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Sindh Assembly dissolved as governor signs CM Murad's summary



KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori on Friday gave assent to three bills.

According to a Governor House communique, the bills included Stamp (Amendment) Bill 2023, partnership bill 2022 and Senior Citizen (Amendment) Bill 2023.

Earlier in the day, in the farewell session of the Sindh Assembly, CM Murad said he would send the summary to the gover-

nor later tonight.

On Thursday, the opposition Grand Democratic Alliance and Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan claimed to have reached a consensus over their candidates for the office of the caretaker chief minister but said they would make a formal announcement after the dissolution of the Sindh Assembly.

GDA leader Sardar Rahim said that both the opposition parties had finalised their names but

it was not appropriate to announce them until the appointment of caretaker prime minister and dissolution of the Sindh Assembly.

Sources told Dawn that retired bureaucrats Shoaib Siddiqui, Younus Dagha and senior politician Dr Saifdar Abbasi were among the candidates shortlisted by the GDA and MQM-P for the office of the caretaker chief minister.

These names, the sources said, would be given to Leader of the Opposition in the Sindh Assembly Rana Ansari, who would present the same to CM Murad.

Until the caretaker CM is finalised, Murad will remain the chief minister.

Meanwhile, addressing the last provincial cabinet session in the afternoon, outgoing CM Murad said he, his cabinet members and all the PPP MPs were going "back to the people with dignity and respect".



KARACHI: Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah paying farewell call on Governor Kamran Khan Tessori. Provincial Ministers Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, Saeed Ghani, Imtiaz Ahmed Sheikh, Mukesh Kumar Chawla, Shabbir Bajrani and Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab are also present.

Minority rights fully protected in Pakistan: Giyanchand Essarani

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Minister for Minority Affairs, Giyanchand Essarani, on Friday, said that the rights of minority communities were fully protected in Pakistan and several measures have been taken for their welfare.

The minister, in his message on National Day of Minorities, said that the day was celebrated in Pakistan in the light of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's history-making speech on August 11, 1947 and his philosophy of equality. He said that Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto granted equal rights to minority communities living in the country through the constitution of 1973 while government of the Pakistan People's Party

has always taken steps to provide all opportunities to the religious minorities for ensuring their role in the fullest in every field of life.

The minister said that Sindh Assembly was the first provincial legislature that passed the Minorities Bill in 2016 by majority vote while at the federal level National Minority Commission was established in 2020 to provide religious freedom to minorities and integrate them into the national mainstream. Terming minority communities' role as vital for development of the country he also stressed on the need of further accelerating the efforts for religious harmony for the promotion of democratic traditions.

Sindh Info Minister hands over Rs 50m grant cheque to KPC President

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Minister of Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon here on Friday handed over a cheque of Rs 50 million to President Karachi Press Club (KPC) Saeed Sarbazi in the Sindh Assembly as an annual grant from the Sindh Government to KPC.



The provincial Minister of Local Government Sindh Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, Minister for Excise and Taxation Mukesh Kumar Chawla, Member of Sindh Assembly Owais Qadir Shah, Director Information Administration Muhammad Yusuf Kaburu, Director Press Information Hasan Asghar Naqvi and former president of KPC Fazil Jamali were also present.

On this occasion, Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the Sindh government had taken historic steps for the welfare of journalists. From the provision of plots for the residence of journalists to financial assistance for their medical treatment, grants have been provided to journalists' organizations and press clubs, he said.

The Sindh government has also excelled in legislation to protect journalists and Sindh Commission for the Protection of Journalists and Media Practitioners has also been established, he added.

PM telephones Nawaz to discuss interim setup

ISLAMABAD (Online): Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Shareef contacted his elder brother and Party Supremo Nawaz Shareef before holding consultation with Allies on interim setup.

According to source both leaders discussed appointment of interim prime minister.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in a group photo with Beat Reporters at his office.

May-9 vandalism: ATC dismisses interim bail of Imran in 7 cases

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Friday dismissed the interim bail of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan over non-appearance in seven cases pertaining to May-9 vandalism.

ATC Judge Ijaz Ahmad Buttar conducted the proceedings on the pre-arrest bail petitions of Imran Khan in seven cases, registered under Anti-Terrorism Act, including the Jinnah House attack case.

Earlier, Imran Khan's counsel argued before the court that bail petitions could not be dismissed over non-appearance. He submitted that as per the Supreme Court judgments, the bail petitions could not be dismissed on technical grounds.

Coast guards seizes huge cache of drugs, arrests one

KARACHI (INP): The Pakistan Coast Guards (PCG) seized a large quantity of drugs and arrested a suspect from a car at Naka Khari Checkpost, Balochistan.

The PCG team during checking of vehicles at the Naka Khari Checkpost, recovered 129kg fine quality hashish, a 30-bore pistol along with two magazines and 14 rounds from a vehicle, according to a news release issued here on Friday.

The driver of the said vehicle was taken into custody. Further legal proceedings were underway.



KARACHI: Upon the conclusion of assembly's five-year tenure, Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, as the leader of the House, delivers a farewell speech on the floor of the house.

Decision on caretaker PM likely today: Shahbaz

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday expressed the hope that the decision on name of caretaker prime minister would be finalised by Saturday.

The prime minister, in a farewell interaction with the PM beat reporters here, said he would meet the heads of coalition parties on Friday night to discuss the matter which would follow his meeting with Leader of the Opposition Raja Riaz on Friday or Saturday.

He explained that in case of their inability to evolve consensus on a single name, the matter would be referred to the parliamentary committee with a mandate to dispose it of within three days. In case of no agreement at that committee level, the matter would be taken up by the Election Commission who would have to take the final decision within two days. Responding to a question about the letter written by President Arif

Alvi to him and the opposition leader to finalise the name by August 12, the prime minister said the procedure was very clear in the constitution.

He said the 16 months of his stint were the most difficult time of his 38-year political career. However, consequent to the teamwork and efforts of all the stakeholders made the government achieve success on different fronts. He said the government machinery worked round the clock during the floods and Rs100 billion was disbursed by the previous government, besides the ones distributed by the provinces and the relevant departments.

He said the agreement with the IMF was a great challenge that was surmounted by the team's efforts otherwise, the country could have faced chaos. Re-counting his government's success at the diplomatic front, the prime minister said they had improved the ties with friendly countries.

SC decision will have no impact in Nawaz Sharif case: Azam Nazir Tarar

ISLAMABAD (Online): Former Law Minister Azam Nazir Tarar has said repeated interference in powers of parliament is not a good tradition.

He said this while reacting to Supreme Court (SC) decision regarding nullification of Review of order and Judgments act here Friday.

He went on to say procedure is laid down in the constitution that the institutions have to run how. The impression goes that advantage was taken of absence of parliament. The institutions will not gain strength but they will grow weak due to this interference. He observed this law was long standing demand of councils and bar associations. He remarked it is beyond comprehension that it is being said the operation be got done from the doctor from whom no healing is coming.

Terms it unconstitutional SC declares Review of Judgments & Orders Act null and void

Power to invalidate any law should be exercised with utmost care and a law should not be declared invalid when its provisions have compatibility with the Constitution

ISLAMABAD (APP): A three member bench of the apex court on Friday unanimously declared the Supreme Court Review of Judgments and Orders Act 2023 as null and void.

The court issued a written order of 87 pages in the case and said that the Parliament has no powers for legislation against the constitution. The bench issued a detailed decision containing 51 pages while Justice Munib Akhtar wrote an additional note containing 30 pages.

The judgment said

that the power to invalidate any law should be exercised with utmost care and a law should not be declared invalid when its provisions have compatibility with the Constitution.

It stated that the said act was clearly contradicting the Constitution of Pakistan and it was not possible to declare this law as compatible with the Constitution. We have taken an oath to protect and defend the Constitution, it said, adding that the courts are empowered to establish the rule of the Constitution.



ISLAMABAD: United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Pakistan, Julien Harneis called on Chairman Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, at Zardari House in Islamabad.

No restriction on Nawaz after completing 5-year disqualification: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said there was no restriction on Pakistan Muslim League-N supremo Nawaz Sharif to contest the election as he had completed his five-year disqualification period.

"As far as Nawaz Sharif is concerned, that law is in the field now under which the maximum disqualification period is five years. There is no restriction on Nawaz Sharif as he has completed his five-year disqualification,"

the prime minister said in an interview with a private television channel (Samaa News).

He said the new law promulgated by the Parliament had overruled the previous law which the Supreme Court has not yet annulled.

"Inshallah, I am sure that he will return by next month... He will face the law. The nation will receive him warmly... He will run the election campaign and all of us will be with him," he stated.

Lyari is PPP's stronghold, development projects being completed: LG Minister

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Minister for Local Government Syed Nasir Hussain Shah on Friday said that Lyari is the stronghold of

Wall of Lyari Gate along with Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab. Former Test cricketer Younis Khan, Hockey



the Pakistan People's Party (PPP).

On the directions of PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and the guidance of Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, ongoing development projects in Lyari are being completed rapidly, he said this while inaugurating Sabzwari Triangle Park and

Olympian Wasim Feroze, Senator Yusuf Baloch, PPP leader Nabil Gabol and other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

Minister LG Syed Nasir Hussain Shah said they were working with full efficiency to solve other problems of Lyari including sewage and drinking water.

Commissioner inaugurates Independence Day Sports Festival

KARACHI (APP): The Commissioner Karachi Muhammad Iqbal Memon inaugurated Pakistan Independence Day Sports Festival here on Friday.

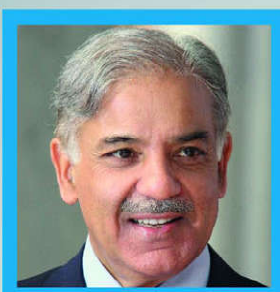
The festival will continue for two days from August 13 to August 14, according to a communique.

Rotary Club Director Muhammad Faiz Qadwai was also present on the occasion.

Commissioner's Sports Coordinator Ghulam Muhammad Khan, Shahida Parveen Kayani,

Begum Asma Ali Shah, Syed Imran Ali Shah, Muhammad Zubair Bavjia, Muhammad Asif Makkai, Huma Ikramullah, Ali Haider, Muhammad Altaf and others were present on this occasion.

On August 13 from 5 to 7pm girls and boys basketball matches will be held at Aram Bagh. Governor Rotary Club Muhammad Hanif Khan will be the chief guest, while on August 13 exhibition cricket match will be held at Asghar Ali Shah Stadium.



MUHAMMAD SHEHBAZ SHARIF
Prime Minister of Pakistan



MS. MARIYUM AURANGZEB
Ex. Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting

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Daily Voice of Masses Independent

A fresh start

It ended in circumstances as controversial as the ones that gave birth to it. The 15th National Assembly — formed following the chaotic general elections of 2018 — stood dissolved on Thursday on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's advice, merely two days before it was to complete its constitutional, five-year tenure. Over its term, it saw two prime ministers sworn into office. One was constitutionally removed for his mismanagement of the economy; the other is about to leave Pakistani democracy considerably compromised. In roughly the same period, two former prime ministers were handed disqualification and jail terms for "corrupt practices".

And, over the entirety of this period, Pakistan was run less like the democratic parliamentary republic envisaged in the Constitution and more like a hybrid system in which elected representatives took most of the blame while their 'handlers' took most of the decisions.

Former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi is perhaps not wrong in regretting that the outgoing Assembly may have been "the worst in Pakistan's history". It not only failed in its fiduciary duty under two separate governments, but it also actively undermined Parliament by ceding unprecedented power to unelected quarters. Former prime minister Imran Khan set the tone by outsourcing his government's control to the intelligence apparatus. The latter whipped up votes and coddled or coerced the PTI's coalition partners when the prime minister himself was not in the mood to play nice.

The then opposition, too, did not help matters by creating what was sometimes an overly hostile environment, pushing the thin-skinned PTI leadership to opt for ordinances to execute its legislative goals. The PDM tenure saw a continuation of the same once the new government realised that it, too, had little patience or will to play by the rules when 'easier' solutions existed.

The transference of power from elected to unelected decision-makers intensified following the May 9 violence this year, as extensive control over internal affairs was handed over to the security establishment. Its influence has now crept into economic decision-making, industry, and, lately, legislative business.

But the 15th Assembly is no more, and the upcoming elections offer an opportunity to undo its mistakes. The aspirants to the 16th National Assembly must demand that the polls follow the constitutionally defined schedule and be conducted in a free and fair environment. They owe this to their constituents. The next setup must avoid the controversies that dogged the last one if it is to return any stability to the country. Any attempts to extend the tenure of the caretaker government or influence election results through pre-poll engineering should be resisted across the board. If the last five years have taught us anything, it is that tinkering with the democratic process is a recipe for disaster.



Zubeida Mustafa

Our schoolchildren are at risk. It is not the system of education that makes them vulnerable to social evils such as drug addiction (substance use disorder, or SUD in medical parlance); schools also fail to provide students the support they need in their adolescent years. When there is talk of illicit drugs, it is generally in the context of their seizure by the authorities.

Data provided by the Anti-Narcotics Force indicates the magnitude of the unmet challenge. There are 7.6 million drug abusers in Pakistan. There were 4.5m in 2013 when the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) held its first survey. Another survey is now underway. It is said that nearly half the drug abusers in Pakistan are under 30.

What confuses the scene is the absence of a clear definition of illicit substances. Thus some stimulants (caffeine and tobacco) and depressants and some synthetic drugs are not considered illicit. But if taken by children, they can be detrimental to their development or cause them to turn to hard drugs later.

The WHO has not been very helpful in establishing clarity. It states, "Psychoactive drugs are substances that, when administered into one's system, affect mental processes, eg, perception, consciousness, cognition or mood." It does not state which substances produce dependence.

This grey area has given social acceptability to many substances that are medically termed harmful. Thus gutka and e-cigarettes are commonly used,

Drugs in schools

the first by the poor and the second by the affluent. Gutka is banned by law, while the tobacco industry enjoys the government's protection.

For obvious reasons, the authorities have failed to check transnational crime cartels that form a nexus with human traffickers and drug smugglers. This has made Pakistan an unsafe country for children in search of solace.

Mental health professionals attribute SUD to a child's inability to cope with her adverse circumstances. Dr Nazila Bano, a psychiatrist and UNODC trainer of professionals treating drug addiction, believes it is not political instability and economic uncertainty that upset schoolchildren. Their focus is on issues of concern to adolescents such as keeping abreast of their contemporaries in lifestyle, dress code and leisure-time activities. The compulsion for them is to belong to a group. Since drugs have become 'fashionable', their classmates who take drugs are considered 'cool' and worthy of emulation.

According to Dr Nazila, psychosocial-biological factors are the main determinants of a child's coping skills. Our norms and parenting methods have changed to the disadvantage of the youth, who are emotionally disconnected from their families.

Since education has become central to the life of the youth, what Sana Khan says is significant. She is a play therapist and a trainee psychotherapist, with 18 years of school teaching experience. She says: "Our education has become highly competitive and the children are under tremendous pressure. They are expected to excel in their studies and nothing less than an A satisfies the parents. That shapes the child's approach as well."

She speaks of numerous other features of our

school system that affect the child negatively: private tuitions after school, whether needed or not; learning in a foreign language, a challenge for many students; and no games or physical exercise. The main problem is that parents want their child to excel and do not validate their child until she is at the top of her class. "I always advise parents to validate their child for what she is and build emotional ties with her to make her feel secure," she adds.

Both these health professionals are critical of the overwhelming presence of technology in the life of the youth, such as the smartphone, which nearly all young persons carry to play digital games or communicate on social media. Dr Nazila points out that commenting on Facebook is a solitary activity, for no direct dialogue takes place between the youth, though thousands may be involved. Their world is actually lonely.

Sana points to the risks of digital games: a shorter attention span, urge for instant rewards and constant need to achieve greater satisfaction levels. Drugs work in a similar way. The drug user needs more of it to satisfy himself.

Unesco's recent GEM report also suggests the appropriate use of technology in schools as it is no substitute for a teacher's presence on-site.

In this situation, it is not surprising that youth of all socioeconomic classes are taking to drugs in large numbers. Schools can at least help by creating public awareness and ensure that drugs are not used on their premises. If education were made enjoyable, why should it create pressure on the child? Parents have to take parenting seriously. Where are the teachers, the super-heroes of yesterday? -- Courtesy Dawn

A shameful chapter indeed



Raouf Hasan

By the time this piece appears in the press, the most dishonourable bunch ever in the history of Pakistan, led by that inveterate pretender to the top office, would have packed their bags and retreated in the hope that they would soon be back to replicate their shameful performance.

They think so because the country's history is replete with such craven instances when leaders kicked out once have been solicited and accepted by virtue of a cleverly contrived mechanism.

Imran Khan is an exception to the rule as he will neither leave the country to safer sojourns and facilitate his return or compromise the enshrining principles of his ideology that he is convinced would bring relief to the state and the people who, for an eternity, have languished in the dungeons of darkness with no trace of light showing through. Their personal lot has continued to deteriorate as circumstances have become harder to endure and life a backbreaking burden to carry.

Countless are the reasons for which my head is bowed in utter shame. The manner the criminal conglomerate made a mockery of parliament has no parallel even in the chequered history of this beleaguered country. Its floor was used wantonly to adopt legislation and enact, amend and alter laws, rules and regulations for two principal reasons: to secure themselves reprieve from countless brazen robberies they have committed

over time, and deprive the weak and enfeebled people of their constitutional and legal rights through draconian indulgences.

In the process, they muzzled the media to ensure that no contrarian view is broadcast, and no one given space to critique the government.

This has gravely dented the democratic identity of the country and created doubts whether it would ever regain a moral and constitutional base, or henceforth remain at the mercy of powerful forces to deal with it as may please their fanciful whims. So immense is the grossness of the past sixteen months that it would be impossible to encapsulate it in a few lines. Voluminous would be required to capture the salient contours of the tragedy that has befallen Pakistan.

For example, lowest ever GDP growth rate of 0.5 per cent, down from 6.1 per cent when the PTI government was removed. Negative growth in manufacturing and agriculture. Record unemployment in 75 years: 8.5 per cent against 6.2 per cent during the PTI government with over two million people unemployed. Annual inflation recorded at its highest ever: 38 per cent against 12.2 per cent during the PTI government.

More contours include: highest ever interest rate at 22 per cent. Lowest credit rating since 1994. One of the worst rupee depreciation phases ever recorded: over Rs105 lost against the dollar during their 460 days in government. Additional debt of over Rs20 trillion accumulated during a span of 16 months against Rs18.3 trillion by the PTI in 40 months. Highest fiscal deficit in absolute term of Rs6,400 billion posted by any government.

Further: tax targets for 2022-23 missed by a massive margin despite 40 per cent devaluation in a

single year. Remittances decreased to \$27 billion from \$31.3 billion during the PTI government. Exports dipped to \$27.7 billion against \$31.7 billion during the PTI government. Despite major increases in electricity tariffs, circular debt increased — as did loadshedding.

In terms of policy formulation, a few harrowing failures, some of which were also identified by the IMF, include the following: undue intervention and manipulation of official exchange rate, thus increasing the difference between the interbank and the kerb rate. Ban on imports to manage balance of payment, triggering smuggling of goods and foreign currency. Policy reversal on major tax initiatives such as broadening of tax base and track and trace system. Crony appointments on key government positions and a huge cabinet with no control over expenditures. Reversal of targeted digital services, withdrawal of Sehat Card, Kamyab and Naya Pakistan Housing schemes. Closure of Langar Khanas and Ehsaas Rashan programmes.

The sinister plan is to let the caretaker government continue till such time they are assured that the Imran Khan factor has been taken care of. True to his prediction, Khan has become an even bigger threat from prison as is evidenced by the recent local bodies results from Peshawar and Havelian.

It is time for the perpetrators to break this deadly mental logjam and face reality. Elections must be held without any delay, and people allowed to bring in a government of their choice. Tampering with their cardinal right or the results of the elections would spell disaster for the country and plunge it into an irredeemable crisis. It is time to pay heed. Let reason and sanity dictate the future. -- Courtesy TheNews

Commerce News

Govt provides Rs 2,953m for agro-based SMEs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The government has provided Rs 2,953 million for the modernization of agro-based Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in order to enhance farm output and encourage agricultural sector value addition for enhancing farm income as well as profit maximization.

The amount was disbursed among 177 borrowers under Prime Minister Kissan Package for dairy, livestock food

processing, fruit, and vegetable packaging across the country, said an official in the Ministry of National Food Security and Research.

Talking to APP here on Friday he said that the government has also provided Rs1,057 million for mark-up subsidy and a risk-sharing scheme for farm mechanization to enhance per-acre farm income in the country. The amount was disbursed among 507 borrowers by

the end of the last fiscal year.

"Meanwhile, the government has disbursed Rs12,817 million under Prime Minister Youth Agriculture Loan Scheme in order to encourage youth towards agriculture entrepreneurship as well as promote the agriculture and livestock sector in the country, he added."

The official said that over 24,776 applications were approved and out of that 23,857 applications

were disbursed, adding that an amount of Rs14,917 million was approved and Rs12,817 million disbursed among the applicants.

The government, he said under the Kissan Package had provided Rs3,830.9 million in interest-free loans by June to landless farmers, which were badly affected due to torrential rains and flash floods last year.

He said adding that by the month of June 2023,



LAHORE: 50-member business delegation from ASEAN countries led by Secretary Trade Development Authority of Pakistan, Dr Farid Iqbal Qureshi in a group photo with Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman during meeting at Governor House.



MULTAN: Members of Multan Chamber of Small Traders are holding protest demonstration against IMF policies, massive unemployment, increasing price of daily use products and inflation price hiking, in Multan.

ASEAN business delegation calls on Governor Punjab

LAHORE (APP): A 50-member business delegation from ASEAN countries led by Secretary Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) Dr. Farid Iqbal Qureshi called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman at the Governor's House, here on Friday.

The delegation comprised businessmen from Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, Brunei Darussalam and Laos.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said Pakistan wishes to enhance trade

relations with other countries including its neighboring countries.

He said people to people contacts and exchange of business delegations are necessary for strong relations among ASEAN member countries.

The Governor Punjab said Pakistan has made a conducive policy for foreign direct investment and has given special incentives to investors in special economic zones. He said the ASEAN countries can benefit from these special economic zones. He said Pakistani textile products are known globally for their quality.

PSX turns around, gains 616 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bullish trend on Friday, gaining 616.06 points, a positive change of 1.29 per cent, closing at 48,424.40 points against 47,808.34 points the previous trading day.

A total of 368,334,990 shares were traded during the day as compared to 322,207,162 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs17.063 billion against Rs12.757 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 331 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 207 of them recorded gains and 101 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 23 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were K-Electric Ltd with 53,872,599 shares at Rs 2.16 per share; Oil and Gas Dev with 22,570,520 shares at Rs.103.47 per share and Lalpur Power with 18,636,000 shares at Rs.32.15 per share.

Nestle Pakistan XD witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 85.85 per share price, closing at Rs 7,181.00, whereas the runner-up was Mari Petroleum with an Rs 27.90 rise in its per share price to Rs 1,636.21.

Weekly inflation up by 0.69 percent

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.69 percent for the combined consumption group during the week ended on August 10, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday.

The SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 273.43 points as compared to 271.56 points during the past week, according to the PBS data.

As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the

combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 30.82 percent.

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

The SPI for the lowest consumption group up to Rs 17,732, increased by 0.76 percent and went up to 279.66 points from last week's 277.55 points.

The SPI for consumption groups from Rs 17,732-22,888, Rs 22,889-29,517, Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175 increased by 0.68 percent.

SECP registers 2,220 companies in July

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) registered 2,220 new companies in July 2023, a 25% increase from the previous year. The total capitalization for these companies was Rs. 3.3 billion. The total number of registered companies in the country rose to 197,828.

About 57% of Pakistan's companies are private limited companies, 41% single-member companies, and 2% not-for-profit associations, trade

organizations, and LLPs. 99.7% are registered online, and three foreign companies have established business in Pakistan. 86 foreign applicants have registered from overseas, said a press release issued here on Friday. The information technology sector took the lead with incorporation of 316 companies, trading with 309, services with 260, real estate development & construction with 252, food & beverages with 96, tourism with 91, education with 90.

Pak-Chinese companies sign agreement for cultivating red chillies

ISLAMABAD (APP): Litong Group, a leading company of China on Friday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Guard Agriculture Research and Services (GARS) for the cultivation of red chillies in Pakistan and subsequently its export to China under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework.

Chen Changwei, Chairman Litong and Chief Executive Officer of GARS, Shahzad Ali Malik signed the MoU on behalf of their respective

companies, said a news release issued here.

Shahzad Ali Malik said that the criteria for selecting seed production land shall consider the underlined factors such as long-term feasibility, land and water availability.

He said that in a phased program, a total of 200,000 acres of land would be brought under chilli cultivation.

He said that joint efforts would be made to promote chilli seed breeding, chilli crop production and research with a focus on developing high-quality chilli seeds,

suitable for the local agricultural conditions and crop production for Litong as per requirement.

Shahzad Ali Malik said it will boost chilli export to China and improve the profitability of chilli growers, adding that

Pak-China collaboration in the field of agriculture would be further fortified in the days to come and GARS had over three decades good working relationship with Longping, one of the Chinese pioneer company for first time evolving hybrid rice seed in Pakistan.

Rupee sheds 90 paise against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Rupee on Friday witnessed a 90-paise devaluation against the US dollar in the interbank trading as it closed at Rs288.49 against the previous day's closing of Rs287.59. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollars in the open market stood at Rs294.5 and Rs297.5 respectively. The price of the Euro increased by 55 paise to close at Rs317.25 against the last day's closing of Rs316.70, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

Awareness session on 'Strategic Export Control Division' held

SIALKOT (APP): An awareness session on 'Strategic Export Control Division' was held at the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) on Friday. The session was attended by SCCI President Abdu Ghafoor Malik, Senior Vice President

Wahub Jahangir, Deputy Director Strategic Export Control Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Aown Arshad Gillani, Assistant Director Strategic Export Control Division Mussawir Ali

Mirza and the business community. Senior Vice President Wahub Jahangir said Sialkot made footballs, hockey sticks, cricket gears and boxing gloves were used in international games, including Olympics and the World Cup. Most International Cricket Batsmen prefer bats manufactured in Sialkot. "The inheritance of skilled craftsmanship in manufacturing surgical instruments forms a history spanning over a century that has enabled.

IG Punjab says: Security of all religious places top priority

LAHORE (APP): Inspector General Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar said that the security of all the religious places including mosques, imambargahs, shrines is the first priority. The security measures will be improved with the effective use of modern technology and available resources.

He expressed these views while meeting the delegation of Muttahida Ulema Board Punjab at the Central Police Office here on Thursday.

The delegation led by Chairman Muttahida Ulema Board Dr. Raghbir Hussain Naemi included Moulana Muhammad Hussain Akbar, Mufti Muhammad Ramzan Sialvi, Moulana Syed

Ziaullah Shah, Moulana Hafiz Zubair Hassan, Moulana Muhammad Ali Naqshbandi, Moulana Sardar Muhammad Khan Laghari and Mufti Muhammad Imran Hanafi. Usman Anwar said that scholars were ensuring the establishment of peace with the cooperation and consultation of religious leaders, community leaders, members of 'aman' committees, institutions, and will continue to provide the best security to all religious programs in the future. IG Punjab said that he was deeply grateful for the cooperation of all the stakeholders, including scholars, aman committees, and religious scholars of all 'Masaliks'.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali along with Chairman Higher Education Commission Professor Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed distributing certificate of electric wheelchairs among the special children/students of the public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

CM reviews arrangements for Independence Day

Independent Report
LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi, during a meeting held at CM's office on Friday, reviewed arrangements for celebrating Independence Day. Acting on directives from the caretaker CM, Independence Day festivities are set to be marked with a blend of grandeur and patriotic fervor, as extensive plans have been finalized for Punjab's jubilant observance.

At night on August 13, a vibrant display of fireworks is scheduled to illuminate the skies.

Simultaneously, on the morning of August 14, flag-hoisting ceremonies will be held in unison across all divisional and district headquarters throughout Punjab. On the evening of August 14, national songs and anthems will be presented to the public in special events. Renowned singers will perform. All government and private buildings will be lit up across the province. National flags will be displayed at prominent places in all cities.

Famous singer Rahat Fateh Ali Khan will perform at the Gaddafi

Stadium. Fireworks will be set off at Minar-e-Pakistan and other places. The day will witness a ceremonial flag hoisting at Huzuri Bagh at 8 am, followed by similar observances at landmarks such as Multan Ghanta Ghar. Firework displays and musical performances will grace the night in Multan, where the Metro route will also be illuminated. In the spirit of rejuvenation, the occasion will also see the planting of saplings.

Reflecting the luminance of unity and patriotism, the canals of Lahore and Faisalabad will

shimmer with the glow of lit lamps. The CM passionately acknowledged Pakistan's genesis as a product of immense ancestral sacrifices, with a reminder that independence was secured through the crossing of rivers of fire and blood by Muslims.

Striving for liberty, emphasizing the vibrancy of the celebrations, the CM conveyed that Punjab's Independence Day observances are meticulously curated to stand as a remarkable and unparalleled tribute.

KP CM stresses on civil servants to work for people's welfare

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Chief Minister, Muhammad Azam Khan here Friday stressed on public servants to work tirelessly for resolution of people's problems and their welfare.

Addressing the completion of 33rd Senior Management Course (SMC) ceremony as a chief guest here at National Institute of Management (NIM), the caretaker chief minister said that great responsibilities rest on public servants by adopting highest standards of professionalism, management skills and work with utmost dedication imperative for

swift resolution of people's problems and welfare of masses.

Congratulating the 34 passed out officers of the SMC, the chief minister said that public servants and officers could not afford leniency in dispensation of official duties.

He directed them to decide cases swiftly on merit and treat general public politely. He said Pakistan had been created after a lot of sacrifices by our forefathers and the country's problems could be addressed by taking guidance from the teachings of the father of the nation, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.



GILGIT: Deputy Speaker Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly Sadia Danish in a meeting with her district people at Assembly Secretariat.



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister of Punjab Muhsin Naqvi conferring the Gold medals and presenting certificates to position holders of Secondary School Examination, at local hotel in Provincial Capital.

Various events planned to celebrate Independence Day

KARACHI (APP): Transition Officer South and Town Municipal Commissioner Sadder, Akhtar Ali Sheikh, has said that various events will be organized in Lyari and Sadder Town to celebrate Independence Day in a dignified manner, for which all preparations have been completed at various key places in district South.

Pakistani flag and Independence Day congratulatory banners will be displayed on the night of the 13th and 14th of August.

On the night of August 13 and 14, lighting arrangements are being made at the central offices and various roundabouts. On August 14, National Anthem and flag hoisting ceremony, national songs program for school children and national flags, badges and sweets will be distributed among the children. Akhtar Ali Sheikh further said that under the direction of Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab, saplings will be planted in various parks and playgrounds of Lyari and Sadder Town.

SU announces 2nd semester 5-Year LLB Programme examination schedule

HYDERABAD (APP): The Controller of Semester Examination University of Sindh Jamshoro Friday announced that second semester 5-Year LLB Programme examination of all public and private sector law colleges will be conducted from August 29, 2023. According to university spokesman, the detailed schedule of the examination will be circulated to all concerned shortly. The first semester examination of all batches will also be started from August 29, 2023.

KP Governor distributes electric wheelchairs among disabled students

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali on Friday said that the guardianship of special children is the responsibility of the entire society.

Addressing as a chief guest at a grand ceremony of distribution of electric wheelchairs among the special children/students of the public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa here, he said that the provision of electric wheelchairs will increase the self-esteem of special children.

Chairman Higher Education Commission Professor Dr. Mukhtar

Ahmed, Vice Chancellors, Secretary Higher Education Department Anila Durrani, students and parents participated in the ceremony. The Governor distributed electric wheelchairs among 30 disabled students of 11 universities of the province under the Prime Minister's Electric Wheelchairs Project. He said that he salutes those parents who have made their special children complete the journey from first grade to higher education.

He directed the vice chancellors of the universities to waive the fees of special children studying in their educational institutions

and take measures to provide them with jobs.

The Governor distributed electric wheelchairs among 30 disabled students of 11 universities of the province under the Prime Minister's Electric Wheelchairs Project. On this occasion, the Governor praised the academic spirit, courage and dedication of the special students and went to the children and met them and encouraged them. Addressing the ceremony on the occasion, Chairman HEC Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed said that under the project, electric wheelchairs have been given to 610 disabled children in three phases.

SAU establishes experimental olive & pomegranate field

HYDERABAD (APP): The authorities of Sindh Agriculture University Tando Jam have established an experimental olive and pomegranate field at the university's farm under "Elite Fruit Tree Plantation".

According to a university spokesman, the project is funded by Small Grant Research Projects which was inaugurated by the Vice Chancellor Dr. Fateh Marri and other experts by planting the saplings.

Under the supervision of the Horticulture Department of Sindh Agriculture University, a research field of

"Elite Fruit Tree Plantation" was established at the varsity's Latif experimental farm. Addressing the participants of the inauguration ceremony, Dr. Fateh Marri emphasized that experts should conduct research for the production of fruits and vegetables against adverse weather and the scope of research should be widened for the production of commodities according to the climate of Sindh.

Dr. Mujahid Hussain Leghari, Chairman of the Department of Horticulture said that the experiments of these varieties of olive.

International News

Bangladeshi UN worker in Yemen freed by Al Qaeda branch

Monitoring Desk
DHAKA: A Bangladeshi citizen working for the United Nations has been freed after a year and a half abduction by Al Qaeda in Yemen, the prime minister's office said.

"I never thought I would return home," Akam Sofyol Anam told re-porters in Dhaka, following his return a day earlier on Wednesday, calling the last 18 months "horrible".

"I thought the terrorists might kill me anytime," added Anam, a former army lieutenant colonel. "My days were miserable. There was a fear of death every

day; it cannot be expressed in words — it is seen in films only."

In February 2022, Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) kidnapped Anam and four others as they returned to Yemen's southern port city of Aden after a field mission while working for UN Department of Safety and Security.

Anam said that he was not physically tortured, but had often been kept blindfolded. "I couldn't see the sky for months," he said, adding that he was moved repeatedly from place to place. He said that he had

"no idea how much money they wanted or what was their demand", adding that he thought he had been "targeted." Anam "expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her role in rescuing him", the premier's office said, releasing a picture of the two meeting.

A bombing in southern Yemen on Thursday killed four fighters loyal to a secessionist force, including a prominent commander who previously survived assassination attempts by Al Qaeda, a security official said.



Bangladeshi national Akam Sofyol Anam, his wife Kazi Nasreen Anam and son Sakeef Anam as they meet Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in Dhaka, after he was freed after a year and a half abduction by Al-Qaeda in Yemen.

North Korea developing nuclear weapons, evading sanctions in 2023 - UN report

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: North Korea continued developing nuclear weapons and producing nuclear fissile material in 2023 and evading United Nations sanctions that aim to cut off funding for Pyongyang's nuclear and ballistic missile programs, according to an unpublished United Nations report seen by Reuters on Thursday.

"After a record-breaking level of cyber thefts in 2022, estimated at \$1.7 billion, DPRK (North Korea) hackers reportedly continued to successfully target cyber

cryptocurrency and other financial exchanges globally," independent sanctions monitors wrote in the report to a U.N. Security Council committee. The monitors, who report to the council twice a year, have previously accused North Korea of using cyber attacks to help fund its nuclear and missile programs. North Korea has denied allegations of hacking or other cyberattacks.

North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the report. Earlier on Thursday

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un replaced the military's top general and called for more preparations for the possibility of war, a boost in weapons production, and expansion of military drills, state media KCNA reported. North Korea has been under U.N. sanctions for its nuclear and ballistic missile programs since 2006. Those measures have unanimously been strengthened over the years, but the 15-member body is now deadlocked as China and Russia push for them to be eased to convince Pyongyang to return to denuclearization talks.

Biden calls China a 'ticking time bomb' due to economic troubles

Monitoring Desk
SALT LAKE CITY: US President Joe Biden on Thursday called China a "ticking time bomb" because of its economic challenges and said the country was in trouble because of weak growth.

"They have got some problems. That's not good because when bad folks have problems, they do bad things," Biden said at a political fundraiser in Utah.

Biden's remarks were reminiscent of comments he made at another fundraiser in June when he referred to President Xi Jinping as a "dictator." China called the remarks a provocation.

Those comments came shortly after US Secretary of State Antony Blinken completed a visit

to China aimed at stabilizing relations that Beijing described as being at their lowest point since formal ties were established in 1979.

China's consumer sector fell into deflation and factory-gate prices extended declines in July. China may be entering an era of much slower economic growth with stagnated consumer prices and wages, contrasting with inflation elsewhere in the world. The United States, the world's largest economy, has fought high inflation and seen a robust labor market.

"China is in trouble," Biden said on Thursday. He said he did not want to hurt China and wanted a rational relationship with the country.

Iran, US to free prisoners under swap deal

Monitoring Desk
DUBAI: Iran agreed to release four American-Iranian dual nationals from Tehran's Evin prison under a prisoner exchange deal between Tehran and Washington, its mission to the United Nations said on Thursday.

"Under the deal mediated by a third country, five Iranians jailed in the United States will be released and Iran's frozen funds in South Korea will be unblocked and transferred to Qatar," it said, according to state news agency IRNA.

Five Iranian nationals will be released from US prisons as well.

Earlier, Iran moved five Americans from jail to house arrest, officials and family members said on Thursday, in the first step of a delicate deal.

The progress on the prisoners — one of them detained for nearly eight years — comes after quiet, exhaustive diplomacy between the long-time adversaries whose separate talks on restor-

ing a nuclear deal broke down.

Sources familiar with the negotiations said that the next step would be the transfer of \$6 billion frozen in South Korea to a special account administered in Qatar which Iran could use for humanitarian purchases such as food and medicine. If all goes as planned, the prisoners could leave Iran sometime in September, one source said.

Four of the prisoners — Siamak Namazi, Emad Sharqi and Morad Tahbaz, and another who preferred to remain anonymous — were taken on Thursday out of Tehran's notorious Evin prison, a day after President Joe Biden's administration informed their families of a breakthrough in talks.

The four were escorted to a hotel where they will remain held under guard by Iranian officials, a lawyer for one of the prisoners said.

Fighting has left half of Lebanon's largest Palestinian refugee camp 'a hot area,' UN says

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: Days of fighting in the largest Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon displaced several hundred families, destroyed up to 400 houses and left half the camp still off-limits and considered "a hot area," a senior U.N. official said Thursday.

Dorothee Klaus, Director of the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, said she was able

to visit part of the Ein el-Hilweh camp for the first time earlier this week and met with traumatized children and women, some whose hair turned white during the hostilities.

The fighting between members of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah group and militants of Islamic groups at Ein el-Hilweh near the southern port of Sidon that began July 30.

Poland plans to deploy 10,000 troops to its border with Belarus

Monitoring Desk
WARSAW: Poland intends to put 10,000 soldiers along its border with Belarus, the country's defense minister said Thursday as Warsaw worries about the presence of Russian-linked mercenaries in Belarus and migrants trying to cross the border without authorization. Separately, the Polish military said it was searching an area near the border.

India proposes sweeping overhaul of British-era criminal laws

Monitoring Desk
NEW DELHI: India's government unveiled new punishments for mob lynchings and crimes against women on Friday in a proposal for the country's biggest criminal justice overhaul since the British colonial era.

India's Penal Code and other statutes governing the police and courts were introduced in the 19th century, while the country was governed by the British crown.

Sweeping changes to the laws would remove ar-

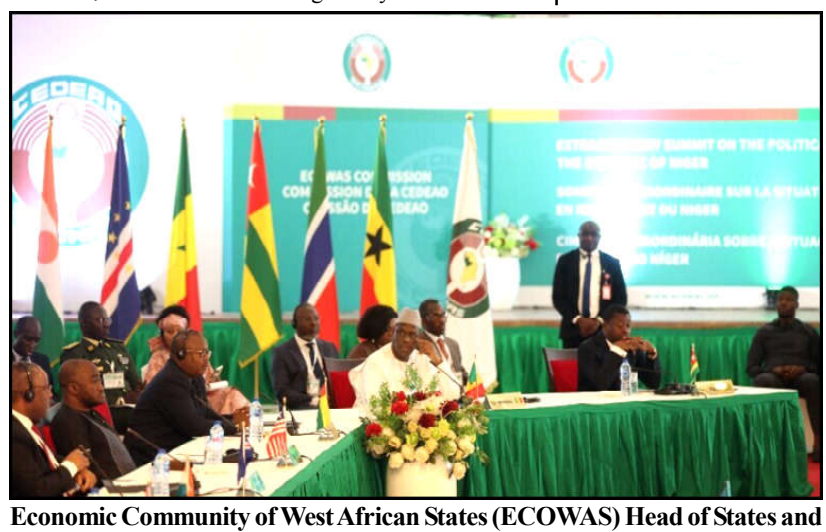
chaic references to the British monarchy and other "signs of our slavery," Home Minister Amit Shah told parliament Friday.

"These laws were made to strengthen the colonial rule, to protect colonial rulers, and the intention was to punish and not give justice," he told lawmakers while introducing bills for the reforms. "We are going to change this and the spirit of these new laws will be to protect the constitutional rights of our citizens."

Tropical storm triggers floods, evacuations in South Korea

Monitoring Desk
SEOUL: South Korea authorities evacuated more than 14,000 people and closed schools in flood-hit areas as tropical storm Khanun swept over the peninsula on Thursday, having pounded southern Japan over the past week.

Downgraded from a typhoon to a tropical storm, Khanun made landfall on the southeast coast, and was heading towards the South Korean capital Seoul. Khanun could also strike North Korea's capital, Pyongyang, early on Friday.



Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Head of States and Government extraordinary session in Abuja.

Cabinet members return to people with respect, dignity: CM Murad

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah presiding over his farewell cabinet meeting at CM House said that he, his cabinet members, and all the MPAs of his party were going back to the people with dignity and respect because they stood by them at a difficult time and served them to the best of their abilities.

The meeting was attended by all the ministers, advisors, special assistants, coordinators, Chief Secretary Sohail Rajput, PSCM Fayaz Jatoti, Secretary Finance Hassan Naqvi, and others.

He said that at the start of his government tenure in 2018, the federal government [PTI] was not ready to cooperate and tried to destabilize the PPP government in Sindh. He further said that under the guidance of former President Asif Zardari and PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, he kept serving our people steadfastly.

Murad Shah said that conspiracies from the fed-

eral government were still in progress when the fatal pandemic - COVID-19 hit hard. "It created a wave of fear and insecurity among the people," he said and added that his government took concrete steps to face the situation and save the people.

He said that the province was still surviving the COVID losses when the floods of 2022 swept almost across the province. "I had almost lost hope to drain out such a deluge of the water but the cabinet members, party workers, and the leadership supported him and finally the water was disposed of, and wheat crops were sown," he said.

Murad Shah said that they have harvested the bumper crop and achieved more than their requirement and now a record cotton crop is being reaped. "We all - the party leadership, ministers, advisors, special assistants, coordinators, MPAs, and party workers remained shoulder by shoulder with the

flood-affected people," he said and added that the houses destroyed by the floods were being reconstructed along with giving the title of the land to the affected people.

Mr Shah said we were going back to our people with respect, dignity, and a feeling of satisfaction that we served the people.

The chief minister thanked his cabinet members, Chief Secretary Sohail Rajput and former chief secretary Syed Mumtaz Shah for their support and cooperation. He also thanked the secretaries, heads of provincial government institutions, staff of the CM House, and everyone who worked with him during his tenure.

The provincial cabinet members lauded the chief minister for his performance, his resolute stand to protect the rights of the people of Sindh, and his support to them when they were harassed by the NAB and other institutions at the hands of the federal government of PTI.



KARACHI: Sindh Assembly Speaker, Agha Siraj Durrani along with Members of Sindh Assembly during the farewell session of the Sindh Assembly, at Sindh Assembly in Karachi.

Promote inter-religious harmony, Masood Khan urges faith leaders

WASHINGTON (APP): With hate speech on the rise worldwide, Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Masood Khan, has called for collective efforts to promote inter-religious harmony when he met faith and community leaders on Thursday.

"It is our collective responsibility to combat intolerance, xenophobia, fanaticism and religious hatred worldwide," he said at the meeting, held at the Pakistani embassy, while reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to promote inter-faith harmony.

Representatives of various faiths and members of the Pak-American community attended the meeting, with Sahibzada Sultan Ahmad Ali, Chairman of the Muslim Institute, as the chief guest.

They included, Reverend Canon Justin Murff, Executive Director of the Anglican Office for Government & International Affairs; Muhammad Usman Noori of the Al-Mustafa Trust; Yahya Hendi, Director of the Muslim Life and Chaplaincy at Georgetown University, Dr. Maqsood

Chaudhry, an interfaith activist, Imam Na'eem Baig, Outreach & Interfaith Director Dar Al-Hijra Islamic Centre.

"Sufism has a great history in Pakistan and it has always worked to connect communities and integrate them as one humanity," the Pakistani envoy told the gathering.

"A cradle of multiple civilizations for centuries, Pakistan's respect for cultural and religious diversity is part of its national psyche and mores. "We will continue to nurture that time-honored tradition," he added.

Development in society possible only with better governance: President

Urges civil servants to improve service-delivery, ensure good governance

LAHORE (APP): President Dr. Arif Alvi has urged civil servants to work with dedication and commitment to improve service delivery and ensure good governance in the country. He also underscored the need to take timely and swift decisions to keep pace with the rest of the world.

Addressing the successful graduates of the 118th Senior Management Course (SMC) and 33rd National Management Course (NMC) at the National School of Public Policy here on Friday, he said that Islam was a community-based religion and it emphasised serving the poor and showing utmost compassion to them.

"A civil servant must interact with the public and be easily accessible to them

in order to address their problems. This principle has been practised by great caliphs of Islam," Dr Alvi said, adding that welfare of the community should be the first priority of a civil servant.

He said that brilliant civil servants were an antidote to the state's ills and that people with the right attitude could change the world around them.

He remarked that the country needed such people more than before as the country was faced with multiple challenges.

Dr Alvi urged the civil servants to follow in the footsteps of the former great civil servants and become a source of resistance against hypocrisy and corruption, besides ensuring good governance.



LAHORE: President Dr. Arif Alvi addressing Graduation Ceremony of NMC at National School of Public Policy.

Mayor Karachi thanks PPP leadership for approval of Rs 1.4bln to pay arrears to ex-employees of KMC

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab thanked People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and Local Government Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah for approving the Rs 1.4 billion special grant to pay the arrears of the retired employees of KMC and a 50 percent increase in the Octroi Zila Tax (OZT) share as in other districts of Karachi.

The Mayor Karachi said that disbursement of salaries of all KMC employees along with increase from July 01 has been started.

He said that previously KMC received 269.646 million rupees in OZT from the Sindh government and now like other district with 50 percent increase KMC will get Rs 134.823 million increase in this head.

KMC use to get Rs 281.437 million in the head of pension from the Sindh government and a special grant of Rs 650 million. The Mayor Karachi said salaries of KMC employees will be paid on time with 50% increase in OZT share whereas through a special grant, there will be considerable help in paying the arrears of the retired municipal employees.



KARACHI: Mayor Karachi, Barrister Murtaza Wahab joined the Minority Rights March on the occasion of National Minority Day held at Frere Hall in Karachi.

70% of electrocution cases happen in private homes: Experts

KARACHI (APP): About 70% electrocution incidents take place in private premises and homes, speakers at a webinar conducted by Mehfooz Pakistan discussed on Friday.

The webinar was on the topic of Electrocution Prevention and Public Safety, said a news release.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Korangi, Tariq Nawaz, stated that the child was kidnapped from the New Town area and had been confined in a house in Block A of Baghe-e-Millat.

The child began crying during the night, which raised suspicions among the local residents who promptly informed the police.

Naimat Khan was asked about the electrocution cases especially that occur in private premises. He said since electrocution cases were a seasonal problem happening mostly during monsoon, there wasn't much importance given to the issue.

Zarrar Khuroh asked Dr Lubna about how the electrocution cases were reported and dealt with to which Dr Lubna responded that electrocution cases were not considered a medicolegal case which meant that these cases were not eligible for autopsy since there were no marks on the body and were not suspicious.

NA Speaker appreciates minorities for services to country

ISLAMABAD (APP): On the significant commemoration of National Minorities Day, celebrated annually on the 11th of August, Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf has extended heartfelt tribute and profound appreciation to all Pakistani Minorities for their exceptional contributions and unwavering dedication towards the cherished homeland.

He reiterated Pakistan's unwavering commitment to ensuring the full realization of rights for our fellow citizens, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan, notably within Articles 36.

The speaker emphatically emphasized that Pakistan embraced every resident within its borders, standing firmly against any form of discrimination based on caste, creed, color, or religion.

KS relief ensures food security for Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (Online): King Salman Humanitarian Aid & Relief Centre (KSRelief) is pleased to announce the successful completion of the first phase of our food security project for the year 2023-24 in Pakistan. In collaboration with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), we have distributed a total of 26,400 food packages, weighing (2,508) tons, to flood-affected and deserving individuals residing in 12 districts (Jaffarabad, Usta Muhammad, Sohbatpur, in Baluchistan, Rajgal, Karak, Banu, Upper Swat in KP, Rajanpur and DG Khan in Punjab, larkana and Umerkot in Sindh) across Pakistan. The first phase of this initiative has greatly impacted the lives of 184,800 beneficiaries throughout the country.

On this solemn occasion of National Minorities Day, the speaker renewed the nation's commitment to construct a harmonious, progressive, and inclusive Pakistan, firmly grounded in the foundational principles laid down by the nation's visionary father, Qaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.



KARACHI: A delegation of under trainee Assistant Collectors meeting with Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori.

IHC reserves verdict regarding PTI chief's shifting to Adiala Jail

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday reserved its judgment, observing that it would pass an appropriate order in an appeal of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman seeking his shifting from the District Jail Attock to the Central Jail Adiala.

chairman had already met him on August 7 to take his signatures on the power of attorney and other documents. The court questioned whether a lawyer could meet his client only for his taking signatures on document. Rejecting the requests to visit the prisoner could fall under contempt of court, he added.

SSP Hyderabad visits 2 day driving license mobile service camp

HYDERABAD (APP): Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Hyderabad, Sajid Amir Siduzai on Friday visited 2-day driving license mobile service camp at Hyderabad Bar Council in collaboration with the Police Facilitation Center (PFC) and the Driving License Center (DLS).



KARACHI: Mayor Karachi, Barrister Murtaza Wahab joined the Minority Rights March on the occasion of National Minority Day held at Frere Hall in Karachi.

Chief Justice Aamer Farooq reserved the verdict after hearing arguments from respondents in the said case. During the course of proceedings, the chief justice remarked that the petitioner was of the view that the trial court had sent him to the Adiala Jail but he was lodged in the Attock Jail.

Assistant Advocate General Punjab Rao Shaikat produced the notification regarding shifting of the convict to the Attock Jail, saying reasons were mentioned about the action.

To the court's query, he said that a lawyer of PTI

Rao Shaikat said the jail administration had permitted the lawyer to visit Imran Khan on August 7, but they reached late on August 8 and 9.

The petitioner's counsel Sher Afzal Marawat argued that the lawyers were being humiliated in the matter of meeting their client.

The chief justice observed that the PTI chief was a former prime minister and leader of a big political party, and at the same time he was convicted, and "we have to move while keeping in mind all of this together".



KARACHI: Dr. Ramesh Kumar Vankwani, Chairman PM's Taskforce on Gandhara Tourism and Patron-in-Chief Pakistan Hindu Council, cutting the Cake Independence Day celebration after witnessing MOU signing ceremony between the Pakistan Hindu Council & the Legal Aid Society (LAS).



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah presides over a farewell cabinet meeting at CM House.

IGP for merger of small police stations into big police stations

KARACHI (APP): Inspector General of Police IGP Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon on Friday committees for integration of small police stations into bigger ones, turning the small police stations to check posts or reporting centers.

Presiding over a meeting for the purpose of reorganization of police stations in Karachi, the IGP Sindh constituted a committee headed by Additional IGP - Karachi Javed Alam Odho for police stations of Karachi region.

For the other ranges, DIGPs concerned were to head the committees for integration of small police stations. IGP Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon said the affairs of policing in police stations should not only be improved but also all positive and fruitful measures should be expanded.

ing collected from them, neither under the pretext of entry nor for the purpose of maintenance.

The response asserts that citizens continue to enjoy free access to all parks and playgrounds, with no charges levied even for maintenance purposes. As per the reply submitted by KMC, all the tenders for the auction of park entry fees were suspended in June. The court adjourned further hearing till September 12, while simultaneously maintaining the order that prohibits the collection of entry fees from citizens.

Funeral prayer of policeman martyred by firing of robbers offered

KARACHI (APP): The funeral prayer of a martyred cop Ghulam, who was killed by the firing of unidentified robbers, was offered at Police Headquarters Garden South on Friday.

The funeral prayer was attended by IGP Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon, Sindh Secretary Home, Additional IGP - Karachi, Zonal DIGPs Karachi, other senior police officers of Karachi district, family members, relatives and neighbours of the martyred.

The IGP Sindh and other officers on the occasion expressed their sympathies with the bereaved family of the martyred police constable and paid tribute to his services to the department.

Ghulam Nabi Memon instructed the police officers present on the occasion to complete all the necessary and legal documentation regarding the departmental privileges for the heirs of the martyr.

No gate fee for entry in parks, KMC tells SHC

KARACHI (INP): In a significant development, the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) on Friday filed its official response in Sindh High Court (SHC) against the application challenging the collection of fees for entry into city parks.

According to the details, a case was filed in the Sindh High Court (SHC) against the KMC for the collection of fees for the entry of citizens in the playgrounds and parks originated for the residents. The corporation clarified that the citizens' right to free entry to parks and playgrounds is upheld, and no fees are be-

ing collected from them, neither under the pretext of entry nor for the purpose of maintenance.

The response asserts that citizens continue to enjoy free access to all parks and playgrounds, with no charges levied even for maintenance purposes. As per the reply submitted by KMC, all the tenders for the auction of park entry fees were suspended in June. The court adjourned further hearing till September 12, while simultaneously maintaining the order that prohibits the collection of entry fees from citizens.



KARACHI: Social Activist Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Junior addressing the gathering of the minority communities at Frere Hall to mark National Minorities Day, in Provincial Capital.

PHC, LAS ink MoU for provision of legal aid to minority communities

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan Hindu Council (PHC) and Legal Aid Society (LAS), on Friday, inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for strengthening access to justice by extending legal support to Hindu and other non-Muslim communities across Sindh.

The MoU was signed by Secretary General PHC Parshotam Ramani and Chief Executive Officer LAS Barrister Hayya Emaan Zahid here at a ceremony in the presence of Chairman PM's Taskforce on Gandhara Tourism and Patron-in-Chief of PHC Dr Ramesh Kumar Vankwani and other representatives of

both the organisations. The signing ceremony was specifically organised on the International Day of Minorities to highlight the significance and role of minority communities in the development, progress and prosperity of the country while a cake was also cut at the occasion to mark the day. According to the MoU both organisations will work jointly for ensuring access of minority communities to justice in criminal as well as civil matters and safeguarding the rights of marginalised communities across Sindh.

As part of the collaboration, PHC will refer cases of the Hindu community to LAS, disseminate information.

Hot, dry weather forecast

SUKKUR (APP): The Met Office here on Friday forecast hot and dry weather for city and its adjoining areas during next 24 hours.

The maximum temperature 46C was recorded during the last 24 hours.

The hot and dry weather has also been forecast for rest of the region.