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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses the 23rd SCO Summit hosted virtually by India

## PM calls for SCO's joint action to counter economic recession, terrorism & climate change

Reaffirms Pakistan's firm support for shared dreams of peace in SCO region

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday called for a joint action by the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to address the common challenges of economic recession, terrorism, and climate change.

"The SCO represents a promising future only if we seize the opportunity to achieve the shared goals for the region's peace and prosperity," he said in his virtual address to the 23rd Meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of State (CHS).

The invitation to Prime Minister Sharif to attend the SCO-CHS, which was held in a video conference format, was extended by the prime minister of India in his capacity as the current Chair of the SCO.

Chinese President Xi Jinping, Russian President

Vladimir Putin, Indian prime minister Narendra Modi, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Tajikistan's President Emomali Rahmon, Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, and Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi joined the virtual moot among other leaders of the observer states.

PM Sharif said the SCO leaders were meeting at a critical juncture as the world faced socio-economic challenges.

He stressed that the regional organization could play the role of "beacon of peace, stability, and progress".

Termining regional connectivity a defining feature of the modern economy, he emphasized focusing on investment in this area as a

"vehicle of peace and prosperity".

He mentioned that China Pakistan Economic Corridor, a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative, could become a game-changer of progress in view of Pakistan's location connecting the region.

He announced that Pakistan was planning to host a regional connectivity conference in the last quarter of the current year.

On terrorism and extremism, the prime minister said the "monster" must be fought with vigour and determination by all SCO states.

He pointed out that diplomatic point-scoring must be avoided by all countries and said that all forms of terrorism, including State terrorism, must be con-

Continued on page 2

## Governor Balochistan says Provision of basic facilities to exiguous but scattered population big challenge

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that it is a big challenge to ensure provision of basic facilities to the exiguous but scattered population in the province.

He regretfully pointed out that the people are forced to migrate towards the urban areas because of gross poverty, backwardness and lack of basic facilities in the far flung areas of the province.

The Governor was speaking to the United Nations' country representative to Pakistan for Population Programme, Dr. Luay Shabaneh who called on him here at the Governor's House on Tuesday.

During the course of meeting, different issues were discussed relating to increasing population, family planning, mother and child healthcare issues, nutritional issues, migration of people towards urban areas, registration of Afghan

refugees, etc.

While speaking to the UN's country representative for Population Programme, the Governor expressed deep concern over the high maternal mortality ratio in Balochistan. He said that it is a matter of great concern that the maternal mortality ratio is highest in the province even in the present scientific era and technology.

He pointed out that the poverty is the biggest hurdle to ensure balanced diet full of nutrition to the poor people.

Under the given circumstances, it is necessary for the national and international organizations to pay focus on the poor people in the remote areas, adding he stressed.

The Governor also stressed the need to involve the local bodies representatives, religious leaders and media to run mass awareness campaign regarding ill-effects of the population rise.

## CM writes commendation letter: Food Department achieves target of 1 million bags of wheat for current year

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Food Department, Government of Balochistan has achieved the target of purchasing 1 million bags of wheat for the current year 2023 in the province.

According to the sources of Food Department, the target of purchasing 1 million bags of wheat has been achieved for the year 2023 well in time.

It may be mentioned here that the Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo-led provincial government had directed the

concerned authorities to ensure purchase of the wheat for 2023 so that no shortage of the same is occurred.

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister has written an appreciation letter to the Provincial Food Department on achieving target of the wheat purchase in the province.

He said that it is appreciable to meet the target of purchase of wheat for year 2023. The Chief Minister expressed the hope that Secretary Food and his team would continue to serve with the same zeal in future.

## Minister Home takes notice of road block, directs to take action against responsible

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove has taken notice of the reports of road block by some and directed the concerned authorities to take action against those responsible.

In a statement issued here on Tuesday, the Minister Home said that strike is democratic right of all, but it should also be used democratic manner.

He was reacting on the reports of road block on the social media the other day. It may be mentioned here

that roads and highways were blocked on call of the Balochistan National Party (BNP) against the issues of law and order in Wadh and other parts of the province besides other issues.

Mir Ziaullah Langove said that there is no fault of party heads in the strike, but we need to create awareness among the political workers.

He said that if there's fault of anyone, it is of those who were present at the spot. He stressed that we should uphold our traditions, which were not followed unfortunately.

## Govt. announces nationwide protests on July 7 against Holy Quran's desecration

"Speaking with one voice, the whole nation will give a message to the evil minds," says PM; Joint session of parliament called on Thursday

ISLAMABAD (APP):

The government would observe Yaum-e-Taqaddus-e-Quran on July 7 to hold countrywide protests demonstrations against the desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden and convene a joint parliamentary session a day earlier.

The decision was made on a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif here to discuss the issue of the desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden.

It was decided that protest rallies would be held on Friday across the country to condemn the act.

The prime minister appealed to the nation, including all the political parties, to participate in the protest

to convey a united message to the mischievous minds.

Besides, the government would also convene a joint session of the parliament on July 6 to formulate a national strategy on the issue and represent the nation's sentiments and feelings through the parliamentary forum.

The joint session would also adopt a resolution to condemn the desecration of the Holy Quran.

The prime minister, also the president of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, instructed the party to participate in the Yaum-e-Taqaddus-e-Quran and hold countrywide rallies.

He told the meeting that the sanctity of the Holy Quran was a part of the Muslims' belief for which all of them were united.

He said that the astray minds were toying a nefarious agenda of fanning the negative trend of Islamophobia.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that nations and leadership believing in peace and co-existence should contain the violent forces infested by the Islamophobia and religious biases.

He believed that the violent mindset targeting the religion, sacred personalities, beliefs and ideologies were in fact the enemies of the world peace.



RAWALPINDI: Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif and Secretary Defence, Lt. Gen (Retd) Hamood Uz Zaman Khan chairing a meeting with H.E. Sher Ali Mirzo, Defence Minister of Tajikistan along with his delegation at Ministry of Defence

## Ban imposed at picnic points, deep water & dams during Monsoon season

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has imposed ban on the picnic points, deep water and dams in the province during the monsoon season.

According to an official notification issued here on Tuesday, the PDMA has issued an official memorandum of all districts regarding ban on the picnic points.

As per the notification, the ban would remain imposed on the picnic points, deep water and dams from July 4 to 8, 2023.

Needless to mention here is that the ban has been imposed to prevent any untoward incident at the picnic points.

## Ban on Nawaz for contesting election ends, he can contest election: FM

ISLAMABAD (Online):

Finance Minister (FM) Ishaq Dar has said that the ban on Nawaz Sharif for contesting the election has ended now and he can contest election now under new law.

Talking to private TV channel here Tuesday he said Nawaz Sharif is leaving for Saudi Arabia from UAE to perform Umrah and later he will fly to England.

About the return of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to Pakistan FM said that he will come from England to Pakistan when party says so.

## Dollar is in reverse gear after IMF deal

KARACHI (Online):

After success of deal with International Monetary Fund (IMF), dollar also lost its power against Pakistani Rupee. Dollar lost Rs.11 against rupee on Tuesday.

Yesterday, market witnessed brisk in the result of IMF deal and dollar also depreciated.

## Khawaja Asif, Tajik Defence Minister discuss bilateral defence cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP):

Tajikistan Defence Minister, Sherali Mirzo along a delegation called on Defence Minister, Khawaja Muhammad Asif and discussed bilateral defence cooperation the other day.

Khawaja Muhammad Asif expressed best wishes for the military and civil leadership of Tajikistan, and its people, said a press release on Tuesday.

The minister highlighted that being neighbours of Afghanistan, both Pakistan and Tajikistan were facing similar security challenges and threats.

Pakistan believed in peaceful resolution of all issues and appreciates the

efforts of Tajikistan in promoting peace and stability in the region, he added.

The minister highlighted that CPEC would further provide new and unique opportunities for enhancing connectivity and integration from Gwadar to Kashgar and Murghab in Tajikistan.

Khawaja Asif said that Pakistan would continue to provide assistance in intelligence capacity building and sharing of technical expertise with Tajik Armed forces.

Tajik Defence Minister assured his government's commitment and pledged to work with Pakistan to strengthen bilateral ties.



BAKU: Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis &amp; HRD, Sajid Hussain Turi signing MoU with his Azerbaijan counterpart on social welfare.

## GB-CM disqualified in fake degree case

GILGIT (Online):

Chief Minister Gilgit Baltistan of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Khalid Khursheed has been disqualified by GB chief court in case of obtaining fake degree.

Three member bench led by Justice Inayatullah Khan issued reserved verdict in petition of seeking CM disqualification from his office under article 62 and 63 of constitution.

Notably, last April, Khursheed's Bachelor of Law (LLB) degree turned out to be fake, a year after he was appointed to the post.

Khursheed had acquired his degree from a network of diploma mills operating under the brand name Belford, but it doesn't actually exist.

He was entrusted with the top slot over his 'outstanding educational achievements', something even the former premier

was misled into believing as he called him the 'right choice' last year.

Subsequently, the se-



nior leadership of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) had come under heavy criticism in G-B for extending legal assistance to their political opponent in the fake degree case.

However, following his disqualification today, a no-confidence motion was submitted against the CM in the Assembly Secretariat almost immediately.



QUETTA: Country Representative of UNFPA, Dr. Luay Shabaneh called on Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Kakar.

## AbdulRazaq Shar's murder case: Imran Khan failed to appear before JIT once again despite second notice

Independent Report

QUETTA: The former Prime Minister and Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Imran Khan didn't appear before the Joint Investigation Team (JIT) formed to probe into the brutal murder of senior lawyer, AbdulRazaq Shar, here on Tuesday.

The JIT had summoned Imran Khan to record his statement about the murder of senior lawyer on June 6, 2023.

However, the Chairman PTI failed once again to appear before the JIT. It may be mentioned here that it was 6th meeting of the JIT held on Tuesday.

On the other hand, another nominated accused Sardar Khan appeared before the JIT. However, the JIT found his reply unsatisfactory in the case, thus he was taken into custody for further investigations, the JIT sources informed.

The JIT sources told that the future course of action is being reviewed about the PTI Chairman. Earlier, two notices had been issued to Imran Khan for appearance before the JIT.

It is being considered whether to release arrest warrants of Imran Khan or issue further notices to him for appearing before JIT.

## 27 killed during June on Balochistan highways

QUETTA (APP):

At least 27 people have died and 1095 were injured in 739 incidents that occurred on the highways of Balochistan during the month of June.

According to data released by Medical Emergency Response Center (MERC), most of the accidents occurred on N25 at Winder, Lasbela area on the Karachi-Quetta highway.

The MERC responded to 739 road accidents that happened on the main highways of Balochistan in the month of June and provided medical treatment to 1095 injured people while shifting the dead bodies to the nearest hospitals.

According to the report, the authority has recorded the highest number of road accidents of 107 at Winder Lasbela, due to which 124 people were injured during the said period.

To provide first aid in emergency situations, Medical Officers, and trained paramedical staffs have been appointed at every Medical Emergency and Response Center to save human lives in case of accidents on the national highways. The centers have been connected with district hospitals to deal with emergency situations and for administrative purposes. The government had also been working to expand the main roads to control the accidents in the province.

## Nepra further jacks up electricity tariff

ISLAMABAD (INP):

In yet another power tariff hike, the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) on Tuesday jacked up electricity prices by Rs1.25 per unit.

According to media reports, the power regulatory authority, NEPRA approved Rs1.25 per unit hike in electricity in the wake of the monthly fuel adjustment. The consumers have to pay the additional amount in August.

Furthermore, the increase in electricity cost will apply to all the consumer categories except lifeline consumers and KE users. It is pertinent to mention here that the Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA) requested an increase in power tariff on May 24 under a third-quarter adjustment.



NASEERABAD: Country Head of WHO Pakistan Dr. Palitha Mahipala and Deputy Commissioner Ayesha Zehri inaugurating EPI Resource Center

## SC rejects plea against BHC's decision to quash FIR against PTI Chairman

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court on Tuesday rejected the plea against the Balochistan High Court's decision to quash the First Information Report (FIR) and arrest warrant filed against the PTI chairman in connection with the killing of senior lawyer Abdul Razzaq Sharif in Quetta.

A two-member SC bench comprising Justice Ijaz-ul-Ahsan and Justice Ayesha A Malik heard the case filed by Imran Khan against his nomination and arrest warrant in the case of the senior Supreme Court lawyer who was killed in Quetta.

During the course of proceedings, Chairman PTI's lawyer Latif Khosa read out the murder case of lawyer Abdul Razzaq Sharif and said that the son of the slain lawyer Abdul Razzaq Sharif filed a case against

Imran Khan under terrorism provisions. Latif Khosa insisted that his client's life was in danger.

Justice Ijaz asked who determined the imposition of terrorism provisions in the case. The lawyer said that the primary responsibility lied with the SHO of the police station.

Justice Ijaz-ul-Ahsan asked that if the SHO's decision was wrong, would an application be made against it in the ATC or not?

When the lawyer said that a non-bailable arrest warrant had been issued for Chairman PTI, Justice Ayesha A Malik asked whether the constitution of joint investigation team (JIT) was challenged.

Latif Khosa said that he did not know what was happening against his client and SHO could not impose terrorism provisions at the stage of investigation.

The lawyer said that Imran Khan was still coming to Islamabad, but he had stopped him from coming to the Supreme Court, on which Justice Ijaz-ul-Ahsan said that this case was to quash the FIR and there was no need for Imran Khan to come.

Justice Ijaz-ul-Ahsan said that if he wanted more relief, request the Chief Justice of Pakistan.

The Supreme Court rejected the request for injunction and interim bail against the decision of the high court and sought the details of the case from the government lawyer.

The court also issued notices to other parties including the Advocate General and Prosecutor General Balochistan.

Subsequently, hearing of the case was adjourned till date in office.

## Pakistan, Japan vow to further intensify bilateral cooperation

ISLAMABAD (Online): Pakistan and Japan have vowed to remain engaged at all levels to further intensify bilateral cooperation.

This came at high-level meetings of Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari during his visit to Japan from 1st to 4th of this month.

In Tokyo, the Foreign Minister held bilateral talks with his Japanese counterpart Hayashi and also called on Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida.

During these meetings, the two sides discussed all aspects of bilateral relation; including, trade and investment, defence cooperation, education and export of manpower from Pakistan to Japan. They agreed to work together on targeted programmes with high impact, especially in the domain of solarization, and infrastructure rebuilding in the flood affected areas in Pakistan.

The Foreign Minister addressed the Asian Development Bank Institute and also met with executives of Japanese business enterprises including Japan International Cooperation Agency and Japan External Trade Organization.



QUETTA: A delegation led by former Chairman Balochistan Board of Intermediate & Secondary Education Munir Kakar meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

## Bilateral ties soars as first post-COVID parliamentary delegation leaves for China

ISLAMABAD (APP): A seven-member delegation of prominent Pakistani parliamentarians will depart for China later today (Tuesday) to foster robust parliamentary exchanges between the two nations while further deepening the mutual understanding and cooperation between them.

Senator Mushahid Hussain, the delegation, "Representing six political parties from all four provinces, is visiting China with a three-pronged purpose: a) to reaffirm Pakistan Parliament's commitment to promoting Pakistan-China friendship as the pillar of Pakistan's foreign policy; b) to learn from the Chinese experience of development and modernisation with a view to imbibing lessons that can

take CPEC forward in the new phase; c) to exchange views with Chinese friends and counterparts on the rapidly changing situation in our neighbourhood so that Pakistan and China can tackle common challenges collectively."

During the stay in China, the delegation will partake in a series of high-level meetings with senior officials of China's Foreign Ministry, the International Department of the Communist Party of China's Central Committee, deputies to the National People's Congress, and Members of Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference plus media and think tanks for first-hand understanding of whole-process people's democracy.

crisis. The significance of this visit cannot be overstated, as it underscores the commitment of both Pakistan and China to further strengthen the bonds of friendship and cooperation.

According to Senator Mushahid Hussain, the delegation, "Representing six political parties from all four provinces, is visiting China with a three-pronged purpose: a) to reaffirm Pakistan Parliament's commitment to promoting Pakistan-China friendship as the pillar of Pakistan's foreign policy; b) to learn from the Chinese experience of development and modernisation with a view to imbibing lessons that can



HYDERABAD: Workers of Jamat-e-Islami hold a protest against burn of Quran Pak in Sweden

## PM calls for SCO's joint action...

Continued from page 1

demmed.

"There is no justification for killing people. Also, the religious minorities should not be marginalized in the garb of political agenda," he said.

Sharif said the SCO countries must take concerted actions against terrorism, extremism, and separatism both in their national capacities and also under the framework of SCO-RATS (Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure).

Terming peace and security a common concern, he said stability in Afghanistan was critical to achieving the common objective.

He highlighted the impending grave humanitarian crisis and economic meltdown in Afghanistan, which he said, needed urgent corrective measures by the interim Afghan government and the international community.

On climate-induced disasters, the prime minister said the situation demanded global solidarity as it was the time to act "now and

immediately".

He mentioned that Pakistan, during the last year's flash floods, faced the "horrors of climate change", leading to 1,700 deaths and economic losses worth \$30 billion.

Sharif said poverty alleviation must be a priority in the wake of economic recession.

On Islamophobia, he said peace and communal harmony were the need of the hour.

He emphasized adhering to the resolutions of the UN Security Council to settle the issues amicably before it was too late.

The prime minister expressed Pakistan's resolve to play a positive and constructive role in making SCO an effective regional organization.

He thanked India for its stewardship of SCO during the past year and congratulated Kazakhstan for assuming the chair for the next year. He congratulated the President of Iran on his country's inclusion in the organization as a full member.

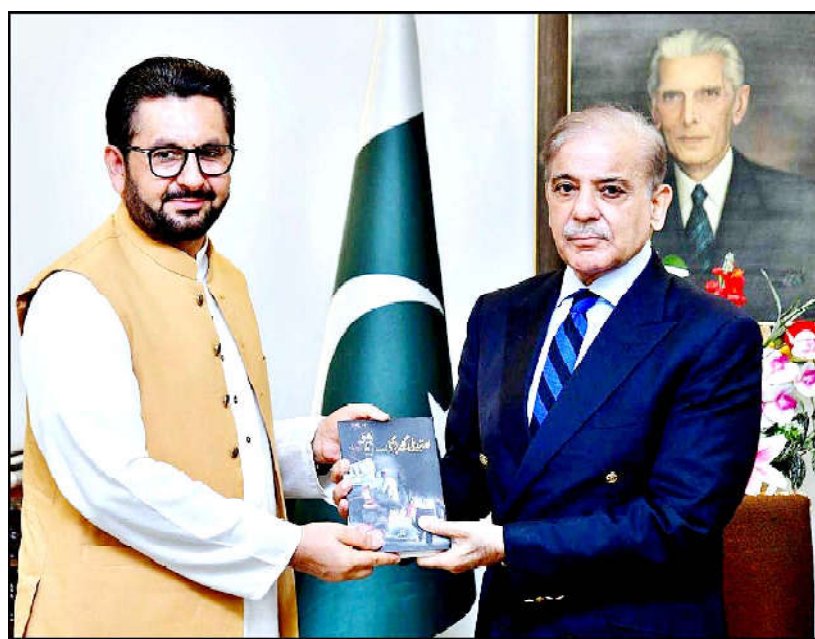
## Measles prevention campaign to be launched in Loralai

Independent Report

LORALAI: A meeting was held in the Department of Health EPI center in connection with the Measles prevention campaign under the chairmanship of Deputy DHO Dr. Abdul Halim Utmankhil.

Muhammad Durrani, M&E Officer PPHI Akhtar Muhammad, SO Muhammad Ghasthman, Vaccinators, Account Officer Zia Ghalzai, Ishaq Nasir, and others participated in the meeting regarding the Measles prevention campaign in seven union councils of Loralai.

The action was decided and necessary preparations were made to make it successful. Later, on this occasion, Deputy DHO Dr. Abdul Halim Utmankhil, M&E Officer Mirzada Kakar, and DSV Ubaidullah Hamzazai gave a press briefing regarding the campaign. Because of the increasing number of measles in Loralai and to control it and to prevent dangerous diseases like measles, Health Department DHO Dr. Nasir Sheikh Mia and EPI in seven union councils of Loralai on 6th July. From July 12 to July 12, i.e. for 6 days, boys and girls from 9 months to 5 years will be vaccinated against measles and for this purpose teams of experienced, assistants and social mobilizers have been formed in each union council in this campaign.



ISLAMABAD: Senior Journalist Saleem Safi presenting his latest book "Aur Tabdeeli Galay Par Gay" to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## Court extends interim bail of Imran Khan, Bushra Bibi in Al-Qadir Trust case

ISLAMABAD (APP): An Accountability Court on Tuesday extended interim bail of Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf (PTI)'s Chairman Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi in Al-Qadir Trust case, a scam worth 190 million pounds.

The same court also granted interim bail to the PTI's head in toshakhana case and stopped the anti-graft watchdog from arresting him.

AC-1 Judge Muhammad Bashir heard the bail cases filed by ex-prime minister Imran Khan in cases initiated by National Accountability Bureau (NAB).

Deputy Prosecutor General NAB, Sardar Muzafar Abbasi prayed the court to dismiss the interim bail of Imran Khan as he had not appeared before the court despite the orders.

The PTI's chief also did not join the investigation, he said, adding that the accused was served notices five times but he appeared

only twice.

The NAB official said that the bureau had served four notices to Bushra Bibi but she did not appear against last three while the fourth notice was of this day.

He, however, told the court that no arrest warrants had been issued against Imran Khan's wife so far.

The prosecutor said that some record pertaining to the Al-Qadir Trust was also missing, adding that might be the beneficiary of the scam had taken the documents with him.

Imran Khan's lawyer, on the other hand, prayed the court to grant further time for arguments in the case, adding that his client had to appear in other courts as well in same day.

He said that the bureau had first time summoned Imran Khan and his wife simultaneously on same day in toshakhana case instead of Al-Qadir Trust matter.

## Govt making efforts to revive, strengthen country's economy: Baligh

LAHORE (INP): Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman has said that the government is making all out efforts to revive and strengthen the country's economy.

He said, "The government is committed to bring economic stability to the country."

This was stated by him while talking to President of Anjuman Tajran Khidmat Group, Hall Road, Babar Mehmood, who called on him at Governor House Lahore on Tuesday and discussed various issues including the country's economic situation.

Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that the business community actively participates in welfare works in addition to contributing to the country's economic development. He said that it is commendable that the business community has generously helped the flood victims and rebuilt the houses for the victims.

On the occasion, Governor Punjab presented a shield of appreciation to President Hall Road Babar Mehmood for constructing 300 houses in the flood affected areas of South Punjab.

## Country's development linked with Balochistan's uplift: Ghazala Gola

Independent Report

SIBI: Provincial President of Pakistan People's Party Women's Wing Balochistan, and former Member of the Provincial Assembly, Ghazala Gola has said that the country's development and prosperity are related to Balochistan.

The people of Balochistan are playing an active role in solving public problems by representing the people.

Talking to the delegation led by Vice President Zakir Jamot, on this occasion Deputy General Secretary of People's Labor Bureau Balochistan Muhammad Aslam Mastoi and senior leader of People's Party Usta Muhammad Abdul Ghaffar Mastoi were also present. The performance of the Bureau provided detailed information on the problems of the workers.

On this occasion, she said, "The construction and development of Balochistan, ending the deprivation of the people's feelings are among our priorities of the Pakistan People's Party. Actions are not hidden from anyone, the party blaring day and night is trying to serve the people and solve public

problems, she added.

Former President Sardar Asif Ali Zardari, Federal Foreign Minister, and Chairman of Pakistan People's Party, Bilawal Zardari positive's policies, Balochistan is moving towards development and prosperity. She further said that due to the leadership skills of the central and provincial leaders, the construction and development of Balochistan are successfully struggling for the prosperity of the people.

With the successful strategy of the People's Party, Balochistan is moving towards peace and prosperity, changing the standard of life of the people. Along with raising their voice at every forum, she said that Pakistan People's Party is striving for the welfare and development of the people across the country including Balochistan. She instructed the workers to take the message of the party to every nook and cranny and start preparations for the general elections. The workers will sweep the whole country including Balochistan with the power of people's vote and continue the people-friendly policies.

## PST calls strike to protest desecration of Holy Book in Sweden

HYDERABAD (APP): The Pakistan Sunni Tehreek has given a call to observe a shutter down strike on July 5 to protest and condemn the desecration of the Holy Book in Sweden.

The party's General Secretary Khalid Hassan Attari told a press conference here on Tuesday that the business community had been requested to keep their businesses shut.

He added that the strike would continue till 4 pm on July 5.

He said the PST would take out a protest rally as well.

Dr. Hamid Maqsood passes away

Independent Report

QUETTA: Dr. Hamid Maqsood passed away in Islamabad. He was father of Dr. Aamir Daud, Atif Ayub, Ahmed Ayub, Ayesha

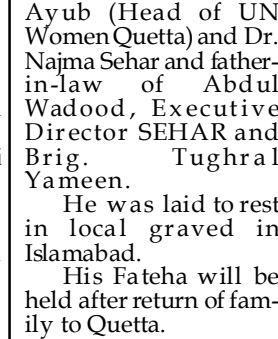


LAHORE: Jamat-e-Islami (JI) Chief, Siraj-ul-Haq addresses to media persons during press conference, at Mansoorah

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Ayub (Head of UN Women Quetta) and Dr. Najma Sehar and father-in-law of Abdul Wadood, Executive Director SEHAR and Brig. Tughral Yameen.

He was laid to rest in local graveyard in Islamabad.

His Fateha will be held after return of family to Quetta.

## Bilawal terms July 5 as Black Day in national history

KARACHI (APP): Chairman of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has termed July 5, 1977, as a black day in national history.

He said that this day will continue to remind us how a power-hungry dictator pushed the entire nation into the mire of extremism, terrorism, Kalashnikov and drug culture under the guise of religion, from which even after 46 years, we still could not get rid of them completely.

On July 5, 1977, the tin-pot dictator General Zia-ul-Haq seized power by unconstitutionally overthrowing the government of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, the first elected prime minister of Pakistan and the most popular leader, and deprived the citizens of their basic rights.

Since then, Pakistanians around the world observe the 5th of July as Black Day.

According to the statement issued by Media Cell Bilawal House, the Chairman of PPP further said in his message that dictator Zia is a culprit of the Constitution of Pakistan and the Pakistani nation.

He said that the way civil and human rights were violated during the dictatorship of General Zia and the way atrocities were committed on those who demanded the restoration of democracy, humanity will always be ashamed of such crimes.

Bilawal said that the nation is well aware of the fact that a handful of people who follow dictator Zia's thinking are still busy making conspiracies against the people's right to rule in their hunger for power, but failure is their destiny. "The era of dictators and puppets has become a thing of the past. Now there is only democracy in the present and future of Pakistan," he added.

The PPP Chairman saluted the Jiyalas (party workers) who were flogged, endured the hardships of imprisonment and embraced martyrdom for the sake of democracy during the Zia regime.

He also vowed that his party will continue struggling with the same determination and courage to fulfill the mission of safeguarding the unanimous Constitution of 1973 and the parliamentary system of democracy and establishing a society based on equality as given by Quaid-e-Awam Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, just like Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto was active and offered unmatched sacrifices throughout her life for this cause.

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The PPP Chairman saluted the Jiyalas (party workers) who were flogged, endured the hardships of imprisonment and embraced martyrdom for the sake of democracy during the Zia regime.

He also vowed that his party will continue struggling with the same determination and courage to fulfill the mission of safeguarding the unanimous Constitution of 1973 and the parliamentary system of democracy and establishing a society based on equality as given by Quaid-e-Awam Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, just like Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto was active and offered unmatched sacrifices throughout her life for this cause.

## Sikh community holds protest against Modi govt in front of UN Office

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Sikh community held a protest demonstration in front of United Nations Office in Geneva to highlight atrocities of the Modi government in India and release of political prisoners of the Sikh community. This protest is significant as the 53rd session of Human Rights Council is underway in UN Office in Geneva where human rights organizations and diplomats from around the world are participating.

According to information received here, the protesters were chanting slogans and carrying placards against the Modi government. Addressing the protesters, the speakers, who were part of the protest said: "Those who speak for the rights of the Sikh community in India and invoke the name of Khalistan are unconstitutionally and illegally imprisoned. The prisoners are not released even after the punishment given by the courts, which is a blatant violation of the Geneva Convention and international law. This is totally unconstitutional and illegal."

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## Green hydrogen to boost CPEC development

BEIJING (APP): China's investment in green energy in countries along the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has exceeded its investment in traditional fossil energy.

"BRI countries have rich wind, photovoltaic and hydropower resources, which makes green energy development an important direction in the future," said An Fengquan, Deputy Director General of International Cooperation Department of National Energy Administration of China (NEA).

Apart from building plants and facilities for clean-green energy production, expanding the application of green energy in the BRI programs should also be stressed.

Hydrogen produced with renewable energy sources, or green hydrogen, has emerged as a key energy to achieve net-zero emissions from heavy industry and transport.

When we mention hydrogen, most people first think of new energy vehicles, while it has a much wider range of applications, such as chemical, power generation and steelmaking.

Zhao Dong, general manager of China Petrochemical Corporation (Sinopec Group) suggested that green hydrogen can be developed coupling with the large-scale development of green electricity and be applied to refining and chemical industry in the next step. China Economic Net (CEN) reported.

"Energy enterprises

and chemical enterprises can be involved in BRI projects to promote green hydrogen production for the demand of industrial production.

The extra hydrogen can be used for the production of low-carbon fuels and chemicals such as green ammonia and green methane. Such efforts can push forward BRI green energy development," he said.

His viewpoint echoes Dr. Najma Memon, professor of Analytical Chemistry at University of Sindh, Pakistan.

"China is investing in most of the infrastructure in Pakistan, building roads and industrial zones, which local raw materials, including steel or concrete material used in it.

Clean fuels like green hydrogen can play a big role in producing raw materials." Najma Memon suggested, stating the importance of expanding the application scenarios of green energy during the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the flagship project of BRI.

"2023 marks the 10th anniversary of CPEC. Both countries should introduce green energy projects in the new era.

The inclusion of green hydrogen technology can be a value addition. Making the materials used in construction works through clean technology can avoid contaminating the local environment, as well as introducing the new concept of green technologies in the country," he added.



QUETTA: Muslim League (PML-Q) Provincial President, Dr. Shakeel Ahmed addresses to media persons during press conference

# Direct air flight between Kazakhstan- Pakistan to start from July 8: Envoy

ISLAMABAD (Online): Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan Yezhan Kistafin on Tuesday said that direct air flight operation between Kazakhstan and Pakistan would start from July 8 this month, which would increase economic, social and cultural integration of both countries.

Addressing a round table on 'Kazakhstan and Pakistan bilateral ties and way forward, he said a direct air flight between Almaty and Lahore would start on July 8.

The Ambassador of Kazakhstan said that direct air flights between the two countries were crucial for regional economic and trade integration in Kazakhstan and Pakistan.

He said that duration of the direct flight between the two countries would be 2 hours, which would pro-

vide mutual economic and trade relations and the possibilities of cooperation in the field of tourism would be brighter. The envoy said that after success of direct flight operations in these two cities, such air service would be started between other big cities including Islamabad and Karachi.

He said that just last week, there was a phone conversation between the President of Kazakhstan, Kassim Tokayev, and Prime Minister of Pakistan, Muhammad Shabbaz Sharif during which issues of mutual interest between the two countries were discussed.

The Ambassador said that the top leadership of both the countries was determined to strengthening and promoting of bilateral economic, trade and diplomatic relations.

He said that

Kazakhstan was currently a great destination for foreign investment which attracted \$28 billion FDI this year.

He said that there was a lot of potential in the ports of Gwadar and Karachi of Pakistan, through which Kazakhstan, including Central Asia, can be accessed to the markets of Europe and Africa.

Ambassador Yezhan Kistafin said that Kazakhstan had vast reserves of energy, gas and oil which Pakistan could take advantage of.

He said that Kazakhstan was currently the third largest exporter of wheat in the world, which had wide possibilities for cooperation with Pakistan.

Kazakhstan is an important member of the Eurasian Organization, which Pakistan can also benefit from, he said.



ISLAMABAD: Former MNA Raja Javed Ikhlas calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

# Nawaz to lead election campaign, PML-N not to forge electoral alliance: Mian Javed Latif

ISLAMABAD (Online): Federal minister Mian Javed Latif has said PML-N will not forge electoral alliance with any party in coming general election.

"No power can prevent Nawaz Sharif from coming to Pakistan. Nawaz Sharif will lead election campaign. PML-N will not forge electoral alliance with any political party in next general election. Seat to seat adjustment can be made. However any final decision will be made by Nawaz Sharif, he said this while addressing a press conference here Tuesday.

He sounded optimistic that PML-N would get two thirds majority in coming general election.

Nawaz Sharif is not evolving any plan while sitting in Dubai but he is striving to steer country out of economic quagmire.

Which is being named as Dubai plan it is this Nawaz Sharif who was expelled repeatedly is working for improvement in national economy while sitting in Dubai.

He remarked Nawaz Sharif is benefactor of Pakistan. There is clear difference between him and those involved in May 9 incidents. Nawaz Sharif eliminated terrorism from the country. He eliminated darkness and gave CPEC. It has become clear on the people only Nawaz Sharif can extricate the country from crisis.

He underlined now this narrative is being made that preparations are underway to give two thirds majority to Nawaz Sharif through rigging.

It is our demand that action be initiated against those who hatched con-

spiracy against flourishing Pakistan. One and a half month has passed but no case has been registered against the man who played central role in May 9 incident. I wonder why the judiciary has not taken notice of May 9 incident. Why the courts are saving the persons found responsible. Will military courts operate for the first time in the country. Judges gate of Supreme court are opened at present too for the master mind of May 9 incident. If action is not taken against the central facilitator of May 9 incidents then it will be against the norms of justice and a question mark on the role of institutions related to justice.

He warned if full truth is not spoken now and the state did not play its role then it will yield dire consequences.

# Beneficiaries of Benazir Nashonuma Program cross 770000 figure

ISLAMABAD (INP): The beneficiaries of Benazir Nashonuma Program including women and children being provided health and nutrition facilities under Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) have crossed 770000 figure.

As many as 38,2900 pregnant and lactating women (PLW) and 387400 children have been facilitated under the program till now.

These beneficiaries had been served through the network of over 488 Nashonuma Centers across the country, the official sources revealed adding that the Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) intervention of Benazir Nashonuma was designed in August 2020 to increase the uptake of Health and Nutrition services of its beneficiaries.

The primary objectives of the program were to prevent stunting in children under two years of age, improve weight gain of pregnant women during pregnancy, reduce anemia

and micronutrient deficiencies and prevent low birth weight.

World Food Programme (WFP) is the lead implementing partner for Benazir Nashonuma which aims at addressing stunting among pregnant and lactating women (PLW) and their children less than two years of age through the provision of additional cash of Rs 2,000 per quarter per PLW and boy child and PKR 2,500/- per quarter per girl child of BISP beneficiary families.

In return, mothers are required to attend regular antenatal health checks and awareness sessions during pregnancy, consume specialized nutritious food (SNF), and take their children for immunization and regular health checks.

According to the statistics, Pakistan's high rates of malnutrition (40.2 percent stunting, 28.9 percent underweight, and 17.7 percent wasting) are indicative of an ongoing child nutrition crisis.



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nizartarar had a meeting with the Turkish Ambassador Dr Mehmet Paçacı.

# AJK President flays desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden

ISLAMABAD (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry, while condemning the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden, has said that the incident has hurt the sentiments of Muslims around the globe.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, the AJK President demanded of the Swedish government to take stern action against the perpetrator involved in this heinous crime.

He said, although the European Union and the OIC have strongly condemned the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden, the international community should bear in mind the fact that such Islamophobic incidents, which target Muslims and insult our sacred values, cannot be allowed to happen in the guise of freedom of expression. "We strongly condemn this incident and demand the Swedish government to take stern action and punish the person who has brazenly committed the unpardonable crime.

reference of such incidents. He said that similar incidents have also happened in Paris and Denmark, which have hurt the sentiments of Muslims all over the world.

Sultan Mahmood said that no international law allows the spread of religious hatred. Peace and interfaith harmony, he said, could be achieved only by promoting tolerance, understanding and mutual cooperation.

He said, although the European Union and the OIC have strongly condemned the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden, the international community should bear in mind the fact that such Islamophobic incidents, which target Muslims and insult our sacred values, cannot be allowed to happen in the guise of freedom of expression. "We strongly condemn this incident and demand the Swedish government to take stern action and punish the person who has brazenly committed the unpardonable crime.



ISLAMABAD: Naib Ameer Jamat-e-Islami Mian Aslam, Tanveer Nowshahi leading a protest rally against Sweden at PIMS Hospital.

# FOSPAH conducts assessment to investigate treatment with women prisoners in Kot Lakhpat Jail

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Ombudsman for Protection of Women Against Harassment (FOSPAH) at Workplace, Ms. Fauzia Viqar, conducted an assessment to investigate the treatment of women prisoners in Central Jail Kot Lakhpat, Lahore. The Federal Ombudsman for Protection of Women Against Harassment (FOSPAH) at Workplace is an autonomous body dedicated to safeguarding the rights and dignity of women, said a press release on Tuesday.

The organization conducts investigations, issues orders, and imposes penalties for violations of laws against harassment and discrimination. The assessment aimed to identify any instances of harassment, mistreatment, or abuse faced by women prisoners, during their arrest, police custody, and imprisonment.

The Federal Ombudsman met with IG Police and IG Prisons,

Punjab to assess female arrest and detention procedures and conditions. IG Police apprised the Ombudsman of police mechanisms such as Women complaint centers, Tahaffuz Markaz and Protection Centres that provide assistance to female victims of violence, disabled and the transgendered persons.

IG Prisons provided comprehensive information about treatment and facilities for women prisoners including separate buildings (within the prison), dedicated female staff, living conditions, skills development, cameras only at the entrance and, the complaint handling mechanism which is centrally located at the IG office.

In her visit and meetings, Ms. Viqar found no evidence and received no reports of physical torture or sexual harassment by the Police or Prison staff.

She specifically interviewed 21 women prisoners arrested after the May

9 incidents to inquire about any kind of harassment. They denied the media reports of sexual abuse and negated any sexual or other kind of harassment by police or prison staff.

They however, highlighted issues related to arrests made by male police officers despite the presence of female police officers, unnecessary dragging during late night raids, police not presenting arrest warrants during arrests and restricted access to lawyers in prison.

They also reported derogatory remarks and questioning of women's political activities, which amounts to Gender stereotyping and insensitivity by police officials which is against constitutional provisions for women's full participation in public life.

Women prisoners expressed satisfaction with the conditions and facilities in prison. Specifically, those arrested after May 9th incidents had no complaints either of maltreatment.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Mian Javed Latif addressing a press conference at PID Media center.

# Over Rs 47 bln disbursed among 5.2m beneficiaries under Benazir Kafaalat

ISLAMABAD (APP): Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has so far disbursed over Rs 47 billion among over 5.2 million beneficiary women under Benazir Kafaalat.

The disbursement of the fourth quarterly tranche of Benazir Kafaalat for the financial year 2022-23 has again started after Eid-ul-Azha holidays through banks' retailers.

Under Benazir Kafaalat, 90 lakh registered beneficiary families are entitled to a quarterly installment of Rs 9,000 per household.

BISP has already released over rupees 81 billion to its partner banks, that is, Bank Alfalah and Habib Bank Limited (HBL) for disbursement among the beneficiaries through

their retail distribution network.

Along with Benazir Kafaalat, Benazir educational scholarships are also being given out to the children of registered families, however, 70 percent attendance in the school is mandatory to receive educational scholarships, said the spokesman of the programme.

In case of any complaint, beneficiaries can approach the nearest BISP Tehsil Offices or call on toll-free helpline number 080026477 of Benazir Income Support Program. The BISP spokesman reiterated that any messages from Benazir Income Support Program are sent only from 8171 and message from any other number should not be trusted.

# APHC call for strike on martyrdom anniversary of Burhan Wani in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD (APP): The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has called for complete shutdown in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir on July 08 (Saturday) on the 7th martyrdom anniversary of the prominent youth resistance leader, Burhan Muzaffar Wani who along with his colleagues sacrificed his life for the just cause of right to self-determination.

According to Kashmir Media Service, Burhan Wani along with two associates was martyred by Indian troops in a fake encounter in Kokernag area of Islamabad district on July 8, 2016.

During the period of mass uprising, 156 civilian protesters were martyred

and thousands injured by the troops, paramilitary and police personnel.

The APHC call has been supported by all pro-freedom leaders and organizations. The posters displayed by All Parties Hurriyat Conference, Nawjawan-e-Hurriyat Jammu Kashmir, Political Resistance Movement, Jammu and Kashmir Justice League Forum, Jammu and Kashmir Sadai Mazloom, Wareseen-e-Shuhada, Democratic Youth Forum, Jammu Kashmir Democratic Movement, Jammu Kashmir Peoples Resistance Party, Kashmir Resistance Movement, Kashmir Hurriyat Forum, Youth Democratic Political Movement, Jammu and Kashmir Tehreek-e-Azadi.



ISLAMABAD: Security personnel secures a vehicle carrying Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan arriving to appear in a court.

# 6th FIR lodged against Ahmadi community over sacrificing animal on Eid

ISLAMABAD (Online): Another case registered against Ahmadi community in Punjab on Tuesday for sacrificing animals on the occasion of Eid ul Azha.

First Information Report registered in Saikot's Qila Kalar Wala police station under section 295-A of the Pakistan penal code.

This comes despite a 2022 judgement of the Supreme Court, ruling that obstructing non-Muslims from practicing their religion within the confines of their place of worship was against the Constitution.

In the FIR, the complainant said that he was a resident of Daska and had travelled to Kot Agha on June 29 — the first day of Eidul Azha — in connection with communal sacrifice of animals.

He said that around 8:30am he saw that two members of the Ahmadi community were doing qurbani (sacrifice) on the

# PMD forecasts monsoon rains in various parts

ISLAMABAD (Online): Rain-wind/thundershower (with isolated heavy falls) is expected in Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Islamabad, Potohar region and upper Punjab. Hot and humid weather is expected elsewhere in the country during the next twelve hours.

Temperature of some major cities recorded this morning: Islamabad and Muzaffarabad twenty-four degree centigrade, Lahore and Peshawar twenty-eight, Quetta twenty-six.

street facing their haveli (mansion). He said that the Ahmadi community were forbidden from performing Islamic rituals and called for taking action against them.

Earlier, at least five similar FIRs were registered across Punjab against the Ahmadi community members for sacrificing animals on Eidul Azha. All five cases were registered under Section 298-C of the PPC, which elaborates on the penalty for persons of the Ahmadi group calling themselves Muslim or preaching or propagating their faith.

Two of the cases were registered at the Saddar Gojra police station in Toba Tek Singh, while one each was registered at the Saddar Shahkot police station in Nankana Sahib, Roshanwala police station in Faisalabad and Bad-ami Bagh police station in Lahore.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman PAC Noor Alam Khan chairing the committee meeting at Parliament House.



ISLAMABAD: A view of stagnant rain water at Fruit and Vegetable market.

# I'bad Police initiate measures to ensure peace during Muharram

ISLAMABAD: In preparation for the holy month of Muharram-ul-Haram, the Islamabad capital police have taken proactive measures to maintain peace and security in the federal capital.

Instructions in this regard have been issued to all Zone DPOs to hold meetings with the organizers of Imambargahs said a news release. On the other hand, an important meeting was held under the supervision of SSP Operations/ Investigation Malik Jameel Zafar, to assess the law and order situation, focusing on crime control and addressing the concerns related to professional criminals.

The meeting was attended by zonal DPOs, SDPOs and all concerned officers from police stations. The meeting aimed to evaluate the performance of all police stations and take necessary actions against professional criminals.

SSP Operations/Investigation directed officers to ensure that in future meetings, the performance of officers is assessed and no compromise is made in

dealing with criminals. Safeguarding the lives and property of citizens in the capital city is the foremost responsibility of Islamabad capital police. The cases of motorcycle and motor vehicle theft were discussed, and efforts were made to apprehend the culprits.

The investigation of the cases should be expedited, and the challan should be submitted to the courts without delay, he added.

He further said that, the cases should be thoroughly investigated and improvements should be made in the inspection of cases.

The officers were given instructions to make patrolling more effective and purposeful. If any area is left unattended in terms of patrolling, and an incident of criminal activities occurs there, the concerned officer of the police station will be held accountable, and immediate action will be taken against them.

Wednesday July 05, 2023

**Stop Islamophobia**

It is not impossible to distinguish between freedom of speech and malicious actions calculated to insult and offend. And it should be clear, especially to the Western world, that the desecration of the Holy Quran comes under the second category.

The appalling incident, where an Iraqi refugee burned a copy of the Holy Book outside a mosque in the Swedish capital, is not the first of its kind. Nor is it likely to be the last — unless Western nations go beyond the usual condemnation and pass and enforce strict laws to deter those whose hate-filled narrative against the world's 1.8bn Muslims continues to be fanned by the lethargy of governments.

A similar incident took place in Stockholm in January, when a politician from the far-right desecrated the Quran in front of the Turkish embassy — an act for which he received a mere rap on the knuckles when the Swedish prime minister described it as “deeply disrespectful”. Preceding this description was his assertion: “But what is legal is not necessarily appropriate.”

Perhaps it is the ‘legality’ of such atrocious actions — and not only in Sweden — that needs to be questioned. Following the recent incident, condemnation has poured in from all sides. The EU has termed it “an act provocation”, saying, “manifestations of racism, xenophobia and related intolerance have no place in Europe” — which, unfortunately, has hardly proved factual, as so many anti-Islam incidents in various European countries have demonstrated.

Sweden has voiced similar criticism of the latest episode, but added that the country had a “constitutionally protected right to freedom of assembly, expression and demonstration”.

The Pope was more to the point when he said, “Freedom of speech should never be used as a means to despise others and allowing that is rejected and condemned”. The 57-member OIC, meanwhile, has called for the application of international law “which clearly prohibits any advocacy of religious hatred”.

Europe will never forget the dark days of Hitler and World War II when six million Jews were sent to their death. Images and stories from that era are etched not only on the memory of the individuals who lived through those times but also on the soul of the generations that followed. In 2005, the UN designated Jan 27 as International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Several European countries have laws that criminalise Holocaust denial. The world today is going down a similar path of hate — against ethnic and religious communities, against minorities, against the ‘other’.

It was this venom spewed on the Muslim world that led the UN to designate March 15 as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia. Just as Europe, and countries outside it, seek to curb anti-Semitism, they should deploy all, including legal, means to stop the march of Islamophobia before it's too late.



Arifa Noor

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has pulled a rabbit out of the hat by successfully negotiating the IMF programme. The fear of default is over, say those who are in the know and those who know the economy (the two don't necessarily overlap much).

For once, the glory that is the prime minister's is not being contested by anyone; there are no hushed whispers or declamations of who worked on the matter behind the scenes despite the breaking news which came days earlier about the riyasat having decided to complete the programme.

The finance minister should also get some of the credit but it is hard to decide if he should get the credit for the success of the negotiations or the earlier eyeball-to-eyeball contest.

Moving on, if I actually had any grasp of economic affairs, I would hold forth — intelligently and poignantly — of our sad state of affairs where success has come to be defined as completing negotiations with the IMF (not even a completion of the programme but just the negotiations). But this is best left to those who understand the issues.

For the likes of ordinary hacks and commentators, it is easier to simply applaud and look forward to the new targets — or definitions of — success we have and will continue to set. From reimagining Pakistan to redefining success, we have it all covered.

But success it surely is because now the risk of default is over, and so is the uncertainty. Or so we are being told. And the uncertainty didn't simply refer to default but also politics. For why else would there be renewed talk about polls where even ministers in the ‘caretaker’ governments are now claiming they are here only to hold elections?

Indeed, the statements about the impending general elections are being delivered with an increased

quotient of certainty. So much so that they are said to be the main discussion point of the meeting of the PPP and PML-N chieftains in Dubai. If news reports are to be believed, from seat adjustment to public sentiment to much else, it was all discussed when the titans met in the Gulf.

Considering that both families had to fly to a third destination for this important discussion, it was surely more important than the economy and the IMF which Dar sahib and the prime minister have successfully handled, while staying put in Pakistan.

However, those in the know link the elections to our resounding success in having completed negotiations with the IMF. For as it is a short programme, which has to be followed by successful negotiations of the next, longer programme, elections have to be held, a government brought to power which will then take over from where Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has left the economy and talks with the IMF.

Seems logical enough. But to be honest, I never realised the uncertainty

over the elections was due to the IMF and kept mistakenly linking it to the undesired results of polling.

The latter situation may not witness much change in the coming days. For while there has been more than one sigh of relief at the IMF news, chances are it will bring little good news to the ones who have to exercise their right to vote. Obviously, they would have been worse off had the default occurred but this may not be consolation enough or a convincing enough argument to vote for the coalition in power.

As they struggle to pay bills of utilities and of food, they may not be grateful enough to realise that had default occurred, they wouldn't have had food available in the stores or fuel available for their cars or electricity.

And hence the confusion about the election. Even with the IMF, the people may still want a broader choice than PDM on the one hand and Raja Riaz and Jahangir Tareen-led stability on the other.

Such dangerous desires on the part of the

people may still be a cause for concern. And for this reason, whatever has so far been ensured through the power games has to be complemented by legalse.

But how much can the law achieve? Keep an individual out of elections? Or more? While elsewhere we have set lower and lower targets for what counts as success, in the political sphere, ambitions are sky-high; to ban not just an individual but also a party. For even Ziaul Haq couldn't manage this back in the big, bad days, which were so much worse than the unprecedented times of today.

This is more than the IMF deal and its benefits may just continue to feed the uncertainty surrounding us. And we may just have to wait till October to get some answers.

For whichever way we go — election and a ‘happily forever’ for PDM — or no election and a ‘happily forever’ for Shehbaz Sharif — it does not seem to lead to certainty any time soon. The IMF may not have provided an answer to our political questions either

way. Postscript: It is worth remembering the ‘stability’ experienced during the Zia or Musharraf period had more to do with the generosity of the West during those years than the abilities or the power exercised by these men themselves. Even authoritarianism requires deep pockets.

PPS: A journalist is missing. He is a journalist and he has been missing for nearly two months now. This is all that matters; his views, his professionalism or even his biases are irrelevant. Journalists can be good or bad, professional or unprofessional, but none of this justifies a disappearance.

Can the government pay attention to this issue? And perhaps the industry called the media? Imran Riaz's disappearance and the ensuing silence is the collective failure of our employers and press representatives. But eventually, history will only remember the government under the watch of which he disappeared. And it might be remembered for longer than the IMF negotiations. -- Courtesy Dawn

**May 9 and the cult of Imran Khan**

Ahsan Iqbal

On May 9, the militant cult-follower of a ‘political’ leader waged war against the state of Pakistan, violently attacking symbols of the state and dishonouring monuments put up in memory of our martyrs. The nation expects that the law will take its course and those responsible for these heinous acts will face the consequences of their actions through the due process of the law. As we all are recovering from the incidents of May 9, it is important to critically analyze the underlying causes behind the day's incidents and do some self-introspection as a state and society. We must ask how and why we allowed one individual — Mr Imran Khan — to put his own petty vested interests above the people and state of Pakistan. Imran Khan joined politics in the 1990s;

he was a cricketing celebrity/star at the time. But before 2018 he did not get a major electoral victory at the national level. What allowed Imran Khan to become a cult-leader in Pakistan?

The rise of Imran Khan cannot be explained without acknowledging the policies of the few segments of the previous military-judicial establishments. A group of people in the army and judiciary did not only provide him political and financial support but also helped him with media management. They cleared the way for him by ousting Mr Nawaz Sharif from the arena.

From 2011 onward, ‘Project Imran Khan’ bombarded people with two messages. One, everyone except Imran Khan is corrupt; and two Imran Khan is a messiah and an angelic honest leader. Imran received positive press while his political rivals were maligned through concerted media campaigns. Hate was injected in people's minds against old parties and the path to victory was created for Imran Khan. The results of GE 2018 were manipulated and rigged in favour of Imran Khan to

bring him into power. In short, with the help of his benefactors in the military and judicial establishments and with the support of a large section of Pakistani media, Imran Khan became a ruthless cult-leader.

What does it mean to be a cult-leader? A cult of personality arises when a leader is represented as larger-than-life through uncritical praise and flattery. Propaganda is a common vehicle used to help create personality cults. Leaders are often depicted as super-human, courageous, wise, and incapable of error. If a leader is viewed as super-human, it is less likely followers will criticize or question his policies or challenge his power.

It is not surprising to see many educated followers of Imran Khan blindly follow and defend him, no matter how ridiculous, contradictory or irrational it is. No matter what Imran Khan does, his core support base tends to justify and romanticize his every action. In other words, it does not matter what policy position Imran Khan takes; his cult-followers will blindly follow him. Historically, this is not new in Pakistan. Religious-spiritual leaders

tend to have a cult-following in Pakistan but what makes Imran Khan extremely threatening for pluralistic parliamentary democracy is his political agenda of neo-fascism and totalitarianism in Pakistan.

I would like to outline six salient features of Imran Khan's cult-politics which stand in contradiction to constitutional democratic rule. One, Imran Khan has projected himself as a cult of a redemptive, ‘infallible’ leader who never admits his mistakes. We as human beings are prone to making mistakes. What makes us strong and courageous is our ability to accept our mistakes and take responsibility for our actions. For example, Mr Nawaz Sharif and the late Ms Benazir Bhutto publicly acknowledged their mistakes of the past when they signed the Charter of Democracy (COD), which has allowed Pakistan to move forward as a parliamentary democracy.

If Imran Khan was serious about rule of law and democracy then after his ouster from the PM Office, he should have publicly apologized to those who were politically victimized and imprisoned during his

term. On the contrary, whenever he is confronted on this issue, he does not even acknowledge that anyone was politically victimized during his term. In other words, he never admits his mistakes because he is a cult-leader who is solely motivated by narcissism.

Two, loyalty to Imran Khan is paramount and more important than competence. Imran Khan cannot stop talking about ‘meritocracy’ when it comes to critiquing his political rivals. But he totally disregarded merit in his own appointments. For example, he nominated one of the least qualified MPAs in the Punjab Assembly as chief minister; the same was true in the case of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Imran Khan wants absolute control, and he appoints the least competent individuals so he can dictate them. His kitchen cabinet was full of such sycophants.

Three, to undermine his political opponents, Imran Khan endorses myths, conspiracy theories and promotes lies. Imran concocted the conspiracy theory of ‘imported government’ after his ouster from the PM Office. First, he blamed the US for his

ouster and then he started blaming others. Therefore, May 9 cannot be seen as a spontaneous reaction but as an inevitable outcome of the neo-fascist cult politics of Pakistan. Therefore, the primary contradiction of Pakistan's politics is the fight against the neo-fascist cult-politics of Imran Khan versus the multi-party parliamentary democracy in Pakistan. History is taking note of those who are still protecting the neo-fascist cult-politics of Imran Khan versus those who are putting up a resistance against neo-fascist politics of Imran Khan to protect the pluralist character of Pakistani politics.

Imran didn't only attack this multi-party pluralist democratic system but also attacked the foundation of Pakistan by attacking the country's military installations and those who sacrificed lives for this country. But as a nation we came together after May 9 because Imran Khan grossly overestimated the power of his cult-following. This larger-than-life syndrome has destroyed many in the history and we are witnessing another episode before our eyes. -- Courtesy TheNews

**Post-Fund deal**

Rashid Amjad

The euphoria that greeted the IMF Staff-Level Agreement on a new nine-month Stand-by Arrangement (SBA) of \$3 billion was understandable. The economy was facing near-certain default and was in the midst of a deep slump, with little or no growth last financial year.

This was accompanied by unprecedented inflation of 35 per cent, causing the IMF to insist on hiking interest rates further to an all-time high of 22pc — the highest in living memory. Poverty levels have soared and left five million workers actively seeking and not finding jobs.

That it was a self-inflicted wound in large part was brought home when the prime minister rightly took credit for the last-minute agreement as the head of the economic team that had failed to achieve this over six months — mainly due to his misplaced confidence — sat next to him. Indeed, the economy overall has been very poorly managed over the last year.

The first thing to note about the IMF SBA is that only the first tranche of \$1.1bn will come in later this month after the agreement is approved by the IMF Board. The second and third tranches will only be forthcoming at three-month intervals after a joint review and the IMF's go-ahead.

So, even if the threat of default has eased temporarily and it should open flows from multilaterals and friendly countries of an

other \$5bn to \$6bn, Pakistan's troubles are far from over.

The country faces an overall foreign exchange financing gap of near \$24bn this year. This makes it imperative that this SBA must not end halfway as the last and many before have done. Critically, first and foremost, the IMF will examine in three months' time whether we have fully removed existing administered import controls and stopped our habitual fiddling with the exchange rate.

Even in a slightly improved foreign exchange reserve position, this is a very challenging task and involves some difficult choices. If we go through this policy change as agreed, we will end up with an unaffordably high exchange rate, despite its current drop, to balance out the rising import demand that will follow in the new import regime in the face of falling export earnings and remittances.

To stem the rising tide of imports, the IMF agreement requires us to impose very tight demand suppression measures. These include continuing with a high interest rate regime and implementing steep increases in tax rates — as announced in the budget — on high-income earners and higher sales tax on many goods, together with deep cuts in development expenditure.

These steps, if fully implemented, will bring the fiscal deficit to a more prudent 4pc. However, these strong stabilisation measures will also mean continuing with very little or no economic growth, rising unemployment and further pressure on rising prices.

But will this tightening of aggregate demand suppress import demand sufficiently to allow the demand-driven exchange rate to fluctuate within an affordable band, one that does not result in such high import prices that inflation

goes through the roof? My own assessment is that these measures will not be enough.

If we really wish to ensure that the IMF deal holds, what is required is for the large banks and major importers (in all sectors) to acknowledge the harsh macroeconomic realities in which they must operate and adjust their requirements accordingly — rather than always maximising narrow self-interest as they are wont to do.

What the country needs is a ‘Charter of the Economy’ endorsed by the private sector (or its representative bodies) that clearly spells out the policy framework required to increase its competitiveness and exports without the usual wish list of more protection and unaffordable subsidies.

The troubling question on everyone's minds is whether the IMF deal will break the back of this unprecedented, entrenched inflation. Given that the current price spiral is in large part driven by cost-plus pricing by sellers to protect their incomes, it will take time for inflation to come down. This will require that direct income support for the poorest households be suitably increased.

The real task, however, of carrying through far-reaching structural reforms to ensure sustainable growth will fall on the new government that will take over in November this year. They should start preparing for how to successfully conclude the current IMF deal and agree on the contours of the next IMF programme, which we will in all probability still need.

For this, we require an economic team in both the interim and new government with professional competence, vigilance and leadership to maintain confidence of financial markets. Hopefully the selectors will find them! -- Courtesy Dawn

**Low growth**

Javid Husain

The most important task facing Pakistan's economic policymakers is to realise the goal of a high rate of economic growth on a sustainable basis. Unfortunately, it is a task in which successive governments have failed in the relatively recent past. For instance, in 2007-08, which was the last year of Pervez Musharraf's military rule, even a low GDP growth rate of 4.4 per cent resulted in an unsustainably high level of current account deficit of \$14bn or 6.9 pc of GDP. The difficult economic situation forced the succeeding PPP government to apply brakes on the GDP growth rate to lower the current account deficit and balance Pakistan's external account.

By 2010-11, the current account deficit turned into a marginal surplus of 0.1pc of GDP but the GDP growth rate had to be slashed to 3.2pc which was barely sufficient to take care of the growth in population. The PPP government in the last year of its rule (2012-13) kept the current account deficit at the manageable level of 1pc of GDP but by keeping the GDP growth rate at the low level of 3.9pc. The goal of a high GDP growth rate (7pc or above) combined with the current account surplus or at least a manageable level of current account deficit remained elusive.

During its tenure from 2013 to 2018, the

performance of the PML-N government from this point of view was only marginally better than its predecessor. It was finally able to raise the GDP growth rate to 6.1pc by 2017-18 but by paying a heavy price in the form of an unsustainably high level of current account deficit amounting to \$19.2bn. The PTI government during its tenure from 2018-22 couldn't do better. After recording low GDP growth rates in the initial years of its tenure, it succeeded in raising the GDP growth rate to 6.1pc in 2021-22 but at the cost of an unsustainably high current account deficit of \$17.5bn.

The present PDM government, therefore, had to go through the familiar exercise of slashing the GDP growth rate, estimated to be about 0.3pc in 2022-23, to drastically lower the current account deficit which declined to \$3.3bn in the first ten months of 2022-23 as against \$13.7bn in the corresponding period a year earlier. Thus, the country, despite changes in government, unfortunately remains stuck on the path of a low GDP growth rate so as to maintain a sustainable balance in its external account.

The fundamental cause of Pakistan's low economic growth rate and persistent current account deficits is its low national saving rate which translates into low national investment and GDP growth rates. Consequently, any attempt by the government to raise the national investment rate for accelerating economic growth results in a current account deficit which, as any student of economics knows, is equivalent to national investments minus national savings. The country then needs capital inflows in the form of loans or for-

eign assistance from bilateral and multilateral sources to finance the current account deficit or the gap between national investments and national savings.

The only way to balance our external account while maintaining a high growth rate of the economy is to raise our currently low national saving rate of about 12pc to at least 25pc of GDP or even higher so that our national savings are sufficient to finance a high rate of national investment needed for accelerating our GDP growth rate. This effort should be combined with economic policies designed to promote exports and import substitution. This should not be an impossible task. After all, in our region the national saving rates of Bangladesh and India are well above 30pc of GDP. China's national saving rate exceeds 45pc of GDP.

The main reason for Pakistan's chronically low national saving rate and the consequent slow economic growth and huge current account deficits is the addiction to conspicuous consumption of our decadent elite consisting of the top echelons of its civil and military bureaucracy, political leadership, feudal landlords, professionals, and business community. Until they mend their ways and adopt austerity as their motto or a strong and stable government forces this through appropriate economic, financial, and administrative measures, Pakistan will remain stuck on the path of slow economic growth while lurching from one economic crisis to another. The latest budget presented by the government could have done more to embody the strong and far-reaching measures needed to push the country in the right direction. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Governor KP directs transparency, merit in appointments of VCs

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali on Tuesday stressed following a policy of merit and transparency in appointments of Vice Chancellors (VCs) in public sector universities and said that educational qualifications and administrative capabilities should be considered minutely before giving them responsibilities.

He expressed these views while chairing a meeting held to discuss matters of appointing vice-chancellors in universities.

The meeting was also attended by caretaker ministers including Barrister Feroz Jamal Kakakhel, Justice (rt) Irshad Qaisar, Hamid Shah, Chief Secretary, Nadeem Aslam, Secretary Law and Secretary Higher Education.

The meeting discussed the educational, administrative and financial problems of universities due to the delay in appointing permanent vice-chancellors. Participants of the meeting also discussed appointments of vice-chancellors in newly established universities including Shringal and Taimargara and various problems faced by these varsities.

The meeting was briefed by Chief Secretary, Higher Education Secretary about appointments of vice-chancellors in public sector universities. The meeting concurred to appoint vice-chancellors at the earliest following policy of merit and transparency.

Chairing the meeting, Governor directed that appointments should be made abiding by policy of merit and transparency and search committee must be informed about any

complaints. He said that universities should be provided all the needed facilities and pay increases of staff should also be considered.

He urged vice-chancellors and faculty members to jointly work to further increase the educational standard of these institutions besides introducing research innovations to enhance the capacity of students and enable them to meet the challenges of the contemporary world.

KP Governor said that young generation is our asset and their venturing into new fields of technologies would directly impact progress and development of our country.

He that advancement into new education field would not only benefit our youth but would also help strengthen the country's economy.



PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali presides over the high level meeting regarding appointment of Vice Chancellors of Public Sector universities.

## Naqvi conducts comprehensive inspection of Jinnah hospital

### CM also inaugurates tracking system, e-challan app for Punjab HPP

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi paid a lengthy three-hour visit to Jinnah Hospital today. Expressing deep dismay over the deteriorating condition of the hospital, he immediately ordered the replacement of the medical superintendent and sought a reply from the principal of Jinnah Hospital within three days. Taking strict notice of the absence of a senior professor at Jinnah Hospital, Mohsin Naqvi promptly ordered an inquiry.

Furthermore, the contract of the parking lot contractor was revoked due to overcharging, and the contract has been

reassigned to Lahore Parking Company. Patients voiced their concerns directly to Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi, citing issues such as peeling paint on the walls and ceilings, water accumulation in the basement, unavailability of free medications and medical tests, and the presence of bed bugs and cockroaches on the floors and beds. They had to fetch urine bags and drip sets from outside the hospital. Patients also shared their frustration about being compelled to undergo tests exclusively at a specific laboratory. The Medical Superintendent Dr Amjad Mehmood failed to provide

satisfactory answers regarding the shortage of medicines and reliance on private labs for tests. Most of the hospital's air conditioners were either non-functional or in poor condition, resulting in discomfort for patients confined to the wards, who were already suffering from the suffocating hot weather conditions. A female patient expressed her plight to the chief minister, stating that there was no drinking water available, and she had to leave the premises to quench her thirst. Wood scraps were found piled up in the corridors and rooms, prompting Mohsin Naqvi to issue an immediate order for their removal and storage.

## Sharjeel vehemently condemns desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Minister for Information Sharjeel Inam Memon while vehemently condemning the desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden, has said that the people around the world have condemned the incident regardless of their religion and termed it a heinous act.

Addressing a press conference here on Tuesday, he regretted that the load-shedding of electricity was continue in rural Sindh and the period of electricity load-shedding in the metropolis had also been increased.

The Provincial Information Minister urged the Prime Minister Mohammed Shahbaz Sharif to take notice of the load-shedding to provide relief to the people of the Sindh province.

He said that the people were in difficulty due to the non-availability of the electricity.

Speaking on allegations of Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), Sharjeel Memon said that JI had been busy in fake propaganda against the Sindh government and Pakistan People's Party for a few days.

## ANF seizes 97.133 kg drugs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) Pakistan seized 97.133 kg drugs, 270 liters sulphuric acid, 50 kg caustic soda and 15 kg suspected powder worth US\$ 3.181 million internationally.

According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman, the force arrested 18 persons including two women and impounded six vehicles while conducting 13 counter narcotics operations throughout the country during last week.

The seized drugs comprised three-kg heroin, 82.346 kg hashish, 11.783 kg methamphetamine (Ice) and four grams weed.

## BISP to utilize mobile registration vans from next month: Minister

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety and Central Information Secretary of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Faisal Karim Kundi has said that mobile registration vans would be utilized from next month to facilitate and register women hailing from far-flung areas for the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP).

He said BISP was a non-political program which was underway for the welfare of the poor voters of every party in a transparent manner.

He expressed these views while addressing an open court at BISP Center to address issues of the people of Daraban, Darazinda and adjacent areas.

Faisal Karim Kundi said that open court was meant to resolve citizens' problems at their doorstep.

He said that the total population of the Daraban Tehsil was about 1,25,000 which included 17500 BISP beneficiaries.

He informed that about 160 million amount

after every three months among them.

He added that the stipend for children of cardholders had been increased and added that amount was also being provided for college and university students to enable children of the poor to pursue higher education as well. He added 11,000 cardholders were given Rs25000 each during the flood in Daraban last year.

He said that 85 percent of the genuinely deserving people were benefiting and if this program was not there then who would ask the poor people of Daraban and Kulachi Tehsils.

He said more incentives would be given to the deserving people of this program.

He said that Daraban, Kalachi and Darazinda were the backward Tehsils of Dera Ismail Khan and the BISP office would be set up there as government land was provided.

If an application was given for a device for his convenience then Bank Al Falah could provide a device to each union council so that people.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman presenting souvenir to Vice Chancellor of Lahore College for Women University Professor Dr. Bushra Mirza during a farewell call at Governor House Lahore.

## SM Tanveer says: No penalty will be imposed for non-transfer of vehicle ownership within 2 months

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Caretaker Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce SM Tanveer held a meeting with the Car Federation's delegation led by its President Prince Salim here at Civil Secretariat on Tuesday.

The delegation informed the minister about the complexities of the biometric system for vehicle registration, issuance of registration cards and number plates, and other issues.

During the meeting, a formula was devised in consultation with the Car Federation regarding the biometric system. According to the formula, no penalty will be imposed for non-transfer of vehicle ownership within the first two months after biometric registration, while a penalty will be imposed if ownership transfer is not completed within the next two months. If the process is still not completed after

four months, biometric registration will be required again. This formula, agreed upon in consultation with representatives of the Car Federation, will be presented before the cabinet for approval.

Provincial Minister SM Tanveer stated that he would present the agreed formula to the cabinet to streamline the biometric system for vehicle registration.

The matter of implementing registration cards and number plates for vehicles would also be resolved soon. He assured that the legitimate issues of the Car Federation will be addressed effectively. SM Tanveer added that simplifying the biometric system for vehicle registration will generate an additional monthly revenue of 2 to 3 billion rupees for Punjab. The head of the delegation expressed his appreciation for SM Tanveer in resolving their longstanding issues.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori Call on by Delegation of Tanzeem-e-Azadari at Governor House.

## CM Sindh says: Water sports facilities to be developed at Guddu, Sukkur, Kotri barrages

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and Yamaha Senior General Manager for Central Asia & Middle East Yoshiyuki ITO discussed developing water sports facilities at different barrages and lakes of the province, including launching a ferry service from Do-Darya to Port.

The Chief Minister said that there was a great scope to develop water sports facilities at Keenjhar, Guddu, Sukkur, and Kotri Barrages in collaboration with Yamaha Pakistan.

These facilities could be established through the private sector.

The visiting Yamaha representatives told the Chief Minister that a ferry service could be established from Do-Darya to Port Qasim for transport facilities and recreation. He said that

their WaveRunners were the best sports.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Sindh, Syed Murad Ali Shah met the 36 athletes of Sindh who participated in the Berlin Special Olympics here on Tuesday.

According to the spokesman of the Sindh Chief Minister, the players of the Special Olympics were dressed in green shirts.

Chief Minister Sindh met the athletes of the Special Olympics by going to their seats and praising their performance in Special Olympics.

The Athletes' delegation was headed by Special Olympics coach Iram, Qamar and Benish Javed.

Speaking on this occasion, Chief Minister said that necessary steps will be taken for the promotion of Special Olympics athletes.



PESHAWAR: Ehsas Welfare organization and All Civil Societies take part in a protest demonstration in front of Press Club against the burning of Holy Quran outside a Stockholm Mosque.

## Decision made to form task force to prevent milk adulteration

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab government has decided to form a task force comprising the relevant departments to prevent milk adulteration. Under this project Lahore will be made a model district free of adulteration in the next 3 years. These decisions were taken in a meeting chaired by the Caretaker Minister for Livestock and Dairy Development Ibrahim Hasan Murad, here on Tuesday. Secretary Livestock Punjab Masood Anwar, Director General Punjab Food Authority (PFA) Raja Jahangir Anwar also attended the meeting.

The proposed task force will examine the source of supply of milk sold by the milk vendors and will probe whether the milk conforms to hygiene norms. Caretaker Livestock and Dairy Development Minister

Ibrahim Hasan Murad directed representatives of the district administration, police, livestock, food authority, veterinary experts and other relevant departments should be included in the task force.

He lamented that some unscrupulous elements are involved in the nefarious business of manufacturing unhealthy milk. "Such elements will be eradicated", he pledged.

Ibrahim Murad said that after the success of the Lahore model, the scope of organized campaign against adulterated milk will be spread throughout Punjab. The Minister directed that awareness among the citizens about adulterated milk will be increased. It was also decided in the meeting that testing strips should be prepared with the help of experts.

## Chinese CG calls on CM Punjab

LAHORE (Online): Chinese Consul General Zhao Shiren called on caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi at his office to discuss ways to enhance cooperation.

The focus of their discussion centered on the fields of agriculture, livestock, and information technology, with both expressing their commitment to further promote bilateral ties.

They agreed to strengthen collaboration in various areas, with China offering its support by providing high-quality cotton and rice seeds to Punjab. Chinese experts will also be involved in cotton research and mechanization efforts.

Additionally, the CM offered to facilitate meat exports from Punjab to China, and the Consul General assured cooperation in issuing Halal Meat Certification for Punjab. Recognizing China's expertise in modern cattle farming, it was agreed to leverage their experience in this domain. The Chinese Consulate in Lahore will arrange the teaching of the Chinese language to the jawans of the Special Protection Unit (SPU). The caretaker CM expressed his appreciation for China's collaboration in agriculture, livestock, IT, and other sectors.

## Kundi condoles of demise of Liaqat Shabab

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday expressed his condolence over the sad demise of Liaqat Shabab Division President Liaqat Shabab.

In a condolence message, the state minister said the death of Liaqat Shabab was very tragic.

He said the party and social services of the deceased were commendable.

Faisal Kundi, who is also the Central Information Secretary of the PPP, said "The PPP was deprived of a hard worker and leader with the death of Liaqat Shabab." The services of Liaqat Shabab for the party would be remembered for a long, he said.

He said the party workers not only from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but from across the country were saddened by the death of Liaqat Shabab.

He prayed to the Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear this loss with fortitude.



LAHORE: Ruet-e-Hilal Committee Chairman, Maulana AbdulKhabeer Azad addresses to media persons during press conference, at Lahore press club

## CBS test facility available at RHC for dengue diagnosis: Jamal

RAWALPINDI (APP): Caretaker Provincial Minister for Primary Health Dr Jamal Nasir on Tuesday said that the Complete Blood Count (CBC) test facility had been provided in Rural Health Centers (RHC) for dengue diagnosis.

Presiding over a meeting of the Provincial dengue committee, he said that the healthcare commission should play a role in improving dengue reporting from private hospitals. The health minister directed the adoption of arrangements for the drainage of stagnant rainwater as accumulated rainwater was a leading

cause of dengue breeding. In addition, Dr Jamal directed the officials to monitor the dengue teams regularly and update data on dashboards regularly.

He said anti-dengue activities should be continued throughout the year so that people can be protected from it through preventative measures. Meanwhile, the provincial dengue committee had expressed concern over increasing dengue cases in Multan and issued instructions to ascertain the reasons. The committee directed all the concerned departments to remain alert to cope with the increasing number of dengue.



GILGIT: A view of wreckage of a vehicle after plunging into deep near Nasirabad check post resulting 2 person died and 8 persons injured.

## First post-Hajj flight lands in Multan

MULTAN (APP): The first post-Hajj Flight No. SV3800 carrying around 399 pilgrims from Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, reached Multan International Airport here Tuesday.

PML-N lawmaker, Ahmad Hussain Dehar, Director Hajj Rehan Khokhar, received the pilgrims with a warm welcome. They put garlands of flowers on them turn by turn upon their arrival, requesting to pray for peace and prosperity in the country.

## Father guns down two daughters in the name of honor in Kasur

KASUR (Online): Father has murdered his two daughters in the name of honor in a village at district Kasur. The incident took place in village Havelli Nathowali wherein the accused Saeed gunned down his two daughters Nadia and Alishba in the name of honor. Police said the accused fled the scene after murdering his daughters. Case has been registered against the accused and Police have started searching him.



MULTAN: MNA, Ahmed Hussain Dehar and Director Hajj Rehan Abbas Khokhar receives the pilgrims as the First Hajj flight landed after Hajj at Multan International Airport.

## CS Sindh assures starting devt work in journalists' housing schemes

KARACHI (APP): Chief Secretary Sindh, Dr Muhammad Sohail Rajput on Tuesday assured starting development works in Journalist Colony Hawk's Bay and New Malir Housing Scheme Block 12 at the earliest.

The CS Sindh extended the assurance to President Karachi Press Club Saeed Sarbazi and Secretary KPC Shoaib Ahmed who held a meeting with the CS Sindh on issues of the housing society of Karachi Press Club, said a handout issued here.

directed deputy commissioner Kiamari to immediately start the demarcation of Lyari Development Authority Block 68 and hand over full possession of the land to the Karachi Press Club.

President KPC Saeed Sarbazi briefed the CS Sindh about matters of demarcation of Lyari Development Authority Hawk's Bay Block 68, development work in Block 3A and 3A-1, the commencement of development work for resettlement of allottees of Journalist Colony of Malir.

## Governor unveils Rs.75 commemorative banknote to mark 75 SBP years

KARACHI (INP): Governor State Bank of Pakistan, Jameel Ahmad, on Tuesday, unveiled a commemorative banknote to mark the 75 years of the establishment of SBP in a ceremony held here at the SBP Museum.

The Rs 75 commemorative banknote is predominantly blue which has been chosen to impart a sense of stability associated with a central bank, said a statement issued here adding that a distinctive feature of the banknote was the inclusion of a stylised sketch of the State Bank building by the renowned calligrapher and artist, Syed Sadequain Ahmed Naqvi, which shares space with the traditional portrait of the Quaid on the front of the banknote.

The reverse of the banknote is dedicated to the SBP's drive of 'Banking on Equality', represented on the banknote by the portrait of Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah.

The reverse also highlights Pakistan's national commitment to address climate change through the depiction of alternative and sustainable energy sources, including wind turbines and solar panels.

The central bank governor, speaking at the occasion, highlighted the achievements of SBP specifically focusing on its engagement with commercial banks regarding supervision and developments therein over the years. He also highlighted the initiatives of the SBP in recent years, with special mention of micro-payment gateway Raast, Roshan Digital Accounts for overseas Pakistanis, encouragement and facilitation of commercial banks for providing digital banking solutions, and development of inclusive policies for different segments of the society including women, youth and agriculturists.

The Governor also spoke about the Strategic

Plan of SBP 'Vision 2028' and its key areas including bringing inflation to the target level in the medium term, promoting fairness in the banking system, propagating gender-inclusive policies, encouraging green financing, providing a conducive environment for Shariah-compliant banking in line with the directives of the Federal Shariah Court, and transforming the SBP into a high-tech, people-centric institution.

He expressed hope that the whole banking industry would work with the SBP in realising the goals. He also appreciated the hard work put into the SBP commemorative banknote, and congratulated the team members on the successful launch of the banknote.

Addressing the ceremony Deputy Governor SBP Sima Kamil, discussed the positive consequences of women's participation in the financial sphere.

## FBR, Inland revenue recovers sales tax evasion worth billions of rupees

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Directorate of Intelligence and Investigation (Inland Revenue) Lahore has detected sales tax evasion worth billions of rupees by a reputed company.

The company had issued illegal credit notes of huge amounts in Annexure-C of the sales tax returns without corresponding debit notes from the buyers, said a press release issued here on Tuesday.

In this way, the company suppressed output tax to reduce its sales tax liability for the tax periods in which illegal credit notes were issued

and thus deprived the national exchequer from due tax revenue.

The team of Directorate gathered information meticulously without disturbing the business activity of the company and initiated proceedings under section 38 of the Sales Tax Act, 1990 and retrieved the record and documents from the business premises.

Thereafter, the company management agreed to deposit the amount of sales tax involved in the credit note issued/claimed in the return of March 2023 along with default surcharge.



LAHORE: President of Anjuman Tajran Khidmat Group, Hall Road, Babar Mehmood, called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman at Governor House.

## Govt is committed to bring economic stability to the country: Baligh

Independent Report LAHORE: President of Anjuman Tajran Khidmat Group, Hall Road, Babar Mehmood, called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman at Governor House Lahore, here today. Various issues including the country's economic situation were discussed in the meeting.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that the government is committed to bring economic stability to the country.

He said that the government is making efforts to revive and strengthen the country's economy. He said the

business community actively participates in welfare works in addition to contributing to the country's economic development. Governor Punjab said that it is commendable that the business community has generously helped the flood victims and rebuilt the houses for the victims. On this occasion, Governor Punjab presented a shield of appreciation to President Hall Road Babar Mehmood for constructing 300 houses in the flood affected areas of South Punjab. Governor Punjab appreciated the efforts made by him and the business community for the rehabilitation of the flood victims.



KARACHI: Governor State Bank of Pakistan Jameel Ahmad inauguration revealing the new banknote of Seventy Five Rupees during celebrating 75 years of SBP Establishment during ceremony at State Bank.

## BoAJK to practice latest banking services on IBP-set parameters

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): State-run Bank of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (BoAJK), in collaboration with the Institute of Bankers Pakistan, has agreed in principle on measures for practising modern banking services, further improvement in banking strategy including staff training and professional capacity building.

A decision was taken to promote cooperation in a meeting between Khawar Saeed, BAJK President/CEO and Mansur-ur-Rahman, Institute of Bankers Pakistan (IBP) Chief Executive Officer in

Karachi late Monday. Khawlah Usman, Director of IBP Marketing & Sales and other executives were also present on the occasion. In the meeting, the President BAJK informed about the steps taken for the progress of the institution.

Strategies were also considered for training and professional development of the staff including the staff of head office and field offices while the examination procedure for various levels of staff, the appointment and training of Management Trainee Officers (MTOs) in future was also discussed.

## China to restrict exports of chipmaking materials

BEIJING (Online): China will control exports of some metals widely used in the semiconductor industry, its commerce ministry announced on Monday, the latest salvo in an escalating war over access to high-tech microchips between Beijing and the United States.

The controls, which China said were aimed at protecting national security and interests, will require exporters to seek permission to ship some gallium and germanium products.

The move to manage exports of the rare elements that Beijing classifies as strategic, comes as

Washington mulls new restrictions on the shipment of high-tech microchips to China, according to media reports.

The United States and the Netherlands are also set to deliver a one-two punch to China's chipmakers this summer by further restricting sales of chipmaking equipment, part of efforts to prevent their technology from being used to strengthen China's military.

China's controls, to take effect from August 1, will apply to eight gallium-related products: gallium antimonide, gallium arsenide, gallium metal, gallium nitride.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce, Syed Naveed Qamar calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## 5G technology set to revolutionize connectivity, business concepts 5G

ISLAMABAD (APP): The commercial usage of 5G technology (the 5th Generation Mobile Network) would herald a new era of seamless connectivity, empowering individuals and propelling industries towards a future of untapped potential.

With its transformative capabilities, the 5G is set to revolutionize the way people connect, while simultaneously ushering in a wave of extraordinary business opportunities, particularly in the realms of the Internet of Things (IoT), sensing and advanced manufacturing.

As the fifth-generation cellular network takes centre stage, its ability to connect people better than ever before opens up a world of possibilities.

With lightning-fast speeds and reduced latency, individuals will experience seamless streaming, instant downloads, and real-time interactions, transforming the way they communicate, work, and entertain themselves.

Industries are set to benefit immensely from the targeted support that 5G brings to industrial needs. The Internet of Things (IoT), which connects an ever-expanding network of devices, will flourish under 5G's enhanced capacity, reliability, and low latency.

This will enable industries to harness data-driven insights, optimize operations, and create intelligent, interconnected systems that drive efficiency and innovation.

Sensing technologies, utilized in fields such as environmental monitoring,

healthcare, and smart cities, will also witness a significant boost from 5G.

With its high-speed connectivity and ability to handle vast amounts of data, 5G facilitates real-time data collection, analysis, and decision-making, enabling timely and informed actions to address critical challenges and improve the quality of life.

Sabrina Meng, Huawei's Rotating Chairwoman and Chief Financial Officer at Mobile World Congress (MWC) Shanghai in her keynote address titled "Embracing 5G transformation" said 5G has been in use across all industries and countless households around the world and is changing the way people work and live, creating tremendous economic, industrial, and social value.

## Stocks struggle in subdued deals amid US holiday

LONDON (AFP/APP): Asian and European equities faltered Tuesday in muted trade, with Wall Street shut for the US Independence Day holiday. Oil rebounded from losses the previous day, when key producers Saudi Arabia and Russia unexpectedly unveiled more output cuts in a bid to stabilise the market. The dollar rose against the euro but fell against the yen, as investors awaited Wednesday's publication of minutes from the Federal Reserve's most recent monetary policy meeting.

Friday's key US nonfarm payroll (NFP) report will provide clues on the health of the world's biggest economy.

"European stocks are struggling for direction amid a light economic calendar and on thin volumes with the US markets closed for Independence Day."

## PBF hopes no further depreciation in IMF SBA Agreement

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) hopes that no further depreciation of the rupee will be seen in the IMF SBA agreement as PKR is already undervalued compared to our regional neighbours. As signing of a \$3 billion stand-by agreement with the International Monetary Fund a positive development in the current scenario but at the same time it raised questions over the coalition government's economic plan to revive the ailing economy. While talking to media on Tuesday, the PBF spokesman Zainab Jatoi said that in the last IMF program (July 2019 - June 2023) witnessed PKR devaluation of 45% and average devaluation of 11.25% (last four years). This is the highest PKR devaluation we have seen comparing all the previous

IMF programs. We expect PKR will slightly appreciate in the short term after the successful SBA agreement with IMF and rupee is strengthening against dollar a ten rupee correction was witnessed in interbank which is a healthier sign for the economy. She said Pakistan will become the fourth largest International Monetary Fund borrower in the world after receiving additional loans of \$3 billion in the next nine months under the standby arrangement from the global lender. Pakistan also holds the "title" of being the largest IMF borrower in the Asian region. Zainab Jatoi further said Pakistan's economy has been in a free fall mode for the last many years, bringing untold pressure on the poor masses in the form of unchecked inflation.



FAISALABAD: Formers are packing the Corns in sacks at Field along the Satyana Road in City.

## Trade deficit narrows by 43% as exports mount to \$27.7 bln in FY23

ISLAMABAD (APP): The trade deficit witnessed a decline of 43.03 percent during the fiscal year 2022-23 as compared to the previous year (2021-22), the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

The trade deficit during July-June (2022-23) was recorded at \$27.547 billion against the deficit of \$48.354 billion in July-June (2021-22), a decline of 43.03 percent.

The exports during the period were recorded at \$27.744 billion against \$31.782 billion last year, showing a decline of 12.71 percent. On the other hand, the imports witnessed a sharp decline of 31 percent falling from \$80.136 billion last year to \$55.291 billion during the fiscal year 2022-23.

On a year-on-year basis, the exports from the country witnessed a decline of 18.72 percent and were recorded at \$2.366 billion in June 2023 against the exports of \$2.911 billion in June 2022.

The imports also decreased to \$4.180 billion in June 2023 from \$7.857 billion in June 2022, showing negative growth of 46.80 percent.

On a month-on-month basis, the exports during June 2023 however increased by 7.55 percent when compared to the exports of \$2.200 billion in May 2023.

The imports into the country declined by 3.42 percent in June 2023 when compared to the imports of \$4.328 billion in May 2023, according to the data.

## Gold prices decrease by Rs.2,200

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs 2,200 and was sold at Rs 205,000 on Tuesday against its sale at Rs. 207,200 the previous day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs 1,887 to Rs 175,754 from Rs 177,641 whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went down to Rs 161,108 from Rs 162,837, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs. 2,500 and Rs. 2,143.34 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market increased by \$17 to \$1929 from \$1912, the association reported.

## Sindh govt takes notice of non compliance of official cotton rates

KARACHI (APP): The Sindh government has taken notice of the non-compliance of the official cotton rates.

The provincial Agriculture Advisor Manzoor Hussain Wasan has said that the official price of cotton is 8,500 rupees per 40 kg.

The adviser directed all the Deputy Commissioners and officers of the Agriculture Department to take action against the dealers who do not buy cotton from the farmers at the government-fixed rate. Cotton factories buying cotton from farmers at low prices should be sealed, he said.

Wasan said that farmers from Sanghar, Mirpurkhas, Nawabshah, Khairpur and other cities registered such complaints which would be redressed.

## China, Pakistan jointly explore new path of silage harvesting, processing

BEIJING (APP): China and Pakistan will step up efforts to jointly explore a new path of silage harvesting and processing in Pakistan, as the two sides agreed on a meeting held last Wednesday to promote the joint research and outcome commercialization of small and medium-sized silage harvesting equipment in mountainous and hilly areas of China and Pakistan.

At the meeting that took place in Lanzhou, China, it was announced that China will help Pakistan in the livestock sector by establishing a test and demonstration base, donating agricultural machinery and equipment worth 1.5 million yuan, and training a professional

team for the R&D and design of silage harvesting and processing machinery and a group of technicians for the operation, use and maintenance of the machinery for Pakistan. According to China Economic Net (CEN), the project, undertaken by Gansu Academy of Mechanical Sciences Co., Ltd., aims to enhance the mechanized operation, efficiency and economic benefits of Pakistan's agricultural production, and the export competitiveness of its silage. Since the project was launched in 2018, the team has been studying the key technologies suitable for Pakistan in terms of silage harvesting and processing, sealing reliability of wrap film, mechanical properties.



FAISALABAD: Farmers seeding the rice crop on their field.



ISLAMABAD: An elderly labourer on the way loading a sack on a Suzuki van on Fruit and Vegetable market.

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Five ships namely, MSC Tokyo, MSC Kritika, Huang Shan-16, Al-Marrouna and Chemroad Hope carrying Containers, Palm oil, LNG and Chemicals, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Engro Vopak Terminal and Engro Elengy Terminal respectively.

Meanwhile two more ships, Atrotos Heracles and N-Orhanwith Canola and LPG also arrived at outer anchorage of the Port Qasim on same day.

A total of 07 ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them an edible oil tanker 'GC Berly' sailed out to sea Tuesday morning on Tuesday and three more ships, MSC Kritika, MSC Tokyo and Aruna Berk are expected to sail on today.

## Altat Baloch says: Maximum cotton production priority

MULTAN (APP): Secretary of Higher Education South Punjab, Muhammad Altat Baloch, said on Tuesday that maximum cotton production was a top priority of the Punjab government.

He expressed these views during a visit to Tehsil Chohara to monitor the campaign to grow more cotton and inspected the demonstration plot of cotton crops. He also inspected the Farmer Facilitation Center Rafiqabad and inquired about the problems of the farmers.

Secretary further said that a good cotton crop will be a source of getting more foreign exchange.

Assistant Commissioner Chohara Jam Muhammad Aslam,

Assistant Director Agriculture Muhammad Sadiq, and Assistant Director Pest Warming Ejaz Qaisrani were also present. Secretary of Higher Education South Punjab directed the agriculture department to reach out to every cotton farmer for consultation. Farmers should be fully informed about the proper use of fertilizers.

He said that farmers' meetings (Baithak) should be organized for timely information about crop irrigation and harmful insects killing pesticides.

Altat Baloch, while checking the quality and prices of agricultural inputs at the Kisan Sahulat Center, directed officials to ensure the availability of fertilizers and pesticides at the center.

# Russia says Ukraine attacked Moscow with at least five drones

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: Russia said on Tuesday that Ukraine had attacked Moscow with at least five drones that were either shot down or jammed, though one of the capital's main airports had to reroute flights for several hours.

Four Ukrainian drones were shot down by Moscow air defences while a fifth was jammed and crashed into the Odintsovo district of the Moscow region, the Russian defence ministry said. No one was injured. Russian news agencies reported that two drones were intercepted near a village 30 km (19 miles) southwest of the

Kremlin. One drone was detected in the neighbouring Kaluga region.

Landings and takeoffs at Moscow's Vnukovo were restricted for several hours early on Tuesday before normal operations resumed after 0500 GMT. A number of flights from Russia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt were diverted. One drone was shot down in the area of the town of Kubinka, some 63 km (40 miles) west of Moscow, RIA reported. A Russian air base is near Kubinka.

Russia's foreign and defence ministries denounced the attack as terrorism.

"The Kyiv regime's

attempt to attack an area where civilian infrastructure is located, including the airport, which incidentally also receives foreign flights, is yet another act of terrorism," said foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova.

"The international community should realise that the United States, Britain, France - permanent members of the UN Security Council - are financing a terrorist regime," she said.

There was no immediate comment from Kyiv. Ukraine almost never publicly claims responsibility for attacks inside Russia or on Russian-controlled territory in Ukraine.



International Atomic Energy Agency head Rafael Mariano Grossi shakes hands with Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi before their meeting at the Iikura guesthouse in Tokyo.

## Blasts rock Khartoum; Sudan army renews call for volunteers

**Monitoring Desk**  
WAD MADANI: Explosions again rocked Sudan's capital Khartoum on Monday as the army rallied civilians to take up arms against a renewed onslaught by its paramilitary foes.

The sound of artillery fire shook the dawn in northwest Khartoum and progressed towards the centre and east of the city, witnesses said.

The fighting "began at 4:00am (0200 GMT) and is still going," one resident said. The war-torn capital barely saw a few hours of respite after heavy clashes on Sunday between troops loyal to army chief Abdel Fattah el-Burhan and those of the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

The army announced Monday it was ready to "receive and prepare" volunteer fighters, after Burhan last week urged

Sudanese "youth and all those able to defend" to join the military.

War-weary civilians have largely rejected the call, pleading for an end to the relentless war between Burhan and his former deputy, RSF commander Mohamed Hamdan Daglo.

Later on Monday, witnesses reported the air force targeted an armoured RSF convoy as it wound its way from the country's south towards Khartoum.

Outside the capital, some of the worst fighting has been in the vast western region of Darfur, where late on Sunday RSF forces "attacked the military base" in Nyala, the capital of South Darfur state.

Since April 15, nearly 3,000 people have been killed in the violence, according to the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project.

## Turkiye accuses Greece of new migrant pushbacks

**Monitoring Desk**  
ISTANBUL: Turkiye has rescued 95 migrants from three overloaded boats in the Aegean Sea, the interior ministry said on Monday, accusing Greece of "pushing back" the dinghies from its shores.

Two inflatable boats carrying 37 people and 47 people respectively were rescued off the Greek island of Lesbos on Saturday, the interior ministry said.

Another boat carrying 11 people was spotted near Turkiye's western port city of Izmir the same day, the interior ministry said. The ministry described all 95 people as "irregular migrants" but provided no details of their countries of origin.

Ankara regularly accuses Greece of pushing migrant boats back into Turkish waters in violation of international law.

Greece accuses Turkiye of turning a blind eye to irregular migrants leaving its shores.

Turkey's latest accusations came just weeks after a fishing trawler carrying hundreds of migrants capsized in Greek waters, leaving at least 82 dead.

## Elections in Russian controlled Ukraine could be cancelled, official says

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: Russia's top election official said on Monday that if the situation worsened in four Russian-controlled parts of Ukraine, local elections scheduled there for September would be cancelled.

Russia controls just under one-fifth of Ukraine, including Crimea, which it annexed in 2014, and parts of four other regions that Russian troops have taken control of since the current war began in February 2022.

President Vladimir Putin says the regions - Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson - are now part of Russia, after Moscow unilaterally annexed them last year.

Ukraine says the annexation is illegal and void, and that it will not rest until every last Russian soldier is ejected from its internationally recognised territory. The front line of the conflict - which Moscow

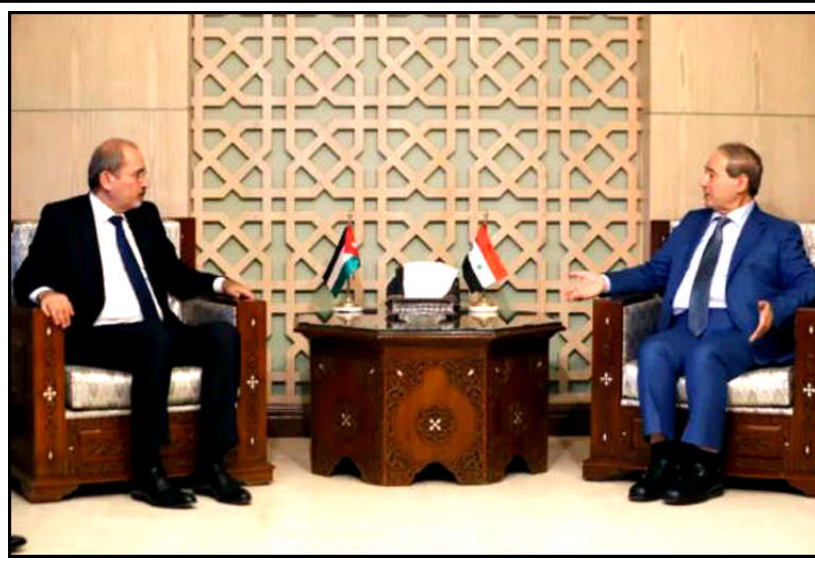
calls a "special military operation" - runs through all four regions.

"Since the situation is really difficult, anything can happen," Ella Panfilova, who chairs Russia's Central Election Commission, told Putin at a meeting in the Kremlin.

"If unforeseen circumstances arise - in some areas the situation may deteriorate dramatically - and we see that there is a serious danger to the life and health of residents, then we have the right to postpone these elections," she said.

"We will certainly use this right if there are serious reasons for it," Putin replied. "Understood."

Russia holds regional and municipal elections on Sept. 10, including elections of 21 regional leaders and 20 regional legislatures, Panfilova said. There are also four by-elections for seats in the federal parliament.



Syria Foreign Minister Faisal Mekdad meets with his Jordan counterpart Ayman Safadi in Damascus, Syria.

## UN nuclear chief is visiting Japan to give a final report on release of treated radioactive water

**Monitoring Desk**  
TOKYO: The head of the U.N. nuclear agency is in Japan to meet with government leaders Tuesday and to see final preparations for the release of treated radioactive wastewater into the sea from the damaged Fukushima nuclear plant, on a visit Japan hopes will give credibility to the contentious plan.

International Atomic Energy Agency head Rafael Mariano Grossi will meet with Prime Minister Fumio Kishida later Tuesday to submit IAEA's final report on the water release. All of IAEA's interim evaluations have been positive and the

final report is expected to say that the water sampling, testing and monitoring plans involved in the release are adequate and fulfill international requirements. Grossi, at a joint news conference after meeting with Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi, said the report sums up the IAEA's work over the past two years and handing it to Kishida marks "an important chapter."

Hayashi thanked "IAEA's impartial and professional efforts on their review from safety and regulatory aspects." He promised Japan's further effort to provide detailed

explanations to the international community "based on scientific evidence and with high degree of transparency."

The treated radioactive water, stored in about 1,000 tanks that are nearing their 1.37 million ton capacity, must be removed to prevent accidental leaks and to make room for the plant's decommissioning.

Japanese regulators finished their final safety inspection of the equipment last Friday and the plant operator Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings is expected to receive a permit for discharging the water in about a week.

## Biggest bloc in Thai legislature faces uphill battle

**Monitoring Desk**  
BANGKOK: Thailand's king opened parliament on Monday following a shock election result in which the pro-democracy opposition trounced army-backed parties that have ruled the kingdom for nearly a decade.

The Move Forward Party (MFP) won the largest share of votes in the May 14 election but their radical platform, which includes reformation of the strict royal defamation law, may see them struggle to form a coalition government.

Their eight-party coalition bloc, including the second-largest party Pheu Thai, remains short of the

required majority in the lower house to surpass the non-elected Senate chamber and successfully nominate a prime minister.

The election was seen as a national rejection of Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha, a former army chief who came to power in a 2014 coup.

King Maha Vajiralongkorn, accompanied by his wife Queen Suthida, reminded the rows of white-uniformed MPs of their duty to represent the people of Thailand.

"The progress of the nation will be up to your intellectual ability and your honesty."

## Taliban administration orders beauty salons to close

**Monitoring Desk**  
KABUL: The Taliban administration in Afghanistan has ordered beauty salons to close within a month, the morality ministry said, in the latest shrinking of access to public places for Afghan women.

The deadline for the closing of beauty parlours for women is one month," Mohammad Sadiq Akif, a spokesperson for the Ministry for the Prevention of Vice and Propagation of Virtue, said on Tuesday, referring to a ministry notice.

Foreign governments and UN officials have condemned growing restrictions on women.



Thai King Maha Vajiralongkorn, alongside Queen Suthida, as he addresses rows of MPs during the official ceremony to open parliament at Thailand's Parliament in Bangkok.

## Britain probes allegations banks blacklisting clients over political views

**Monitoring Desk**  
LONDON: The British government has said it is looking into concerns that banks are blacklisting certain customers over their political views, after individuals including leading Brexit figure Nigel Farage said their access to finance was being cut. "It would be a serious concern if financial services were being denied to those exercising the right to lawful free speech," a spokesperson for the financial ministry said in a statement on Monday.

The government recently passed legislation requiring regulator the Financial

Conduct Authority to review how banks treat "politically exposed persons", "so we can strike the right balance between the customer's right to free speech and the bank's right to manage commercial risk", the spokesperson said. The ministry spoke out against "cancel culture" earlier this year as it began consulting on its payments regulations, including whether current rules were protecting freedom of expression. The Daily Telegraph first reported overnight that the ministry was poised to recommend a more rigid notice period for closing accounts.

## North Korea appears to lift COVID mask mandate, reports say

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: North Korea appeared to have eased a strict COVID-19 mask mandate, media reports said this week, after state news agencies showed many people maskless. The isolated country has maintained border lockdowns and other anti-COVID measures long after most other nations ditched such restrictions.

North Korean state television and newspapers did not make any official announcement, but showed crowds of people at theatres and other locations without masks.

## Police hunt for suspects after blasts at Washington, D.C., retail outlets

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: Police in Washington are offering a reward of up to \$20,000 for information that could lead to the arrest of those involved in three explosions within a 15-minute span at retail outlets in the U.S. capital.

No one was killed or injured in the early hour blasts in Washington's Northeast neighbourhood, but all three places were damaged, police said in a statement. In one of the blasts, someone threw "a Molotov cocktail style ob-

ject" at a Safeway store before fleeing in a vehicle, police said.

The other two explosions took place outside an ATM and in front of a Nike store. All of the establishments were closed at the time.

It was not immediately clear how many suspects police were looking for but officials released an image of one suspect and of a vehicle that could have been used in the attack. The suspect's back was turned to the surveillance camera in that image and the face was not visible.

## Deadly India rail crash caused by faulty signal connections made during repair

**Monitoring Desk**  
BHUBANESWAR: Workers repairing a rail-road barrier in India made faulty connections in the automated signalling system on the network, leading to the country's worst rail disaster in two decades, an official has found.

The June 2 crash at Bahanaga Bazar station, in the eastern Indian state of Odisha, killed 288 people and injured more than 1,000. The disaster struck when a passenger train hit a stationary freight train, jumped off the tracks and hit another passenger train coming from the opposite direction.

## Israel signals Jenin operation close to completion, 10 Palestinians dead

**Monitoring Desk**  
JENIN: Israel is close to completing its Jenin operation, a senior aide to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Tuesday after the fiercest fighting in the flashpoint West Bank town in more than two decades killed 10 Palestinians and forced thousands to flee.

Launched early on Monday, the raid involving hundreds of commandos backed by drones prompted the internationally backed Palestinian administration to suspend contacts with Israel and stirred U.S. and U.N. concern for humanitarian conditions.

Israel says the operation in Jenin's tenement-like refugee camp, codenamed "Home and Garden", aims to uproot Iranian-backed Palestinian armed factions behind a recent surge in gun

and bomb attacks as well as preliminary efforts to manufacture rockets.

A Palestinian wounded during the clashes died overnight and another body was found in the morning, bringing the death toll to 10, with around 100 wounded, 20 of them critically, the Palestinian health ministry said. The Islamic Jihad faction claimed four of the dead as its fighters. Hamas, another Islamist faction, claimed a fifth. It was not immediately clear if the other five fatalities - males aged 17 to 23 - were combatants or civilians.

The operation "is close to completing the achievement of the goals set," Israeli National Security Adviser Tzachi Hanabi told Kan radio after a relative lull in the clashes overnight.

## UN commander in contact with Lebanese and Israeli officials about tensions over Hezbollah tents

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIRUT: The U.N. peacekeeping force on the Lebanon-Israel border said Monday its commander is in contact with officials in both countries over tensions regarding two tents set up by the militant Hezbollah group last month.

Israel filed a complaint with the United Nations in June claiming that Hezbollah had set up tents several dozen meters (yards) inside of Israeli territory.

The area where the tents were erected in Chebaa Farms and the Kfar Chouba hills were captured by Israel from Syria during the 1967 Mideast war and are part of Syria's Golan Heights that Israel annexed in 1981. The Lebanese government says the area belongs to Lebanon.

Israel media reported Sunday that Hezbollah evacuated one of the two tents but there has been no confirmation from the Iran-backed Lebanese group.

The head of the U.N. peacekeeping force known as UNIFIL, Maj. Gen. Aroldo Lázaro, "continues to be in direct contact with authorities on both sides of the Blue Line to resolve the situation of the tents," UNIFIL said in a statement sent to The Associated Press. The borderline demarcated after Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000 is known as the blue line.

UNIFIL added: "We are looking into reports that a tent has been moved north of the Blue Line." UNIFIL added that any unauthorized presence or activity "near the Blue Line is a concern, and has the potential to increase tension and misunderstandings."

The head of Hezbollah's parliamentary bloc Mohammed Raad said Saturday that the tents are in Lebanon.

He added, referring to Israel: "You cannot remove two tents because there is resistance and strong men in this country."

## Jordan's foreign minister calls for investment into war-torn Syria to speed up refugee returns

**Monitoring Desk**  
DAMASCUS: Jordan's foreign minister Monday called for international investment into conflict-ravaged Syria's crippled infrastructure to speed up refugee returns.

Ayman Safadi made the remarks during a visit to the capital Damascus, where he met with Syrian President Bashar Assad and his counterpart, Faisal Mekdad.

Jordan, which shares a border with the war-torn country and hosts some 1.3 million Syrian refugees, played a crucial role in the once-pariah state's return to the Arab League. It hosted regional talks in May between Syrian, Saudi, Iraqi and Egyptian officials in an initiative to reach a political solution to the years-long crisis.

Syria's uprising-turned civil war, now in its 13th year, has killed nearly half a million people and

displaced half of its prewar population of 23 million. Syrians in both government-held territory and an opposition-held enclave in the country's northwest suffer from rampant poverty and crippled infrastructure. "We have offered everything we can to ensure them a dignified life," Safadi said at a news conference following his meetings. "But what we are sure of is that the refugees' futures lie in their country."

The Jordanian foreign minister said that securing critical infrastructure and basic necessities will speed up voluntary refugee returns, especially as international aid for refugees continues to decline.

Assad in a statement released by his office echoed similar sentiments, saying that investment in infrastructure and reconstruction would create the "best environment" for refugee returns.

## Wanted activists should surrender or 'spend days in fear': Hong Kong leader

**Monitoring Desk**  
HONG KONG: Hong Kong's leader has called on eight overseas activists to turn themselves in a day after police put out bounties on them for violating the city's national security law.

Police on Monday offered rewards of HK\$1 million (\$128,000) each for information leading to the arrests of eight prominent democracy activists based abroad, accusing them of crimes such as subversion and colluding with foreign forces.

City leader John Lee said on Tuesday that he supported the police action and called on the activists to surrender themselves.

"The only way to end their destiny of being an absconder, who will be pursued for life, is to surrender," Lee told reporters, adding they would otherwise "spend their days in fear."

All eight fled Hong Kong after Beijing imposed a sweeping national security law on the financial hub

in 2020 to quell dissent after huge, sometimes violent pro-democracy protests in 2019 were quashed.

Lee called on the public to assist police, adding that even the activists' "relatives and friends" could be informants.

The offer has been criticised by the United States, Britain and Australia - countries where some of the wanted activists reside.

US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller condemned the bounties as part of China's "transnational repression efforts" and called for them to be withdrawn.

"The extraterritorial application of the Beijing-imposed National Security Law is a dangerous precedent that threatens the human rights and fundamental freedoms of people all over the world," he added.

UK Foreign Secretary James Cleverly said Britain would "not tolerate any attempts by China to intimidate and silence individuals in the UK and overseas."



Israeli troops and drones hit Jenin in major West Bank operation.

## Holy Quran desecration: UN rights council to hold urgent meeting on Pakistan's request

ISLAMABAD (Online): United Nations Human Rights Council will hold an urgent meeting to address the issue of desecration of the Holy Quran following the desecration incident that occurred in Stockholm and sparked global anger, said spokesperson on Tuesday.

The request of an urgent session with change of its agenda on Pakistan's request of 'Swift Justice'.

The development comes after a man, who fled from Iraq to Sweden several years ago, tore up and burned the Holy Quran outside Stockholm's central mosque last week as Muslims around the world began marking the Eidul Azha holiday.

The act drew strong criticism from several countries, including Pakistan, Turkey, Jordan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Iraq and Iran.

The Geneva-based UN Human Rights Council, which is meeting in session until July 14, will change its agenda to stage an urgent debate, following a request from Pakistan.

"The UN Human Rights Council will hold an urgent debate to discuss

the alarming rise in pre-meditated and public acts of religious hatred, as manifested by the current desecration of the Holy Quran in some European and other countries," council spokesman Pascal Sim told reporters, citing the wording of the request.

"This urgent debate will be convened following a request of Pakistan, sent on behalf of several members of the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation, including those that are members of the Human Rights Council.

"It will most likely be convened this week at a date and time to be determined by the bureau of the Human Rights Council that is meeting today," Sim added. There are 47 members of the Human Rights Council. The UN's top rights body is currently in the second of its three regular sessions per year.

A day earlier, Pakistan demanded immediate action against the perpetrator of the act.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif while addressing a cabinet meeting had said the whole Ummah and the government and people of Pakistan

strongly condemned the sacrilegious act.

"We demand immediate action against the perpetrator," the premier had said.

Unfortunately, this is not the first time that such an act has been committed, he had added, recalling that a similar incident had taken place in the past too.

The premier had also demanded that the Swedish government take notice of the Islamophobic and hateful narrative against the Muslim population in their country.

PM Shehbaz had further appreciated the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation for convening an urgent meeting on the issue and said Pakistan endorsed the OIC's meeting and its decision with the hope that such Islamophobic incidents would not recur in the future.

On Sunday, the OIC had called an emergency meeting and said collective measures were needed to prevent acts of desecration of the Holy Quran and international law should be used to stop religious hatred after the burning incident in Sweden.



QUETTA: Hindu Panchayat in the leadership of Sunil Kumar Bajaj meets with Governor Balochistan Abdul Wali Kakar.

## PM for priority to completion of public welfare projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday stressed on according high priority to the public welfare projects, besides maintaining quality and transparency of the ongoing development projects.

He said preference should be given to completion of those projects which were aimed at development and prosperity of youth and women's empowerment.

The prime minister issued these directives while chairing a high-level meeting on uplift projects under the current fiscal year.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Finance Ishaq Dar, Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal, PM's Adviser Ahmad Khan Cheema, PM's Special Assistants Malik Ahmad Khan and Shaza Fatima Khawaja, and other relevant authorities, the PM Office

Media Wing said in a press release.

The meeting was apprised of the progress on the development work during the fiscal year 2023-24 and a detailed briefing was also given about the steps for the progress and prosperity of youth and women, and development of agriculture, industries, infrastructure and other sectors.

The prime minister directed for completion of all the projects within the stipulated period of time and the submission of a comprehensive report over the related mechanism.

He said the PM's Merit Scholarship initiative was being launched across the country, including Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir.

The meeting was further briefed that under the PM's Youth Programme, distribution process of laptops among the talented youth would commence soon.

## PAC order inquiry of \$3 billion interest free loan amid Covid

ISLAMABAD (Online): Public Accounts Committee (PAC) ordered Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and Military Intelligence (MI) to take joint investigation three billion interest free loan scheme amid Covid era.

Committee also summoned Finance secretary and Governor State Bank of Pakistan on Wednesday.

Chairman Noor Alam Khan said during corona time \$3 billion interest free loan was given to some favorite industrialist and other few people.

State Bank wrote explanatory letter in which he said the loan was given to assist industrialists amid Covid time and it was not interest free. 5% interest was imposed on loan. Loan was given under TERF scheme.

Chairman further said State Bank has not told the name of those who took loan and present situation of loan return.

Member committee Barjis Tahir of Pmln said 620 people and companies

were awarded with interest free loan. During that other member Senator Mohsin Aziz of PTI said TERF scheme gave loan to industrial sector, loan was also given to increase imports and due to which \$4 billion imports raised.

Mohsin Aziz expressed anger over again and again interruption and it caused exchange of bitter words between committee member Barjis Tahir and Mohsin Aziz, committee chairman interfered and make both quiet and said don't make committee meeting a market.

Mohsin Aziz PTI senator said I will not work as rubber stamp 3200,000 people got jobs due to this \$3 billion loan, I will tell truth, also see what benefits country got by awarding these loans.

Committee chairman said I only want the revelation of name who took loans.

PAC summoned State Bank governor and Secretary Finance for explanation of issue and also summoned list of those who took loans. Audit report 2019-

2020 of energy ministry was reviewed in the meeting. Report identified more than 4000 billion irregularities.

50 objections of Rs.128.23 billion were presented for review. Committee expressed anger for not holding departmental accounts committee meetings.

Chairman Committee expressed deep concern over unannounced electricity load shedding across the country.

He said I spent Eid holidays on Grid stations, officers' salaries gets increase but people don't get electricity.

During that Committee member Ramesh Kumar said main reason behind load shedding is electricity theft. I know three areas where is no electricity theft and they are at zero load shedding.

Secretary energy told committee that circular debt of electricity sector crossed Rs.2370 billion.

PAC handed over the investigation of eight audit paragraphs of 9.20 billion to FIA.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding PSDP projects.

## Rs 44124mln allocated for construction of 51 new NHA road building schemes

ISLAMABAD (APP): For implementation of the present coalition government's vision of building road infrastructure in the country, Rs 44124.386 million have been earmarked in the Public Sector Development Programme for 51 new schemes of the National Highway Authority (NHA). According to official data, Rs 6000 million have been proposed in the PSDP 2023-24 for dualization and rehabilitation of Karachi-Kararo and Wadh-Khuzdar road. Similarly, Rs 6000 million have been allocated for the Kararo-Wadh and Kuchlak-Chaman section. Rs 4000 million have been set aside for construction of Abdul Khel Interchange to Dhakki to Kaurkot road.

For rehabilitation and upgradation of 38 km Pezu-Tank Road, Rs 2200 million have been allocated whereas Rs 2000 million have been apportioned for

35 km road from Yarik Interchange to Tank road. For construction of 14.9 km two-lane D.I Khan bypass, Rs 1000 million have been set aside and as much amount has been earmarked for construction of 66 road link from Ramak (N-55) to Daraban (N-50). Rs 1800 million have been set aside for rehabilitation and reconstruction 86 km section of N-5 from Moro to Ranipur including damaged bridges under ADB flood emergency loan. For establishment of Interchange at Tandlianwala Area, District Faisalabad on M-3 motorway, Rs 1000 have been kept. For rehabilitation and upgradation of 56 km Kundal Interchange to Lakki Marwat to Tajazai road under D.I Khan Development Package, Rs 1000 million have been allocated. Rs 2500 million have been allocated for the PC-I for Lowari Tunnel electrical and mechanical works.

## Khetran flays desecration of Holy Qura'an in Sweden

Independent Report QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Communications, Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran has strongly condemned the incident of desecration of Holy Qura'an in Sweden.

In a condemnation statement issued here on Tuesday, the Provincial Minister described the act as an anti-Islam and unacceptable.

He said that it is totally unacceptable to cover up the desecration of any religion with freedom of expression. He said that the condemnable act has hurt the sentiments of over 1.5 billion Muslims all over the globe. Sardar Khetran also said that extremists are behind this unwarranted act.

## IPP to contest upcoming poll with full strength: Tareen

LAHORE (INP): Chief of Istehkam-i-Pakistan Party (IPP) Jahangir Tareen has said that his party would contest the upcoming general elections with full strength and a proper preparation.

The party chief held a meeting with Secretary General of IPP Amir Kayani and Additional Secretary General Awn Chaudhry and held discussion with them on various political issues.

It was agreed to increase the political activities of the party with issues ranging from the party's registration in the Election Commission of Pakistan.

## Rally held in Nushki to solidarise with martyrs

NUSHKI (APP): The representatives of the civil society and traders community have staged a rally here to express solidarity with the martyrs who rendered sacrifices for the country.

The rally was held under the supervision of President of Anjuman-e-Tajirani Haji Mir Ahmed Mengal which concluded at Anam Boston Chowk, said a press release on Tuesday.

The participants were carrying banners and national flags and raised slogans to pay tribute to the martyrs. Meanwhile, medical camps were organized at Barkhan and Lasbela where over 330 patients were examined for various diseases. A Baloch Cultural Day activity was organized at Barkhan in which over 700 individuals participated.

## Government takes all possible measures to end terrorism

Independent Report QUETTA: Spokesman Chief Minister Balochistan Babar Yousofzai said that the reason for targeting the security forces was the fear of the terrorists. They were defeated and now these few miscreants will also meet their end soon.

He further said that the miscreants did not have any details of the movement of the security forces. The security forces are always engaged in the service of the people, but in the meantime, the extremists carry out their operations.

The government is taking all possible steps to eradicate terrorism. Our effort is to root out terrorism.

The extremists want to prove their movement successful by targeting the security forces, he said.

## Siraj says: Desecration of Quran in Sweden, JI to hold protests on Friday

LAHORE (INP): Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Sirajul Haq has announced to hold countrywide protest demonstrations on Friday (July 07) against the desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden.

Addressing a press conference at Mansoorah on Tuesday, he termed the incident a sequence of an organized campaign against Islam in western world which particularly started after 9/11, following the worldwide boost in the demand of Quran.

## Courts extends interim bails of Imran in ten cases

ISLAMABAD (APP): The local courts on Tuesday extended the interim bails of Pakistan Tehreek e-Insaf (PTI)'s Chief Imran Khan in ten cases pertaining riot, vandalizing public property and violation of section-144 of Pakistan Penal Code (PPC).

Additional District and Session Judge Tahir Abbas Sapra heard the interim bail petitions of

ousted prime minister in six cases.

Imran Khan's lawyer Sher Afzal Murawat objected over the court, hearing this case, and said that it had already disclosed its mindset in the matter to the extent of two co-accused.

He said that the decision should have come together and prayed the judge to transfer the case to another court.

Sirajul Haq noted that anti-Islam elements, psychological patients and hatemongers could not digest the promotion to the message of peace and equality. But their tactics would never succeed as Almighty Allah has taken responsibility for the protection of Quran which is the final divine message for mankind, he added.

Islamophobia became a culture in west and posed a serious threat to world peace, he said.

## Aziz Pathan visits Lorlai Teaching Hospital

Independent Report LORLAI: Chairman Municipal Committee Lorlai Aziz Pathan visited Lorlai Teaching Hospital. He inspected the hospital care system and issued orders to find a permanent solution.

The water of the hospital was flowing on Zangiwal Road for a long time, causing people to suffer. The chairman instructed his staff on the spot and said that now efforts should be made to improve the sewage system permanently by building a new channel so that the sewage water will not go to the road and this longstanding problem of the hospital authorities and citizens will solve.

He said that on the occasion of Eid al-Adha in the city, the staff of the municipal committee worked day and night for cleaning and throwing away the garbage despite their small number and resources. The work of supplying water to the farmers and their livestock also continued.

## PPP fights for democracy: Ghazala Gola

QUETTA (APP): President of Pakistan People's Party Women's Wing Balochistan and former provincial minister Ghazala Gola, General Secretary Zarina Zahri said on Tuesday that Pakistan People's Party has always fought for democracy.

In a statement issued here, they said 05 July 1977 was the darkest chapter in the history of the country, during which the popular political leader Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was overthrown.

Pakistan People's Party has always raised its voice for democracy in the country and its leadership and workers have rendered sacrifices for democracy in the country.

July, 5 is the black day in the democratic history of the country, PPP leaders added.

## Telenor delegation visits PTA

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation from Telenor, led by Senior Vice President and Head of Spectrum, Erlend Fanebust, visited the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) headquarters on Tuesday.

The delegation included Senior VP Spectrum, Dr. Magne Pettersen; Chief Corporate Affairs Officer, Mr. Kamal Ahmed and Mr. Shan Ul-Haq, VP, RA & Public Policy said a news release. The delegation met with Chairman PTA, Major General Hafiz Ur Rehman.



QUETTA: Police removing fake and fancy number plate from motorcycle at Mission Chowk.

## PMA flays teaching Hospital Khuzdar incident

QUETTA (APP): The Pakistan Medical Association Balochistan (PMA) condemns in the strongest terms the deplorable incident that took place at Teaching Hospital Khuzdar.

"We are deeply saddened and outraged by the series of attacks on hospitals, destruction of properties, and the insulting of doctors that occurred during this incident," a statement issued by PMA Balochistan on Tuesday.

The statement read, the PMA firmly believes that hospitals are sacred spaces where patients seek care, comfort, and healing. These facilities serve as pillars of our healthcare system, and any act of violence or vandalism targeting them is an assault on the very essence of humanity. It is deeply concerning to note that over

400 attacks were carried out on hospitals, leading to significant damage and disruption of essential healthcare services. Such acts not only undermine the crucial work of medical professionals but also jeopardize the lives and well-being of patients who depend on these facilities for their medical needs.

Insulting doctors is not only a violation of their professional dignity but also undermines the trust between healthcare providers and patients. We strongly condemn any form of disrespect towards our doctors and healthcare workers who tirelessly serve the community, often under challenging circumstances. PMA called upon the authorities to thoroughly investigate this incident and bring the perpetrators to justice.



GWADAR: Deputy Commissioner Izzat Nazir Baloch exchanging views with Deputy Regional Security Officer US Consulate David Oban

## UoB Mustang campus providing higher education to students from remote areas

MASTUNG (APP): The Director of the University of Balochistan (UoB) Sub-Campus Mustang, Muhammad Iqbal Tareen on Tuesday said the campus was providing the best higher education opportunities to the students from remote areas of the province.

The director in a meeting with the former Chief Minister of Balochistan, Provincial Assembly Member Nawab Muhammad Aslam Raisani discussed the matter regarding education, research activities, future plans, financial matters and current issues of the sub-campus.

The University of Balochistan sub-campus

Mustang was providing higher education and accommodation and transportation facilities to students at very low fees, said a news release.

The university has provided higher education with limited resources and also reduced their expenses to a great extent.

Despite the financial difficulties, the process of teaching and learning is going on, including the timely conduct of university examinations and admissions, Tareen told.

Aslam Raisani while considering the educational efforts of UoB Sub-Campus Mustang said that all resources should be utilized to improve the financial and other matters of higher education institutions.