

# Independent

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## Imran Khan to face trial in special court for hatching 'cypher conspiracy': Rana

Interior minister says Azam Khan's confessional statement is a charge sheet against former PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Interior Rana Sanaullah Khan on Wednesday said that the cypher was still in the possession of Imran Khan Niazi, who would remain "criminal" until it was recovered from him.

The reported statement of Azam Khan, former principal secretary to the prime minister, confirmed that he had handed over the cypher to the then prime minister, who told him next day it was lost, the minister said while addressing the press conference, flanked by Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Attaullah Tarar.

He said Azam Khan, in his statement, had clarified that when the then secretary foreign affairs brought the issue of cypher in his knowledge, and former foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi was also part & parcel of the whole planning to use it (cypher) against the national interests for personal and political gains.

The interior minister said a case would be registered against Imran Niazi and his accomplice Qureshi under the Official Secrets Act for making a classified document public. Eventually he would have to ap-

pear before the court as his case would be tried in the special court.

He said Azam Khan reportedly admitted that he had told Imran Niazi that using a classified document for political gains was a criminal act under the Official Secrets Act, but the then prime minister used the cypher to gain political mileage.

"That cypher is still in his custody and he will remain a criminal until he returns the classified document or it is recovered by an investigation agency from him," he added.

## President urges bureaucracy to promote good governance in public departments

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday urged the government officers to play their role in promotion of good governance in all public departments.

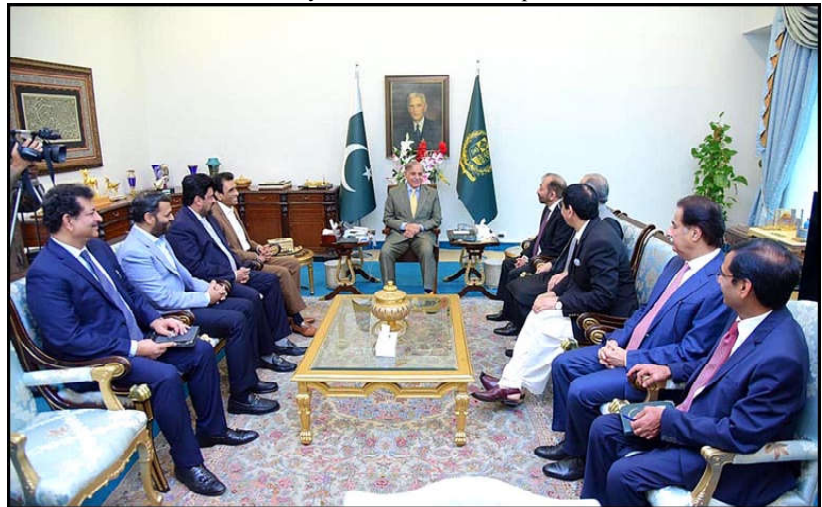
Besides improving service delivery, he said, the bureaucracy should also work for the country's development and welfare of the people with sincerity and hard work.

He was talking to the participants of 37th Mid-Career Management Course Quetta, who called on him here at the President House.

The president said the government authorities needed to take timely decisions to provide justice to the people. "Delay in decision making put negative impact on the service delivery and development of the country," he said.



Rescue 1122 carrying out rescue operations as wall collapse during heavy rains in Islamabad



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of MQM led by the Convener Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## PM, MQM hold discussion on formation of caretaker governments

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) led by the Convener Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif here on Wednesday and discussed in detail the matter of formation of caretaker governments besides overall current political situation in the country.

Federal Minister for Information Technology Syed Amin ul Haque, Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori, Dr Farooq Sattar and Mustafa Kamal were also part of the delegation.

Minister for Railways and Aviation Khawaja Saad Rafique and Minister for Economic Affairs Sardar Ayaz Sadiq were present in the meeting.

The meeting was held in connection with the prime minister's consultations with the allies with respect to formation of the caretaker governments. During the meeting, matter of the recent population census also came under discussion.

The delegation paid tributes to the prime minister on personally monitoring the federal government's ongoing projects in Karachi and ensuring speedy work on these projects on priority basis.

The MQM delegation also praised PM Shehbaz Sharif and his economic team's efforts for completing the agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

## Australian envoy calls on Info. Minister PML-N govt firmly believes in press freedom: Marriyum

ISLAMABAD (Online): Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan Neil Hawkins called on Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb in Islamabad on Wednesday and the two exchanged views on bilateral relations, economic stability and cooperation in the areas of film, art and culture.

Australian ambassador lauded the efforts of Pakistan government for stability of national economy and IMF agreement.

Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said Pakistan holds its relations with Australia in high esteem.

She went on to say the government took immediate and concrete steps for national economy in line with the PM Shehbaz Sharif vision. Positive results have started coming in national economy due to these steps. She also apprised Australian ambassador about newly established Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC).

She said this council will ensure consistency and effective implementation of policies for economic recovery. SIFC will work on high forum of decision making.

## Imran tenders apology in case of hurling threats against female judge

ISLAMABAD (Online): PTI chairman has tendered apology before the case in the court of judicial magistrate Malik Aman.

On the occasion chairman PTI came on rostrum and said "I established political party for the sake of supremacy of justice 27 years back. I have not broken even a flower pot so far. I had uttered these words in a demonstration. I went to court of judge Zeba Chaudhry to apologize. I tender apology if anyone has been hurt due to my statement."



WASHINGTON: Shazia Marri, Federal Minister PA&SS and Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme Presents Book titled 15 Years' Journey from Inception to a Globally Recognized Social Protection Vehicle' to Nicole Klingen, World Bank's Regional Head of Social Protection & Acting Director for Digital Development in Europe and Central Asia.

## 12 killed in wall collapse during heavy rains in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (INP): As many as 13 people were reportedly crushed to death in separate incidents of walls collapse in Islamabad on Wednesday due to heavy monsoon rains in the federal capital and Rawalpindi.

Torrential rains continue to lash the twin cities as the monsoon currents from the Arabian Sea intensified today as forecast by the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), with the highest, nearly 200 millimetres, rain fall in Rawalpindi.

Police said that 12 people were killed when the wall of an under-construction bridge came crashing down on them near Golra Mor, Peshawar Road in Islamabad.

They said the wall was 100-foot wide and 11-foot high, under which the labourers had set up a tent to live at the construction site.

The rescue teams reached the site of the incident as soon as they received the report, Rescue 1122 officials stated.

Police said that the rescue workers pulled bodies out from the wall's debris with the help of machines. Search for more people likely to be stuck under the rubble is underway, with four being rescued alive so far. Meanwhile, an 11-year-old girl was killed in a similar wall collapse incident in Mohammadi Town within the jurisdiction of Khana Police Station of Islamabad.

In a separate rain-related incident, several people were injured when two buses travelling via Islamabad-Peshawar Motorway barreled into each other after losing control due to a slippery road amid a downpour.

Rescue 1122 said that their teams are working to aid the injured while the

severely injured are being shifted to hospitals in Wah Cantt and Taxila.

As per Met Department, Shamsabad received up to 188 millimetres of rainfall. It poured up to 110 millimetres in Chaklala, 138 millimetres in Bokra, 102 millimetres in Golra, 98 millimetres at zero-point, 79 millimetres in Kachehri, 64 millimetres at Islamabad airport, and 44 millimetres in Saidpur.

The water level in Nullah Lai rose dangerously high, 14 feet near Katarian and 11 feet near Gawalmandi due to incessant rains, with army troops called in for rain emergency services.

Authorities rang sirens of threat to alert the residents in the surroundings and advised them to evacuate. Meanwhile, Rescue 1122 has also been alerted in Rawalpindi.



LAHORE: Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council and Special Representative of Prime Minister of Pakistan for Interfaith Harmony and Middle East Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi series of All Parties National Peace Seminar at Rahmani Islamic Center Model Town hand in hand for peace and unity on the occasion of Muharram.

## Nawaz was disqualified to pave way for Imran, claims Aleem Khan

ISLAMABAD (Online): Istehkam-i-Pakistan Party (IPP) president Abdul Aleem Khan has claimed that former prime minister Nawaz Sharif was disqualified to pave the way for PTI Chairman Imran Khan.

He made the remarks on private show 'Live with Adil Shahzeb' on Tuesday night. When asked by the host whether Nawaz was disqualified to bring Imran, Aleem said: "Yes, absolutely."

When pressed whether the "then-establishment" had brought it about, Aleem stated: "Several other people were involved in it but the establishment played its part too."

"We know that Jehangir Khan Tareen was disqualified so that Nawaz gets disqualified," he said, adding that Jehangir Tareen was also disqualified as a result of those manoeuvres.

Aleem Khan was appointed the president of the IPP — a splinter faction of PTI loyalists who coalesced around Jehangir Tareen in the wake of the May 9 violence.

## PM reiterates unflinching support to Kashmiris on Day of Accession to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday reiterated that without the just and peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute, South Asia would never be able to attain durable peace and unlock its true development potential.

On his Twitter handle, the prime minister said the government and the people of Pakistan expressed their unflinching support and solidarity with the Kashmiris living in Pakistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and elsewhere in the world on the Day of Accession to Pakistan.

The Day marked the adoption of a resolution by the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference at a convention in Srinagar in 1947 that called for merging Kashmir with Pakistan, he added. "We strongly condemn the relentless Indian persecution of Kashmiris & grave violation of human rights and call upon the UN and international community to ensure the implementation of the UN resolutions," he further added in a tweet.

## Terrorists used American weapons in Zhob attack

QUETTA (Online): The facts related to terrorists who were killed in Zhob area of Baluchistan have come to light. American weapons and equipments were used by terrorists in TTP's Zhob attack. Questions arose that: How did modern weapons and uniforms reach the terrorists? The terrorists had used weapons left by American army in Afghanistan in Zhob attack area of Baluchistan.

5.56 mm Caliber, M16 assault rifles, modern helmet, gloves, bag packs and uniforms were used against Pakistan. It can be seen in the pictures that the attackers who have been killed are dressed in American uniforms.

Even if heavy armed terrorists wear American uniforms they will die the death of cowardice. This is firm commitment of the military leadership that this war will continue till the complete elimination of the terrorists.

## FM highlights effectiveness of reforms, approaches in face of fast changing world

ISLAMABAD (APP): Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Wednesday stressed upon adoption of new diplomatic approaches in the fast changing world and expressed the hope that the recently introduced change management reforms in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would bring further efficiency, accountability, agility and dynamism.

Addressing a ceremony at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the change management reforms initiatives taken during the last one year, the foreign minister said that a total of 51 reform works were carried out at the ministry, among which 19 were fully implemented, three were partially com-

pleted and 29 initiatives were on the track of completion in the areas of automation and digitization processes, improvement in the diplomatic, administrative, finance and consular services abroad etc.

The foreign minister enumerated the significant achievements of the ministry at the global level under his stewardship, including Pakistan's removal from the FATF grey list, successful hosting of COP27, effective role at the OIC Foreign Ministers Council, etc. besides endeavours to enhance the relationships and diplomatic outreach.

He said, "The world is changing at the lightning speed with technological advances shifting power

dynamics while the interconnectedness has become the new norms on diplomatic fronts." To embrace the changes, after assuming the office, he said he embarked upon the reforms process to create a robust and agile ministry so that it could tackle any challenge that come their way. Bilawal Bhutto said that they were now living in the fast paced and dynamic world, and emphasised the need of an adaptive approach to ensure evolving and to stay ahead of the multi-dimensional challenges. It was crucial to embrace changes and management for their benefits, enabling them to navigate with agility, as living in the fast paced and interconnected world, the traditional



## Daily Voice of Masses Independent

### Census & polls

As the nation begins to enter election mode, the rulers have made it clear that the next polls will be based on the 2017 census. While this decision has been decried by some government allies, such as the MQM, the inconvenient truth is that this late in the day, the government has little choice — mainly because of its own lethargy — but to hold polls as per the 2017 numbers. Any other option may end up delaying elections, which is unacceptable.

The federal law minister announced on Monday that “if” the seventh census is not approved then constituencies will be drawn up on the basis of the previous head count’s figures. This is largely a foregone conclusion as the legal and constitutional process of notifying the latest census and delimiting new constituencies would clash with the electoral time line.

Some media reports on Tuesday indicated that the National Assembly could be dissolved early, though these were denied by the information minister. Regardless, elections would be due no later than November.

This means there is not enough time to notify the results, make the requisite constitutional amendment, and delimit new constituencies.

Independent observers also concur that polls will have to be held on the basis of the 2017 numbers. This is because even if the government notifies the 2023 results today, it will have to amend the Constitution under Article 51(3) and thereafter delimit new constituencies.

As mentioned, the government does not have the time to carry out these legal processes, while a caretaker set-up does not have the mandate to make constitutional amendments. Therefore, despite the reservations of the MQM, the fact is that there are few good options other than holding polls based on the 2017 numbers.

Of course, the rulers must shoulder the blame for this predicament. Apart from resource allocation, updated census numbers are essential for the democratic process, yet the multibillion-rupee exercise will be of no utility in the upcoming polls.

When provisional census numbers had been finalised two months ago, the government should have gone ahead and notified the results so that the legal process could have begun.

Perhaps the rulers feared they lacked the numbers in a rump parliament to make the requisite constitutional changes. Because of this mismanagement, voters in provinces where the population has grown will not get increased representation in parliament. However, the fresh census controversy notwithstanding, under no circumstances should the polls be delayed any further. Already the Punjab and KP caretakers are operating beyond their constitutional tenures. This must not be replicated in Sindh, Balochistan and the centre. The only way out of the current quagmire is for free and fair polls to be held on time, bringing in a new dispensation with a fresh mandate to govern.

### The strength within



Muhammad Mohsin Masood

The resilience of people is awe-inspiring. In the darkest of crannies and nooks, the strength that is within us can lead to us to light. In individuals, that tiny flicker of light can give rise to unprecedented amounts of courage, energy, kindness and joy. In the lives of nations, the resilience of its peoples, if led through the halls of principle, can lead to tolerance, magnanimity, stability and democratic values. Unfortunately, in Pakistan, we have an uncharitable tendency to discount much of the suffering and the long-term trauma that ordinary individual citizens face. It would be accurate to say that the most ordinary of people lead, in the most ordinary of circumstances, the most extraordinary of lives. It is certainly most extraordinary of them to face up to a barrage of challenges such as terrorism, poverty, the worsening political and economic stability, testing their resilience in everyday life. One such challenge which silently gnaws at the heart of one in 10 menstruating women in the world is endometriosis. This disease which affects some 200 million women in the world literally eats into the very insides of a person and drains the physical and mental strength with which they face the world.

Endometriosis is a condition where tissue similar to that found in the lining of the womb grows elsewhere in the body, such as on the ovaries and in the fallopian tubes. Symptoms can include lower abdomen or back pain, severe pain during periods, pain during intercourse, bowel and bladder symptoms, and fertility problems. The symptoms can vary for different women, with some more severely affected than others.

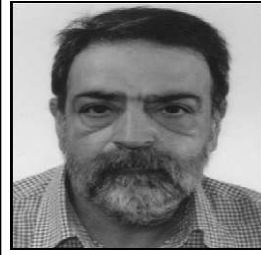
Endometriosis can have a significant impact on some women’s lives. It is a debilitating condition characterised primarily with intense pain with no cure. The level of pain can not only cause fainting in those living with endometriosis but also take a mental toll and can cause complete paralysis in social and domestic functioning. Yet, they are there, living, working, and existing with us in our homes, social spaces and workplaces.

The amount of energy that they expend on just functioning and adding to our productivity as a society is colossal. Endometriosis is not a rare disease in Pakistan, it is estimated that some 25 per cent of all laparoscopies done in the country find traces of endometriosis. A condition that has such a vast impact upon the lives of such a huge number of women needs to be addressed. Yet, this disease remains shrouded because many doctors are misinformed about the disease; then there is a major lack of awareness, funding, research into diagnosis coupled with the cultural silence and taboo around women’s bodies, menstrual cycles and health.

The resilience of patients of endometriosis is not only to be admired but should be taken as a source of inspiration to take action as a society and state which attempts to grant its citizens the rights with which they can enjoy a safe, respectful and healthy life. Yes, Pakistan does not have an explicit right to health enshrined in the Constitution. We do, however, have a jurisprudence developed around Articles 9 and 14 of the Constitution to guarantee the right to healthcare to ensure the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. The Supreme Court has recently stressed on the availability of access to all kinds of medical services to everyone without discrimination. Endometriosis and its affectees on the other hand remain under the radar and the shroud of societal invisibility not only denies them proper healthcare but also recognition of their pain. However, the state is obligated under the dictates of its moral and political authority to grant them not only that recognition but also cater to and facilitate them with its resources.

It is partly because of this, that the US Congress passed a law to get funding into endometriosis research programmes. There is also the Endometriosis CARE Act of 2022 introduced in the Congress attempting to get more funding and raise awareness and education with respect to endometriosis. Considering that many are unaware of endometriosis, such targeted legislation is a good starting point. In Pakistan, we recently had the 2020 Rights of Persons with Disability Act; however, endometriosis is not considered a disability to enable women to get benefit of the legislation. What is needed is research backed by legislation attempting to understand not only the disease but also to counter the multidimensional barricades that such women face to properly realise their right to health in combating this disease. -- Courtesy Dawn

### Masters of war



Mahir Ali

The headlines from the Nato summit that concluded a week ago in the Lithuanian capital mainly reflected the prospect of Swedish membership and, more dramatically, the failure to invite Ukraine into the fold. The petulant reaction from Volodymyr Zelensky suggested he was counting on not an immediate induction but at least some kind of timetable.

Leading figures from the British and US administrations indicated that they expected a bit more gratitude from Kyiv. There is some consternation among Western political-military elites that whenever Zelensky thanks his Western backers for their latest shipment — or promise — of lethal weaponry, he asks for more.

For obvious reasons, there was never any question of Ukraine entering the fold in the middle of a war, but there was the possibility of announcing that it would be able to join right after it ended. That, in turn, could have reduced the likelihood of Vladimir Putin agreeing under any circumstances to any kind of truce.

Mind you, the Russian president has never so much as hinted at the possibility of a ceasefire, and his imperialist impulses appear undamaged in the wake of the Wagner mutiny and the consequent impression of a weaker Kremlin. But then, the same goes for the other side.

Even before Joe Biden held out the promise of cluster bombs — a particularly pernicious weapon banned by several Nato members — the response to Russia’s invasion has involved pumping weapons into Ukraine, mainly from the US

but also from others. Germany advanced rapidly from helmets to tanks, and one of the less-publicised achievements of the Vilnius summit was an agreement on training Ukrainian pilots to fly F-16s.

Those warplanes are among the commitments Recep Tayyip Erdogan was seeking for his own regime, alongside Stockholm’s willingness to turn its back on the Kurds who have sought refuge in Sweden, as the price for agreeing to Swedish membership of Nato. He also wanted the resumption of talks on Turkey joining the EU, even though there is no short-term prospect of accession.

Biden has also indicated that the quality of Ukrainian democracy remains a concern, but that’s hardly bothered Nato in the past. Military coups in Turkey and Greece did not affect their status, and questions could justifiably be raised about the quality of purported democracy in countries such as Hungary and Poland, not to mention the US itself.

Following the birth of Nato in the aftermath of World War II, its first secretary general, Britain’s Lord Ismay — who was born in India, and served as military secretary to colonial viceroy Lord Willingdon — said that the military alliance was intended to keep “the Americans in, the Russians out and the Germans down”. However, as Grey Anderson and Thomas Meaney pointed out in a New York Times column, Nato “was never primarily concerned with aggregating military power”, as the divisions it fielded would never have been enough to repel a Soviet ground invasion (which, one might add, was never contemplated in Moscow). “Rather, it set out to bind western Europe to a far vaster project of a US-led world order, in which American protection served as a lever to obtain concessions on other issues, like trade and mon-

etary policy.” “In that mission,” they add, “it has proved remarkably successful.” There is talk now of a ‘global Nato’, and putative ‘Indo-Pacific 4’ partners — Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand — were all present at Vilnius, as they were at Madrid last year. The potential adversary, in this case, is China.

No challenge to American hegemony can be tolerated, and Nato has never been much more than an instrument for that mindset, primarily in Europe — including its bombardment of the Balkans in the 1990s — but also in territories from Afghanistan to Libya. It leaves a trail of mass destruction wherever it goes, and the project of making the world safe for capitalism has not been a particular success outside Europe.

None of the above is intended to suggest that Russia or China is on the right track. The monumental folly of invading Ukraine will haunt Russia long after Putin perishes, by natural causes or otherwise, and Xi Jinping’s “Chinese dream” could turn out to be a nightmare for plenty of less powerful nations, but also for China itself. Yet the prospect of entrenching US neo-imperialism more widely is much like adding fossil fuel to the fire while the world experiences some of its hottest days in thousands of years.

Anthropogenic climate change has brought humanity to the brink of self-annihilation. Egged on by the masters of war — excoriated by Bob Dylan 60 years ago shortly after Dwight Eisenhower’s warning against the military-industrial complex, which remains dedicated to profiting from the economies of conflict — misanthropic militarism could push us over the cliff. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Commerce News

### ADB maintains growth forecast for Asia and the Pacific at 4.8%

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is maintaining its growth outlook for developing economies in Asia and the Pacific at 4.8 percent this year, as robust domestic demand continues to support the region’s recovery.

Inflation is expected to continue falling, approaching pre-pandemic levels as fuel and food prices decline. According to the Asian Development Outlook (ADO) for July 2023 released by the ADB on Wednesday, growth in Pakistan in FY2023 (ended

30 June 2023) was weighed down by tighter monetary and fiscal policies to safeguard macroeconomic stability, pervasive inflation, and significant damage from flooding. The ADO April 2023 projection for Pakistan in FY2024 assumes that the government will continue reform as recommended by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) under a new policy-support program approved on July 12. Inflation in developing Asia is forecast at 3.6 percent this year, compared with April

forecast of 4.2 percent. The inflation outlook for 2024, meanwhile, is raised to 3.4 percent from an earlier estimate of 3.3 percent, it added. The reopening of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) is bolstering the region’s growth. The PRC’s economy is projected to expand 5.0 percent this year, unchanged from the April forecast, amid strong domestic demand in the services sector. However, demand for developing Asia’s exports of electronics and other manufactured goods is

slowing, as monetary tightening drags on economic activity in major advanced economies.

The region’s growth forecast for next year is marginally revised down to 4.7 percent from 4.8 percent estimate in April.

“Asia and the Pacific continue to recover from the pandemic at a steady pace,” said ADB Chief Economist Albert Park. “Domestic demand and services activity are driving growth, while many economies are also benefiting from a strong recovery in tourism.”



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting to review the progress regarding the ongoing SOE reforms.



A Delegation of Asian Development Bank (ADB) led by Country Director Mr. Young Ye, called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, at Finance Division, Islamabad

### No additional tax being imposed on agriculture sector income: Bilal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to Prime Minister on Economy and Energy Bilal Azhar Kayani on Wednesday categorically said that the government had no plan to impose additional tax on income of agriculture sector.

Addressing a news conference here, he said it was unfortunate that those who pushed the country to the verge of default were now attempting to dent the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme.

He expressed firm resolve that the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) would continue to take the country’s journey towards economic stability and progress forward after coming into

power in the next general elections.

He mentioned that the government had successfully entered into a nine-month Stand-By Agreement (SBA) with IMF, which was the result of the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif’s dedicated efforts that received overwhelming support from the entire nation.

One significant indicator of the country’s economic growth was observed on July 3 when the Pakistan stock exchange experienced a remarkable increase of 2446 points, with the index surpassing the 45,000 mark. This positive development was well-received by the business and trading communities,

signifying their confidence in the government’s economic policies, he added.

Kayani highlighted that Fitch, a renowned credit rating agency, also improved Pakistan’s rating from minus ‘CCC’ to ‘+CCC’ further bolstering the nation’s economic position.

Acknowledging the concerns surrounding loans acquired from the IMF, the Prime Minister himself acknowledged the necessity of such measures for Pakistan’s economic well-being. As a result, the country’s foreign reserves increased, and exchange rate stability has been achieved, effectively eliminating the threats of default.

### SBP designates domestic systemically important banks for 2023

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan on Wednesday announced the Domestic Systemically Important Banks for the year 2023 under D-SIBs framework aimed at further strengthening risk management capacities and resilience against shocks.

According to a statement issued here, the central bank has designated National Bank of Pakistan (NBP), Habib Bank Limited (HBL) and United Bank Limited (UBL) as D-SIBs for the year 2023 after carrying out the annual assessment based on banks’ financials as of

December 31, 2022 in line with D-SIBs framework.

In addition to the implementation of the enhanced supervisory requirements, the designated banks have to follow additional Common Equity Tier-1 (CET-1) capital requirements according to the specified bucket. The NBP has been assigned bucket D with 2.5 percent additional CET-1 requirement, the HBL has been placed in bucket C with 1.5 percent additional CET-1 requirement and UBL in bucket A with 0.5 percent additional CET-1 requirement.

### SM Tanveer chairs 123<sup>rd</sup> PSIC board meeting

LAHORE: Caretaker Provincial Minister for Industry and Commerce SM Tanveer chaired the 123<sup>rd</sup> Board of Directors (BoD) meeting of Punjab Small Industries Corporation (PSIC) to discuss 14 agenda items here on Wednesday.

The BoD approved the PSIC budget of Rs 5.1 billion for the financial year 2023-24,

besides taking important decisions to expedite industrialisation. It was decided to give a final chance to those who have not yet established industries on vacant plots in industrial estates.

The plot owner would have to fulfill obligations in the first month, submit a plan within three months, and start construction within the following three months.

### PM directs for swift reforms in loss-making state-owned enterprises

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday directed the relevant authorities to introduce reforms on priority basis in the state-owned enterprises (SOEs) inflicting loss to the national exchequer.

The prime minister, who chaired a meeting to review the reforms in the SOEs, instructed to ensure the transparency in the process of outsourcing the services as well as public-

private partnership. He said the government would ensure that the caretaker government carried forward the policies of the national interest to achieve consistent progress.

The prime minister said the government was taking all-out measures to uplift the working of institutions at par with international standards and provide the best facilities to the masses.

In the briefing, Prime

Minister Shehbaz Sharif was told that the reforms process of the SOEs was going on swiftly.

It was told that government would ensure the inclusion of experts in the boards of the SOEs to establish modern systems and provide better facilities.

The prime minister was briefed on the performance indicators of the institutions as well as the corporations and the ongoing reforms process there.

### Ambassador of Pakistan to Ethiopia visits SCCI

SIKALOT (APP): Ambassador of Pakistan to Ethiopia Atif Sharif on Wednesday visited the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI). During the meeting, VP SCCI Amer Majeed Sheikh emphasized the need to improve the current trade volume between the two countries. The meeting was aimed to strengthen bilateral trade relations and explore business opportunities. The vice president shared the potential of “Made in Sialkot” products in the Ethiopian market as well as ways to enhance trade and economic cooperation.

### PTCL group posts 26.8% revenue growth in 6 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) revenue has jumped to Rs 90.9 billion posting a growth of 26.8 per cent during the first six months of the current year compared to the corresponding period.

The financial results for six months were announced during the Board of Directors’ meeting held in Islamabad here on Wednesday, said a news release. Throughout the first half of 2023, PTCL Group has sustained its momentum, further solidifying its position as the leading integrated telecom service provider in Pakistan. “This substantial increase in revenue is primarily

attributed to the exceptional performance across multiple segments, including fixed broadband, mobile data, business solutions and banking services.”

PTCL achieved 17.2 per cent revenue growth over the same period last year in the fixed broadband business. The Company further strengthened its flagship FTTH brand, ‘Flash Fiber’ by achieving significant net subscriber additions through exceptional customer experiences and aggressive expansion of the fiber network across the country which played a vital role in achieving a significant increase in FTTH revenue by 106.5 per cent.



## CM directs Admin to immediately complete rainwater drainage operation

RAWALPINDI (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi on Wednesday directed the authorities concerned with the district administration to utilize all available resources and immediately complete the rainwater drainage operation.

According to a district administration spokesman, the chief minister had issued special instructions to Rescue-1122, PDMA and the district administration directing them to ensure immediate drainage of water in low-lying areas of Rawalpindi following heavy rain on Tuesday night. The CM said that immediate actions should be taken on an emergency basis for drainage of rainwater.

The officers of the administration and related institutions should remain in the field until the drainage work is completed, he ordered.



**HYDERABAD: Residents of Tando Jam are holding protest demonstration against high handedness of influential people, at Hyderabad press club.**

## Special medical facilities to be provided to participants of Muharram processions

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Punjab Health Minister Dr Javed Akram on Wednesday directed to provide the best medical facilities to participants of the processions during Muharram-ul-Haram.

In the directions issued here, the minister said that special arrangements would be made to provide medical facilities in government teaching hospitals on 9th and 10th Muharram. He said that special beds would be allocated in government teaching hospitals during Muharram, adding that duty roster of indoor, operation theaters and pharmacies would be issued. In all government teaching hospitals, paramedical staff

including medical, nursing, paramedical and support staff will perform 24-hour duties. He said that during Muharram, security staff would perform 24-hour duties in government teaching hospitals.

Dr. Javed Akram added that during Muharram, the availability of medicines, vaccines, IV fluids, surgical and non-surgical disposables and blood bags would be ensured in government teaching hospitals. He said that operation theaters of all government teaching hospitals would remain fully operational during Muharram, adding, ambulances with trained staff would also be available in the hospitals.



**PESHAWAR: A delegation of public representatives of District Khyber Tehsil Bara meeting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali.**

## Govt sends Pakistanis abroad for employment after signing MoUs with foreign countries: Sajid Tori

PESHAWAR (APP): Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Sajid Husain Tori here Wednesday said the government was sending Pakistanis abroad for employment after signing proper MoUs and agreements with foreign countries to ensure their jobs security and dignified stay there.

The Minister said that

under proper agreements and MoUs, the skilled and semi-skilled workforce of Pakistan were being sent to different countries for employment to earn valuable foreign exchange for the country.

"People are not going by themselves but rather being sent abroad under proper MoUs and agreements signed with 16 different countries to ensure their jobs security and dignified stay in these states," he said.

The federal minister said that up till now, MoUs were signed with about 16 countries for abroad employment to Pakistanis and some more agreements were under consideration.

The Minister said vocational education and professional training were imperative for the sustainable progress and development of the country.

## PPP leaders capable to run country's affairs in better way: Inqilabi

PESHAWAR (APP): Deputy Secretary Information Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter Gohar Inqilabi expressed optimism to win the next general elections.

In a statement issued here, he said that the party is fully capable to run the affairs of the country in a better manner and steering it out of the prevailing crises.

He said that the PPP has prepared a master plan to make Pakistan a prosperous, green and developed country by providing all basic amenities of life to the people of cities, towns and villages across the country.

He said that after coming into power in 2008, it did the historic feat of the 18th Constitutional Amendment and guaranteed rights to the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and other small federating units.



**KARACHI: A large numbers of vehicles stuck in traffic jam due to negligence of traffic police staffs and illegal parking, at Liaquatabad in Karachi.**

## Hearing of petition filed by Pervez against grant of his physical remand adjourned

LAHORE (Online): Without proceeding further, Lahore High Court (LHC) has adjourned till August 12 hearing of the petition against decision regarding physical remand of former Chief Minister (CM) Punjab Pervez Elahi.

The petition came up for hearing before single bench of LHC led by Justice Shehram Sarwar Wednesday. Anti corruption authorities and others have been made respondents in the petition.

The court had summoned the lawyers for arguments on appeal of Chaudhry Pervez Elahi.

The LHC has already suspended the sessions court decision for presenting Chaudhry Pervez Elahi for physical remand again.

The petitioner has taken the plea judicial magistrate refused to grant physical remand of Chaudhry Pervez Elahi to anti corruption authorities. Judicial magistrate sent Chaudhry Pervez Elahi to jail on judicial remand.

Anti corruption challenged the decision of magistrate in sessions court. It was further said in the petition that the court nullified the decision of judicial magistrate for not granting physical remand of Chaudhry Pervez Elahi. Sessions court gave illegal decision of granting physical remand of Chaudhry Pervez Elahi.

The petitioner requested the court to nullify the decision of granting physical remand by sessions court.

## IG police pins badges to promoted officials

FAISALABAD (APP): Inspector General Police Punjab Dr Usman Anwar visited on Wednesday and pinned badges to promoted officials at the Police Lines.

Regional Police Officer Dr Muhammad Abid Khan, City Police Officer Usman Akram Gondal, SSP Operation and other officers were also present. The IG congratulated the promoted staff and directed them to perform their new responsibilities with dedication and honesty. He said the police department was using all available resources for welfare of families of the policemen.

## Iranian Consul: China Window can help promote Pak-Iran people to people ties

PESHAWAR (APP): Iranian Consul General in Peshawar, Ali Banafshekhan, Wednesday said the China's cultural center set up in Peshawar could play an effective role in promoting people-to-people relations between Pakistan and Iran, besides its main objective of further strengthening Pak-China friendship.

He expressed these views during his visit to China Window, a center for promotion of Chinese culture and information in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The Iranian diplomat took round of different sections of China Window, sang the Friendship Wall and penned down his remarks in Guests Book.

Speaking on the occasion, Ali Banafshekhan said on one side Pakistan and China had strong friendly relations, and on the other Iran and Pakistan also had very cordial brotherly relations. He said he was of the belief that with exchange of delegations from both the countries, "our people-to-people relations will become more intact and strong".

Both China Window and Khana-e-Farhang Iran could jointly play an effective role in the promotion of historic relations and culture of three countries, he suggested.

The consul general said he was working on arranging visits of Iranian delegations to Pakistan and in the same way the people from different walks of lives from Peshawar should visit their brotherly Iranian country.

He termed the establishment of China Window a welcoming decision which would help share information among the people about the socio-economic benefits of China Pakistan Economic Corridor in Pakistan.

# International News

## Turkiye, Qatar to enhance bilateral relations after Erdogan visit

**Monitoring Desk**  
DOHA: Turkiye and Qatar agreed to further boost bilateral ties in various fields, according to a joint statement issued after President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's visit to the Gulf country.

"On the basis of our strategic relations and bilateral cooperation in the political, diplomatic, economic and commercial fields, and in line with the directives of the wise leaders of the two countries, we are determined to continue our joint efforts to coordinate in various fields to ensure the continuity of the strengthening of bilateral relations for the benefit of the two brotherly countries and peoples."

The Turkish and Qatari foreign ministers signed the declaration during Erdogan's visit to Qatar, marking a half-century since the establishment of diplomatic ties.

"We are pleased to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Turkiye and the State of Qatar in 2023," it said.

"Turkiye-Qatar relations have undergone a qualitative transformation since their establishment in 1973 until (they) reached the stage of strategic partnership." The declaration also stressed

that Turkiye-Qatar relations reflect "deep-rooted" historical ties built on political and social foundations. "The current strategic partnership between the Republic of Turkiye and the State of Qatar is fruitful at all levels, and the two countries have similar approaches on most regional and international issues," it added.

Economic and commercial cooperation between the two countries has witnessed steady growth over the past few years, it added.

Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani welcomed Erdogan with an official ceremony.



**Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan and Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani attend a welcoming ceremony in Doha, Qatar.**

## Russia strikes critical port facilities in Odesa after Kremlin halts grain deal

**Monitoring Desk**  
KYIV: Russia unleashed intense drone and missile attacks overnight Wednesday, damaging critical port infrastructure in southern Ukraine, including grain and oil terminals, and wounding at least 12 people, officials said.

The bombardment crippled significant parts of export facilities in Odesa and nearby Chornomorsk and destroyed 60,000 tons of grain, according to Ukraine's Agriculture Ministry.

It came days after President Vladimir Putin pulled Russia out of its participation in the Black Sea Grain Initiative, a wartime deal that enabled Ukraine's exports to reach many countries facing the threat of hunger.

It also followed a vow by Putin to retaliate against Kyiv for an attack Monday on the crucial Kerch Bridge linking Russia with the Crimean Peninsula, which the Kremlin illegally annexed in 2014.

The Agriculture Ministry, citing experts, estimated it would take a year to restore the damaged facilities.

The destroyed grain was supposed to have been loaded onto a vessel and sent through the grain corridor two months ago, the statement said.

"Such attacks by Russian terrorists are not only affecting our country but also global stability," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said during a briefing with the visiting Irish prime minister in Kyiv. He said Ukraine needs more anti-aircraft defense systems to protect the port.

Zelenskyy said his government is trying to find a way to maintain a corridor to keep grain exports flowing despite Russia's decision to abandon the deal brokered with the U.N. and Turkey.

## South Africa says Putin will skip a summit next month because of his ICC arrest warrant

**Monitoring Desk**  
CAPE TOWN: Russian President Vladimir Putin will not attend the BRICS economic summit in Johannesburg next month, the office of South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said in a statement Wednesday. The decision means South Africa will not face the dilemma of whether it should carry out an International Criminal Court arrest warrant against the Russian leader.

South Africa is a signatory to the treaty that created the ICC and would have been obliged under that to arrest Putin, although the country had given strong hints that it would have likely not executed the arrest warrant.

But Wednesday's announcement allows South Africa to avoid the problem and comes after Ramaphosa spoke with Putin by telephone in recent days. The decision for Putin not to attend was by "mutual agreement," Ramaphosa's office said. Russia will instead be represented at the Aug 22-24 summit by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. The BRICS economic bloc is made up of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. South Africa had invited the leaders of the other four countries to the summit before Putin's arrest warrant was issued by the ICC in March.



**Australian sailor Timothy Lindsay Shaddock, 54, who went adrift with his dog Bella over two months speaks during a welcoming ceremony in his honor after being rescued by a Mexican tuna trawler, in Manzanillo, Mexico.**

## North Korea fires two missiles after U.S. submarine arrives in S.Korea

**Monitoring Desk**  
TOKYO: North Korea launched two ballistic missiles eastward early on Wednesday, Japan's and South Korea's militaries said, just hours after a U.S. ballistic missile submarine arrived in a South Korean port for the first time in four decades.

Both of the missiles appeared to have fallen outside Japan's exclusive economic zone, the Japanese Defense Ministry said.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) called on the North to cease such launches.

"We strongly condemn North Korea's successive ballistic missile launches as grave provocative acts that undermine the peace and stability of the Korean Peninsula as well as the international community, and are a clear violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions," the JCS said in a statement.

The U.S. military said it was aware of the missile launches and was consulting closely with its allies and partners.

## An American economist is getting a top EU job. France's Macron isn't happy about it

**Monitoring Desk**  
BRUSSELS: With French President Emmanuel Macron insisting the European Union needs more strategic independence, he seemed decidedly piqued on Tuesday over the EU head office's plans to hire an American expert as its chief competition economist.

"Is there really no great European researcher with academic qualifications that could do this job?" Macron asked at a summit of EU leaders with their Latin American counter-

parts. In a bloc of some 450 million people, "is there no one in the 27 member states that has a researcher good enough to advise the (European) Commission? That is a real question mark," Macron said. The EU's executive commission announced last week that it had appointed Yale economics professor Fiona Scott Morton as chief competition economist in its department tasked with ensuring that "all companies compete equally and fairly on their merits within the single market."

## Kenyan protesters hurl rocks at police as three-day tax protests begin

**Monitoring Desk**  
NAIROBI: Kenyan protesters hurled rocks at police, which responded with volleys of tear gas, in skirmishes in the country's major cities on Wednesday as three days of demonstrations against high costs of living and tax hikes kicked off. Two water-cannon trucks and dozens of riot police were stationed at the entrance to the Kibera neighbourhood in Nairobi, where protesters burned tires and engaged in running battles with security forces.



**Flooded banks of river Yamuna along the Taj Mahal in Agra.**

## Kremlin says it did not tell S.Africa that Putin arrest would mean war

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: Russia did not tell South Africa that arresting President Vladimir Putin on an arrest warrant from the International Criminal Court (ICC) would mean "war", the Kremlin said on Wednesday.

Shortly after the Kremlin's comments, South Africa said that Putin would not attend a summit of the BRICS group of nations in South Africa in August "by mutual agreement." The ICC has accused Putin and his children's commissioner Maria Lvova-Belova of the war crime of deporting children from Ukraine to Russia, something Moscow rejects as false. A local court submission published on Tuesday had shown that South African President Cyril Ramaphosa had asked permission from the ICC not to arrest Putin in the context of the BRICS summit because to do so would amount to a declaration of war.

## At least 16 killed by suspected electrocution in north Indian state

**Monitoring Desk**  
LUCKNOW: At least 16 people were killed and another six injured in a suspected case of electrocution in the north Indian state of Uttarakhhand on Wednesday morning, government officials said. The incident took place inside a sewage treatment plant established in the Himalayan state's Chamoli district as part of a flagship programme of the federal government that focuses on conserving the river Ganga.



## Women's political inclusion vital for stable democracy, proactive Parliament: Raja

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaz Ashraf on Wednesday said no society could develop without inclusion and active participation of women in all spheres of life.

The political inclusion of women was imperative for a stable democracy and proactive Parliament as those societies remained backward and underdeveloped where they were not encouraged and promoted, he said while addressing the closing ceremony of the two-day "Roundtable of Political Parties on Women's Manifesto", organized by the Women Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) in collaboration with the UN Women.

The NA speaker said the Pakistani women were talented and taking active

part in politics. The women parliamentarians had been on the forefront and proactive in the legislative process.

He said the Constitution discouraged gender-based discrimination. He also said that women empowerment should be central goal of manifestos of all political parties.

Raja Pervaz said stable politics and a strong Parliament were interlinked with political empowerment of women. "Women comprise more than 50 percent of population and their representation in politics will strengthen the Parliament and democracy," he added.

He felicitated the organizers on holding a successful roundtable conference and appreciated the consensus evolved on its manifesto.

WPC Secretary Shahida Rehmani, in her remarks, said the Caucus had always been at the forefront to legislate for protection of fundamental women's rights.

She said the political participation of women was vital for the country's progress and development, and all political parties were in unison to represent women at every political forum.

Shahida Rehmani said empowerment of women and ensuring their participation in Next 16th National Assembly was essential for their economic and social empowerment.

Freeha Omar, UN Women Representative in Pakistan, said the political participation of women was pivotal for empowering them.



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi in a group photo with the participants of the 37th Mid-Career Management Course, Quetta, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## Imam Hussain (RA)'s sacrifice an immortal reminder about fighting oppression, upholding truth: President

PM urges countrymen to promote tolerance, social justice

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr. Arif Alvi has said that the invaluable sacrifice of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) is an immortal reminder about challenging the oppression and injustice, and standing firm to uphold truth.

He said the new Islamic year is a reminder that the strength of the nation lies in unity and harmony.

"With a united approach, we can overcome any challenge and make the future of our coming generations bright," he said, in his message to the nation on the advent of new Islamic year 1445 Hijrah.

President Alvi em-

phasized the need for mainstreaming all segments of society and providing them a level-playing field.

The president said new Islamic year has a great significance for the Muslims all over the world and reminds of the immense sacrifices rendered by their forefathers.

"On this day, we make a pledge to follow the life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) and implement these in our lives," he said. He said compassion, justice, unity and kindness are the ethos of Islamic culture and are important to promote harmony and prosperity

in the society.

The president said Muharram as the first month of the Islamic calendar guides a Muslim to refresh his spiritual journey of life. He said it relates to the month when Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA), the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his companions sacrificed their lives in the battle of Karbala. Against oppression, the historic event of Karbala is an example of undeterred courage, sacrifice and steadfastness, he added.

Meanwhile on the advent of the new Islamic year on Wednesday, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif urged countrymen to

strive for emulating the noble teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his companions besides building a society featuring principles of social justice and equality. "Let us pledge today that we will strive to emulate the noble qualities established by our Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his companions. Let us promote tolerance, understanding and respect for each other regardless of our differences. Let us work towards building a society that upholds the principles of social justice, equality and compassion," the prime minister said in

his message to the nation at the start of Hijri year 1445.

Extending greetings to the nation and the whole Muslim Ummah, the prime minister prayed to Allah Almighty that the new Islamic year proved to be a year of peace, progress and prosperity for Pakistan as well as the Muslim world.

He also prayed that the new year also brought ease to the lives of Muslims suffering across the world and people of Kashmir and Palestine got deliverance from oppression and achieve peace, progress and prosperity.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaz Ashraf addressing the closing ceremony of Roundtable of Political Parties on Women's Manifesto 2023 organized by WPC.

## President for further strengthening economic, cultural ties with Jordan

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr. Arif Alvi on Wednesday said that Pakistan wanted to further deepen its ties with Jordan in areas of trade, economy, culture and defense.

The president, talking to outgoing Ambassador of Jordan to Pakistan Ambassador Ibrahim Yala Al Madani, who called on him, said that Pakistan enjoyed excellent fraternal relations with Jordan based on common culture and history.

He emphasized the need for enhancing cooperation with Jordan in the economic and commercial fields for the mutual benefit of the two brotherly countries.

He called for political, cultural and educational exchanges to bring the two brotherly countries further closer.

President Alvi appreciated Jordan's peace efforts and support to the Palestine issue through political and diplomatic means. He reaffirmed Pakistan's steadfast support to the people of Palestine for their inalienable right to self-determination.

Expressing deep concern over the rising incidents of Islamophobia, the president emphasized the need for taking effective measures by the international community to prevent such incidents. He stated that there was a growing need to promote interfaith harmony, tolerance and mutual respect for each other's religion. The president appreciated the efforts made by the outgoing ambassador for improving bilateral cooperation during his stay in Pakistan.

## Alvi appoints AG Pab, FPSC Chairman

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr. Arif Alvi has approved appointment of Ayaz Shaikat Advocate as Advocate General (AG) Islamabad while Captain (ret) Shahid Ashraf Tarrar was appointed as Chairman of Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) with immediate effect.

The president also approved resignation of Jahangir Khan Jadoon from the office of Advocate General Islamabad with effect from July 14.

## Senator Talha unveils plan for reduction in next year's Hajj expenses

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Senator Muhammad Talha Mahmood, on Wednesday revealed that next year's Hajj expenses could be significantly reduced by up to fifty percent due to timely measures taken by the government.

Addressing the Pakistan Citizens Forum's event held to appreciate his unwavering efforts to provide ease and comfort to pilgrims throughout this

spiritual journey here in Islamabad Club, the minister emphasized the importance of providing affordable Hajj during inflationary times, considering it a vital service to the pilgrims.

On this occasion, Senator Talha expressed his appreciation for the commendable services rendered by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz, and his Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman, for their generous support

in facilitating this year's Hajj arrangements.

The gathering was graced by esteemed dignitaries, including former Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Sardar Muhammad Yousaf and Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Murtaza Javed Abbasi, who served as the guest of honor. Professor Sajjad Qamar, President of Pakistan Citizens Forum, and Secretary Mohsin Khan Abbasi were also present at the occasion.



MNA Hamid Hameed calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad

## CJIHC says: Policy being devised for early disposal of cases in courts

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Justice Islamabad High Court (IHC) Justice Aamer Farooq on Wednesday said that a policy was being introduced for early disposal of cases in the high court and lower courts.

He said that shifting of 'kachehri' to judicial complex G-11 was a milestone which would help to address the problems of lower courts.

He stated this during his visit to the press room of IHC along with Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri. President Islamabad High Court Journalists Association (IHCJA) Rizwan Qazi, Vice President Farah Mahjabeen, Secretary Hussain Ahmed Chaudhry, former president IHCJA Asad Malik, Awaiz Yousafzai, Saqib Bashir,

former general secretary Fiaz Mehmood and others were also present on the occasion.

The chief justice said that we were considering setting up a judicial academy at the chief justice block of the old building of IHC. However, family courts would be set up in other parts of the building where recreational facilities would be ensured for the children to give them a pleasing environment beyond family conflicts.

The chief justice IHC also issued instructions regarding the construction of shades at the place dedicated to cameramen. Justice Tariq Mehmood on the occasion said that the media should focus on highlighting the problems of the public.

## NSFC-PSF invites joint proposals for research & development projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) and Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF) have invited universities, research centres and institutions to submit joint proposals for Research and Development projects, as per a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between institutions.

According to an official of PSF, the call for Proposals for Joint Research and Development Projects with National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) is open in the priority areas including Green technologies (mainly focusing development of green sources of energy generation which may have industrial implications); Nanotechnology (based on the socioeconomic needs of Pak-China) and Computing sciences (Limited to Augmented/Virtual reality, Artificial Intelligence, Quantum Computing).

About the guidelines for proposal submission, the official informed that Chinese and Pakistani scientists should come to an agreement with each other using their own means of communications and jointly develop and complete their project proposal before submitting it to NSFC and PSF. NSFC and PSF do not match the collaborating partners. Chinese or Pakistani Collaborator or partner should necessarily be identified in each submitted Joint Research Project Proposal submitted individually from any side without Chinese or Pakistani collaborator or partner will not be processed further. Joint Research and Development Project must be basic or applied research with strong implications for the development of Industry, Technology, Process, Techniques, Prototype, Commercialization and Innovation, leading to socioeconomic uplift of both countries.

## Traffic police arranges road safety workshop

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Traffic Police Education Wing organized a one-day road safety workshop for the drivers of the COMSATS University Islamabad.

More than 15 Public Service Vehicles (PSV) drivers participated in the workshop, where they were educated about road safety and traffic laws. The drivers appreciated the initiative by the traffic police.

The staff of the Education Wing also provided awareness to the participants about the benefits of seat belt usage, the dangers of using mobile phones while driving, the hazards of overspeeding, lane violations, overloading, and other traffic laws.

Chief Traffic Officer Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanveer said that true humans care about their own and others' lives and property.

## 400 projects worth over \$330m benefited beyond 21.2 mln people including flood affectees: PHF

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Humanitarian Forum (PHF) Annual Report launched here on Wednesday unveiled its progress throughout the year highlighting that its member organizations (INGOs) implemented 400 projects throughout Pakistan including A&K and Gilgit Baltistan with a dedicated 296 projects providing humanitarian assistance, particularly in response to 2022 floods, and 104 focused on development interventions.

These initiatives, worth over \$330 million, benefited more than 21.2 million people across the country emphasizing the importance of long-term recovery and efforts.

Pakistan Humanitarian Forum (PHF) serves as an independent and registered organization, acting as a voice for international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) in their engagements and coordination with the Government of Pakistan, UN agencies, humanitarian actors, and civil society organizations. It represents 42 INGOs and 8 affiliate members, including the National Humanitarian Network (NHN), Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), and IFRIC/ICRC in Pakistan.

In his opening remarks, Country Coordinator, PHF Syed Shahid Kazmi provided a brief overview of the forum and its efforts in compiling the annual report.

## AIOU strives to promote skill-based education

ISLAMABAD (APP): Training the youth is the need of the hour for the development of country, said Vice Chancellor, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood on Wednesday.

While chairing the consultation meeting held regarding Middle/Matric (Tech) programs, VC AIOU said that Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) pays special attention to skill development.

With the support of JICA we will make youth skilled so that they can play a role in the social and economic development of the country, said Vice-Chancellor.



ISLAMABAD: Director AIOU Professor Dr. Amir Shah presenting the shield to DG National Police Bureau Dr. Ehsan Sadiq after the seminar.

## HEC unveils graduate education policy for implementation fall 2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan has unveiled its highly anticipated Graduate Education Policy 2023 (GEP-2023) which marks a crucial milestone for higher education institutions in Pakistan and is available at <https://www.hec.gov.pk/site/gep>.

It is effective and applicable from Fall 2023 semester onwards, said a press release on Wednesday.

Drawing upon the Commission's extensive two-decade experience and feedback from academia, the new policy has been meticulously crafted to embody the core principles

of university autonomy, flexibility, and quality assurance, while also upholding academic freedom, relevance, and originality.

One of the notable features of GEP-2023 is its liberal approach, which allows for intra-disciplinary admissions, enabling students to explore diverse academic fields within their chosen discipline. The policy recognises the value of both local and foreign expertise by introducing external evaluation conducted by indigenous Professors alongside foreign evaluators. This inclusive approach aims to ensure a comprehensive assessment of academic standards.



RAWALPINDI: Vehicles passing through rain water accumulated on road during torrential rain since last night.

## PM's Taskforce, diplomats visit Bhamala Stupa

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister's Taskforce on Gandhara Tourism, headed by its Chairman Dr. Ramesh Kumar Vankwani along with diplomats Wednesday visited the historical Bhamala Stupa a Buddhist Site near Haripur to highlight Gandhara heritage and promote religious tourism in Pakistan.

Dr. Ramesh Kumar with the status of Minister of State, has arranged a series of visits every Wednesday to promote sacred sites and monuments built during the Gandhara era.

Bhamala stupa and monastery is situated in the scenic valley of Khanpur at

the gateway of Khanpur dam. The visiting delegates comprised diplomats of various countries, Gandhara Heritage experts, other dignitaries and members of the media. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Ramesh Kumar said this series of visits is showing keen interest of diplomats and foreigners towards Gandhara heritage sites in Pakistan.

There is huge potential for Gandhara heritage in Pakistan, said Vankwani, calling upon the renowned hotel chains to show interest in opening their branches or portable hotels near popular scenic Gandhara Tourism points.