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Will distribute a million laptops annually, if given mandate in next polls: PM

KARACHI (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that if given a mandate in next general elections, his next government would distribute around one million laptops across the country annually as part of the vision to support the talented youth.

The prime minister, addressing a ceremony for the distribution of laptops and cheques for youth business loans, said with support from allies, a mechanism would be formulated – to be equally funded by centre and provinces – to distribute up to 1000,000 laptops across all provinces.

“This is how the revolution will come... This is the only way to make the nation progress,” the prime

minister told the ceremony also attended by Sindh governor, chief minister, federal ministers, MQM leaders, provincial ministers, diplomats, and representatives of bankers.

He said youths from across the country needed to be equipped with education and provided maximum resources for country's swift progress.

Mentioning the launch of the capital venture initiative for freelancers on Tuesday, he lauded the youngsters' talent for developing the projects like converting banana peels into different products and drones for agricultural use.

He said it would be sheer injustice if the talented youths were not provided with the required re-

sources as they were the guarantee for the country's prosperity.

He said the incumbent government was in the process of distributing 100,000 laptops announced for the fiscal 2022-23 while the provision for another 100,000 laptops had been made in the budget 2023-24 which would be distributed purely on merit, without any nepotism.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said the caretaker government should also ensure the merit in laptops' distribution keeping the excellence and enrollment in public sector universities as the only merit.

He said through hand-holding, the talented youths could bring in billions of dollars to the country

within a short span of time which other industries could not do.

The prime minister also thanked the commercial banks for distributing Rs 30 billion among youth within a few months in the form of business loans.

Calling the existing volume of loans insufficient, he called for formulating a policy to make it mandatory for the banks to extend loan facilities to youth, farmers, and small shopkeepers.

He said the previous government gave away \$3 billion in loans to business tycoons without thinking of the youngsters.

Prime Minister Shehbaz also called for national unity and concerted efforts to rid the country

of poverty as a robust mechanism in the form of a Special Investment Facilitation Council had already been established with a view to putting the country on the course towards economic restructuring and reforms.

He said the country could never progress without curbing corruption, power, and gas theft.

He said the SIFC would take the country to the destination that the forefathers had dreamt of.

The prime minister appreciated the Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah for carrying out youth welfare projects and Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori for arranging courses for the youngsters at the Governor House.



KARACHI: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif distributes laptops among the high achievers of public sector universities of Sindh under PM's Youth Laptop Scheme 2023 at Governor House.

Parliament passes Election (Amendment) Bill 2023; empowering caretaker setup

Bill approved with majority the vote; Granting caretaker government power to take decisions regarding existing bilateral or multilateral agreements, projects

ISLAMABAD (INP): Despite opposition from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), a joint session of the Parliament approved amendments to the Election Act of 2017 on Wednesday.

The move enables the caretaker government to effectively take actions and make decisions concerning current bilateral or multilateral agreements and projects. The Elections (Amendment) Bill 2023 aims to move by Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi.

Law Minister Azam Nazir Tarar, taking the floor, clarified that no new powers are being given to the caretaker government. He said that amendments in

Section 230 are aimed to ensure that the decisions already taken by the federal cabinet do not face any hiatus.

He said that the bill was presented with consensus, saying it was a sensitive bill and things would be explained about the proposed amendment in Section 230 when the provision comes up for approval.

APP adds: The Joint sitting of Parliament on Wednesday passed much-awaited amendments in the Election (Amendment) Bill, 2020 which aimed to improve the election law and ensure smooth and transparent elections.

The National Assembly passed the Election

(Amendment) Bill, 2021 on June 10, 2021 but it could not sail in Senate.

A parliamentary committee under the chairmanship of Sardar Ayaz Sadiq was constituted to ensure consensus on the various amendments. This committee included parliamentarians from all political parties and finally agreed on amendments in the bill.

The bill was tabled in the joint session of the parliament which approved the amended bill.

It approved amendments in section 230 of the Election (Amendment) Bill, 2021 which is related to the functions of the caretaker government.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to the Republic of Tunisia, Mr Javed Ahmed Umrani, called on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Economy on track of progress as default risk ebbs away: PM

KARACHI (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Wednesday said that the country's economy was on the course of progress as the risk of default had been averted, consequent to the efforts by the coalition parties.

The prime minister, in a meeting with a delegation of the Pakistan Business Council here, said all the coalition parties cooperated in every decision of the government.

He said the government was keen to revive national economy through investment facilitation and business-friendly policies.

The prime minister said restoring the confidence of investors and the business community was the greatest achievement.

He said the government would miss no opportunity for economic recovery, restoration of confidence of international part-

ners, investors and the business community.

He told the meeting that a Special Investment Facilitation Council had been established for foreign direct investment in Pakistan.

He acknowledged that the business community did not only provide employment opportunities in the country but also becomes a source of foreign exchange by enhancing exports.

Headed by Chairman Muhammad Aurangzeb, the PBC delegation appreciated the federal government's efforts for economic revival during the last year.

They also lauded the government for successfully signing the agreement with the International Monetary Fund and appreciated the incorporation of the business community's proposals in its policies.

Sherry unveils country's first-ever National Adaptation Plan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Senator Sherry Rehman

scale of the disaster underscored its significance for the future of the nation.

The minister alleged said the adaptation plan had



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change, Senator Sherry Rehman talking to media after unveiling the Pakistan's First National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change.

Wednesday unveiled the country's first-ever National Adaptation Plan unanimously approved by the federal capital to enhance nation's resilience against adverse impacts of climate change and environmental degradation.

The minister flanked by Additional Secretary, Ministry of Climate Change, Syed Mujtaba Hussain briefed the media persons over the landmark achievement that remained unaccomplished due to poor interest of the previous regime. She said the country needed adaptation and resilience as after 2022 floods the devastation and

reportedly started in 2019 but she did not find any record of the document in the ministry. The team under the leadership of Additional Secretary Mujtaba Hussain worked extensively to create first ever adaptation plan which was a home grown plan and had been prepared with the input of the line ministries and provincial ministries, she added. The minister informed that detailed consultations with all the provinces including the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit Baltistan (GB) in the process of preparing the National Adaptation Plan as the ownership of the plan was important.

Sindh governor, chief minister call on prime minister

KARACHI (APP): Governor of Sindh Kamran Tessori and Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah Wednesday called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif here.

In the meeting, they discussed the overall political situation in the country as well as the ongoing federal government's projects in the province.

SC issues written order regarding hearing

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court (SC) Wednesday issued written order regarding hearing dated July 24, in a petition of chairman PTI Imran Khan against addition of his name in case pertaining murder of a lawyer in Quetta.

The court directed the petitioner to appear before the bench in personal capacity in next date of hearing.

The order said that the lawyer of the petitioner had prayed the court for adjournment in the case, which was accepted by the bench and hearing was adjourned till August 9.

The order said that the petitioner would not be arrested by the authorities in the said murder case till next date of hearing.

It further said that so far no arguments had been given pertaining the merits of the case.

It further said that the case would be fixed before any available bench on next date as it was possible that the current bench would not be available after the summer vacations.

Nasir Shah condoles death of Murad Ali

Independent Report KARACHI: Provincial Minister for Local Government Nasir Shah expressed grief and sorrow over the death of Haji Murad Ali, grandfather of Deputy Mayor Karachi Salman Abdullah Murad and paid tribute to this family for their services to the party.

Nasir Shah prayed to Allah Almighty for the forgiveness and exaltation of the late Haji Murad Ali and said that He may grant the deceased a high place in Jannat al-Firdous and grant patience to all the bereaved.

Bilawal, Russian FM discuss bilateral coop. in multiple sectors

ISLAMABAD (APP): Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari held a telephone conversation with Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov of the Russian Federation on Wednesday and exchanged views on bilateral matters and growing cooperation in diverse areas. The Foreign Minister also renewed the invitation to Foreign Minister Lavrov to visit Pakistan, a press release issued by the Foreign Office spokesperson said.

The two Foreign Ministers also discussed the Black Sea Grain Initiative (BSGI). Recognizing the importance of this initiative and its potential

impact on disruption of global food supply chains, causing food inflation and food-security-related challenges, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari underscored the need for concerted efforts to find viable solutions that would in particular, benefit developing countries, already under economic strain.

He expressed the hope that all parties involved in the BSGI would engage in constructive dialogue to revive the Initiative. In this regard, the Foreign Minister reiterated Pakistan's support for international efforts for restoring the deal by addressing the concerns of all sides.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Tessori and Chief Minister Sindh, Syed Murad Ali Shah call on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Naval Chief stresses combat readiness to thwart any aggression against country

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi on Wednesday emphasized on maintaining perpetual combat readiness to effectively thwart any aggression against Pakistan.

He stressed this while addressing the concluding session of Command & Staff Conference of Pakistan Navy held at Naval Headquarters, Islamabad.

During the conference, participants assessed evolving maritime situation in the region and discussed a range of topics related to national security, geostrategic affairs, combat readiness and discussed various service policies. Readiness for disaster relief operations amid potential flood alerts during ongoing monsoon season in the country was also reviewed.

Naval Chief Admiral Amjad Niazi also directed all naval commands to be fully ready for humanitarian assistance during the ongoing monsoon season.

He lauded the initiatives undertaken towards capability development through acquisition of emerging technologies.

The Admiral expressed full confidence over high state of operational preparedness of Pakistan Navy to meet challenges while safeguarding the maritime frontiers of Pakistan.

The Command & Staff Conference serves as an apex decision-making body of Pakistan Navy wherein; Chief of the Naval Staff, Principal Staff Officers and Field Commanders review Pakistan Navy policies and plans.

EPRA increases cost of electricity by Rs 2.31 per unit for Karachi consumers

ISLAMABAD (Online): National Electric Power and regulatory authority (NEPRA) has increased cost of electricity by Rs 2.31 per unit for consumers in Karachi.

An additional financial burden of Rs 4 billion 30 crore will be shifted to consumers of Karachi.

Electricity consumers of Karachi will have to make additional payments in August.

The increase was made in the context of June's monthly fuel adjustment which will not apply to K Electric's Lifeline customers.

NEPRA authorities said that K-Electric generated electricity at Rs 24.90 per unit from its own resources. Cost of electricity received from the federal government remained as Rs 11.56 per unit.

Water accumulated during rains in sloping areas cleared: Mayor Karachi

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Wednesday said that we are aware of the problems of the people and making sure rainwater does not stay anywhere during the rains.

Visiting different areas of district central here, Mayor Karachi said that water accumulates during the rains in the sloping areas was cleared and the people who have posted pictures of rainwater on social media are nowhere now. Those who posted the pictures on social media can also see the pictures of the water cleared, he added.

If the citizens have any complaints, they should inform, the teams of all the relevant departments, including Karachi

Metropolitan Corporation, Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation, are present on the ground.

On this occasion, the Deputy Commissioner of Central District Taha Saleem, local leaders of PPP, officers of KMC, Sindh Solid Waste Management Board and other institutions were also present.

Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab visited and inspected the double drain at Shadman and UP drain which has been cleared by immediate action, Mayor Karachi also inspected Nagan Chowrangi, UP Mor, Saleem Centre, Power House Chowrangi and adjoining areas where the rainwater drainage staff had completed the drainage work.



KARACHI: Peoples Party (PPP) leaders gather at Jinnah Hospital after shifted dead bodies of victims of firing incident, who were assassinated in firing incident by unidentified gunmen were opened fire on a car of Brother and nephew of Sindh MPA Aslam Abro, at Defence area, in Karachi.

Firing on vehicle, MPA Aslam Abro's brother and nephew killed, 2 injured in Karachi

KARACHI (Online): Sindh Assembly member Aslam Abro's brother and nephew were killed as a result of firing on his brother's vehicle near Qayumabad in the Defence Housing Authority area of Karachi while 2 people were injured.

According to the police, Vigo vehicle number KV 6052 was fired upon by the motorcycle riding terrorists.

The police said that Elahi Bakhsh Abro was safe in the firing incident

while MPA Aslam Abro's brother Akram Abro and nephew Shahryar Abro were killed in the car.

Police said that Irshad Ali Panhor and Abdullah Abro were injured in the incident. According to the initial estimate of the police, more than 2 dozen bullets have hit the windshield and sides of the vehicle.

The bodies of those who died in this terrorist incident and the injured have been shifted to Jinnah Hospital.



ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi chairing the Command & Staff Conference of Pakistan Navy held at Naval Headquarters.

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Wrong move

At a time when Pakistani democracy is facing an unprecedented existential crisis, legislation to improve service delivery for ordinary citizens would have gone a long way towards demonstrating that the country's leadership is serious about turning its fortunes around. Instead, the record for the past year shows that politicians seem to be preoccupied with their own troubles and power struggles.

The Contempt of Majlis-i-Shoorah (Parliament) Bill on Monday became the latest piece of legislation to clear both Houses in record time, with normal procedures bypassed to hasten its enactment. The proposed law, which seeks to impose criminal penalties on anyone for contempting parliament or parliamentarians, has been bluntly described by experts and observers as a 'weapon' that our lawmakers wish to wield in their ongoing stand-off against the Supreme Court.

The bill proposes that anyone who wilfully refuses to comply with an order passed by parliament or any of its committees be slapped with an imprisonment sentence of up to six months, or a fine of up to Rs1m, or both.

A 'parliamentary contempt committee' comprising five members, of which three will be drawn from the Lower House and two from the Senate, is to determine if anyone is to be charged with contempt of parliament, hear the matter, and also issue a punishment if left unsatisfied.

In this, the law has been criticised, and rightfully so, for arrogating to parliament the power to act as judge, jury and executioner. Critics have pointed out that Article 66(3) of the Constitution, under which it has been proposed, directs that the matter of punishments in case of noncompliance with parliamentary directives be left to a court.

Further, the language of the law — especially how it defines contempt — is also vague and rather expansive, which makes it vulnerable to abuse. As an example, even journalists protecting their sources against a parliamentary order to name them may be charged with contempt under the law if a contempt committee so decides.

Despite all these warnings, parliament seems intent on having this bill enacted. Parliament and public representatives do deserve to be accorded due deference and respect, especially when discharging their duties. However, they cannot be handed quasi-judicial powers to enforce their writ. Unless all members of the committee are trained legal experts as well, it is unlikely that the trials they hold will be in accordance with the universal standards of justice.

This has grave implications for constitutional rights, especially as there is a possibility of a criminal sentence at the end. The government must reconsider this move. It may tighten existing rules or legislate to ensure better compliance with parliamentary directives, but it must leave the determination and imposition of punishments to the courts.

Resketching Karachi



Masood Lohar

Amidst the changing winds of power and politics in Pakistan, Karachi witnesses its first ever mayor from the PPP. The young Murtaza Wahab, a born Karachiite, has to deliver on multiple fronts in addition to facing the earnest political rivalry in the shape of the Jamaat-i-Islami and the PTI's vote bank.

Karachi's municipal history is as old as the modern city's emergence as a key port after the British annexation of Sindh in 1843. Only a year after the establishment of the Municipal Commission in 1852, the latter was turned into the Karachi Municipal Committee. The first local government elections in Karachi were held on Nov 1, 1884.

Before it got converted to the Karachi Municipal Corporation in 1933, among many others Seth Harchand Rai Vishandas (1862-1928) and Jamshed Nusserwanji Mehta (1886-1952) continued as elected presidents of the Karachi municipality. The former is known for his introduction of electricity to Karachi in 1913, which became common in the US not before 1920. This visionary step made Karachi 'The City of Lights'.

Unlike his predecessors a century ago, when Karachi was known as 'Queen of the East', Wahab is taking over a city rated as one of the world's least liveable cities by the Economist Intelligence Unit. Of 173 cities, Karachi stands at 169th, only a little ahead of war-torn Damascus and Tripoli.

Hosting 10 per cent of Pakistan's population and

two key seaports, Karachi urgently needs bold and innovative measures for environmental improvement, economic growth, and sociocultural progress.

The new mayor's journey surely can't follow the beaten track. A lot more innovation and out-of-the-box solutions are needed to bring this city back to normal, if not to its original glory.

Some key actions include the restoration of the Lyari and Malir rivers, the creation of wetlands for rainwater harvesting, and the conversion of inhabited islands into ecotourism hubs. Additionally, there is an urgent need to restore Karachi's key lagoons, Obhayo and Nai Nar, and declare areas like Turtle Beach protected zones.

Promoting urban forests, disaster-risk reduction measures, and coastal mangrove cover is critical for a more resilient city. Simultaneously, fostering economic opportunities for the youth and meeting their recreational needs are equally vital for Mayor Wahab's ambitious agenda.

Restoring the once-glorious Lyari and Malir rivers is an arduous task that demands immediate attention. Unchecked industrial pollution and untreated sewage have turned these rivers into toxic streams, posing severe environmental and health risks. Restoration efforts can capitalise on creating wetlands within the Lyari and Malir riverbeds, serving as natural reservoirs for rainwater harvesting, mitigating the impact of monsoon flooding, and replenishing the city's water resources.

Karachi's four inhabited islands, including Manora, hold great potential for ecotourism development. Collaborating with the native fishing community, Mayor Wahab can ensure that tourism initiatives respect ecological integrity while providing economic op-

portunities.

The Obhayo and Nai Nar lagoons are vital to Karachi's ecosystem but have suffered from neglect. Connecting Obhayo lagoon with the sea through an overhead bridge, rather than the current Mai Kolachi road, can facilitate the flow of cleaner water, preserving the mangroves and marine life. Similarly, restoring the Nai Nar lagoon at Sandspit will aid the natural cleaning and washing of the Keamari harbour during low and high tides, improving the overall coastal ecosystem.

The Turtle Beach holds significant ecological importance as it serves as a nesting ground for the endangered green turtle. Ma-yor Murtaza Wahab can take decisive action by declaring this area a protected zone, implementing strict regulations on development, and promoting responsible tourism practices to safeguard the turtles' habitat.

Initiating a massive tree plantation campaign and creating urban forests will not only restore biodiversity but also provide recreational areas and cleaner air, addressing the lack of green spaces in Karachi.

Disaster-risk reduction measures, including improved infrastructure, early warning systems, and coastal mangrove cover, can enhance Karachi's resilience to natural calamities, like the recent near-miss Cyclone Biparjoi. Leveraging Karachi's young population, Mayor Wahab can foster economic opportunities by reaching out to Commonwealth countries in need of human resources and providing job training and skill development programmes for unemployed youth.

Creating safe and vibrant recreational spaces will enhance residents' well-being and strengthen social bonds within the community. — Courtesy Dawn

Bangkok backslide



Mahir Ali

It did not come as much of a surprise when Pita Limjaroenrat was prevented from becoming the prime minister of Thailand earlier this month. After all, his potential problems on the path to power were widely discussed after his Move Forward party won the highest number of votes in the May elections.

Somewhat less expected was the party leader's suspension from parliament by the constitutional court, after it accepted a case challenging Pita's eligibility as a candidate. The disqualification charge relates to his alleged ownership of (inherited) shares in an effectively defunct media company. But that's just a technicality: the underlying reasons for the heavily military-flavoured Thai establishment's resistance to a Move Forward-led government are hardly a state secret.

The party's campaign agenda included vows to challenge both military involvement in politics and the dominant clout of monopolies in the economy, posing a twin threat to vested interests. Arguably an even bigger issue, though, was the questioning of royal absolutism and, more specifically, the absurdly anachronistic lese-majeste laws that punish even the mildest criticism of the monarchy. Just a couple of years ago, a former civil servant in her 60s was sentenced to 87 years in prison for posting audio clips on social media. It was reduced to 43 years after she pleaded guilty.

That's longer than Pita has been around. The

42-year-old's chances of becoming prime minister rested on securing a parliamentary majority, but while the elected Lower House proved willing to back him, he won only 13 out of a possible 249 votes in the unelected senate. The senators couldn't care less about the popular will because they are picked by the army — and any shift in the status quo could jeopardise their status.

What lies ahead for Thailand is unclear. Media reports suggest a likely alternative is property tycoon Srettha Thavisin, a luminary of the Pheu Thai party that entered into a coalition with Move Forward, but has a chequered history with the military, exemplified by the fate of its exiled former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra (toppled in 2006) and his sister Yingluck (thrown out in 2014).

The election result in May was portrayed in the Western media as a triumph for 'progressivism' — a concept that has become more nebulous of late. Pita evidently became interested in politics at school in New Zealand, and was enthused by the Obama presidential campaign while at Harvard. He claims to be an admirer of Uruguay's José Mujica, and recently told The New York Times he was reading Bernie Sanders' book 'It's OK to be Angry about Capitalism'.

None of that necessarily suggests an inclination to overturn the existing order: it seems the idea, at best, is to tweak it and to pull Thailand out of the dark ages. Reducing the political input of the monarchy and the military would be an achievement, and may set Thailand on a path where progressivism goes beyond the US-sponsored 'rules-based order' that Pita appears to favour. But it seems all aspects of modernity are anathema to the Thai military and the related 'stakeholders'.

In terms of its polity,

it's hard to discern how much better Thailand is than its neighbours Myanmar and Cambodia. Military rule is even more regular — and abrasive — in Myanmar, which is embroiled in a sporadic civil war after the army overthrew an allied political order. In Cambodia, Hun Sen, in power for nearly 40 years, further solidified his support last weekend by excluding adversaries through bans and imprisonment. He intends to emulate North Korea by passing the baton to his son, Hun Manet — a West Point graduate who might not measure up to the expectations of his Pentagon tutors.

Inevitably, coup-prone Thailand and Myanmar throw up parallels with Pakistan, not least in the context of the coalescence between feudalism and militarism, alongside obvious variations. Common ground can also be located in the resistance to various aspects of modernity and, of course, democracy. The latter, though, is also clearly ailing in nations where it was long considered the established norm, from India to the US, and across much of Europe.

Thailand could have gone a different way, but it seems the very idea of curbing the military and downgrading — let alone abolishing, which really ought to be the aim — the monarchy is a bridge too far for the dominant segments of the elite. As one Thai voter told AFP, "Why ask people to go to the polls? Why don't you just pick someone from your families to be the prime minister?"

It's a reasonable question, and not just for Thailand. But the show must go on, the democratic charade, even if the crown goes to the clown. The very concept of democracy is due for a reckoning. Where it might begin remains an open question. — Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Ahsan inaugurates historic 'FUTURE E-Commerce Operations Center'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday inaugurated a historic 'FUTURE E-Commerce Operations Center', calling upon the younger generation to embrace e-commerce and information technology as pivotal components of Pakistan's economic growth.

The event marks a significant milestone for Pakistan, as it celebrates the 10th anniversary of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and

showcases the country's remarkable progress over the years, a news release said. Addressing the inaugural ceremony, the minister highlighted the essence of nation-building, emphasizing that unity and cooperation formed the bedrock of any successful nation. He drew attention to China's remarkable progress, attributing it to three fundamental pillars including political stability, policy continuity and peace.

"Political stability in China played a pivotal role in fostering an environment of peace, enabling the

nation to channel its efforts towards growth and prosperity," he said, stressing the importance of policy continuity, as it had been instrumental in sustaining China's progress over the years. He said no country could progress without a system that prioritized peace, stability and policy consistency.

Ahsan Iqbal made a crucial point that no matter how qualified and exceptional the individuals in government may be, "political uncertainty, turmoil, or divisive politics hinder a country's path to success."

Rs30b loans distributed under PMYB&ALS in five months: SAPM

KARACHI (NNI): Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Youth Affairs Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Wednesday said under the Prime Minister's Youth Business and Agriculture Loan Scheme (PMYB&ALS), the loans of 30 billion rupees were distributed during the last five months.

This was stated by her while addressing the ceremony held for the distribution of laptops and

cheques under the Prime Minister's Youth Business and Agriculture Loan Scheme and Prime Minister's Youth Laptop Scheme 2023, respectively at the Sindh Governor House. Shaza Fatima Khawaja said the business loan programme was initiated by former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif in 2013. The loans amounting to Rs. 75 billion were distributed under the scheme in last 10 years, she added.

PSX stays bullish, gains 265 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Wednesday, gaining 265.19 points, a positive change of 0.57 percent, closing at 46,682.53 points against 46,417.34 points the previous trading day. A total of 429,515,564 shares were traded during the day as compared to 319,893,485 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 14,137 billion against Rs 10,259 billion on the last trading day.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal cutting ribbon to inaugurate Hyper Future E-Commerce Operations Center.

Pakistan, Kazakhstan have trade potential of \$1 billion: Ambassador

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan, Yerzhan Kistafin on Wednesday said that Pakistan and Kazakhstan have the potential of \$1 billion of bilateral trade for which the communication and interaction between both sides is pivotal.

He said this while addressing a seminar on the theme of "Small and Medium Enterprises and Women Entrepreneurs" organized by Islamabad Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IWCCI) along with the Founder President of IWCCI, Samina Fazil here.

The envoy said that the IWCCI and other local business chambers can play an important role in increasing bilateral trade between Pakistan and Kazakhstan and in their cooperation with the business community of both sides.

Yerzhan Kistafin said that 47% contribution to the economy of Kazakhstan is currently from Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) which are growing day by day.

He said that women have a very important role in the economy of Kazakhstan, women entrepreneurs are the

owners of big brands in Kazakhstan, and there are a lot of women, especially in the textile, clothing, fashion and IT sectors.

The Ambassador said that the delegation of IWCCI under the leadership of Samina Fazil should visit the cities of Almaty, Astana and others to evaluate the business opportunities there so that they can have an idea about the local market and also both sides could establish business links.

Meanwhile, Yerzhan Kistafin said that Kazakhstan is currently the most attractive country for foreign investment.

PTCL implements robotic process automation for Digital Transformation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL), the leading ICT services provider in Pakistan, has announced the implementation of Robotic Process Automation (RPA) in its Customer Care operations as a vital part of its digital transformation strategy.

The aim is to improve overall customer experience across all touch points. The initiative will help PTCL firmly align with the highest

global standards in digitalization and automation, reinforcing its position as the industry leader, said a news release issued here Wednesday. Commenting on the initiative, Ahmad Kamal, Group Chief Customer Care Officer at PTCL and Ufone 4G, said, "We are delighted to announce the implementation of Robotic Process Automation (RPA), a significant milestone in our ongoing efforts to enhance the customer journey."

Gold rates decline by Rs 2,400

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs 2,400 and was sold at Rs 222,100 on Wednesday compared to its sale at Rs 224,500 on the previous day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs 2,058 to Rs 190,415 from Rs 192,473 whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went down to Rs 174,547 from Rs. 176,433. All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

ECC approves Rs985.43 for USC Ramzan Atta Scheme-2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the cabinet here on Monday approved Rs985.43 million for Ministry of Industries and Production that were spent by Utility Stores Corporation (USC) under the Prime Minister's Free Atta Scheme during Ramzan in last financial year (2022-23).

The scheme was launched on March 18, 2023 and continued till April 16, 2023, according

to a press statement issued by the finance ministry adding the summary was moved by Ministry of Industries and Production.

The meeting was chaired by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar while among others it was attended by Federal Minister for Industries and Production Makhdoom Syed Murtaza Mehmood, Coordinator to the PM on Economy, Bilal Azhar Kayani, Federal Secretaries and some senior officers.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Ethiopia to Pakistan, Jemal Beker Abdula calls on Federal Minister for Aviation and Railways, Khawaja Saad Rafique at Ministry of Aviation.

Traders warn countrywide protest against increase in electricity tariff

MULTAN (APP): The Chamber of Small Traders expressed concern on the recent increase in electricity tariff and warned of countrywide protest in case the electricity tariff was not reduced.

President Chamber of Small Traders south Punjab Chaudhary Tariq Kareem along with other traders held a press conference stating that the traders were unable to pay electricity bills.

He stated that the traders had to pay Rs 65/unit of electricity. The office bearers lamented that peak hours had also been increased from 5 pm

to 11 pm. The government should make arrangements for the production of electricity through dams, solar systems and coal instead of fuel.

A number of taxes have been included in electricity bills, they stated.

The demand of the government to reduce electricity tariff at the earliest.

They also warned that the traders would hold countrywide protests. A meeting of traders will be convened in August in which representatives of traders organizations from across the country.



QUETTA: President Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry Haji Abdullah Achakzai presenting special shield to Provincial Minister for Finance and Chairman BFA Engineer Zamrak Khan Achakzai.

Naqvi reviews security arrangements to ensure public safety in Muharram

Independent Report

LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi has stated that comprehensive security arrangements have been made throughout Punjab to ensure public safety during Muharram-ul-Haram.

Processions and gatherings have been geotagged and all processions and gatherings are being supervised through CCTV cameras, he added.

He said that every effort is being made by the government to ensure peace and security during Muharram-ul-Haram, adding that mobile service would be temporarily suspended where needed.

Chief Secretary, IG police and relevant security officials are monitoring the security situation, and all line departments are on high alert, he said.

Provincial ministers,

administrative officers, and police officials are present in the field and will remain present to maintain a peaceful atmosphere through unity and cooperation, he added.

CM Mohsin Naqvi inspected the routes and reviewed security arrangements for gatherings and processions related to Muharram-ul-Haram by visiting Khaima-e-Saadaat, Lytton Road, and Taxali Road late night.

Citizens to get municipal services through single click: Amir Mir

LAHORE (APP):

Caretaker Provincial Minister for Information and Local Government Amir Mir on Wednesday said that the Punjab government decided to decentralize all municipal services for the convenience of citizens.

To achieve the goal, the local government department established a complaints management and information system where citizens could access services with just one click.

In a statement, the minister said that as part of this system, preparations have been completed to launch a helpline number 1198 through which citizens could register complaints and obtain information related to municipal services.

Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi would soon inaugurate this system for awareness and handling of complaints about municipal services, he added.

Youth shot dead, body found in Lahore

LAHORE (INP):

A youth was shot dead over financial dispute while body of another youth was recovered roadside in different areas of the city on Wednesday, police said.

According to details, Muhammad Ali of Defence-C Lahore sold his land to Rana Nasir at Kala Khatai road but accused refused to pay for the purchased after which the deceased got stay order from the court.

Over same dispute, culprit Rana Nasir gunned down Muhammad Ali and fled the scene.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali inspecting the control room during the eve of Muharram ul Haram during his visit to Razaq Police Station.

Azam directs effective measures for improvement of law and order in KP

PESHAWAR (APP):

Expressing concerns over recent incidents of terrorism, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa caretaker Chief Minister Azam Khan here Wednesday directed the authorities concerned to take effective measures for improvement of the law and order situation in the province.

He was presiding

over a high-level meeting about the law and order situation in KP. The meeting reviewed the overall security situation of the province. Information Minister Farooz Jamal, Chief Secretary, IGP KP and other senior officials attended.

The caretaker Chief Minister stressed the need

for a special focus on security measures in sensitive districts and places during Muharram and said that special measures in that regard were inevitable for which all stakeholders need to play an effective role.

The caretaker Chief Minister held the sacrifices of security forces and police in high esteem.

Court orders to stop salary of IGP, others over not producing Parvez Elahi

LAHORE (APP):

A special court (central) on Wednesday ordered accountant general Punjab to stop salary of Home secretary Punjab, inspector general of police (IGP) Punjab and inspector general of prisons Punjab over not producing former chief minister Punjab Chaudhry Parvez Elahi during the hearing of a money laundering case.

The court imposed a fine of Rs 50,000 each on the officers and also issued show cause notices to them for August 5.

Special Court Judge Bakht Fakhir Behzad

conducted the proceedings of the money laundering case against Parvez Elahi and others.

Earlier, the court expressed displeasure over not producing Chaudhry Parvez Elahi and directed for producing him by 3.00pm.

The court observed that strict action would be taken if the court orders were not complied with.

As the court resumed proceedings at 3.00pm, DIG Operations Ali Nasir Rizvi, Deputy Superintendent Adiala Jail and other officials appeared.

Transformation process should be continued in parties: PPP

LAHORE (APP):

Pakistan Peoples Party Central Punjab Information Secretary Shehzad Saeed Cheema has said that the process of transformation in the political parties and organizations should be continued.

Addressing a meeting of the divisional information secretaries, here on Wednesday, he said that the first time, social activists had joined the party. He stressed to ensure effective information and political contacts as elections were close now. He said that the future strategy should be set to contest the upcoming elections.

Senator Mushtaq for steps to improve law & order in merged KP districts

ISLAMABAD (INP):

Senator Mushtaq Ahmed, representing Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan (JIP) on Wednesday called for taking steps to improve law and order situation in merged districts of Kyber-Pakhtunkhwa.

Speaking at the joint session of the parliament, he stressed the Federal and provincial governments to take prompt and effective measures to restore peace and stability in the region.

The Senator's made the passionate appeal in the wake of tragic incident at Ali Mosque the other day, where terrorists targeted the place of

worship, resulting in the martyrdom of Adnan Afridi, Additional SHO.

The loss of life, he said, underscored the immediate need for taking decisive action against the terrorist elements.

He said that the local community had also taken out peace marches to express their support to promptly resolve these issues.

Speaker of the National Assembly, Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, paid tribute to the sacrifices of the security forces in their relentless efforts to eliminate terrorism these areas.



KARACHI: View of closed Korangi Causeway road for traffic that was completely destroyed while security and rescue officials stand alert to avoid untoward incident after flood flow in Korangi Drain River after heavy downpour of monsoon season, in Karachi.

'Education to usher era of progress, development in tribal region'

PESHAWAR (INP):

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Excise and Narcotics Control, Haji Manzoor Khan Afridi has said that education will play a key role in the development of the merged districts and a new era of development will begin in the region by paying special attention to it.

He expressed these views while discussing the education sector projects in merged districts during a meeting with Education Adviser Rahmat Salam

Khattak.

Deputy District Education Officer District Khyber Shahid Ali Khan and other officials participated in the meeting.

The provincial minister said that the caretaker government is taking practical steps for the promotion of education and besides the provision of facilities in educational institutions; scholarships are also being paid to both boys and girls students.



KARACHI: A view of the massive traffic jam at Qayyumabad area due to the closure of the road because of the flooded conditions on Korangi road in Provincial Capital.

International News

New Chinese foreign minister Wang talks Ukraine in Turkey on first trip

Monitoring Desk

ANKARA: Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi discussed Ukraine with his Turkish counterpart in Ankara and met President Tayyip Erdogan on Wednesday during his first foreign trip since being appointed, a Turkish foreign ministry source said.

China named Wang, a veteran diplomat, as its new foreign minister on Tuesday, removing former rising star Qin Gang after a one-month absence from duties barely half a year into the job. Discussions between Wang and Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan included the latest situation in Ukraine as well as the

global financial system, the Turkish foreign ministry source said.

Russia has expanded its air attacks on Ukrainian grain targets in recent days after quitting a 2022 deal brokered by the United Nations and Turkey that had allowed the safe Black Sea export of Ukrainian grain for the past year.

The United States and several European countries have urged China to use its influence over Russia to seek an end to the war in Ukraine. Earlier this year, China published a 12-point peace plan, calling for the protection of civilians and the sovereignty of all countries to be respected.

During his talks with Wang, Erdogan voiced hope that Turkey and China would intensify their cooperation as both countries play important roles in global and regional issues, Erdogan's office said in a statement released after the meeting.

Fidan and Wang also touched on the development of economic and trade relations between Turkey and China, the Turkish foreign ministry source said.

Their discussions included "harmonisation of the initiatives of (China's) Belt and Road and Middle Corridor", as well as nuclear energy, agriculture and civil aviation, the source added.



Turkey's President Tayyip Erdogan meets with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at the Presidential Palace in Ankara, Turkey.

African leaders arrive in Russia for summit as Kremlin seeks allies amid fighting in Ukraine

Monitoring Desk

ST. PETERSBURG: Some African leaders arrived in Russia on Wednesday for a summit with President Vladimir Putin as the Kremlin seeks more allies amid the fighting in Ukraine.

Putin has billed the two-day summit that opens Thursday in St. Petersburg as a major event that would help bolster ties with a continent of 1.3 billion people that is increasingly assertive on the global stage.

On Wednesday, Putin met separately with Ethiopia's Prime Minister

Abiy Ahmed, and said Russia will more than triple the number of Ethiopian students it hosts and cover their education costs.

Later in the day, Putin is set to hold talks with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi. Africa's 54 nations make up the largest voting bloc at the United Nations and have been more divided than any other region on General Assembly resolutions criticizing Russia's actions in Ukraine.

It's the second Russia-Africa summit since 2019, and the number of heads of

states attending shrank from 43 then to 17 now because of what the Kremlin described as a crude Western pressure to discourage African nations from attending it.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov deplored "unconcealed brazen interference by the U.S., France and other states through their diplomatic missions in African countries, and attempts to put pressure on the leadership of these countries in order to prevent their active participation in the forum."

North Korea to welcome China and Russia with military display after pandemic isolation

Monitoring Desk

SEOUL: After years of pandemic isolation, North Korea has invited its friends back this week, hosting senior Chinese and Russian delegations for 70th anniversary commemorations of the Korean War and the struggle against the United States and its allies.

The visiting dignitaries, which include Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu and Chinese Communist Party Politburo member Li Hongzhong, are expected to be presented with one of North Korea's signature events: a massive military parade showcasing its latest weaponry.

Analysts say the spectacle will likely include the North's nuclear-tipped

missiles banned by the United Nations Security Council, where Russia and China are permanent members.

The visits are the first known foreign delegations to visit North Korea since the COVID-19 pandemic began, and come as Pyongyang has looked to deepen its ties with Beijing and Moscow, finding common ground in their rivalries with Washington and the West. Thursday's holiday, in which North Korea celebrates what it sees as a victory over U.S.-led allied forces in the 1950-1953 Korean War, provides a chance for Pyongyang to highlight the Cold War days when North Korean troops fought with Chinese and Russian support.



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un visits the Chinese People's Volunteer Army Martyrs' cemetery in this photo released by North Korea's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

China's sharp-tongued foreign minister is ousted, but his combative style is expected to continue

Monitoring Desk

BEIJING: China's sharp-tongued foreign minister, Qin Gang, was something of an avatar for nationalist Communist Party leader and President Xi Jinping, warning of "conflict and confrontation" with the U.S., the stakes of which could be the "future of humanity." Now, Qin has been dismissed from office in the biggest political tumult to strike China in a decade.

Qin's departure was announced Tuesday after a month-long disappear-

ance from public view, sparking rumors of personal scandals or friction within the top party echelons. He was absent from key meetings as the U.S. sent Secretary of State Antony Blinken and other officials to Beijing. It also comes during economic challenges and poor relations with the United States and other nations that China relies on for economic development but is also seeking to push aside in its drive to overcome the Western-led economic order.



Members of the Philippine Coast Guard remove a fallen tree from a road following the onslaught of Typhoon Doksuri in Buguey, Cagayan province, Philippines.

Indian government faces no-confidence vote over Manipur ethnic clashes

Monitoring Desk

NEW DELHI: India's parliament on Wednesday authorised a no-confidence vote against Narendra Modi's government by an alliance of opposition parties, to force the prime minister to address in detail concerns about ethnic clashes in the northeastern state of Manipur. Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has a clear majority of 301 members in the 542-seat lower house of parliament, so

the no-confidence vote will not affect its stability.

The opposition instead wants to trigger a debate about violence in the remote, BJP-ruled Manipur state, where more than 130 people have been killed and 60,000 displaced since it began in early May. Approving the opposition motion, lower house speaker Om Birla said he would soon decide when the debate and vote would take place.

Jakarta terms Taliban officials' visit 'informal'

Monitoring Desk

JAKARTA: Representatives of Afghanistan's Taliban government travelled to Indonesia this month on an unofficial visit, the foreign ministry in Jakarta said on Tuesday, despite Kabul saying they held meetings with politicians in the world's most populous Muslim-majority nation. "My understanding is that they were in Jakarta informally for internal matters with the Afghanistan mission here."



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs Federal Cabinet Meeting.

Cabinet approves E-Safety, Personal Data Protection Bills 2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): The federal cabinet on Wednesday approved the E-Safety Bill 2023 (E-Safety Bill 2023) on the recommendation of the Ministry of Information Technology (IT) to protect user data and prevent illegal and illegal use of information systems.

Under this law, a comprehensive framework will be established to ensure the protection and unauthorized use of user data on all types of online services, online shopping, data provided to various companies, and social networking websites in Pakistan. After the approval of the bill, heinous crimes like online harassment, cyberbullying, and blackmail will be effectively prevented.

The meeting of the cabinet was held here with Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in chair. The federal cabinet also approved in principle the Personal Data Protection Bill 2023 on the recommendation of the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication. Under this bill, the government will ensure the security of the user's personal information/data of various organizations and companies and prohibit sharing of the user's information/data with any company, individual, or government organization without their permission. After the law is passed, the National Commission for Personal Data Protection (NCPDP) will be established which will act as a

civil court to protect the private documents/data of the users and redress the grievances of the complainants.

The federal cabinet also gave assent to the draft amendment bill of the Investment Board Ordinance 2001 for the promotion of foreign investment in Pakistan.

The amendment will empower the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) as well as lay down its basic structure, working procedures, and cooperation mechanisms with various ministries and provincial governments.

After the law is passed, the SIFC will ensure the speedy implementation of foreign investment projects in the country.

Single-use plastic items banned in Capital from August 1: Sherry

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Senator Sherry Rehman on Wednesday informed that a new regulation further limiting the use of single-use plastic items was going to be imposed from August 1 in the federal capital.

The minister flanked by Additional Secretary, Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Syed Mujtaba Hussain while launching the first-ever National Adaptation Plan approved by the federal capital, briefed the media on banning one-time use of plastic items. Senator Rehman said that the Ministry had taken

the decision after proper consultations with the plastic bags and items manufacturing industry to circumvent any possibility of unemployment or damage to businesses. She said, "By 2050, plastics will be more than marine life in our oceans and it has a lifetime shelf life."

The single use of plastics would be completely banned after the implementation of the revised statutory regulatory order (SRO), she added. The Additional Secretary informed that plastic plates, bowls, cups, glasses, stirrer and cutler and also packaging items would be completely banned in the federal capital whereas all these items had their environment friendly alternatives.

MQM delegation calls on prime minister

KARACHI (APP): A delegation of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) headed by Convenor Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui Wednesday called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif here. The delegation comprised Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori, Dr Farooq Sattar and Mustafa Kamal. In the meeting, they discussed the overall political situation in the country.

KMC starts physical verification of pensioners

KARACHI (APP): Karachi Metropolitan Corporation is starting the process of physical verification of all the pensioners of KMC, DMCS and District Council Karachi from August 1, who receive their monthly pension through Habib Bank and National Bank to make the process of payment of pension better and transparent. The staff of the KMC Welfare Department in collaboration with the Finance and Accounts Department will conduct the physical verification of pensioners at designated branches of Habib Bank and National Bank in the city, said a spokesperson of the KMC on Wednesday.

In this regard, to make the verification process easy and convenient, it has been decided that the management of Habib Bank and National Bank will send a text message to the pensioners through their registered mobile number asking them to provide their life certificate, no marriage certificate and non-remarriage certificate. In the letter sent to the management of the two banks by the KMC Financial Advisor of KMC, they have been asked to contact the concerned branch manager to cooperate with the staff of KMC during the physical verification.

Ejaz Qureshi lauds efforts of Ombudsman Sindh to provide relief to common man

Independent Report

KARACHI: The Honorable Wafaqi Mohtasib Mr. Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, visited the office of Provincial Ombudsman here on Wednesday, discussed the issues of mutual interest and way forward to improve the working of their respective offices in providing more relief, assistance to the masses in redressal of their grievances.



Honorable Wafaqi Mohtasib planted a sapling as part of the ongoing "Tree Plantation" drive and visited the newly established library. Mr. Ejaz Ali Khan, Provincial Ombudsman Sindh gave a comprehensive presentation about the working of Sindh Ombudsman Office, initiatives taken to reduce the backlog and future plans.

The Honorable guest appreciated the efforts made by the Ombudsman Sindh, particularly the international outreach, to provide relief to the common man, and to portray a positive image of the Province of Sindh and Pakistan at international level.

Would improve town in every way and make it stand on its feet: Rizwan

Independent Report

KARACHI: The first introductory meeting of Jinnah Town Council was held under the presidency of

Addressing the meeting, Chairman Rizwan Abdul Sami said that the town has to play its role to make it stand on its feet in

would be ensured with the help of the concerned department, talking about charged parking, he said that bylaws would be



Chairman Jinnah Town Rizwan Abdul Sami in which town vice chairman Hamid Khan and members of town council attended the meeting. Council Officer Hasan Ali Khan briefed the council about the council matters after the introduction of council members.

every respect, in this regard, team work will be done to increase revenue, while a committee of council members will be formed to prevent illegal road cutting and advertisements.

He said that the ban on the orders of heavy vehicles from 11 pm to 6 am

formed in this regard. The council members said that they were facing difficulties due to non-availability of offices, staff and funds, to which the chairman said that the problems would be resolved by contacting the Sindh government in this regard.

PM for extensive export policy; assures all out support of Federal Govt

KARACHI (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday stressed upon the formulation of a comprehensive export policy and assured that the federal government would make every effort to facilitate the exporters, traders, industrialists and businessmen.

He said that the port city of Karachi had always been a gateway and home to exporters, traders and entrepreneurs that served as the backbone for national economy. He was addressing at Karachi Chamber of Commerce (KCCI) Export Trophy Awards ceremony.

The prime minister said that Karachi always been the place of main hub for revenues generation for the country and underlined

that Pakistan required extensive efforts for boosting its exports by setting up industries and utilization of modern techniques to compete in the global market.

The export quality must be competitive in global market, he added.

He also appreciated the contribution of exporters and industrialists for country's economy and said that despite difficulties, they made relentless efforts to increase exports.

Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori, Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, federal ministers, provincial ministers, parliamentarians, office bearers of Karachi Chamber of Commerce and relevant authorities were present during the ceremony.

SC rejects chairman PTI plea for stopping trial in Toshakhana criminal case

ISLAMABAD (Online): Supreme Court (SC) while rejecting chairman PTI plea for stopping the trial in Toshakhana criminal case has sent the matter to Islamabad High Court (IHC).

The court ordered that the counsel for the petitioner and DG Law election commission agreed that IHC should give decision after hearing both of the applications first.

Justice Yahya Afridi remarked the point related to jurisdiction in the case is

basic and important. We can only request the high court. To my view we should avoid interfering in the matter at this time.

A two members bench of SC presided over by Justice Yahya Afridi took up the case for hearing Wednesday.

On the hue and cry outside the court before commencement of hearing the court expressed annoyance saying Khawaja Haris "please see the matters outside the court. We cannot hear the case this way."

Rs30b loans distributed under PMYB&ALS in five months: SAPM

KARACHI (INP): Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Youth Affairs Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Wednesday said under the Prime Minister's Youth Business and Agriculture Loan Scheme (PMYB&ALS), the loans of 30 billion rupees were distributed during the last five months.

This was stated by her while addressing the ceremony held for the distribution of laptops and cheques under the Prime Minister's Youth Business and Agriculture Loan Scheme and Prime Minister's Youth Laptop Scheme 2023, respectively at the Sindh Governor House. Shaza Fatima Khawaja said the business loan programme was initiated by former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif in 2013.

The loans amounting to Rs. 75 billion were distributed under the scheme in last 10 years, she added.

The SAPM said the loan was being provided in three tiers. In the first tier, the loan of Rs. 0.5 million, in the second tier, Rs. 0.5 to 1.5 million and in the third tier, Rs. 1.5 million to 7.5 million is provided, she said.

On the occasion, the students, recipients of laptops, were presented Guard of Honor by a contingent of Sindh Police. The recipients of loans and laptops expressed their pleasure and thanked Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Federal Minister for Information Technology Syed Ameen-ul-Haque, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb, Sindh Ministers Sharjeel Inam Memon, Nasir Shah, Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab, President of different banks also attended the ceremony.

Commissioner chairs meeting regarding Muharram-ul-Haram arrangements

NAWABSHAH (APP): In order to overview the situation of rainwater disposal and arrangements made for 9th and 10th Muharram, Commissioner Muhammad Abbas Baloch chaired a meeting in Committee Room here on Wednesday.

Addressing the meeting, the Commissioner stressed that administration and elected representatives shall collectively work with the spirit of teamwork in order to save the public from difficulties arising out of recent monsoon rains and to dispose of the same at the earliest, he said that no negligence would be tolerated in this regard and negligent staff would face legal action. DIG Muhammad Younus Chandio, Additional Commissioner-1 Subhash Chandar, Deputy Commissioner SBA Shehryar Gul

Memon, SSP Mehzoor Ali Ghouri, Mayor Municipal Corporation Qazi Muhammad Rasheed Bhatti, XEN Hesco Zulfikar Memon, PD Scarp Amjad Memon, SE Public Health Nazeer Shaikh, Deputy Director Information Ghulam Abbas Goraho and other officials attended the meeting.

All Deputy Commissioners were directed to submit reports in case any official was found ignoring his duty strict action would be taken against him. On the instruction of the Commissioner, the DC recommended Secretary Irrigation for initiating departmental action against officials of the irrigation department of negligence on the issue of breaches those developed in different areas and different canals of the district.

Drone cameras banned in Karachi during Muharram possessions

Independent Report

KARACHI: The Home Department Government of Sindh has notified that the Inspector General of Police Sindh Karachi has communicated the recommendation/request of Additional Inspector General of Police Karachi Range for imposing ban on using / flying of Helicam for video recording under Section 144 Cr.P.C on 08th 09th and 10th Muharram-ul-Haram, 1445 Hijri - 2023 for the processions from the Nishtar Park to Hussainian Iranian Imambargah, Karadar and on 12th Muharram-ul-Haram, 1445 Hijri - 2023 for the procession from

Imam Bargah Sahib-uz-Zaman, Gulshan-e-Iqbal to Imambargah Akhbar-uz-Zaman, Gulistan-e-Johar and procession from Imambargah Shah Khuausan and back to same place after taking around Nishtar Park to avoid any untoward incidents as well as best interest of safety and security of participants/mourners of the said processions. The Government of Sindh is satisfied that in view of the present law & order situation and security environment, it is necessary to make immediate measures and foolproof preventive security arrangements.

PM Shehbaz spends busy day in Karachi



KARACHI: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif launches the 19th edition of "My Karachi Expo".



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif presenting awards to highest exporters at "KCCI Exports Trophy Awards Ceremony 2022-23".



KARACHI: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif distributing keys of newly constructed houses donated by HBL among the flood affectees of Sindh.



KARACHI: A delegation of MQM comprising Governor Sindh Kamran Tessori, Convenor MQM Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Dr. Farooq Sattar and Mustafa Kamal calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.



KARACHI: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif distributing cheques among the successful candidates under PM's Youth Business Loan Scheme at Governor House.



KARACHI: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meeting with a delegation of Pakistan Business Council.