Hajj flight operation of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) commenced from Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Quetta here on Sunday

## Father & son gunned down over resistance during bike snatching

**Independent Report**

QUETTA: Two persons identified as father and son were shot dead by unknown armed bandits upon resistance in the motorbike snatching incident on Sunday morning.

According to the police, the incident of brutal killing of a person and his teenage son was occurred on Qambrani road. As per details, the two were on their way riding on their motorbike when at least two armed dacoits intercepted them and asked them to hand over their bike to them.

However, both identified as Abdul Karim and Eaz Ahmed showed resistance in handing over their bike to the bandits, they sprayed bullets targeting them from close range.

As a result, both sustained serious bullet wounds and thus died before they were provided any medical assistance, the reports suggested.

The armed bandits fled from the scene leaving them in the pool of blood. Later, the area police reached the spot.

## No doctor in 10 out of 12 jails of Balochistan

**Jail dept writes to Home dept for provision of Rs15m**

QUETTA (INP): There is lack of health facilities in jails of Balochistan and there is no doctor in 10 out of 12 jails including Machh, the largest jail of the province.

According to details, a lady doctor was deployed at District Jail Quetta and a doctor at Central Jail Gaddani while in other jails of province, compounder were serving as doctors for treatment of the prisoners.

On the other hand, the provincial government has reduced the six million rupees funds allocated for jail department to three million despite increase prices of drugs and number of prisoners.

Only one million rupees were released by provincial government for the purpose this year.

The Balochistan Jail Department has dispatched a summary to Home Department for provision of 15 million rupees. Earlier, Chief Justice Balochistan High Court had also expressed his annoyance for not deploying doctor in Machh Jail.

## CM directs IGP, DIGP to take steps on war footing bases to better law and order in Quetta

**Independent Report**

QUETTA: Taking strict notice of the gruesome act of killing of a person and his son during motorbike snatching incident on Qambrani road Quetta city on Sunday, the Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo has directed the Inspector General of Police and DIG Police Quetta to take steps on war footing grounds to improve law and order situation in the city.

The Chief Minister sought a report from the police command about this incident and similar other crimes including the robberies and dacoities.

Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo expressed anguish over the incidents of road robberies and killing of people in these incidents.

The Chief Minister asserted that the police would have to show its performance to end dangers posed to the citizens of Quetta.

He said that the citizens of Quetta are insecure after increase in incidents of robbery and snatching in the city.

He said that it is prime responsibility of the police to protect life and property of the masses. Abundant resources are being provided to the police for from the public tax money, he added.

He said that the trust of people would have to be restored on police anyway. He directed the concerned high ups to prepare security plan for Quetta city afresh.

In addition to this, patrolling of the security personnel should also be increased, adding he stressed.

Moreover, an effective system of the checking on entry and exit routes should also be developed, he maintained.



JHELUM: A view of site of gas cylinder explosion flattens three-storey building

## Five dead as explosion flattens three-storey building in Jhelum

ISLAMABAD (APP): At least five people were killed and many others received critical injuries when a three-storey building collapsed suddenly due to a powerful LPG cylinder blast in Jhelum on Sunday.

According to details, Rescue officials informed that the cylinder exploded in the kitchen of a three-storey hotel on GT Road, resulting in the collapse of a building, private news channels reported.

As a result, five people lost their lives and as many as 12 people were injured in the tragic incident.

Soon after the incident, the rescue teams, police and other personnel of law enforcement agencies arrived at the site and cordoned off the area. An emergency has been declared in the District Headquarters Hospital (DHQ) Jhelum. Dust was seen rising from the rubble of the collapsed building in the surrounding streets for a long time.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the incident of building collapse in Jhelum that resulted in death of five persons.

## India leaves water in Chenab river

LAHORE (Online): Water left from Indian side in Chenab River entered into Pakistan, Water flow in head marala reached to 122184 cubic feet. Administration issued alerts. According to flood control room water flow in Chenab river was 60,000 cubic feet on Saturday morning and continues rise in water flow threatens high level flooding.

## Daily Voice of Masses Independent

### Keeping promises

The commentariat has been abuzz ever since it emerged that the IMF had held separate meetings with two political parties over the \$3bn sought by Pakistan under a Stand-by Arrangement. While the IMF also held a similar one-on-one meeting with the PTI leadership that piqued the most curiosity.

However, the ensuing gossip, which gave the meeting a political tint, ignored a simple fact: the only reason the IMF had sought the meetings was to secure assurances that whatever agreement was eventually signed with the current government would not be jeopardised by the next. To this end, all parties seem to have endorsed the deal that will be presented to the IMF board on July 12. However, they must also reflect on why an international lender felt the need to approach them individually.

As a nation, we have had a big problem keeping our promises. From the Reko Diq fiasco to the IPP contracts signed in the PPP era, to the repeated violation of IMF deals — Pakistan has a habit of failing to honour contracts and agreements, which has left it in a very weak position in negotiations that must be backed by some form of sovereign guarantee.

The usual reason behind our inability to keep our promises has either been a change of policy following a change of government, or interference and 'intervention' by the other branches of the state. The country has paid billions of dollars in direct fines and suffered incalculable secondary losses due to this.

Even if the original agreements in the aforementioned cases may have been deleterious to our national interests, refusing to honour them after they were signed was indefensible under the timeless, universal laws that guide formal contracts. When the wise talk about the need for a 'charter of economy', this is one of the main issues they seek to address. The IMF, or any foreign entity interested in taking a stake in the country, should not feel the need to have our officials jump through hoops in order to satisfy it that they are, indeed, serious about the commitments they are making. It is essential for this to happen that creditors and investors see some continuity in policy. This can be ensured if government leaders involve the opposition in the decision-making process so that any major reservations within political circles are cleared up well before the country enters into any sovereign agreement.

All contracts should also be vetted thoroughly beforehand by the relevant parliamentary committees to ensure that they are lawful. Once an agreement is finalised and inked, it must then be honoured consistently. Protecting the national interest is important, but what it means cannot keep changing, especially where sovereign contracts are concerned.

### Don't stop press



Muna Khan

As I prepare my course outline for a new university-level class on media literacy next month, I am struggling on how to mandate newspaper reading into the syllabus. I mean physically reading a paper, a habit I still practise at home and in travels. That practice has changed over the years thanks to technological advancements, but I prefer holding a paper and reading it — at cafés, planes, trains etc. When I was at graduate school in the US in 2016, I could only afford to subscribe to the digital version of a paper, but also began a new habit of listening to the news as that was the norm among my peers. I hope we return to listening to the news, like my grandfather did on his trusted radio when he tuned into BBC Urdu so many decades ago, because it is a handy way to consume news.

Sadly, newspaper trends are on the decline everywhere.

I'm writing this in New York, a city I have regularly frequented since the birth of my nephew in 2014, and can't find newspapers as easily as I did. There is a Starbucks every few blocks, but none of them stocks papers and I've not seen paper stands either. I want to be clear this is anecdotal and not meant as an indictment on the state of the industry. I passed one news kiosk at the entrance of Central Park, which sold major papers, but the owner said there were very few buyers, largely tourists. He said he sells more celebrity magazines

than legacy publications, though I suspect that's always been the case.

It's against this backdrop that news of the printing of the last edition of the 320-year-old Austrian paper Wiener Zeitung on June 30 should come as no surprise. But it still merits a moment of mourning because it may be the writing on the wall for many others. Widely recognised as "the world's oldest paper" — world meaning the Western world — the government-owned (since 1857) but editorially independent paper began publishing in 1702. According to its final edition, it "saw 12 presidents, 10 kaisers and two republics". It was shut down in 1939 by the Nazis but began reprinting in 1945 under allied occupation, according to a report in The Guardian.

Mozart and Beethoven advertised in the paper, said Judith Belfkih, co-deputy editor of the paper. "It's an example of historical awareness that I miss among politicians," she said in an interview to Deutsche Welle (DW).

But in the end, it was unable to survive financially. Because of its role as an official gazette, it relied on firms publishing their annual results on their pages for a fee, as was legally required. A new law changed that, resulting in the paper losing 18 million euros, according to Der Spiegel. While the paper has moved online, it had to cut 63 jobs, roughly two-thirds of its staff. It hopes to print a monthly edition, but did not elaborate on when or how.

Journalists in Austria have expressed concerns about the news media industry, which, DW noted, dropped 18 places in the World Press Freedom Index in five years. It's worrying when papers of record and reputable lose space to tab-

loid, disinformation machines.

The closure of the Wiener Zeitung means one less paper will serve the public interest. One can't overestimate the value of reporting done in the public interest as it caters to the very basic fundamental of journalism, which is to inform the public. That is essential to the functioning of democracy, a form of governance yet to be seen in Pakistan. Here, one sees all sorts of folks posing as journalists, pretending to report when they're likely spreading disinformation.

It's important for readers to know who receives government advertising and the relationships between companies and state institutions. The media is meant to be a watchdog holding all powerful entities to account, not allowing owners to nurture relationships that compromise editorial independence.

Here, organisations like newspaper co-uncils have a role to play in calling for solutions to save print publications from dying, especially because people's livelihoods are at stake. It requires trying new business models — and there are several studies like the one done by Pew Research Centre's Project for Excellence in Journalism in 2012 which examined how papers that applied a successful digital strategy and retrained staff to acclimatise to the changing environment managed well. There are also several success stories about papers that invested in hyper-local journalism which caters to audience needs. There is hope amid the doom and gloom — if media outlets are committed to getting creative and ahead of the game. I'm hoping to convince a new generation of readers to help make that happen. Wish me luck. -- Courtesy Dawn

### Mini forums



Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry

Asia-Pacific has been the primary venue for the US-China strategic competition. However, the competition is now spilling into other regions too, including the Middle East, where the US is gradually losing its influence. In order to bolster its standing in the Middle East, the US facilitated the process of normalisation of ties between Israel and the Arabs. Initially called the Abraham Accords, the UAE was the first to normalise ties with Israel in August 2020, followed by Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco. In the follow-up, a grouping that came to be known as the 'Negev Forum' was formed to promote economic cooperation amongst Arab states that had normalised ties with Israel.

Encouraged by the Abraham Accords, the US facilitated the formation of a forum for economic cooperation among India, Israel, the UAE and US. Called the I2U2, the foreign ministers of the grouping first met in October 2021. The forum is also referred to as the West Asian Quad, the western counterpart of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue where the US, India, Australia and Japan are weaving a kind of containment arc against China. The I2U2's stated aim is to promote economic cooperation among its four members. Political or ideological issues are not included in the agenda. Described as 'economic pragmatism', the Palestine issue has been relegated to the backburner. Geoeconomics

has overtaken geopolitics. But, behind its overt economic agenda, lies an attempt by the US to revitalise its partnerships in the Middle East, especially in technology, trade, climate, pandemics and security. There has been talk of broadening the I2U2 to include S2 (Saudi Arabia and South Korea). However, Saudi Arabia has yet to take a decision on this. It is recalled that after the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, and the ensuing sanctions imposed by the US and Europe on Russia, a serious energy crisis erupted. The US tried to persuade Saudi Arabia to lower its oil production to stabilise oil prices; however, Saudi Arabia decided to protect its own interests. Saudi Arabia, feeling unsure of US security guarantees after its failure in Afghanistan and Iraq, seems to be diversifying its options.

All this while, China has maintained its economic outreach, including with the Middle Eastern countries. It has deepened its ties with Iran and Saudi Arabia, and in a move that surprised everyone, has brokered a rapprochement between them. Meanwhile, Russia, impacted gravely by the sanctions, has also started leaning on China and become a kind of partner of Beijing in its strategic competition with the US. Russia also engaged with India and some other countries to sell its oil. India has so far played all sides, citing strategic autonomy. However, India is increasingly finding itself in a tight spot. This was illustrated in a recent summit meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, chaired by India. Given the recent high-profile state visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the US, India was awkwardly placed to invite President Vladimir Putin to the impromptu summit. India also did not sign onto the para referring to China's Belt

and Road Initiative in the joint statement. The Goa experience probably weighed in on the decision vis-à-vis the invitation to Pakistan's prime minister. India's escape route was to go for a virtual summit even at the cost of diluting its commitment to the SCO.

In the I2U2 also, India is walking a thin line given the regional political and ideological dynamics. To avert polemics, the I2U2 countries seem to be focusing on the economic agenda. For instance, in the virtual summit meeting held by I2U2 countries in July 2022, discussions were focused on food security and clean energy.

In terms of concrete outcomes of the I2U2 summit, the UAE offered to invest \$2 billion to develop integrated food parks across India, incorporating climate-smart technologies to reduce food waste and conserve freshwater. India would provide the land and facilitate farmers' integration into the food parks. The US and Israeli private sectors would provide expertise. In another major decision, the I2U2 countries would cooperate in generating 300 megawatts of wind and solar power in India's Gujarat state, with a complementary battery energy storage system. India wanted to use this project to become a global hub for alternative supply chains in renewable energy.

Mini-lateral groupings, such as I2U2, are filling space that once belonged to relatively larger multilateral organisations, and are diverting their focus from politics to economics. There are lessons for Pakistan. Geoeconomics is the pathway to economic security and political clout. Given the developments in the Gulf, Pakistan must expedite north-south connectivity and prioritise setting right its economic house. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Commerce News

### CPEC's projects attract \$ 25.4bln of direct investment during last 10 years

BEIJING (APP): The projects under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) are flourishing all across Pakistan and have attracted US\$25.4 billion of direct investment from China during the last 10 years.

"After ten years of development, a '1+4' cooperation layout has been formed, with the CPEC at the center and Gwadar Port, transport infrastructure, energy and industrial cooperation being the four key areas," according to a senior official of the Chinese Foreign Ministry.

The projects under the CPEC framework have created 192,000 jobs, producing 6,000 megawatts of electric

power, building 510 kilometers of highways and adding 886 kilometers to the core national transmission network, he added.

Terming the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor a signature project of China-Pakistan cooperation in the new era, he said that it is an important project under the Belt and Road Initiative.

This year marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the launch of CPEC. After ten years of development, a 1+4 cooperation layout has been formed, with the CPEC at the center and Gwadar Port, transport infrastructure, energy and industrial cooperation being the four key areas.

The CPEC has made a tangible contribution to

the national development of Pakistan and connectivity in the region. China and Pakistan have also explored new areas for cooperation under the framework of CPEC, creating new highlights in cooperation on agriculture, science and technology, telecommunication and people's well-being.

"China stands ready to work with Pakistan to build on the past achievements and follow the guidance of the important common understandings between the leaders of the two countries on promoting high-quality development of CPEC to boost the development of China and Pakistan and the region and bring more benefits to the people of all countries," the official said.



ISLAMABAD: A view of the trucks parked outside Floor mills at Sector I-II as waiting for laborers to unload them, in Federal Capital.

### Kiyani says: PTI had breached IMF pact to get cheap fame

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister's Coordinator for Economy and Energy Bilal Azhar Kiyani said on Sunday that PTI government had breached the IMF agreement to catch up cheap fame, and propagated a false cipher when the PDM's no-confidence motion was passed in National Assembly.

Addressing a press conference here, he added that after ousting from power, the PTI Chairman had tried hard to spread chaos in the country by

raising hollow slogan of imported government. Bilal Azhar Kiyani said, the person who had launched cipher drama, hatched conspiracies and used to say that his government was ousted through America's conspiracy but today, the same person is seen begging America. "And they are calling us an imported government despite the fact that PTI itself is imported and its chairman speaks what for others, actually he himself involved in it."

Kiyani said that

present coalition government corrected the wrong decisions of the previous government; the staff level agreement signed with the IMF was the link of the last year's hard work, while the PTI government had breached the IMF agreement to get cheap fame. The present government brought the IMF to the table and completed its seventh, eighth review. He said that instead of celebrating the meeting of IMF delegation with PTI chairman a few days ago.

### FTO Coordinator identifies De-dollarisation signs in global economy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to Federal Tax Ombudsman Meher Khashif Younis on Sunday said that the payment of oil imported from Russia in "Yuan" is continuation signs of de-dollarisation surfacing in the global economy. Speaking at a seminar on "Impact of de-dollarisation on the health of the economy" organized under the aegis of Gold Ring Economic Forum, a strategic think tank, he said the sanctions that have frozen Russia out of the global banking system have seen a fresh push since March by

the "BRICS" nations, Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, to challenge the dollar's hegemony, said a press release. He said "some signs of de-dollarization are emerging," adding the trend was likely to persist even as the dollar maintains its "large footprint". Efforts by BRICS countries and other major commodity exporters to loosen the dollar's stranglehold on global commerce have ramped up since the start of the war in Ukraine, which saw the US freeze a large chunk of Russia's foreign reserves.

### Barlas elected as chairman SIAL

SIALKOT (APP): A Sialkot based leading exporter Sohail Barlas was elected unopposed as chairman of Sialkot International Airport Limited (SIAL), while Mian Daud Sair was elected unopposed as vice chairman of SIAL for the year 2023-24 during its annual elections held here. On this occasion, the newly elected chairman SIAL Sohail Barlas pledged to make all out sincere efforts to make the SIAL as a model airport of Pakistan. He revealed that SIAL had been a hallmark of the sincerity, dedication, enthusiasm and unity of the Sialkot exporters.

### Shahzad Shah says: Access to modern farming techniques, infrastructure key challenges facing agri sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Rice Research and Development Board Punjab Shahzad Ali Malik on Sunday said that the agricultural sector in South Asia is confronted with various multiple challenges of limited access to modern farming techniques, inadequate irrigation facilities, fragmented land holdings, and insufficient post-harvest storage and processing infrastructure.

Talking to a delegation of progressive farmers led by Muhammad Hussain Shah

Pindi Shaikh Musa district Faisalabad said these factors affected productivity and contributed to food insecurity, said a press release. He said food insecurity continues to be a significant issue in many parts of South Asia. While on the other hand, the region has made progress in recent years in reducing poverty and improving overall food security, several factors contribute to the persistent challenges faced by many countries including Pakistan, he added.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor selling fruits on his stall at weekly Sunday bazaar Peshawar Morr in Federal Capital.

### Operation speed up against fake, low quality agriculture medicine: Agri Secretary

FAISALABAD (Online): Agriculture Secretary Punjab Iftikhar Ali Saho said that to make quality agriculture medicine available operation has been speeded up against sellers fake and low quality medicines on the basis of secret information. Cases against involved peoples will be entered under MPO act: agriculture secretary. Agriculture secretary Punjab chaired meeting to review the current situation of cotton crops in civil secretariat Lahore. Director General Agriculture (Pest warning) Punjab Rana Fakir Ahmed, Director General Agriculture (crop reporting) Punjab Abdul Qayyum, Director

agriculture (Expansion) Head Quarter Lahore and other officers participated in the meeting. Additional Secretary Agriculture (Task Force) Punjab Muhammad Shabir Ahmed, Director General Agriculture (Expansion) Punjab Dr. Muhammad Anjam Ali including Director agriculture (Expansion) attended meeting virtual format. Director General agriculture (Pest warning) Punjab Rana Fakir Ahmed briefed secretary agriculture on cotton crops' situation and said white bee, mealybugs and thrips attacked has been witnessed in some areas of cotton crops however it is not beyond the economic damage.



FAISALABAD: Farmer using modern agriculture machine for seedling of rice crop in his field.

### PAC directions ignored, 500% increase in household consumers gas bill

ISLAMABAD (Online): Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) increased household consumers gas bills upto 500%. 400Pkr gas bill of summer increased to 3000Pkr. Despite less consumption of gas in summer at least 2000Pkr other than taxes has been added to gas bills on the name of adjustment.

Despite clear direction of Public Accounts Committee (PAC)

overpayments are ongoing from household consumers of gas. SNGPL started taking 500% extra payments from consumer in bills and also added 2000Pkr on the name of adjustment. SNGPL has added fixed charges of 475Pkr, general sales tax Pkr161 and 2000 to 2500 on the name of adjustment and correction added in bills of 400 gas price and haven't issued any explanation in which regard they are taking this money from consumers.

### Storm of inflation continues in city

PESHAWAR (APP): The storm of inflation continued in the provincial capital as the price of ginger touched the Rs 1000 mark while the district administration claimed to control the rates according to the official price list of various food items.

A visit to the vegetables and fruits markets revealed that the storm of inflation in the markets continued with ginger touching all-time high marks of Rs 1050 per kilogram, garlic at 300 and lemon at 140 per kg remained unchanged.

Onion 50, tomato 80, green pepper 80, peas 250, okra 90 and turnip 80 rupees sold per kg while Potato 110, Kachalo 130, Cauliflower 120, Eggplant 30, Zucchini and Tenda 100 rupees per sale.

Among fruits, apples reached Rs 400, mango Rs 250, peach Rs 220 per kg, Cherries 430, potatoes 260 and bananas 200 per dozen were sold.

## CM Punjab says: Saints Mazars to be renovated, extended

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi Sunday chaired a meeting at CM Office in which mega decisions were made for making renovation, extension and bringing improvements in the administrative affairs of the Mazars of Religious Saints and Aulia Karam.

Online donation portal will be established to donate aqiqat, sadkaat and nazrana. Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) had been assigned the task to set up online donation portal.

Facilities to give nazranas, sadkaat, langar within the country and abroad will be provided through the online donation portal. Online payment facility will be provided for giving langar, laying Chaddar and wreath on the mazars from abroad.

The caretaker CM Mohsin Naqvi has ordered to widen entry and exit passages of mazars to provide comfort in the transportation of devotees and pilgrims visiting mazars. It was principally decided during the meeting to establish a library

attached with every mazar and other essential facilities like sarai, langar khany and wash rooms will be provided with the mazars.

A waiting place and parking will be established on the mela ground attached with the mazar of Baba Bulleh Shah.

Naqvi directed to immediately start renovation and extension work of the mazar of Shah Shams Tabrez in Multan. He ordered to prepare a plan of the renovation and restoration of Chiniot Shahi Masjid.



**KARACHI: Governor Sindh, Kamran Tessori planting a sapling during the inauguration of Tree Plantation Drive held in Karachi.**

## PPP terms IK's demand of election from IMF as inciting to interfere in internal affairs

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Central Punjab leaders have termed the demand of Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) from the IMF delegation to seek guarantee for timely election as tantamount to inciting to interfere in the internal affairs of the country.

In a joint statement issued here by PPP Central Punjab Acting President Rana Farooq Saeed, Faisal

Mir, Mian Ayub and Afnan Butt on Sunday they said that Niazi should stop plotting against the state.

They said that Imran is not stopping himself from conspiracies against the state, so the judicial concessions given to him should be terminated immediately. They said that the hearing of the Tasha Khana case against Imran Niazi was being started from July 10, Monday by the session

## 7 dead, 1146 injured in 1084 RTCs in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): At least seven persons were killed and 1,146 injured in 1,084 Road Traffic Crashes (RTCs) in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours.

Out of these, 586 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 562 victims with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by Rescue Medical Teams thus reducing the burden of hospitals.

## SACM directs to provide basic facilities to prisoners

PESHAWAR (APP): Special Assistant to Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Prison Hidayat Uallah Khan Afridi issued directives to jail authorities on Sunday to provide basic human rights alongwith other facilities to prisoners in lock ups.

He said that it is the need of the hour to bring positive reforms in the jail system aimed at tackling crimes and making the prisoners responsible citizens of society.

The Special Assistant

issued these directives on the occasion of his surprised visit to District Jail Swat. He visited various sections of the jail while the jail superintendent Riaz Khan Mohmand gave a detail presentation on the administrative system of the prison.

The caretaker special assistant urged the jail staff to keep a special focus on the cleanliness of the goal, adding that strict steps should be taken for jail security and no excuse will be tolerated in this regard.

## PDMA DG visits Sialkot, reviews relief camps

SIALKOT (APP): Director General (DG) Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Punjab Imran Qureshi visited Head Marala Sialkot and inspected all Naullahs passing through the city.

He also chaired a meeting to review the preparations for rescue and relief activities. He expressed satisfaction over the measures taken by the district administration

for setting up 22 relief camps, health department, livestock counters, rescue and relief in the four tehsils.

The DG said that in the next 24 hours, the flow of water in Chenab river was likely to be between 2,00,000 and 2,15,000 cusecs, which would be a medium level flood, however, there was a capacity of 1,10,000 cusecs of water to be released from Head Marala.

## All departments directed to remain alert during Monsoon

RAWALPINDI (APP): Secretary Housing and Urban Development Punjab, Sajid Zafar Dall has directed all the departments concerned to remain alert during Monsoon. According to a district administration spokesman, the Secretary during a visit reviewed the preparations finalized by Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) for Monsoon.

He informed that the

Secretary also inspected the cleaning work of Nullah Lai at Gwalmandi bridge.

After the forecast of the Meteorological Department, all the departments concerned need to be alert, said Sajid Zafar Dall.

He said that WASA Rawalpindi had made extensive preparations for Monsoon, including timely cleaning of major drains and sewage lines of the city along with Nulla Lai.

## Low-level Flood in River Chenab

SIALKOT (APP): Deputy Commissioner Sialkot Adnan Mehmood Awan on Sunday said that there was low level flood in River Chenab with 1,14,000 upstream and 98,430 downstream flood water at Head Marala-Sialkot. According to handout issued here, the water level recorded 1,14,000 cusecs upstream in River Chenab at Head Marala-Sialkot while the downstream flood water was 98,430 cusecs in River Chenab near Head Marala.



**HYDERABAD: Residents of Radio Pakistan area are blocked road and burn tires as they are holding protest demonstration against prolong electricity load shedding in their area, in Hyderabad**

## CPEC projects rapidly ushering Pakistan's development landscape

LAHORE (APP): Experts on Sunday said that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was playing a key role in transforming the development landscape of Pakistan with the launch of several multi-billion-dollar projects.

Talking to APP in connection with the completion of 10 years signing of CPEC, the experts opined that the mega project helped Pakistan making progress in the region and the world.

The experts said the country, during the last one decade has ushered in a new era of development with the completion of hundreds of projects under the umbrella of CPEC, which included coal-fired power plants,

the Orange Line mass transit project, and road infrastructure.

Dr. Nadeem Javaid Chief Economist and PD CPEC said that it was worth welcoming that the synergistic convergence of President Xi's Belt and Road Initiative and former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's vision is going to transform Pakistan into an Asian tiger by 2025.

This collective vision aimed to shift the nation's focus from geopolitics to geo-economics, harnessing Pakistan's strategic location as a crossroads between South Asia, Central Asia, China, and the Middle East, he said.

The goal was to establish Pakistan as a regional hub for trade,

commerce, manufacturing, and agriculture, he said, adding that the CPEC is all about a story of hard work and untiring commitment between the leadership of Pakistan and China.

Through industrial diversification, the long-term economic development of any country is dependent upon its productive material capabilities and the types of products which it produces for exports.

To a query Nadeem said that even, South-East Asian countries are now gradually moving up the industrial ladder and have developed capabilities for production of more complex and sophisticated products, which are much in demand in the global

markets. Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) former President Mian Nasser Hyatt Magoo told APP that in the prevailing situation, industrialisation has the potential to become a dynamic engine of economic growth for the country, adding that it would help make significant contributions to meeting Pakistan's economic and human development goals.

Regarding development of industrial sector and Vision-2025, he said that Pakistan's economic planning and policies should be formulated under a long-term productive development vision and modern technology

capabilities in the sectors where there is a high scope of diversification and innovation, which would be attractive for the investors.

He appreciated the incumbent government for announcing the main pillars of GDP growth for the next fiscal year, including exports, construction, industries, agriculture, IT, poultry and foreign remittances.

In terms of economic growth and regional connectivity, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is also a blessing for Pakistan's extensive industrial revitalisation, as well as for other regional countries in South Asia, he remarked.

# International News

## Yellen says Washington might 'respond to unintended consequences' for China due to tech export curbs

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIJING: Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen on Sunday said she agreed Washington will listen to Chinese complaints about security-related curbs on U.S. technology exports and might "respond to unintended consequences" as she ended a visit to Beijing aimed at reviving strained relations.

Yellen defended "targeted measures" on trade that China's leaders complain are aimed at hurting its fledgling tech industries. She said the Biden administration wants to "avoid unnecessary repercussions" but gave no indica-

tion of possible changes.

Relations between the two biggest economies are at their lowest level in decades due to disputes about technology, security and other irritants. A key Chinese complaint is limits on access to processor chips and other U.S. technology on security grounds that threaten to hamper the ruling Communist Party's development of smartphones, artificial intelligence and other industries.

"We will open up channels so that they can express concerns about our actions, and we can explain and possibly in some situ-

ations respond to unintended consequences of our actions," Yellen said at a news conference.

Yellen talked with China's No. 2 leader, Premier Li Qiang, and other officials during 10 hours of meetings. She had a five-hour session Saturday with her Chinese counterpart, Vice Premier He Lifeng. Treasury officials said in advance there were no plans for her to meet Chinese leader Xi Jinping.

Yellen received a warm welcome and prominent coverage by the state press, but Chinese officials gave no sign they would change

industrial or other policies that Washington and other governments say violate Beijing's free-trade commitments. On Saturday, she said Washington should "adopt a rational and pragmatic attitude" to improve relations. On Sunday, Yellen announced no agreements on major disputes or plans for future activity but said her department and Chinese officials would have "more frequent and regular" communication. U.S.-China political strains are adding to uncertainty that is dampening the willingness of consumers and businesses to spend and invest.



**Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev votes during an early presidential election in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.**



**Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen speaks during a press conference at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, China.**

## Biden begins three-nation tour with stop in London

**Monitoring Desk**  
DELAWARE: US President Joe Biden departed on Sunday on a three-nation trip that will be dominated by a NATO summit in Lithuania aimed at showing solidarity with Ukraine in its fight against Russia while not yet accepting Kyiv as a member of the alliance.

Biden's first stop will be in London, where he will meet British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak at 10

Downing Street on Monday and then travel to Windsor Castle for a visit with King Charles. The talks with the king, expected to include climate initiatives, will give Biden a greater sense of the man who succeeded his mother, Queen Elizabeth, who died last September.

Biden had tea with the queen at Windsor in June 2021 and they discussed many of the same issues that remain a top priority today, like Russia and China.

## UN chief says Sudan is on the brink of a 'full-scale civil war' after nearly 3 months of fighting

**Monitoring Desk**  
CAIRO: U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said Sudan is on the brink of a "full-scale civil war" as fierce clashes between rival generals continued unabated Sunday in the capital of Khartoum.

Guterres warned late Saturday that the war between the Sudanese military and a powerful paramilitary force is likely to destabilize the entire region, according to Farhan Haq, deputy spokesperson for the U.N. chief.

Sudan descended into chaos after months of tension between military chief Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan and his rival, Gen. Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo, commander of the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, exploded into open fighting in mid-April.

Health Minister Haitham Mohammed Ibrahim said last month that the clashes have killed over 3,000 people and wounded over 6,000 others.

The death tally, however, is highly likely to be much higher, he said. More than 2.9 million

people have fled their homes to safer areas inside Sudan or crossed into neighboring countries, according to U.N. figures.

The fighting began 18 months after the two generals led a military coup in October 2021 that toppled a Western-backed civilian transition government. The coup and ensuing conflict dashed Sudanese hopes of a peaceful shift to democracy after a popular uprising forced the military removal of longtime autocrat Omar al-Bashir in April 2019. The war has turned the capital Khartoum and other urban areas across the country into battlefields.

Residents in Khartoum said fierce fighting was underway early Sunday south of the capital.

The warring factions were using heavy weapons in battles in the Kalaka neighborhood and the military's aircraft were seen hovering over the area, said resident Abdalla al-Fatih.

In his statement, Guterres also condemned an airstrike Saturday that

## Poland moves troops to eastern border amid Wagner fears

**Monitoring Desk**  
WARSAW: Poland began moving over 1,000 troops to the east of the country, the defence minister said, amid rising concern in the NATO-member that the presence of Wagner Group fighters in Belarus could lead to increased tension on its border.

Russian President Vladimir Putin's decision to offer mercenary fighters of Yevgeny

## Six dead in private jet crash outside Los Angeles

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: All six people aboard a small jet died when the aircraft crashed and burned in a field near an airport near Los Angeles on Saturday, local and federal authorities said. The aircraft, a Cessna C550 business jet, was travelling from Las Vegas and crashed near French Valley Airport in Riverside County, about 137 kilometres south of Los Angeles, at around 4:15am, the Federal Aviation Administration said in a statement.

## S.Korean lawmakers berate IAEA chief over Japanese plans to release treated Fukushima wastewater

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: South Korean opposition lawmakers sharply criticized the head of the United Nations' nuclear watchdog on Sunday for its approval of Japanese plans to release treated wastewater from the damaged Fukushima nuclear power plant.

They met with Rafael Grossi in a tense meeting in Seoul that took place while protesters screamed outside the door. Grossi, the International Atomic Energy Agency's director general, arrived in South Korea over

the weekend to engage with government officials and critics and help reduce public concerns about food safety. The IAEA last week approved the Japanese discharge plans, saying the process would meet international safety standards and pose negligible environmental and health impacts. South Korea's government has also endorsed the safety of the Japanese plans. In his meeting with members of the liberal Democratic Party, which controls a majority in South Korea's parliament.

health authorities said killed at least 22 people in Omdurman, a city just across the Nile from the Khartoum. The assault was one of the deadliest in the conflict so far.

The RSF blamed the military for the attack in Omdurman. The military denied the accusation, saying in a statement Sunday that its air force didn't carry out any airstrikes in the city Saturday.

The secretary-general also decried the large-scale violence and casualties in the western region of Darfur, which has experienced some of the worst fighting in the on-going conflict, Haq said in a statement.

"There is an utter disregard for humanitarian and human rights law that is dangerous and disturbing," Guterres said.

U.N. officials have said the violence in the region has recently taken on an ethnic dimension, with the RSF and Arab militias reportedly targeting non-Arab tribes in Darfur, a sprawling region consisting of five provinces.

## CM tweets Govt. of Balochistan all set to introduce Green Bus Service

**Independent Report**  
**QUETTA:** The Government of Balochistan is all set to introduce the long-awaited and much-needed Green Bus Service in Quetta.

The trial operation of the Green Bus Service would kick off on July 13, and the full-scale operation would be inaugurated on July 17.

This was announced by the Chief Minister, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo in a tweet on his social media account, Twitter on Sunday.

He said that after dedicated efforts, we are delighted to bring the long-awaited and much-needed

quality public transport system to Quetta.

The inauguration ceremony would be graced by a member of the general public who actively utilizes public transportation.

In his tweet, the Chief Minister described the launch of Green Bus Service as a great news for the citizens of Quetta especially students.

Moreover, he said that the elderly women, children and students would benefit from the facility. He mentioned that the Green Bus Service project was delayed for long time. However, by the grace of Allah, it is going to be functional, he added.



**KARACHI:** Governor Sindh, Kamran Iqbal, presenting shield to Ignazio Cassis, Swiss Foreign Minister during meeting held at Governor House in Karachi.

## PM, FM to address inaugural session of Gandhara symposium

**ISLAMABAD (APP):** Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will address the inaugural session of a three-day Gandhara symposium, being held here from July 11 to July 13.

The symposium titled "Cultural Diplomacy: Reviving Gandhara Civilization and Buddhist Heritage in Pakistan", is being held under the prime minister's vision of interfaith harmony, aiming to raise global awareness about the historical and cultural significance of the Gandhara civilization and Buddhist heritage in Pakistan.

Chairman, Prime Minister's Task Force on Gandhara Tourism Dr.

Ramesh Kumar Vankwani and Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Senator Talha Mehmood will also address its different sessions, besides keynote by different foreign and local dignitaries, said a press release issued here Sunday.

The delegates will also call on President Dr Arif Alvi.

The symposium is jointly organized by PM's Task Force on Gandhara Tourism, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), the National Heritage and Culture Division and Archeology Departments of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

## Qambrani road bike snatching: Zia for arrest of killers within 24 hours

**Independent Report**  
**QUETTA:** The Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove has taken serious notice of the brutal killing of a father and his son during the motorcycle snatching incident on Qambrani road on Sunday and directed the Secretary Home to make arrests of those involved in it.

In an official letter to the Secretary Home, the Provincial Minister directed to arrest the killers within 24 hours. If the criminals were not arrested within 24 hours, then he would take action on Monday (today), the Minister Home as-

serted.

Mir Ziaullah Langove said that no compromise would be made on the law and order situation. He said that the government pays salary to the police and other institutions to protect the life and property of the masses. He said that stern action would be taken in view of the deteriorating law and order.

Moreover, he strongly condemned the incident of killing and expressed deep grief and sorrow over it. He also asked the police and levies force to take steps as he can't see bloodshed in the province anymore.



**PESHAWAR:** Members of Minority Community are expressing solidarity with Muslims as they are holding protest demonstration against desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden, at Gor Kathri Park in Peshawar.

## Monsoon rains kill 9, injure 8 in 24 hours; death toll reaches 76

**Monitoring Desk**  
**ISLAMABAD:** NDMA says 31 children, 30 men, 15 women among those who have died due to rains in last fortnight.

Nine more people have died, and eight others were injured due to the monsoon rains in the last 24 hours, as per the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA).

Since June 25, the number of deaths from monsoon rains across the country has reached 76.

According to the NDMA, 31 children, 30 men and 15 women are among those who have died due to rains in the last fort-

night.

The highest number of deaths, 48, has been reported in Punjab.

Rains have also claimed 20 lives in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, five in Balochistan and three in Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Moreover, among the more than 130 people injured in rain-related incidents are 49 men, 38 women and 48 children, the authority says in a report.

So far, 78 houses have been damaged by the rains across the country, while there is a fear of urban flooding in different cities of the country due to torrential rains.



**LAHORE:** Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Religious Harmony Maulana Tahir Ashrafi addressing a seminar on Hazrat Usman Ghani (R.A) at Press Club

## May 9 mastermind advances his anti-state agenda through overseas proxies: Marriyum

**ISLAMABAD (APP):** Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Sunday castigated the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief for furthering his anti-state agenda through his "proxies and puppets" sitting abroad.

"Some elements have been engaged in anti-state activities and treason while sitting abroad, but it is the PTI chief who will be held responsible if any incident of political extremism strikes the country," the minister said in a news statement.

She said the relentless campaign of the PTI chief against the state has continued unabated, with only the faces involved being swapped out periodically. The reprehensible and shameless media campaign launched against the national institutions was a direct result of his malevolent planning and mindset, she added.

Marriyum emphasized that the "foreign agent" was afflicted with an incurable ailment, characterized by an insatiable desire to be in the limelight. He has been suffering from "FOMO" (Fear of Missing Out) syndrome following his ouster from power.

"This person is mentally sick and should be in a mental hospital," the minister said while lashing out at the PTI chief for resorting to unfounded accusations, mischief, and conspiracies against others.

She said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had already made it clear that propaganda against the state institutions would not be tolerated under any circumstances. The minister said Imran Khan sought another conspiracy to divert attention from his corruption trial had been commenced unearthing evidence.

## Three medical teams moved to Aranji

**Independent Report**  
**QUETTA:** Three medical teams have been moved to Aranji area of Wadh, Khuzdar after the gastro epidemic hit the area, on Sunday. According to the Director General Health Services, Dr. Noor Qazi, two medical teams have been dispatched to Aranji from Quetta while another moved to the area from Lasbela. All the medical teams are carrying the necessary medicines and facilities to treat the gastro patients in the affected areas. Moreover, a base camp has already been set up by the teaching hospital Khuzdar in Aranji. The DG Health Dr. Noor Qazi is personally supervising the situation of gastro outbreak in Khuzdar.

## Flour price continues to rise despite Chief Minister's notice

**Independent Report**  
**QUETTA:** The flour price continued to increase despite the notice taken by the Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo in this regard.

According to the market sources, an increase of Rs. 70 was recorded in the 20-kilogram bag. With this, the price of 20-KG bag has been increased to Rs. 1720. Previously, the bag of flour was being sold at Rs. 1650.

The market sources told that the price of flour has been increased for second time during last two weeks. Earlier, the bag of 20-KG flour was being sold at Rs. 1600 last month.

On the price increase, the flour mills owners association sources informed that the price has been increased due to shortage of the wheat and increase in its rates recently.

If we would get wheat at the government's rate, then we would be able to sell the flour at the prescribed rate, the sources of association told.

Needless to mention here is that the Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo had taken notice of the reports of increase in price of flour in Quetta city.

The Chief Minister had directed the district administration to ensure sale of flour at the prescribed



**QUETTA:** Activists of Balochistan National Social Forum hold a protest rally in favour of their demands.

## Fire erupts at Gujranwala oil refining unit

**GUJRANWALA (INP):** An oil refinery unit at Alipur Chattha has caught fire and a firefighting operation has been underway, sources said on Sunday.

Rescue teams rushed to the spot and initiated fire-fighting operation, sources said. According to preliminary reports five fire tenders of Rescue 1122 have been engaged in firefighting operation.

According to rescue sources, the fire ignited at the boiler and heating chamber of the oil refining unit.

"Around 25,000 litres of the crude stock has been present at the oil chamber of the refining unit," sources said.

Rescue sources said that the cause of the blaze could not be ascertained so far.

A fire broke out in an oil tanker near a plastic factory located in Gujranwala last month, severely injuring five individuals.

The incident occurred near the Mafi Wala Chowk - Gujranwala, where five employees of a plastic factory sustained injuries as a result of a fire that broke out in an oil tanker.

Sources said that the rescue teams controlled the fire with the assistance of six fire tenders.

## Chairman NDMA discusses disaster management coop. with Swiss Foreign Minister

**ISLAMABAD (APP):** Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik on Sunday held an interactive meeting with Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis to discuss key points related to disaster management and resilience upon his visit here to NDMA headquarters.

The meeting focused on various aspects of disaster preparedness and collaboration between the two countries in the field of disaster management, a news release said. The Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) emphasized the significance of local community engagement in order to enable disaster resilience.

He highlighted the unprecedented Floods 2022 emphasizing the need for an efficient Early Warning System (EWS) in place to mitigate the adverse impacts of such disasters.

He stressed the crucial role of disaster preparedness in Pakistan, stating that managing two simultaneous disasters can be a daunting task and have severe consequences. He apprised the Swiss delegation of inclusive and people-centric disaster preparedness system, mentioning three National Simulation Exercises (SimExs) conducted by NDMA to enhance disaster preparedness in Pakistan. The Chairman NDMA informed about the establishment of NEOC to generate National Common Operating Picture (NCOP) for all relevant stakeholders.

The meeting focused on various aspects of disaster preparedness and setting up NDMA's Think Tank, NIDM to collaborate with think tanks, NGOs, INGOS, academia, and industry stakeholders both domestically and globally to develop effective policy recommendations and reduce disaster risk. He underlined the importance of reaching out to regional universities for knowledge sharing and capacity building. Swiss Foreign Minister, Ignazio Cassis, expressed his gratitude for MoU on disaster management cooperation between Switzerland and Pakistan. He highlighted the similarity in topography and challenges faced by both countries, and emphasized the importance of technological knowledge in dealing with complex disaster management challenges.

## President directs SLICP to improve policy on pre-insurance medical tests

**ISLAMABAD (APP):** President Dr Arif Alvi has directed the State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan (SLICP) to improve its policy on medical tests before the issuance of Life Insurance policies to prospective policyholders.

He asked SLICP to constitute a panel of doctors which should suggest as to what were the most prevalent and common diseases in Pakistan and what tests should be conducted before the issuance of the policy.

The president gave these orders in view of the fact that a number of representations were being filed with him by the insurance companies as well as citizens in cases where insurance companies were denying the payment of death insurance claims to family members of the insured policyholders on the ground that they had willfully hidden ailments at the time of obtaining the policy, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release on Sunday.

The payments were being refused despite the fact that the policies had been issued after the policyholders had been de-

clared medically fit by the authorized medical officers as well as the field officers of the insurance companies.

The president issued directives while rejecting two separate representations filed by SLICP against the decisions of the Wafaqi Mohtasib (WM) directing it to pay Rs 3.68 million to the family members of two policyholders to whom SLICP had denied payment on account of them hiding pre-insurance ailments.

As per details, Muhammad Yousof and Abida Bibi had obtained life insurance policies from SLICP for the sums assured of Rs 3,485,000 and Rs 200,000 respectively.

After their deaths, their family members approached SLICP for the payment of insurance claims but SLICP refused to pay them the respective amounts on the ground that they were patients of diseases, such as Hepatitis C, chronic kidney disease, heart condition and hypertension and they did not disclose the existence of these ailments before SLICP.

Feeling aggrieved, the

family members separately filed complaints with the Wafaqi Mohtasib, that passed the orders in their favour. SLICP, then filed representations with the President, which were rejected.

The president in his decision observed that the two policyholders were declared medically fit by the concerned medical officers as well as the field officers of SLICP who stated that they knew the policyholders for a number of years.

He noted that pre-insurance ailments could easily be diagnosed and detected by the medical officers as the services of these officers were arranged to examine policyholders prior to the issuance of policies.

He maintained that SLICP could not take the plea of pre-insurance ailments to deny payments as under Contracts Act 1872, where the consent was caused by misrepresentation or fraudulent means, the contract was not voidable if the party whose consent was so caused had the means of discovering the truth with ordinary diligence.



**TANDO MUHAMMAD KHAN:** Syed Naveed Qamar, Federal Minister for Commerce Visited H/P Bund and issued directive regarding repair and maintenance of H/P Mulaktiyar Bund Bulri Shah Karim.

## Ashrafi terms interfaith dialogue essential in current times

**LAHORE (APP):** Pakistan Ulema Council Chairman and Prime Minister's Special Representative on Interfaith Harmony and Middle East, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, on Sunday strongly condemned the recent incident of Quran burning in Sweden.

Addressing a seminar, held here in Lahore Press Club in honor of the martyrdom of Hazrat Usman Ghani (RA), he emphasized the urgent need for interfaith dialogue and global legislation against blasphemy or desecration of any celestial religion or scripture.

The event was attended by distinguished scholars including Allama Abdul Haq Mujahid, Maulana Muhammad Rafiq Jami, Maulana Asad Zakaria Qasmi, Maulana Nauman Hashir, Maulana Muhammad Shafi Qasmi,

Maulana Assadullah Farooq, Allama Zubair Abid, Maulana Islam Siddiqui, Qari Abdul Hakeem Athar, Allama Tahir Hassan, Maulana Muhammad Ashfaq Pitafi, Maulana Aziz Akbar Qasmi, Mufti Falk Sher, Mufti Syed Naseem-ul-Islam, Mufti Rehmat Din, Qari Abdul Majid Haqqani, Qari Kifayatullah, Maulana Abdul Jabar, Qari Muhammad Islam Qadri, Maulana Qari Mubashir Rahimi, Maulana Abdul Ghaffar Farooqi, and Maulana Nasir Haqqani.

Ashrafi highlighted that the teachings of the Holy Quran and the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) promote interfaith dialogue.

He expressed gratitude towards Pope Francis, Christian leaders, and leaders of other non-Muslim

faiths in Sweden for their condemnation of the Quran burning incidents.

He further affirmed the Pakistan Ulema Council's full support for the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and its agreements under the leadership of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

He urged the government to take immediate action against individuals involved in promoting campaigns against the armed forces and the nation.

He demanded swift justice for the perpetrators of the May 9 incidents and the release of innocent individuals who have been detained without evidence.

He emphasized that extremist and foreign ideologies had caused the most damage to Islam and Muslims.

## Iran deports another 35 illegal Pak migrants

**CHAGAI (INP):** Iranian border officials on Sunday deported another 35 Pakistani emigrants who had illegally entered the neighbouring country.

Pakistan's border authorities said that citizens deported from Iran have been handed over the detained persons to the Federal Investigation Agency's anti-human trafficking cell.

"The deportees were intending to illegally immigrate to European countries via Iran," Pakistan's border officials said. People from here used to cross into Iran in the hope to illegally emigrate to Europe in search of greener pastures. The issue of illegal immigrants has highlighted on global level with recent boat sinking incident near the coast of Greece, in which several Pakistani nationals have reported died. At least 78 people were drowned when the ill-fated boat with reportedly 400 to 750 people onboard sank in the Mediterranean Sea near the Greek coast.



**PESHAWAR:** Awami National Party (ANP) Leader, Haider Hoti addressing during the public gathering meeting to pay rich tribute to Haroon Bilour Shaheed for his services he rendered for Peshawarites.

## Qureshi terms Ahsan's statement about China, CPEC irresponsible

**Says under PTI govt implementation of various projects shows Pakistan's commitment to CPEC**

**ISLAMABAD (INP):** Vice Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Shah Mehmood Qureshi has termed the statement of PML-N leader and Minister Planning Ahsan Iqbal pertaining to China and CPEC as unfortunate and irresponsible.

In a statement issued on Sunday, he said that the insinuation that our iron brother would interfere in our domestic affairs was baffling and insulting.

Shah Mehmood said that with PTI, there has always been strong consensus on taking CPEC forward, and under Imran Khan's leadership they successfully implemented the important projects, deep-

ening Pakistan's commitment to CPEC under the PTI government.

Faisalabad Rashakai Industrial zones were made operational during PTI government and the Dhabaji Industrial zone was finalised, which was under construction, he revealed.

Similarly, PTI Vice Chairman said that IT Science and Technology and Agriculture - Three new joint working groups negotiated and added in second phase of CPEC.

He recalled that all power plants under construction were completed; Power generation projects were completed and added to transmission project.



**QUETTA:** Political Secretary of Balochistan Chief Minister, Malik Khuda Bakhsh Lango and Mir Attaullah Lango talking regarding tribal affairs