

# Independent

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## Rallies held to protest desecration of Holy Quran as nation observes 'Quran Sanctity Day'

ISLAMABAD (Online): Nation observed Yaum-e-Taqaddus-e-Quran on Friday to lodge protest against desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden. In connection with Yaum-e-Taqaddus-e-Quran, rallies and demonstrations were being taken out across the country after Friday prayers.

On the constitution avenue in Islamabad, Supreme Court Bar Association organized a rally against the desecration of holy Quran in Sweden. The President of Supreme Court Bar Association said this despicable act is a conspiracy against Islam and Muslims. He said such incidents are intolerable.

The Supreme Court Bar Association also submitted a condemnation resolution at the ministry of foreign affairs.

Earlier, addressing the joint sitting in the Parliament Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif urged Islamic countries to forcefully raise their voice against

the recent despicable incident of desecrations of the Holy Quran in Sweden at all forms, including the United Nations, so that nobody can dare commit such a crime in future.

He said he will contact the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres to convene a meeting of the world body on this matter wherein heads or representatives of the all the Islamic countries are invited to express the sentiments of the Muslim Ummah.

He said this session should also pass a condemnation resolution, suggesting ways and means to curb the provocative acts of disrespecting the divine books and holy personalities.

The Prime Minister noted the Islamophobic incidents are a conspiracy aimed at driving wedge between Muslim and the Christians.

He also expressed his thanks to Pope Francis for condemning the incident and distancing himself from this profane act.



ISLAMABAD: Activists of All Pakistan Anjuman-e-Tajran holds protest rally at Aabpara Chowk to commemorate Yaum-e-Taqadus against the desecration of Quran Pak in Sweden.

## PM, COAS vow to address food insecurity, boost agri exports

Govt launches Land Information and Management System - Centre of Excellence - to transform unproductive land



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir and others in a group photo during inauguration ceremony of Land Information and Management System - Centre of Excellence (LIMS-COE)

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's civil and military leaders joined hands on Friday to tackle the pressing issues of food insecurity, malnutrition, and soaring import costs in the agriculture sector.

Inauguration Ceremony of Land Information and Management System - Centre of Excellence (LIMS - COE) was graced by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif as a chief guest here on Friday.

Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir was also present on the occasion. The ceremony was also attended by Ministers of Finance, Defence, Planning Development & Special Initiative, National Food Security & Research, Information, Chief Secre-

taries of Provincial Governments, agricultural experts and Senior Army Officials. According to the World Food Programme, 36.9 % of Pakistanis are food insecure and 18.3% of these are facing severe food crisis.

Cognizant of the prevailing food insecurity, mass malnutrition and widening import bill of agri related products vis-a-vis projected population growth and future domestic food needs, the National political, economic and military leadership has decided to undertake the decisive and meaningful steps to address this critical issue.

Establishment of LIMS is the first exceptional initiative, aimed at enhancing food security and improving agri exports thus

reducing import burden on national exchequer by transforming millions of acres of uncultivated and low yield land within the country.

This state-of-the-art system will help optimize the agricultural production through innovative technologies and sustainable precision agricultural practices based on agro-ecological potential of land, while ensuring well being of rural communities and preservation of environment.

The GIS based LIMS will greatly improve the national agri yield by systemizing digitization of agriculture, providing real time information to local farmers about soil, crops, weather, water resource and pest monitoring

through remote sensing and geospatial technologies as well as minimizing the role of middlemen through efficient marketing system.

The Land Information and Management System (LIMS) is an unprecedented project of the government of Pakistan and the Pakistan Army to promote modern agriculture, whereas the establishment of LIMS will help revolutionize the agriculture sector in the country.

LIMS is the first comprehensive government initiative for the development of the agricultural sector in the country's history, an official source said.

The main objective of LIMS is to reduce domestic agricultural imports, increase exports and meet the

food needs of the growing population.

Land Information Management System will also be helpful in enhancing food security of the country. The establishment of LIMS will provide farmers with simultaneous access to information on climate change, satellite crop monitoring, water, fertilizer and spray focus areas and direct access to markets.

Under Land Information Management System, it will be possible to increase agricultural production by using modern technology on uninhabited and low-yielding agricultural lands. This revolutionary institute will work on land, crops, weather, water resources and pest control under one roof.

## Resolution of journalists' problems topmost priority of present government: Mariyum

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb said on Friday that the government fully believed in freedom of the press and addressing the problems of journalists was the topmost priority of the government.

This she said during a meeting with a delegation of journalists led by Abbottabad Press Club President Raja Haroon and Secretary General Raja Munir.

Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi was also present during the meeting.

The Ministry of Information, she said would continue to play its key role to equip the press clubs across the country with modern requirements.

Abbottabad Press Club, she added, was one of the most important and responsible press clubs in the country.

The minister issued directives to immediately set up a computer lab and studio at the Abbottabad Press Club.

She assured that Abbottabad Press Club would also be provided with a grant already announced.

Murtaza Javed Abbasi thanked the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for the announcement of the establishment of a computer lab, studio, and grant for the Abbottabad Press Club.

Abbottabad's journalistic community was doing its professional work despite limited resources, Murtaza Javed Abbasi said.

## At least 50 dead in monsoon floods across Pakistan since June 25

ISLAMABAD (INP): At least 50 people, including eight children, have been killed by floods and landslides triggered by monsoon rains that have lashed Pakistan since last month, officials said on Friday.

The summer monsoon brings South Asia 70-80 per cent of its annual rainfall between June and September every year.

It is vital for the livelihoods of millions of farmers and food security in a region of around two billion people — but it also brings landslides and floods.

"Fifty deaths have been reported in different rain-related incidents all over Pakistan since the start of the monsoon on June 25," a national disaster management official told reporters, adding that 87 people were injured during this period.

## PML-N submits request to retain 'tiger' as poll symbol

ISLAMABAD (Online): PML-N has filed application in Election Commission (EC) for the allotment of election symbol of tiger to the party in coming general election. EC had invited applications from all political parties through its July 01, 2023 press release for allotment of election symbols for next general elections. PML-N Assistant Secretary General Dr Mehr Liaqat and office secretary Sjad Hussain filed application duly signed by party president Mian Shehbaz Sharif in EC office on July 07.

## PM phone calls OIC SG on desecration of Quran, Islamophobia

ISLAMABAD (Online): Prime Minister (PM) Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif held a telephone conversation with the Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), H.E. Hissein Ibrahim Taha on Friday and discussed desecration of Holy Quran. Prime Minister conveyed Pakistan's strong condemnation of willful and provocative incidents of public burning of the Holy Quran which hurts Muslims sentiments worldwide.

He stressed that vilification of religion, revered religious personalities, Holy Scriptures and symbols could not be condoned on the self-serving pretext of freedom of expression and protest.

The Prime Minister appreciated the OIC Secretary-

General's role in articulating Muslim Ummah's concerns and demands about these Islamophobic trends and incidents. He emphasized that as the collective voice of the Islamic world, the OIC must chalk out a coordinated and comprehensive strategy, aimed at raising global awareness about its perspective and building legal and political deterrence against rising incidents of anti-Muslim hatred and Islamophobia.

While welcoming the convening of an urgent debate at the Geneva-based Human Rights Council on the issue, the Prime Minister further underscored that the OIC must raise the issue with the UN Secretary-General and at other relevant forums and bodies within the UN system.

## Justice Musarrat Hilali takes oath as judge of SC

ISLAMABAD (Online): Justice Musarrat Hilali took oath as second woman judge of Supreme Court (SC) on Friday.

Oath taking ceremony was held in SC and Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial administered oath to Ms Hilali.

The ceremony was attended by senior judges, Attorney General (AG) and lawyers.

Justice Musarrat Hilali will serve as SC judge for three years. The total number of SC judges now has reached 16 with the induction of Justice Musarrat Hilali. Parliamentary committee for appointment of judges had approved induction of Justice Musarrat Hilali as SC judge.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice Mr. Umar Ata Bandial administering the oath to Justice Supreme Court judge of the Ms. Justice Musarrat Hilali, Chief Justice Peshawar High Court as Judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan

## Naveed Qamar, PPP finance team hold meeting with IMF country representative

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar on Friday held crucial meeting with Ester Perez Luis, the country representative of International Monetary Fund (IMF).

In a significant development for Pakistan's economic landscape, Ester Perez Luis, the International Monetary Fund's resident representative, met with the finance team of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), including Syed Naveed Qamar, Federal Minister for Commerce, and Saleem Mandviwala.

The meeting, held at minister's enclave, was aimed at discussing the possibility of a standby agreement with Pakistan, which would have a profound impact on the nation's financial stability,

said a press release issued by Ministry of Commerce.

The PPP team expressed its willingness to support the IMF programme, citing larger national interests as the driving force behind their decision.

Syed Naveed Qamar, representing the PPP finance team, acknowledged the significance of the standby agreement in addressing Pakistan's economic concerns.

He reiterated the PPP's commitment to working in harmony with the IMF to ensure the successful implementation of the programme.

The discussion between the IMF representative and the PPP finance team is seen as a positive step towards economic reform and stability in the country.



ISLAMABAD: Ester Perez Luis, the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) resident representative, calls on the finance team of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), including Syed Naveed Qamar, the Federal Minister for Commerce, and Senator Saleem Mandviwala.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif distributing smart cards and cheque books relating to Benazir Social Protection Account among the beneficiaries

## Shazia Marri terms Benazir Social Protection Account as revolutionary milestone

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety (PA&SS) and Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Shazia Marri Friday said that "Benazir Social Protection Accounts" is a revolutionary milestone in the 15-year journey of BISP which will further ensure transparency during cash disbursements.

She was speaking during the launching ceremony of "Benazir Social Protection Accounts" for Benazir Income Support Programme's beneficiaries.

The Prime Minister of Pakistan, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif was the chief guest at the ceremony who also launched the "Benazir Social Protection Account" along with the SAPM, Faisal Karim Kundi and others at Prime Minister House.

The launching ceremony was attended by a number of distinguished guests including Federal Minister of Information and Broadcasting Ms. Mariyum Aurangzeb, members of the diplomatic community and BISP beneficiaries.

The federal minister, Shazia Marri said that BISP has achieved a significant milestone today with the formal launch of Benazir Social Protection Accounts under the esteemed patronage of Prime Minister of Pakistan, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

She further said that this new payment system will give autonomy to women in selecting the bank of their choice.

The payments will be directly made into their accounts which beneficiaries can withdraw at their convenience, she added.

## ICCPO meets CNS at Naval Headquarters

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCPO), Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan met Chief of Pakistan Navy Admiral Amjad Khan Niazi, at Naval Headquarters Islamabad, a police public relations officer said. He said that, ICCPO and Chief of Naval Staff held discussions on professional matters and the law and order situation in the federal capital and exchanged valuable insights on important matters.

During the productive meeting, ICCPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan and Chief of Pa-



kistan Navy Admiral Amjad Khan Niazi engaged in a comprehensive discussion regarding the law and order situation.

Chief of Pakistan Navy Admiral Amjad Khan Niazi expressed his appreciation for the relentless commitment demonstrated by the Islamabad Capital Police in upholding law and order and he commended the police force for their unwavering dedication and proactive approach in ensuring the safety and security of the federal capital.

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## Jenin incursion

Another day, another massacre. This is the violent reality that perpetually confronts the Palestinian people. While the Israeli war machine usually reserves its barbaric wrath for the impoverished coastal enclave of Gaza, this time it was the West Bank city of Jenin that was subjected to state-sponsored violence. Trouble had been brewing since last month, when Tel Aviv had dispatched helicopter gunships to the West Bank in a brazen escalation of tensions. But on Monday, the Israelis launched a brutal two-day assault targeting the Jenin refugee camp, ostensibly to hunt down Palestinian fighters. What ensued is typical of the one-sided violence that has marked this decades-old conflict, with Arab civilians facing the unrestrained cruelty of Israel's military. Perhaps it should be a relief that 'only' 12 Palestinians were killed — including several children — as over 1,000 Israeli troops descended upon Jenin. Hundreds of homes have been damaged or destroyed, while Jenin's infrastructure, including water, electricity and sewerage networks, lies in ruins. According to the UN, intentional attacks directed at civilians not taking part in hostilities come under the ambit of war crimes. Unfortunately, the UN's human rights chief issued a tepid statement, meekly urging Israel to "minimise" the use of lethal force. Washington's reaction to the blitz was expected, with a spokesperson defending Tel Aviv's "right to defend its people". Clearly, for those who trumpet the sanctity of the international 'rules-based order', there are different rules for different situations. When geopolitical enemies indulge in atrocities, there are howls of protest and sanctimonious calls to sanction and punish the perpetrators. But when friends, such as Israel, butcher civilians and flatten residential areas, the 'right' of these comrades to defend themselves is underscored.

Israel is mistaken if it thinks such brutal actions will dim the Palestinian spirit of resistance. In fact, each time Tel Aviv strikes, Arab fighters vow to strike back, and often deliver on their promises, thus perpetuating the circle of violence. The two-state solution, or whatever remains of it, has little chance of success when the Israeli establishment considers Palestinians as subhuman, worthy of extermination and collective punishment. Shockingly, Israel's extremist national security minister was quoted as saying recently that 'terrorists' (his ugly euphemism for Palestinians) must be 'eliminated' "if necessary even [in the] thousands". This ominous threat sounds like a plan for a mass anti-Arab pogrom. The international community apparently lost interest in a viable Palestinian state a long time ago. Yet, can those with a conscience globally at least speak up for the Palestinians' right to life and dignity? To be recognised as human beings and not be subjected to wanton Israeli violence? Or will Palestinian civilians continue to be endlessly killed and maimed in Israel's elusive quest for 'security', as they remain silent?



Faisal Bari

It is not too difficult to see, upon entering a school, whether or not it works well. If the premises look as if someone worries about them, if the infrastructure works, if the teachers and students are inside the classrooms with the students absorbed in their lessons and their teachers ensuring they are taught well, and if the staff and administration are pulling in the same direction, it is very likely the school is working well.

The research that my colleagues and I did some years back showed that for every school that was working well, there was a leader who, for lack of a better term, took 'residual responsibility' for the school and worried about it beyond the call of duty.

Usually, it was the head teacher or principal of

the school; but, in some instances, it was the owner or a person on the governing board. In a couple of cases, it was even a member of the teaching staff.

For a school to work, a 'leader' has to be there. She motivates and provides the vision for the school, she inspires by example, she ensures the school's smooth functioning, and she is there to manage any crisis that crops up.

But over the years I have seen the opposite too — in schools as well as universities. A 'bad' leader can destroy even a good school or university. A leader driven by a personal agenda and more concerned about her pursuits and ego, with little or no respect for herself or others, can bring down a school or university in a matter of years. Again, recent literature on leadership points this out clearly: bad leaders can have a big impact on organisations.

So, leadership matters. On the public sector side, at the K-12 level, we are still taken in by the seniority model for posting head teachers and principals in most provinces.

Where a change has been made, it has been to

appoint the most educated teacher as the head teacher, instead of trying to look for the best 'leader'. Being senior or being more educated is no guarantee that a person is a good leader too, or even has the potential to be one.

The situation is not very different for most of the private sector. But the more dynamic education providers in the private sector moved away from the seniority model for appointing school leadership quite some time back.

Most of their school have created systems for leader identification and/or selection. They have leadership training and support programmes and they ensure leaders are provided with proper opportunities for career development.

They also have strong weeding programmes where 'bad' leaders are identified and, if training and support cannot change outcomes, these people are moved out of the leadership positions as quickly as possible.

The autonomy of the head teacher has been shown to have an impact on school performance, and there is the impact of good leadership too. Our schools in the

public sector have not been performing well. Where other reforms are being implemented, it would be important to add leadership identification, selection and support programmes too.

The same argument applies to universities. Even today, if you look at advertisements for hiring vice chancellors for public sector universities, there is still an almost exclusive emphasis on seniority, academic output and administrative experience. In many cases, even experience in the armed forces has been considered 'good' administrative experience for appointment as VC. VCs need to be good leaders. A lot of power, good or bad, rests with them.

We need to have better systems for finding leaders who can be appointed to VC positions. This imperative is becoming more binding as the university sector is becoming more crowded and competitive. We have over 200 universities in the country. Islamabad alone has more than 24; over half of them have emerged in the last 23 years or so.

Universities will, increasingly, have to compete for funds and students as space gets more crowded.

Leaders who can create a reputation for quality education at their institution will become increasingly more important.

The imperative applies to the private sector as well. I have been associated with a private sector university in Pakistan for over three decades now, and have worked with more than six VCs. Each has brought their own unique perspective to the institution. Good leaders have been able to enhance the institution's reputation significantly and to create the virtuous cycles that lead to better educational programming and outcomes for students. They have attracted good faculty and have been able to create a mission- or vision-driven institution with buy-in from faculty and staff, leading to improvement in morale and outcomes.

There have been poor leaders as well. They have undermined rules and routines for their personal agenda, ego satisfaction and self-aggrandisement. This costs the institution not only in terms of morale but in actual outcomes too: staff and faculty get apathetic, some leave, others choose to work to please the leader

rather than doing their work for the university.

Institutions with a history, precedent and set expectations about quality and ways of doing things can survive bad leaders for some time, but even these periods are not without cost. If Trump can almost undermine institutions in an established democracy, one can imagine what a poor leader can do in institutions that might not have as long or deep a history. And recovery from a bad period is not guaranteed either.

Leadership matters. Good leadership can make a school or university and bad leadership, if it continues, can destroy even a well-performing school or university.

Barring a few of the more dynamic private sector school systems, across the private and public sector we have yet to start taking leadership issues seriously.

This needs to change. If schools and universities are to perform better, we need to identify/select and nurture/support good leaders and, if they cannot be trained, then weed out the bad ones. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Leadership matters

## Where no questions are asked



Dr Sania Nishtar

In Pakistan, polarization and rhetoric are at their peak and many conflicts abound whilst a terrifying brain drain and flight of capital are underway. With the recent IMF SLA, we have narrowly averted the threat of a sovereign default. However, it is critical now that we focus on a long-term plan for meaningful economic reform that will help prevent such a situation in the future. But first, we must introspect. Why have we landed in this situation? And beyond what's apparent, for example the numbers, we need to get a sense of their true determinants.

We tend to predominantly debate the dismal statistics — deficits, inflation, growth numbers, interest rate, etc. These, however, are symptoms of the problem, just as fever can

herald infection and persistent cough can signal cancer. When you deal with a patient, one must diagnose and treat the underlying disease, not just the symptoms; similarly, beyond the economic numbers, it is imperative we ascertain their determinants.

To this effect, economists have been drawing attention to structural problems, our import-dependent economy, our investments in non-productive sectors, the focus on consumption versus investment, our dollar denominated sovereign debt, the tendency to artificially control the exchange rate, the persistently low tax-to-GDP ratio, the lacking ease of business ecosystem, lack of global competitiveness, the overall lack of an enabling environment, poor governance, and so on and so forth.

However, it must be appreciated that these 'structural problems' are manifestations of deeper issues. I believe the most salient of these structural problems is the lack of accountability, which pervades every level of government in Pakistan today. I realized the extent of this rot when I first served in

government as a caretaker federal Minister in 2013. After my term, I wrote a paper in *The Lancet* titled 'Reflections From my Tenure as Minister' ([https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(14\)61284-8/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(14)61284-8/fulltext)) about my understanding of the government's limitations and fault lines.

It was eye-opening to find that in Pakistan, the government is simply not set up to perform. In installing the government, we focus on processes — elections, cabinet selection, and key appointments — but not the attributes which truly matter for the government's performance: namely, accountability, incentives, and performance measurement.

Although these three are intertwined and accountability has several dimensions bordering on the financial, administrative, legal, and political realms, the rest of this piece will focus on one aspect of accountability, which is the lack of answerability for actions, which I consider one of the root causes of government malfunction.

Let's take the present state of the economy as an

example. On the revenue side, we lament the persistently low tax-to-GDP ratio, but we cannot hold tax functionaries accountable for not taxing many holy cow sectors and not deploying data analytics to catch habitual evaders. My experience with catching 820,000 BISP fake beneficiaries leads me to believe that this can be done easily with data triangulation using CNIC as the peg.

Decision-makers have consistently encouraged consumption over investment and savings and have prioritized investment of aid in non-productive assets. No one is ever held accountable for busting the ceiling of the Fiscal Responsibility and Debt Limitation Act repeatedly, especially for loans which were spent on non-productive politically motivated assets.

No one has ever been made answerable for the massive politically motivated human resource hirings, and procurement rent seeking which has made public-sector enterprises non-viable incurring hundreds of billions in losses annually which need to be underwritten by tax-payers money.

There has also been a

failure to deploy ease of business, e-tendering, and privatization reforms. Transparency reforms, to enable electronic filing and public expenditure tracking were not institutionalized to track pilferages from the system. Yes no one is ever questioned for the damage done and losses incurred in the process.

The list can go on and on. Explore every problem and it will be rooted in the lack of accountability — the energy sector, which has been deliberately designed to run in loss; foreign policy decisions that fostered terrorism; decisions which entrenched circular debt in many sectors; inattention to water availability and land use; the trillions which are channeled in untargeted subsidies from which the affluent benefit. Every sector has an institutionalized pattern of collusion by design.

I wrote about the systematic collusion in the wheat value chain in these columns on May 6 (<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/1067410-wheat-policy-imperatives>). No one has been held answerable for the loopholes and the lack of oversight in this regard. Shockingly, tax eva-

sion and money laundering has also been structurally ingrained, through loopholes in tax laws. No one is answerable for that.

Unfortunately, even the deepest governance reform to-date — the 18th Amendment to the constitution — failed to address certain key issues needed for transparency reform, such as political party finance, conflict of interest and accountability within government, despite the broad-based changes it introduced in the entire state system.

There are more recent glaring examples of the way the lack of answerability has been damaging for the country. For over a year, there were many warnings of an impending sovereign default, yet the IMF deal was delayed for months. Or for that matter, how will you hold the coalition of thirteen parties accountable for speedily legislating on matters that are widely perceived to further their own interests but failed to come together in the interest of water security and other critical needed governance reforms over the last seven decades. -- Courtesy TheNews

## The way to peace



Amin Valliani

All human beings are different from each other in many ways. They are different in their lifestyles, cultures, thoughts, habits and likes, dislikes, etc. However, most people have an innate desire for peace and tranquillity. Everybody wants peace in life, but very few people manage to attain it. The major reasons for the absence of peace are internal and external conflicts, rigidity, quarrelsome behaviour and some other negative tendencies. In order to attain peace, one needs to be pragmatic, adaptive, flexible and compromising in his/her attitude.

It is said that a sure key for peace in life is compromise. It is by adopting such an attitude, rather than being unyielding in dealing with others, that a person becomes fluid. Many disputes within families, societies and nations are resolved by adopting the way of compromise — an agreement that involves concessions from both sides.

In the history of mankind, wars have been stopped, lives have been saved, peace has been restored, material losses have been curtailed and people have kept their dignity by resorting to compromise. An uncompromising attitude from any side is an obstacle to peace, therefore, all major world philosophies have supported the idea of compromise.

It is not good for people to remain in perpetual animosity. Holding

out an olive branch to opponents does not mean weakness, but a way out of turmoil. This principle of compromise advocates that 'half a loaf is better than none'.

The early history of Islam indicates that Muslims under the benign leadership of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) followed the principle of compromise. They concluded the treaty of Hudaibiyyah, which allowed the Muslims to live in peace. The agreement also allowed the Holy Prophet and his followers to enter Makkah the following year for what came to be known as the first pilgrimage.

Similarly, the Holy Quran enjoins that if they (enemies) are inclined towards peace on just terms, the overture should be accepted: "If they incline to peace, incline you as well to it, and trust in Allah. Surely, He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing" (8:61).

Through compromise, each party gets less than it feels it is entitled to, but agrees to it because the situation it anticipates under a deal is better than the one it expects in the absence of one. It can provide a bridge across a difficult period. This is an essential aspect of life whereby one can end disputes and spend life in peace and tranquillity.

At present, Pakistan is experiencing turmoil because of differences among various political parties. The best way to address the turmoil is compromise. Violence and confrontation are never an answer to this political challenge, especially when the country is going through a serious economic crisis. The art of compromise is an essential component of politics, without which life goes into gridlock.

Since the beginning of time, compromise has been the main way for

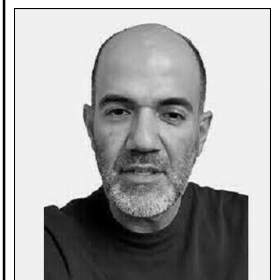
people, groups and countries to work out their differences. It is a tool of diplomacy, but needed in all areas of life, such as politics, business, professions, etc. In Pakistan, where there is a huge backlog of unresolved court cases, the principle of compromise would be worth trying out. It would reduce the burden of the courts and also satisfy the disputing parties to some extent. There should, therefore, be a mechanism to make disputing parties agree to a compromise.

There are certain situations which one cannot change. It is better, then, to accept the situation as it is and wait for better times. One should never make his/her desire or liking the final word. Some things in life are not obtainable nor achievable, yet one's ego wants to achieve these. This does not mean that we should not struggle. Our struggle should be continuous but we should be ready to make any adjustments or compromises where the situation demands so.

We must never forget that human life is a series of compromises and it is not always easy to achieve in practice what one has found to be true in theory. Learning the wisdom of compromise can be highly beneficial, for it is better to bend a little than to break.

Life is like a bumpy road with many ups and downs. Many people undergo mental, emotional or physical challenges and sometimes feel lost or without hope. Most of the time, untangling oneself from these depressing thoughts can cause confusion and pain. However, compromising with life's challenges provides solace and understanding and enables one to cope with these demanding situations. Therefore, the idea of compromise needs to be promoted in life. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Colonial present



Aasim Sajjad Akhtar

The French state prosecutes a mini civil war against African and Arab populations. The Israeli Defence Forces bomb and kill Palestinians in the West Bank with complete impunity, again. And Pakistani youngsters smuggle themselves on fishing vessels at the risk of death to the coveted West, even as our rulers grovel for handouts from 'donors', and then celebrate when we get them. Who says colonialism is dead?

It is fashionable these days to take a stingy view of the past, to say that talk of colonialism and imperialism is passé. The argument is that we should take responsibility for our own failures and stop blaming the white man.

It is correct that aimlessly blaming the white man or anyone is neither here nor there. But acknowledging our colonial present is not about blaming anyone; it is about accurately identifying the roots of today's structural crises so as to find a way out.

For Pakistanis — and other Muslim-majority societies — the words 'colonialism' and 'imperialism' drip easily off our tongues when we talk of Palestine, Israel, and its principal backer, the US, have engaged in naked aggression to dispossess Palestinians of their lands and dignity for decades. The Israeli settler-colonial project extends deeper into Palestinian territory with each passing day.

But there is less clarity about the global implications of US-Israeli expan-

sionism. It has been advertised that the Gulf kingdoms seek some accommodation with the Zionist state.

Indeed, the Gulf states are the quintessential example of how our 'Muslim' brethren are driven by the pursuit of profit; for them, it is literally kosher to do business with anyone, including Zionists.

Seen thus, it is not sufficient to simply voice outrage vis-à-vis Israeli crimes against the Palestinians — there must be a political-economic project to isolate Israel, just like that which squeezed apartheid South Africa.

Political-economic subjugation is also the root cause of the current fires in France. Long-term immigrant populations — the vast majority from France's former colonial possessions in West Africa and the Maghreb — are rebelling against their unending trysts with systemic racism, class exploitation and other forms of discrimination. Whatever the immediate trigger, the scale and depth of the resentment demands acknowledgement of the deep-seated colonial legacies that afflict France today.

The French state has no problem assimilating Africans and Arabs when it comes to nation-state projects — most of France's footballing success, for example, has been powered by brown and black players. But it also presides over ghettoisation, incarceration and property regimes that relegate brown and black French 'citizens' to second-class status.

France also has no problem continuing to extract resources from its former colonial possessions in Africa. The slogans of the French republic — liberté, égalité, fraternité — ring hollow in the face of such colonial modalities.

Meanwhile in Pakistan, the jubilation at the IMF agreeing to give us a measly \$3 billion shows how we refuse to grapple

with our very own colonial present. Many insist the IMF and other donors have no role in our crisis. This is akin to turning one's back on the truth that Pakistan is like many former colonies in Latin America, Africa and Asia whose economies, politics and societies continue to be shaped by neocolonial debt regimes.

Why, for instance, could our donors not have responded to last summer's floods — and the approximately \$40bn in damages incurred — by not giving us more loans, and instead, cancelling at least some of our existing debt obligations?

One reason is that our ruling class — led by the military est-ablishment — is simply not committed to undoing the political, economic and cultural structures that keep them at a table in proximity to the global ruling class.

The smug contentment at doing a deal with the IMF mirrors the contentment at issuing contracts to MNCs, one's own companies and those of friends while sacrificing the resources and rights of the sons and daughters of the soil.

It mirrors the building of countless roads, expressways, mega-water infrastructure and real estate schemes despite clear evidence that the colonial logic of conquering nature are disastrous. It mirrors the fiefdoms of sardars, the epidemic of enforced disappearances, and the war economies generated by the weaponisation of religion. Deploying politically correct, liberal language to sanitise what is happening in Palestine, France, Pakistan's own peripheries, or many other parts of the world is at best self-deception, and at worst, colonial apologetics. To acknowledge our colonial present is to at least reimagine political-economic projects of decolonisation that represent the only potential salvation for our youth. -- Courtesy Dawn

## PM directs for steps to curb smuggling of tyres, spare parts

*Assures to extend facilitation to Chinese investors*

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday directed the authorities concerned for the early formulation of a comprehensive policy to do away with the smuggling of tyres and spare parts.

The prime minister, in a meeting with a delegation of Service Long March Tyres and Chaoyang Long March Tyres led by their Chairman Li Qingwen, also instructed the relevant authorities to take effective measures to curb the smuggling of tyres.

He told the delegation that being a time-tested

friend, China always supported Pakistan like a brother in every hour of need.

He also assured the delegation that the government would extend all possible support to the Chinese investors to facilitate their investment in Pakistan.

The prime minister appreciated the delegation for their company's investment through a joint venture with Pakistan's renowned tyre manufacturing company.

The prime minister was told that tyres being manufactured by the plant established by Chinese

investment were also being exported to the international market.

It was told that within a short span of a year, the company's tyres have created their space in the world markets.

The prime minister was told that the company would enhance tyres manufacturing to boost its exports to \$200 million annually.

The prime minister instructed the authorities to extend all-out support to the Chinese investors to uplift the tyre industry in Pakistan.

Special Assistant to Prime Minister Tariq Pasha

and other relevant officers attended the meeting.

**Online add:** Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has assured to extend every possible facilitation to the Chinese investors for investment in Pakistan.

He made the remarks while talking to a delegation of Service Long March Tyres and Chaoyang Long March Tyres led by Chairman Li Qingwen in Islamabad.

Shehbaz Sharif said China has also supported Pakistan in difficult times. He said China is a longstanding friend of Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Service Long March Tyres and Chaoyang Long March Tyres led by their Chairman Mr Li Qingwen calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.



MULTAN: Governor Punjab Engr. Muhammad Baligh Ur Rehman cutting the ribbon to inaugurate three days of 'Mango Festival 2023' at DHA Arena Hall.

## Wafaqi Mohtasib mediates to ensure payment of Rs 5m as wages to MEPCO labourers

**Independent Report**  
MULTAN: More than 100 daily wage labourers working in the Multan Electric Supply Company (MEPCO) were provided five months salary by their contractor due to the timely intervention and mediation of Mr. Muhammad Zahid Senior Investigation Officer (IRD) of Wafaqi Mohtasib Office, Multan.

Mr. Muhammad Zeeshan a daily wage labourer along with 33 others lodged complaint against "Ali Azam Enterprises", a contractor of MEPCO, wherein they claimed that the said contractor had failed in paying their daily wages for the last five months and they were living miserably.

The Complaint was processed under Informal Resolution of Disputes (IRD) through mediation and conciliation between the representative of MEPCO and the contractor, Mr Riaz Ahmad, under Wafaqi

Mohtasib IRD Mechanism.

The said contractor admitted the fact about non-payment of wages and undertook that payment of wages to all the laborers of D.G Khan, Kot Chutta and Rajanpur MEPCO Division would be made till June, 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

On 27<sup>th</sup> June, the representative of "Ali Azam Enterprises" appraised the Wafaqi Mohtasib Office that pending wages of more than 100 labourers amounting to Rs Five million has been paid and their rightful grievance have been redressed through mediation and conciliation.

Mr. Zeeshan, the representative of the complainants also endorsed the version of the agency to the extent that their wages have been paid before Eid-ul-Azha and extended gratitude to the Ombudsman office for redressal of their grievances.

## Companies fail to distribute electricity, waste 1237k units daily

ISLAMABAD (Online): Reason behind unannounced electricity load shedding disclosed as distribution companies failure in distribution and waste of 1237000 units of electricity on daily basis.

It has been revealed that electricity distribution companies are failed and due to technical error electricity of 30 million is wasting on daily basis.

Source told that daily consumers are burdened 900 million without even consuming electricity.

FESCO cannot use 176 Mega Watt (MW) daily due to maintenance work daily. GEPCO fails to use 232 MW due to technical error. PESCO also fails to use 134MW due to overloading and faults. SEPCO cannot use 140MW due to electricity theft and line losses. MEPCO don not use 225MW. HESCO fails in using 114 MW due to theft, faults and overloading. KESCO fails in using 193MW electricity.

## Ahsan Iqbal inaugurates 200kv solar PV system

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives Prof Ahsan Iqbal on Friday inaugurated the installation of a 200kv solar PV system at the ministry to promote environment-friendly electricity.

The ceremony was held at the Ministry's auditorium which was attended by the Secretary, Ministry of Planning Syed Zafar Ali Shah, Additional Secretary (AS) and officials of the ministry, said a press release issued here.

Speaking at the occasion, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal said, "The provision of affordable, reliable and clean energy has always remained a priority of the government."

"Pillar IV of Vision 2025 outlines the approach towards achieving energy, water, and food security," the minister said.

"The recent 5E framework provides a short to medium-term strategy to achieve economic growth, social development, and environmental sustainability in the coming years," he remarked.

"The recently launched 5Es framework and energy is one of the important E, he highlighted.

"Plan House will be established soon." "This generation will also reduce the annual energy bill for the Ministry from Rs 26.746m per annum to Rs14.09m resulting in annual savings of Rs 12.66m. At the existing prices, the project is expected to recover its capital cost within four years."

## SBP says: Financial system exhibit resilient performance with 18.3% growth in asset base

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), on Friday said that financial sector had shown resilience against internal and external headwinds and posted steady performance as the financial sector's asset base grew by 18.3 percent in Calendar year 2022.

The banking sector witnessed 19.1% growth in its assets mainly driven by investments while the credit risk remained contained as gross NPLs ratio lowered to 7.3 percent by end CY22.

The observations were made in Financial Stability Review (FSR) for CY22, the annual flagship publication of the central bank published under Section 39(3) of the SBP Act 1956, said a statement issued here.

The review presents the performance and risk assessment of various segments of the financial sector including banks, non-bank financial institutions, financial markets, financial market infrastructures and non-financial corporates.

The FSR for CY22 noted that Pakistan's economy experienced a turbulent year as the existing economic imbalances were compounded by the unfavourable external environment.

The review termed the twin deficits, high inflation, catastrophic flooding, and delay in the completion of IMF program reviews as major challenges at domestic side while the global challenges including fast paced increase in commodity prices and monetary tightening by major central banks in advanced economies, manifested in the deteriorating macroeconomic conditions.

The FSR noted that the SBP and the government took various policy steps to address widening imbalances, which included further increase in policy rate and macro-prudential policies pertaining to consumer financing and administrative measures to contain external imbalance.

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## Sindh Bank selects PTCL to implement cutting edge SD-WAN Infrastructure

**Independent Report**  
KARACHI: Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) and Sindh Bank have signed an agreement for deployment of SD-WAN at 200 branches of Sindh Bank.

Karachi. The ceremony was witnessed by Hatem Bamatraf, President and Group CEO PTCL, Imran Samad President & CEO Sindh Bank and their teams.

PTCL is providing Sindh Bank with its state-of-the-art infrastructure agreement with Sindh Bank, emphasizing PTCL Group's commitment to assisting the bank in meeting its digital connectivity requirements.

As a national carrier, PTCL is at the forefront of driving digitalization throughout

## FPCCI, business bodies welcome direct link with Kazakhstan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and other business bodies on Friday welcomed commencing of direct air link between Pakistan and Kazakhstan on Saturday as it would help enhance bilateral economic cooperation.

Karachi Chamber of Commerce (KCCI) President Muhammad Tariq Yousaf said with the start of direct flights, the economic relations between the two countries would improve further.

He said the business community of Karachi considered that the step would have positive impact on trade relations with Kazakhstan and Central Asia.

Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Kashif Anwar said Kazakhstan was an important country.

economic activities.

Irfan Malik said Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan, Yezan Kistafin, deserved appreciation for playing an important role in the launch of a direct air link between the two brotherly countries.

It would prove to be a milestone in forging mutual business and economic integration with Kazakhstan and other Central Asian states, FPCCI President Irfan Iqbal Malik said while talking to APP.

He said the direct flights would increase the possibilities of economic cooperation between the two countries. Two flights in a week from Almaty, the industrial hub of Kazakhstan, to Lahore, would help enhance

## Pak-Korea program on certified seed system to yield 160,000 tons of seed

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Project Steering Committee of Korea Program on International Agriculture (KOPIA) Pakistan Center was informed on Friday that "Pakistan-Korea Joint Program on Certified Seed Potato Production System" is set to yield an impressive production of 160,000 tons of certified seed potatoes.

The meeting was held with Chairman Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) Dr Ghulam Muhammad Ali in the chair and discussed collaborative efforts in various research projects, focusing on the development of technologies for potato seed, chilli, and fodder crop production. This meeting was also attended by Korean scientists, representatives from the

Korean Embassy, Ministry of National Food Security and Research, universities and senior officials of allied departments, said a press release. These initiatives are being implemented through the joint efforts of PARC and the KOPIA and the successful outcomes of these projects are anticipated to significantly enhance both the quantity and quality of these crops.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Ali lauded the invaluable cooperation extended by the Government of Korea in this regard and emphasized the potential extension of this cooperation to the livestock sector and the application of sex semen technology. He assured the Korean counterparts of PARC's commitment to maintaining close collaboration and acknowledged the people.

## PSX gains 28 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) gained 28.46 points on Friday, a slight positive change of 0.06 percent, closing at 44,207.31 points against 44,178.85 points the previous trading day.

A total of 247,993,312 shares were traded during the day as compared to 297,822,139 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs. 8.512 billion against Rs. 12.428 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 327 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 158 of them recorded gains and 149 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 20 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 35,838,308 shares at Rs. 1.25 per share; Telearcard Limited with 19,877,612.



Zarrar Hasham Khan, Group Chief Business Solutions Officer, PTCL & Ufone 4G and Syed Ata Hussain Jaffri, EVP Head of IT, Sindh Bank, signed the agreement at a ceremony recently held at Sindh Bank Head Office in

and platform solutions that are equipped with latest technology & managed security. Hatem Bamatraf, President and Group CEO, PTCL & Ufone 4G, expressed his satisfaction during the signing ceremony regarding the



LAHORE: A wood worker given the final touches and polishes on a clothes hanger stand at Shahdara Furniture Market.

## Weekly inflation up by 0.70 pc

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.70 per cent for the combined consumption group during the week ended on July 06, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday.

The SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 257.79 points as compared to 256.00 points during the past week, according to the PBS data.

As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 28.55 per cent.

The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 is covering 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups.

The SPI for the lowest consumption group up to Rs17,732, increased by 1.08 per cent and went up to 265.88 points from last week's 263.03 points.

The SPI for consumption groups from Rs 17,732-22,888, Rs 22,889-29,517, Rs 29,518-44,175; and above Rs 44,175 witnessed an increase of 1.02 per cent, 0.91 per cent, 0.83 per cent and 0.51 per cent respectively.

During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 24 (47.06%) items increased, 10 (19.61%) items decreased and 17 (33.33%) items remained stable.

The items, which recorded a decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week (WoW), included bananas (7.51%), chicken (2.80%), eggs (1.17%).

## Govt taking concrete steps to stabilize country's economy: Governor

MULTAN (APP): Punjab Governor Engineer Baligh ur Rehman Friday said that the incumbent government was taking concrete and immediate steps to stabilize Pakistan's economy as country had come out of the economic crisis to a great extent.

He expressed these views while inaugurating the three-day Mango Festival organized here by Muhammad Nawaz Sharif Agricultural University, DHA Multan and Mango Research Institute.

The governor said that the honest and hardworking leadership was working round the clock to get the country out of the problems, adding that everyone had to play his due role for developing the country.

Baligh ur Rehman said that those who spread hatred caused irreparable damage to the country, today even the monuments of the martyrs were not preserved.

He said that the nation had to end hatred and promote love in the society, adding that a lot of work had been done in

education sector in the province as new universities had been established in South Punjab and the research on crops was being made in the universities.

The governor pointed out that in 2018, the country was going to become the 24<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world but it moved to 44<sup>th</sup> economy in 2022.

The country's leadership was striving hard to get it out of troubles, he said, adding that the stock exchange had been improved after the agreement with the IMF as the dollar was now heading towards a decline.

The governor said that Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif took crucial steps for the development of the agricultural sector as wheat crop's production had increased this year.

He said that the incumbent government had fixed the support price of wheat on time which benefited the farmers.

Baligh ur Rehman said that the agriculture sector of South Punjab

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Four ships named, Seaspan Beacon, Singapore, and Atrotis Heracle Containers carrying Canola and Palm oil, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Grain & Fertilizer Terminal, and Liquid Cargo Terminal respectively.

Meanwhile, two more ships, Kition-M and Perth-1 with Mogas and Coal also arrived at the outer anchorage of the Port Qasim on Friday.



QUETTA: Vendor sells mosquitoes net to earn his livelihood for support his family during hot day of summer season at a roadside stall located on Zarghoon road in Quetta



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi chairing a meeting regarding the framework for the classification of disabilities, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## President for accelerated efforts to provide jobs to differently-abled people

ISLAMABAD (Online): President Dr Arif Alvi has urged the need to accelerate efforts for the job placement of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in the public and private sectors to empower them financially. He said that the suitability of PWDs for different jobs in the market should be determined as per international standards, and they should be facilitated in finding jobs for their financial empowerment.

The President expressed these views while chairing a meeting regarding the framework for the classification and severity of disability, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. Senior officials of the Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of National Health Services Regulation and Coordination, NAVTTC, and NADRA, and representative of the World Health Organization,

Dr Maryam Malik, attended the meeting.

Speaking on the occasion, the President said that prospective employers for the job placement of skilled Differently-Abled People (DAPs) should be identical and, in the first phase, large employers in the private sector should be approached to accommodate DAPs as per their skill set. He said that the representation of PWDs in the business and industrial sectors should be increased to make them productive citizens of the country.

The President emphasized the need for adopting the framework for the classification of disabilities, developed in line with international standards and best practices, at the national and provincial levels. He added that the framework would help determine the severity of disability as well as the

suitability of PWDs for jobs in the market. He also called for making the disability certificates accessible and readable to the general public by translating them into Urdu.

He urged the concerned stakeholders to improve their coordination with the provinces for the adoption of a uniform classification framework and disability certificate throughout the country that would greatly facilitate PWDs. The President underscored the need for highlighting the success stories of DAPs in the media so as to encourage and motivate PWDs to make similar achievements.

The President urged the Ministry of Human Rights to further intensify its efforts for finding jobs for differently-abled people in the public and private sectors.



ISLAMABAD: Police personnel stand guard to counter any unexpected situation during the rallies of Youm-e-Taqadus in Federal Capital against the desecration of Quran Pak in Sweden.

## Attaullah Tarar says: 5 years of disqualification of Nawaz Sharif completed

ISLAMABAD (Online): Special Assistant to Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif Atta Ullah Tarar has said that 5 years of disqualification of Nawaz Sharif have been completed.

While talking to media he said that there is no substance in the cases against Nawaz Sharif.

There cannot be disqualification more than 5 years.

He has said that gov-

ernment will complete its term.

The time of election is fixed in the constitution. He has said that Nawaz Sharif will return very soon.

We wish Nawaz Sharif to lead the election campaign.

If there is no evidence, the cases die on their own.

The term of the government will be completed in August.

## IHC instructs for recovery of Ali Nawaz's brother

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) Friday ordered the authorities to ensure recovery of missing a citizen Umar Nawaz Awan, the brother of PTI's leader Ali Nawaz Awan, within three days.

The court instructed the Chief Commissioner ICT and Inspector General of Police (IGP) to appear before court in personal if the missing person was not recovered within the said time.

Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri heard the case regarding the matter where in the police officials also appeared before the bench.

The wife of the missing citizen shared the evi-

dences regarding the lifting Umar Nawaz with the police officials in USB.

At the outset of hearing, Justice Jahangiri expressed annoyance with the police and said that the Safe City Cameras' system should be closed down if it was not helpful in such matters.

The court noted that the family members of the citizen did not even know whether the victim alive or not.

Petitioner's lawyer Dr. Baber Awan said that the two vehicles had chased the victim and lifted him before his wife and four daughter, but the police expressing anonymous about the incident.

## Three-day training for DROs, ROs concluded

ISLAMABAD (APP): The three-day training by the leading trainers for District Returning Officers (DROs) and Returning Officers (ROs) ahead of the upcoming general elections was successfully concluded at Pakistan's Electoral Academy for Democratic Practices, Research, and Management (PADRM) here Friday.

A total of 33 officers from the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) were imparted comprehensive training during this intensive session. They will play a pivotal role in disseminating their knowledge

to a larger group, including 142 DROs and 859 ROs hailing from all four provinces of the country.

The training session encompassed a wide range of topics crucial to ensuring the smooth conduct of the upcoming general elections.

The participants received comprehensive instruction on electoral procedures, legal frameworks, and best practices in managing the electoral process. Equipped with this valuable knowledge, the trained officers are now well-prepared to fulfill their vital roles during the upcoming elections.

## SC Lawyers protest against desecration of Holy Quran

ISLAMABAD (Online): The lawyers of the Supreme Court have protested against desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden.

Supreme Court Bar has demonstrated protest against the incident of desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden.

The lawyers of Supreme Court have protested on the central door of Supreme Court. Lawyers were holding banners and Holy Qurans in their hands. While addressing protest rally SC Bar president Abid Zubairi has said that we strongly condemn desecration of Holy Quran. We will not tolerate the desecration of Holy Quran. Today lawyers are gathered to give this message that desecration of Holy Quran will not be tolerated at all.

## Mariyum grieved over demise of PTV Director Programs

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb on Friday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the death of PTV Director Programs Akbar Malik. In a condolence message, the minister expressed sympathy with the family and children of Akbar Malik over his sudden death.



ISLAMABAD: Vehicles on the way being driven through flooded streets at Ghouri Town.

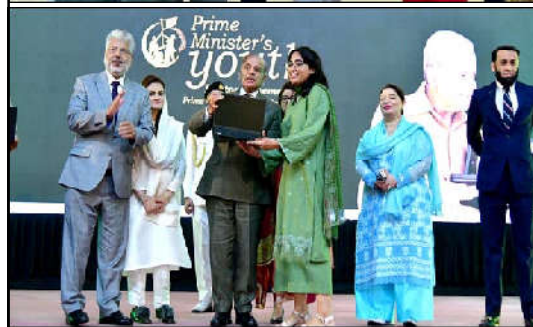
## Youth empowerment key to development, prosperity of Pak: PM

Desirous of giving laptops instead of Kalashnikov to every youth

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said the government was committed to empower youth of the country as empowering them was key to ensure development and prosperity of Pakistan.

He said the youth of the country were capable enough to transform the country's fate as with their hard work and dedication, they could help Pakistan develop at faster pace leaving its neighboring country far behind in term of economic development and prosperity. Addressing the launching ceremony of the laptop programme here, the prime minister said this ceremony reminded him of the days when as Chief Minister Punjab he distributed hundreds of thousands of laptops among the students on merit. He said those laptops helped the students a lot during Covid pandemic days when they took their classes online while sitting home and also earned their bread and butter by work-

## PM attends laptops distribution ceremony and BISP function



ing as freelancer.

He informed that he as CM Punjab also provided scholarships to the talented youth under Punjab Education Endowment Fund (PEEF), and the beneficiary of these programmes was now serving the country in various areas including health, IT and Engineering.

The prime minister maintained that this had been his mission to provide every youth with a laptop machine to enable them to successfully move forward in their respective areas.

He informed that apart from the 100,000 laptops approved for the previous financial year, he also get another 100,000 laptops approved for the current fiscal year.

He said the laptop distribution process would totally be on merit and no influence will be accepted in this regard.

For the youth from rural areas, he said the government had allocated Rs 5 billion to provide agriculture loans.

## Shortage of Climate resources holding Pakistan back, says Sherry Rehman

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change & Environmental Coordination, Senator Sherry Rehman on Friday said Climate Finance was uncharted territory for many developing countries due to a significant knowledge and capacity gap on this critical issue.

Pakistan faces dual challenges of limited accessibility to climate finance and a lack of technical capacity, impeding its progress in achieving crucial climate adaptation and mitigation goals.

The minister was delivering her key note address at the launch event of the Climate Finance Accelerator (CFA) organized by the UK Government, where she emphasized the significant role that programs like CFA could play in knowledge-creating, building capacity and new pathways within both the public and private sectors, a news release said.

She underlined the challenge of prioritizing climate change in both sectors and highlighted the potential of such initiatives to elevate the government's narrative on climate finance.

By creating awareness and aligning public interests with government objec-

tives, these programs can effectively enhance the discourse on climate finance.

The minister highlighted Pakistan's commitment to exploring Carbon Markets as part of its efforts under the Paris Agreement.

She mentioned that the country was in the process of developing an interim framework for a voluntary carbon market and we had officially signed on a collaboration with Verra, a global standard-setting body, to share knowledge and educate stakeholders on carbon markets and the certification process for generating carbon credits.

She spoke about the Delta Blue Carbon Project by the Sindh Government as a flagship in voluntary carbon markets, which was the world's largest blue carbon project, with a 60-year lifespan and aim of restoring 350,000 hectares of land in the Districts of Thatta and Sujawal in Sindh.

She said that the restoration of the mangrove forests has the potential to increase Pakistan's mitigation capacity by reduction in emissions worth 27 million tons of CO2e over the life cycle of the project.

## PTCL Group's SummerSpark' Internship Program set to ignite careers of young graduates

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's leading telecommunications and integrated digital services provider, PTCL Group (PTCL & Ufone 4G) has launched its highly anticipated 'SummerSpark' internship program at a vibrant opening ceremony held here at PTCL Group Tower.

The 6-week internship program, 'SummerSpark' received an overwhelming response upon opening the registration process, with over 15,475 young graduates eagerly vying for a spot.

After a rigorous selection process, the top 30 candidates with exceptional competencies and potential were selected to participate in the program. These future leaders will enjoy valuable hands-on work experience on various business projects under expert mentorship at PTCL & Ufone 4G offices in Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi that will facilitate them to set the stage for the successful com-

mencement of their professional careers ahead.

Sharing his thoughts at the opening ceremony, Group Chief People Officer, PTCL & Ufone 4G, Shoaib Baig said, "We are thrilled to launch the 'SummerSpark' Internship Program 2023, which is designed to ignite the careers of Pakistan's highly talented graduates.

The internship program aligned with sustainable practices by investing in the long-term growth and success of individuals in the telecom sector, he added.

He said "We provide a diverse and enabling environment for the youth to develop and showcase their talent and focus on promoting experiential learning and equip interns with practical skills and knowledge that will pave the way for their future success". The 'SummerSpark' goes beyond traditional mentorship as it helps participants to fully immerse in the corporate culture.

## PM pays tribute to Shaheed Havaldar Lalak

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday paid tribute to Nishan-e-Haider Havaldar Lalak Jan on his 24th martyrdom anniversary, saying that he had bravely fought the enemy in Kargil War to safeguard the country.

The prime minister, in a statement, said the example of courage and bravery set by dutiful Havaldar Lalak Jan for the defence of the motherland would be remembered forever.

He said that the Ghazis of Pakistan protected the country's security, national ideology and independence through their professional capabilities and bravery while the martyrs sacrificed their lives for the cause, be it the war against terrorism or any foreign aggression. He said the brave soldier of the Northern Light Infantry embraced martyrdom while defending the country.

## WB approves \$46m for KPK's child healthcare services

ISLAMABAD (APP): The World (WB) has approved \$46 million to help increase access to child healthcare services and enhance citizen-centered service delivery in selected districts of khyber pakhtunkhwa province.

The WB's Board of Executive Directors approved the financing under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Citizen Centered Service Delivery Project.

According to WB press statement, the project would support both supply and demand side interventions to improve health service delivery in the province, as well as the operations of citizen-centric administrative facilitation centers in the Newly Merged Districts.

## APSUP urges PM to address autonomy issues in higher education

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Association of Private Sector Universities of Pakistan (APSUP) has penned a letter to the Prime Minister of Pakistan that expressed deep concerns over the recently proposed amendments to the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Ordinance 2002.

APSUP, representing private-sector universities, highlights potential threats to the autonomy of higher education institutions and urges the Prime Minister to address these issues promptly.

In a letter addressed to Prime Minister Sharif, APSUP Chairman, Prof. Dr. Chaudhry Abdul Rehman, emphasized the need to safeguard the autonomy and independence of universities for the advancement of academic excellence, research, and innovation in Pakistan. The amendments, as currently formulated, raise several critical concerns that could have far-reaching consequences for the quality and growth of higher education.

One of the key concerns raised by APSUP is the potential undermining of the HEC's autonomy.