

# Independent

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## PM seeks plan comprising concrete measures to reduce excessive electricity bills

Says such measures will be taken which will not put an additional burden on the country's exchequer.; NEPA determines electricity tariff: Water & Power ministry

ISLAMABAD (Online): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar has directed the relevant institutions to prepare concrete measures to reduce the excessive electricity bills and submit a report in the next 48 hours.

He said that such measures will be taken which will not put an additional burden on the country's

exchequer. The distribution companies should present a road map to prevent electricity theft, it is not possible that the common man will be in trouble and bureaucrats and the prime minister will use free electricity on their taxes, he added.

The first round of emergency meeting on the

increase in electricity bills was held on Sunday under the chairmanship of Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar Haq Kakar.

According to the ongoing declaration, the Prime Minister was given a detailed briefing on the increase in July electricity bills in the meeting.

The Caretaker Prime

Minister said that in the next 48 hours, concrete steps should be taken to reduce the excess electricity bills.

No action will be taken in haste which will harm the country.

Measures will be taken which will not burden the national exchequer and provide convenience to the consumers.



Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar chairing an emergency meeting regarding electricity bills at the Prime Minister's House Islamabad.



KARACHI: Leaders and activists of Jamat-e-Islami (JI) are holding protest demonstration against massive unemployment, increasing price of daily use products, inflation price hiking and the highly inflated electricity bills, held in Karachi.

## Murad Ali Shah visits Bhutto family graveyard

LARKANA (APP): The former chief minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah along with the former Sindh ministers and PPP leaders on Sunday visited the Mausoleum of the martyrs of Bhutto's family in Garhi Khuda Bakhsh Bhutto (Larkana).

They also visited the grave of the former prime minister and slain chairperson of PPP Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, laid a wreath and offered 'Fateha' for 'Isal-i-Sawab'.

Murad Ali Shah who was also accompanied by former Sindh Ministers Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, Jam Khan Shoro, Chairman District Council Sukkur Syed Kamil Haider Shah, Chairman District Council

Larkana Aijaz Ahmed Leghari, Ghulam Mustafa Leghari, PPP leaders and others sat there for some time.

Syed Murad Ali Shah and others also laid wreath at the grave of Founder Chairman of PPP and former Prime Minister Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and offered 'Fateha'.

They visited the graves of former Chairperson of PPP and First Lady, Madar-e-Jamhooriat late Begum Nusrat Bhutto, late Shireen Amir Begum, the first wife of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Shaheed Mir Murtaza Bhutto and Shaheed Mir Shah Nawaz Bhutto laid floral wreaths and offered fateha.

## No room for extremism, religious animosity in Pak: Jamal

JARANWALA (APP): Caretaker Minister for National Heritage and Culture Dr. Jamal Shah says extremism and religious animosity will not be tolerated at any cost in Pakistan.

Talking to media in Jaranwala, he said our religion Islam doesn't permit any kind of discrimination and violence against any other religion and beliefs. He said that Islam teaches the lesson of peace, love and respect for others.

He lauded the efforts of Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi and his team for the speedy rehabilitation work on damaged worship places and houses.

## Interim CM directs to control Malaria in a week

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Sindh Justice (Retd.) Maqbool Baqir, while taking notice of increasing malaria cases across the province here on Sunday, directed the Health Department and Local Government (LG) Department to take necessary measures to control the disease in a week.

He said that most of the cases were being reported from Hyderabad,

Mirpurkhas, Larkana and Sukkur divisions.

The caretaker CM directed the Health Department to launch a campaign against the elimination of malaria. Baqir also directed to make arrangements for the availability of malaria drugs and wards in all government hospitals.

He said that the LG department should start spraying mosquito killers in their respective areas.

## MQM-P wants elections after fresh delimitations

KARACHI (INP): Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) Convener Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui on Sunday demanded transparent elections with the fresh delimitation of constituencies in line with the census 2023.

The MQM-P leader went on to say that Karachi needs transparent elections at the earliest, but on the same hand, Siddiqui said "If the delimitation of constituencies took weeks or months, it is not a bad deal."

"In the previous elections, fake representatives were imposed on the city," Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui said, adding that this time the elections needed to be fair, transparent, impartial, and acceptable to all. "Delimitation of new constituencies inevitable after the new census," he said.



FAISALABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage & Culture Syed Jamal Shah is visiting a Christian Colony Jaranwala.

## Sindh's vulnerability to floods needs to be mitigated on urgent basis - Dagha

Independent Report KARACHI: Minister Planning & Development Mohammad Younus Dagha directed the Irrigation Department Secretary to prepare plans to reduce the risks to the structure of the Sukkur Barrage, the flooding of cities and villages on the right bank of River Indus and to rehabilitate Manchar Lake.

Outfall Drainage (RBOD) project. It was informed that RBOD continues to be a sick project and the toxic affluent of the right bank irrigation continues to be discharged in the Manchar Lake.

The meeting was informed that there is no project/plan presently under execution which could improve the situation. The department's reps gave some ideas which could improve the quality of affluent in the MNV drain before it is discharged into the Manchar Lake. On another quarry the meeting was informed that even if the RBOD project is completed.

The directives were issued in the meeting attended by the Chairman P&D Syed Hassan Naqvi, Secretary Irrigation, and engineers and other officials of Sindh irrigation department. The Secretary Irrigation briefed on the progress of Right Bank



KARACHI: Supporters of Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) are holding protest demonstration in favor of PTI Chief Imran Khan and demanding of released from Jail, held at M.A. Jinnah road in Karachi.

## PPP's next CEC meeting on polls scheduled in Lahore

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) has decided to call next meeting of its Central Executive Committee in Lahore next month to further deliberate on matter of general elections in the country on Saturday.

Sources privy to the development told that PPP CEC summit will be held next month in September which will be attended by the top leadership of the party including former president Asif Ali Zardari, party chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and other leadership.

In its CEC meeting held in Karachi recently, the PPP formed a 5-member committee comprising Syed Nayyar Bukhari, Sherry Rehman, Faisal Karim Kundi, and two others on early polls.

## Elections should be held within 90 days: Maula Bux Chandio

HYDERABAD (APP): Central leader of Pakistan Peoples Party Senator Maula Bux Chandio on Sunday said that the caretaker government should take practical steps to save the people from inflation.

Talking to media persons at a hotel here, he said that caretaker government should take immediate actions to provide relief to the people.

## An attempt to smuggle 1 billion 17 crore worth sugar to Afghanistan fails

KARACHI (Online): Customs has made fail an attempt to smuggle 1 billion 17 crore worth of sugar to Afghanistan.

Additional Director Customs Moin Afzal told private TV that sugar worth 1 billion 17 crore rupees was being smuggled from Pakistan to Afghanistan. Smugglers were using off-road tracks to smuggle foreign goods, mafias were now smuggling banned goods along with local goods in small pick-ups.

He said that an attempt was being made to smuggle Indian Gutka under the guise of Chalia cement, smuggled goods worth 36 lacs have been recovered and seized from a Land Rover pick-up.

## India releases fourth flooding water volum in Sutlej river

KASUR (Online): India has released the fourth flooding water volume in Sutlej River, which is likely to worsen the flood situation in Sutlej River. Hundreds of villages on the river belt of Pakpattan, Kasur, Bahawalpur, Lodhran and Wahari are already under water and crops are submerged due to the flooding water.

Residents of the affected areas are forced to leave their homes and live in camps.

## Poverty-stricken masses continue protesting against unbridled electricity bills

ISLAMABAD (INP): People took to streets against inflated electricity bills and heavy taxes in parts of the country on Sunday.

During the demonstrations, people vehemently chanted slogans against the government, holding them accountable for the exorbitant power bills.

Protests were held in Multan, Faisalabad, Nowshera, Bahawalpur, Sadiqabad, Hujra Shah Muqem, Okara, Kasur, Malakand and other areas

of the country. Amid sloganeering, the agitators demanded the government to withdraw the inflated bills and reduce the electricity taxes.

In Faisalabad, the protesters blocked the Shekhupura Road and chanted slogans against the Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO).

In Risalpur, Nowshera the traders pulled their shutters down and blocked traffic on GT Road against the heavy electricity bills.

## Nawaz Sharif has no plan to return to Pakistan soon: Khursheed Shah

ISLAMABAD (INP): Despite the statement made by Shehbaz Sharif, PPP leader Syed Khursheed Shah has said that he does not see PML-N supreme Nawaz Sharif returning to Pakistan in October.

On Friday, after meeting his brother in London, Shehbaz had said that after consultations with the party's senior leadership, it had been decided that Nawaz "will return to Pakistan in October".

Shehbaz made the statement in response to a question about media reports suggesting that Nawaz would return to Pakistan in mid-October. However, in an interview with a private television

channel earlier this month, Shehbaz had said Nawaz would return to Pakistan in September while other senior N-leaguers suggested the same.

Informed sources told that though the elder Sharif was eager to return to Pakistan ahead of the elections, there was still no clear date set.

Party insiders told that Nawaz's return date was still up in the air, as key developments back home would determine his return to the country, including the retirement of Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial, the status of Nawaz's pending appeals and a date for elections.



HYDERABAD: Peoples Party (PPP) Senior Leader, Mola Bux Chandio addresses to media persons during press conference held in Hyderabad.

## Eats and Beats Festival will add to vibrancy of city: Nasir

Independent Report KARACHI: Senior leader of People's Party and former Minister of Local Government of Sindh Syed Nasir Hussain Shah address the opening ceremony of Eats and Beats exhibition at Karachi

Concert and Music Band have been organized in Eats and Beats Mega Family Fun Fair event.

He added that all the things introduced in the festival are very important, in these conditions everyone



Expo Center on Saturday. He said that in addition to food and drink stalls, handicraft stalls were also set up in the two-day exhibition. I congratulate the administration for organizing such an exhibition in which Chef, Qawwali Night, Live

should have fun, I would ask everyone to come here and participate and enjoy. Nasir Hussain Shah while talking to the media said that the Eats and Beats Festival will add to the vibrancy of the city as a food festival has been organized in Karachi.



LAHORE: Federal Minister for Human Rights Khalil George talking with media persons along with mother of 14-year-old housemaid Rizwana, outside hospital in Provincial Capital.

## Arshad Wali Muhammad says Sindh offers a conducive environment for tourism development

Independent Report KARACHI: A significant meeting was held on Sunday between the Caretaker Provincial Minister of Tourism and Environment, Mr. Arshad Wali Muhammad, and Governor of Gilgit-Baltistan, Mr. Mehdi Ali Shah. The



Governor extended his congratulations to Minister Muhammad for his role in the provincial cabinet. During the dialogue, Minister Muhammad highlighted a mutual agreement to bolster tourism initiatives between Gilgit-Baltistan and the Sindh province. The discussion revolved around pertinent issues related to tourism expansion.

Drawing parallels, Minister Arshad emphasized that Sindh, much like Gilgit-Baltistan, boasts a plethora of tourist attractions.

## During investigation Imran deviates from the May 9 incidents

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) once again deviated from the events of May 9.

The JIT investigated Chairman PTI in 6 cases on May 9 arson incidents across the country.

According to the sources, 6 cases of terrorism related to May 9 have been registered against Chairman PTI, on which he was investigated.

JIT sources said that the entire JIT team, including DIG Investigation Imran Kishor, questioned Imran Khan regarding the events of May 9.



Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

**Flashpoint now**

Bloated electricity bills have triggered countrywide protests. Crushed by the spiking cost of living, hundreds of consumers took to the streets in most cities yesterday to give vent to their seething anger over growing incidence of indirect taxes in their electricity bills.

Some political parties joined them to cash in on the growing discontent. The interim government of Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar is also feeling the heat and has convened a meeting of power sector authorities today to find a way to provide some "relief" to frustrated power consumers. How? It's not yet clear. The caretakers have little space to help inflation-stricken citizens without compromising on the fiscal goals of the present IMF programme, which would be disastrous for the economy, as it could make the multilateral lender suspend or terminate the programme.

The increasing price of electricity is essentially a governance and fiscal problem for which successive governments are to blame. On the one hand, the ruling classes have relied on heavy indirect taxes on fuels and power bills to pay for the state's ballooning expenditure, instead of effectively taxing powerful lobbies like retailers, real estate and agriculture because of their political clout.

On the other hand, they've utterly failed to implement energy sector reforms to control growing theft and power and gas sector losses, and chosen instead to periodically increase prices to recover lost revenues from honest customers. It goes without saying that the surging fuel and energy costs are devastating the working-class and salaried households, as well as industry.

At least a third of the electricity bill is made up of taxes and other government charges. Likewise, almost a quarter of the petrol price consists of taxes and levies. The government can't remove or even partially reduce these levies without an IMF waiver. At best, they can offer consumers the 'facility' of paying their bills in installments, as was decided by Shehbaz Sharif last year.

This is no solution though. It will only delay the calamity for the consumers. The toxic mix of inflation and economic recession over the last two years, coupled with inequitable tax policies, have brought households under renewed pressure.

Inflation, considered to be the most regressive tax on the poor-middle-income families, remains elevated at above 28pc. Fuel and food prices have hit the hardest as tens of millions of people scramble to find some way to survive. Unable to cope with the rising cost of living that is exacerbating inequalities in society, many are ready to risk their lives to leave this country.

With the authorities unlikely to change their bad fiscal and tax policies, and take tough decisions to reform the energy sector, working-class and salaried households can expect to face continued pain for a much longer time than the rulers would like us to believe.

**Outsider, outcast**



**Muna Khan**

My nephew, now 9, and I have been watching one of the 11 Star Wars films for the last three years whenever we are together. He didn't think anything of the British-Pakistani actor Riz Ahmed playing Bodhi in Rogue One, whereas the rest of us celebrated this first. Bodhi's ethnicity doesn't figure in the film. There are many other firsts for Pakistanis in the creative arts which have paved the way for a new normality.

When I was nine, the closest I got to some sense of representation — without knowing what it meant — was watching Alyque Padamsee play Jinnah in Gandhi in 1982. I watched it as part of my history class and remember feeling upset at Jinnah's portrayal. Pakistan seemed like a last-minute inclusion in the film. Fast forward to my first job as a journalist at Newsline in the mid-'90s; there was so much controversy about Christopher Lee playing Jinnah but the film went ahead.

That could not happen now and it is a good thing. Today you see pushback against the constant portrayal of regressive storylines in dramas or the casting of a man to play a transgender character. Of course, this pushback will cause conflict among those who have created and enforced a social order, and do not want to give new voices a seat at the table.

I believe audiences want to see themselves in stories and visuals, and I'm including the news in this, too. Marginalised communities aren't adequately represented,

which widens the gulf in people's understanding of their issues.

But sometimes seeing yourself on screen can also go wrong, as happened with Yashica Dutt, author of Coming out Dalit, who saw her story in an episode of the Indian series Made in Heaven, the second season of which was released recently. The episode in question portrays an inter-caste wedding of Pallavi Menke, a scholar at Columbia University who reclaims her Dalit identity after years of hiding behind an upper-caste name. Her marriage into an upper-caste family in India is riddled with power and class dynamics. These are rarely talked about on screen and many people have hailed the episode, which was directed by Neeraj Ghaywan, also Dalit, for the assertion and resistance shown by Pallavi. In a tense exchange of words with her fiancé about the kind of wedding they should have, Pallavi says, "everything is about politics".

But for Dutt, the opening scene cuts too close to home and, as she wrote on Instagram, was "taken without permission or credit". While the director Ghaywan credited Dutt as an inspiration for the episode in a social media post, and Dutt herself called the episode a "cinematic triumph when it comes to showcasing what it truly looks like for a Dalit woman to take her power back in the casteist society", she wants to be acknowledged in the end credits. The producers felt otherwise and issued a strong rebuke denying any appropriation of Dutt's life. This controversy has evoked diverse opinions and thoughtful discussion across caste lines. Dalits are sharing stories about the discriminations they've faced, and also asking whether any individual should speak for a community.

For readers in Pakistan not familiar with the caste system: Dalits are the lowest in social hierarchy. They have historically performed jobs like manually removing human waste from sewers. Although India outlawed caste discrimination in 1950 and manual scavenging in 2013, both continue. India also created a quota system for lower castes to give them more opportunities.

One of America's greatest public intellectuals, Cornel West, was quoted by the Associated Press as saying he felt a kinship with Dalit activists, and called racism and casteism "institutionalised forms of hatred".

Let's any sense of gloating set in, I'd like to remind you about Pakistan's shameful "institutional form of hatred" that makes its citizens rob others of their right to self-identification. Further, linking that to citizenship — and even marriage certificates, as attempted in Punjab last year — legitimises hatred. We are seeing this hatred play out across Pakistan in the form of brutal violence against peaceful communities trying to make ends meet like every other person right now. Yet they are only seen when acts of violence are thrust upon them. Our response to Christian persecution in Pakistan does not elicit the same reaction as does violence against Muslims in India.

I do not know how this institutionalised prejudice can be arrested, given the government's head-in-the-sand approach. However, I believe filmmakers may have answers if they are allowed to tell stories that unmask stigmas. We have, after all, a rich history of thought-provoking dramas on social ills. I have no doubt of our ability to do it again. There is an audience desperate for these stories. — Courtesy Dawn

**Truth & tolerance**



**Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry**

Jaranwala, a small town near Lahore, has shot into prominence, but for the wrong reasons. What happened there on Aug 16, 2023 represents another low in our history of communal intolerance, with local community leaders and law-enforcement authorities appearing totally helpless in preventing the mob from targeting dozens of Christian families, their houses and churches. For a country whose teeming majority adheres to the faith of Islam — the religion of peace — the incident has put all Pakistanis to shame.

Sadly, this was not an isolated occurrence, nor was it the first time that Christians were targeted in our country. In July 2009, a mob attacked houses belonging to Christians in Kasur, and a month later in Gojra. In 2010, Aasia Bibi was sentenced to death for blasphemy and remained in prison for eight years before her acquittal, and in 2012, the trial of another Christian, Rimsha Masih, made headlines. In 2013, a suicide bombing at a church in Peshawar killed more than 100 people, while at least 75 Christians were killed in 2016 when they were celebrating Easter at a park in Lahore. Extremists have targeted other non-Muslims as well.

This gross intolerance and vigilantism in the name of religion is most reprehensible. The persecution of minority communities is against the spirit of Islam and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Any Muslim knows that one's

faith is not complete if he or she does not believe in Allah's Prophets or His books, including Hazrat Essa (Jesus) and the scripture revealed on him, the Gospel or Bible.

These actions are also a violation of the Constitution, which provides for freedom of religion to every citizen under articles 20 and 36. The founder of Pakistan also provided clear guidance that all citizens of Pakistan should be free to go to their places of worship.

Such blatant display of violent extremism causes immense damage to Pakistan's reputation. The persecution of Christians is noted around the world because the majority of the world's Christians (nearly 63 per cent) live in the Americas and Europe, where parliaments, international human rights organisations and civil society are quick to call out Pakistan every time such persecution of Christians occurs.

Such incidents also weaken the moral high ground that Pakistan has taken to speak for the rights of Muslims and other non-Hindu citizens of India.

The only silver lining in this situation is that this time, the people of Pakistan from every walk of life have expressed deep anguish and concern about the growing incidents of mob violence against non-Muslims living in Pakistan. However, condemnation of such incidents is not enough. We need concerted action to prevent such incidents in future.

A first step would be to ensure that the perpetrators of the latest violence are brought to justice. If they manage to escape accountability on one ground or the other, then sadly the Jaranwala incident might not be the last one.

Secondly, we need to revive the culture of tolerance that used to be the hallmark of our soci-

ety. Textbooks would need to be amended to include the virtues of tolerance. In a recent article published in this paper, Amir Rana reported that Saudi Arabia was updating its textbooks, removing anti-Semitic and anti-Christian references, and modernising negative depictions of non-believers. Pakistan could consider taking a leaf or two from the Saudi book. In this regard, it would help if the study of all major religions is mainstreamed in academic disciplines at all levels of education.

Thirdly, we need to complete the task of madrassah reforms that was started under the National Action Plan. These reforms should also ensure that masjid imams would be allowed to lead prayers only if they have the requisite academic certification issued by the government. This has been adopted as a standard practice in many Muslim countries.

Fourthly, the threshold of evidence regarding blasphemy accusations needs to be raised in order to prevent the misuse of the law. Our legislators have an onerous responsibility in this regard. Finally, and most importantly, extremist organisations should not have any political patronage, nor should they be used as a tool for political manoeuvring. British philosopher Bertrand Russell, when asked to outline his advice to future generations, identified the values of truth and tolerance as 'vital' for the continuation of human life. In Jaranwala, both these values were trampled upon with impunity. If we want to prevent such incidents from happening in future, the state must act firmly to uphold the values of truth and tolerance. Let the intolerance displayed in Jaranwala be the endpoint of the cycle of faith-based violence in our country. — Courtesy Dawn

**Commerce News**

**Caretaker govt's efforts to give a fillip to industrial revolution in Balochistan: PM Kakar**

QUETTA (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Sunday said that the interim government, during its short period, would make all-out efforts to spur an industrial revolution in Balochistan.

He said that under the Special Investment Facilitation Council, efforts would be made so that Balochistan province

could benefit from foreign investment.

The caretaker prime minister was addressing a delegation of the Quetta Chamber of Commerce that called on him.

The delegation comprising prominent members of the business community of the province also apprised the prime minister of their issues, PM Office Media

Wing said in a press release issued here.

The prime minister said that Balochistan was not only the largest province of the country owing to area, but also a very suitable area for trade due to Gwadar port.

He opined that the province should have been a hub of industries due to huge mineral resources and vast agricultural land.

During the meeting, the caretaker prime minister also assured the delegation of the resolution of their issues.

Separately, a delegation led by Sahibzada Muhammad Khan also called on Caretaker PM Kakar. The delegation felicitated the prime minister on assuming his duties and expressed good wishes.



QUETTA: A delegation of Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry calls on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar



HYDERABAD: Members of Sindh Left Front (SLF) are holding protest demonstration against massive unemployment, increasing price of daily use products, inflation price hiking and the highly inflated electricity bills.

**Farmers demand Rs450 per maund rate for sugarcane crop**

HYDERABAD (APP): The Sindh Chamber of Agriculture (SCA), a farmers' lobbying group, on Sunday demanded at least Rs450 per maund for sugarcane crop, keeping in view of the ever increasing cost of inputs and crop cultivation.

They rejected Rs425 per 40 kilogram price fixed for the crop from the growers by the sugar mills. The prices of seeds, fertilizer, pesticides, fuel and machinery have increased by leaps and bounds, they observed.

They pointed out that the government had not increased the price of gas for the fertilizer industries but still the farmers were being extorted for expensive rates

for bags of fertilizer.

The farmers complained that the dealers selling fertilizer had also turned into a mafia which first stockpiled the supplies and then demanded higher than the factory rates for the bags. The SCA's President demanded that the government should take action against the industries and dealers by sealing shops of the latter.

He said the season of sowing the wheat crop would start soon and requested the caretaker government to take action against hoarding and overpricing to prevent the common people from suffering food price inflation.

The chamber's presi-

dent said inflation had made it difficult for the farmers to grow wheat crop. He suggested the government provide loans with 3 to 5 percent markup rate to the wheat farmers so that they could grow that crop.

He lamented that despite abundant water in the Indus River system, shortage of irrigation water was being witnessed in many command areas of Rohri, Nara, Phuleli and other canals.

He asked the government to immediately put an end to the water rotation which was practised during the times of water scarcity, adding the growers of dates had suffered losses in 2 successive years.

**Online shopping scams on rise with influx of platforms**

ISLAMABAD (APP): The influx of online shopping platforms during the last few years has undoubtedly made the lives of people much easier by making every essential item available to their doorsteps but their reliability is still questionable for many.

It has been observed that a number of online shopping websites, social media pages and groups operating in the country were selling sub-standard stuff including dresses, shoes and other accessories to the customers, contrary

to what is displayed and shown.

A number of fake websites created in the names of famous brands are making buyers fool by showing original branded pictures of dresses and other items with original prices but delivering substandard stuff and replicas.

"Those fake websites are even using exact names and logos of the famous brands that anyone can hardly feel the difference between the original and the fake ones", Samina Naz, a regular online buyer said.

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**Malik stresses Africa's \$4 trillion market as key for Pak sustainable development**

ISLAMABAD (APP): SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industries (SCCI) former President Iftikhar Ali Malik on Sunday stressed the need for fully exploiting the vast potential and investments in Africa, a \$4 trillion market, for sustainable socio-economic development of Pakistan.

Chairing a round table conference on 'Vast Potentials of Africa and Pakistan', he said recognizing Africa's potential for exponential growth in the mining sector as a result of the global energy transition, he

anticipated an influx of foreign investment within the continent which holds an estimated 30 percent of the planet's mineral reserves.

He said, "Africa possesses an impressive range of minerals, particularly those vital to the energy transition," according to a news release issued here.

He said, "We can not afford to sideline the continent that holds the key to many of the world's most pressing challenges."

He stressed the need to explore the significant opportunities that lie in

harnessing the untapped potential of partnerships with African nations.

"As Pakistan seeks to diversify its economic and diplomatic relations, Africa presents a rich landscape for collaboration and mutual growth," he added.

He said, "Africa, with its diverse economies, vast natural resources, and growing consumer markets, holds immense promise for trade, investment, and cooperation." He said by strategically engaging with African nations, Pakistan could tap into sectors such as agriculture, energy,

**Fuel price hike ignites struggle for affordable transportation**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Transportation stands as an indispensable component of daily existence, serving as the bridge that connects individuals to their workplaces, educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and leisure pursuits. Amid current economic challenges, citizens strive for affordable mobility solutions, reshaping their interactions with a crucial aspect of existence.

**PCMEA calls for devising long-term export policy**

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Carpet Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PCMEA) Senior Vice Chairman Usman Ashraf has demanded for devising at least 10-year-long policy to increase exports, as the fluctuations in US dollar rate against Pak rupee, high cost of production in the region, and unjustified restrictions by various departments were hampering exports.

Addressing a review meeting of the Association here Sunday, he welcomed

the vision of Caretaker Federal Minister for Commerce and Industry Dr. Gohar Ejaz to complete the strategic programme to enhance country's exports to US \$ 80 billion in 90 days, but called for implementation of this programme in letter and spirit. Carpet Training Institute (CTI) Chairman Ejazur Rehman, PCMEA senior central leader Abdul Latif Malik, senior member Riaz Ahmed and others were also attended the meeting.



## Governor praises Christian schools educational services in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali on Sunday lauded the significant contributions of Christian Church-administered educational institutions to the advancement of education.

He highlighted that these institutions have played a commendable role not only in producing numerous scholars across the country, including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, but have also contributed to increasing the literacy rate prior to the partition of the subcontinent. Governor Haji Ghulam Ali expressed these sentiments during a meeting with a delegation led by Priest Rauff Masih of the Seventh Day Adventist Church.

The delegation, which

included Principal of Seventh Day Adventist School, Waris Sharif, Adil Siddiqui, and others, discussed the provision of facilities in the schools under the administration of Adventist Church.

The delegation informed the Governor about the challenges faced in providing clean drinking water and other facilities at the Adventist Church-administered school. They also shared that the construction of a tube well had been initiated by the Department of Auqaf (Religious Affairs), but due to a lack of funds, progress had been hindered, causing difficulties in ensuring clean drinking water for the students. Governor Haji Ghulam Ali attentively listened to the delegation's concerns and assured them

of his complete cooperation in resolving the issues.

He expressed his condolences over the Jaranwala incident, emphasizing that minority communities are equal citizens of the country and their protection is the responsibility of all.

He mentioned that individuals from various schools of thought, including important figures and even the Prime Minister, had shown solidarity with the Christian community.

Praising the exemplary educational services provided by the Christian community, Governor Haji Ghulam Ali said that the Christian community is contributing significantly to the progress and well-being of the nation.



LAHORE: Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage & Culture Syed Jamal Shah is visiting Jinnah House.

## Jaranwala a shameful act, committed by some so-called Muslims: Minister

FAISALABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage & Culture Syed Jamal Shah has said the Jaranwala incident was a major tragedy which saddened all patriotic Pakistanis.

It was a very shameful act and regrettably it was committed by those who called themselves Muslims. "I am ashamed and apologise to the Christian community over this incident, he said during his visit to Isa Nagri in Jaranwala and an

interaction with the locals and the media on Saturday.

The caretaker minister said that teachings of Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) were very obvious and not only a philosopher but also a common man could understand it easily.

He said Pakistan was a peaceful land despite having diverse ethnic communities and religions. He regretted that intentionally the peaceful combination was distorted by sowing thorns in this

land and "now we are facing its ill impacts".

He said "we lived in the diversity. Many of my teachers and friends were Christians, Hindus, Parsi. But our Indus culture narrative had taught us that we are a bouquet of diversity and our difference was a beauty of the land where flowers of all kinds grow". He said Pakistan was a most peaceful land in the region. It was the land of Sufis who prohibited strictly from injuring feelings of any person.

## Minister visits LGH, says govt to uphold rule of law at all costs

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Human Rights Khalil George assured the public that the government was committed to upholding the rule of law at all costs.

During a visit to the Lahore General Hospital here on Sunday, he spoke to the media about the importance of justice and accountability, stating that even the government officials would not be exempt from facing the court if they commit injustices.

The minister

emphasised his personal connection to matters of human rights and commended the media for shedding light on issues that might otherwise go unnoticed.

He stressed equal rights to minorities in the country and acknowledged their significant role in Pakistan's freedom struggle.

Khalil George also praised the unity between Muslim Ulema and local communities, particularly in supporting Christians in Jaranwala.



LARKANA: Mayor of Municipal Corporation Adv Anwar Ali Luhur addressing a press conference after inaugurating a Cleanliness Campaign in City at Press Club.



HYDERABAD: Residents of Badin District are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, held at Hyderabad press club.

## Controller BISE dismay over non provision of text books to schools

HYDERABAD (APP): The Controller of examination, Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (B.I.S.E) Hyderabad Dr. Masroor Ahmed Zai has expressed concern over non-provision of textbooks to public sector schools by the Sindh Text Book Board despite passage of eight months of the academic year.

"It is a matter of concern that what will the school children do when they were not given text books and they were being tested, it will become a worrisome situation and in such circumstances it is obvious that their tendency will be gone towards cheating," said Zai in a meeting with a delegation of All Teachers Association Sindh here on Sunday. He stated that in order to prevent cheating, it is essential that teaching materials to be provided timely to students.

He noted that it was never happened that the process was not completed even after eight months passed of the academic year and if the delivery of the text books starts from now, it will take a period of month to reach the schools. The delegation of Teachers Association included central leader Dr. Saeed Ali Khan, Ashraf Memon, Bashir Ahmed, Waleed Yement, Mashkoor Ahmed, and other members.

## Committee formed to conduct election of Blind Welfare Association

HYDERABAD (APP): The annual general body meeting of the Hyderabad Blind Welfare Association was held in Latifabad here Sunday.

The meeting formed a three-member committee through mutual consultation for the upcoming elections 2023-24. The committee which included Syed Mahmood Ali as the Chairman of the Election Committee, along with Afra and

Mashooq Jamali as the members, will be responsible for making arrangements for the election.

During the meeting, General Secretary A.D Pirzada said that the efforts made by the office bearers for the improvement and progress of the organization dedicated to the welfare and empowerment of visually impaired individuals were commendable, said a press release.

## SA women cricket team lands in Pakistan on first visit

KARACHI (Online): The South African women's cricket team has landed in Jinnah airport Karachi for their first visit to Pakistan.

According to sources, the 23-member African squad arrived in Karachi on flight EK600 via Dubai, where they were accorded a grand welcome at the Jinnah International Airport, garlanded with flowers and bouquets were also presented to the players.

The African squad arriving in Karachi includes players, coaching staff and

management, captains Laura Wollwardt, Marizan Kapp and Nadine de Klerk will arrive in Karachi on August 29, team physiotherapist Molbatsi Phelan will also arrive on August 29.

South Africa Women's team was welcomed by Tania Malik, Head of Women's Wing and General Manager Ayesha Ashar.

According to police sources, the protocol of the President is being given for the security of the South African women cricket

team, strict security arrangements have been made from Karachi Airport Terminal One to the team's accommodation.

Heavy contingents of SSU Commandos, Rangers, Police and other institutions has been deployed, the team was taken to a local hotel under tight security. 3 T20 matches will be played between South Africa and Pakistan women cricket teams at the National Stadium. On September 1, 3 and 5, three T20 matches will start at 7.30 pm.

## International News

### Putin orders Wagner fighters to sign oath of allegiance following Prigozhin plane crash

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: Vladimir Putin has ordered Wagner fighters to sign an oath of allegiance to the Russian state, amid anger in the mercenary group's ranks over their leader's apparent assassination in a plane crash near Moscow.

The decree was published on the Kremlin's website and signed with immediate effect by Mr Putin, as his spokesperson Dmitry Peskov insisted that claims Prigozhin had been killed on the Russian president's orders were an "absolute lie".

The wording of the oath includes a line in which those who take it promise to strictly follow the orders of commanders and senior lead-

ers, as questions hang over the fate of the mercenaries — many of whom had already relocated to Belarus following their mutinous march on Moscow in June.

Russia has opened an investigation into the plane crash, but has not yet officially confirmed the identities of the 10 bodies recovered from the wreckage. However, Mr Putin has appeared to eulogise Prigozhin — using the past tense — as a "talented businessman" who made "serious mistakes".

Mr Peskov told reporters on Friday that it was unclear how long the investigation would take and insisted it was therefore "impossible to talk about" whether Mr Putin would attend

Prigozhin's funeral, adding: "The only thing I can say is that the president has a rather busy schedule at the moment." Nigel Gould-Davies, a former British ambassador to Belarus, said the funeral would be significant. "If Putin wishes to emphasise that Prigozhin died as a traitor, he will ignore it," he said, adding that the occasion "could strengthen the hostility of a core of Wagner loyalists towards the Kremlin".

However, Belarusian president Alexander Lukashenko, who appeared to help broker the deal which saw Wagner relocate to Belarus, also sought to insist that the plane crash was "just too rough and unprofessional a job" for his ally Mr Putin to be behind it.



U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo, shakes hands with Lin Feng, Director General of China Ministry of Commerce as U.S. Ambassador to China Nick Burns looks on as she arrives at the Beijing Capital International Airport in Beijing.

## Xi stresses 'hard-won social stability' in rare Xinjiang visit

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping made a rare visit to Xinjiang on Saturday, state media reported, calling on officials to conserve "hard-won social stability" in a troubled region where Beijing is accused of severe human rights abuses.

The Chinese government has pursued a years-long campaign against what it describes as terrorism and Islamic extremism in the northwestern region, detaining large numbers of Uyghurs and other Muslims. A United Nations re-

port last year found China's actions in Xinjiang may constitute "crimes against humanity", and the United States and legislatures in other countries have labelled the policies a "genocide" — claims Beijing denies. State broadcaster CCTV said Xi travelled to regional capital Urumqi on Saturday, listened to a government work report and delivered a speech "affirming the achievements made in various tasks in Xinjiang".

It was his first publicly known visit to

Xinjiang since last July, when he made his maiden trip since the crackdown in the region was escalated.

Xi "stressed that top priority must always be given to maintaining social stability... and we must use stability to guarantee development", CCTV reported.

He said it was "necessary to... combine the development of the anti-terrorism and anti-separatism struggle with the push for normalising social stability work and rule of law", according to the broadcaster.

## Iran says uranium enrichment continues based on domestic law

**Monitoring Desk**  
DUBAI: Iran's enrichment of uranium continues based on a framework established by the country's parliament, nuclear chief Mohammad Eslami said on Sunday when asked about reports regarding Tehran slowing down its 60% enrichment.

"Our nuclear enrichment continues based on the strategic framework law," Eslami said, referring to a related legislation.

Earlier this month, the Wall Street Journal reported that Iran had significantly slowed the pace at which it was accumulating near-weapons-grade enriched uranium and diluted some of its stockpile, moves that could help ease tensions with the U.S. and revive broader talks over Iran's nuclear work.

In 2020, Iran's parliament passed a law requiring the government to take measures such as stepping up uranium enrichment beyond the limit set under Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal if other parties did not fully comply with the deal.

After Washington ditched the deal in 2018 and reimposed sanctions, Tehran began to violate the nuclear curbs set out in the pact.

Iran, which under the nuclear agreement could only enrich uranium to 3.67%, started enriching it to 60% purity in 2021, a move bringing the fissile material closer to levels suitable for developing a bomb. Tehran has repeatedly denied seeking a nuclear bomb.

## Zimbabwe's opposition alleges 'gigantic fraud' in vote that extends the ZANU-PF party's 43-year rule

**Monitoring Desk**  
HARARE: Zimbabwe's main opposition leader on Sunday alleged "blatant and gigantic fraud" in the country's election after President Emmerson Mnangagwa was declared the winner and international observers reported an atmosphere of intimidation against voters.

The returns from the latest troubled vote in the southern African nation were announced Saturday night, two days earlier than expected. Opposition leader Nelson Chamisa's Citizens Coalition for Change party said it would challenge the results as "hastily assembled without proper verification."

"They stole your voice and vote but never your hope," Chamisa wrote in a post on X, formerly known as Twitter, in his first public reaction to the election's announced

outcome. "It's a blatant and gigantic fraud."

People in the country of 15 million were bound to view the results with suspicion but Mnangagwa, 80, dismissed allegations of vote fraud.

"I did not conduct these elections. I think those who feel the race was not run properly know where to go to complain. I am so happy," he said at a news conference Sunday, adding that the elections were run "transparently, fairly in broad daylight."

Mnangagwa was re-elected for a second and final five-year term with 52.6% of the vote, according to the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission. Chamisa, 45, who also lost to Mnangagwa in a very close and disputed election five years ago, won 44% of the vote this time, the commission said.



Zimbabwe's President Elect Emmerson Mnangagwa speaks to the media at State House in Harare.

## Japan says seawater radioactivity below limits near Fukushima

**Monitoring Desk**  
TOKYO: Tests of seawater near Japan's Fukushima nuclear power plant have not detected any radioactivity, the environment ministry said on Sunday, days after authorities began discharging into the sea-treated water used to cool damaged reactors.

Japan started releasing water from the wrecked Fukushima plant into the Pacific Ocean on Thursday, sparking protests in Japan and neighbouring countries, in particular China, which banned aquatic product im-

ports from Japan. Japan and scientific organisations say the water is safe after being filtered to remove most radioactive elements except for tritium, a radioactive isotope of hydrogen.

Because tritium is difficult to separate from water, the Fukushima water is diluted until tritium levels fall below regulatory limits.

The ministry's tests of samples from 11 points near the plant showed concentrations of tritium below the lower limit of detection — 7 to 8 becquerels of tritium per litre.

## 338 missing since deadly Hawaii wildfire

**Monitoring Desk**  
KIHEI: Hawaii officials have released the names of 338 people still missing more than two weeks after the deadliest US wildfire in more than a century swept through the resort town of Lahaina.

The list, compiled by the FBI, includes only people whose full names are known and who were reported missing by someone for whom authorities have verified contact information. "The 388 names are a subset of a larger list," Steven Merrill, a special agent from the FBI's Honolulu field office, told a press conference in Maui on Friday. "I don't want to lose sight of the fact that we still have hundreds of other names where we still need more information."

In the hours after the list was published, the FBI had received reports that about 100 people on the list were accounted for, which agents were working to confirm, Merrill said.

The death toll from the Aug 8 fire on the island of Maui stands at 115, but officials have warned that figure is likely to rise.

## At least three die after US military aircraft crashes amid drills in Australia

**Monitoring Desk**  
SYDNEY: The US military officials said on Sunday that at least three US Marines died after a Boeing MV-22B Osprey helicopter crashed on a remote tropical island north of Australia during war games, according to AFP.

"There were a total of 23 personnel on board," US military officials said in a statement. "Three have been confirmed deceased while five others were transported to Royal Darwin Hospital in a serious

condition." Australian police said they were conducting a preliminary assessment of the injured at the crash site. Rescue efforts were complicated by the location of the crash site—the remote and sparsely populated Melville Island about 60 kilometres (37 miles) north of the Australian mainland.

"Recovery efforts are ongoing," US officials said, adding that an investigation into the cause of the incident had been launched.

## Biden campaign will not concentrate on Trump's legal woes, aide says

**Monitoring Desk**  
NEW YORK: U.S. President Joe Biden's 2024 re-election campaign will not concentrate on the legal cases against Republican front-runner Donald Trump, who faces four sets of criminal charges, a top Biden campaign aide said on Sunday. Trump on Thursday was booked at an Atlanta jail on more than a dozen felony charges as part of a criminal case arising from the former U.S. president's attempts to overturn his 2020 election defeat in the state of Georgia.



## Ministry organizes 'Interfaith Harmony Conference' to address religious issues, minority safety

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony is holding an 'Interfaith Harmony Conference' on Wednesday, August 30, to bring together religious leaders and representatives from various faith communities to discuss pressing issues related to attacks on religious sites, desecration of holy scriptures, and the safety of minorities.

Presiding over by Minister Aneeq Ahmed, the conference would promote unity and cooperation among different religious groups besides providing a platform for open dialogue and collaboration on topics crucial to fostering interfaith harmony. The attendees would include representatives from both Muslim and Christian communities, demonstrating their shared commitment to peaceful coexistence.

Meanwhile, in a meet-

ing with the executive members of International Interfaith Harmony Council, President Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi highlighted the recent attack on the Christian community in Jaranwala and characterized it as a deliberate attempt by external forces to tarnish Pakistan's reputation on the global stage.

He asserted that initial investigations pointed towards the involvement of elements from India, alleging a strategic move to divert international attention from the plight of minorities in India.

Ashrafi who is also the Chairman of Pakistan Ulema Council further detailed a larger scheme involving planned incidents in Sargodha and Sialkot, alluding to Pakistan's successful prevention of these attempts by its law enforcement agencies.

He emphasized the solidarity between Pakistan's Muslim and Christian communities, noting their shared commitment to thwarting divisive agendas.

Applauding the Danish government's recent legislation against the desecration of the Holy Quran, Ashrafi underscored the Christian community's respect for the holy scripture.

He highlighted the Quran's role in providing insights into the lives of Prophet Jesus and Hazrat Maryam, further promoting mutual understanding between the two faiths.

He asserted that Pakistan belonged to both Muslims and Christians alike urging the public to refrain from seeking collective retribution for individual wrongdoings, thereby promoting a sense of tolerance and coexistence.



Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi in a group photo with Winners and Runners up of 2<sup>nd</sup> CNS All Pakistan Squash Championship 2023 held at RKJK Squash Complex Karachi.

## Religious affairs minister visits Jamia Islamia Clifton

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Aneeq Ahmed on Sunday paid a visit to Jamia Islamia Clifton and engaged in discussions with Ulema, fostering unity and collaboration for a shared religious harmony agenda.

Addressing the religious scholars, he, in light of escalating social intolerance, raised a question on the dissemination of true message and purpose of Islam to fellow Muslims. He lamented that the tragic incident in Jaranwala highlighted the unfortunate reality of the nation.

Aneeq asserted that any misconception regard-

ing blasphemy or desecration of the Holy Quran must be dispelled. "No doubt, we cannot tolerate blasphemy or disrespect towards the Holy Quran under any circumstances. But it does not mean that we have to establish our own courts to deal with such sensitive issues," he added.

He said what the message he had delivered in case of Jaranwala incident as it has portrayed a negative image of Pakistan and Islam in the comity of nations. "As followers of the Holy Prophet Peace Be Upon Him, we must exhibit conduct and ethics that invite others to embrace our religion," he urged.

## Power sector pushing country towards anarchy: PEW

ISLAMABAD (INP): President of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) Dr. Murtaza Mughal has said that people across the country are protesting and committing suicides as a result of excessive electricity costs, which are pushing the country into chaos.

He said, "The country is plunging into lawlessness and chaos as elites have turned an affluent country into a living nightmare for its citizens."

After the political and economic collapse, the power bills have become a nightmare for the masses; their household budgets have been destroyed, and their lives have become miserable, he added.

In a statement issued here on Sunday, Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that fights are taking place in the streets and in houses, violence has become the norm, and divorces are taking place due to the inflated electricity bills.

People have been forced to take out loans, sell jewellery and other essential items to pay the bills, and compromise on food, health, and education.

## Law ministry condemned criticism of Chief Justice of IHC on social media

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Ministry of Law strongly condemned the criticism of the Chief Justice Islamabad High Court on social media and said that political parties should refrain from attacking the country's institutions.

In a statement issued by the Ministry of Law and Justice, it has been said that the attack on the Chief Justice of the Islamabad High Court by a political party on social media is highly condemnable. Ministry said it is a responsible act for political parties to refrain from attacking national institutions. Keep clear that the social media is heavily criticising the Chief Justice Aamer Farooq on petition to dismiss conviction of chairman PTI Imran Khan by additional and session judge Humayun Dilawar in Tosha Khana case.

Former Information minister and PMLN leader Maryam Aurangzeb also criticised the social media criticism and wrote on that state terrorist (Imran Khan) who threatened Zeba Judge has now come down to "Oy Aamir Farooq, I will not leave you." Information Secretary of Pakistan Muslim League (N) Maryam Aurangzeb said that the person who threatened "Oy beautiful judge, I will not leave you" and the state terrorist of May 9 now "Oy Amir Farooq, I will leave you", "Ga nain" has come down.

Maryam Aurangzeb, in one of her tweets on the social media website X (former Twitter) said that the hands, actions, mouth and conspiracy of the state terrorist have always harmed the state, the country and the people and benefited the enemy.



QUETTA: A delegation of Vice Chancellors of Public Sector Universities of Balochistan called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

## Brain drain escalates: Over 450,000 Pakistanis flee in pursuit of better jobs overseas

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan is grappling with a major exodus as more than 450,000 of its citizens have left the country in search of improved job prospects overseas during the first half of 2023, according to official data from the Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment.

This alarming trend underscores the ongoing economic challenges facing the nation, pushing educated professionals like Nazeer Ahmed, a young banking professional, to make the difficult decision to leave his job and seek a brighter future abroad.

"The economic conditions and uncertainties left me no choice. I had to find a way out," Ahmed explained. "The salaried class is working hard, but the disparity between what we earn and what it takes to have a decent life continues to widen." Ahmed's story reflects the experiences of many educated Pakistanis who are increasingly seeking opportunities abroad to escape the country's per-

sistent economic crisis.

The data from the Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment reveals that during the first seven months of 2023 (January to July), 450,110 Pakistanis departed their homeland in pursuit of work opportunities overseas. This diverse group includes individuals from various professional backgrounds and qualifications.

Saudi Arabia emerged as the primary destination for Pakistani migrant workers, with 205,515 choosing the kingdom as their new workplace.

The UAE followed closely with 121,745 relocating to the country, known as the "second home" for many Pakistanis. Other Gulf countries, including Oman (34,140), Qatar (35,637), and Bahrain (7,441), also witnessed a significant influx of Pakistani workers.

Beyond the Gulf region, a total of 16,166 opted for Malaysia, while China recorded 990 arrivals from Pakistan.

## May-9 reflected not political anger but anti state mindset: Jamal

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Jamal Shah said on Sunday that May-9 mayhem did not reflect anger of some so-called political activists but anti-state mindset.

Talking to the media after visiting the Jinnah House (Corps Commander's House in Lahore Cantt), he said that those who had burnt the house and pictures of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah on May 9 could neither be regarded as responsible citizens nor patriots. He said that on May 9, memorials of martyrs, iconic fighter jet of MM Alam, and the statue of martyred Captain Sher Khan were put on fire and vandalised by unruly mobs. He said those who had burnt the sensitive installations were "zombies" as they had zero per cent ability to apply their own mind.

## Miftah Ismail not optimistic about any relief by IMF in electricity bills

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former finance minister Miftah Ismail has claimed that without seeking permission from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the incumbent government could not extend relief to masses who are feeling the heat of the inflated electricity bills.

Following mass protests against the exorbitant

electricity bills across the country, the former minister said the caretaker government would seek IMF approval before providing relief to electricity consumers, who are using 200 to 300 units monthly.

On June 30, Pakistan and the IMF had reached staff-level agreement on \$3 billion stand-by arrangement.



MULTAN: Pakistan cricket team arrived for the upcoming First match of Asia Cup 2023 between Pakistan and Nepal teams at Multan Cricket Stadium.

## Hydro-power potential vital for socioeconomic uplift of Kashmiris: AJK PM

MIRPUR (AJK): (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar Ul Haq, while referring to the region's incredible hydro-power potential, has said that taking full advantage of the existing hydro-power potential was imperative for socioeconomic uplift of the people of Azad Jammu Kashmir.

The PM said this while speaking at a high level meeting of the Energy and Water Resources Department held at Jammu Kashmir House in the federal metropolis on Sunday.

Stressing the need for an uninterrupted supply of electricity across the state, the PM said that along with repair and maintenance of the feeders there was an urgent need to improve the power distribution system.

The PM also sought feasibility reports regarding Khurshidabad Power Project, Transmission Line from Minhasa to Bagh and

Transmission Line from Rampura to Barora. He directed the concerned authorities to prepare a feasibility report on whether the Mang area should be linked to Rawalakot or Palindri.

He said that Betar Power Project should be upgraded for the comfort of the people of Haveli. He said that PDO must ensure better maintenance of its projects so that citizens do not face any difficulties.

Anwar emphasized the need to adopt a better strategy regarding Jagran 1, 2, 3, 4. The Prime Minister also stressed maintenance of community development projects and local power houses in Neelum, Haveli and Jhelum Valley.

He said that the demands/needs of commercial, industrial and domestic users should be taken into account and the billing system should be made transparent so that there was no inconvenience to the public.

## Pakistani doctor gets 18 years in US prison on terror charges

WASHINGTON (INP): A Pakistani physician, Muhammad Masood, was sentenced to 18 years in prison for attempting to provide material support to a terrorist organisation, Daesh.

Muhammad Masood, a 31-year-old licensed Pakistani doctor, living in the United States on a work visa, was formerly employed as a research coordinator at a medical clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

"A Rochester man was sentenced today to 216 months in prison, equivalent to 18 years, followed by five years of supervised release for attempting to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organization," a press release issued by the US Department of Justice stated.

"A Rochester man was sentenced today to 216 months in prison, equivalent to 18 years.



HYDERABAD: All Pakistan Clerks Association leader, Ashraf Bozja addresses to media persons during press conference held at Hyderabad press club.

## Customs thwart attempt to smuggle foreign liquor worth millions in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): An attempt to smuggle foreign liquor worth over Rs80 million from Port Qasim into Karachi under the guise of diplomatic cargo was foiled by Customs officials, a spokesperson from Pakistan customs said on Sunday.

According to the spokesperson, the goods declaration of the container showed it was carrying diplomatic cargo for an embassy; however, the customs officials intercepted the suspicious container. They then wrote to the embassy concerned for confirmation regarding the container and its contents; however, the embassy professed to have no knowledge of the imported goods.

According to sources, upon checking, it was revealed that instead of domestic goods, the container was carrying foreign liquor worth approximately Rs85 million. The customs spokesperson said that the

officials had registered a case and arrested one suspect, while investigation and efforts are underway to nab more members of the group involved in the smuggling.

The arrested suspect has been presented in court and remanded for six days, the spokesperson said.

This is not the first case of alcohol smuggling in the port city involving diplomatic cargo. Earlier this year, the Directorate of Intelligence and Investigation (I&I), Customs, Karachi, seized 12,780 bottles of liquor and beer cans (10,548 bottles and 2,160 cans) worth Rs252 million imported in the garb of diplomatic cargo. The documents revealed that Absolut Vodka's 1,080 bottles, Scotch whisky's 3,000 bottles, blended Clan MCG's 1,080 bottles, Grants Blended Scotch whisky's 828 bottles, Chivas Regal's 888, Sparkling Wine's 120 bottles etc. were seized by the customs.



LARKANA: Activists of Jeay Sindh Mahaz (JSM) are holding protest demonstration against killing of Senior Journalist Jan Muhammad Mahar and 10-years old housemaid, Fatima Furiro and demanding justice for them, held at Larkana press club.



PESHAWAR: Members of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) are holding protest demonstration against the highly inflated electricity bills, held in Peshawar.

## It is collective responsibility of all to safeguard national heritages: Dr. Syed Junaid

Independent Report KARACHI: In a significant development showcasing the commitment to heritage preservation, Dr. Syed Junaid Ali Shah, Caretaker Minister for Culture, Youth

the preserved belongings under the possession of the Father of the Nation.

Speaking at the event, Dr. Syed Junaid Ali Shah highlighted the privilege of closely witnessing the



Affairs, Sports, and Human Development Resources of Sindh, undertook a visit to Quaid-e-Azam House in Karachi.

On the occasion Secretary Culture Sindh, Abdul Aleem Lashari, Resident Director of P&D (Planning and Development) Roshan Qanasiro briefed on efforts to ensure the preservation of Quaid-e-Azam House.

Dr. Syed Junaid Ali Shah, the Caretaker Provincial Minister, toured various sections of Quaid-e-Azam House and examined longings used by the founder of the nation, Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Minister for Culture and Youth Affairs, Junaid Shah, emphasized that each item within Quaid-e-Azam House holds national significance, and it is the collective responsibility of all to safeguard this heritage.

The provincial minister directed the concerned authorities that every possible facility will be provided to those visiting Quaid-e-Azam House for exploration and research purposes.



KARACHI: Members of Christian Community are holding protest demonstration against attacked on churches in Jaranwala incident and demanding for Justice, held at Karachi press club.

## Sh. fears civil disobedience movement amid protests over electricity bills

RAWALPINDI (INP): Awami Muslim League (AML) president Sheikh Rashid Ahmed has said the people of Pakistan, recently hit hard by inflated electricity bills and generally affected by inflationary pressures, are moving towards civil disobedience movement.

Taking to X (formerly known as Twitter), he said the masses protesting power bills on roads could be more violent in the month of September if the caretaker rulers failed to rescue their economic woes.

Taking jibe at former Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the seasoned politician said those [PDM government] claiming to sell their clothes to provide relief to the masses after enjoying 16

months in power. He said the influential people are involved in power theft, but the poor bear the brunt of this theft, fearing next bills of fuel and electricity would add fuel to fire.

Rashid further was of the view that the most important challenge for the country is not holding elections in time, but how the masses would bear electricity and fuel costs for the month of September.

The former minister said that all the power distribution companies have removed official number plates of their vehicles, fearing public view that there is no difference between filers and non-filers as both of them have to pay taxes in one way or the other.

## IPP President urges govt to waive off electricity bills up to 200 units

LAHORE (INP): Isteqam-e-Pakistan IPP President Abdul Aleem Khan on Sunday said that IPP will not receive electricity bill up to 300 units after coming into power.

Abdul Aleem Khan demanded the interim government to show mercy on the poor citizens and provide relief.

He said direct tax should be levied and collected considering the financial status of the privileged.

The IPP President said the government should make electricity free for up to 200 units and petrol cheaper for motorcycles.

He added, "It is not fair to charge the same price of petrol from a motorcycle and a big vehicle."