

# Independent

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## Won't rest until steering Pakistan out of current crisis: COAS Munir

*Hails govt's plans for agricultural uplift; says no external force can hinder our journey towards advancement*

RAWALPINDI (Agencies): Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir on Monday inaugurated the Khanewal Model Agricultural Farm at an event seeking to bolster the agricultural sector and promote national prosperity.

The event witnessed the participation of distinguished dignitaries, local farmers, and officials from various sectors.

"Pakistan Army takes pride in serving its nation," stated the army chief, highlighting the military's dedication to the welfare of the people and the country.

"The army belonged to the people, and the people belonged to the army," COAS said, emphasising the strong bond between the armed forces and the civilians.

COAS Munir expressed his determination to steer Pakistan out of the prevailing crises, stating, "We have decided to lead Pakistan out of the current crisis."

Addressing the nation's qualities, he praised the Pakistanis for their pride, self-respect, and competence, recognising the nation's potential to overcome challenges.

Referring to the prevailing economic challenges, the

army chief remarked, "All Pakistanis have collectively rejected the beggar's bowl."

Grateful for the country's blessings, COAS Munir remarked, "Allah has bestowed Pakistan with numerous gifts."

Drawing attention to Pakistan's potential for progress, the army chief asserted, "No external force can hinder our journey towards advancement." He reaffirmed his belief in the nation's capability to achieve greatness in all domains.

COAS Munir hailed the government's plans for an agricultural uplift, expressing his confidence in the transformation of the agricultural landscape of Pakistan, saying, "Pakistan will witness an agricultural revolution, Insha' Allah."

The Khanewal Model Agricultural Farm is designed to benefit small-scale farmers and promote sustainable practices. The army chief announced that similar modern farms would be established across Pakistan, aiming to uplift the livelihoods of farmers and contribute to the nation's economic growth.



LAHORE: Masood Nabi, MD Pakistan LNG Ltd and Mariam Almaszade, CEO SOCAR signing an agreement for LNG cargo on behalf of Pakistan and Azerbaijan respectively. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and other dignitaries are witnessing the ceremony.



RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir exchanging views with General Michael Erik Kurilla, Commander United States (US) CENTCOM during meeting held at General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi.

## US CENTCOM Commander lauds Pak Army's successes in fight against terrorism

RAWALPINDI (APP): Commander United States (US) CENTCOM, General Michael Erik Kurilla called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir and lauded Pakistan Army's successes in the fight against terrorism.

During the meeting matters of mutual interest, regional security situation and defence cooperation

were discussed, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release received on Monday said.

Both the dignitaries reiterated the desire to further enhance bilateral relations in all fields.

The visiting dignitary also acknowledged and appreciated Pakistan's continued efforts for bringing peace and stability to the region.

## Interim PM to be appointed as per Constitution: Marriyum

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Monday said the caretaker prime minister would be appointed as per the procedure enshrined in the Constitution. The announcement for the purpose would also be made accordingly, the minister said in a news statement. According to the Constitution, the prime minister and the opposition leader would finalize the interim PM's appointment after consultation, Marriyum noted.

## CCoIGCT approves G2G agreement between UAE and Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Cabinet Committee on Inter-Governmental Commercial Transactions (CCoIGCT) on Monday approved G2G draft framework agreement between United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Pakistan for the ratification of the Federal Cabinet. The meeting was chaired by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chaired, said a press release issued here.

The agreement will be signed between the governments of the UAE and Pakistan. The CCoIGCT considered summary of Ministry of Maritime Affairs regarding G2G agreement between the Governments of UAE & Pakistan on Cooperation for the Development of Bulk and General Cargo Terminal at East Wharf at Karachi Port under Inter-Governmental Commercial Transaction.

## Torrential rains kill 133, injure 215 across country

ISLAMABAD (INP): The recent torrential rains across the country have so far killed 133 besides leaving 215 injured and causing damages to houses and infrastructure.

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) data stated that so far 133 deaths and 215 injuries to people have been reported, which includes 21 women and 55 children. As many as 368 houses have also been damaged as torrential rain continued to play havoc across the country, it added. Punjab has the most number of people who died where 65 people were killed in the heavy rains and 35 lost their lives in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), six were killed in Balochistan, NDMA report read.



ISLAMABAD: The two-day International conference, organized by the Ministry of Planning Development & Special Initiatives in collaboration with Embassy of the Republic of China, kicked off on Monday with the theme "Decade of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) & Belt & Road Initiative (BRI) from vision to reality to mark the 10-year celebrations of CPEC.

## CPEC from vision to reality 2-day int'l conference to mark 10-year celebrations begins

ISLAMABAD (APP): A two-day international conference, themed "Decade of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Belt & Road Initiative (BRI): From Vision To Reality," started here on Monday to mark the 10-year celebrations of CPEC. The Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives has organized the conference in collaboration with the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan, a news release said. The key objective of the conference is to bring together policymakers, scholars, practitioners and

other stakeholders to exchange ideas and insights related to the economic, social, environmental and geopolitical impacts of CPEC and BRI. Chinese Charge d'Affaires Pang Chunxue was the chief guest on the first day of the conference, which was attended among others by Secretary Planning Syed Zafar Ali Shah and Chief Economist of Pakistan Dr Nadeem Javaid, who is also Project Director of CPEC.

Higher Education Commission (HEC) Chairman Dr Mukhtar Ahmed and hundreds of

policymakers and experts were present on the first day of the conference.

Chief Economist Dr Nadeem Javaid, in the inaugural session, said the objective of the conference revolved around the socio-economic impact of CPEC and opportunities for industry relocation, the prospect of regional connectivity and technology transfer, enhanced cooperation for security, geopolitical implications to overcome challenges and maximizing synergies in CPEC and BRI initiatives, besides people-to-people connectivity.

## No hike in electricity tariff upto 200 units: PM

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said that the 63% domestic consumers using up to 200 units per month would be exempted from the recent increase in power tariff.

A partial subsidy was also being given to those consuming up to 300 units per month, who were around 31% of the total domestic consumers, he added.

"Due to the toughest conditions from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the government had to raise the electricity prices but I stressed that the burden should not be passed on to the protected segments of the society," he said after witnessing the signing of a framework agreement between the

State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR) Trading and the Pakistan LNG Limited (PLL).

The framework agreement was signed by PLL Managing Director Masood Nabi and Chief Executive Officer of SOCAR Trading Mariam Almaszade.

Minister of State for Petroleum Musadik Malik, Punjab Governor Baleegh Ur Rehman, diplomats and government officials were also present on the occasion.

Under the framework agreement, the SOCAR Trading has offered supply one cargo per month of liquefied natural gas (LNG) to Pakistan on flexible terms and with the credit line for 30 days after delivery of the cargo in one

year contract which is extendable by another year. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said it was really a great day as "we are standing here as brothers from two brotherly countries - Pakistan and Azerbaijan". He expressed good wishes for President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev whom he met in Baku few weeks ago and thanked him for finalizing the agreement.

"We had extremely productive and very fruitful discussion over there as to how to promote economic relations between the two friendly countries," he said, adding immediately on his return to home, the Government of Pakistan accorded approval to the Azerbaijan Airline to land at Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi.

## PM thanks President of Azerbaijan for favorable LNG agreement

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Monday thanked President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev for his support in the finalization of Liquefied Natural Gas agreement on favorable terms to Pakistan.

In a tweet on social media platform Twitter, he said, "Today marks a major development in the bilateral relations of Pakistan & Azerbaijan. Our respective ministries signed an LNG Agreement today to procure one LNG cargo per month for a period of one year. This agreement will help ease gas shortage in the country & provide relief to the people & industry."

"I am grateful to H.E President of Azerbaijan, for his support in the finalisation of this agreement on favorable terms to Pakistan. My appreciation is also due to Minister of Finance Ishaq Dar, Minister of State for Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik & their teams for the hard work. Without their commitment to public service, this agreement would not have been possible in the shortest span of time," he added.

## Bilawal, Josep Borrell discuss revival of Black Sea Grain Initiative

ISLAMABAD (APP): Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari held a telephone conversation with European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell here on Monday and discussed matters of mutual interest.

Expressing Pakistan's concerns over the expiry of the Black Sea Grain Initiative (BSGI), the foreign minister said that the resulting food inflation and food security-related challenges would adversely impact developing countries like Pakistan which were already under economic pressure.

The foreign minister said that he had also spoken to his Ukrainian and Turkish counterparts on this subject.

He hoped that efforts aimed at reviving the initiative would come to fruition through dialogue and constructive engagement accommodating the concerns of all parties. The foreign minister requested the EU High Representative to play his role to help find a solution that would allow the renewal of BSGI and conveyed Pakistan's readiness to contribute to collective efforts in that regard.

## Marriyum launches health insurance registration form for journalists



ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Monday that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif would formally launch Journalists Health Insurance Card Scheme on August 7.

She stated this after launching the registration process for Journalists Health Insurance Scheme by uploading its form on the website of the Press Information Department and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

The minister said that the health insurance form was now available online for media workers and journalists and they would be able to register themselves through the online health insurance form.

The minister said that for the first time, the gov-



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi offering his condolences over the sad demise of the son of Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhary at his residence.

## ECP issues non-bailable arrest warrants for Imran

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) issued non-bailable arrest warrants for Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief, Isteikhkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) leader Fawad Chaudhry, and former PTI secretary general Asad Umar on Monday.

A four-member ECP bench, headed by Member Sindh Nisar Durran heard the ECP contempt plea against PTI chief, Fawad Chaudhry and Asad Umar. However, lawyers representing them did not appear before the ECP.

Umar's assistant lawyer requested the commis-

## Law Minister calls on NA Speaker

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar Monday called on Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf in his office to discuss matters related to pending legislative business.

The delegation of Lawyers' community of Gujranwala Bar Council was also present in the meeting, said a news release issued here.

The meeting discussed the issues being faced by the lawyers' community in Gujranwala.



The speaker said resolving the problems being faced by the lawyers of Gujranwala Bar Council had been his top priority. He said that the role of the lawyers' community was of key importance for ensuring rule of law, supremacy of the constitution and promotion of democracy in the country.

## President condoles with Dr Tariq Fazal on death of son

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi Monday here arrived at the residence of Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry and condoled on the death of his young son.

The President expressed grief and sorrow over the death of his son and prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear the loss with fortitude.

## No possibility of Dar's becoming caretaker PM: Kh Asif

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for Defence and central leader of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Khawaja Muhammad Asif has ruled out the possibility of Finance Minister Ishaq Dar becoming a caretaker prime minister (PM). Talking to a private news channel on Monday, Khawaja Asif said a caretaker PM plays the role of an umpire in a caretaker set-up. He added that Ishaq Dar's name was not considered for the caretaker PM's slot on any platform.

He added that the federal government did not even give any hint at appointing Dar as the caretaker premier. "The report was actually leaked by a reputed journalist in the media." "I personally wish to see Dar as the caretaker premier."

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Skewed tax policy

In a statement before the National Assembly on Friday, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar rebuffed reports that the government was planning to impose new taxes on the agriculture and construction — including real estate — sectors.

A day later, he insisted that the taxes on these two sectors agreed with the IMF for its new \$3bn loan, and widely reported in the media, had already been implemented in the budget for this fiscal year. "I want to categorically state that no new tax will be imposed on the agriculture and construction sectors ... we have already endured the pain, and met all prior actions of the IMF programme," he told parliamentarians.

The budget is estimated to generate additional revenues of Rs80bn by increasing the tax rate for builders and developers and non-filers on the purchase and sale of immovable property and second homes.

The changes in the rates were part of the government effort to secure the IMF bailout by raising additional tax and non-tax revenues during the present financial year to meet the programme goal of producing primary surplus equal to 0.4pc of GDP, as well as strengthen tax collection to 10.3pc of GDP.

Most additional revenue measures were announced on the day parliament approved the budget to satisfy the Fund after the latter's criticism of Mr Dar's original budget that the government had 'missed' the opportunity to broaden the tax base.

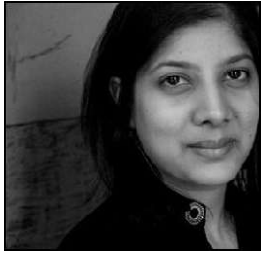
Though the tax target was eventually revised upwards, the minister tiptoed around the broader tax policy goal of effectively taxing undertaxed sectors such as retail, agriculture and real estate — especially incomes from these sectors.

However, this did not come as a surprise. The PML-N — or any party for that matter — and the powerful civil and military bureaucracy are averse to taxing incomes from retail, real estate and agriculture, the economy's three largest segments, because of their own vested interests.

Former FBR head Shabbaz Zaidi has narrated how he was prevented by the previous army chief from taking steps to document the massive 'file' business in real estate.

This government's tax policy was set by a tweet from PML-N chief organiser Maryam Nawaz last year when she indicated to then finance minister Miftah Ismail through Twitter that he should revoke a nominal tax he had dared to impose on the electricity bills of the party's core support group, ie, retailers. The narrow tax base and low tax-to-GDP ratio means that the documented corporate sector and salaried classes will bear the burden of any increase in the tax target. The last two budgets are evidence of this skewed policy. Though the new IMF loan deal commits the government to expand the personal income tax base by adding 300,000 persons, few believe the rulers have the political will to meet this condition.

NATO summit



Huma Yusuf

Pakistan's Foreign Office last week offered to mediate between Russia and Ukraine in an effort to end the war. The offer has some credibility on the back of the Ukrainian foreign minister's visit to Islamabad, and Pakistan's repeated insistence of neutrality in that context. And it is a sensible offer from a country desperate for both cheap gas from Russia and wheat from Ukraine. Unfortunately, neutrality seems an increasingly difficult pose to strike in our complex world.

This was a key signal from the recently concluded summit of Nato leaders in Vilnius. Although the summit fell short of announcing a timeline for Ukrainian accession, it gave a clear 'us versus them' message, the sense that a new Cold War is already upon us.

The alliance reassured Ukraine of membership at an appropriate time and members' bilateral promises of arms and support to Kyiv, a message that Nato would check Russian ambitions. It also used strong language against China, indicating that Beijing's non-transparent approach, military modernisation and ties with Moscow were all perceived as threats to Nato's interests.

On the other hand, Finland's inclusion — and Sweden's imminent accession — were celebrated because they provide the alliance its greatest-ever territorial reach across Europe, the Baltic Sea and the Arctic Circle. The Baltic Sea was smugly rebranded a 'Nato lake'.

The alliance made clear its intentions to es-

tablish itself as a real contender in the Asia-Pacific theatre. Japan and South Korea attended the summit for the second year in a row, and while the French president blocked the opening of a Nato liaison office in Japan, other plans to entrench Nato's presence in China's backyard were hatched, including ensuring interoperability of Nato and Japanese forces to deploy alongside each other.

Nato's secretary general also drummed home his thesis that security crises are globalised, with issues in Asia having European ramifications, and vice versa — in essence, a justification of Nato's Asian forays.

Nato also made a push to give teeth to its expanded vision. Leaders agreed to a baseline of two per cent of GDP for defence expenditure. Nato's top general also presented defence plans outlining how it would secure the alliance's northern, eastern and southern flanks. Such detailed plans have reportedly not existed since the Cold War era.

Against this backdrop, Islamabad's neutrality seems fragile. Pakistan is, after all, a major non-Nato ally, and one assumes it's a matter of time before Nato messaging regarding Russia and China comes to bear on that status (let's not forget the challenge this January to Pakistan's non-Nato ally status by a US Congressman on the basis that Pakistan was not doing enough to clamp down on the Haqqani Network; could neutrality vis-à-vis Moscow be the next fault decider?).

Polarisation of the global landscape has been the story of the past decade, with the divides between populism and pluralism quickly hardening into those between autocracy and democracy. We are returning to a world of blocs and satellites, and those such as Pakistan seeking neutrality, or particularly trying to bal-

ance relations between the US and China, are likely to struggle.

These balancing acts must be central considerations for Islamabad not only as it crafts its foreign policies, but also in the economic arena (for example, we must consider long-term scenarios during the privatisation of key assets that will be of interest to key players from the West, China and Russia).

Beyond polarisation, the Nato summit also held some warnings for civil society in places such as Paki-s-tan where democ-a-tic values are already threatened. The shift to terming the 2pc military expenditure as a floor rather than a ceiling in an era of cost-of-living crises privileges security spending at all costs.

This means IFIs' requirements for underdeveloped countries struggling with debt and seeking bailouts to cut their own military expenditure to cover costs of public service may be perceived as lip service instead. This would be an unfortunate development, diverting from future funding for social welfare, infrastructure and the green transition.

Human rights groups have also criticised Sweden's many concessions to Turkey to gain approval for its accession to Nato, including the lifting of an arms embargo and the introduction of new laws regarding proscribed groups. Many believe Stockholm has had to throw Kurdish dissidents seeking refuge in Sweden under the proverbial bus in order to secure its Nato spot. This goes against the key criteria for aspiring Nato members to respect democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. As such, despite prioritising security, the Nato Vilnius summit seems to be hearkening to a scarier world. -- Courtesy Dawn

Quotidian quotas



Shahzad Sharjeel

'We' were fewer in number, yet a large swathe of the subcontinent came under us. Then came the British, yet fewer in number, to rule over both 'us' and 'them'. By the time the British were sent off, the ballot and bullet had both gained currency. Strength in numbers determined who called the shots. We insisted that 'them' outnumbering 'us' was not acceptable and carved out a country from areas where we were in a majority.

The fear of being outnumbered transcends umbrella identities. There are minorities among the majority groupings based on language, race, sect, geography, etc. Division of the subcontinent resulted in the biggest migration in human history. The migrants to Pakistan naturally sought representation in the new polity. The host communities' fears of becoming 'Red Indians' on their own soil were stoked. The quota system was born.

Debates of equality vs equity can be taken up in subsequent pieces as space restrictions allow us only to scratch the surface of issues as complex as inclusion, diversity, fairness and merit. The NFC awards and provincial shares in water resources can also be debated separately.

Provincial quotas for federal jobs were introduced in 1948, revised in 1949, and have been amended and extended through successive constitutions and presidential orders. However, the last such extension should have ended the quotas in 2013. Since then, bills for

the constitutional amendment to decide the matter have been shuttling between the Upper and Lower Houses of parliament; throw in a few petitions to the courts of law and orders of the Supreme Court, and it is anybody's guess on what basis the quotas persist.

According to the FPSC website Punjab has a 50 per cent share in federal jobs, Sindh has 19pc, KP 11.5pc, Balochistan 6pc, Northern Areas, and Federally Administered Tribal Areas [sic], 4pc, Azad Kashmir 2pc, and Merit 7.5pc. Ten per cent of the respective provincial quotas are reserved for women.

Sindh takes the cake in these reservations as no other province has a further rural-urban, ie, 60-40, subdivision of quotas within the province. Fight over resources is not about their finite nature; it stems from a trust deficit in the other's intentions and fears that any recourse to remedial measures will favour those wielding force. Quotas may appear well-meaning and fairness-oriented initially, but they pose major problems.

First, to qualify for a reserved quota, all one needs is to belong to a certain geographical area, speak a language or belong to a race, religion, or some other identity marker. Quotas are dissimilar to non-discrimination laws, meaning a person otherwise qualified will not be discriminated against on any grounds. What is fundamentally wrong with the quota system is that it does not help anyone in the long run, least of all the intended beneficiaries of these 'head start' schemes as they have no graduation programmes. A few individuals belonging to the underserved community or region may benefit but the area or the community gain nothing in terms of competitiveness.

The crux of the matter is that a temporary arrangement meant to be phased out gained permanence and has created a debilitating dependence amongst its beneficiaries. Efficient governance and access to finance will help the stragglers to catch up with the rest of the caravan, not quotas. The quality of education in rural Sindh has deteriorated over the decades. It is because the lollipop of quotas suppresses the demand side of education reforms in rural Sindh that commands a majority in the provincial legislature. The constituents have been lulled into a perpetual state of gratitude for government jobs and a few admissions to professional colleges. Before the urbanites of Sindh act smug, their insistence on institutionalising organised cheating in exams ostensibly to counter the double whammy of lax vigilance at examination centres in rural Sindh and its favourable share in quotas is akin to cutting one's nose to spite one's face. Enterprises like Pakistan Railways, Wapda and PIA are meant to provide the best services at the most competitive rates to the teeming millions in Pakistan — and not for the perks and privileges of their employees. Similarly, the civil services are meant to serve the masses and are not employment exchanges. Professional colleges and universities are meant for producing the best doctors, engineers and artists. What does it matter to a patient if her doctor belongs to a certain area, race or religion? If a kidney is removed in what was meant to be a knee replacement, what slope can the aggrieved patient derive from any kinship with the malpractitioner? Fight elite capture, and ensure equity through quotas. -- Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Modern technology, alternative energy inevitable to achieve exports competitiveness: PM

SHEIKHUPURA (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said that the utilization of modern technology and alternative energy by the industrial sector were inevitable to make exports competitive in the international market.

The prime minister, addressing the soft launching of Ombre Special Economic Zone, Sundar Green Special Economic Zone and Smart Special Economic Zone, said owing to surging oil prices, the only option was to exploit the potential of solar, wind and hydel energy for the cost-effectiveness of local products.

He said the issue of circular debt was required to be addressed on a war-footing basis, which was swelling due to wasting billions of rupees annually because of line and transmission losses as well as power theft.

The prime minister appreciated the private sector for chalking out a plan to establish the three special economic zones and assured all-out support from the federal and Punjab governments.

He said the commitment by the private sector to attract investment worth billions of rupees was also laudable, besides their plans to set up a three-megawatt solar power plant and other allied facilities like the vocational training center. He hoped that the interim government would also take all possible measures to keep the national economy on track of progress, as the incumbent one was already making necessary legislation to pave the way for future course of action.



HYDERABAD: Hyderabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (HCCI) President, Adeel Siddiqui addresses during National Exporters Training Program organized by Trade Development Authority of Pakistan held at HCCI in Hyderabad.

TDAP in collaboration with HCCI organizes training programme for Hyderabad business community

HYDERABAD (APP): President Hyderabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Adeel Siddiqui has emphasized the need to initiate collection efforts to increase the volume of Pakistan's exports so that the country could come out of the economic crisis. Despite issues of water and energy, Pakistani businessmen are hitting the 26 billion dollar exports mark whereas Bangladesh exports stood at \$ 60 billion dollars with single digit markup ratio like other Asian countries, he said while addressing the participants of a national export training

programme organized by Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) on Monday evening.

He said that foreign remittances in Pakistan stood at 22 billion dollars, however, he said that close liaison with TDAP will help in increasing export volume as best as possible. He informed that the business community of Hyderabad had helped the Federal Board of Revenue to meet the tax collection target of Rs 7,100 billion in 2022-23 and now the target of Rs 9,000 billion would be achieved with the same zeal in 2023-2024.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Gas carrier 'LPG-FSM' carrying 2,200 tonnes of LPG arrived at outer anchorage of the Port Qasim on 22nd July, 2023.

A total of 06 ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them four ships, Maersk Nayassa, Al-Areesh, Summer-Pleog and Sea-Ranger sailed out to sea on Monday morning (today), while another ship 'San-Antonio' is expected to sail on same day. Cargo throughput of 68,986 tonnes, comprising 38,130 tonnes imports Cargo and 30,856 tonnes export cargo.

RDA generates Rs 851 mn revenue during last fiscal year

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Metropolitan Planning and Traffic Engineering (MP&TE) Directorate, Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) generated revenue amounting to Rs 851 million against the target of Rs 565 million set for 2022-23 fiscal year.

According to RDA spokesperson, the Land Use and Building Control (LU&BC) Wing had collected Rs 558 million and Planning Wing collected Rs 293 million.

Boosting Exports: Value of rupee, dollar has to be left to market: Mian Zahid

KARACHI (INP): Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said that strengthening the value of the rupee makes exports difficult while making imports cheaper.

In a statement here on Monday, he said that a strengthened currency reduces exports and increases imports, which drain the

forex reserves, and the country has to borrow, which burdens 240 million people in the country.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the value of the rupee and dollar must not be controlled to boost exports and remittances. Efforts to control the value of currency reduced textile exports by \$2.8 billion in 2023.

He said that non-textile exports, which were 12.46 billion dollars in 2022, fell to 11.23 billion dollars in 2023.

PBF demands govt to end free power units to save 10bn annually

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) on Monday urged the federal government to discontinue the facility of free or discounted electricity to government officers including staff of all power distribution companies (discos). This move will save the national exchequer Rs 10 billion a year. In a statement, PBF Chief Organiser and Vice President, Chaudhry Ahmad Jawad said gone are the days of these individu-

als living like royals. If parliamentarians, businessmen and masses pay electricity bills from their own pockets, then why certain segment of society enjoy the free facility when country is already facing economic crises. Similarly PBF showed displeasure on a significant increase in the base tariff by Rs7.50 per unit for electricity, dealing a severe blow to middle- and lower-middle-class consumers with Time of Use (TOU) metres.

Iran Ambassador calls on Dar, discusses bilateral ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan Reza Amiri Moghaddam on Monday called on Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and discussed ways to enhance bilateral relations.

The minister welcomed the ambassador and extended felicitations on assuming the charge of ambassador in Pakistan, said a news release issued here. Ishaq Dar extended blessings to the Iranian leadership and people at the start of the new Islamic year and highlighted deep-rooted historical relations between both countries based on age-old commonalities.

During the meeting, they discussed in detail various fields for mutual

cooperation including trade, investment, and security between the two countries.

They discussed enhancing trade relations by activating the recently inaugurated border markets and opening of three more border markets between the two countries in order to achieve the optimal trade volume through the border trade mechanism and removing technical hurdles in enhancing trade relations between the two countries.

Collaboration in the banking sector between the two countries also came under discussion as the heads of central banks of the two countries would meet next week in Pakistan to discuss and sort out the issues related to banking cooperation.



Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam calling on Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar at Finance Division, Islamabad

Power Division directed to refer \$ 32m damaged matter to GT-14 7474 MW to FIA

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Senate Standing Committee on Power Monday directed the Ministry of Power Division to refer the matter of recovery \$ 32 million damaged to GT-14 (747 MW) from GE to Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) for investigation. The committee which met with Senator Saifullah Abro in the Chair decided to refer the matter to FIA after being dissatisfied on the briefing by the acting CEO GHCL.

The Committee discussed at length the matter of the recovery of amount of damaged GT-14 (747 MW) from GE.

The Committee also directed the Power Division to refer the matter of the constitution of the new Members of BoDs and also recommended to appoint fresh Members of BoDs as per qualification and merit. The committee while discussing the matter inquired on the action taken regarding the three letters issued by Power Division on 31-3-2022.

# Naqvi calls for immediate drainage of rainwater

**Fort Kuhna Qasim to be rehabilitated into its original form**

**Independent Report**  
MULTAN: Caretaker Punjab Chief Minister, Syed Mohsin Naqvi, took notice of the accumulation of rainwater in various areas of the city and ordered immediate drainage of water. He paid a visit to various parts of the city including Ghanta Ghar, Fish market, Eid Gah, Cantt, Shujabad road, and other areas, and reviewed the drainage condition after the rain here on Monday evening. He directed Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) to mobilize all machinery and resources and asked

Deputy Commissioner on Monday. Mohsin Naqvi, however, expressed displeasure over the poor cleanliness arrangement and instructed officials concerned to ensure cleanliness arrangements. The chief minister also ordered the widening of a door and its restoration to its original condition. He added that all steps would be taken for the rehabilitation of the ancient fort. On this occasion, Chief Secretary, IGP, Commissioner Multan and many other officers were also present.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Baligh Ur Rehman calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## Rangers conduct flag march regarding security of Muharram

LARKANA (APP): Wing Commander Shahbaz Rangers Lt. Col. Mohammad Baig led a flag march of Police, a convoy of Rangers vehicles and motorcycles, that took a round of Larkana city as part of Muharram security arrangements in the district on Monday. The convoy took its start from Rangers Headquarters Larkana and passed through all the main roads of Larkana city and other areas of the city. Later, the Wing Commander Shahbaz Rangers along with other officials of Rangers also inspected routes of Muharram processions and sites of Majalis. Rangers are performing their professional duties to ensure peace, tranquility, law, and order during Muharram in Larkana. On the directives of Director General Azhar Waqas control rooms had been established at various points. The Rangers had also been directed to monitor the Muharram processions. He also directed to deploy the Rangers personnel at the venues of Majalis and to carry out patrolling in their surroundings.

## PIA steward 'disappears' in Canada

KARACHI (INP): A Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) steward went 'missing' from a hotel after his arrival in Toronto, Canada from Lahore. As per the PIA administration, flight steward Muntazir Mehdi arrived in Toronto from Lahore via the national airline's flight, PK-798 on Friday. He along with other crew members had been staying at a hotel in the Canadian city. The mysterious missing of the PIA steward came to light when he didn't report for duty on a flight back to Pakistan. Subsequently, the matter was brought to the notice of the airline management and Canadian immigration authorities. Before Mehdi, four flight stewards and air hostesses of the national airline have slipped into Canada for citizenship. Last year, an air steward for Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) reportedly went missing in Canada after flight PK-798 landed in Toronto which the airline authority confirmed. The flight attendant Ramzan Gul boarded the national flag carrier's flight from Islamabad in the capacity of the aircraft crew, confirmed the PIA spokesperson. PIA authorities said they also updated, on the development, the Canadian immigration authority as the crew member gets clearance under General Declaration and when one of them has indeed gone missing.

## SSWMB takes measures for de-watering, Muharram: MD SSWMB

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB) is taking effective measures for de-watering after rain and also to facilitate the mourners during the programs which would be held in connection with the Muharram-ul-haram. The steps are being taken on the directions of the Managing Director SSWMB Syed Imtiaz Ali Shah, said a spokesperson on Monday. The MD SSWMB also met the prominent scholars and the administrators of Imambargahs and assured them of the cleaning of the roads, streets and venues of processions and Majalis, sprinkling of lime and other arrangements. All the officers and staff will be active and ensure timely arrangements in relation to rain and Muharram-ul-haram, he said. Meanwhile, emergency will remain in force in relation to expected more rain, he added. He said that redressal of the complaints received from the citizens is being ensured in a timely manner, in this regard private contractors have also been directed to collect the garbage as soon as possible.

## Scholar sees great potential in SU faculty members

HYDERABAD (APP): Professor of South Asian and Post-colonial Pakistan Studies, North Carolina Central University and President, American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS) USA Dr Matthew A. Cook has said that the institute would assist the Pakistan Study Centre (PSC), University of Sindh in bringing US faculty for conducting training and development of strong academic linkages with the US varities. He said that the teachers and scholars of the uni-

## SSP visits security routes in Khairpur city

SUKKUR (APP): The Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Khairpur, Mir Rohail Khan Khoso on Monday visited security routes of the 8<sup>th</sup> Muharram-ul-Haram mourning processions. The SSP Khairpur visited routes of Katchehry Road and Mall Road to be taken out on 8<sup>th</sup> Muharram-ul-Haram and issued directives to all SHO's to ensure effective Security arrangements.

## Staff to remain high alert on Ashura; says MS Sukkur Hospital

SUKKUR (APP): District headquarters hospital Sukkur will remain on high alert on Ashura days in compliance with the directions of the Sindh Government. A meeting under the chair of MS Dr Rafique Memon was held at the office to finalize the arrangements regarding 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Muharram on Monday. Memon told the participants that foolproof arrangements would be ensured during Ashura. He directed to keep an ample quantity of life-saving drugs in the emergency ward during the Ashura. Medical equipment should be completely functional and all the staff must be alert during these days, he said. He directed that separate beds would be fixed for wounded Aza-dars so that other patients coming to the emergency ward could be treated uninterrupted.



FAISALABAD: Ahmad Farooq Senior Advisor to Federal Ombudsman is visiting Executive Office of Regional Passport Office at Koh-e-Noor Chowk.

## KU chemical engineering program receives PEC re-accreditation

KARACHI (APP): The B.E. Chemical Engineering Programme at the University of Karachi has received re-accreditation from the Pakistan Engineering Council. The delegation which was led by Engineer Professor Dr Abdullah Khan Durrani from the University of Punjab, Lahore, spent two days at the University of Karachi, assessing the performance and activities of the chemical engineering department. Other members of the delegation included Engineer Taha Ahmed Khan, Engineer Dr Neharullah Khan, Engineer Dr Asad Ullah Khan, and Engineer Dr Ghulamullah Khan Kakar. She mentioned that the PEC delegation has assured the department that the formal documents confirming the re-accreditation would be provided shortly. A delegation of five members from the PEC visited the KU Department of Chemical Engineering to evaluate the batches enrolled between 2019 and 2023. The departmental chairperson Professor Dr Shagufa Ishiyaque shared that after thoroughly assessing the department and campus, the delegation agreed to re-accredit the chemical engineering programme. She mentioned that the PEC delegation has assured the department that the formal documents confirming the re-accreditation would be provided shortly.



HYDERABAD: Rain water accumulated on the road at Latifabad.

# International News

## North Korea fires ballistic missile after US submarine arrives in South Korea

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: North Korea fired at least one ballistic missile into its eastern sea, South Korea's military said Tuesday, adding to a recent streak in weapons testing that is apparently in protest of the U.S. sending major naval assets to South Korea in a show of force. South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff did not immediately say where the weapon was launched from and how far it flew. The launch came hours after South Korea's navy said a nuclear-propelled U.S. submarine — the USS Annapolis — arrived at a port on Jeju Island. The arrival of the USS Annapolis adds to the allies' show of force to counter North Korean nuclear threats. Last week, the USS Kentucky became the first U.S. nuclear-armed submarine to come to South Korea since the 1980s. North Korea reacted to its arrival by test-firing ballistic and cruise missiles in apparent demonstrations that it could make nuclear strikes against South Korea and deployed U.S. naval vessels. Also on Monday, the American-led U.N. Command said it has started a conversation with North Korea about a U.S. soldier who ran into the North last week across one of the world's most heavily fortified borders. Andrew Harrison, a British lieutenant general who is the deputy commander at the U.N. Command, refused to say when the conversation started, how many exchanges have taken place and whether the North Koreans responded constructively, citing the sensitivity of the discussions. He also declined to detail what the command knows about Pvt. Travis King's condition.



Members of the security services investigate the site of a damaged building following a reported drone attack in Moscow, Russia.

## UN chief urges Russia to return to Black Sea deal

**Monitoring Desk**  
UNITED NATIONS: United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called on Russia on Monday to return to a deal allowing the safe Black Sea export of Ukrainian grain in line with a proposal he made to President Vladimir Putin. Russia quit the agreement a week ago, saying that demands to improve its own food and fertilizer exports had not been met, and that not enough Ukraine grain had reached the poorest countries under the Black Sea deal. "With the termination of the Black Sea Initiative, the most vulnerable will pay the highest price," Guterres told the U.N. Food Systems summit in Rome on Monday. "When food prices rise, everybody pays for it." Since Russia quit the deal and began attacking Ukrainian food-exporting ports on the Black Sea and Danube river, global wheat and corn futures have risen sharply. "This is especially devastating for vulnerable countries struggling to feed their people," Guterres said. Guterres had written to Putin on July 11 in a final effort to save the deal.

## Canada PM Trudeau plans cabinet reshuffle this week

**Monitoring Desk**  
OTTAWA: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is planning to reshuffle his cabinet this week, likely replacing ministers deemed to have struggled in their posts or who are not planning on running again in the next election, two government sources said. Trudeau has periodically reshuffled his cabinet since taking power in 2015. The shakeup — which the Canadian Broad-

## Two protesters burn Koran in front of Iraqi embassy in Denmark

**Monitoring Desk**  
COPENHAGEN: Two protesters set fire to a copy of the Koran, Islam's holy book, in front of the Iraqi embassy in the Danish capital on Monday, risking a further deterioration of relations between the two countries. Protests have raged across Iran and Iraq after Denmark and Sweden allowed the burning of the Koran under rules protecting free speech.

## China to step up policy adjustments amid tortuous recovery

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIJING: China's top leaders pledged on Monday to step up policy support for the economy amid a tortuous post-COVID recovery, focusing on boosting domestic demand, signalling more stimulus steps. The world's second-largest economy grew at a frail pace in the second quarter as demand weakened at home and abroad, raising pressure on policymakers to deliver more stimulus to shore up post-COVID recovery. China will step up economic policy adjustments, focusing on expanding domestic demand, boosting confidence and preventing risks, state news agency Xinhua cited the Politburo, a top decision-making body of the ruling Communist Party, as saying. "Currently, China's economy is facing new difficulties and challenges, which mainly arise from insufficient domestic demand, difficulties in the operation of some enterprises, risks and hidden dangers in key areas, as well as a grim and complex external environment," Xinhua quoted the Politburo as saying, after a meeting chaired by President Xi Jinping. China will implement its macro adjustments "in a precise and forceful manner" and strengthen counter-cyclical adjustments, as the government sticks to a prudent monetary policy and pro-active fiscal policy, the Politburo was quoted as saying. Xinhua quoted President Xi as saying during a separate meeting that China will strive to achieve its annual development targets.



Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg is lifted away by police when she takes part in a new climate action in Oljehammen in Malmo, Sweden.



Tourists are seen after being evacuated following a wildfire on the island of Rhodes, Greece.

## 15 dead, all missing passengers found after Indonesia boat sinks

**Monitoring Desk**  
BUTON TENGAH: At least 15 people were killed on Monday after a wooden boat sank off the coast of Indonesia's Sulawesi island, search and rescue officials said, adding that all missing passengers had been accounted for. The boat sank with 48 people onboard just after midnight (5pm GMT on Sunday), the local office of Indonesia's search and rescue agency said in a statement. Six people were rescued and taken to hospital for treatment, it added, and the cause of the sinking was being investigated. Muhamad Arafah, head of the local search and rescue agency in Kendari city in Southeast Sulawesi, said in the statement that the 27 other passengers had been accounted for and all the victims had been identified. The agency had earlier reported that 19 were missing and that search efforts were ongoing, but Arafah said the operation had now been "declared finished and closed".

## Second US submarine arrives in South Korea amid North Korea tensions

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: A U.S. nuclear-powered submarine arrived in South Korea on Monday, only days after the first U.S. nuclear armed submarine made port in the country in four decades, as the two allies seek to boost American strategic assets to deter North Korea. The USS Annapolis entered a naval base in South Korea's southern island of Jeju, to load military supplies while on an unspecified operational mission, the South Korean navy said.

## Iran kicks off air force drill as US sends more fighter planes to the region

**Monitoring Desk**  
TEHRAN: Iran on Sunday began an annual air force drill in the central part of country, state media reported, as the U.S. sends more fighter planes to the region to deter the Islamic Republic from seizing commercial vessels in the Persian Gulf area. The official IRNA news agency said 11 Iranian air force bases participated in the drill, dubbed Fadaeian Velyat-11, or Devotees of the Supreme Leader-11. It said an air base at the southern port of Bandar Abbas at the mouth of the strategic Strait of Hormuz is active in the drill. The Strait of Hormuz is the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which 20% of all crude oil passes. The report said more than 90 fighter planes, bombers and drones would participate in the drill. Air Force Chief Gen. Hamid Vahedi said the drill's message is one of friendship, peace and security in the region. "Sustainable security, improving and fostering regional ties, peaceful coexistence and defending air borders are on the agenda," he said. From time to time Iran holds such drills and says they are designed to assess force's combat readiness and demonstrate the nation's military capabilities.

## Alvi for enhancing economic linkages with Ethiopia

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday asked Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to Ethiopia to foster trade and economic linkages with Ethiopia by facilitating and enhancing interactions between business communities of the two countries.

He also urged the ambassador to work towards increasing trade volume with Ethiopia by reaching out to their businesspersons for the import of Pakistani products. The president was talking to Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Mian Atif Sharif, who called on him at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, the President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

President Alvi said that Pakistan-Ethiopia bilateral ties were marked by common history, interests, and support for each other on various international fora. He said that the bilateral relations between the two countries needed to be further cemented by taking the mutual trade volume to its fullest potential.

The president also called for enhancing cooperation in the field of education and people-to-people contacts, adding that students in Ethiopia could benefit from online/video educational materials/courses of the Virtual University of Pakistan and Allama Iqbal Open University to enhance their skill sets. He said that Pakistan's offer of training young Ethiopian diplomats at the Foreign Service Academy and scholarships for banking courses would further help improve bilateral ties with Ethiopia.

The president asked the ambassador to create awareness in Ethiopia about the rising tide of Islamophobia in the world and the need for collective efforts to promote inter-faith harmony and mutual respect. He also urged the newly-appointed envoy to highlight the human rights violations and atrocities being committed by India in the Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) as well as the maltreatment of minorities.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Mian Atif Sharif called on President Dr. Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## ED vacant post in HEC to be filled soon: Rana

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, Rana Tanveer Hussain on Monday assured the National Assembly that Executive Director vacant post in the Higher Education Commission (HEC) will be filled soon.

Responding to a calling attention notice regarding the vacant ED position, the minister said that the post would be filled once the proposed amendments to the existing law, established in 2002, are approved.

"The amendments will be passed within a week, and the appointment of the Executive Director will be made subsequently," the minister reassured the assembly.

He further explained that the suggested amendments aimed to further improve the existing laws governing the commission.

In the meantime, the current ED has been granted an extension until July 31, ensuring continuity in HEC's operations during the transitional phase.

He emphasized that the Higher Education Commission operates independently and autonomously, and the government has no role in the extension decision taken for the present ED.

During the session, Muhammad Jamal-ud-Din from Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Pakistan (Fazl) highlighted issues in his area and called on the government to take notice and initiate measures for resolution.

## Govt committed to mitigate hardships of GB's people: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar on Monday said that the government was committed to mitigate the hardships of the people of Gilgit Baltistan and extending every possible cooperation in that regard.

He said that to attract investment in energy sector in order to materialize the full potential of GB resources for its people, the PPIB Act and the Power policy of 2015 would be extended to the province.

The minister chaired a meeting to finalize power generation policy for GP.

Advisor to Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Qamar Zaman Qaira, Secretary Water And Power Gilgit Baltistan, Secretary Kashmir Affairs, representatives from power division, and Secretary Law And Justice Division also attended the meeting.

The participants shared their insightful ideas for bridging the demand and supply gap that the Gilgit Baltistan region was currently experiencing.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali, Caretaker Chief Minister KP and Chief Secretary KP Nadeem Aslam Chaudhary discussing the rehabilitation efforts and losses in Chitral owing to heavy rains in the area.

## Fed govt teachers demand hiring arrears

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Teachers' Associations of federal public educational institutions of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Monday demanded of the government to pay the hiring arrears to teachers immediately.

Talking to APP, President Federal Government Teachers Association (FGTA) Fazal Mola said that the owners were evicting the teachers from their homes, and urged the government to pay the arrears.

He said that steps should have been taken to solve the problems of teaching and non-teaching staff of education department.

He pointed out that the payments for hiring had not been made for the past several years.

Fazal said the concerned authorities assured before the budget that the arrears would be given in terms of hiring, but no practical action was taken in that regard. He said that new hiring was not being given to teachers who adopted the sacred profession of teaching.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar speaking at annual talks between Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Pakistan Naval Headquarters.

## ECC approves fixation of Maximum Retail Prices of 25 new drugs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) on Monday approved the fixation of Maximum Retail Prices (MRPs) of Twenty-Five (25) new drugs.

The cabinet committee meeting was chaired by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar, according to a press statement issued by the finance ministry.

Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination submitted a summary regarding the fixation of MRPs of 26 new drugs.

Ministry of National Food Security and Research submitted a summary for allocation of Pakistan Agricultural Storage and Services Corporation (PASSCO)'s wheat amongst recipient agencies/provinces/areas for the year 2023-24 and informed that the recipient agencies have made their demand of 2,488,000 MT for the food year 2023-24.

The ECC after discussion allowed allocation of wheat amongst the recipients @ 50% local and 50% imported on the weighted average price of the stock.

The ECC directed that all recipients would pay the full price of wheat and incidental charges of PASSCO as there would be no financial liability on the part of the federal govt for the supply of the wheat to the respective provinces/entities.

The ECC directed the provincial governments to pay the pending liabilities of Rs. 149 billion of PASSCO before signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the procurement of wheat for the current year. Accordingly, the ECC considered and approved summary of the Ministry of Industries and Production regarding amendments in the EPZA Rules, 1981, and EPZs (Control of Entry and Exit of Persons and Goods) Regulations, 1994, to allow the import of construction material from tariff area into EPZs of Northern region (Sialkot, Gujranwala and Risalpur) as well as all future EPZs in local currency instead of foreign convertible currency.

## Senate body directs to expedite work for Sasta Bazars

ISLAMABAD (Online): A sub-committee meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Interior took place today at Parliament House, chaired by Senator Mousa Bux Chandio.

During the meeting, the Secretary Poverty Alleviation provided an update on the progress of the CDA's Sasta Bazars, which received a total of 1590 applications for Stalls. The data from these applications was shared with BISP for assessment, data revealed that 280 applicants were registered with BISP, out of which 24 were classified as very poor. Following the discussion, the Secretary Poverty Alleviation recommended the immediate issuance of allotment letters to 180 applicants.

## Current Monsoon Situation NDMA holds special NEOC session with key Stakeholders

ISLAMABAD (APP): Acting Chairman, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Brigadier (Approved Major General) Naiknam Muhammad Baig on Monday presided the special National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) session with key stakeholders on current monsoon situation. The session was attended by DG Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), representatives of Federal Flood Commission (FFC), provincial disaster management authorities (PDMAs), State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA), Gilgit Baltistan Disaster Management Authority (GBDMA), Armed Forces and PCIW, a news release said. The Acting Chairman NDMA reviewed restoration of roads and bridges, monsoon-related incidents and rescue & relief operations in parts of country including Chitral, Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) in the past two days.

He instructed relevant departments to prepare resource contingency plans, implement early warning systems and disaster mitigation interventions in hazard-prone areas by learning from the experiences of Floods 2022. He noted that proactive measures are essential in mitigating disaster impact and called for tangible actions before disaster strikes. The DG PMD briefed on rainfall data in last 24 hours and upcoming monsoon spell. He informed that next monsoon spell is expected to bring heavy rains in the upper parts of the country from July 31<sup>st</sup> to August 6<sup>th</sup>, triggering urban flooding in major cities.



ISLAMABAD: Mr. Itikhar Ali Shallwani federal Secretary Health, MoNHSR&C during the Event of "Dissemination of Who and Unicef Estimates on National Immunization Coverage" WUENIC Pakistan 2022 Data.

## Int'l EPI mission launches WUENIC in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): A high level international joint Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) mission Monday disseminated WHO and UNICEF Estimates of National Immunization Coverage (WUENIC) in Pakistan.

The WUENIC is a rule-based logical framework developed by WHO and UNICEF for estimating children's immunization coverage in all countries and territories across the globe.

"It is heartening indeed to welcome the high level international joint EPI mission to Pakistan," stated Itikhar Ali Shallwani, Secretary, Ministry of National Health Services Regulations and Coordination.

The sentiments were shared by the Federal Health Secretary in response to the promising immunization data pertaining to Pakistan shared by the World Health Organization (WHO) and UN International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) estimates of National Immunization Coverage (WUENIC) during the dissemination event, organized by the Federal Directorate of Immunization (FDI).

Shallwani stated that WHO and UNICEF had made annual estimates of national infant immunization coverage for selected vaccines for more than two decades now enabling countries across the world into informed decision making.

Pakistan has benefited from WUENIC in a score of ways. The government of Pakistan has capitalized on these estimates to track progress towards the Sustainable Development Goal No. 3 of "Good Health & Well Being".

## Rank Pinning ceremony of newly promoted officials held

ISLAMABAD: According to the details, a distinguished ceremony was held at Police Lines Headquarters Islamabad to honor the promotion of newly promoted Sub-Inspectors, Assistant Sub-Inspectors and Head Constables who were posted at Headquarters Division. The event was organized by the SSP Headquarters Sarfaraz Ahmed Virk in recognition of their exemplary dedication and commitment to their duties. The newly promoted officers were acknowledged and congratulated by SSP Headquarters and SP Headquarters.

Under the special directives of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer Dr. Akbar



Nasir Khan, the process of departmental promotions is currently underway within the Islamabad Capital Police. The SSP Headquarters Sarfaraz Ahmed Virk, in line with this initiative, organized the prestigious ceremony to celebrate the promotion of newly promoted police officials. Among the promoted officers, 02 are Sub-Inspectors, 14 are Assistant Sub-Inspectors and 14 are Head Constables.

## Hina Rabbani Khar calls for realizing blue economy potential

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar Monday stressed the importance of holistic policy framework and enabling domestic ecosystem for realizing Pakistan's maritime and blue economy potential.

Hina Rabbani was speaking at annual talks between Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Pakistan Naval Headquarters.

She urged proactive approach for seeking effective international partnerships in maritime domain.

The Foreign Secretary Dr. Asad Majeed Khan and Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (Operations) Vice Admiral Ovais A Bilgrami led the respective sides for the talks. Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar presided the meeting. The Ministry of Maritime Affairs was also represented in the meeting.

The meeting provided an opportunity for a comprehensive overview of Pakistan's maritime interests including in the domain of maritime security, blue economy, disaster management, environmental protection and climate change imperatives. Pakistan's participation in various regional and international forums dealing with maritime issues and opportunities for international collaboration and capacity-building in various fields were also discussed. The participants of the meeting were unanimous on the need for early finalization of a comprehensive maritime policy framework to synergize.

The efforts of all relevant stakeholders in the maritime domain for a holistic pursuit of the maritime interests of Pakistan.

The participants pledged to deepen their interaction and coordination and work with the relevant stakeholders for the achievement of this objective.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman NDMA presiding Special Session of NEOC on monsoon situation.

## PM approves appointment of new ambassadors in China, Russia

ISLAMABAD (Online): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday approved the appointment of new ambassadors to China and Russia.

Khalid Hashmi, a seasoned diplomat, has been named as Pakistan's ambassador to China, while Khalid Jamali will take charge as top envoy to Russia.

A summary for the appointment of new ambassadors was sent to the premier by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after their names were approved by the Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

## KP Minister tenders resignation

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Transport Shahid Khattak on Tuesday resigned from his post due to personal commitments, said the resignation letter sent to the Chief Minister Secretariat.

It is to be mentioned that Election Commission has taken notice of caretaker provincial minister Shahid Khattak's attendance and address at Awami National Party (ANP) rally.

## NA body takes notice of passive attitude of Ministry

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Special Committee took serious notice of the passive and non-professional attitude of the officials of M/o Interior as not a single official came to attend the meeting of the Special Committee. The Special Committee deemed it a matter of privilege and decided to invite Secretary, M/o Interior in person in the next meeting to be held tomorrow to enquire the reasons thereon. The Special Committee decided to bring the matter into notice of the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

## IHC grants time for recovery of Nawaz's brother

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) Monday granted the police more time for recovery of the brother of former PTT's MNA Ali Nawaz Awan and adjourned the case.

Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri heard the case regarding the matter wherein Chief Commissioner ICT Noor ul Ameen Mengal, IGP Islamabad Dr. Nasir Akbar Khan and others appeared before the court.

## Khawaja Haris continues cross-examination of witness in Toshakhana case

ISLAMABAD (APP): Khawaja Haris, counsel of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman on Monday resumed cross-examination of the prosecution witness in the Toshakhana criminal case.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Hamayun Dilwar heard the criminal case lodged by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). The PTI chief appeared before the court along with his lawyer amid foolproof security arrangements.

At the outset of hearing, the judge remarked that he had written to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) regarding actions about the Facebook posts against him, and had also approached the Islamabad High Court (IHC) for justice. Khawaja Haris resumed cross-examination of witness Waqas Malik, who is also a complainant of the case as the District Election Commissioner, Islamabad.

The lawyer objected that how the court could determine that the signature and the initial of the witness on the documents were original. The judge, however, observed that the lawyer could not stop the court from giving remarks and issuance of a decision.

The counsel asked the witness that whether the Form-B mentioned by him was also prepared by him.

## Pak-US Education Alliance bridging both nations: Masood

WASHINGTON (INP): Pakistan's Ambassador to United States Masood Khan has stated education has been a robust link between Pakistan and United States from 1950s till today.

He was addressing a batch of 25 visiting Pakistani students under 'Study of the US Institutes' program at Embassy of Pakistan Washington DC.

He said number of Pakistani students increased to 8000, registering 17% increase last year and we must have more students here in the United States.

He said that this is a process of cross fertilization and intellectual capabilities recognize no boundaries. Highlighting imitation, emulation, and innovation as three key stages for societal progress, he expressed the hope that extraordinary experience would empower the visiting students to replicate and adopt what they have observed and experienced during their stay in the United States.

He said this short course should inspire you to come back, to interface our two countries, to enrich shared intellectual heritage of our two nations," he said.



A delegation of Pakistan Youth Parliament visiting Senate Museum at Parliament House, Islamabad.

## 3-member committee formed to probe IUB scandal

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi has constituted a committee to probe the alleged sale and purchase of drugs and possession of obscene videos by officers at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB). The 3-member committee comprising Secretary Minerals Punjab Babar Aman Babar, DIG Ameen Bukhari, and DIG Raja Faisal will probe the alleged sale and purchase of drugs in the university, obscene videos and photos, and identify the involved persons. It will submit a report to the Chief Minister.

The IUB Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Athar Mahboob has welcomed the formation of the committee and assured varsity's cooperation in that regard.

He said that it is essential to find out if any student, teacher, or staff member of the university was involved in the sale or purchase of drugs.

VC Mahboob said strict disciplinary action would be taken against those found involved in the heinous crime. However, he said that fake propaganda against the university and its honorable teachers must be ended and people should not jump to any conclusions prior to the results of the investigation.