

# Independent

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

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

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

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Corps Commanders' Conference (CCC) on Monday noted that "the sanctuaries and liberty of action available to the terrorists of proscribed TTP (Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan) and other groups of that ilk in a neighbouring country and availability of the latest weapons to the terrorists" were major reasons impacting security of Pakistan. The 258<sup>th</sup> CCC, presided over by Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir here at the General Headquarters, was given a detailed briefing about the prevailing internal security environment, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said. The forum paid rich tribute to the supreme sacrifices persistently being offered by the valiant soldiers in the defence of their motherland against the threat of terrorism. It also deliberated in detail upon the operational preparedness and training aspects of the army. The COAS, on the occasion, said, "Objective training remains the hallmark of our professionalism and we must always remain prepared to guard against any threat to our national security."

## Mayor Karachi chairs first meeting of the city council

JI not capable to take country out of quagmire

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Monday chaired the first meeting of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation-KMC's Council in the City Council Hall at the KMC building here. Deputy Mayor Karachi Salman Abdullah Murad was also present on this occasion. Two condolence and one condemnation resolution were adopted in the meeting. Condolences were offered on the death of Member City Council Farida Majeed and former Federal Minister Sher Muhammad Baloch and prayers for forgiveness were offered for the deceased. A resolution condemning the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden was passed. Addressing the meeting, the Mayor welcomed all members of the City Council and expressed hope that all members will work for the betterment of the city. He said that we will work in every UC and there will be equal treatment with all members, we will work with everyone including the workers of Jamaat-e-Islami. He said that we will connect the hearts to make Karachi the cradle of peace as we want to solve the problems of Karachi with understanding. Pakistan People's Party, Jamaat-e-Islami, Muslim League (N), Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf and other parties have to serve Karachi together, he said that time will tell who served Karachi and who did politics. Murtaza Wahab asked the members present in the House whether they want the development of Karachi. Want to solve water problems and want to get rid of the land mafia. He said that the media is seeing that we want to hold a meeting so that the problems of Karachi can be solved and the occupation can be ended from the parks of Karachi, the drains of Karachi, the drains of roads and streets can be built. He said that shouting slogans does not solve problems and our political training is visible to Karachi because we want to improve and develop Karachi. He said that he and the Deputy Mayor are with them and he wants to tell that Karachi is our priority. Water sewage and roads are a priority and we will fix the parks of Karachi and will try to have work in every UC, he added.

## Federal Govt seeks dismissal of petitions challenging military court trials

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Government on Monday prayed the Supreme Court to dismiss petitions seeking to challenge trials of civilians accused of various offences emanating from the events of May 9. The government, in its concise statement, stated that violence against military and vandalism of army installations was a direct attack on the national security of Pakistan, and was, therefore, prejudicial to security, interests and defence of Pakistan. It said the May 9 events, which were neither localised nor isolated, indicated a premeditated and intentional attempt to undermine the country's armed forces and inhibit its internal security. The total damage incurred on the day was Rs 2,539.19 million, including a loss of Rs 1,982.95 million to military establishments, equipment and vehicles, the government added. It further stated that while some of the first information reports (FIRs) registered against the suspects did not explicitly mention provisions of the Army Act, the Supreme Court had previously held that the contents of the FIR and not the mentioning of a particular statutory provision determined the nature of the offences made out. The federal government further argued that the petitions against the military trial of civilians were not maintainable before the apex court in its original jurisdiction under Article 184(3) of the Constitution. Article 184(3) of the Constitution sets out the SC's original jurisdiction and enables it to assume jurisdiction in matters involving a question of public importance with reference to the enforcement of any of the fundamental rights of Pakistan's citizens, it added.



KARACHI: Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab chair the meeting of the newly elected City Council while member of Jamaat-e-Islami and his alliance stage protest in front of Mayor desk during the meeting of City Council in Provincial Capital.

## PM thanks Sri Lanka for helping clinch IMF deal

ISLAMABAD (Online): Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif has telephoned Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe and expressed his gratitude to him in supporting and helping Pakistan to reach an agreement with IMF. PM said "you played role of friend and well wisher of Pakistan and I thank you on behalf of people of Pakistan. Pakistan and Sri Lanka are close and trusted friends. We pay tribute to the role of Sri Lanka for regional development and peace. He hoped Pakistan and Sri Lanka will soon come out of whirlpool of the prevailing economic difficulties.

## Bilawal pays tributes to Shahnawaz Bhutto on his 38th anniversary

KARACHI (APP): Chairman of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said that the nation will always remember the struggle and sacrifice of Shaheed Shahnawaz Bhutto for democracy, who is truly a symbol of revolutionary thinking and vision among the youth of Pakistan. "Being an elder sister, the grief and sorrow of the tragic separation of her younger brother always remained like an unhealed wound in the heart of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto," he added. Bilawal said, "Under all circumstances, Shaheed Shahnawaz Bhutto's constant communication with the 'young Jiyalas' and never compromising on democracy is an example for us to emulate in our struggle, adding that in the light of Bhutto's ideology, his party will continue its struggle for the protection of the 1973 Constitution and democracy.

## Sindh govt to organise international conference for investors: Sharjeel

Sharjeel calls for tapping potential of mineral sources with full capacity

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Information Minister, Sharjeel Inam Memon on Monday said that remarkable progress has been made in transport, energy, agriculture, irrigation, communication and other sectors in Sindh and the provincial government was mulling over organising an international investment conference to attract foreign investment. The minister while talking to the journalists at the Sindh Assembly media corner said that the PPP Sindh government laid the foundation stone of Dhabeji Special Economic Zone to attract and invite investment from all over the world with the objective of ameliorating the current economic situation of the country. He also shared broad contours of the economic policies being implemented by the government to pave the way for a prosperous and financially stable country.

## Karachi City Council meeting turns into ruckus after JI & PTI's protest

KARACHI (INP): The Karachi City Council meeting on Monday turned into ruckus after members of the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) staged protest and also came to face to face against each other. Presided over by PPP Mayor Murtaza Wahab, the meeting witnessed slogans of "mandate thief". The meeting passed a resolution to condemn the desecration of Holy Quran. The Mayor went on to say that mere slogans would not serve any cause or resolve the problems the city is facing. Meanwhile, the members of both the JI and the PTI dragged each other during the meeting.



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

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marrimum Aurangzeb on Monday said the present government had saved the country from default by addressing the economic challenges deliberately created by the previous regime of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). "Today, the project Imran has become a source of embarrassment for even those who had brought him to power as the masses are bearing the brunt of his 44-month-long economic destruction," the minister said while addressing a news conference. She said the incumbent coalition government took many important steps in 14 months to undo the devastation caused by the four-year misuse of the inefficient and incompetent rulers. The PTI chief's 44-month reign was a period of economic destruction, inflation, theft, loot and plunder, she added. His government signed the agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on tough conditions, first violated it and then suspended, pushing the country to the brink of default. The PTI chairman had, in fact, crossed all limits to harm national interests as he and his cronies wanted the country to default like Sri Lanka, she added. The petrol price was, she said, reduced by the PTI chief in 2022 in violation of the IMF programme and it was done intentionally to get petty political mileage.

## Patel performs groundbreaking of National Cancer Hospital at PIMS

ISLAMABAD (INP): Minister for National Health Services Abdul Qadir Patel performed the groundbreaking of National Cancer Hospital at Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) in Islamabad on Monday. Speaking on the occasion, he said that this project will be completed at a cost of 10.8 billion rupees by June 2025. He regretted that this cancer hospital in the public sector was delayed by the previous government out of ego and stubbornness. He said this delay has increased the cost of this project.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for health Abdul Qadir Patel being briefed about Cancer Hospital in PIMS.

## Election on 2017 census unacceptable: MQM-P

KARACHI (INP): Muttahida Quami Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) on Monday came out strongly against the decision of the coalition government to hold elections on the basis of the old census. Addressing a press conference, MQM-P Convener Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui whose party is a stakeholder in the government said the population of Karachi is around 30 million, which was about 14.9 million in the 2017 census, and his party would not accept figures less than this. The MQM-P leader vowed to resist the move after Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah announced that the government would not notify the recently concluded census as the results are not authentic and the Election Commission of Pakistan needs at least four months to complete the delimitation process. Under laws, the census is done after every 10 years, but the last one becomes controversial, and it was decided to conduct a fresh exercise to address reservations and carry out a fresh delimitation process. However, objections were raised to the enumeration by the Sindh government and MQM-P. Demanding to rectify the flaws in it, they refused to accept the results. MQM-P is a key coalition partner in the ruling alliance and had joined the government on certain conditions, including a transparent census. Raising their reservations on the federal minister's statement, Siddiqui said that they had chosen the right path against injustices and tried in every situation to ensure peace in Karachi. "MQM-P is the representative party of the urban areas of Sindh, especially Karachi; the impression being spread by the MQM London rally seems to be a conspiracy. Siddiqui said that the assemblies and the government would end in August. "We have made all efforts for the peace of this city. A census is one of our main demands."

## Finance Minister calls on Air Chief

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar called on Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu during his visit to Air Headquarters, Islamabad on Wednesday. Matters pertaining to evolving geo-economic environment and regional security situation were discussed during the meeting, said a press release. The Air Chief briefed the minister about various ongoing projects being carried out by the Pakistan Air Force with special focus on modernization and development of indigenous capabilities. He also apprised the minister about the PAF's National Aerospace Science & Technology Park project that it was aimed at fostering collaborative research, development and innovation in the domains of aviation, space, IT, cyber & computing in order to accrue maximum economic, technological and scientific dividends for Pakistan. The Air Chief also commended the pragmatic policies and initiatives of the government to lead the economy towards growth and stability. The finance minister lauded the matchless professionalism of PAF personnel and stated that the government would utilize all its resources to modernize the Pakistan Air Force in order to ensure an impenetrable aerial defence of the country. He also shared broad contours of the economic policies being implemented by the government to pave the way for a prosperous and financially stable country.

## Muharram Reporting Cell established at CPO

KARACHI (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon on Monday established a Central Muharram Reporting Cell at the Central Police Office (CPO) Karachi to monitor the law and order situation as well security arrangements during the first 15 days of Muharram-ul-Haram in the overall province. According to a spokesman for Sindh Police, the Central Muharram Reporting Cell can be contacted by phone numbers 02199212064-5, 02199213081, fax number 02199213836, WhatsApp number 0335314556, and at email address [igoperationsroom@gmail.com](mailto:igoperationsroom@gmail.com). IGP Sindh has deputed three deputy superintendents of police (DSPs) to supervise the cell. The cell would remain operational round-the-clock in three shifts. The deputed officers would collect the information related with the events of Muharram or any eventuality etc. and would share such information with the competent authority well in time.

## Registered voters cross 126m figure: ECP reports

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Monday issued a report that revealed the number of registered voters in the country had reached over 126 million, as of June 30, 2023. The ECP also released the percentage of voters in terms of age, according to which, the highest number of voters remained within the age group of 26 to 35 years. According to the report, the ratio of male and female voters in Pakistan stood at 54.02 per cent and 45.98 per cent respectively. The total number of registered voters in Islamabad was over one million while Punjab topped with 71.60 million voters.



FAISALABAD: Interior Minister Rana Sana Ullah Khan addressing to a public gathering.



## Power price hike

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

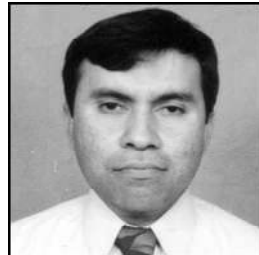
The expected recovery in manufacturing after the IMF-mandated tariff increase may remain elusive at least in the near term. It is a dilemma for the government. On the one hand, it has to meet the conditions of the new, short-term \$3bn IMF programme needed to avert default and improve Pakistan's debt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

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

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

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

## Ranking Karachi



Dr Noman Ahmed

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

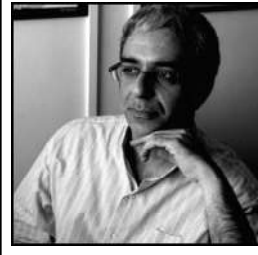
For management, repair and rehabilitation work, the local government entities will have to approach the provincial government. A familiar tug of war will begin between various tiers of government.

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

To improve Karachi's livability, the administration, political elite and business leadership would have to evolve a consensus on core matters.

Defining the metropolitan boundaries of the city, regulating the built environment, documenting and safeguarding heritage, repairing roads, engaging with communities for maintaining law and order, with the assistance of the agencies concerned, and improving water and air quality by controlling pollution can become the starting agenda for this broad-based conversation. — Courtesy Dawn

## White noise



Zarrar Khuuro

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Commerce News

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

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

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

Organic Pakistan, a pioneering organization dedicated to promoting

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

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

Both organizations are committed to creating knowledge resources through seminars,

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

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

### Banking Mohtasib designate calls on finance minister

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

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

### PSX loses 25 points

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



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

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

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

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

domestic requirements as compared to the manufacturing of 455,884 metric tons of same period last year.

Meanwhile, during the period under review, about 1.421 million tons of vegetable ghee were locally manufactured as against the production of 1.286 million tons in the same period last year, which was up by 10.44 per cent, according to the data of the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

### Gold rates increase Rs.1,600

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs1,600 and was sold at Rs 214,800 on Monday against its sale at Rs 213,200 the previous day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs1,371 to Rs 184,156 from Rs 182,785 whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went up to Rs 168,810 from Rs 167,553, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

### SMEDA to organize webinar on July 19

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) is going to organize a webinar on "How to sell on Daraz" for profitable business growth on July 19 (Wednesday).

The session is being offered by SMEDA under National Business Development Programme (NBPD) for SMEs, to extend non-financial advisory services to small and medium businesses, according to a source in the authority.

The programme will provide opportunities to the SMEs on high trending and most demanding e-commerce tools and platforms.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): Zong 4G Pakistan's leading telecom giant, marks a momentous milestone as it celebrates 15 years of unwavering excellence in the country's digital landscape.

Guided by the motto "Let's Get Digital," Zong 4G has revolutionized the nation's connectivity through its widest 4G network and cutting-edge technology, leaving an indelible mark on Pakistan's technological future.

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



RAWALPINDI: A laborer cutting woods at Chakbeli Road.

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

ISLAMABAD (APP): The NEECA managing director was briefing media persons about key initiatives including National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Action Plan (NEECA) Dr Sardar Mohazzam on Monday said that the proposed Energy National Action Plan (ENAP) could help save \$6.4 billion annually.

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



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

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

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



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

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

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

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

be resolved easily with the best coordination.

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

## WWF President urges action on climate change

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

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

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

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

# International News

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

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIJING: China's President Xi Jinping told former Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte to continue to promote cooperation between the two countries, after bilateral relations cooled with Duterte's successor seeking closer ties with Washington. Ferdinand Marco Jr was elected as president for a six-year term in 2022, taking over from Duterte who had adopted a more pro-China stance. "I hope you will continue to play an important role in the friendly cooperation (between China and the Philippines)," state media cited Xi as saying during a meeting at the Diaoyutai state guest-house in Beijing on Monday. Under Marcos, relations between China and the Philippines have grown tense, with Manila pivoting back to its traditional ally, the United States. The Philippines and the U.S. reaffirmed a decades-old security alliance during a trip by Marcos to the U.S. in May, where he met with President Joe Biden, who said the U.S. commitment to defending its ally was "ironclad".

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



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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

## China's economy misses growth forecasts

**Monitoring Desk**  
HONG KONG: China's economic growth missed forecasts in the second quarter of the year, adding to worries over surging youth unemployment and a weak property sector and raising the likelihood the government will double down on support for the faltering post COVID-19 recovery. The world's second largest economy grew at a 6.3% annual pace in the April-June quarter, much slower than the 7% plus growth analysts had forecast given the anemic pace of activity the year before. Unemployment of youths aged 16 to 24 rose to a record 21.3% in June, up from 20.8% the month before. Investment in property development, a vital driver of both industrial and consumer demand, sank 7.9% in the first half of the year compared to a year earlier in a troubling sign of persisting weakness in an industry that slowed even before the pandemic as the government moved to rein in excessive borrowing.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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



## Pakistan put on road to progress again: Ahsan

*Says Shehbaz-led government saved country from default*

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

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

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

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

in the year 2009, he dreamed of setting up an engineering university campus, which had been fulfilled today.

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

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

Addressing a public gathering after laying the foundation-stone of Sialkot Cantt to Jassar Cantt Road at Phalora on late Sunday night, he said the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) had always ac-

complished development projects and tried its best to place the country in the list of developed countries.

The minister said some generals, who have retired, and some former judges, imposed Imran Khan on the people of Pakistan under a conspiracy. He said Pakistan had become one of the five fastest growing economies in the world under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif, but the keys to development were snatched from Nawaz Sharif and handed to a man who had not the experience of even running a union council in his life. That person (Imran Khan) experimented with every sector of the country and destroyed its economy.

He said that in the year 2018, the journey towards development was stopped through a conspiracy and the politics of hatred was started in Pakistan. Ahsan Iqbal said that 15 months ago, when the coalition government was formed through constitutional means, it had to bear the brunt of Imran Khan's incompetence.



NAROWAL: Mr. Ahsan Iqbal Federal Minister for Ministry of Planning Development & Special Initiatives unveiling the plaque to inaugurate Nisar Fatima Auditorium and Jamia Masjid UET.

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

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

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

Replying a question, he said a politician should be appointed as caretaker prime minister, adding, Prime Minister Shehbaz

Sharif has started consultations with allied parties on the selection of interim setup.

He said that the prime minister would consult with the opposition leader after deliberations with coalition partners. To another question, he replied that the government will hand over the reins to the interim rulers next month, before the completion of the assembly's tenure.

To another question, he said the election reforms could be completed in a few days and that the election commission had started the process based on the old census as delay election will further disturb the matters.

## Shahzain Bugti calls on PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Narcotics Control Nawabzada Shahzain Bugti on Monday called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

During the meeting, they discussed the current political situation in the country at length, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The matters related to the relevant ministry also came under discussion.

## Chairman NAB regrets to appear before NAB

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chairman PTI has once again regretted to appear before NAB and has filed written reply.

He has taken plea in his written reply he has to appear in the courts of Islamabad on July 19 and then he can appear before NAB. "I travel less from Lahore to Islamabad due to security reasons, he added.

In his written reply he further said only he only can receive inquiry report under section 18-C of NAB laws.

## Police constable killed by brother, nephews

KARACHI (INP): A police constable was murdered by his brother and nephews over property dispute in Chakiwara area of Lyari in the metropolis.

According to details, Constable Ismail deployed at Gordon HQs and residing at Gulistan Colony was brutally tortured by his brother Gul Zameen and nephews with iron bars, batons and set his motorcycle on fire.

## SIU arrests two of robbers gang

KARACHI (APP): The Special Investigation Unit (SIU) of the Crime Investigation Agency (CIA) Karachi Police on Monday claimed to have arrested three of a robbers gang from Gulshahn-e-Mazdoor Saeedabad area and recovered illegal weapons from their possession.

Arrested were identified as Muhammad Imtiaz, Muhammad Sarfraz and Abid, according to SSP SIU. The arrested accused along with their other accomplices were involved in a number of street crimes. The gang was involved in snatching cash from citizens outside banks at gun-point.

## Karachi police foil ATM theft attempt, arrest suspect

KARACHI (INP): Karachi police on Monday foiled Automated Teller Machine (ATM) theft in Karachi and arrested a suspect.

As per details, two thieves entered an ATM booth of a bank in Landhi Industrial Area to loot cash. After being informed by the security guards of the bank, a police team from Shah Latif Town reached the spot and arrested a suspect, while others fled the scene.

The police said the suspects were about to take the cash tray of the ATM after breaking the lock of the machine.

The suspect has been shifted to the police station for further investigation and the whereabouts of his accomplice.

Separately, Sindh police Madadgar-15 foiled the theft attempt on an Automated Teller Machine (ATM) in Karachi's Korangi Industrial Area.

According to details, the Madadgar-15 unit of Karachi Police conducted a timely operation in Sector 16 of the Korangi Industrial Area and apprehended the culprit involved in the attempted theft.

## Crackdown initiated against illegal loan applications to combat fraudsters: Amin

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Amin-ul-Haq has said that the government has initiated a crackdown against illegal loan providers to combat with the fraudsters.

In a statement issued here on Monday, he said that Chairman Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) Major General @ Hafeezur Rehman has issued directives to take swift action on the illegal loan applications.

Amin-ul-Haq said that under the orders issued, 43 loan applications had already been blocked. The targeted companies, operating within the lending industry, were registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission, he added.

Highlighting the severity of the issue, he shed light on the involvement of mafia groups operating through social media platforms, particularly Facebook.

These unscrupulous entities have resorted to blackmailing innocent individuals, exploiting their financial vulnerabilities.

To raise awareness and safeguard the public, a comprehensive public awareness campaign has been launched. The citizens are urged to report any suspicious loan applications or incidents involving the loan mafia groups to the PTA, the Federal Investigation Agency's (FIA) Cybercrime wing, or their local police stations.

The collaborative efforts of various law enforcement agencies aimed to address the increasing cybercrime wave in the country.

## Senator Talha Mahmood emphasizes collaboration for national progress

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

The event, attended by journalists from Hazara and various parts of the country, aimed to promote welfare and prosperity among journalists based in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The Hazara Journalists Association's new professional panel, elected under the leadership of Syed Luqman Shah, took an oath to diligently serve the journalistic community in the region.

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

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

## Qureshi says Shehbaz, Zardari sit-in ratified Dubai decisions

MULTAN (INP): Vice Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Shah Mahmood Qureshi has said that the meeting of Shehbaz Sharif and Asif Ali Zardari in Model Town has ratified the decisions of Dubai.

Talking to media here, Qureshi said that everyone knew what was discussed in the meeting in Lahore. On the issue of dissolution of assemblies, caretaker setup, two major political parties held consultations and decisions were taken.

The PTI leader said, "Now they will take other PDM parties into confidence. Decisions have been taken, consultations have to be made with other parties." The PTI vice chairman, taking a dig at the ruling alliance, said other parties of PDM would be invited at a lavish tea party. They would take other PDM parties into confidence over the decisions which had been taken already.

He said it was quite clear now that new caretaker prime minister would be affiliated to which party. "It is preplanned that what type of caretaker setup will be installed," he said. "Who has to decide the political future of Pakistan? The leaders of the two major parties have to do it or the right will be given to the people? he asked. He said that a committee on electoral reforms had been formed under the chairmanship of Ayaz Sadiq which were trying to finalise the reforms in haste.

## Women's skills camp concludes

KARACHI (APP): The second phase of the women's a 10-day skills camp concluded on Monday at the Hanif Muhammad High Performance Centre, Karachi. The first phase was held in Lahore's National Cricket Academy from 5 to 9 July.

Like the first phase, a total of 20 players including Pakistan women's captain Nida Dar took part in the second phase. During the five-day Karachi phase, the players featured in two practice games on Friday and Monday, besides taking part in different skills sessions under the supervision of Pakistan women's team support staff, led by head coach Mark Coles.

Both camps also provided an opportunity for players to sharpen their skills, but at the same time it also gave selectors a chance to closely observe the players' fitness and skillset ahead of the busy 2023-24 season where Pakistan women's team are scheduled to play 15 ODIs (all part of ICC Women's Championship) and 17 T20Is excluding Asian Games matches.

Batting coach Taufeeq Umar, shedding light on the importance of camp, said, "The camp went well where the prime focus was on players' fitness. During the Karachi phase, the players got the opportunity to play in some practice games, which helped them to showcase their skills in the matches."



KARACHI: Members of Oil Tankers Owners Association are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, held in Karachi.

## Iran's abundant energy resources can greatly benefit Pakistan: Iranian CG

KARACHI (APP): The Consul General (CG) of Iran to Karachi Hassan Noorian has laid emphasis on the potential for strengthening the relationship between Pakistan and Iran through cooperation in various fields.

He expressed these views in a recent meeting with a delegation of the Karachi Press Club (KPC) led by its President Saeed Sarbazi at the Iranian Consulate in Karachi, according to a communiqué here on Monday.

The delegation included KPC Vice-President Mushtaq Sohail, Secretary Shoaib Ahmed, and Joint Secretary Aslam Khan, which had an opportunity to engage in discussion with the Iranian Consul General.

The CG Noorian expressed his belief in the deep-rooted and brotherly relations between Pakistan and Iran.

He said that Iran im-

ports basmati rice, meat, and other commodities from various countries.

He said that she (Iran) provided ample trade opportunities for Pakistani businessmen.

Noorian also stressed the potential for promoting cooperation between the two nations in multiple sectors, in particular, Iran's abundant energy resources can greatly benefit Pakistan. He also exemplified the ongoing Pakistan-Iran Gas Pipeline project.

President of the Karachi Press Club Saeed Sarbazi, on the occasion, suggested organizing visits of journalistic delegations between the two countries, which received positive feedback from the Iranian Consul General.

The Consul General expressed the Consulate's closeness with the Karachi Press Club and accepted an invitation from Secretary Shoaib Ahmed Khan to visit the Press Club.



KARACHI: View of site after a fire broken out incident as the fire brigade officials are busy in extinguishing fire and rescue operation, at Garments Factory building located on Maymar Industrial Area in Karachi.

## Abbasi hints at staying away from elections

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former prime minister and PML-N stalwart Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has hinted at to stay away from next elections.

"I don't want to be a part of such system, perhaps I will work better to remain outside of it," Abbasi said in an interview with a private TV news channel. "It is my personal assessment that currently politics won't resolve national issues," he said. "This reality seems to me, at least my contesting election won't bring any solution," PML-N leader said.

"I would not contest election if all stakeholders will not sit together," he said. "What I will do by contesting election, in absence of a thinking to resolve the national problems," he questioned.

## Six injured in property dispute clash

SUKKUR (INP): At least six people including a woman and a young girl were injured in armed clash between two groups over property dispute, police said on Monday.

According to details, two groups hailing from suburban village of Rohri which were in old dispute over ownership of a piece of land traded fire.

In cross firing, six including Gul Bahar, Sherar, Kamran, Aamir Umrani, a woman Shehnaaz Khatoon and six-year old Sameena were injured.

The injured were shifted to Taluq Hospital Rohri where they were referred to Civil Hospital Sukkur.

## Power outages badly impacts business activities: Nizam Arain

HYDERABAD (APP): Pakistan People's Party Leader and well-known builder Chaudhri Nizam U Din Arain has said that Electricity load shedding has irritated residents of Hyderabad as 10 to 12 hours of load shedding was being carried out in Hyderabad and its surroundings daily which has increased the miseries of people.

In a statement on Monday, he urged HESCO management to reduce the load from transformers besides maintenance of power installations because transformers were being blasted or damaged in most parts of Hyderabad due to unnecessary load on the transformers which were not being repaired for several days. He said that Electricity was a necessity for every home and business. He said that prolonged load-shedding has badly affected business activities.

## Three of motorcycle lifters gang held, 8 motorcycles recovered

KARACHI (APP): The City district police on Monday claimed to have arrested three most wanted operatives of Cheena group involved in motorcycle lifting across the megalopolis and recovered 8 snatched/stolen motorcycles from the accused.

The accused were arrested during a technical/intelligence-based operation from the limits of Chakiwara police station, according to SSP City Arif Aziz.

## Commissioner expresses dissatisfaction over deteriorated sanitation situation of hospitals

NAWABSHAH (APP): Commissioner Shaheed Benazirabad Division Muhammad Abbas Baloch paid a surprise visit to the office of the Assistant Commissioner Qazi Ahmed and Taluka Hospital, and expressed his anger over the deteriorated sanitation situation there. He also inspected health facilities being provided to patients and collected information in this regard. He expressed anger at the sanitation situation, over the absence of doctors.

He strictly directed the Medical Superintendent for provision of all possible treatment facilities to admitted and visiting patients while the sanitation situation shall be improved.

Commissioner said the Sindh Government is incurring huge funds on better facilities of medical treatment to poor people but despite that Taluka Hospital on National Highway lacks better treatment for area people. Earlier, the Commissioner visited the



KARACHI: Female Councilors of Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, after first district council meeting session held at City Council Hall Old KMC building in Karachi.

## Commissioner expresses dissatisfaction over deteriorated sanitation situation of hospitals

office of Assistant Commissioner Qazi Ahmed Tariq Ali Solangi and instructed him to settle the genuine revenue issues and problems of applicants at the offices of Assistant Commissioner and Mukhtarkar on priority basis to provide instant relief. Commissioner also directed for removal of illegal encroachments from Qazi Ahmed town and other towns of the tehsil with improvement in cleanliness.

He also directed to take steps for bringing improvements in the sector of education and health. AC Tariq Ali Solangi informed the Commissioner that he took over the charge of assistant commissioner a few days back. He said that arrangements are made with respect to improvement in sanitation and others. Additional Commissioner-1 SBA Subhash Chandar, Information Officer Aijaz Ali Teevino and other officials were present on the occasion.



HYDERABAD: Advocate Yousaf Laghari addresses during Law Conference organized by All Pakistan Law Association held at Hyderabad press club.