

# Independent

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## Emergency session OIC calls for collective measures against desecration of Holy Quran

International law should be used to stop religious hatred;  
We must send constant reminders to world community: OIC chief

### Monitoring Desk

CAIRO: The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on Sunday said that collective measures are needed to prevent acts of desecration to the Holy Quran and international law should be used to stop religious hatred.

The statement by the group of 57 member states, most of whose members have a Muslim-majority population, was issued after an extraordinary meeting in Saudi Arabia's Jeddah called to discuss Wednesday's incident in Sweden where the holy book was desecrated in a protest outside a mosque.

"We must send constant reminders to the international community regarding the urgent application of international law, which clearly prohibits any advocacy of religious hatred," OIC Secretary-General Hissein Brahim Taha said.

During the meeting, Mr Taha called for a unified response to such incidents, describing the most recent one as a "despicable act".

The Secretary-General emphasised that such inci-

dents are not mere Islamophobia, but actions that deeply insult and offend the religious sensibilities of Muslims. As such, they require serious international measures to prevent their recurrence.

On Wednesday, a man desecrated the holy book outside Stockholm's central mosque, the first day of the Muslim Eid al-Adha holidays. The act angered OIC member Turkey whose backing Sweden needs to gain entry to the NATO military alliance.

Swedish police had granted permission for a protest to take place. But, after the incident, police charged the man who carried it out with agitation against an ethnic or national group.

The incident has triggered large protests in Baghdad in front of the Swedish Embassy. It has also been condemned by the United States.

Turkey in late January suspended talks with Sweden on its NATO application after a similar incident of desecration of the Holy Quran by a Danish far-right politician near the Turkish embassy in Stockholm.



JEDDAH: Pakistan's Ambassador to the OIC Fawad Sher participating in extraordinary meeting of Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) called to discuss incident of the Holy Quran's desecration in Sweden.



Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari speaking at a function organized by the Pakistan diaspora in Tokyo

## Nasir Shah lauds efforts of LG representatives on Eidul Adha

Municipal bodies are always trying to fulfill the vision of their Chairman Bilawal Bhutto

### Independent Report

KARACHI: Provincial Minister for Local Government Syed Nasir Hussain Shah appreciating the efforts of all elected local government representatives of PPP & other parties regards Eid-ul-Azha, said that the enthusiasm and passion of all local body representatives for public service is worthy of praise and the Sindh government believes in the undivided support and co-operation of all the elected local body representatives who have the passion to serve the people.

He said that World Waste & Management along with elected local government representatives have made all possible efforts to provide relief to the people. He added that Solid Waste & Management along with elected local body representatives have made all possible efforts to provide relief to the people.

He said that all the local bodies and representatives should be active in their respective areas until the garbage and complete



cleaning, arrangements should be made to immediately remove the garbage in the areas. Nasir Shah said that the peoples should register their complaints on solid waste management helpline number 1128 regarding waste and sanitation, while action will be taken against the concerned officers who do not address public complaints.

Minister orders to local government representatives to continue the work of cleaning and removing garbage, said that chairman Bilawal Bhutto's vision of public service will be fulfilled in every possible way and it will be possible only when all local representatives and institutions fulfill the vision of Chairman Bilawal Bhutto by making public services their motto.

## PM Shehbaz to attend SCO summit via video link

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will participate in the 23rd Meeting of SCO Council of Heads of State being held in videoconference format on Tuesday.

The invitation to the Prime Minister to attend the SCO-CHS was extended by the Prime Minister of India in his capacity as the current Chair of the SCO.

## SBP to be closed today

LAHORE (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) will remain closed to the public on July 3 (tomorrow) due to a bank holiday, the SBP sources told APP here.

Following this holiday, all banks/DFIs/MFBs will remain closed for public trading on the aforementioned date. The holiday will be observed on July 3 due to the commencement of the new fiscal year on July 1 (Saturday), however as Eid ul Adha's third day was commemorated on July 1, date of SBP holiday was moved ahead.

## Pakistan will come out of all problems: Tessori Governor Sindh committed for welfare of people

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori on Sunday said that a political party, carried out attacks on May 9, was criticizing a recent agreement with International Monetary Fund (IMF) and it would fail in all its nefarious designs.

He said that the country was facing economic challenges and hoped that it would come out of all problems.

The Governor said that all-out efforts were being made to make the country strong at all levels.

He said that Information Technology (IT) course entry test would be conducted soon.

Kamran Tessori said he had asked IT minister to provide 100,000 laptops for the youth.

He said that Hujaj had returned with prayers for their children. He said that their prayers also saved the country from the clouds of default.

He further said that the prays of Hujaj

resulted in deal with IMF.

The Governor hoped that the coalition government would do something for the development of the country.

Meanwhile, Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori has said that when he took the charge of Governor, he committed himself to do whatever he could do for the welfare of the people.

He stated this in a reception held in recognition of his services by businessman and CEO unity foods Farrukh Amin at his residence.

The Governor said that he was thankful to God for providing him a chance to serve the people on the occasion of Eidul Azha.

Kamran Tessori also thanked the people, who cooperated with him while serving the people.

On the occasion, famous industrialist Aqil Karim Dhedhi, and other businessmen were also present.

## Three police and one FC cop martyred in attack on check post in Sherani

Independent Report

QUETTA: Three police and one Frontier Corps (FC) personnel were martyred in a rocket attack and firing at a check post in Dhana Sar area of Sherani district on Sunday morning.

According to the reports reaching here, unknown armed assailants resorted to fire five rockets targeting a check post located in Dhana Sar area in wee hours of Sunday.

The rocket attack was followed by extensive firing at the check post. As a result four security personnel embraced martyrdom on the spot. In the meantime, the security personnel retaliated and exchanged firing with the assailants.

During the exchange of fire, one terrorist was also killed, the sources informed.

Afterwards, the armed assailants fled from the scene.

## Pakistan, Japan have full potential to increase bilateral trade: Bilawal

TOKYO (APP): Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari says Pakistan and Japan have the potential to increase bilateral trade in diverse sectors for mutual benefit.

He was speaking at a function organized by the Pakistani diaspora in Tokyo on Sunday.

The Foreign Minister said both countries can benefit from investment in agriculture and livestock.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said incumbent government is working on economic diplomacy to bring prosperity in the country.

He said Pakistan can learn from Japan's advancement in Information Technology and other fields.

The Foreign Minister said during his meeting with Japanese leadership and entrepreneurs, he will urge them to enhance trade and investment in Pakistan.

He said Pakistan has over sixty five percent populations of youth and we can exploit this human resource through skills based education and training.

The Foreign Minister urged Pakistani businessmen to play their role for increase in trade between two countries and also strengthening of bilateral relations.

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari interacted with a number of Japanese business executives and representatives of Japan International Cooperation Agency and Japan External Trade Organization in Tokyo on Sunday.

During the meetings, the matters related to bilateral cooperation in trade and investment came under discussion.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori receiving the pilgrims warmly with flower garlands as first hajj flight landed at Karachi International Airport during post hajj operation

## Army kill six terrorists in DIK IBO: ISPR

RAWALPINDI (Online): Army has killed six terrorists in an intelligence based operation (IBO) in Dera Ismail Khan (DIK) district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

According to ISPR, on 02 July 23, security forces conducted an Intelligence Based Operation in general area Kulachi, DI Khan District. During the conduct of operation, after intense fire exchange, three terrorists were sent to hell. Weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the killed terrorists. The killed terrorists remained actively involved in various terrorist activities against security forces, Police and innocent civilians.

## CTD arrested TTP commander

MULTAN (APP): Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) claimed to have arrested a commander of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) during an operation here on Sunday.

According to the CTD spokesperson, the TTP commander was apprehended from the city during an intelligence-based operation and the arrested terrorist was identified as Kamal.

The explosive material, fuses, phones, and cash were recovered from his possession. CTD was following the goal of 'Safer Punjab', the spokesperson concluded.

## Muslim world condemns desecration of Quran in Sweden

ISLAMABAD (INP): Muslims across the world have strongly condemned the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden's capital during a protest authorised by the police. Pakistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran and other Muslim countries have strongly condemned the act.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has slammed Sweden over the incident, saying Ankara will never bow down to a policy of provocation or threat. "We will teach the arrogant Western people that it is not freedom of expression to insult the sacred values of Muslims," he said.

The United Arab Emirates has summoned the Swedish ambassador to protest against the desecration of Holy Quran.

Qatar has also condemned the Swedish authorities' permission to burn copies of the Quran Thursday calling it a "heinous" act to have especially occurred on Eid.

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs warns that allowing repeated infringement of the Holy Quran under the pretext of freedom of expression fuels hatred and violence, threatens peaceful coexistence, and reveals abhorrent double standards," its foreign ministry said.

Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the burning was a "dangerous, provocative step that inflames the feelings of Muslims around the world".

It called on the international community and governments "to take responsibility for swift action to renounce feelings of hatred, extremism and religious intolerance".

**Return of Hajis begins**  
ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has started its flight operation to bring pilgrims from Saudi Arabia back to Pakistan as the first flight PK-762 reached Islamabad from Jeddah early Sunday morning.

## Only with unity, we can solve problems of citizens: Murtaza

### Independent Report

KARACHI: Mayor Karachi and Spokesperson of Sindh Government Barrister Murtaza Wahab has said that during the days of Eid-ul-Azha, 1,13,035 tons of offals and sacrificial waste were removed from the city, and more than twenty-four thousand staff worked day and night, for which I am grateful to the staff, elected representatives, and concerned officers. Only with unity, we can solve the problems of the citizens, we will work with the same spirit in the monsoon rains, all was done not by the critics or their party but by the hard work of the local bodies.

He was addressing a news conference at Clifton Park on Sunday.

Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab further said that on the first day of Eid, he had said on the polo ground that the staff will be seen working and appealed to the citizens to cooperate so that they can serve the public. For the last five days, the civic administration has been working day in and day out for which I

113,035 tons of offals, sacrificial waste removed from city



thank them. I am grateful to all the officers of the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB), the District Administration, the Town Chairmen, and the staff, they all worked together with love and affection. I visited every town and saw the pace of work. Alhamdulillah, the sacrificial

waste and offals were collected in a good manner. The process of picking the offals and sacrificial waste started a day before Eid as the Bohri community performs the sacrifice a day before. Perhaps the critics found out for the first time in 75 years when the Bohra community celebrates Eid

while the Ahl al-Hadith community is still offering sacrifices on Sunday. Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab said that 1,13,035 tons of Eid-specific garbage was disposed of, including the garbage that was picked up from the city daily. More than 24,000 staff were working

this year. This year boy scouts also helped us. I am also grateful to all my friends in the media. The media did positive reporting and pointed out the problems. With the help of the media, it was possible to clean up some places immediately.

Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab said that the garbage was prevented from falling from the vehicles while carrying it to the land fill sites. A few people made selfies and pictures while sitting on waste and tweeted them. Karachi is an unfortunate city where social media showed the city as dirty, but positive people also appreciated the efforts of the administration. Garbage is not picked up anywhere in the world for 24 hours continuously.



Monday July 03, 2023

**Relief, for now**

The IMF's announcement that it has agreed to extend a lifeline of \$3bn to rescue our crisis-hit economy has come as a relief to all stakeholders: government, business and the public.

Yet the fact that it balked at the idea of approving Islamabad's request to complete the ninth review of the just-expired EFF facility and release the \$1.2bn tranche stuck for months shows that the lender still has trust issues with Pakistan.

The new agreement comes under the IMF's short-term Stand-By Arrangement and is structured for a nine-month period to help save the teetering economy.

Even multiple interventions by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who must be credited for clinching the deal, despite Finance Minister Ishaq Dar's outbursts against the Fund, couldn't bridge this gap.

The IMF, which blames policy 'missteps' and shocks like floods and the Ukraine war for our declining economy, did not think it a good idea to free politicians and their collaborators in the finance bureaucracy from its oversight in the lead-up to the elections.

It wants Islamabad to strictly execute Budget 2023-24 and not cede to pressure for unbudgeted spending and tax exemptions.

After all, an economy plagued with high inflation, drying dollar inflows and macroeconomic instability takes a long time and sustained fiscal discipline to turn around.

The SBA is a better deal as it ends the uncertainty around fiscal discipline before and after the elections, with fears of an immediate sovereign default receding as reflected by the rapidly surging prices of Pakistan's short-duration eurobond debt becoming due in 2024 and 2025.

If Pakistan follows the programme, it can unblock financing from multilateral and bilateral lenders and easily secure bilateral and commercial debt rollovers to shore up its foreign currency stocks.

Moreover, the fear of losing IMF support again will keep fiscal authorities on their toes.

But macroeconomic stability will not come free; the Fund demands that energy and foreign exchange market reforms be implemented, and the State Bank must pursue a proactive monetary policy.

That means interest rates will remain high and base electricity prices rise by a third to over Rs33 a unit.

The home currency may stabilise, even strengthen, in the short run, but further depreciation of the exchange rate cannot be ruled out once the administrative curbs on imports and dollar outflows are lifted.

Politicians and policymakers need to recognise that the deal gives them another chance to implement fundamental, structural reforms for long-term debt sustainability and macroeconomic stability.

If we implement the SBA diligently, it will help us secure a new long-term and less-encumbered bailout after the elections once the arrangement ends.

That is crucial to raise multilateral and bilateral funds to boost reserves, and buy some room to execute basic reforms for overall economic stability.

**Muhammad Amir Rana**

Pakistan has been successful in pulling off a staff-level deal with the International Monetary Fund and securing a \$3 billion stand-by arrangement. Pending approval by the IMF board in July, this pact is expected to provide immediate respite to Pakistan's acute balance-of-payments crisis and serve as a platform for opportunities for further financial support from multilateral and bilateral partners.

Reaching an agreement with the IMF was no piece of cake, as it required extensive political capital from both the civil and military leadership. Undeterred, they embarked upon a relentless diplomatic campaign in major capitals of friendly nations. However, this victory is not the end; it merely marks the begin-

ning of another arduous undertaking — securing additional financial assistance from these friendly countries. Their demands are known, and include issues related to security and terrorism. As Pakistan emerges from the shadow of adversity, one recalls that last year, it had successfully met another formidable challenge: getting off the menacing 'grey list' of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). This achievement was the product of years of dogged determination and persistent efforts to convince the international community of its strong commitment to tightening its monetary regulations in order to prevent exploitation by terrorists and criminals.

These milestones can be seen against the backdrop of the Indian prime minister's recent visit to the US, where discussions between US President Joe Biden and Narendra Modi led to a joint statement condemning cross-border terrorism and urging the FATF to enhance its anti-money laundering and counterterrorism financing standards. It was aimed at Pakistan which swiftly is-

sued an official demarche to the US envoy in Islamabad. The strategic community in Islamabad believes that the US and its allies are employing the IMF and FATF as geopolitical tools. This perception is further bolstered by the view that Pakistan's close strategic proximity to China and its role in Afghanistan make it an unfortunate target of coercive politics, with India emerging as the principal beneficiary.

While acknowledging the existence of such geopolitical factors, it is essential to avoid falling into the trap of victimhood that saps the nation's energy and compromises its ability to stay the course. Externalising the issue will not yield a solution. Economists and security experts have long warned of the looming economic crisis and the ramifications of leniency towards any militant group in the country. When the consequences of policies are well known, clinging to the status quo, without making the necessary course correction, would leave little room for justifiable complaints.

Pakistan now stands at a critical juncture where

it must harness its resilience and determination to not only navigate the challenges imposed by global politics but also take transformative measures to ensure long-term solutions.

The allegation of militants infiltrating India-held Kashmir from Pakistan lacks substance. Pakistan has successfully subdued militant groups in compliance with FATF. Major groups, like the Jamaatud Dawa and Lashkar-e-Taiba, are having an internal debate but are unwilling to go public with it due to their mistrust of and fear of exploitation by India. Friendly nations also have concerns about militant groups and extremism in Pakistan.

The way out for Pakistan is obvious. The institutions should focus on countering terrorism financing and fulfilling international obligations. Efforts to neutralise the militant infrastructure should prioritise core national interests — and any temptation to use them for internal politics must be avoided. Pakistan has established mechanisms to check the illicit financial flows under FATF compliance. Effective oversight from parliament and legisla-

tive cover will increase legitimacy and gain international trust.

In the grand tapestry of global affairs, the presence of strong institutions to combat illicit financing is not merely a matter of international trust, but a crucial factor in maintaining geopolitical equilibrium. Recognising the significance of this paradigm, Pakistan must strategically position itself as a member of esteemed international bodies, such as the FATF, to bolster its influence on the geopolitical stage.

Becoming a FATF member calls for heightened responsibility. A few nations currently find themselves on the FATF's grey list, and are subject to scrutiny by this international watchdog. However, for Pakistan, membership promises to arm it with the necessary tools to deftly navigate the intricate web of diplomatic and political challenges thrust upon it by formidable forces such as India, the US and others.

To secure this coveted position within the FATF, Pakistan has earnestly attempted to meet the watchdog body's stringent criteria and elevate its standards.

The FATF places particular emphasis on fostering transparency, understanding beneficial ownership, and ensuring that criminals are unable to conceal their nefarious activities behind a veil of opaque corporate structures.

In the journey towards membership, Pakistan's inclusion lies in the hands of member countries engaged in the intricate process of mutual evaluation. It is within this evaluative framework that the final verdict will be rendered, determining Pakistan's destiny in the ranks of the world's foremost financial warriors.

However, lurking in Pakistan's geopolitical landscape is a formidable challenge, one that tarnishes its global image and threatens its strategic interests. This challenge emanates from the terrorist groups operating across the Afghan border.

Even as Pakistan navigates the complex web of relations with the Afghan Taliban regime, the nation steadfastly supports its regime. On the other side, the Taliban, in their unwavering stance, continue to seek support from the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Ah, but there's the rub****Ghazi Salahuddin**

An 'Alhamdulillah' moment it was for Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif when Pakistan reached a nine-month \$3 billion staff-level agreement with the IMF on Friday, the second day of Eid. And it certainly lifted the spirits of the ruling coalition's supporters. There had been great suspense about it, with the threat of a default looming on the horizon. It was more real for some than others. Like in a thriller, the happy ending was delivered at virtually the last minute. The lead role in this 'chase sequence' was played by the prime minister. Obviously, his vindication bodes well for his party's prospects in the expected elections later this year.

But what does it mean for Pakistan and what happens in the country in the

immediate context? In the first place, of course, the bailout that has to be formally approved by the IMF Board by the middle of this month has grave economic implications.

That, obviously, is not my territory. However, comments made by independent experts and commentators suggest that this deal is a good sign for our economy. Miftah Ismail, the former finance minister of the present political arrangement, has called it good news for Pakistan during Eidul Azha. He graciously congratulated the prime minister for his personal commitment and for speaking to the IMF MD multiple times. For business and economy journalist Khurram Husain, this is a "ray of hope after a year of economic chaos".

Altogether, there is a sense of relief that Pakistan has earned an economic breathing room. At the same time, there is increased awareness about the challenges that lie ahead in the economic domain. As it is, the acquisition of a loan or financial assistance is not something to be jubilant about.

For that matter, the thought of our economic

management remaining the same cannot be reassuring. But we have generally remained prisoners of the business-as-usual mindset. It is repeatedly asserted that economic stability demands political stability — and it is politics that has forever been the source of our disorders.

This observation should allow me to turn to politics that has entered into its most treacherous and violent phase. There is the spectre of May 9 to contend with. Nothing has ever been so disruptive and so testing in our political history. While it is hard to grasp the extent and depth of what has already happened after that day of infamy, some very pertinent issues are still in the process of being resolved. Naturally, a number of questions relating to the ongoing developments in the political arena were posed to the prime minister when he addressed the press conference on Friday.

Eid has been some kind of an interlude in these proceedings. For instance, speculation about when Imran Khan would be taken into custody had rested on this premise: before Eid or

after Eid? That is how a festival like Eid becomes a marker also in our personal business.

Anyhow, the before Eid option is now dead. We are entering into the after-Eid segment of time. There have been these five holidays and the action, in a sense, begins tomorrow — on Monday. The pace of events is likely to be hectic, under the dark shadow cast by that momentous press conference of the director general of the ISPR on Monday June 26. Its easily deciphered message was that the game for Imran Khan and his party was over.

How this ending is to be scripted is the cause of tension that is now gripping the nation. There are various dots that are yet to be connected. Surely, the IMF deal is woven in this story, giving the coalition government much confidence in playing its cards. Shehbaz Sharif has explained the government's position on who will be tried in the military courts while the issue is still before a divided Supreme Court of Pakistan.

Against this backdrop, Pakistan has clearly a very welcome opportu-

nity to make a new beginning. If the preliminary IMF deal can facilitate the necessary economic reforms and the anticipated closure of the May 9 disaster can restore some harmony in the political arena, what can now impede Pakistan's gradual advancement?

Ah, but there's the rub. Apart from the fact that old ideas do not a new beginning make, our rulers have congenitally ignored or paid little attention to an entire area of national activity that is crucial for any movement in any direction. I am referring to the social sector and the building of social capital. This is something that cannot be imported or borrowed. Nor can any judgment made in whichever court can change or modify our human development indicators.

There is this simple point that should be present to the rulers when they sit on the table of authority to make policies for this nation. No crisis, whether it is economic or political, can be resolved when there is a human capital crisis in the country. The truth of this statement is manifest in the quality of

our performance and behaviour at all levels of society.

Though we did not need those reminders, international agencies and research organizations have constantly been trying to rouse us from our deep slumber, though in a careful and diplomatic nudge. We are not waking up. What opium has been administered to the rulers and the populace of Pakistan?

Almost exactly two months ago, the World Bank had released the Pakistan Human Capital Review in Karachi and Islamabad. One focus of the report was our population growth and the state of health and education. Pakistan's Human Capital Index is below the South Asian average. We can only compare it with some countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In his IMF deal press conference on Friday, PM Shehbaz Sharif confessed that "this is not a moment of pride but of contemplation". He would do well to hold a meeting of all high functionaries, and do some contemplation on what this World Bank Review is telling us. -- Courtesy TheNews

**Eat, pray, cancel****Muna Khan**

What is literature's purpose and should it be different in times of war? I was left wondering about this after reading Elizabeth Gilbert's decision to postpone the publication of her novel *The Snow Forest* "out of respect" for her Ukrainian readers who expressed their disappointment that her book was set in Russia. Although the book was set to be released in February 2024, reviewers left one-star reviews on Goodreads, having read only the description about it being set in 1930s Russia.

*The Snow Forest* is a historical novel based loosely on the Lykov family, Russian Christian fundamentalists who moved to a remote part of Siberia to avoid religious persecution. They lived in isolation from the 1930s to 1970s when they were discovered by a group of geologists. Gilbert said she was inspired by their story during the pandemic, her period of isolation.

"It is not the time for this book to be published," Gilbert said in a video statement she published on Instagram a few days after announcing the publication of *The Snow Forest*. "And I do not want to add any harm to a group of people who have already experienced, and are all continuing to experience, grievous and extreme harm."

I wonder if she'd have done this if her story was set in Palestine, or Kashmir, or Xinjiang or any other conflict-riddled territory.

Gilbert is arguably

most known for *Eat Pray Love* — a memoir cum self-help book cum travelogue, which stayed on the New York Times bestseller list for 187 weeks. She has laid open her life bare for readers, so I can understand why she'd feel like she owes them something. But she has received a lot of censure from them.

She has also been criticised for being bullied into postponing her novel and how such actions pose a threat to freedom of speech. When will it be OK to publish *The Snow Forest*: when the war is 'over' or will Ukrainian readers — how do you quantify this — decide this?

I wonder if her act of self-cancellation is an act of boycott and non-violent resistance that has often led to success — albeit at painful costs: non-violent protests in the subcontinent to British rule, sanctions against apartheid in South Africa and the BDS movement against Israeli occupation of Palestine.

That was then and it was collective. Today, it is easier to organise on the internet, as we saw with the case of the Ukrainian reviewers on Goodreads. Protest takes different forms — be it street art, music, seething journalism, or diaspora in India standing up for WSJ reporter Sabrina Siddiqi who faced a torrent of abuse from Modi supporters after she asked the Indian prime minister about human rights abuses at a press conference in D.C.

I return to the question: what is literature for in times of conflict? Kate Malby in *I News* offered a possible answer: "If literature is not about the cultivation of human empathy, it is nothing."

History teaches us how aggressors attempt to wipe out their victims' culture and identity in wars. Putin is no exception. But

as many have pointed out, Ukrainians are doing the same in their attempt to erase Russia. Malby writes how Ukrainian writers are refusing to share space with Russian dissident writers like Mikhail Shishkin who is in exile because of his open criticism of Putin. I'm not questioning calls to boycott Russian music productions, art, literature but to ask who joins in those calls, and when they do, are they endorsing one group's nationalistic endeavours?

Socialists have noted how support for the Ukrainian war effort comes from a group "whose rabid hatred of Russia is historically rooted in Cold War anti-communism" and that Russia won't be forgiven for its socialist, Bolshevik ties. Without such questions that allow for reflections, I fear we're headed to an era of book burning. (We're already living in an era of book bans.)

Nationalism is problematic especially when myths are peddled as fact to legitimise policies and power. Writers — fiction and non-fiction — have an important role to play in challenging myths, lies and various groups' assertions. I believe that is art's purpose. The anger at the atrocities of war should be redirected at corporations and industries that support those efforts, not artists who set their novels in, this case, Russia.

Journalists challenge nationalist, military, hyper religious narratives every day in Pakistan, often at great cost. But many also practise self-censorship out of fear. Soon they may be joined by artists who will feel they have to create for popularity rather than purpose. Literature and art should not be weaponised. You may not want to read Gilbert's new book but that should be your choice, not one made for you by a mob. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Focus on food****Aisha Khan**

COP27 saw a step change in the focus on food systems as a vital sector for climate action, but investment and policies continue to fall far short. In the lead-up to COP28, the June discussions in Bonn made significant progress in the first week but encountered a breakdown regarding the establishment of a coordination group for collaborative efforts on agriculture and food security. The negotiations concluded with a procedural outcome that is expected to be followed with a draft text in Dubai for delivery of food system transformation that ensures sustainable food security.

The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report highlights the huge impact of climate change on food systems and warns that, without urgent action, millions more people will be at risk of hunger. At the same time, industrial food production systems and ultra-processed foods are fuelling an obesity pandemic. Food systems (across the whole food supply chain) are responsible for 34 per cent of global GHG emissions, and food energy systems are fundamentally intertwined. The challenges to reforming food systems include climate change constraints on pollinators, soil quality, water availability, and crop variety feasibility. However, the threats of unsustainable agriculture as the greatest driver of biodiversity loss (responsible for 80pc of deforestation and 70pc freshwater use) are undermining resili-

ence, increasing fragility in food systems and hampering adaptation efforts. As the world grapples with food shortages, with more than 250 million people facing acute food insecurity, exacerbated by the climate crisis, it is time to change the rules of international finance that are stacked against the world's poor, and accelerate momentum for fit-for-purpose food systems.

COP28 must set clear goals, laying out pathways and identifying priority policies and investments to deliver food system transformation. The benchmarks for defining pathways and ambition at sub-national, national, regional and multilateral food systems transformation must be guided by a just transition. This will require taking into consideration food sovereignty, equitable food distribution and protection for farmers, farm workers, processors as well as marginalised communities, placing small-holder and family farms at the heart of food system transition plans.

Moving beyond benchmarks that are already embedded in international agreement and commitments, the new contours require clear goals from governments and the private sector to address food systems reform in an integrated way, including meeting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), commitments under UNFCCC and the CBD Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

For the Global South, meeting SDG 2.1 to end hunger and ensure access by all people to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round, is becoming a distant dream. This is less a problem of global food supply and more due to food systems that prioritise profits over public health and the environment. Without a massive investment in food systems and wider develop-

ment needs, large populations in the Global South will face a daily struggle to secure sufficient food for themselves and their families.

The agriculture methane emissions by industrialised countries also need clear, time-bound targets for reducing and implementing policies that focus on the harmful impacts of industrial livestock farming and damage to ecosystems, water quality and health, labour rights and animal welfare. Globally, the use of inorganic fertilisers has increased tenfold since the 1960s. This has been a key driver of industrialisation of agriculture, increasing yields in many places but with knock-out impacts on soil, health and ecosystems.

In Pakistan, 81pc of farm holdings are less than five hectares in size. While smallholders and family farmers are ideally suited for embracing agro-ecological and regenerative practices, they often face investment structures that limit their access to finance and exclude them from supply chains dominated by larger businesses. Pakistan ranks 92 out of 107 countries with 43pc of the population food-insecure and 18pc facing severe food shortages. With rapid urbanisation and greater quantities of food consumed and wasted in cities, Pakistan needs to revisit policies, repurpose agricultural subsidies and align objectives with initiatives like the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact.

The FAO roadmap for food systems announced at COP27 with the first output due at COP28, can help Pakistan improve sustainability whilst also enhancing resilience and improving food security. It is critical to plan and set milestones now for different sub-sectors for the agri-food system to 2050. -- Courtesy Dawn



## KSA, UAE keen to invest in Pakistan: Musadiq Malik

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Petroleum Dr Musadiq Malik on Sunday said that Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates are taking keen interest in Pakistani information technology, agriculture and mining sectors.

KSA has planned to fix funds of 24 billion dollars for investment purposes, while U.A.E allocated 22 billion dollars funds for exploring opportunities in three sectors of Pakistan, he stated in an interview with a private television channel. The heavy investment in three major sectors of Pakistan would open many job opportunities for young people, he added. Our young people having knowledge of advanced technology are fully capable to show the world about their skills, he said. We are hopeful to bring business opportunities

here in this country, he said. He said the government has recently constituted committees for One-window operations to facilitate the investors. Commenting on Nawaz Sharif's arrival in Pakistan, he said, after the announcement of the date by the election commission of Pakistan, the former prime minister will come Pakistan to lead the election campaign. He said the incumbent government's tenure will be finished by August mid and the Caretaker set-up will invite ECP to announce the schedule for general elections.

He said it is the responsibility of ECP to hold the next elections in a transparent manner. He said the PML-N under the guidance of Nawaz Sharif would sweep the general elections. To a question about the next leadership role in this country, he said the PML-N will decide

about the leadership role. To a question about relief to poor people, he said despite economic challenges, the government has provided maximum relief to employees, and pensioners besides the people working in the private sector. About load-shedding of gas and electricity, he said, we have issued directives to the department concerned to ensure energy supply during cooking breakfast, lunch and dinner timing. He said that a discussion has been made with Azerbaijan regarding the provision of LNG cargo to Pakistan before next winter. To a question about IMF, he said a nine-month relief through an agreement has been made to run the economic affairs in a proper manner. He hoped that heavy investment from the Gulf region would boost business activities besides open job opportunities in Pakistan.



**KARACHI:** Workers are peeling the "Siri Paye" outside their shop at nanak warha area, the paye and Siri is the one of the favorite and famous dish in Pakistan.

### Speakers say: 5G has the potential to revolutionize industries

LAHORE (Online): It is evident that 5G has the potential to revolutionize industries and drive economic transformation on a global scale.

Speaking at a seminar on "The role of 5G in Economy" held here today under the aegis of Gold Ring Economic Forum, a strategic think tank, Coordinator to Federal Tax Ombudsman Meher Kashif Younis Sunday said that the impact of 5G on the economy is expected to be significant, with numerous potential benefits across various industries. He said 5G technology will open up new possibilities for innovation and entrepreneurship. Startups and businesses will be able to leverage the high-speed and low-latency capabilities of 5G to develop and deploy new applications, services, and business models. This will spur economic growth,

create jobs, and drive technological advancements, he added.

He said this improved connectivity will enable faster and more reliable communication between devices, leading to increased productivity and efficiency across industries. He said the low latency and high reliability of 5G networks will enable real-time monitoring and control of machinery, improved supply chain management, predictive maintenance, and overall operational efficiency. He said this will fuel the growth of mobile-based services, such as mobile gaming, streaming platforms, e-commerce, and mobile advertising. Meher Kashif Younis said the widespread adoption of 5G is expected to contribute significantly to economic growth and productivity gains. According to estimates by the World Economic Forum,

### As per IMF condition, Punjab to lose Rs336b to federal govt

ISLAMABAD (INP): Punjab will also face the brunt of International Monetary Fund's conditions as the province will have to give Rs336 billion from its income to the federal government in the coming financial year.

The caretaker Punjab government has given approval to give Rs336 billion to the federal government on the recommendations of the latter.

Earlier, the Punjab Finance Department had prepared a strategy to give Rs125 billion from the revenue collection of the province.

However, the federal government requested the caretaker government in Punjab to increase the share to Rs336 billion as per the global lender's conditions.

### CTP to take action against transporters involved in overcharging

RAWALPINDI (APP): As residents of the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad head to their hometowns and villages to celebrate Eidul Azha, inter-city transporters have started hiking their fares.

To stop this profiteering, the City Traffic Police (CTP) has launched a grand operation against these transporters for overcharging passengers.

According to City Traffic Officer (CTO) Taimoor Khan transporters have already been warned to stop overcharging or else face strict action in accordance with the law.

CTO said that they had constituted special squads who monitor these buses and wagons.

### PFC to take part in 2<sup>nd</sup> Intl Expo, Trade Fair Kabul starting on July 16

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) will take part in the 3-days Imam Abu Hanifa 2<sup>nd</sup> International and National Expo and Trade Fair Kabul starting from July 16 to discover business opportunities and explore new market access for Pakistani products.

Chief Executive Officer PFC Mian Kashif Ashfaq talking to a delegation of industrialists led by Ch Zeeshan Elahi Arain CEO Marvel Cables here on Sunday said that PFC along with Chenone will be participating in this mega event, said a news release. "Chenone will also exhibit its high-quality

international standards products to capture their share in the global market besides it's an excellent opportunity to showcase Pak products and develop business deals with international buyers", he added. Mian Kashif Ashfaq said that around over hundreds of Pak companies will be exhibiting their products which included furniture, textile, garments, leather garments, sportswear, sports goods engineering, etc. He said this expo will also offer professional buyers a sourcing platform with a wide variety of products ranging from basics to the most creative and qualitative.



**FAISALABAD:** Workers preserving sacrificial animal hides at their warehouse.



**FAISALABAD:** A worker is busy in his work at Tissue making factory, to earn daily wages for the livelihood of his family.

## Pakistan is now firmly back on right track, says Miftah Ismail on IMF agreement

**Monitoring Desk**  
KARACHI: Reacting to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreement, former finance minister Miftah Ismail on Friday said, "Pakistan is now firmly back on the right track".

Pakistan and the IMF reached a long-awaited staff-level agreement (SLA) on a \$3 billion "stand-by arrangement" (SBA), the global lender announced today.

The \$3 billion funding, spread over nine months, is higher than expected for Pakistan. The country was awaiting the release of the remaining \$2.5 billion from a \$6.5 billion bailout package agreed in 2019, which expires on Friday (today).

Taking to Twitter, Miftah said that the signing of the \$3 billion agreement was "great

news" for Pakistan. He also congratulated Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who ensured that the deal went through because of his "personal commitment and intervention".

"As I have been saying, a deal with the Fund is the best insurance we have against default. Now InshaAllah the clouds of default will recede, demand for hoarding dollars will slowly decrease, and there will be renewed hopefulness and vibrancy in the business climate," said Miftah.

The former Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader noted that Pakistan lost nine months in reaching the agreement. He also acknowledged the efforts of his successor Ishaq Dar, State Minister for Finance Aisha Ghaus Pasha, special assistant to the prime minister on

Finance, secretaries of finance, revenue and power and their teams in securing the deal.

"We must recognise that this IMF deal gives us yet another chance for making fundamental reforms. Unless we undertake these reforms, Pakistan will remain at the mercy of multilateral lenders and the people of Pakistan will continue to pay for the structural and governance failures of their governments," said Miftah.

The former finance minister was part of the ruling PML-N. However, he recently decided to step down as the party's Sindh general secretary and all other positions after months of bitterness over his removal and the subsequent appointment of Ishaq Dar as the finance minister in September last year.

### Actions needed to make northern regions a center of tourism: Ahsan Bakhtawari

ISLAMABAD (INP): Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari met Chief Secretary Gilgit-Baltistan Mohiuddin Ahmed Wani.

During the meeting held at Gilgit-Baltistan House, Islamabad, he briefed about the first ICCI International Tourism Summit to be held in Skardu from July 7 to 9 next month. On this occasion, arrangements and measures regarding the tourism conference were also discussed in detail.

President Islamabad Chamber while speaking said that the tourism sector is the easiest source of foreign investment for Pakistan. There are probably no other tourist destinations in the world like our northern regions. However, our

problem is that unfortunately tourism has never been given priority in our country and due to lack of concrete measures in this regard, tourists are turning to other countries.

Along with the completion of the CPEC project and the construction of Skardu International Airport, more steps need to be taken to promote tourism. International flights should be launched in Skardu. Flights from all over the world should come to Skardu.

Apart from this, special attention should be paid to the construction of infrastructure for the promotion of tourism in Skardu. For the promotion of tourism, new restaurants, hotels and guesthouses should be built to attract tourists.

### Brazilian analysts upgrade GDP's growth forecasts

BRASILIA (Xinhua/APP): Brazilian financial analysts raised their projected GDP expansion in 2023 from 2.14 to 2.18 percent, the seventh consecutive weekly upgrade, and upped the 2024 forecast from 1.20 to 1.22 percent, the Central Bank of Brazil.

Analysts lowered the forecast inflation for the year from 5.12 to 5.06 percent, and for next year, from 4.00 to 3.98 percent, according to the bank's weekly Focus survey of the country's top financial institutions.

Brazil's target inflation is 3.25 percent for 2023 and 3 percent for 2024, with a 1.5 percentage point margin of tolerance in both cases.

Market analysts maintained the forecast for the benchmark Selic interest rate at 12.25 percent for this year.



**HYDERABAD:** Female farmers are busy in seeding rice crops in their fields at the bypass.

### Farmers stressed need for switching over to "Inter cropping"

LAHORE (Online): Chairman Rice Research and Development Board Punjab Shahzad Ali Malik Sunday stressed the need for switching over to "Inter cropping" for growing two or multiple crops simultaneously in the same field for bumper agricultural production to achieve food atarky besides boosting profitability of farmers across the country.

Talking to a delegation of progressive farmers led by Pir Saddam Hussain Shah of Pindi Shaikh Musa district Faisalabad here today he said Inter cropping can significantly enhance overall crop productivity.

By growing different crops together, farmers can maximize the use of

available resources, such as sunlight, water, and nutrients, he added. He said the complementary nature of different crops helps in better utilization of the growing space, resulting in higher yields per acre. The added income from inter cropping can improve farm profitability and financial stability.

He said Inter cropping provides a form of insurance against crop failure. If one crop is susceptible to pests, diseases, or adverse weather conditions, the other crops in the mixture can compensate for the losses, he added. This diversification of crops reduces the risk of complete crop failure and helps farmers maintain a more stable income.

### Stocks push higher as investors track China

NEW YORK (APP): Global stocks advanced as China's growth reassurances and solid economic data in the United States helped reduce recession worries.

US consumer confidence surged unexpectedly to an 18-month high in June, fueled by an uptick in the outlook for family finances.

Meanwhile new home sales surged in May to reach the highest rate in over a year, while orders of big-ticket manufactured items rose again last month, fueled by a sharp jump in orders for transportation equipment.

"There was a lot of US economic data released today and the key takeaway was that the economy is not breaking just yet," said Oanda's Edward Moya.

## Ahsan calls for increasing exports

NAROWAL (INP): Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal has stressed the need for increasing exports of the country by utilising all available resources.

Addressing a news conference in Narowal on Sunday, the federal minister said five main fields of economy including agriculture, IT, manpower, minerals and industries could play a vital role in increase of exports and to deal with the economic crisis.

The Planning Minister said Pakistan has the lowest GDP growth rate in the region and by

paying special attention to SMEs we can achieve the set target. He said that we must increase the tax to GDP ratio for self-sufficiency. He also urged the nation to adopt the tax culture for the development of the country.

Iqbal said Pakistan is now on a right track after its agreement with the IMF and this Stand by Arrangement will be helpful in economic turnaround of Pakistan.

He regretted that the PTI has tried to sabotage the IMF's agreement with Pakistan but could not succeed.



**QUETTA:** An elderly man pushing his handcart full of coconuts for selling to earn livelihood for his family.

### BMP says: IMF financing good Dev. but reforms must to end economic crisis

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) has termed the agreement with IMF as a positive development for the economy but warned that the multilateral donors financing might not bring any significant impact on struggling economy, as the sustainable solution to Pakistan's economic issues lies in the structural reforms and consistent

policies.

FPCCI former president and BMP Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar said the deal would end speculation of a possible default, but the country's debt troubles won't end there, as the more IMF aid will be needed in 2024, he added.

He said that the rupee will strengthen which will reduce inflation, so, the IMF agreement is overall a good development.

The BMP Chairman expressed his opinion on the agreement with the International Monetary Fund and said that there is positive news at the beginning of the new fiscal year, as it was not expected but the agreement was reached.

Now the rupee will strengthen, which will reduce inflation. He said that there is a 9-month agreement which is very positive, as the caretaker government will remain in the facility, however, the IMF conditions have increased the cost of production.

Now the rupee will strengthen, which will reduce inflation. He said that there is a 9-month agreement which is very positive, as the caretaker government will remain in the facility, however, the IMF conditions have increased the cost of production.

**RAWALPINDI:** Shopkeepers are packing the Charcoal for customers at their shop in Ganjmandi area as due high demand because of Bakra Eid.

### MEPCO nabbed 16985 power pilferers during 2022-23

MULTAN (APP): Multan Electric Power Company (MEPCO) caught 16985 power pilferers across the 13 districts of South Punjab and imposed a Rs 534.2 million fine on them during the fiscal year 2022-23. Rs 408.3 were recovered and deposited into the treasury.

4285 applications were got registered out of 14889 applications sent for registration of cases against power pilferers during the above said period.

Grand operation was underway against the power pilferers across the region under the supervision of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) MEPCO Engineer Mahar

Allah Yar Bharwana. Rs 432.6 million fine was imposed on 16220 domestic power pilferers while 4045 cases registered during the fiscal year 2022-23.

Rs 11.9 million fine was imposed on 343 commercial consumers and 90 FIRs were registered.

Rs 12 million fine was imposed on 42 industrial consumers (industrialists) and 16 cases were registered. Rs 69.2 million fine was imposed on 337 agricultural tubewell users (farmers) and 128 FIRs were registered.

Rs 4.6 million fine was imposed on 37 other consumers and six cases were registered during fiscal year 2022-23.

### Apple's market value ends above \$3tr for first time

**Monitoring Desk**  
O A K L A N D / BENGALURU: Apple Inc's stock market value ended a trading session above \$3 trillion for the first time on Friday, lifted by signs of improving inflation and bets that the iPhone maker will successfully expand into new markets.

Shares of the world's most valuable company jumped 2.3% to \$193.97, giving it a market capitalisation of \$3.05 trillion, Refinitiv data showed.

It was Apple's fourth straight record high close. The Cupertino, California company's market

capitalisation briefly peaked above \$3 trillion in intra-day trading on January 3, 2022, before closing the session just below that mark.

Heavyweight growth stocks including Apple, Nvidia Corp and Tesla Inc rose sharply after a Commerce Department report showed the Personal Consumption Expenditure price index advanced less in May than in April, reflecting progress in the Federal Reserve's fight against inflation.

Apple has surged 49% so far in 2023 in a rally by several of Wall Street's most valuable companies.



## After winning elections, PMLN to end inflation on priority basis: Nawaz

**Monitoring Desk**  
DUBAI: Pakistan Muslim League-N and former Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif has said that after winning the upcoming elections, PMLN will end inflation on a priority basis.

Former prime minister held an important meeting with the Pakistan Muslim League (PMLN) Gulf delegation in Dubai. PML-N leader was briefed about the high morale of the party workers based in the Gulf countries including the UAE. During the meeting, the delegation inquired about

the well-being of Nawaz Sharif, while PMLN delegation also met PMLN Senior Vice President and Chief Organizer Maryam Nawaz Sharif.

Meanwhile, Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz discussed the strategy of the upcoming elections with the delegation.

Nawaz Sharif assured and said that the Muslim League-N will quickly overcome the problems of Pakistan.

Nawaz Sharif said that he saluted his party workers who were facing difficult situations.

PMLN Nawaz Sharif finalized his future travel

plans and confirmed his return ticket to London on 4th of July.

Sources claimed that PMLN supreme will return back to London.

He will hold important meetings in Dubai before leaving for London.

INP adds: Ex-prime minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Quaid Nawaz Sharif is unlikely to make a comeback to Pakistan anytime soon. According to media reports, Nawaz, who was convicted by an accountability court before the 2018 general elections in graft cases, went to London to receive medi-

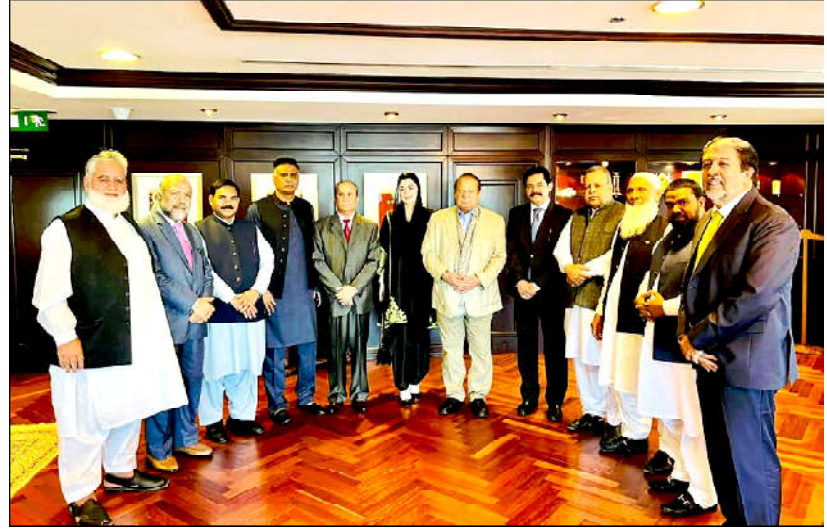
cal treatment in 2019, and has been staying there since then.

Last week, Nawaz reached Dubai and met Pakistani politicians. His arrival in the Gulf emirate generated a debate in the media about his return to Pakistan.

However, the source, a cabinet member, said that he would not be returning just yet. The PML-N supreme is convicted in the Al-Azizia and the Aveinfield Apartment references filed by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in the aftermath of the Panama Papers case.



KARACHI: Activists of Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen Pakistan holds protest outside Press Club against the burning of Quran Pak in Sweden.



DUBAI: Leaders of PML (N) United Arab Emirates photographed with former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz

## Harsh punishment for 2014 sit-in could have prevented May 9: Tanvir



ISLAMABAD (INP): Calling PTI a bunch of rogue and mischievous people, Federal Minister for Education Rana Tanvir Hussain said on Sunday that had the party leaders been penalized for attacking parliament and Pakistan Television (PTV) buildings back in 2014, incidents of violence on May 9 could have been prevented.

held under the auspices of PML-N in Muridke tehsil of Sheikhupura, the minister said it was Pakistan's bad luck that the PML-N government did not take action against the PTI during the sit-in of 2014. "Those burning electricity bills and exhorting people to resort to civil disobedience can never be the country's well-wishers," Hussain said.

He was of the view that what happened on May 9 was unprecedented. "There is no country in the world where people attack their own country's army," he opined.

He called for giving tough penalties to those involved in the vandalism and arson of government and military installations on May 9.

## State minister says: Efforts on to give maximum relief

SARGODHA (APP): Admitting that the country was facing price-hike, triggered by external factors, State Minister for Production and Industries Tasneem Ahmed Qureshi urged people on Sunday to take special care of those who have no resources to make ends meet.

Talking to APP here, he said the coalition government was utilising all resources to provide relief to the public. It provided relief to the salaried class, pensioners and labourers in the current budget, he added. The minister prayed for peace and prosperity of

the Muslim world and for alleviation of sufferings of Muslims across the world, particularly the oppressed brothers and sisters in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and Palestine.

Tasneem Qureshi said that peace, tolerance, brotherhood and obedience to the commands of Allah Almighty were the messages conveyed through sacrifices and performance of Hajj. Meeting such requirements through practical measures would fulfill real objectives of the recently concluded EidulAzha event, he added.



MUZZAFFERABAD: A destructive view of the warehouse as burnt after fire due to short circuit, near Tanga stop at the Capital of AJK.

## Fresh wave of inflation to further expose Shehbaz's govt: Rashid

RAWALPINDI (INP): Awami Muslim League (AML) chief and former interior minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed on Sunday said the cash-strapped Shehbaz-led government's downward countdown is expected to begin from July 12 [the start of new wave of inflation including increasing power tariff].

Taking to Twitter, he asked what was the difference between the IMF decisions of former finance minister Miftah Ismail and his successor Ishaq Dar ex-

cept they are relatives. "Dar's tone was aggressive initially and then he started bowing before the [International Monetary Fund] to get the loan approved for nine months."

He said a new wave of inflation would engulf the masses from July 12, leading to downward countdown of the incumbent government, adding the three governments the caretaker government and the new government—had to fulfill the IMF's strict conditions in nine months

## Desecration of Holy Quran condemned

LAHORE (APP): A political party head has strongly condemned desecration of holy Quran in Sweden recently.

Pakistan Markazi Muslim League President Khalid Masood Sindh said in a statement on Sunday the incident was unacceptable and painful for the Muslims.

He said that allowing pages of the holy book to be set on fire by the Swedish authorities on Eidul Azha in front of Muslims was intolerable. He said it was a conspiracy to hurt the sentiments of billions of Muslims in the name of freedom of speech.

He said the desecration incident was the second tragic incident of Islamophobia of the West during the current year. He demanded the government register strong protest on the incident after summoning the Swedish ambassador at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## Jahangir Tareen returns home from London

ISLAMABAD (INP): Istikhame-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) patron-in-chief Jahangir Khan Tareen on Sunday returned to Pakistan after a medical check-up in the United Kingdom (UK), ARY News reported. According to details, Jahangir Khan Tareen reached Pakistan after undergoing several medical tests in London.

Jahangir Tareen went to UK before Eid over health issues. On June 8, Jahangir Tareen officially launched the "Istikhame-e-Pakistan" party.

## PM lauds WMC for excellent cleanliness arrangements during Eid

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has lauded Waste Management Companies (WMC) and district administrations across Pakistan for their excellent cleanliness arrangements on Eid Ul Azha.

In a tweet, he said people were able to perform Sunnah-e-Ibrahimi without any difficulty due to the excellent arrangements in all major cities of Pakistan, especially Lahore.

The Prime Minister praised the officials of solid waste companies for ensuring cleanliness in the cities while being away from their loved ones. He also thanked the nation for cooperating with administration and making it all possible.

## Monsoon rain spell in country begins from today

KARACHI (INP): The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) on Sunday forecast monsoon rainfall in the country from July 03 and will continue till July 08.

The Met Office, in a report stated that moist currents from the Arabian Sea are likely to penetrate in upper parts of the country, and a westerly wave is also likely to enter the country from July 3 (tomorrow).

Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Murree, Gallivat, Attock, Chakwal and Jhelum, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan and other areas will receive rain with thunderstorm from July 4-7.

Rain, wind, thunder-shower with isolated heavy falls are also expected in Barkhan, Sibbi,

Loralai, Kalat, Khuzdar, Zhoob, Lasbella and Naseerabad, Bannu, Karak, Waziristan, D.I Khan, Rajanpur, Multan, Bhakkar, Layyah, Kot Addu, Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar, Sahiwal and Okara from July 5 to 8.

The Met Office also predicted rainfall, wind, thundershower with isolated heavy falls in Sukkur, Jacobabad, Ghotki, Shaheed Benazirabad, Larkana, Mithi, Chhor, Padidan, Nagarparkar, Tharparkar, Umerkot, Sanghar, Mirpur Khas, Dadu, Thatta, Badin, Hyderabad, and Karachi on July 07 and 08.

The Met Office has warned that heavy falls may cause flash floods in hill torrent of Dera Ghazi Khan and adjoining areas of northeast Balochistan.

## Geneva Kashmir moot highlights plight of Kashmiri prisoners languishing in Indian, IIOJK jails

KARACHI (APP): While voicing their grave concern over the continual illegal detention of Kashmiri prisoners in Indian as well as Occupied Kashmir's jails, speakers at a seminar held on the sidelines of the 53rd session of the UN Human Rights Council (UNCHR) in Geneva late Saturday, said that thousands of detainees lodged in different jails in and outside the Valley were getting worse with every passing day.

"The seminar titled 'Plight of Kashmir Prisoners' was attended and addressed by political activists, parliamentarians, public representatives, law experts and human rights defenders hailing from different parts of the world including Altaf Hussain Wani

chairman Kashmir institute of International relations, Faheem Kayani, Hassan ul Bana, Mirza Asif Jarral and others", says a message reaching and released to the media here on Sunday.

The speakers continued that thousands of Kashmiris who were arrested before and after 5th August 2019 have been languishing in India's notorious jails like Tihar, which has become a death trap for Kashmiris. They said that a sizable number of Kashmiris who were taken into preventive custody on 5th August 2019 continue to rot in Amphala, Udhampur, Hiranagar, Khatua and Kotbalwal jails.

The speakers said that the Indian government has given a free license to its

forces and agencies like NIA and Enforcement Directorate to arrest Kashmiris. They said that dozens of top rank political leaders including Muhammad Yasir Malik, Musarrat Aalam Bhat, Shabir Ahmad Shah, Nayeem Ahmed Khan, Asiya Andrabi and others were picked up from their homes and whisked off to prisons outside the valley. "They have been actually abducted by NIA and ED and shifted to Tihar Jail under frivolous and concocted charges," the speakers said, adding that scores of detainees including Dr. Qasim Faktoot, Dr. Shafi Shariati, Gulam Qadir and many more were rotting in jails serving life terms.

## Payments under BISP to begin today: Kundi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation & Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi has said that the process of the payment of installments under Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) will begin from July 03 (Monday).

In a message for deserving women under BISP here on Sunday, he urged them to collect their installments from the specified retailers and inform them in case of any complaint. He said that 0.9 million cards of the BISP suspended by the previous PTI government including 7000 cards of the deserving women of D.I. Khan are being unblocked. He further said that the teams of BISP are formally contacting those people whose cards have been unblocked.

So far over 2,50,000 cards have been restored. Mr Kundi said that the holders of blocked cards either contact the local office of BISP or sent message on 8171. For the redressal of the complaints of beneficiaries, he said a new system for direct recovery from banks is being introduced during the current month.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali in a group photo with people during Eid greeting at Governor House.

## Int'l seminar will organize on completion of 10-year of CPEC

PESHAWAR (APP): Preparations for holding an International Seminar on the completion of 10 years of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) kicked off in the provincial capital Peshawar which would be scheduled on July 5.

The Chinese Cultural Center China Window in Peshawar is going to present papers on the usefulness of CPEC in the seminar organized in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission, KP Investment Board and IM Sciences.

The seminar will have four sessions in which prominent personalities from different fields of life will express their views on this

great project of Pakistan-China friendship.

During the seminar to be held on July 5, awards will also be given to those Pakistani and Chinese companies who have invested a lot in CPEC projects and besides providing employment to a large number of people, have contributed to the economic development of Pakistan.

Played a prominent role, according to the organizers of China Window, this will be the first and unique seminar of its kind in Peshawar, in which the speakers will express their views on the project on the completion of ten years of CPEC, while videos of various projects will also be shown.

## KSA ranked first in Govt. Strategy Index AI

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was ranked first globally in the Government Strategy Index for Artificial Intelligence. One of the indicators of the global classification of artificial intelligence was issued by Toroise Intelligence, which evaluated more than 60 countries in the world, the Saudi Press Agency reported on Sunday. Germany and China secured the second and third rankings, respectively. The Global Ranking of Artificial Intelligence incorporates more than 100 indicators, categorized into seven sub-pillars. The Kingdom had ac-

complished a remarkable feat, scoring 100 percent in all criteria of the index related to artificial intelligence.

This included the establishment of the National Strategy for Data and AI (NSDAI) within the Kingdom, the presence of a dedicated government authority for artificial intelligence, the allocation of funding and budget for AI initiatives, and the formulation and monitoring of national targets for artificial intelligence.

This significant achievement by the Kingdom perfectly aligns with the overarching goals of Saudi Vision 2030.

## Talha strongly flays Holy Quran desecration in Sweden

MAKKAH MUKARMA (APP): Minister of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Senator Talha Mehmood vehemently denounced the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden.

In a resolute statement, he emphasized that mere condemnation is insufficient.

Talha strongly stated, "Islamophobia is a stigma on the face of the Western world," stressing that freedom of expression cannot be shielded by such heinous acts that have deeply hurt the sentiments of over 1.5 billion Muslims.

He called upon the OIC (Organization of Islamic Cooperation) to actively engage in effectively addressing such issues.

## Radio Pakhtunkhwa role in sharing joys with people is commendable: Feroze

Independent Report PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister Information, Hajj and Auqaf Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel has said that the spirit of sacrifice should be throughout the year and not just on Eid. He said Eid-ul-Azha is an opportunity for the entire Muslim world to celebrate and share happiness collectively.

On the contrary, he said, if we always keep fresh the spirit of eternal self-sacrifice as demonstrated by Hazrat Ibrahim and Ismail (peace be upon them) and follow it in the true sense, then Muslims all over the world can get rid of divisions and become united and develop by leaps and bounds. He was speaking as chief guest at the special Eid show De Akhtar Mulghalre on the occasion of Eid-ul-Adha at the studio of Pakhtunkhwa Radio Peshawar FM 92.2.

Secretary Information and Public Relations Mukhtiar Ahmed and station director Pakhtunkhwa Radio Ghulam Hussain Ghazi also participated in this Eid show while Prof Dr. Abasin Yousafzai and producer Fritar Buneer hosted it.

Barrister Feroze Jamal Kakakhel hailed the innovation and public acceptance of Pakhtunkhwa Radio and said that the media as a whole can light the candles of hope in the society by pulling the society and people from the morass of growing anxieties and despair. On a question of Dr. Abasin, the Minister said that Eid is not only for children but also for adults. On Eid, he said, most of the families get together after a long separation away from their city or homeland, while the pilgrims also return to their homes after the obligation of Hajj and share the joys with each other.



KARACHI: A view of the sea shells at Sea View after the recent storm in Arabian Sea in Provincial Capital.