

# Independent

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ISLAMABAD: A delegation of an International Consultancy Firm called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## PM assures to extend facilities to private sector for revival of economy

Okays massive electricity tariff reduction for industrial sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday instructed the relevant authorities to hold consultation with the globally reputed consultancy firms to realize the investment agreements with the friendly countries.

The prime minister, in a meeting with a delegation of an international consultancy firm headed by former State Bank Governor Raza Baqir, also directed for consultation with the reputed firms to reduce the volume of government infrastructure and enhance effectiveness of the governance system.

He told the delegation that there existed a huge potential for investment in minerals and energy sectors. Appreciating the key role of the private sector in national economic development, the prime minister assured of all-out facilitation by the government for economic revival.

Federal ministers Ahsan Iqbal, Ahmad Khan Cheema, Dr Musaddik Malik, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Awais

Ahmed Leghari, ministers of state Ali Pervaiz Malik and Shaza Fatima Khawaja and relevant senior officials attended the meeting.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday approved a massive reduction in electricity tariff for the industrial sector by Rs 10.69 per unit in order to boost production and exports.

In view of the prime minister's initiative, the new electricity price per unit for the industrial and export sector had now been fixed at Rs 34.99, a PM Office press release said. The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) had recommended a reduction of Rs 10.69 per unit for industries. "The PM's package, which is expected to provide relief of over Rs 200 billion to the industry, will help bring down the manufacturing cost of the goods making them competitive in the global market," the news release added.

Similarly, the initiative would also help decrease the prices of agriculture commodities.

## 70 pc work on target about preparations of budget done: We have decided in principle to end bad governance in Balochistan: CM Bugti

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has stated that 70 percent work on the targets about preparation of the next financial year budget of the province has been completed. He said that the education and health is the first priority of the provincial government.

He categorically asserted that we have decided in principle to end bad governance from the province.

He said that the beginning of analyzing the performance of government would be from approval of the budget for next financial year and implementation

tion on it. The Chief Minister was chairing a review meeting on preparations of the provincial budget for the next financial year 2024-25 here at the CM's secretariat on Friday.

The Provincial Minister for Finance, Mir Shoaib Naushervani, Minister for Planning and Development, Zahoor Ahmed Buledi, other ministers, Chief Secretary, Shakeel Qadir Khan, Additional Chief Secretary Development, besides other administrative secretaries and concerned high ups were in attendance at meeting.

The meeting was briefed about the salient features of the budget of province for next financial year besides the development plan.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister appreciated the Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan and his whole team for the preparations of budget.

He said that it remained our endeavour that mistakes of the past may not be repeated in formulation of the budget.

He announced that education and health are top priorities of the provincial government in budget. He said that he has decided to put an end to the bad governance in the province.

The meeting was briefed about the salient features of the budget of province for next financial year besides the development plan.

## Political parties must prioritise country's progress: President

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi called on President Asif Ali Zardari at the Aiwan-e-Sadr here Friday.

During the meeting issues of mutual interest and country's overall situation were discussed in detail.

President Asif Ali Zardari emphasized we need to take Pakistan forward and everyone has to play their role in this regard.

He stressed that political parties must prioritize the country's progress and prosperity by fulfilling their democratic and constitutional responsibility. He added we must only think about Pakistan and put aside personal differences.

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi concurred that any challenge can be countered through the power of unity and solidarity.



ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi meeting with President Asif Ali Zardari

## Govt reduces petrol, diesel prices to ease inflation pressure

Petrol price reduced by Rs10.20 per litre while HSD will see a reduction of Rs2.33 per litre

ISLAMABAD: The government announced on Friday a significant reduction in petrol and high-speed diesel (HSD) prices for the upcoming fortnight, providing relief to consumers grappling with inflation.

Effective from June 15, petrol prices will decrease by Rs10.20 per litre, bringing the new price to Rs258.16 per litre. HSD will see a reduction of Rs2.33 per litre, with the new rate set at Rs267.89 per litre, according to a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office.

Kerosene oil will remain priced at Rs171.61 per litre, and light diesel oil (LDO) will stay at Rs157.32 per litre in the open market.

Petrol is primarily used for cars and motorcycles, while HSD powers heavy vehicles such as trucks and buses, as well as industrial machinery.

It is noteworthy that on June 1, the government reduced the price of petrol by Rs4.74 per litre and diesel by Rs3.86 per litre. So far, a total relief of Rs35 per litre has been provided to the public for petrol.

## No point negotiating with powerless govt: Imran

Monitoring Desk RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan on Friday stated that there is no point in negotiating with a government that lacks authority.

During an informal conversation with the media during the hearing of the £190 million reference at Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail, he accused the administration of pressuring judges who rule in favour of PTI and criticised the recent budget for burdening salaried individuals.

Khan alleged that a judge from Sargodha informed the Lahore High Court about pressure exerted by intelligence agencies.

He claimed that the judge's household gas supply was cut off and that judges sympathetic to PTI face immense pressure. "Journalists speaking in favour of PTI are being targeted; Raouf Hassan was attacked, and Ali Zaman was tortured," Khan asserted, implicating intelligence agencies in these actions. Khan urged the Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa to uphold the rule of law amidst these interferences.

## Home Minister directs to ensure foolproof security on Eidul Azha in Quetta

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home, Mir Ziaullah Langove has directed to the concerned authorities to ensure foolproof security on eve of Eidul Azha in Quetta and other parts of the province.

According to an official hand out issued here on Friday, the Minister Home said that it is responsibility of the government to protect life and property of the masses.

He directed to the concerned authorities to take special arrangements of security at the congregations

## Jamal Raisani discusses Balochistan politics with Bilawal Bhutto

Independent Report

ISLAMABAD (APP): Young member national assembly of the Pakistan People's Party, Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani, met with Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Friday to discuss Balochistan's political situation and strategies for strengthening the party.

MNA Jamal Khan Raisani highlighted the issues of his Saryab constituency and proposed solutions.

He also briefed on the youth policy and the challenges being faced by young people of Balochistan region. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari assured his full cooperation to address the problems facing the youth of the province.

He expressed confidence in the abilities of Jamal Khan Raisani and emphasized that the party needs the young leaders.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti presiding over a meeting to review preparation of provincial budget for next financial year 2024-25

## Maximum steps being taken for welfare of media community: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Friday that the government was taking all possible steps for welfare of the media community.

Addressing a ceremony regarding launch of the health insurance scheme for the journalists, the minister said the government had been playing its due role for the welfare of journalists community and he had personally requested the prime minister to take more initiatives in that regard.

The minister requested the All Pakistan Newspa-

pers Society (APNS) to give due rights of the media workers and journalists. He had spoken to the owners of media organizations in that regard, and it was his desire cheques pertaining to outstanding dues should be distributed among the journalists directly instead of through the Implementation Tribunal for Newspaper Employees (ITNE) platform.

He said after assuming charge as information minister, he ensured clearance of the outstanding dues of media organizations on priority. He said former information minister Marriyum Aurangzeb had taken the

initiative of health insurance scheme, and he was carrying forward it.

"Some 5,000 journalists will be provided will be provided medical cover in the first phase and 10,000 more in the second phase," he added.

Rs 1 billion, the minister said, had been allocated for the project in the budget.

He said he had requested the Principal Information Officer to add those who died of unnatural causes, in the insurance package so that financial assistance should be provided to their families as well.



KARACHI: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari briefed by Sarfraz Bugti, Balochistan Chief Minister on his government performance, future plans and other measures regarding solving public problems in the province through video link, in Karachi.

## BHC issues show cause notices to ACS, Principal Secretary to CM, Deputy Chairman PC

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Balochistan High Court (BHC) has issued notices to the Additional Chief Secretary (Development) Balochistan, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister and Deputy Chairman Planning Commission of Pakistan to show cause, as to why a contempt of court proceedings shall not be initiated against them for a willful defiance of the court's orders.

The BHC also directed all the concerned officials to appear in personal capacity for filing a reply to the show cause notice. The Court observed: "we are dismayed to further observe here that despite sending the copies of orders to all the concerned officials at provincial and federal level, no response has ever been received."

BHC issued notices of show cause to the concerned officials during hearing of



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers Mir Ali Madad Jattak and Sardar Sarfraz Domki meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

## Achakzai to hold talks with PML-N, PPP

ISLAMABAD (INP) - Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PKMAP) Chairman Mahmood Khan Achakzai expressed his willingness to hold talks with PML-N President Nawaz Sharif and PPP Co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari.

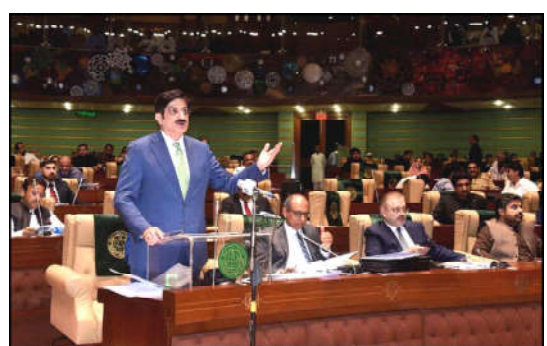
Earlier, PTI chose Achakzai to spearhead negotiations through the opposition alliance's platform, Tehreek-e-Tahafuz Ayeen-e-Pakistan (TTAP). "Pakistan needs a strong army," Achakzai stated clarifying that his movement is not against the military. "We have raised the banner for the supremacy of democracy and the Constitution."

## T20 World Cup 2024: Pakistan eliminated as rain abandons USA, Ireland match

Sports Desk

NEW YORK: Pakistan suffered early exit from the T20 World Cup 2024 after USA bagged one point to qualify for the Super Eights following the abandoning of their match against Ireland due to rain.

Pakistan's hopes of qualification to the Super Eight Stage in West Indies might remain alive if USA lost against Ireland in today (June 14) match. However, rain played spoilsport and



KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Friday presented a Rs. 3,056.27 trillion development and social protection-oriented budget of the province for the next fiscal year 2024-25 on the floor of Provincial Assembly of Sindh.

The next fiscal year's budget marks 34 percent

increase over budget estimates of Rs. 2,282.58 billion in current year 2023-24.

The chief minister, who also holds the portfolio of the Sindh Finance Minister in his budget speech, proposed a hike of 22 to 30 percent in salaries and a significantly higher development expense of Rs

959 billion, which accounts for 31 percent of the outlay.

While terming as the balanced budget, Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah said that the budget mainly centred around the rehabilitation of flood-affected people and social protection for the poor.

The total projected revenue for the province is Rs. 3 trillion. The majority of this comes from federal transfers 62 percent, followed by provincial receipts 22 percent. The remaining receipts are through current capital receipts of Rs. 22 billion, foreign project assistance of Rs. 334 billion, other federal grants in the form of PSDP of Rs. 77 billion, foreign grants of Rs. 6 billion.

**Daily Voice of Masses**  
**Independent**

**Budget and politics**

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb on Thursday expressed his ‘resolve’ to increase Pakistan’s tax-to-GDP ratio to 13pc in the next three years. Addressing a post-budget media briefing, he said: “Our basic principle while framing this budget was to expand the tax base.”

Given this statement and his earlier declaration at the launch of the Economic Survey that “countries cannot be run on charity but taxes”, it was expected that the new budget would have significant measures to broaden the tax base. The reality of the taxation measures announced by him in the budget, however, does not match his rhetoric. Before we delve into the reasons for this gap, it should be acknowledged that the budget does propose the revocation of certain tax exemptions being enjoyed by certain privileged sectors of the economy. That, though, has been done to raise the annual tax collection to Rs12b.97tr, a sine qua non to qualify for the three-year Extended Fund Facility being sought from the IMF.

One does not have to be a financial wizard to see that the budget still follows the same tried, tested, flopped and, therefore, oft-rejected trope of milking those already in the tax net even more. A large part of the additional revenue measures being proposed target the same two segments — the salaried classes and documented businesses — which already pay the bulk of personal and direct taxes.

At best, the government can only hope that its proposal to levy higher taxes on non-filers trying to buy or sell property will force them to join the tax net voluntarily. At worst, it will force more people to engage in cash transactions and, thus, increase tax evasion.

The next budget, in fact, reflects the ruling PML-N’s political concerns more than its economic reform agenda. For one, it has left its traditional support — traders — virtually untouched. Nothing except such political imperatives explain why the finance minister did not levy any direct taxes on retail trade even when the government has talked a lot about it of late.

Similarly, while there is a proposal to levy federal excise duty on property, real estate developers and agents have been shielded from any additional tax burden. This, too, stems from political expediency: the PML-N cannot afford to anger the middle class other than those sections that have already turned against it. The budget, therefore, lacks both imagination and courage. It shows that the finance team did not envision any structural changes to broaden the tax-to-GDP ratio and, instead, chose to stick to old formulae. It also shows that the ruling party is scared of taking bold steps lest it loses whatever little public support and legitimacy it has. Consequently, the budget it has presented signifies nothing but a lost opportunity to fix the system.

**A helping hand**

**Zubeida Mustafa**

In a country without institutionalised social security, how do people of limited means survive in an emergency? A wage earner might lose his job unexpectedly, a young woman with small children may be widowed, or a serious illness might strike. The well-to-do have their savings and insurance to help them tide over the emergency. But for the indigent, the options are limited. At best, they can beg, borrow or steal.

It is in this context that the social network system has assumed great significance. Many large communities existed even before Pakistan, such as the Ismailis, Memons, etc. Several biradaris are relatively new, having been formalised after 1947 when populations were uprooted and needed support. The fact is that communities have stepped in to fill the vacuum created by the failure of the state to provide economic and social security to its citizens. A well-known community is the Saudagran-i-Delhi.

These communities are structured diversely and perform complex functions. I learnt more about them from Seema Liaquat of the Anjuman-i-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen, Partabgarh (Awadh). Seema’s father died in 1974. She is grateful to the AIMPG as it came to her mother’s rescue when she was left with four young children. The community assigned her a stipend, which arrived, without fail, every month at her doorstep until her eldest son began to work and support the family. “When my mother requested for the stipend to be discontinued, a committee member was dispatched to check if all was well,” Seema recalls.

The AIMPG is an urban community though its founding members traced their origins to various villages of Partabgarh, a district of Awadh. It was not based exclusively on common paternal descent but included the fraternity of households of the area.

Following partition, 100-odd Part-ab-gar-hians migrated to Karachi to test the greener pastures promised by the Muslim League. Then followed the migration of families. Meanwhile, the sight of a woman from Partabgarh begging on a Karachi street upset the pioneers so much that they decided to set up a welfare society in 1955 so that no one would have to beg. The idea was also to connect members with relatives with whom they had lost touch. There was no looking back after that.

The community’s membership has risen to 6,000, comprising a number of highly educated and socially and economically well-placed individuals. It had started as a group of illiterate men, mostly unskilled workers such as gardeners, peons, drivers and chowkidars. The Anjuman now boasts a 99 per cent literacy rate and has PhD doctors, a veterinarian, an MPhil (to be), an MNA, two MPAs and lawyers in its ranks. For many, it has been a story of from rags to riches.

I was impressed by the AIMPG’s self-help spirit. Its focus has been on humanitarian service, the Shoba-i-Khidmat-i-Khail-Qureshi being its most important department. When I asked the organisation’s president Khalil Qureshi what he took most pride in, he replied: “We have delivered stipends or assistance to those on our list on the first of the month for the last 69 years without fail. Today, 82 families between them receive Rs1,000,000 every month.”

Mr Qureshi, who is commercial manager at Port Qasim, also speaks proudly of the 60-bedded Awadh General Hospital,

a healthcare centre and the Awadh Public School that provides education to 400 children — 100 of them receiving fee subsidy.

The Anjuman raises its own funds. The membership fee is a token one rupee, which was fixed in 1955. But members and non-member beneficiaries are generous with their zakat, fitra and other donations.

The administration is democratically elected. It is divided into 19 wards in the city (Karachi) with a representative to monitor the well-being of the members under his jurisdiction. Above the wardens is a three-member council consisting of a president, general secretary and finance secretary assisted by an auditor. Elections are held every two years.

Events held periodically are well-attended and help the members bond. Membership is entirely voluntary and those who choose to join demonstrate a strong sense of brotherhood, which means a lot in a country that has failed to give its people a sense of ownership. The AIMPG has been progressive in its outlook and had managed generational change effectively. No wonder all children are attending schools, and the emancipation and empowerment of women in an extremely patriarchal community has proceeded smoothly. How does the government feel about such communities? Obviously, it welcomes them because they are apolitical and do not challenge the state’s power.

The wealthier communities contribute a lot to the national economy. But with membership hardly amounting to anything in a country of 241 million, the communities make no impact on the social security situation in the country. — Courtesy Dawn

**Protecting the coast**

**Umar Farooq**

Pakistan’s coastal and marine ecosystems, such as the Indus delta, Karachi’s mangroves, and the Makran coast, are not merely scenic beauties but foundational to the country’s environmental and economic stability. The Indus delta mangroves alone encompass about 130,000 hectares (321,237 acres) serving as vital carbon sinks that store approximately 14.4 million tonnes of carbon annually. Yet, these ecosystems face critical threats — industrial pollution, rampant overfishing, and the overarching impacts of climate change compromise their ability to perform essential functions.

In Karachi, the unchecked discharge of industrial pollutants has severe consequences on its marine ecosystems. Notably, the city’s release of about 90 per cent of its untreated wastewater into the Arabian Sea introduces pollutants such as heavy metals and hydrocarbons, with the tanning industry releasing toxins that have been shown to damage sensitive mangrove roots and reduce the water quality, affecting the health of fish and other marine life. The recent controversial construction of the expressway along the route of the Malir river, poses a direct threat to these ecosystems resulting in increased sedimentation that might suffocate the mangrove forests, which are crucial nurseries for many species of fish.

One solution to these problems is the establishment of a national marine data repository. This centralised data system would enable better management and moni-

toring of marine environments by providing accurate and timely information on pollution levels, biodiversity health, and the effectiveness of conservation efforts. The data on pollution levels, including concentrations of heavy metals and chemicals from industrial discharges, will help identify pollution hotspots and guide regulatory enforcement. Biodiversity data, tracking species populations and health, monitoring the health of the mangroves and coral reefs through satellite imagery, and field surveys and data on water quality indicators such as pH, dissolved oxygen, and nutrient levels would help in tracking the broader environmental health of the blue ecosystems.

Strengthening regulatory frameworks is essential to addressing the threats faced by Pakistan’s marine ecosystems. One specific policy would be the introduction of a ‘marine pollution control act’ which would mandate industrial facilities to install and maintain wastewater treatment plants to remove harmful pollutants before discharge. The act should be reinforced with the setting and offsetting of toxin release. Additionally, a permit system for factories along the coast, mandating the treatment of wastewater before the release and investment in catchment restoration, should be introduced. This would be in the form of ‘marine credits’ for funding coral reef restoration or seagrass meadow rehabilitation, which could then be used to offset their pollution footprints. These permits would be linked to regular inspections and hefty fines for non-compliance, ensuring a deterrent effect that would encourage industries to adopt cleaner practices.

Community involvement is equally critical for sustainable outcomes. Local and indigenous communities, which have depended on Pakistan’s coastal and marine ecosystems for generations, are often overlooked in policymaking processes. These communities are key stakeholders, possessing invaluable traditional knowledge and a deep connection to the environment. Yet, policymakers from urban centres frequently impose regulations without consulting them, leading to ineffective and unsustainable outcomes. True progress can only be made by genuinely engaging these communities, earning their trust, and implementing tailored awareness campaigns where needed. Without their involvement, no policy will be effective or enforceable.

Looking at international examples, community-led initiatives were one of the key components in the success of Marine Protected Areas, which helped to revitalise coral reefs. Ensuring justice means recognising these communities’ rights, incorporating their insights, and creating inclusive conservation strategies that honour their roles as stewards of the environment. In the words of a local fisherman, “We protect what we love, and we love what we understand.” Just as the tides sustain the shores, so, too, we must sustain our efforts to protect these vital ecosystems. For the future of our oceans, and the communities that depend on them, is a shared responsibility we cannot afford to ignore. — Courtesy Dawn

**Commerce News**

**Masood Khan urges greater US investment in Pakistan, trade to boost bilateral ties**

WASHINGTON (APP): Pakistan’s Ambassador to the United States, Masood Khan, has called for greater American investment in Pakistan and more trade between the two countries in an effort to further strengthen their relations.

Speaking at the World Affairs Council in Philadelphia, he urged US businesses to increase their investment portfolios, especially in tech-startups, renewable energy, agriculture and extractive industries.

“Pakistan is a big market for American manufacturers,” the ambassador told a gathering of scholars, policy-makers,

legislators, entrepreneurs, business leaders and professionals. “If you manufacture state-of-the-art products, you have 240 million consumers in Pakistan,” he said.

In his remarks, Ambassador Masood Khan dealt with Pak-US relations, war on terror, recalibration of their bilateral ties in the post-withdrawal period, Pakistan-India relations and the issues of regional stability. In this regard, he focused on the existing investment and trade opportunities between the two countries that provided new sinews to the relationship.

Tracing the roots of

Pak-US relations, especially the US support during the initial days of Pakistan and the robust partnership of the two countries both in times of war and peace, the Ambassador presented a holistic view of the ties spanning over seven decades, saying the two countries are now investing in people-centric diplomacy.

“We have a big human capital and it is growing. Pakistan is digitally connected with the rest of the world and it is tech savvy, with hundreds of institutions which are investing in future technologies,” he said.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja exchanging views with Julian Gorman, GSMA Head of Asia Pacific during meeting held in Islamabad.

**Govt committed for transforming Pak into digital economy: Shaza**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan, GSMA, Saira Faisal was also present in the meeting.

She said Ministry of IT will play pivotal role in GSMA Digital Nation Summit. Ministry of IT & Telecom will extend full support and facilitation regarding GSMA Digital Nation Summit to be held on August 7.

Julian Gorman expressed his gratitude to MoITT for their support of the GSMA Digital Nation Summit in August and assured full support to the government in their digitization journey.

**Envoy Tirmizi, UAE minister discuss insurance, facilitation of Pakistani workers**

DUBAI (APP): Ambassador of Pakistan to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Faisal Tirmizi on Friday met with the UAE’s Minister of Human Resources and Emiratization Dr. Abdulrahman Al Awar wherein they discussed the issues of mutual interests especially those pertaining to Pakistani diaspora working in the multiple sectors.

Ambassador Tirmizi conveyed regards and gratitude on behalf of

Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Chaudhry Salik Hussain to Dr. Abdulrahman Al Awar. He lauded and thanked the leadership of the UAE for reposing great trust in Pakistan as a brotherly and friendly country. He appreciated the government and people of the UAE for hosting about 1.7 million Pakistanis who were supporting their families and country by sending



HYDERABAD: Family busy in selecting and purchasing sandal on a roadside stall in connection with Eid-ul-Azha at Resham Bazaar.

**Indonesia embassy, ACI hosts ‘ASEAN Movie Night’**

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, in collaboration with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Committee in Islamabad (ACI) has hosted a ASEAN Movie Night event featuring the award-winning Indonesian film “Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap” directed by the Indonesian Producer Bene Dion Rajagukguk.

The event was a delightful fusion of cinema and cuisine, celebrating the

rich cultural ties and immense similarities between Indonesia and Pakistan.

On this occasion, the Indonesia Chargé d’Affaires (CDA) Rahmat Hindaarta in his welcoming remarks appraised the distinguished guests from the diplomatic and Pakistani community that the ASEAN Movie Night reflects the spirit of continuously bolstering friendship among ASEAN family members.

**Shipping activity at Port Qasim**

KARACHI (APP): Three ships namely, Beijing, Victorian Kosan and Xin Hai Tong-23 carrying Containers, Chemicals and Coal, berthed at Container Terminal, Engro Terminal and Bulk Terminal respectively on Thursday.

Meanwhile three more ships, Bristol Trader, Two Million Ways and Magique Marline with Chemicals, Gas oil and Stel coil also arrived at outer anchorage of the port during the last 24 hours.

A total of seven ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them four ships, Beijing, Victorian Kosan, Asia Inspire and Hafnia Excellence are expected to sail on today afternoon. Cargo volume of 143,392 tonnes, comprising 106,111 tonnes imports cargo and 37,281 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 2,206 Containers (13 TEUs Imports and 2,193 TEUs export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours. Three ships are at outer anchorage, out of them two ships namely Bristol Trader and Two Million Ways & another ship Eleoussa carrying Chemicals, Gas oil and Coal.

**RDA inflows rise to \$8.055 bn in May 24**

ISLAMABAD (APP): The inflow of remittances under Roshan Digital Account (RDA) has risen to US \$8.055 billion by the end of May 2024 as compared to US \$7.831 billion by April (2024) end, according to the latest data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The data showed that the inflows of remittances during April were recorded at US\$ 224 million as compared to US\$ 171 million in

**Rupee gains 9 paise against Dollar**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Rupee on Friday gained 9 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 278.50 against the previous day’s closing at Rs 278.59.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market, however, were Rs 277.6 and Rs 280.5 respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by Rs 3.06 to close at Rs 298.22 against the last day’s closing of Rs 301.28.



ISLAMABAD: President of Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Atif Ikram Shaikh addressing a press conference at his office in the Federal Capital.

**Pakistan Food Festival Inaugurated at Shangri-La Hotel, Chengdu**

BEIJING (APP): The Pakistan Food Festival was inaugurated on Friday at the prestigious Shangri-La Hotel in Chengdu, celebrating the rich culinary heritage and diverse flavors of Pakistan.

The festival with signature Muslim cuisine is jointly being presented by Shangri-La Chengdu and Pakistan Consulate General in Chengdu.

The event saw the participation of several distinguished guests and officials, including Director General Zhang Tao of the Sichuan Foreign Affairs Office, Director General Jiang Bin of the Chengdu Foreign Affairs

Office, Vice President Tang Jilan of the Sichuan People’s Association of Friendship with Foreign Countries, Vice President Wang Guangjun of the China Council for Promotion of Investment and Trade - Sichuan Branch, Song Junwu, Deputy Director General of the Sichuan Provincial People’s Department of Culture and Tourism, He Di, Director of the Office of International and Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee of the Sichuan Provincial People’s Congress, and Thomas Gou, Assistant General Manager of Shangri-La Hotel.

# Punjab Governor says: Sundus Foundation doing great work for thalassemia patients

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: The Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan today visited Sundus Foundation on World Blood Donor Day. He met children suffering from thalassemia and hemophilia. Governor Punjab also donated blood on this occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that donating blood for people suffering from life-threatening diseases is a great service to the humanity. He said that Sundus Foundation is doing great work for thalassemia patients. Governor Punjab said that Sundus Foundation and other such charitable organizations

which are serving humanity should be encouraged. He said that blood donation is a hope of new life for people suffering from life-threatening diseases including children suffering from thalassemia and hemophilia. Sardar Saleem Haider said that millions of patients get new lives every year through blood donation while it is harmless for the persons who donate blood. Speaking to the media, the Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said that Sundus Foundation has a good reputation as a reliable organization which is serving the persons suffering from thalassemia and hemophilia. He said that the people have faith



**KARACHI:** Chief Minister Sindh, Syed Murad Ali Shah presides over a pre-budget cabinet meeting at CM House.

## Punjab health ministers stress collective responsibility in dengue control

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Ministers Khawaja Salman Rafique and Khawaja Imran Nazir have emphasized that combating dengue is a collective responsibility of all stakeholders, not just one department.

They made these remarks while chairing a crucial meeting on dengue, infectious diseases, and disaster management at the Civil Secretariat, on Friday. Minister Khawaja

Salman Rafique stressed the need for commissioners and deputy commissioners to actively monitor anti-dengue operations.

He urged religious scholars to raise public awareness about dengue during Jummah prayers and called for increased dengue surveillance in Lahore, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, and Multan. "All departments must be mobilized at the district level to tackle the dengue threat effectively. The health department is implementing a comprehensive plan to prevent dengue and other diseases, with the timely revamping of major hospitals being a top priority," he stated. To date, Punjab has reported 170 confirmed dengue cases this year.

He also mentioned the availability of ample dengue medicines in government hospitals.

## KP Governor lauds performance of national health services academy

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday visited Health Services Academy Islamabad where he lauded its performance. Upon arrival, the Governor was received by Vice Chancellor of the Academy, Dr Shahzad Ali Khan, says a statement of Governor house.

He was accompanied by Member Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Ahmad Kundi. The Governor visited different departments of the National Health Services Academy working under an aegis of Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination. He was briefed on its overall performance and its future projects.

While appreciating performance of the national health services academy Islamabad, the Governor said that the academy can play an effective role in elimination of unemployment and provision of better healthcare facilities to the remote and far flung areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



**LAHORE:** Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan donating blood for children suffering from thalassemia and hemophilia during his visit to Sundus Foundation on World Blood Donor Day.

## Coaster accident claims one life, leaves injured

ABBOTTABAD (APP): At least one person was killed and several others injured when the brakes of a coaster carrying students and teachers of Haripur Rehana Umar Islamic Public School failed at Batangi Mor Bagnetar in Abbottabad on Thursday.

According to rescue sources, the coaster carrying 42 students and 8 teachers met with an accident in which 12 people were injured.

Rescue 1122 shifted the injured to the Ayub Teaching Hospital (ATH) Abbottabad.

Unfortunately, one injured student could not survive and succumbed to injuries, and the condition of four patients remains critical, while others injured are stable. The injured were identified as Zahid, Imran, Mah Noor, Riyadh, Noor Fatima, Fiza Sharif, Anabia, Ayesha, Shanza, Manahil Aziz, and Khizra Warris. Mazhar Iqbal, a resident of Darband Khelabat, lost his life in the accident.



**LAHORE:** Provincial Minister of Punjab for Finance Mian Mujtaba Shuja-ur- Rehman addressing during pre-budget press conference in the Provincial Capital.

## PTI founder enjoying lavish lifestyle in jail: Azma

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Information Minister Azma Bokhari said on Friday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder was enjoying a lavish lifestyle in jail, as six jail cells had been vacated for him.

In the last eight months, the PTI founder met 288 people in jail, she added. His family and his lawyers meet him thrice a week, the minister said while rebutting Barrister Saif's statement.

She said Imran Khan had been provided with TV, room-cooler, study table, chair, exercise bike, stretching belt, bookshelves, books and a separate space for walking twice a day, along with a separate kitchen.

She recalled that Mian Nawaz Sharif was allowed to meet his people only once a week on Thursday.

## Punjab presented tax-free budget with largest ADP: ministers

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) Punjab government has presented a tax-free and surplus budget of Rs 5,446 billion, having the largest ADP (Annual Development Programme) for fiscal year 2024-25, mainly focusing on social sector, infrastructure, development, production sectors, services sectors, and special initiatives for people's welfare and poverty alleviation.

This budget is not an exaggeration of figures but a consolidated document that has full cash cover and it is the outcome of the effective and well-thought-out policies of the incumbent government. The full cash cover due to surplus revenue receipts, particularly the provincial own revenue receipts, will ensure complete utilisation of the ADP, thus ensuring maximum relief to the common man.

Provincial Senior Minister for Planning and Development (P&D) Muriyumu Auranzeb and Provincial Finance Minister Mian Mujtaba Shuja-ur-Rehman stated this while addressing the post-budget conference, here on Friday.

The senior minister said that now the elected government was in place and "we have shun politics for the sake of politics and blame game, and we will have to make joint efforts for people's well-being". The opposition has the constitutional right of criticism and the government would welcome its objections which deemed better for the people and the country, she added.

She said that under the leadership of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, the Punjab government was putting in order comprehensive measures such as promotion of information technology, skill development among youth, women, transgender community and the minorities. The priority sectors of the government are Education, Health, IT, Agriculture, infrastructure, and law and order. She elaborated that the government has allocated more funds for the above sectors, stating that Health Sector has been allocated a total of Rs 539 billion with ADP of Rs 129 billion; Education sector was allocated Rs 670 billion with Rs 66 billion ADP; Local Governments to get Rs 321 billion with Rs 62 billion ADP; Agriculture budget is Rs 117 billion with Rs 65 ADP; Rs 375 billion would be spent on infrastructure; and Rs 220 billion on Law and Order.

During the next financial year, she said, the government will also give subsidy in various sectors including Agriculture Rs 26.6 billion; Transport Rs 24.3 billion; and Rs 100 billion for the special initiatives. Finance Minister Mian Mujtaba said that Rs 842 billion ADP was 28 per cent higher than the outgoing FY 2023-24 containing Rs 655 billion on this count. Out of the development budget, he elaborated, 33 per cent would be spent on Social Sector, 29 per cent on Infrastructure, 13 per cent on Production Sector, and 5 per cent on Services Sector, while 20 per cent would go to Special Programmes/Initiatives.

The finance minister said that total revenue collection was estimated at Rs 4643.40 billion; Rs 3,683.10 billion will be received from federal divisible pool; provincial receipts (Own Resource Revenue) are estimated at Rs 960.30 billion (54 per cent higher than the current fiscal year) for financial year 2024-25, while Non-Tax Revenues are estimated at Rs 488.40 billion (111 per cent higher than the current FY).

## International News

### Putin demands more Ukrainian land to end war; Kyiv rejects 'ultimatum'

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin said on Friday Russia would end the war in Ukraine only if Kyiv agreed to drop its NATO ambitions and hand over the entirety of four provinces claimed by Moscow, demands Kyiv swiftly rejected as tantamount to surrender.

On the eve of a conference in Switzerland to which Russia has not been invited, Putin set out maximalist conditions wholly at odds with the terms demanded by Ukraine, apparently reflecting Moscow's growing confidence that its forces have the upper hand in the war. He restated his demand for Ukraine's demilitarization, unchanged from the day he sent in his troops on Feb. 24, 2022, and said an end to Western sanctions must also be part of a peace deal.

He also repeated his call for Ukraine's "denazification", based on what Kyiv calls an unfounded slur against its leadership. Ukraine said the conditions were "absurd".

"He is offering for Ukraine to admit defeat. He is offering for Ukraine to legally give up its territories to Russia."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is meeting world leaders for a summit this weekend.

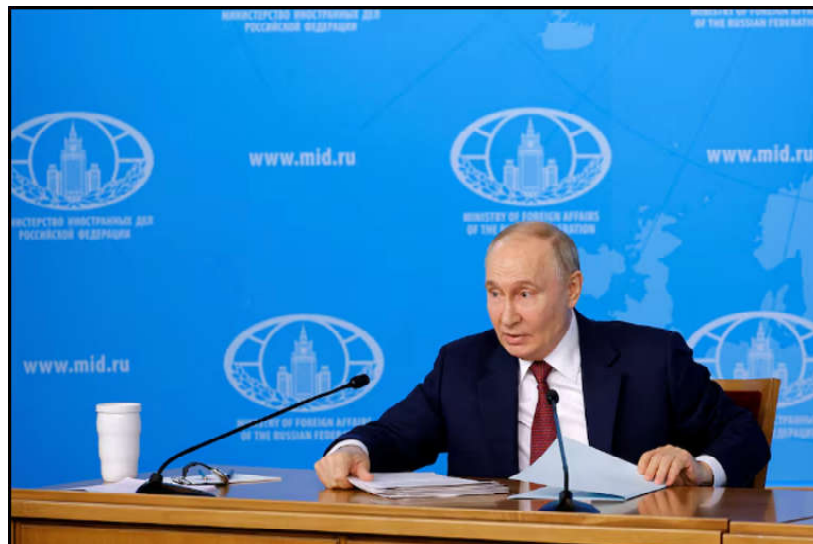
"The conditions are very simple," Putin said, listing them as the full withdrawal of Ukrainian troops from the entire territory of the Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions in eastern and southern Ukraine.

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin told reporters at NATO headquarters in Brussels: "He (Putin) is not in any position to dictate to Ukraine what they must do to bring about peace." The timing of Putin's speech was clearly intended to preempt the Swiss summit, billed as a "peace conference" despite Russia's exclusion, where Zelenskyy seeks a show of international support for Kyiv's terms to end the war.

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**Russia's President Vladimir Putin attends a meeting with the leadership of the Russian foreign ministry in Moscow, Russia.**

### Heavy rain, landslides kill 6 in India's Sikkim, 2,000 tourists stranded

**Monitoring Desk**  
GUWAHATI: At least six people have been killed this week and around 2,000 tourists stranded in India's Himalayan state of Sikkim in landslides and floods after incessant rainfall, officials said on Friday.

Another four people have been killed in Nepal's Taplejung district, which borders Sikkim, after a landslide following rains swept away the house in which they were sleeping, officials there said.

Heavy rains triggered landslides at several locations in Mangan district, which covers north Sikkim and lies about 100 km (60 miles) north of the state capital Gangtok. The local government of the north-eastern Indian state said.

"It's been raining continuously for 36 hours. The road to north Sikkim has been damaged in multiple locations, snapping connection to the district," said Hem Kumar Chettri, the district magistrate of Mangan.

"The stranded tourists are all safe but we have not been able to evacuate them because of the damage," he said, adding that 11 of them were foreign nationals.

The small Buddhist state of 650,000 people, wedged between Bhutan, China and Nepal, is a popular tourist destination but also faces natural disasters caused by extreme weather events in the Himalayas. At least 179 people died last year in Sikkim when a Himalayan glacial lake outbreak triggered floods. Personnel and machinery have been deployed to fix the road, Chettri said, adding that the damage was "extensive" and repair will take some time.

### Huthi missile attack severely injures sailor on cargo ship: US military

**Monitoring Desk**  
DUBAI: Two cruise missiles launched by Yemen's Huthi rebels struck a bulk cargo carrier in the Gulf of Aden on Thursday, severely injuring a sailor who was evacuated by American forces, the US military said.

The Huthis have been targeting vessels in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden since November 2023 in attacks they say are in solidarity with Palestinians during the ongoing Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip.

Although this has caused major disruption, to international shipping, casualties have been rare.

The M/V Verbenia — a Palauan-flagged, Ukrainian-owned, Polish-operated ship — "reported damage and subsequent fires on board. The crew continues to fight the fire. One civilian mariner was severely injured during the attack," the US Central Command (CENTCOM) said in a statement.

"Aircraft from USS Philippine Sea (CG 58) medically evacuated the injured mariner to a partner force ship nearby for medical attention," CENTCOM said.

The Ramallah-based health ministry identified him as 21-year-old Qais Muhammad Zakarneh.

### Pope Francis tells G7 that humans must not lose control of AI

**Monitoring Desk**  
BORGO EGNAZIA: Pope Francis became the first pontiff to address a Group of Seven summit on Friday, warning world leaders that Artificial Intelligence must never be allowed to get the upper hand over humanity.

An array of global chiefs warmly embraced the 87-year-old pope as he made his way around their huge oval table, pushed in a wheelchair as age and infirmity limit his mobility.

The pope said AI represented an "epochal transformation" for mankind, but stressed the need for close oversight of the ever-developing technology to preserve human life and dignity.

"No machine should ever choose to take the life of a human being," he said, adding that people should not let superpowerful algorithms decide their destiny.

"We would condemn humanity to a future without hope if we took away people's ability to make decisions about themselves and their lives, by dooming them to depend on the choices of machines," he warned.

The G7 draws together the leaders of the United States, Germany, Britain, France, Italy, Canada and Japan.

In addition, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, the summit host, invited 10 other nations to join the talks on Friday, including the prime minister of India and presidents of Turkey and Kenya.

On entering the conference room ahead of his speech, Francis was warmly enveloped by a fellow Argentine, President Javier Milei, received a hug from Jordan's King Abdullah, a kiss from Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and had a long, whispered conversation with U.S. President Joe Biden.

### Over half of cropland in Gaza has been damaged, says UN

**Monitoring Desk**  
GENEVA: More than half of Gaza's agricultural land, crucial for feeding the war-ravaged territory's hungry population, has been degraded by conflict, satellite images analysed by the United Nations show.

The data reveals a rise in the destruction of orchards, field crops and vegetables in the Palestinian enclave, where hunger is widespread after eight months of Israeli bombardment. The World Health Organisation warned on Wednesday that many people in Gaza were facing "catastrophic hunger and famine-like conditions".

Using satellite imagery taken between May 2017 and 2024, United Nations Satellite Centre (UNOSAT) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) found that 57 per cent of Gaza's

### Putin is in no position to make demands of Ukraine for peace, US defense secretary says

**Monitoring Desk**  
BRUSSELS: Russian President Vladimir Putin is in no position to make demands on Ukraine to end the war, U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said on Friday, as he touted Kyiv's military successes confronting Moscow's full-scale invasion. Putin said earlier on Friday that Russia would end the war in Ukraine only if Kyiv agreed to drop its NATO ambitions, hand over the entirety of four provinces claimed by Moscow, and carry out a demilitarization. "He is not in any position to dictate to Ukraine what they must do to bring about peace," Austin told reporters at NATO headquarters in Brussels.

Russia controls nearly a fifth of Ukrainian territory in the third year of the war. Ukraine says peace can only be based on the full withdrawal of Russian forces and the restoration of its territorial integrity.

"He's had some hundreds of thousands of troops wounded and killed in this unjust and unprovoked invasion. He could end this today if he chose to do that. And we call upon him to do that and to leave Ukrainian sovereign territory," Austin said.

In his address, Putin said "the future existence of Ukraine" depended on it withdrawing its forces, on it adopting a neutral status, and on beginning talks with Russia, and said Kyiv's military situation would worsen if it rejected the offer. The timing of Putin's speech was clearly intended to preempt Ukraine's Swiss summit, billed as a "peace conference" despite Russia's exclusion, where Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy seeks a show of international support for Kyiv's terms to end the war.

### Palestinians say Israeli West Bank raid kills 3

**Monitoring Desk**  
QABATIYAH: Palestinian officials said Israeli troops killed three Palestinians in a raid in a town in the occupied West Bank Thursday, as Israel's military reported it had "eliminated two wanted suspects".

The raid took place in the town of Qabatiyah near the city of Jenin, said Jenin governor Kamal Abu al-Rub who confirmed the "deaths of two martyrs".

The Palestinian Red Crescent said a third Palestinian was also killed in the raid.

### Hamas' armed wing says Israeli airstrike killed two hostages in Rafah

**Monitoring Desk**  
CAIRO: Hamas' armed wing al-Qassam Brigades said on Friday that two Israeli hostages held in Gaza were killed in an Israeli airstrike on Rafah a few days ago. The group, in a video posted on its Telegram channel, did not release the names of those said to have been killed or provide any evidence.



**KARACHI:** A large number of people gather for boarding on special Eid train as they are going to their native areas for celebrate upcoming festival Eid-ul-Azha with their family members, at Cantt Railway Station in Karachi.

## Interference of establishment in judiciary will soon come to end: CJ LHC

RAWALPINDI (Online): Chief Justice (CJ) Lahore High Court (LHC) Malik Shehzad Ahmad Khan has said establishment interference in judiciary will soon come to end.

"Different institutions are involved in the affairs of judiciary. The interference started from Moulvi Tameez ud Din case. Establishment interference in the matters of judiciary will soon come to end, he said this while addressing a ceremony here Friday.

He went on to say we together will have to get rid of interference in judiciary. Our judiciary is performing its obligations without fear or inducement.

He held "during telephone talk with a judge he

told me all what happened with him. Judge said he does not fear. He will perform his duty honestly.

He remarked complaints have come regarding pressure on judges. Those who fear Allah don't fear any blackmailing.

"I had come out from my home alone for the sake of justice system in 2007, he added.

There is general complaint that judges don't sit in courts on time. We have brought biometric system in Punjab for the attendance of judges. Action will be taken against the judges who don't reach courts on time.

He underlined there are black sheep every where. Some judges get do

their work by readers and go home after sipping tea. CCTVs have been installed in court rooms to see the presence of judges.

The chief justice's comments came after six Islamabad High Court (IHC) judges wrote a letter Supreme Court on March 25, accusing spy agencies of meddling in judicial affairs.

The IHC judges had demanded Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa to convene the judicial convention to consider the matter of alleged interference of intelligence operatives in the judicial functions or "intimidation" of judges in a manner that undermined the independence of the judiciary.



**QUETTA:** Inspector General of Police Balochistan Abdul Khaliq Sheikh presenting souvenir to Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti during a ceremony of 100<sup>th</sup> Passing Out Parade of Balochistan Police

## KP governor thanks PM for allocating Rs 19 bln for Chashma Lift Canal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday extended his gratitude to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for allocating Rs 19 billion for completion of the Chashma Lift Canal project that would help boost the wheat crop yield in the province.

Talking to the media outside the Parliament House, Governor Kundi said after the project's completion the province would be able to chip in the country's wheat export along with meeting its local needs.

The Chashma Lift Canal would be inaugurated during the current year, he added.

The governor regretted that the promises made to federally and provincially administered tribal areas (FATA & PATA respectively) had not been fulfilled whereas the issues pertaining to the new taxes for the newly merged districts needed to be resolved.

"Everyone knows about the security situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the KP chief minister must call an emergency meeting of the apex committee," Kundi said.

The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government was bragging about its education reforms whereas 26 universities in the province did not have a vice chancellor, he added.



**QUETTA:** A view of traffic jam due to rush on bazaar during eid shopping.

## BSDSB executing comprehensive heat wave response project: Razaq

QUETTA (APP): Project Manager of Bright Star Development Society Balochistan (BSDSB) Abdul Razaq Baloch said that with the substantial support of the START Network, Ready Pakistan was successfully executing a comprehensive Heat Wave Response Project.

In a statement issued here Friday, he said Sibi, the hottest spot in Asia, now has a dynamic plan to support its community through these severe conditions. This aspiring intervention, conducted in a strong coordination with the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), district administration, municipal corporation and others stakeholders of district Sibi, includes several critical initiatives, he said.

He said that the establishment of five cooling cen-

ters had been a central step of BSDSB in providing immediate relief to the community of Sibi in Balochistan. These centers offer cold drinking water and much-needed shade to the residents, allowing them to cope with the oppressive heat more effectively. The cooling centers were established in most populated areas including cattle market, Allahabad Bus Stop, Quetta Jacobabad Bus stop, Talli Bus Stop and BISP Center, he said.

He said that this initiative has been particularly beneficial for the most vulnerable members of the community. To further relieve the adversities faced by the daily wagers/working class, BSDSB has set up two shade structures, he maintained.

He said that these structures provide a reser-

vation for daily wage workers and passengers, offering them a place to rest during the peak heat hours of the day. Recognizing the need for personal protection against the sun, the BSDSB with the financial assistance of START Network/Ready Pakistan has distributed 1,450 heat wave kits and 100 large umbrellas for Hand cart runners, he noted. He said that each kit included essential items such as umbrella, sunglasses, cloth pieces, towels, water bottles, and drink sachets, and sun glasses, helping individuals stay cool and hydrated throughout the day. He said that in a bid to address medical emergencies caused by the heat, BSDSB has established heat stroke centers at BHU Khair Wah and RHC Bakhtiar Abad with the assistance of District Health authorities.

## Upper House witnesses mix reaction over budget 2024-25

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senate on Friday witnessed mix reaction on the budget as the treasury benches termed it pro-people and relief orientated while the opposition called for reviewing increase in tax on salaried class besides giving more relief to the masses.

Resuming debate on the budget, Senator Raja Nasir Abbas of MWMP said that no relief was given to the poor masses in the budget.

He said that sufficient fund was also not allocated for education and health sectors. The budget lacked future economic plan, he claimed.

He said problems of industries should be addressed on priority basis as it played key role in country's exports.

Increase in petroleum levy would further cause inflation in the country, he added.

Maulana Atta ur Rehman of JUI-F said that the government should made the budget people-friendly oriented.

Sarmad Ali of PPP said that the country was facing severe economic crisis and we have limited resources and fiscal space. Our over 50 per cent revenue collection spent on debt servicing, he added. He said proposed tax on papers would have negative impact on education and newspaper industry.

Sadia Abbasi of PML-N said the government should review proposed increase in tax on salaried class and provide maximum relief to the common people in the budget.

She said the government's policy should be pro-people, pro-business and pro-agriculture. She also suggested that the government should control its expenditure.

Dr Zarqa Suharwardy

Taimur of PTI termed the budget pro-elite rather than pro-people.

She said tax has increased on the salaried class particularly on grade 1-16 employees.

She claimed that exemption was given to the elite class in the budget.

No tax was imposed on IPPs, members of Parliament and elite class, she said.

She said that government has to curtail its own expenditure and she should start from its own door.

She welcomed an increase in minimum wages of the labourer but the government should reduce tax ratio.

Nasir Butt of PML-N while taking part in the debate said that the government presented people friendly budget and announced sizable increase in salaries and pensions of the employees despite economic crisis.



**ISLAMABAD:** Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with JUI (F) Chief Maulana Fazlur-Rehman.

## Dr. Khalid Maqbool stresses future-ready education

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui has said, "We must provide our youth with an education that will be essential in future."

Talking to the media at the Pakistan Institute of Fashion and Design (PIFD) here on Friday, he mentioned that a significant portion of our population consisted of youth, and they were our future. He stated that the government is aware of its responsibilities and has declared an education emergency to educate the youth, adding that we should provide an education that will be relevant in ten years.

In response to a question about the 18th Amendment, he said that some

provinces benefited from the amendment while others did not. He mentioned that the 18th Amendment was introduced for devolution of powers, but it proved otherwise in the past 15-20 years. He noted that the federal government has very limited fiscal space after debt repayments and defence expenditure. He suggested that tax should not be based on areas, industry and agriculture, rather, it should be on income, adding that whoever earns should pay tax.

Replying to a question about differences between the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and the government, he said that the PPP was present in the house during the budget session, and their protest was merely symbolic.

## MoEF, WAPDA sign agreement for Mohmand Dam Hydropower Project

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Economic Affairs (MoEA) and Water

and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) on Friday signed a Subsidiary Loan Agreement (SLA) amounting to US\$ 25 million for the Mohmand Dam Hydropower Project.



The Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Dr. Kazim Niaz, signed on behalf of the Ministry, while Chairman WAPDA, Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Sajjad Ghani, represented WAPDA, said a news release. Ambassador of Kuwait in Pakistan Nassar Abdulrahman Jasser Al Mutairi graced the ceremony with his presence.

This significant financing comes as a result of the Kuwait Fund's commitment to extend a total of US\$ 100 million to support the Mohmand Dam Hydropower Project. The total financing will be disbursed through four equal loans, each amounting to US\$ 25 million. The first loan agreement was signed between the Government of Pakistan and the Kuwait Fund on June 3, 2024, in Kuwait, it added.

The Mohmand Dam is a comprehensive infrastructure project designed to address multiple needs. It aims to generate approximately 2,862 GWh of electricity annually with an installed capacity of 800 MW.

## Court discharges Imran Riaz from case

LAHORE (Online): Local court of Lahore has ordered to discharge and release Anchorperson Imran Riaz from the case of interference in state affairs.

Police presented Imran Riaz in the court for physical remand.

Police took the plea the accused was arrested a day before being nominated in FIR. The other accused have to be arrested on indication of the accused, there-

fore, 10 days physical remand in respect of Imran Riaz be granted.

The counsel for Imran Riaz while opposing the physical remand said the case registered against Imran Riaz is false and baseless. Judicial magistrate reserved judgment regarding plea in connection with physical remand of Imran Riaz. Later announcing the decision court discharged Imran Riaz.

## Providing health facilities to people one of our responsibilities: Dr. Ayaz

QUETTA (APP): District Health Officer (DHO) Kachhi Dr. Ayaz Qureshi on Friday said that providing health facilities to people was one of our main responsibilities.

Talking to media he said on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha in district Kutchhi, the health department has imposed emergency duty for the staff in THQ Machh, Bhag and RCD, BHUs of the district including DHQ Dhadar.

He said that it would not be allow any interruption in providing the best facilities to the intensive care patients in the hospi-

tals across the district including Machh, Bhag Dhadar. All our efforts will be continued so that people do not face any kind of problems regarding health, if any citizen of any area, village has any kind of complaint, they can contact me in time 24 hours, he said.

He said that his complaint would be redressed immediately and departmental action to be initiated against the negligent official. Due to the large number of problems, the responsibility will be carried out efficiently without wasting time in solving them, he said.



**PHILADELPHIA:** Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States Masood Khan addressing at World Affairs Council of Philadelphia, U.S.A.



**QUETTA:** A delegation of Youth Wing Balochistan led by Sardar Naqeeb Tareen meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

## Forms committee for resolvable matters CM Bugti issues orders to resolve issues of govt. employees

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti has issued orders for resolving the issues of government employees.

The Chief Minister was speaking to the representative delegation of Balochistan Employees and Workers Grand Alliance, who called on him here on Friday.

The Chief Minister formed a committee headed

by the senior officer of Balochistan government for the resolvable matters.

On the development, the Balochistan Employees and Workers Grand Alliance called off the protest call.

The delegation of Employees grand alliance was comprised Habibur Rehman Mardanzai, Professor Tariq Baloch, Abdul Salam Zehri, Muhammad Yaqoob Kakar and Arbab Nasrullah.

During the meeting, both sides engaged in substantive discussions about PTA's current and future initiatives, regulatory frameworks, and technological advancements in the telecommunications industry.



**ZIARAT:** Provincial Ombudsman Nazar Muhammad Baloch Advocate visiting District Headquarter Hospital

## Google team to visit Pak soon for cooperation in education, tech field

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Ministry of Education and Vocational Training has announced that a high-level team from Google will visit Pakistan soon to explore possible cooperation in the fields of education and technology.

According to the Ministry of Education, the purpose of the Google

team's visit to Pakistan is to improve educational outcomes and increase access to quality education, especially for out-of-school children.

The visit follows a request from the Ministry of Federal Education to Google to support Pakistan's efforts to create a digitally enabled education system.

## Pervaiz Elahi could not be indicted in illegal appointments case

LAHORE (Online): Former Chief Minister (CM) Punjab Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi could not be indicted in illegal appointments in Punjab Assembly (PA) case.

illegal appointments case came up for hearing before Anti Corruption Court (ACC) Lahore Friday.

Judge Arshid Hussain Bhutta of ACC heard the case.

PTI leader Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi could not appear in the court being sick.

The counsels of Pervaiz Elahi filed petition for exemption from attendance. They also filed medical certificate of Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi wherein it was stated that doctors have stopped Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi from travelling. Rib fracture of Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi has also been not healed.

The petition said Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi is suffering from heart pain, therefore, his plea for exemption from attendance be accepted.



**QUETTA:** Tribals from Hanna Lake and Urak block road and burn tires as they are holding protest demonstration against race and one-wheeling by youths, at Hanna road.