

# Independent

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RAWALPINDI: Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir presiding over 258th Corps Commanders' Conference (CCC) held at the General Headquarters.

## COAS presides over 258th Corps Commanders' Conference Sanctuaries, liberty for TTP in neighbouring country impacting Pak security: Army top brass

We must always remain prepared to guard against any threat says COAS; Commanders resolve to provide all possible support for economic revival

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Corps Commanders' Conference (CCC) on Monday noted that "the sanctuaries and liberty of action available to the terrorists of proscribed TTP (Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan) and other groups of that ilk in a neighbouring country and availability of the latest

weapons to the terrorists" were major reasons impacting security of Pakistan.

The 258th CCC, presided over by Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir here at the General Headquarters, was given a detailed briefing about the prevailing internal security environment, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

The forum paid rich tribute to the supreme sacrifices persistently being offered by the valiant sol-

diers in the defence of their motherland against the threat of terrorism.

It also deliberated in detail upon the operational preparedness and training aspects of the army.

The COAS, on the occasion, said, "Objective training remains the hallmark of our professionalism and we must always remain prepared to guard against any threat to our national security."

The forum was also apprised about the government's economic re-

vision plan and role of the Pakistan Army in uplifting agriculture, information technology, mining and mineral, and defence production sectors under the ambit of Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC).

The participants vowed to fully support the strategic initiatives planned by the Government of Pakistan for the revival of the economy by providing all possible technical and management support for the overall good of the people of Pakistan.

## Balochistan LG's amended draft law presented in BA; handed over to standing committee

Form committee of parliamentary leaders to resolve issues of medical teachers and law & order

### Independent Report

QUETTA: The session of Balochistan Assembly began with the Speaker Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali in the chair here on Monday. In the session, the draft of the amended law of Balochistan Local Government was tabled in the provincial assembly.

The Parliamentary Secretary Khalil George presented the draft law of the Local Government, which was referred to the concerned standing committee for review and approval.

Similarly, the Parliamentary Secretary Khalil George also tabled the draft law of the use of Balochistan Plastic Shopping bags in the house.

The draft law of the use of plastic shopping bags was approved by the house.

Meanwhile, an adjourn-

ment motion was also tabled about the incidents of terrorism in Harnai and Zhob districts. The motion was tabled by the member of provincial assembly belonging to Pashtoonkhw Milli Awami Party (PKMAP), Nasrullah Zairay. The motion was adopted for discussion in the next sitting of the ongoing assembly session i.e., on July 20.

Earlier, the leader of Opposition Malik Sikandar Advocate raised the issue of making BDA employees permanent and demanded of the government to take steps in this regard.

The Speaker ruled that the issue of making employees of BDA permanent should be included in the cabinet meeting. He also gave ruling about extension in contract of the PPHI employees. Similarly, he also directed to form a com-

mittee of the parliamentary leaders to resolve the issues of medical teachers association and law and order.

A parliamentary committee was also formed for holding negotiations with those protesting outside the assembly including the medical teachers.

Earlier, on a point of order, the parliamentary leader of Awami National Party, Asghar Khan Achakzai raised the issue of law and order in Harnai and Zhob. He also urged to form a committee to resolve the issues of law and order. Later, the parliamentary leader of BNP, Malik Naseer Shahwani also diverted the attention of the House towards the tense situation in Wadh.

Meanwhile, the question hour and call attention notice were deferred due to the absence of concerned provincial ministers.

## PM thanks Sri Lanka for helping clinch IMF deal

ISLAMABAD (Online): Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif has telephoned Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe and expressed his gratitude to him in supporting and helping Pakistan to reach an agreement with IMF.

PM said "you played role of friend and well wisher of Pakistan and I thank you on behalf of people of Pakistan. Pakistan and Sri Lanka are close and trusted friends. We pay

tribute to the role of Sri Lanka for regional development and peace.

He hoped Pakistan and Sri Lanka will soon come out of whirlpool of the prevailing economic difficulties. Pakistan is our very close friend. Helping friends is friendship.

Sri Lankan president lauded the efforts of PM Sheba Sharif in difficult times and congratulated in regard to IMF agreement.

## Govt seeks dismissal of petitions challenging military court trials

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Government on Monday prayed the Supreme Court to dismiss petitions seeking to challenge trials of civilians accused of various offences emanating from the events of May 9.

The government, in its concise statement, stated that violence against military and vandalism of army installations was a direct attack on the national security of Pakistan, and was, therefore, prejudicial to security, interests and defence of Pakistan.

It said the May 9 events, which were neither localised nor isolated, indicated a premeditated and intentional attempt to undermine the country's armed forces and inhibit its internal security.

The total damage incurred on the day was Rs 2,539.19 million, including a loss of Rs 1,982.95 million to military establishments, equipment and vehicles, the government added.

It further stated that while some of the first in-

formation reports (FIRs) registered against the suspects did not explicitly mention provisions of the Army Act, the Supreme Court had previously held that the contents of the FIR and not the mentioning of a particular statutory provision determined the nature of the offences made out.

The federal government further argued that the petitions against the military trial of civilians were not maintainable before the apex court in its original jurisdiction under Article 184(3) of the Constitution. Article 184(3) of the Constitution sets out the SC's original jurisdiction and enables it to assume jurisdiction in matters involving a question of public importance with reference to the enforcement of any of the fundamental rights of Pakistan's citizens, it added.

The government said that the challenges raised in the plea could only be heard by the high courts in their original constitutional jurisdiction under Article 199.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Narcotics Control, Nawabzada Shahzain Bugti calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## Central Rue-e-Hilal Committee to meet in Quetta today

### Independent Report

QUETTA: The central Rue-e-Hilal Committee is scheduled to meet for sighting of the moon of Muharramul Haram in Quetta today (Tuesday) evening. The chairman central Rue-e-Hilal Committee, Maulana Abdul Khair Azad would chair the meeting slated to be held at the DC office complex.

He will lead the discussions and deliberations to determine the official sighting of the moon.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has released its forecast regarding the sighting of the moon for the Islamic month of Muharram 1445 Hijri.

According to the Climate Data Processing Center of the PMD, the moon of Muharram is expected to be sighted on Tuesday, July 18 (29th of Zilhaj).

## Marriyum Aurangzeb says Masses bearing brunt of economic destruction brought by 'project Imran'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Monday said the present government had saved the country from default by addressing the economic challenges deliberately created by the previous regime of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

"Today, the project Imran has become a source of embarrassment for even those who had brought him to power as the masses are bearing the brunt of his 44-month-long economic destruction," the minister said while addressing a news conference.



"The PTI chief has crossed all limits in his enmity towards the country," she said while lauding the leadership and the vision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif who had not only saved the country from default, but also charted the country on the path of progress.

At the outset of press conference, she said the incumbent coalition government took many important steps in 14 months to undo the devastation caused by the four-year misrule of the inefficient and incompetent rulers.

The PTI chief's 44-month reign was a period of economic destruction, inflation, theft, loot and plunder, she added.

## CJ BHC orders immediate transfer and postings of judicial officers

### Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Justice Balochistan High Court (BHC) has ordered immediate transfers and postings of the judicial officers in view of public interest and requirements of the service.

According to a notification issued here on Monday, the District and Session Judge Loralai, Tahir Humayun has been posted as District and Session Judge, Khuzdar.

The District and Session Judge Khuzdar, Muhammad Anwar Muhammad Shahihs has been transferred and posted as District and Session Judge Dera Murad Jamali.

## ECP begins delimitation for Quetta ahead of LG polls

QUETTA (INP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) commenced the delimitation process for constituencies in Quetta, marking the beginning of preparations for the local bus transport project after the issuance of health cards with the efforts of the team of Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo and the members of a coalition government.

These objections will be reviewed and addressed on September 7, leading to final decisions being made on September 10.



QUETTA: MPA Asghar Khan Achakzai, Mir Arif Jan Muhammadhassani, Malik Sikandar Advocate, Malik Naseer Ahmed Shahwani and Nasrullah Zarey expressing their views on point of order during Balochistan Assembly session chaired by Speaker Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali

## Provision of basic facilities of life in backward areas top priority, states Governor Kakar

### Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has categorically stated that it is our top priority to provide basic facilities of life to the backward areas of province.

He also assured that concrete steps would be taken to provide all basic amenities to the people of Tehsil Saranan, Union Council Ajram at their doorstep.

These views were expressed by the Governor while speaking to an Awami Jirga in Tehsil Saranan, Union Council Ajram, on Monday.

The Jirga was arranged by Malik Haji Malik Sargarh and Kalimullah Kakar. Addressing the Jirga, Governor maintained that Ajram is a backward and barren area which lacks education, health, clean drinking water, gas and road facilities.

He said that people of the area are facing numerous problems due to lack of basic amenities of life. The Governor assured that the steps would be taken to meet shortage of the teaches in educational institutions of Ajram.

He said that it is very necessary to provide basic facilities to the people so that they may take wholehearted part in development and prosperity of the province.

Earlier, the tribal elders and political workers apprised the issues being confronted by the people of area. On this, the Governor assured his every possible cooperation for resolving the issues on permanent basis.

## First-class Green Bus service finally launched in Quetta

Pride of performance award holder oil tanker driver Faisal Baloch inaugurates Green Bus service

### Independent Report

QUETTA: The first-ever first-class public transport i.e., Green Bus Service was finally launched in the provincial metropolis on Monday.

The pride of performance award holder oil tanker driver, Sher Ahmed alias Faisal Baloch formally inaugurated the Green Bus Service by cutting a ribbon at the inauguration ceremony held in the premises of Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUITEMS) Takatu campus, Baleli.

Among the prominent personalities present at the inauguration of Green Bus Service were the Parliamen-



tary Secretary for Transport, Malik Naeem Khan Bazzari, spokesman of Chief Minister, Babar Yousafzai, Coordinator, Muhammad Bilal Khan Kakar, Chief Secretary, Abdul Aziz Uqaili, Secretary Transport, Muhammad Aslam Baloch, other secretaries of differ-

ent provincial government departments, administrative officials, vice chancellor of BUITEMS, Professor Dr. Khalid Hafeez, senior faculty members of the BUITEMS, SSP Traffic, Behram Khan Mandokhail, DGPR, Kamran Asad, students and other citizens.



QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar addressing Awami Jirga at Tehsil Saranan Union Council Ajram

## Registered voters cross 126m figure

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Monday issued a report that revealed the number of registered voters in the country had reached over 126 million, as of June 30, 2023. The ECP also released the percentage of voters in terms of age, according to which, the highest number of voters remained within the age group of 26 to 35 years.

According to the report, the ratio of male and female voters in Pakistan stood at 54.02 per cent and 45.98 per cent respectively.

The total number of registered voters in Islamabad was over one million while Punjab topped with 71.60 million voters.

The number of registered voters in Balochistan is over 5.27 million of which 2.96 million are male and 2.31 million are female. The number of registered voters in KP is over 21.62 million of which 11.79 million are male while 9.82 million are female.

According to the report, the ratio of male and female voters in Pakistan stood at 54.02 per cent and 45.98 per cent respectively.

## Pervez Khattak forms 'PTI Parliamentarians'

PESHAWAR (INP): Former prime minister Imran Khan's aide Pervez Khattak has formed a new party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Parliamentarians, days after being thrown out of PTI.

According to media reports, former Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister Mahmood Khan and ex-lawmakers Shaukat Ali and Syed Muhammad Ishtiaq Umar are among 57 ex-assembly members who have joined the party.

## Green bus service, a continuation of people-friendly initiatives of govt: Farah

QUETTA (APP): The Spokesperson of the Balochistan government Farah Azeem Shah on Monday said that the establishment of the green bus service was a continuation of the people-friendly initiatives of Chief Minister (CM) Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo. Talking to APP, she said, "Starting the green bus

service will make it easier for the people of all age groups especially, women, students, and senior citizens, to reach work timely with the provision of convenient travel facilities." "Quetta's residents have welcomed the starting of a modern air-conditioned bus service to reduce traffic pressure in the city, which is a sign of confidence in the policies of the people-friendly government," Farah Azeem Shah said. "A large number of people will directly benefit from the state-owned public bus transport project after the issuance of health cards with the efforts of the team of Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo and the members of a coalition government."

Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

**Power price hike**

Pakistan's business community is dismayed over yet another increase of Rs4.94 per unit in electricity prices. The new hike pushes the base unit power tariff from Rs24.82 to Rs29.78. Businesses are worried that the fresh hike will adversely hit their competitiveness by spiking their costs, making them a lot more expensive both for domestic consumers and foreign buyers. With the economy reeling because of the balance-of-payments crisis, high energy prices and soaring inflation, several industries have shut down or slashed production to reduce costs.

The expected recovery in manufacturing after the IMF-mandated tariff increase may remain elusive at least in the near term. It is a dilemma for the government. On the one hand, it has to meet the conditions of the new, short-term \$3bn IMF programme needed to avert default and improve Pakistan's debt repayment capacity over the next several months. On the other, it is under tremendous pressure to revive industrial activity for economic growth and job creation.

The Stand-by Arrangement stipulation to produce a primary budget surplus of 0.4pc this financial year has restricted fiscal space as well as the government's ability to continue financing massive power tariff price losses beyond a specific threshold to prevent power sector debt from increasing more rapidly than it already is. Indeed, the business community has a point when it holds successive governments' failure to execute long-standing politically unpopular and tough structural reforms responsible for Pakistan's economic predicament. For example, we have increased power tariffs multiple times over the last several years but still cannot contain the growth in circular debt. It is because no government has had the political will to fix the distribution losses, recover bills from powerful defaulters and control theft.

Businesses are spot on when they emphasise that we seem content with managing the symptoms rather than addressing the causes of the ailment. The increase in power tariffs will not only hurt businesses but also every citizen as electricity becomes more unaffordable and the hike unleashes a new round of inflation.

The question is, what other options did the government have? Many. For starters, it could have designed a framework to fix the deep-rooted energy sector to cut losses, taxed untaxed sectors — real estate, retail and agriculture — to bridge the fiscal gap, and launched a credible privatisation plan to offload loss-making public sector businesses like PIA to reduce pressure on the budget. But it didn't. That shows the weak resolve of our politicians and policymakers to stick to reforms. No wonder the IMF Board has communicated its concerns over Pakistan's poor track record in fulfilling its commitments to the Fund, and advised the authorities to complete the new programme. As the lender has warned, this is Islamabad's last chance to improve its poor track record on reforms.

**Ranking Karachi**



**Dr Noman Ahmed**

The Economist Intelligence Unit's rating of Karachi as one of the world's least livable cities is not surprising. Five categories were reviewed to arrive at this conclusion: stability, healthcare, education, culture and environment, and infrastructure. Karachi's ranking was an abysmal 169<sup>th</sup> out of a total of 173 cities.

Karachi may be Pakistan's largest city, but it has an uneasy existence in this context. It comprises a third of the total population of Sindh. The bulk of monetary resources and revenues originate in Karachi. In order to benefit economically, successive rulers have worked out controversial administrative arrangements to deprive Karachi of self-governing options.

After the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 2010, Sindh's chief minister and cabinet have acted like the mayor, deciding on almost every development and management prerogative — from garbage collection to running public transport. City inhabitants have hardly any say in decision-making that is pertinent to their daily lives.

Karachi's political affairs are complex. It may appear that it is political groups and parties and the military and civilian establishment that call the shots. In reality, there are many more godfathers. Formal and informal developers ensure that whatever they need to keep their businesses going is made available without interruption. So we see unabated land supply for investment, albeit at the cost of farmlands, or-

chards and dwellings as indigenous settlements are uprooted and people evicted from planned localities and katchi abadis.

While a few thousand investors accrue exponential profits, millions of people see their lives altered for the worse. Realtors are ably assisted by the city administration, professional engineers, architects, contractors and service providers. Utility agencies bend the rules to extend their services to their schemes.

People in central city neighbourhoods are affected by erratic water supply while some of the remote real estate developments along the M-9 Motorway have no problem in receiving piped water supply.

In public transport, the old-fashioned transporters who ran buses and minibuses are now being replaced by trading enterprises that procure expensive buses and hardware for visibility on the city streets.

Officialdom claims that the bus rapid transit system will revolutionise city mobility, but the reality is otherwise. Even if all seven BRT lines were operational, they would cater to only nine per cent of total passenger trips at a hefty cost of over Rs170 billion.

In fact, BRT benefits large consulting firms, civil and other contractors, suppliers, service providers, etc. Ordinary citizens, especially along University Road and allied locations, are braving the inconvenience caused due to work on the BRT, which will significantly reduce active road space for all manner of vehicles.

Given that thousands of motorcycles and cars are registered every day and carry millions of commuters, how can one justify the exclusive right of way for BRTs ferrying a few thousand? Karachi's roads are in a state of disrepair, with vehicles and passengers facing huge

problems. Commuters frequently display road rage, frustration and helplessness.

Karachi has an 'elected' mayor, town council chairmen, union committee chairmen, councillors and other elected representatives who must operate under a legal regime that empowers them. If they are lucky, some funds will be granted to them to operate. These funds are expected to foot essential expenditure.

For management, repair and rehabilitation work, the local government entities will have to approach the provincial government. A familiar tug of war will begin between various tiers of government.

It is, however, possible that elected local entities take a different approach and change the situation to their as well as the city's advantage. Using the status of their elected office, councillors and UC chairs may consider reaching out to their respective constituents, listening to their problems, and engaging with them. These elected representatives can also liaise with civil society activists, public-spirited professionals, business and commerce leadership and academia to evolve a platform where core city matters can be debated.

To improve Karachi's livability, the administration, political elite and business leadership would have to evolve a consensus on core matters. Defining the metropolitan boundaries of the city, regulating the built environment, documenting and safeguarding heritage, repairing roads, engaging with communities for maintaining law and order, with the assistance of the agencies concerned, and improving water and air quality by controlling pollution can become the starting agenda for this broad-based conversation. — Courtesy Dawn

**White noise**



**Zarrar Khuhro**

Security at the White House tends to take its job pretty seriously, and so when a packet containing an unknown white powder was found somewhere in the White House, it was cause for serious alarm and led to a temporary evacuation. Could this be anthrax or some other biological agent? Had Putin finally had enough of the US arming Ukraine to the teeth and decided to poison Biden? After much scrambling and testing it turned out that the said white powder was in fact cocaine.

We don't know whose cocaine this was, as despite having round-the-clock surveillance and sweeping CCTV coverage (not the kind we have in our safe city projects) and DNA and fingerprint testing of the packet itself, Secret Service was unable to determine who had left the cocaine, which was reportedly found in a cubbyhole in the visitors' section which is usually frequented by tour groups.

Naturally, former US president Donald Trump wasted no time in declaring that it was 'obvious' that the drugs belonged to Joe Biden and/or his son Hunter Biden, both of whom are the former president's favourite targets.

Even if that were to be true it really wouldn't be all that unbelievable; a few years back the bathrooms in the UK Houses of Parliament were swabbed for cocaine and it turned out that cocaine had been snorted off the basins and toilet tops of 11 out of 12 bathrooms

tested in the parliamentary estate. These weren't publicly accessible bathrooms, and many of these could only be accessed if you had a designated parliamentary pass. As per Britain's Sunday Times, cocaine was also found "close to rooms used by the opposition Labour Party, as well as a sedate dining room in the House of Lords".

One bathroom that tested positive for cocaine was also rather close to then-prime minister Boris Johnson's office, which goes a long way in explaining the former British PM's antics, policies and actions. In any case, it does show you that lawmakers are also people, and given that in 2015 London sewers were found to contain the highest concentration of cocaine in all of Europe, the possibility of the members of the Houses of Parliament being coked out of their minds only shows how deeply in touch UK's parliamentarians are with the people they govern.

Buckingham Palace has also seen some cocaine use, though this isn't really linked to the royals but to legendary British actor Stephen Fry who, while admitting to a 15-year addiction, confessed to having snorted cocaine in the palace, the House of Commons, the House of Lords, Windsor Castle, Clarence House, Sandringham House, the BBC Television Centre and just about anywhere else he had been.

Politicians and heads of state doing drugs isn't anything new, but the absolute poster child for this sort of thing is none other than Toronto's former mayor Rob Ford. Rumours about his out-of-control drug habit had been doing the rounds for some time and some reporters were approached by an individual who offered to sell them a video of Ford smoking crack cocaine, with media outlet Gawker even setting up

a fund they named 'crackstarter' to raise money to buy the video. While Ford, already known for his drunken antics, originally denied the claim, the video of him smoking crack while discussing politics was soon made public, along with a photo of him posing with known gang members, one of whom was later shot dead on a Toronto street. Later, it emerged that the video was recorded and put on sale by none other than his smoking buddies, which just goes to prove that you really can't trust anyone.

When confronted by reporters about his lies and evasions, Ford re-plied that he had smoked crack "probably in one of my drunken stupors". And that he hadn't admitted to it under questioning because reporters had not asked the "correct questions". The usual round of apologies, promises and rehabilitation followed but Ford's antics continued, with more and more accounts and videos of his intoxicated behaviour emerging. Ford passed away at the age of 46 in 2016. Another politician who was partial to crack cocaine was former Washington, D.C. mayor Marion Barry. In 1990, Barry, who had been elected mayor thrice, was arrested for possession of crack after a sting operation by the FBI and local police; a video was recorded of him smoking the drug with a woman who had set him up in exchange for a reduction in her own previous drug-related sentence. Claiming to have overcome his 'personal adversities' after serving six months in prison, Barry re-entered politics and was elected mayor for an unprecedented fourth time, perhaps proving that voters respond well to an honest admission of human failures and also, that people love a good redemption story. — Courtesy Dawn

**Commerce News**

**Mishal, Organic Pak sign MOU to work on agro economy, climate change**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Organic Pakistan and Mishal Pakistan on Monday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), decided to work together to address critical issues related to agro-economy, climate change, and food security.

The collaboration of organizations will involve the exchange of updated and timely data, media training, capacity-building workshops, and the creation of knowledge resources to foster public discourse and develop key opinion-makers, said a press release issued here.

Organic Pakistan, a pioneering organization dedicated to promoting

organic agriculture and sustainable practices, and Mishal Pakistan, a leading institution in the development sector specializing in research and communication strategies, are thrilled to announce a collaborative partnership aimed at revolutionizing the agriculture landscape in Pakistan and enhancing the country's international rankings.

The MOU sets the framework for joint initiatives, including the development of key opinion-makers, advocacy campaigns, and the sharing of resources and expertise.

Both organizations are committed to creating knowledge resources through seminars,

interactive workshops, and thematic reports to promote public awareness and understanding of sustainable agriculture practices and related subjects.

As the Country Partner Institute of the New Economy and Societies Platform, World Economic Forum, Mishal Pakistan plays a pivotal role in measuring and improving Pakistan's global rankings on various indicators. The collaboration between Mishal Pakistan and Organic Pakistan will support the World Economic Forum's initiatives by providing essential data and narratives related to sustainable agriculture, urban farming, and other crucial areas.



**RAWALPINDI: A laborer cutting woods at Chakbeli Road.**

**Proposed Energy National Action Plan can help save \$ 6.4 bln annually: MD**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Underscoring the need for energy conservation in the country, Managing Director of National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (NEECA) Dr Sardar Mohazzam on Monday said that the proposed Energy National Action Plan (ENAP) could help save \$ 6.4 billion annually.

Out of total annual imports of \$ 80-82 billion, the share of energy stood at around \$ 27 billion and the Energy National Action Plan could reduce it by \$ 6.4 billion, he added.

The NEECA managing director was briefing media persons about key initiatives including National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Policy, 2023, National Energy Conservation Action Plan 2023-2030, Pakistan Energy Conservation Building Code 2023, Pakistan Energy Labels Regulations 2021, Minimum Energy Performance Standards for Electrical Appliances and Electric Vehicles Regulation. He said the NEECA Policy 2023 was approved in May this year, while the NEECA Board had also given its consent to the revision of Energy,

**Banking Mohtasib designate calls on finance minister**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Banking Mohtasib/Ombudsman (Designate), Sirajuddin Aziz called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar here Monday.

The minister greeted the guest and extended his best wishes to him, according to a statement issued by the finance ministry.

**PSX loses 25 points**

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Monday lost 25.37 points, a negative change of 0.06 per cent, closing at 45,042.61 points against 45,067.98 points the previous trading day. A total of 314,785,498 shares were traded during the day as compared to 267,514,280 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 6.770 billion against Rs 6.783 billion on the last trading day.



**ISLAMABAD: Mr. Sirajuddin Aziz, Banking Mohtasib/Ombudsman (Designate) called on Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar at Finance Division.**

**Domestic edible oil, ghee output grew by 12.75% and 10.44% in 11 months**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Domestic production of cooking oil, and vegetable ghee during the 11 months of the financial year that ended on June 30, 2023, increased by 12.57 per cent and 10.44 per cent respectively as compared to the output of the corresponding period of last year.

During the period from July-May, 2022-23 about 513,206 metric tons of edible oil were produced locally in order to fulfil the

**Gold rates increase Rs.1,600**

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs1,600 and was sold at Rs 214,800 on Monday against its sale at Rs 213,200 the previous day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs1,371 to Rs 184,156 from Rs 182,785 whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went up to Rs 168,810 from Rs 167,553, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

**SMEDA to organize webinar on July 19**

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) is going to organize a webinar on "How to sell on Daraz" for profitable business growth on July 19 (Wednesday). The session is being offered by SMEDA under National Business Development Programme (NBPD) for SMEs, to extend non-financial advisory services to small and medium businesses, according to a source in the authority.

**AEDB formally merged with PPIB**

ISLAMABAD (APP): "We are confident that this merger will pave the way to enhance operational efficiency and facilitation of investors by extending a true one-window facility for smooth and seamless development and processing of power projects of all technologies including Alternative and Renewable Energy (ARE) projects by PPIB as a one entity on behalf of the Government of Pakistan," it further said. Managing Director PPIB Shah Jahan Mirza said that the whole team is excited to take fresh responsibility as a challenge for achieving new horizons of excellence and fully poised to harness the indigenous.

**Pakistan' trade with Korea flourishes as exports doubled: Sung Jae Kim**

KARACHI (APP): The bilateral trade between Pakistan and Korea witnessed a significant boost with Pakistan's exports to Korea doubling to reach \$306 million in the previous year.

It was stated by Director General of Korea Trade Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA) in Karachi, Sung Jae Kim, during his visit to the Korangi Association of Trade and Industry (KATI), said a statement issued here on Monday.

Kim highlighted growing trade relations between the two countries and emphasized the need for further bolstering cooperation as well as technology transfer from

Korea to Pakistan. He noted that promising growth in trade and investment between Pakistan and Korea bodes well for strengthening bilateral relations and fostering economic growth in both nations.

Kim mentioned that Korean companies were working in Pakistan in fish food processing and chemical sectors while YouTubers from Korea were showcasing the beauty of Pakistan in the world.

He said that over 10 thousand Pakistanis were residing in Korea while there were opportunities of investment in Fisheries and Textile sectors in Korea available to Pakistanis.



**KARACHI: Women and children selecting and purchasing old toys at a roadside stall in Empress Market.**

**Zong 4G celebrates 15 years of pioneering excellence in Pakistan**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Zong 4G, Pakistan's leading telecom giant, marks a momentous milestone as it celebrates 15 years of unwavering excellence in the country's digital landscape. Guided by the motto "Let's Get Digital," Zong 4G has revolutionized the nation's connectivity through its widest 4G network and cutting-edge technology, leaving an indelible mark on Pakistan's technological future.

For over a decade and a half, Zong 4G has been at the forefront of technological advancement, pioneering the introduction of 3G and 4G networks and successfully testing 5G. The company's commitment to technological progress has transformed the way Pakistan connects and communicates, propelling the nation's digital revolution. Investing significantly in expanding its network infrastructure, Zong 4G has erected over 14,000 towers nationwide, extending its services to even the remotest corners of the country.

**Punjab Governor says:  
Govt determined to completely eradicate polio from the country**

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Dr. Christopher Elias, Head of Polio Oversight Board delegation called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman today at Governor House Lahore. Secretary Health Punjab Ali Jan, representatives of UNICEF and World Health Organization were also present. Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that the government of Pakistan under the leadership of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif is determined to completely eradicate polio from the country. He said that the efforts of caretaker chief minister Punjab,

Mohsin Naqvi and the team of health department to eradicate polio in Punjab province are commendable. Governor Punjab said that the polio workers who are working on the front line to eradicate the polio virus, including a large number of women, have rendered commendable services for the prevention of polio. He said that he is grateful to all global partners including Gates Foundation, UNICEF, World Health Organization and Rotary International for helping to eradicate polio. Governor Punjab said that eradication of polio is indispensable to give a healthy and safe future to our new generation. He said that the government is taking all possible



LAHORE: Dr. Christopher Elias, Head of Polio Oversight Board delegation in a group photo with Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman at Governor House.

**Punjab govt following zero tolerance policy to ensure peace during Muharram**

MULTAN (APP): The Punjab government has a zero-tolerance policy to ensure exemplary peace on the occasion of Muharram-ul-Harram. Caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi has formed a special cabinet committee for monitoring the law and order situation. Provincial Minister of Higher Education Mansoor Qadir said this while presiding over the review meeting of Muharram arrangements in South

Punjab. He said that the Punjab government wants the cooperation of scholars of all schools of thought for peace. The district administration has assigned full powers for peace. He expressed satisfaction over all arrangements made to maintain peace during Muharram in South Punjab. The minister while appreciating the mutual cooperation of the district administration and police, said that the issues could

be resolved easily with the best coordination. Provincial Minister for Health, Dr Javed Akram said that Muharram teaches us tolerance, patience and brotherhood. The government has united ulema of all schools of thought on one platform by promoting inter-faith harmony and all of them assured their cooperation. Provincial Minister for Information, Aamir Mir, said that we all have to play a key role.

**Naqvi expresses satisfaction over healthcare facilities being provided at RIC**

**Independent Report**  
RAWALPINDI: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi on Monday expressed satisfaction with the medical facilities being provided at Rawalpindi Institute of Cardiology (RIC). During his visit, the CM in detail inspected the hospital's emergency, CT scan, X-ray room, Fluoroscopic, and other departments of the institute. He directed the RIC administration to open the VIP ward for the general public and ensure the availability of medicines at the institute. The CM interacted

with the admitted patients and inquired about Angiography and Angioplasty treatment and other facilities being provided to them. The patients uttered pleasure over the treatment facilities at the RIC. On a Twitter handle, he said that state-of-the-art heart treatment facilities were provided to the patients at the RIC. During my recent visit to the Rawalpindi Institute of Cardiology, I was impressed by how effectively the management and doctors handled the large influx of patients.



RAWALPINDI: View of badly damaged vehicles struck by an out of control Dumper Truck near Lahore High Court Bench at Swan area in the outskirts of the city.

**Mother dies, 3 people injure in a car, m/c collision**

MANAWALA (Online): A mother died and 3 people including daughter and son were severely injured as a result of collision between motorcycle and car on Mananwala Nankana Road. A high speed bus went out of control and collided with a truck in Nankana Motorway M3 near Colony Canal. A person died while 11 people were severely injured.

**UoP's Department of Journalism plays key role in KP's uplift: Feroze**

PESHAWAR (APP): Journalism Bakht Zaman, Assistant Professor Journalism Syed Irfan Ashraf and others were also present on this occasion. The caretaker minister said that the profession of journalism plays a huge responsibility in the uplifting of society and the country. The caretaker setup is trying its best to promote peace, prosperity and development in the province without borrowing a single penny. We consider politics as worship, he added. On the occasion, the caretaker minister was given a detailed briefing on the various sections, affairs and performance of the journalism department.

**Two policemen injured during exchange of fire in Katcha area**

DG KHAN (APP): Two constables and an outlaw here on Monday got injured during exchange of fire between the accused and police in the Katcha area. Other unidentified accused succeeded to escape the scene by crossing the river, the police said. The police on tip-off condoned off the area to arrest the criminals. The exchange of fire continued for at least an hour, the police said. The injured policemen Constables Mushtaq and Qazi Shahbaz were immediately shifted to the hospital. The District Police Officer (DPO) Muzaffar garh termed the incident as a 'routine matter'.



MOHENJO DARO: Classical Dancer, Sheema Kirmani along with her team are visiting and expressed keen interest in the historical ruins of the World Heritage Monuments of Mohenjo Daro

**WWF President urges action on climate change**

LAHORE (Online): Climate change is no longer a future issue, we are experiencing it right now, said Adil Najam, President of WWF International, who is also a globally recognized academic and policy expert. He was addressing an invited talk on "Now or Never: The Urgent Need to Take Climate Action for a Sustainable Future" at GC University Lahore. Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Asghar Zaidi was also present. Adil Najam stated that it is high time we face

the realities of climate change and take bold, immediate actions to protect our only home, planet Earth. He also emphasized that humans, as a species, are very good at adaptation, and we should look at the climate change not only as a problem but also as an opportunity. He mentioned that while we may think globally about climate change, we need to act locally and see this as our individual responsibilities. He also raised his voice against the increasing use of plastic in human lives.

**KP minister directs to introduce online financial system in TEVTA**

PESHAWAR (Online): He issued these directives while presiding over a high-level meeting here in the headquarters of Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) on Monday. All directors and other concerned officers of the authority attended the meeting. During the meeting, the caretaker minister was given a detailed briefing regarding the overall performance, financial and administrative affairs, professional activities.

As incident was reported, rescue teams 1122 reached the scene and shifted the injured to hospital. The deceased was identified as 22 years old woman Rafiya Bibi. 2 years old girl Asifa and 4 years old son Zaigham and brother Wikran are included among the injured. The deceased in Bus accident was identified as 51 years old Mohammad Safer. 35 years old Abuzar Ghuffari, 25 years old Ramzan, 25 years old Shehbaz, 18 years old Shahzaib, 23 years old Mohammad Asif and other are included among the injured.

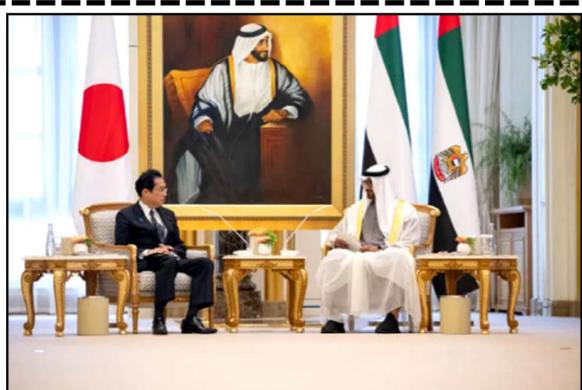
**International News**

**Xi tells ex-Philippine president Duterte to promote ties with China**

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIJING: China's President Xi Jinping told former Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte to continue to promote cooperation between the two countries, after bilateral relations cooled with Duterte's successor seeking closer ties with Washington. Ferdinand Marco Jr was elected as president for a six-year term in 2022, taking over from Duterte who had adopted a more pro-China stance. "I hope you will continue to play an important role in the friendly cooperation (between China and the Phil-

ippines)," state media cited Xi as saying during a meeting at the Diaoyutai state guest-house in Beijing on Monday. Under Marcos, relations between China and the Philippines have grown tense, with Manila pivoting back to its traditional ally, the United States. The Philippines and the U.S. reaffirmed a decades-old security alliance during a trip by Marcos to the U.S. in May, where he met with President Joe Biden, who said the U.S. commitment to defending its ally was "ironclad".

Washington has pledged to defend the Philippines, which allowed the U.S. access to four additional military bases this year, angering Beijing. Marcos also said granting U.S. access to the bases was a defensive step that would be "useful" if China attacked democratically governed Taiwan, which China claims as part of its territory. China has always insisted on being friendly with its neighbours, which it sees as its partners, Xi said, without commenting on the state of current bilateral ties.



Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and Emirati President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan meet at Qasr Al Watan in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

**Exclusive-USAID chief to announce over \$500 million in aid in visit to Ukraine**

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: U.S. aid chief Samantha Power is set to announce more than \$500 million in humanitarian assistance for Ukraine on Monday during a visit to the war-torn country, where the United Nations says some 17 million people need help following Russia's invasion. U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Administrator Power in Kyiv

will announce the assistance to respond to the needs of Ukrainians affected by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, according to an announcement shared in advance with Reuters. Tens of thousands of Ukrainian civilians and soldiers on both sides have been killed and millions have fled their homes since Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022, triggering Europe's

biggest land war since World War Two. The aid, which will be provided through the United Nations and other non-governmental organization partners, will increase support for those who have been displaced or otherwise affected by the war with emergency food assistance, health care and safe drinking water, among other assistance, according to the announcement.

**Japan's prime minister visits the UAE as part of a Gulf trip focused on energy and commerce**

**Monitoring Desk**  
DUBAI: Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida visited the United Arab Emirates on Monday as part of a swing through the Arab Gulf states focused on energy and commerce. He met with Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, the president of the UAE, which will be hosting the COP28 U.N. climate summit later this year. A joint statement said they were committed to "enhancing cooperation on climate ambition, decarbonization, and clean energy." Kishida visited Saudi Arabia over the weekend, where he met with Crown

Prince Mohammed bin Salman. The two launched a joint initiative aimed at promoting clean energy. He will visit gas-rich Qatar on Tuesday. Japan is the fifth-largest oil consumer in the world and relies on imports to meet around 97% of its demand. It imports more than 75% of its crude oil from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Japan and the UAE have pledged to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, and Saudi Arabia aims to do so by 2060. It's unclear how the two Gulf nations — which rely on massive oil exports — will reach those goals.



Rescuers search through the rubble of a collapsed five-story apartment building in Cairo, Egypt.

**A 5-story apartment building collapses in Cairo and kills at least 9 people**

**Monitoring Desk**  
CAIRO: A five-story apartment building collapsed Monday in the Egyptian capital of Cairo, leaving at least nine people dead, authorities said, as rescuers searched through the rubble. Building collapses are common in Egypt, where shoddy construction and a lack of maintenance are widespread in shantytowns, poor city neighborhoods and rural areas. The state-run MENA news agency reported that rescue teams recovered at least nine bodies from under the

rubble of the building in Cairo's neighborhood of Hadaeq el-Qubbah, roughly 2 miles (3.2 kilometers) from the city's center. Four survivors were also taken to a hospital and authorities evacuated a neighboring apartment building, MENA said. Following an initial inspection, Cairo's deputy governor, Hossam Fawzi, said the collapse was caused by one of the ground floor residents who removed a number of walls during earlier maintenance work. The man has been detained and will be investigated, he said.

**China's economy misses growth forecasts**

**Monitoring Desk**  
HONG KONG: China's economic growth missed forecasts in the second quarter of the year, adding to worries over surging youth unemployment and a weak property sector and raising the likelihood the government will double down on support for the faltering post COVID-19 recovery. The world's second largest economy grew at a 6.3% annual pace in the April-June quarter, much slower than the 7% plus growth analysts had forecast given the anemic pace of activity the year before.

**Erdogan says he believes Putin wants continuation of grain deal**

**Monitoring Desk**  
ISTANBUL: Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said on Monday that he believed Russian President Vladimir Putin wants the continuation of a deal allowing the export of Ukrainian grain through the Black Sea, after Moscow suspended its participation. Erdogan added that he hoped for progress on the issue after Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan and his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov talk on Monday. The grain deal, brokered by the United Nations and Turkey last

July, aimed to alleviate a global food crisis by allowing Ukrainian grain blocked by the Russia-Ukraine conflict to be exported safely. Russia suspended its participation in the deal on Monday, the Kremlin said, adding that the part of the agreement concerning Russia had not been implemented. "Despite the statement made today, I believe Russian President Putin wants the continuation of this humanitarian bridge," Erdogan said, adding that the two men would speak on Erdogan's return from his trip to Gulf countries on Wednesday.

**US special envoy Kerry holds talks in China aimed at reviving climate diplomacy**

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIJING: US climate envoy John Kerry held four hours of talks with his Chinese counterpart in Beijing on Monday, reviving stalled diplomacy on reducing planet-warming emissions. Climate talks between the two biggest greenhouse gas emitters came to a halt last year after Nancy Pelosi, then speaker of the US House of Representatives, enraged Beijing by visiting self-ruled Taiwan, which China considers to be part of its territory.



South Korea's President Yoon Suk Yeol (C) visits a village, where more than a third of houses were damaged in landslides and two people remain missing, in Yecheon.

**EU may update climate pledge to show faster progress on CO2 goals**

**Monitoring Desk**  
BRUSSELS: European Union countries are debating whether to update their climate pledge ahead of this year's COP28 summit, to show they expect to exceed their current goal for CO2 emission cuts, a draft document showed. The 27-country EU has one of the most ambitious climate targets among major economies - having agreed in law to cut its net greenhouse gas emissions by 55% by 2030 compared with 1990 levels. A draft document, seen by Reuters, said EU countries may notify the United Nations that they can reach a 57% emissions cut. The text was in brackets, indicating it is not yet

agreed by all countries. The overshoot would only happen if countries comply with recently-passed EU policies to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions causing climate change. They include obligations to expand renewable energy, and higher fees for companies that pollute. An updated pledge from Europe - the world's fourth-biggest emitter after China, the United States and India - could increase the pressure on other countries to improve their green goals ahead of this year's United Nations climate summit in November.

# Pakistan put on road to progress again: Ahsan

Says Shehbaz-led government saved country from default

NAROWAL (APP): Federal Minister for Planning and Development Prof. Ahsan Iqbal has said, "Today we have put Pakistan back in its place", as Pak Rupee is gaining strength, stock exchange is improving and country's economy is stabilising.

Addressing the opening ceremony of Nisar Fatima Auditorium, Jamia Masjid and Innovation Centre at the UET Narowal Campus on Monday, he said that on July 14, China made investment of \$3.5 billion in Chashma nuclear power plant, and billions of

dollars more investment would come to the country in the coming weeks.

He hoped that people would make a right decision in the next general election, and then Pakistan would be put on the road to development again.

Ahsan Iqbal said the UET Narowal was making a place for itself among the best universities of the world. Students would play a proactive role in the country's development after getting education from this university. He said that in the year 2009, he dreamed of setting up an

engineering university campus, which had been fulfilled today.

He said the government wanted the youth to excel in all spheres of education and that was why it was giving the brilliant students laptops. He said the UET Campus Narowal Innovation Centre had Rs1 billion, which would be spent on research and higher education of students.

Meanwhile Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal has said that working day and night under the leadership of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, the incumbent government saved the country from default and revived the development projects, which were stopped by the previous government.

Addressing a public gathering after laying the foundation-stone of Sialkot Cantt to Jassar Cantt Road at Phalora on late Sunday night, he said the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) had always accomplished development projects and tried its best to place the country in the list of developed countries.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman WAPDA, Lt. Gen. (R) Sajjad Ghani calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## Kaira stresses electoral reforms with consultation of all political parties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senior Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) leader Qamar Zaman Kaira Monday stressed for legislative election reforms soon after completing a comprehensive consultations with all political parties as any democratic system, without the sanctity of a ballot box could not deliver.

"It is a symbol of a vibrant democracy to move forward only after consultations and discussions", he said while talking to a Private news channel.

Replying a question, he said a politician should be appointed as caretaker

prime minister, adding, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has started consultations with allied parties on the selection of interim setup. He said that the prime minister would consult with the opposition leader after deliberations with coalition partners.

To another question, he replied that the government will hand over the reins to the interim rulers next month, before the completion of the assembly's tenure. To another question, he said the election reforms could be completed in a few days and that the election commission had started.

## QESCO says Around Rs. 543bn outstanding against all defaulters in province

QUETTA: The aggregate amount of the electricity utility bills and arrears against the agriculture defaulters have crossed the figure of Rs. 411 billion till June 2023 in the province.

According to the sources of QESCO, the total dues against the provincial government and its subsidiary departments are over Rs. 32 billion while it (government) has to pay the arrears of over Rs. 45 billion on account of the agriculture subsidy.

In addition to this,

over Rs. 1.72 billion are outstanding against the federal government and its departments. While the federal government has also to pay over Rs. 21 billion on account of the agriculture subsidy.

Similarly, an amount of Rs. 30 billion 70 crores is outstanding against the domestic, trade, commercial and private consumers in the province.

At the outset, around Rs. 543 billion are outstanding against all defaulters in the province, the QESCO sources informed.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Abdul Aziz Uqaili being briefed about under construction Gai Khan Chowk Flyover project

## NAB holds seminar with trainee Police officials

QUETTA (APP): The National Accountability Bureau (Balochistan) on Monday organized a seminar at Police Training College, Sariab Road.

The main objective of the seminar titled "Eradication of Corruption is must for a prosperous Pakistan" was to spread awareness and anti-corruption principles among the participants of the Police Training College.

Deputy Commandant Aurangzeb represented the Police Training College whereas NAB Balochistan was represented by Direc-

tor Dr Muhammad Rashad and Deputy Director Khurram Shahzad.

The participants of the seminar provided useful information about the negative impact of corruption on society and the steps taken so far in that regard to eradicate the menace. The speakers of the seminar also highlighted the practical ways the police could play in promoting a more transparent and responsible society.

A symbolic walk was organized in which trainees of the Police Training College participated.



QUETTA: A delegation led by provincial leader of Awami National Party Engr. Abdul Rasad Kakar meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

## PM issues directives for construction and repair of Dalbandin airport

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has issued standing directives to the concerned authorities for necessary construction and repair of the Dalbandin airport. The Prime Minister also thanked the Chairman Senate on diverting his attention towards the condition of Dalbandin airport.

According to the official sources, the Prime Minister has directed the concerned quarters to submit report after completing the construction and repair

work on the Dalbandin airport at the earliest.

He also directed the Civil Aviation Authority to restore the airport immediately after completing the necessary work.

It may be mentioned here that the Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani had diverted the attention of Prime Minister towards the deteriorated condition of the Dalbandin airport. The Prime Minister also thanked the Chairman Senate on diverting his attention towards the condition of Dalbandin airport.

## Talha emphasizes collaboration for national progress

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Senator Muhammad Talha Mahmood on Monday participated in the oath-taking ceremony of the recently elected Hazara Journalists Association.

The event, attended by journalists from Hazara and various parts of the country, aimed to promote welfare and prosperity among journalists based in Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

The Hazara Journalists Association's new professional panel, elected under the leadership of Syed Luqman Shah, took an oath to diligently serve the journalistic community in the

region. Representatives from other media organizations also attended the ceremony, further highlighting the spirit of cooperation and collaboration among various journalistic bodies.

During his address to the gathering, Senator Talha Mahmood praised journalists from all across Pakistan and emphasized equal respect for journalists in his constituency.

He assured the government's cooperation with the media for the betterment of the nation.

While acknowledging that he prefers to focus on his duties as Minister for Religious Affairs rather than frequent media appear-

ances, Senator Talha Mahmood highlighted his efforts in refunding more than four billion rupees to this year's Hajj pilgrims, indicating a cost-effective Hajj policy.

He emphasized the need to improve the country's situation and provide better opportunities for the people, thus discouraging emigration.

Recognizing the vital role of the media in shaping the nation's future, Senator Talha Mahmood stressed the importance of collaboration between all sectors, including the media, Parliament, and other institutions, to lead the country towards progress and prosperity.

## PM AJK says: European Union resolution criticizes human rights violations in India

MIRPUR (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq on Monday said that the resolution of the European Parliament condemning human rights violations in India, the AJK premier demanded the European countries link trade with India to the improvement of the human rights situation in the country.

He said that "India was an extremist state where religious minorities have been deprived of their basic human rights".

The AJK premier, while referring to continued bloodshed and violence in the Indian-occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir, said that India had been involved in massive human rights violations in the region. He said that the Kashmiri people have been the worst victims of India's fascism for the past several decades. He, however, maintained that after August 5, 2019, India has turned the occupied territory into a military garrison, where people live in a state of perpetual fear and anxiety. Terming India's 5th August action as a violation of the UNSC resolutions, the PM said that after stripping the region of its special status.

the world", PM emphatically said.

While welcoming the European Parliament for condemning human rights violations in India, the AJK premier demanded the European countries link trade with India to the improvement of the human rights situation in the country.

He said that "India was an extremist state where religious minorities have been deprived of their basic human rights".

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QUETTA: MoU signing ceremony between Balochistan Govt and Faisal movers, Chief Secretary Balochistan Abdul Aziz akeli, Provincial Minister for transport Malik Naeem Bazai are also present in ceremony

## PM briefed about hydro electric projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Monday held a meeting with Chairman Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) Lt General Sajjad Ghani and received briefing about the ongoing hydroelectric projects and the projects for producing energy at a lower cost.

During the meeting, he also briefed the PM about the pace of progress on all mega dam projects including Dasu, Diamer Bhasha and Mohmand dams.

He also apprised him about the effect of recent rains on the water reservoirs in the country.

## Security arrangements reviewed for Muharram in Sibi, Zhob

QUETTA: The security arrangements were reviewed for the upcoming month of Muharramul Haram in Sibi and Zhob districts on Monday.

While the Deputy Commissioner Sibi, Mansoor Ahmed Qazi presided over a meeting to review security and other related matters pertaining to the holy month in his district, a similar meeting was chaired by Deputy Commissioner Zhob, Muhammad Azeem Kakar in circuit House Zhob the same day. The administrative officers of the two districts as well as religious personalities and representatives of different departments participated in the meetings. The participants of meetings reviewed the security and other related arrangements made and being made for Muharramul Haram in the two districts.

It was stressed to ensure religious harmony besides maintaining law and order there.

## Two died after truck overturns

SHERANI (Online): Two people died and 4 were injured in a truck overturn. According to details, a truck loaded with onions overturned due to brake failure at Dhana Sar due to which 2 people died and 4 were injured. Victims were transferred to 1122 centers.

## Land transfer to army: LHC single bench order suspended

LAHORE (APP): A Lahore High Court (LHC) division bench on Monday suspended a single bench order that struck down a decision of the interim government to hand over 45,000 acres of land in three districts of Punjab to the army on a 20-year lease.

The division bench, headed by Justice Ali Baqar Najafi, passed the orders while hearing an intra-court appeal, filed by the Punjab government against the single bench decision. The court also issued notices to the respondents on the appeal and sought a reply.

The interim government, through the appeal, had pleaded with the court to set aside the single bench order. The government submitted that the project was

initiated by the previous elected government and not by the interim government. As per law, the interim government was empowered to implement or finalise any pending decision and policy of the previous government, it added. The government further contended that the court was not empowered to regulate agricultural policies. It submitted that the order of the single bench was not only in violation of the law but also had contradictions in it.

On June 22, a single bench had struck down the decision of the interim government to hand over 45,267 acres in Bhakkar, Khushab and Sahiwal districts of Punjab to the Pakistan Army for corporate farming.



QUETTA: Members of Harnai Awami Ittehad are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, outside Balochistan Assembly.

## Election on 2017 census unacceptable: MQM-P

KARACHI (INP): Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) on Monday came out strongly against the decision of the coalition government to hold elections on the basis of the old census.

Addressing a press conference, MQM-P convener Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui whose party is a stakeholder in the government said the population of Karachi is around 30 million, which was about 14.9 million in the 2017 census, and his party would not accept figures less than this.

The MQM-P leader vowed to resist the move after Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah announced that the government would not notify the recently concluded census as the results are not authentic and the Election Commission of Pakistan needs at least four months to complete the delimitation process. Under laws, the census is done after every 10 years, but the last one becomes controver-

sial, and it was decided to conduct a fresh exercise to address reservations and carry out a fresh delimitation process.

However, objections were raised to the enumeration by the Sindh government and MQM-P. Demanding to rectify the flaws in it, they refused to accept the results. MQM-P is a key coalition partner in the ruling alliance and had joined the government on certain conditions, including a transparent census.

Raising their reservations on the federal minister's statement, Siddiqui said that they had chosen the right path against injustices and tried in every situation to ensure peace in Karachi. "MQM-P is the representative party of the urban areas of Sindh, especially Karachi; the impression being spread by the MQM London rally seems to be a conspiracy. Siddiqui said that the assemblies and the government would end in August.



QUETTA: Transporters and Traders Leaders, Abdullah Kurd, Abdul Rahim Kakar, Mir Dolat Lehri and others addressing a joint press conference, at Quetta press club.

## Medical teachers stage sit-in outside BA

QUETTA: The medical teachers of Bolan Medical College and three other different colleges of the province took out protest rally and staged dharna outside the provincial assembly building on Monday.

The rally of medical teachers commenced from the BMC on Brewery road and reached the provincial assembly passing through different city roads.

They held protest demonstration and then staged sit-in to press the provincial government for acceptance of their demands.

They were also carrying the banners and plac-

ards inscribed with the slogans in favour of their demands.

They also chanted slogans in favour of their demands including promotion of the medical teachers, award of health professional allowance, increase budget of the medical colleges, besides other issues.

The medical teachers regretfully pointed out that they have been lodging protest for two months, but the government is not paying any heed towards their issues and demands.

They asserted that their protest would remain continued till acceptance of the demands.

## Quetta's dwellers prized Green Bus Service

QUETTA (APP): Residents of Quetta prized the Balochistan government's project of state-run 'Green Bus Service' to provide a decent transportation facility which would also reduce huge traffic congestion in the city.

Quetta city was in dire need of public transport facilities as most of the roads cannot sustain the pressure of traffic, leading to congestion and environmental problems, Aziz

Ullah Nasar said while talking to APP. The green bus service would provide decent transport facility to the locals and reduced the traffic congestion issue in Quetta which is getting worse with every coming day due to increasing population, he added. "Traffic jam is a big issue in Quetta where people waste hours due to rush in the morning, afternoon, and evening on the roads."

Aziz urged the provincial government to take maximum efforts to avoid traffic jams and other traffic problems in the city.

The Balochistan Government on Monday formally launched the 'Green Bus Service' project to provide the best and most affordable public transport to the commuters of Quetta.

The Green Buses would be run from Balali to Sariab in the first phase which would be expanded across the city.



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers Mir Naseebullah Marri, Abdul Khaliq Hazara, Haji Akbar Askani, Lala Rasheed, Malik Naeem Khan Bazai, Deputy Speaker Sardar Babar Khan Musakhail and MPA Mir Arif Jan Muhammadhassani talking during Balochistan Assembly session