

# Independent

dailyindisb@gmail.com Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah www.dailyindependent.com.pk Islamabad

Vol. XIV No. 164 Reg. mails-B / ID-445 Wednesday July 17, 2024, Muharram 10, 1446 A.H. Ph: 2158688, 2158997 Pages 4: Rs. 12

## 10 security personnel, 5 civilians martyred, 13 terrorists killed in terror attacks in Bannu, DIK

President vows to root out menace of terrorism; Entire nation stands with security forces in war against terrorism: PM Shahbaz

RAWALPINDI (APP): As many as eight soldiers of Pakistan Army embraced martyrdom while gallantly fighting and successfully eliminating a group of ten terrorists who attacked Bannu Cantonment on July 15th.

According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release on Tuesday, in early hours of July 15th, a group of ten terrorists attacked Bannu Cantonment, whereas the attempt to enter the cantonment was effectively thwarted by the security forces personnel, which forced the terrorists to ram

eight brave sons of soil that included Naib Subedar Muhammad Shehzad (age: 44 years, resident of District Poonch, AJK), Havildar Zil-e-Hussain (age: 39 years, resident of District Khushab), Havildar Shahzad Ahmed (age: 28 years, resident of District Neelum, AJK), Sepoy Ashfaq Hussain Khan (age: 30 years, resident of District Muzaffarabad, AJK), Sepoy Sobhan Majeed (age: 22 years, resident of District Muzaffarabad, AJK), Sepoy Imtiaz Khan (age: 30 years, resident of Dis-

tributary. In the ensuing operation, the Army troops effectively engaged the terrorists as a result of which all ten terrorists were killed.

"This timely and effective response by the security forces prevented major catastrophe, saving precious innocent lives. The gallant and selfless action of the security forces is a testament of unrelenting resolve in fight against terrorism," the ISPR said.

The heinous act of terrorism has been undertaken by Hafiz Gul Bahadur group, which operates

stability. In the ensuing operation, the Army troops effectively engaged the terrorists as a result of which all ten terrorists were killed.

"Pakistan Armed Forces will keep defending the motherland and its people against this menace of terrorism and will take all necessary measures as deemed appropriate against these threats emanating from Afghanistan," the ISPR said.

Meanwhile terrorists carried out a cowardly attack on Rural Health Center (RHC), Kirri Shamozai in Dera Ismail Khan District and opened indiscriminate fire on RHC staff.

Resultantly, five innocent civilians including two Lady Health Workers, two children and one Watchman embraced Shahadat.

Security Forces in vicinity were immediately mobilized for clearance operation in RHC and in ensuing fire exchange, own troops effectively engaged the terrorists as a result of which three terrorists were sent to hell. However, during intense fire exchange, Naib Subedar Muhammad Farooq (age 44 years, resident of District Narowal) and Sepoy Muhammad Javed Iqbal (age 23 years, resident of District Khanewal) paid the ultimate sacrifice and embraced Shahadat.

Sanitization of area is being carried out to eliminate any other terrorist found in the area. The per-

petrators of this heinous and cowardly act targeting innocent civilians, especially women and children, will be brought to justice.

Meanwhile President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday strongly denounced the terrorist incident in Bannu Cantonment and paid homage to the martyred soldiers for thwarting the attacks.

In a statement, the president highlighted that the nation's soldiers prevented a major loss through swift action.

The president expressed that the entire nation was proud of the brave soldiers' sacrifice and paid tribute to the security forces for their role in foiling the terrorist attack in Bannu Cantonment.

The President reiterated his commitment to eliminate those engaged in such despicable activities. He offered prayers for the martyrs, seeking their elevation in paradise and requesting patience for their grieving families.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday expressed his admiration for the security forces for effectively thwarting a major attack on Bannu Cantonment. In his statement, the PM vehemently denounced the terrorists for the assault on Bannu Cantonment and reiterated the nation's steadfast backing of the security forces in their ongoing fight against terrorism.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visiting main procession of the 9th of Muharram and personally reviewed the security arrangements put in place to protect mourners.

## President underlines need of unity; seeking guidance from supreme sacrifices of Karbala

Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA)'s sacrifices inspire resistance against oppression: PM



ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari has stressed upon the need of display of unity and facing the forces of cruelty and evil with steadfastness while learning lessons from the incident of Karbala.

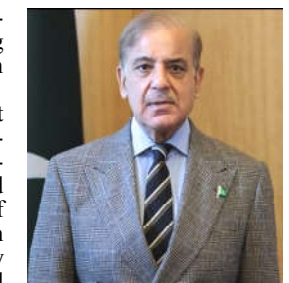
poor and the needy, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release on Tuesday.

The president said that Youm e Ashur had a significant place in the Islamic history, the day reminded them of the shahadat of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA), grandson of Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) in the battlefield of Karbala.

Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) along with his faithful companions laid down their lives for the revival of Islamic values and the rights of Ummah while strongly resisting the forces of cruelty and tyranny, he added.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif stated that the supreme sacrifices of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) serve as a reminder, inspiring humanity to stand against falsehood and oppression, reaffirming the unwavering commitment to truth on this significant occasion of Youm-e-Ashur.

In his Youm-e-Ashur message, the prime minis-



ter highlighted its profound significance, noting that the grandson of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions sacrificed their lives in a decisive battle between truth and falsehood at Karbala, illustrating the eternal strength of truth over falsehood through their martyrdom. The prime minister emphasized that the tragic events of Youm-e-Ashur resonate deeply within believers, serving as an enduring reminder of the sacrifices for truth and justice. He highlighted Imam Hussain's (RA) courageous stand against Yazid's oppressive rule in Karbala, illustrating his unwavering perseverance.



an explosive laden vehicle into perimeter wall of the cantonment.

The suicide blast led to collapse of portion of the wall and damaged the adjoining infrastructure, resulting in shahadat of

trict Karak), Sepoy Arsalan Aslam (age: 26 years, resident of District Bahawalpur) of Pakistan Army and Lance Naik Sabz Ali (age: 34 years, resident of Lakki Marwat) of Frontier Con-

from Afghanistan and has used Afghan soil to orchestrate acts of terrorism inside Pakistan in the past as well, it added.

Pakistan has consistently raised its concerns with Interim Afghan Gov-

## PML-N to consult with allies regarding PTI ban issue: Asif

SIALKOT (INP):- Defense Minister Khawaja Asif has announced that the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) will consult its parliamentary allies regarding the potential ban on Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), emphasizing the importance of collaboration in legislative matters.

In a press conference held in Sialkot, Asif criticized



PTI's political motives, stating, "The only aim of PTI is power."

He referred to comments made by a female PTI member, asserting that their principle of politics revolves around the idea that without Imran Khan, there is no Pakistan. "For me, Pakistan is the most important thing," he added.

Asif also addressed the implications of Article 6, recalling personal experiences with political inquiries and asserting that accountability must be upheld, especially in light of past actions surrounding the no-confidence motion.

## US expresses concern over Pak govt's decision to seek ban on PTI

WASHINGTON (INP): The United States has expressed concern over the Pakistan government's decision to seek a ban on the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for anti-State activities. Speaking at his daily news briefing in Washington, US State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller responded to questions regarding the "possible restrictions on PTI".

Miller stated that the US has observed govern-

## Youm-e-Ashur to be observed today with solemnity

ISLAMABAD (INP): ISLAMABAD (INP): Youm-e-Ashur, the tenth of Muharram-ul-Haram, will be observed today (Wednesday) across the country with due solemnity to pay homage to the supreme sacrifice rendered by Hazrat Imam Hussain Razi Allah ho Ta'ala Anho and his devoted companions in Karbala.

Mourning processions will be taken out in all cities and towns of the country. Ulama and Zakireen will highlight the bright and candid teachings of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) and various aspects of Karbala tragedy.

Fazal criticizes use of force against political entities

PESHAWAR (INP): Maulana Fazlur Rehman, leader of Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam F, has strongly condemned the use of force against political entities, warning that such actions will only escalate political unrest.

In a recent statement, Rehman urged authorities to acknowledge the failure of the current hybrid system.

He emphasized the importance of adhering to constitutional boundaries for all institutions, asserting that the country can recover only if the military withdraws from politics.

## No decision yet to ban PTI, says Ishaq Dar

LAHORE (INP): Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar said on Saturday that no decision has been made regarding the ban on the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, stating that any decision will only be taken after consultation with coalition partners.

Speaking to media at Lahore's Data Darbar, Dar emphasized that the current economic challenges were not introduced by the incumbent government but were a consequence of previous administrations. "The economic downside began with the ousting of Nawaz Sharif, not during our tenure," Dar asserted.

He criticized the PTI's

previous government for exacerbating the country's financial instability, alleging that PTI left the economy on the brink of default within six to seven months of their rule and accused them of rigging the 2018 elections to place their leader in power.

Further detailing the economic impact, Dar pointed out that during the PTI's tenure, Pakistan's economic ranking plummeted from 24th to 47th.

"Had the PML-N not stepped in, Pakistan would have defaulted," he claimed, praising Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his team for averting a financial crisis.

Imam Hussain (RA)'s sacrifice teaches great sacrifices needed for great causes: Tarar

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister of Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar here on Tuesday said that the incident of Karbala had taught the lesson that great sacrifices were needed for the great causes.

"Lesson of the sacrifice of Imam Hussain (RA) was that no tyrant and oppressor should be allowed to play with the truth" he said during his visit to Imambargah Kashan Abbas to review the security arrangements here.

The minister said that the incident of Karbala was the difference between truth and falsehood until the Day of Resurrection.

"The courage, patience, independence and prudence of all the companions of Imam Hussain are the beacon of light for us," he maintained.

Tarar said that the battle between the forces of truth



LAHORE: Deputy Prime Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar talking to media persons



LAHORE: Deputy Prime Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar talking to media persons

## CJ convenes judicial commission meeting to appoint ad hoc judges

ISLAMABAD: (Online): The Chief Justice of Pakistan, Qazi Faez Isa, has convened the Judicial Commission meeting on July 19.

The purpose of this meeting is to determine the names of four judges who will be appointed as ad hoc judges in the Supreme Court.

Sources said that the Chief Justice has nominated Justice (Retired) Mushir Alam and Justice (Retired) Maqbool Baqar, while Justice (Retired) Mazhar Alam Khan, and Justice (Retired) Sardar Tariq Masood are also in the race.

They said that appointment of ad hoc judges aims to reduce the burden of pending cases in the apex court.

A retired judge can be appointed as an ad hoc judge for a period of three years.

Media reported that the CJ sent a summons to all members of the commission stating that despite the best efforts, the cases continue to accumulate, as seen from the Registrar's note and the reviewed statistics on cases pendency.

## Interior minister reviews security for 9th Muharram procession in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi here on Monday visited the main procession of the 9th of Muharram and personally reviewed the security arrangements put in place to protect mourners.

The interior minister inspected the procession route, met with organizers to inquire about arrangements and gave instructions to IG Islamabad Police Ali Nasir Rizvi and CDA Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa regarding security protocols.

He also conducted an aerial inspection of the entire procession route, ensuring that all necessary measures were in place.

The minister emphasized the importance of maintaining a high level of security throughout the mourning period, instructing the security personnel to remain on duty until the procession's conclusion.

He also issued directives for the implementation of a special security plan across all four provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir, ensuring strict adherence to the plan.

## Four Pakistanis martyred, 30 hospitalized in Muscat Imambargah attack: FO

ISLAMABAD (APP): Four Pakistanis were martyred and thirty others were hospitalized with gunshot wounds after a terrorist attack targeted the Imambargah, Ali bin Abi Talib, in Muscat's Wadi Kabeer area, said Foreign Office spokesperson on Tuesday.

In a statement, the Foreign Office spokesperson quoted the latest information from Omani au-



ISLAMABAD: A large number of mourners attending main procession on 9th of Muharramul Haram at G-6, Muharramul Haram known as the first month of the Islamic calendar and the mourning month in remembrance of the martyrdom (Shahadat) of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA)

## Daily Voice of Masses Independent

### Banning PTI

It is dangerous for a government to appear so desperate. Like grains of sand, power slips quicker from the hand the tighter the fist is clenched. In their obsession with countering the resurgent PTI, the ruling parties are, wittingly or unwittingly, pushing the country towards even more chaos and anarchy instead of accepting ground realities and working around them.

Though 11 judges of the Supreme Court, including the chief justice, only last week recognised the PTI's bona fides as a political party, the coalition government is now seeking a complete ban on the party itself.

The shock proclamation came on Monday afternoon, along with announcements that the government had decided to seek a review of the Supreme Court's ruling in the reserved seats case as well as proceedings under Article 6 against former president Arif Alvi, former prime minister Imran Khan, and former deputy speaker of the National Assembly, Qasim Suri.

Was this the government's best response to losing its two-thirds majority, which, in any case, had only been secured thanks to a series of unconstitutional and unlawful decisions taken by the Election Commission? Was the prospect of the largest party in parliament being restored to its rightful status so alarming that the ruling parties, in the tradition of military dictators, would seek to ban it on dubious charges?

If the government thought it was projecting power through Information Minister Atta Tarar's Monday press conference, it was gravely mistaken. It only managed to appear desperate and intimidated, clutching at straws while the tide rises around it. One can only hope that it was merely testing the waters for what the reaction may be to such a move. Nevertheless, it was a shock that the stalwarts in its ranks had not shot down the proposal before a minister went public with it.

It appears that the government and its backers within the establishment have still not realised that they are in uncharted territory. Previous regimes that ruled through political coercion and fear tactics had strong economies backing them. The conditions right now appear to be far from conducive for the type of brinkmanship and adventurism being displayed by the current regime. If the idea is to precipitate a collapse of the democratic political order, then, by all means, the authorities should proceed.

However, if social and economic stability is what is sought, they would be well-advised to undertake a hard course correction. At the same time, the PTI also needs to display some flexibility and greater maturity. It appears that it has gained enough leverage to be able to achieve its political objectives without the country having to travel further down the path of political violence and social instability. Victory in politics is rarely absolute. It must open itself to negotiations.

### Lessons not learnt

Naseer Memon

The tumult generated by the collapse of Gate 47 of Sukkur Barrage in Sindh subsided after the irrigation department brought the situation under control by constructing a cofferdam. This was made possible by dextrously dumping over 3,000 sand-filled, one-tonne sacks amid a flow of over 100,000 cusecs. Department engineers and local fishermen worked round the clock to contain the crisis. A 9-by-18-metre sandbag platform was created to block the flow of water, thus enabling the fixing of a caisson in place of the collapsed gate. The authorities heaved a sigh of relief as water supply to the canals was restored partially.

Moreover, work to replace Gate 47 has commenced before the scheduled date. Local media, growers' organisations and civil society forums are abuzz with all manner of speculation and apprehension. Meanwhile, four senior officials who were posted at the barrage have been removed.

Lowering the pond level by draining water downstream revealed more gates with cracks. Gates 46, 48, 52, 53 and 54 showed structural fatigue, which points to a lack of regular inspection and maintenance. It underscores the need for an urgent inspection of all gates to ensure structural safety before the monsoons trigger massive river flows. A crack in a gate or the masonry structure of the barrage is not something to be shrugged off, as it could result in devastating consequences if not addressed at an early stage.

An incident from June 2018 should have served as a lesson for

the authorities. On June 21, 2018, staff at the Sukkur Barrage noticed a crack on the outer flange of the upper girder of Gate 39 during a routine inspection. An in-depth technical study was conducted by Atkins, ACE & NDC Joint Venture in July 2018. The report revealed that the web plate of the girder showed high corrosion in almost all parts. The epoxy coating of horizontal surfaces of the components of the structure had either been totally eroded or badly damaged. This was on account of a leaking water jet that was directly impacting these horizontal surfaces.

Most of the bolts connecting the different components were badly rusted. The two horizontal stiffeners welded at the skin plates showed deterioration due to algae. Only 17 bolts were fixed in the two cover plates of the back flange, against a total of 24 holes available in the two plates. Two bolts were fastened without washers; while 15 washers were of different sizes.

Similar deterioration was noted in Gate 38, though the damage was less severe. The report also mentioned that Gates 15 to 23 had wooden plank extensions to raise the pond level. The tail channel gates were found to be leaking heavily, with water showers falling on the upper girder of most of the gates. Extensive accumulation of waste material was observed upstream in a few gates. Gate 39 especially had been exposed to a large accumulation of waste material extending to about 6m to 7m.

The original river sluice gates of the barrage were 5.6m in height so that a pond level of around 60m

could be achieved. However, in 1966, the height of the gates was increased by approximately half a metre to achieve a higher pond level. New gates were installed during 1988-92 after the collapse of a gate in 1982. However, to further increase the pond level, these gates were increased in height by half a metre in 2008-10, with the use of wooden planks. Leakage from these planks caused rusting in different sections of the gates.

An inspection of the Sukkur Barrage gates was assigned to NED University in January 2019 under the Sindh Barrages Improvement Project. A team of experts inspected 20 gates. The report revealed that while the upper sections of the gates were in stable condition, the lower sections of most of the gates had been severely corroded. Fourteen gates showed a reduction in thickness in the lower portion. The reduction was estimated to be less than 10 per cent in the vertical girder flanges, the web plates and main skin plates of these gates. On the other hand, seven gates showed a reduction in thickness of below 20pc. The report recommended either repairing the lower sections of the gates or replacing them along with girders. Subsequently six gates were replaced.

A technical investigation into the damage done to Gate 39 in 2018 and the rupture of a gate in 1982 provides sufficient evidence of structural fatigue.

Increased surveillance and regular maintenance of the barrage gates is absolutely essential to avert a dangerous situation. The authorities must not delay matters on this count. - Courtesy Dawn

### Sindh Labour Code

Parvez Rahim

Over the last four decades or so, at least three labour commissions were formed to consolidate and simplify labour laws. However, the suggestions they made and the draft legislation they proposed were not even considered for putting up before parliament.

There are some 190 labour enactments and rules made thereunder, with different definitions of 'worker', 'employer' and 'establishment'. Besides, the laws and rules have outdated provisions. For instance, there is the Payment of Wages Act, 1936, and three Rules of 1937, 1938 and 1960. Then there are the Minimum Wages Ordinance, 1961, the Rules of 1962 and the West Pakistan Minimum Wages for Unskilled Workers Ordinance, 1969.

Labour laws should be simple, especially for those ensuring compliance with statutory requirements. The Sindh government, in collaboration with the ILO, has prepared and circulated the Sindh Labour Code, 2024, among employers and workers' bodies. The SLC is purported to have consolidated 20 labour laws, inclusive of legislation such as the Industrial & Commercial Employment (Standing Orders) Ordinance; Factories Act; Industrial Relations Act; Shops & Establishments Act, etc.

Separate meetings organised by the Employers' Federation of Pakistan and the National Trade Union Federation were held on June 8, 2024, to discuss the draft legislation contained in the 318-page SLC. In the EFP meeting, participants were of the view that consolidation should have been based on existing laws, making their enforcement simple by removing obsolete provisions and making them relevant to existing

needs.

Instead, the draft legislation of the SLC is very complicated and confusing. For instance, 'worker' is defined as an employee, but 'employee' has been defined separately. Besides, it is mentioned that "a person exercising the authority, duties or responsibilities of an employer" is a worker.

It is mentioned that a person is a worker irrespective of the nature of work, which includes "skilled, unskilled, intellectual, clerical, professional, managerial, administrative and any other kind of work".

The Industrial & Commercial Employment (Standing Orders) Ordinance, 1968, defines 'workman' as any person employed to do any skilled or unskilled, manual or clerical work for hire or reward. Based on this definition, progressive organisations have divided their workforce into two categories: management and non-management. They have been managing employee relations successfully with this structure over more than five decades.

Now that this structure is being dismantled through the SLC and all the employees of an organisation are to be considered as 'workers' except for the 'occupier', it is difficult to comprehend how businesses will be operated and discipline maintained without the well-established layers of management hierarchy. Various provisions of the SLC are so complicated and confusing that even experienced practitioners of industrial relations are at a loss to understand them.

In the realm of disciplinary procedure, various acts of omission and commission by a worker, including misconduct, have been unnecessarily labelled 'gross misconduct'. The most

frequently committed acts of willful insubordination, actions subversive to discipline and habitually showing up late for work, have been deleted from the list of misconduct. A worker accused of misconduct has been allowed two weeks to submit his explanation, instead of the decades-old practice of three days.

At present, the role of an inquiry officer conducting a domestic inquiry into the charge of misconduct is confined to recording statements of the accused, prosecution and defence witnesses, and their cross examination. Besides, he has to ensure that the accused is not put under any pressure by the management and that the inquiry proceedings are fair. Under the SLC, the officer will again communicate the charges to the accused employee and ask him to submit a written defence within seven days. The system of hiring third-party workers has been since the inception of industry in Pakistan.

Its rationalisation by SLC has been opposed by labour federations, who say the Code should have been formalised through prior consultation with a tripartite commission.

Consolidation and simplification should be based on the contents and scope of existing labour laws. Nevertheless, provisions which have become redundant should be deleted and the maintenance of registers and other manual record keeping should be automated. The key labour laws have evolved since the British era. Their sudden replacement with differently intended and worded laws will not only jeopardise industrial functioning but also make implementation difficult. - Courtesy Dawn

## Commerce News

Ifthikhar Malik says:

### Pakistan can earn billions by tapping mineral wealth

LAHORE (APP): SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry former President, Ifthikhar Ali Malik has said Pakistan can comfortably fetch billions of dollars foreign exchange by fully exploiting its minerals wealth estimated at \$6 trillion dollars.

Talking to delegation of industrialists led by Taimoor Ali, here on Tuesday, he said this immense wealth, if effectively harnessed, has the potential to transform the country's economic landscape. Currently, Pakistan's mining sector is underdeveloped, contributing only a small fraction to the national GDP. To unlock this potential, several strategic measures need to be implemented.

He said investment in geological surveys and exploration activities was crucial. Comprehensive mapping of mineral resources

can attract both domestic and international investors. Pakistan can benefit from collaborations with countries that have advanced mining technologies and expertise, such as Australia and Canada. By creating a favorable investment climate, the government can encourage multinational companies to invest in the exploration and extraction of minerals, he added.

He said developing infrastructure was vital for the mining sector's growth. Efficient transportation networks, including roads and railways, are necessary to transport minerals from remote mining sites to processing facilities and export hubs. Investing in power generation and distribution infrastructure was also crucial, as mining operations are energy-intensive. Public-private partnerships can play a significant role in developing this infrastructure.

Ifthikhar Ali Malik said building a skilled workforce was essential. Establishing training centers and vocational institutes focused on mining-related skills can equip the local population with the necessary expertise. This not only creates job opportunities but also reduces dependency on foreign labor. He said the government must ensure that the benefits of mining are equitably distributed.

Revenue generated from mining should be reinvested in local communities, improving healthcare, education and overall living standards. By adopting these strategies, Pakistan can fully exploit its mineral wealth, driving economic growth and improving the livelihoods of its citizens. Leader of the delegation Taimoor Malik was of the view that regulatory reforms are essential.

### Technology crucial for Pakistan's sustainable growth: PFC CEO

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC) Chief Executive Officer, Mian Kashif Ashfaq has said that technology for development was an urgent need for Pakistan to address its multifaceted challenges and pave the way for sustainable growth. Talking to overseas Pakistani investors delegation led by Sheryar Khan Investment Consular to Milano Italy, here on Tuesday, he said Pakistan faces significant hurdles in education, healthcare, agriculture sectors and governance. Leveraging technology can transform these sectors, enhancing efficiency, accessibility and quality of services.

He said the integration of renewable energy technologies can also address Pakistan's chronic energy shortages and reduce its reliance on fossil fuels. Investment in solar, wind, and hydropower can

ensure a sustainable and environmentally friendly energy supply. He said the urgent need for technology in Pakistan spans various sectors, offering solutions to pressing issues and opportunities for development. By embracing technological advancements, Pakistan can drive economic growth, improve the quality of life for its citizens, and secure a sustainable future. He said governance and public service delivery can also be significantly improved through technology. E-governance initiatives can increase transparency, reduce corruption, and streamline administrative processes. Digital platforms for citizen engagement can foster a more inclusive and participatory governance model.

Mian Kashif Ashfaq said agriculture, a backbone of Pakistan's economy, can benefit immensely from technology.

### Overseas Pak can import vehicle after two years

LAHORE (APP): Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) Dr Asif Mahmood Jah in his verdict declared that overseas Pakistanis are entitled to import vehicles under personnel baggage scheme, transfer of residence and gift scheme who have not imported, gifted or received a vehicle during the last two years under Import Policy Order (IPO), 2022.

The FTO Advisor Dr Waqar Ch Arain disclosed this to the business community while addressing an awareness session here Sunday. He added that the FTO has instructed the Director, Directorate of Remittances & Automation Karachi, to develop and deploy e-CRF form by the Collector of Customs, Appraisalment (West) Karachi, enabling the assessing officer to ensure that no goods declaration (GD) is filed on a new passport by the same importer.



HYDERABAD: A vendor arranging and displaying plums to attract the customers on hand cart.

### Pakistani universities join Intl alliance for agricultural technology development

BEIJING (APP): In a significant move towards advancing agricultural technology through international collaboration, four Pakistani universities including Quaid-i-Azam University, Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University, Sindh Agriculture University, and Ayub Agricultural Research Institute have joined the Silk Road Agricultural Education and Research Innovation Alliance at the 9th Silk Road Agricultural Edu-

cation and Research Cooperation Forum held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan from July 9-12. This collaboration aims to foster cooperation between leading institutions in China and Pakistan, focusing on the exchange and joint development of new food crops, vegetable varieties, and medicinal crops. Abdul Ghaflar Shar, a Post-doctoral Research Fellow at Northwest A&F University in China, a founding institution of the alliance.

### Traders denounce hike in POL prices

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Markazi Tanzeem-e-Tajir (Central Organisation of Traders) on Tuesday denounced another hike in the prices of petroleum (POL) products. According to details, traders' leader Kashif Chaudhry said: "The country will witness the tsunami of inflation with the increase in the price of the POL products." "It has already become challenging to continue the business activities due to the current prices of power and gas."

### Dow ends at record as luxury share weakness hits European bourses

NEW YORK (AFP/APP): The Dow finished at a record Monday as markets weighed the impact of the failed assassination attempt on Donald Trump, while European bourses came under pressure from weakness in the luxury sector and disappointing Chinese economic data.

The blue-chip index piled on 0.5 percent to finish at 40,211.72, notching its first record since mid-May.

Major US indices were in positive territory the entire session amid talk that the assassination attempt boosted Trump's prospects in the election. Trump was hit in the

ear but not seriously injured in a gun attack during a campaign event on Saturday in Pennsylvania ahead of the Republican National Convention in Wisconsin. The former president announced Monday that Ohio Senator J.D. Vance will be his vice presidential nominee.

"The connection for the market is that former President Trump is seen by many to be a more market-friendly candidate due in part to his push for deregulation and a lower corporate tax rate," O'Hare said.

"Still, others worry that his push to increase tariffs could also lead to higher inflation."



ISLAMABAD: A street vendor displaying dates on his handcart at roadside setup to attract customers at Lehar Road.

### Handicraft industry - preserving centuries old asset

PESHAWAR (APP): In the heart of South Asia lies Peshawar, a city with stories spanning over past 2,500 years and an inimitable destination of domestic and foreign artisans bringing in marvelous and eye-catching crafts designs.

Rich in different traditional and cultural values this city boast of a tapestry of different dynasties and civilizations, most vibrant among them the handicrafts introduced by local and foreign artisans of pre-Greek, Mughals and colonial era.

Aptly named as "Peshawar" or "the City of Artisans," Peshawar still carries the legacy of craftsmanship passed down generation after generation with city bazaars like Misgran, Ratti bazaar, Dabgari Gar-

dens and the legendary Qissa Khawani Bazaar, still echoing past glory of artisans.

"Walking through these markets is like stepping back in time. The air is filled with metal clinking, the scent of wood and steel shavings and curving and sight of meticulously crafted items," said a Senior Research Officer, Archeology and Museums Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Bakhtzada Khan.

"The shops brimming with wood and metal cutlery capture the attention of visitors as despite rapid technological advancements, these ancient bazaars maintain a steadfast appeal, especially among rural people of KP and Punjab provinces," he

stated.

Bakhtzada said the discovery of human remains in Soan Valley in Punjab was evidence of stone-made cutlery and bone tools used anciently. "It was found that people started making clay and stone pots, crockery and other related utensils during the Neolithic period commonly known as new Stone Age dating back some 8,000 years back."

The wooden cutlery shops in Peshawar bazaars, in particular, are a visual feast, displaying an array of handmade items—wooden spoons, blenders, kneading plates, curd mixers and bowls—showcasing artisans' dedication and hard work. These products, though presenting an old-fashioned look, also pos-

sess a timeless quality and unique designs.

"Wooden cutlery is still alive in Peshawar. We have valuable customers for whom we specially produce these items," said Qaiser Khan, a shopkeeper in main Dabgari Bazaar. "Majority of our customers belong to KPK and Punjab while our cutlery is also preferred in Afghanistan, Middle East and Central Asians Republics due to its durability and unique designs." However, he complained of the lukewarm response of urban population who consider these products as obsolete and outdated and shifted to stainless steel cutlery and porcelain crockery.

Faraz Ali, another shopkeeper at Misgran bazaar said use of wooden cutlery had declined in re-

cent decades and the KPK government should take steps to preserve this asset. "Wooden utensils are mostly cheaper than stainless steel or aluminum. Moreover, many people think that meals cooked in clay pottery with the help of a wooden spoon are better in taste."

If seen in the hygiene perspective, the wood cutlery and clay pots are not that harmful as those prepared by using certain chemical components.

"Wood products are not harmful for using domestically. However, mixing of some chemical ingredients in preparation of utensils from different metals can affect human health," said Dr Riaz Khan, Principal Medical Officer, Pabbi hospital.

## Peace vital for economic prosperity: Governor

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday said that establishment of law and order was imperative for peace and economic development of Pakistan.

He said that law and order was a major problem, and that the heights of economic progress and prosperity could be achieved by making Pakistan as per vision of father of the nation Qaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and national poet Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal.

He said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was passing through difficult time. The important problem is of the law and order and all other problems are linked to it. If the condition of law and order is better then economic situation would be improved and progress would be made.

The Governor said that people of Karachi and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan Army, police and

children of Army Public School Peshawar had rendered great sacrifices for Pakistan that was unprecedented in the world history.

Governor was addressing a function at Al Ghazali university in Karachi.

Earlier, the Governor reached at Jamia Al Rashid where he met with Raes Al Rashid University and Chancellor Al Ghazali University Mufti Abdul Raheem, Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Sohrabgot Lal Raheem and was accorded warm welcome.

He went around different sections of Al Rashid University and received briefing about the organization. Later, he attended a function at Al Ghazali University and received briefing.

The Governor expressed pleasure to see such great institution in the country. He said Qaid-e-Azam Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali

Bhutto had assembled leaders of Muslims Ummah and laid foundation of Atomic power, saying no one can defeat us if we get united. The Governor stressed for keeping care of minorities rights that were protected under the constitution.

Kundi invited students of Al Ghazali to visit Peshawar saying the doors of Governor House Peshawar were now open for people and stressed on students that they would perform role like the country's Ambassador to highlight Pakistan soft image.

Raes Al Rashid University and Chancellor Ghazali University welcomed the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor and urged all stakeholders to shun differences and sit together for progress and prosperity of Pakistan.

They said such organizations should be in all cities of Pakistan and vowed to extend its services in Peshawar.



**MULTAN: Security Official standing high alert outside the Imambargah Mumtazabad to avoid any untoward incident during the procession on 9th Muharram. Muharram Ul Haram is known as the first month of the Islamic calendar and the mourning month in remembrance of the martyrdom (Shahadat) of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA), the grandson of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (SAWW).**

## 9th Muharram processions peacefully end in KP amid glowing tributes to martyrs

PESHAWAR (APP): The 'Alm and Zuljinnah' mourning processions of the 9th Muharram was peacefully concluded in all districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including Peshawar amid tight security arrangements by police and law enforcement agencies on Tuesday.

In Peshawar, the main 'Alm and Zuljinnah' procession appeared in the morning from Imambargah Hussainia Hall on main Saddar Road and later was joined by many other processions in parts of the provincial capital amid flagellation and chest beating.

The mourners passed through the prescribed routes comprising Saddar Road, Kalabari and Fawwara Chowk where the organizers arranged water, milk and drinks for the Azadars.

The religious scholars delivered special sermons on the importance of 9th Muharram, Ashura Moharram and supreme sacrifice offered by Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) and other martyrs of Karbala for supremacy of Islam.

They said the match-

less sacrifices of martyres of Karbala were a great source of strength and inspiration for all Muslims.

After offering 'zuhra' prayer, the procession culminated back at the Imambargah Hussainia Hall at Peshawar Cantonment.

The 1122 Rescue Service had set up a medical camp to provide timely treatment to the mourners in case of any emergency.

The participants were allowed only after body search by the police, law enforcers and volunteers.

## KPCM approves free meal program in public sector primary schools

PESHAWAR (INP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government, as an important welfare initiative, has decided in principle to start free meal program (Schools Khana Program) in public sector primary schools under which free meals will be provided to children in primary schools in urban areas of all divisional headquarters of the province.

This decision was taken in a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur.

Provincial Minister for Primary and Secondary Education Faisal Khan Tarakai, Advisor to the Chief Minister on Finance Muzamil Aslam, Additional Chief Secretary Planning and Development Syed

Imtiaz Hussain Shah and other senior officials of the concerned departments, besides the Chief Executive Officer of the private welfare organization Allahwale Trust, Shahid Lone and other staff attended the meeting.

It was decided in the meeting that initially, the initiative will be started on pilot basis in Abbottabad and Swat which will later be extended to other divisional headquarters of the province.

Under the proposed program, around 70,000 children will be provided with free and quality food daily. The program has been estimated at Rs 50 crore annually which will be borne by the provincial government.



**PESHAWAR: A large number of mourners attending the 9th Muharram Zuljinnah procession passes through Saadar Road.**

## PRCS distributes 210 loader rickshaws among flood affected families

PESHAWAR (APP): Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), in collaboration with the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), here on Tuesday distributed 210 loader rickshaws among the communities affected by the monsoon floods of 2022.

This initiative is a significant component of PRCS's Livelihood Assistance Program under the Flood Recovery Phase.

The loader rickshaws have been distributed

among the deserving families in five districts of Sindh, one district of Baluchistan, one district of Punjab and one district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, says a press release issued here on Tuesday.

PRCS Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari emphasized PRCS's firm commitment to restoring normalcy through multifaceted programs, including livelihood assistance, shelter construction, cash assistance, and health and hygiene initiatives.

## Punjab Governor message Martyrs of Karbala taught oppressed humanity not to bow down to falsehood

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said in his message on the occasion of Ashura Day that courage, bravery and eternal sacrifice of Hazrat Imam Hussain (peace be upon him) and the martyrs of Karbala will always be remembered in history. He has said that the martyrs of Karbala taught the oppressed humanity not to bow down to falsehood and stand firm against oppression.

The Punjab Governor said that the incident of Karbala is a testament to the unparalleled determination and courage of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) and his companions. Governor Punjab said that Ashura reminds us of the great sacrifices of the martyrs of Karbala, it also teaches us

to show patience and perseverance in hour of trial. He said that we should awaken within ourselves the same spirit of sacrifice and solidarity which was demonstrated by Imam Hussain (RA) and his companions in the field of Karbala. Besides, Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan strongly condemned the terrorist attack on Bannu Cantonment. He saluted the military personnel who thwarted the terrorist attack. Governor Punjab paid tribute to the martyred soldiers. He said that the entire nation is indebted to the sacrifices of the security forces. Governor Punjab said that the sacrifices of those who laid down their lives can never be forgotten. He said that the nation stands with its security agencies in the war against terrorism.

## KP Governor condoles with families of eight martyred troops in Bannu attack

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Faisal Karim Kundi here on Tuesday condoled with the families of eight martyrs of security forces during a suicide attack at Bannu and prayed for the eternal peace of all the martyred troops.

The Governor expressed sympathy with the families of the martyred troops and prayed for speedy recovery of the injured.

Governor Faisal Karim Kundi paid rich tributes to the security forces for foiling the attack and lauded their gallantry and bravery in the fight against terrorism.

He said the entire nation stands with security forces in fight against terrorism.

## Pb govt takes strict security measures for Muharram: Minister

SARGODHA (APP): The Punjab government has taken all the strict security measures for the 9th and 10th Muharram processions and gatherings in Sargodha division.

This was stated by Provincial Minister for Construction and Communications Malik Sohaib Ahmed Bharth while talking to media-men on Tuesday. He said a total of 567 majalis (mourning gatherings) was going to be held in the four districts of the division, including 24 A-category majalis while 222 mourning processions would be taken out in Sargodha, Khushab, Mianwali and Bhakkar collectively and 26 of A-category processions originating from different locations.

Malik Sohaib Ahmed Bharth said a total of 7,683 police officers and personnel were performing duties for the security of the majalis and processions.

## 2 killed, 3 injured in bus, car collision in Faisalabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Mother and son were died whereas 3 others including father and daughter were injured when a high-speed bus collided with a car coming in front of it while overtaking in Tehsil Samundri of Faisalabad.

According to the details, the accident happened near Chak No. 228 GB in Tehsil Samundri of Faisalabad. Private news channel and rescue 1122 reported on Tuesday.

## 3 killed, 3 injured in bus, car collision in Faisalabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Mother and son were died whereas 3 others including father and daughter were injured when a high-speed bus collided with a car coming in front of it while overtaking in Tehsil Samundri of Faisalabad.

According to the details, the accident happened near Chak No. 228 GB in Tehsil Samundri of Faisalabad. Private news channel and rescue 1122 reported on Tuesday.

## International News

## Israel hits Gaza from land, sea and air as Hamas pulls out of truce talks

**Monitoring Desk**  
GAZA: Israel struck the southern and central Gaza Strip on Monday and carried out raids that killed "a number of" militants, the Israeli military said, as hopes faded for a truce and hostage release deal being secured any time soon. Hamas announced on Sunday it was pulling out of truce talks after an Israeli strike targeting the head of the group's military wing, Mohammed Deif, killed scores of Palestinians.

Israel hammered the Gaza Strip from the air, sea and land Monday as the war in the Palestinian territory showed no sign of abating, with Hamas saying it was pulling out of truce talks.

Shells rained down on the neighbourhoods of Tal Al-Hawa, Sheikh Ajlin and Al-Sabra in Gaza City, AFP correspondents reported, while eyewitnesses said the Israeli

army had shelled the Al-Mughraqa area and the northern outskirts of the Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza.

Paramedics from the Palestinian Red Crescent said they had retrieved the bodies of five people, including three children, after Israeli air strikes in the Al-Maghazi camp, also in the central Gaza Strip.

Meanwhile, eyewitnesses reported Israeli gunship fire east of Khan Younis, in southern Gaza, and shelling and Apache helicopter attacks in western areas of the southern-most city of Rafah.

The Israeli military said in a statement that it was continuing its activity throughout the coastal territory, and said it had conducted raids in Rafah and central Gaza that killed "a number of" militants, as well as air strikes throughout the strip over the past day.

It also said its naval forces had been firing at targets in Gaza.

The relentless bombardments came as prospects dwindled for a truce and hostage release deal being secured any time soon.

Hamas, the Iran-backed Islamist group that Israel has been fighting in Gaza for over nine months, said on Sunday it was withdrawing from ceasefire talks.

The decision followed an Israeli strike targeting the head of Hamas's military wing, Mohammed Deif, which the health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said killed 92 people.

Deif's fate remains unknown, with Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu saying there was "no certainty" he was dead while a senior Hamas official told AFP that Deif was "well and directly overseeing" operations.



**Palestinians, who fled the eastern part of Khan Younis after they were ordered by Israeli army to evacuate their neighborhoods, ride on a vehicle loaded with belongings, amid Israel-Hamas conflict, in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip.**

## Trump steps into Republican convention spotlight after surviving shooting

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: Donald Trump made a triumphant entrance to cap the first day of the Republican National Convention, receiving a raucous ovation from the party faithful days after surviving an assassination attempt that has reshaped the US presidential contest.

The former president walked into the Fiserv Forum in downtown Milwaukee to an uproarious response, his car heavily bandaged from having been grazed by a bullet, hours after he was officially nominated to be the party's

## No surprises expected as Syrians vote in parliamentary poll

**Monitoring Desk**  
DAMASCUS: Syrians in government-held areas were voting Monday in their fourth parliamentary election since civil war erupted in 2011, a poll expected to keep President Bashar al-Assad's ruling Baath party in power. The election came amid overtures from Ankara towards Damascus, after ties were severed following the start of Syria's war in 2011, with Assad saying he was open to meeting Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan depending on the encounter's "content".

## President Joe Biden says it was a 'mistake' to say he wanted to put a 'bull's-eye' on Donald Trump

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden told NBC News in an interview Monday that it was a "mistake" to say he wanted to put a "bull's-eye" on Republican nominee Donald Trump, but argued that the rhetoric from his opponent was more incendiary while warning that Trump remained a threat to democratic institutions.

The remark in question came during a private call with donors last week as Biden had been scrambling to shore up his imperiled candidacy with key party constituencies.

During that conversation, Biden declared he was "done" talking about his poor debate performance and said it was "time to put Trump in the bull's-eye," saying Trump has gotten far too little scrutiny on his stances, rhetoric and lack of campaigning.

## Seven students drown on summer holidays in Mexico

**MEXICO CITY (INP):** Seven students drowned in eastern Mexico after their vehicle was dragged into a fast-flowing river as they tried to retrieve a boat from its waters, local government sources said Sunday.

The victims, all between 21 and 23 years old, on Saturday were celebrating the end of the school year and summer holidays at a private residence on the banks of the river in the city of Coatzacoalcos.

## Heavy rains kill 35 in eastern Afghanistan

**Monitoring Desk**  
KABUL: At least 35 people were killed and 230 injured on Monday after heavy rain in eastern Afghanistan, a local official said.

"On Monday evening, rain caused by thunderstorms killed 35 people and injured 230 others in Jalalabad and certain districts of Nangarhar" province, Quraishi Badloon, head of the department of information and culture, said.

The casualties were caused by heavy storms and rains that collapsed trees, walls and roofs of people's houses, Badloon said. "There is a possibility that casualties might rise," he went on, adding that the wounded as well as victims' bodies were brought to Nangarhar regional hospital and Fatimatul-Zahra hospital.

Images shared by Badloon's department showed medical personnel

wearing white and blue uniforms giving treatment to the wounded. "We share the grief of the families of the victims," said Zabihullah Mujahid, a spokesman for the Taliban government.

"The relevant institutions of the Islamic Emirate have been directed to go to the affected areas as soon as possible," Mujahid wrote on X, adding they would provide shelter, food and medicine to displaced families.

The tragedy comes after flash floods killed hundreds of people in Afghanistan in May and swamped agricultural lands in the country, where 80 per cent of the population depends on farming to survive.

Among the poorest countries in the world, Afghanistan is particularly exposed to the effects of climate change. This year, it saw an unusually wet spring after an extremely dry winter.

## Ukraine needs 25 Patriot air defense systems and more F-16 warplanes, President Zelenskyy says

**Monitoring Desk**  
KYIV: Ukraine needs 25 Patriot air defense systems to fully defend its airspace and protect the entire country from Russian missile attacks, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Monday, adding that he also wants Western partners to send more F-16 warplanes than those already pledged. In his first news conference since returning from a trip to the United States, Zelenskyy said he is ready to work with Donald Trump if he wins November's election. "I am not afraid" of that prospect, Zelenskyy said, adding he is convinced that most Republicans support Ukraine in its war with Russia.

Zelenskyy said on Sunday he was "appalled" by the attempt to assassinate Trump and wished him a speedy recovery.

Western support is crucial for Ukraine as it tries to beat back Russia's bigger

and better-equipped invading army. Zelenskyy has proved talented at persuading friendly countries to provide ever more support, even if he doesn't always get what he wants immediately. A six-month delay in military assistance from the U.S., the biggest single contributor to Ukraine, meant that Kyiv's forces "lost the initiative" on the front line, Zelenskyy said.

Since the U.S. aid resumed in April, Ukraine has been scrambling to block a Russian offensive in eastern areas. Zelenskyy didn't say how many Patriot systems Ukraine currently possesses, though it is far fewer than the 25 he says his country needs as Russia has battered the national power grid. The U.S. and other NATO allies promised last week to provide Ukraine with dozens of air defense systems in the coming months.

## 100 injured as Bangladesh's student groups clash over quotas

**Monitoring Desk**  
DHAKA: Rival students in Bangladesh clashed on Monday leaving at least 100 people injured, as demonstrators opposing quotas for coveted government jobs battled counter-protesters loyal to the ruling party, police said. Police and witnesses said hundreds of anti-quota protesters and students backing the ruling Awami League party battled for hours on Dhaka University campus, hurling rocks, fighting with sticks and beating each other with iron rods. Some carried machetes while others threw petrol bombs, witnesses said.

The quota system reserves more than half of well-paid civil service posts totalling hundreds of thousands of government jobs for specific groups, including children of "he-

roes" from the country's 1971 liberation war. "They clashed with sticks and threw rocks at each other," local police station chief Mostajirur Rahman said.

Masud Mia, a police inspector, said "around 100 students including women" were injured, and had been taken to hospital. "More people are coming," Mia added. Students launched protests earlier this month demanding a merit-based system. They have continued despite Bangladesh's top court suspending the quota scheme.

Anti-quota protesters blamed the ruling party students for the violence. "They attacked our peaceful procession with rods, sticks and rocks," Nahid Islam, the national coordinator of the anti-quota protests, said.

## Delhi lawyers go on strike over criminal law overhaul

**Monitoring Desk**  
NEW DELHI: Thousands of lawyers in India's capital protested on Monday against an overhaul in criminal legislation by staying away from work and boycotting court hearings, as opposition mounted to the changes. Many have been angered by new laws that came in on July 1 expanding police powers to keep people in pre-trial detention and requiring judges to issue written rulings within 45 days of the end of a trial.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has defended the changes — which also include the death sentence for gang rape of women under 18 — saying they are "victim-centric", modernise the system and "end the endless wait for justice".

## IMF programme to boost Pakistan external financing: Moody's

NEW YORK (INP): Moody's – one of the top international rating agencies – has said the new deal reached with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) will improve the chances of obtaining finances for Pakistan while providing reliable sources for the purpose both friendly nations and international financial institutions.

In a latest report on Pakistan's economy, Moody's at the same time has feared that persistent Pakistan inflation may lead to social unrest and tensions. Higher taxes and fu-

ture energy tariff adjustments could hamper economic reforms in the country, it added.

On the other hand, Moody's is also of the view that lack of electoral mandate is also a threat to effective and sustained implementation of economic reforms – a clear reference to the coalition government led by PML-N's Shehbaz Sharif.

Weak governance and social tensions could impact the government's ability to go ahead with economic reforms, Moody's said.

Moody's report coin-

cides with the latest increase in fuel prices announced on Monday after the government went for electricity basic tariff hike to please the IMF by meeting one of the basic conditions for approving a bailout package.

Earlier, the government presented a budget which saw a massive hike in income tax for salaried classes and imposition of GST on items like milk, thus propelling the food prices further in a country where an overwhelming majority is dealing with an unprecedented cost of living crisis. The latest comments came after Islamabad

secured a staff-level agreement for a \$7 billion deal covering a 37-month period, which is subjected to a final approval by the IMF Executive Board.

About foreign reserves, it says the current \$9.4bn level isn't enough to meet the needs, as Pakistan requires around \$21bn in 2024-25 and \$23bn in 2025-26 through external financing.

Hence, Moody's says Pakistan is an alarming position with reference to external debt and the next three to five years would be very tough for policy making and execution.



ISLAMABAD: The Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, visiting main procession of 9th Muharram-ul-Haram to review the security arrangements.



Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi addressing a function at Al-Ghazali University Karachi.

Visits 9th Muharram-ul-Haram processions

### IGP Islamabad directs foolproof security for Muharram processions

**Independent Report**  
ISLAMABAD: The Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, visited the main procession of 9th Muharram-ul-Haram to review the security arrangements. Over 3,400 police officers, including senior officers, have been deployed to ensure the safety of citizens and maintain law and order during the processions. IGP Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, accompanied by senior police officers, inspected the security measures in place for the procession. He directed the senior officers to implement foolproof security protocols to safeguard the lives and property of citizens, emphasizing the importance of maintaining peace and harmony during the observance of Muharram. Speaking about the security arrangements, IGP Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi stated that Islamabad Police and the district administration have made foolproof security arrangements for the 9th

Muharram-ul-Haram processions. In this regard, foolproof security has been provided for all processions from 1st Muharram onward.

He further emphasized that security has not been compromised at any point during the 9th Muharram-ul-Haram procession. A total of 2,137 officers from Islamabad Police and other law enforcement agencies are deployed in the first security cordon, with an additional 3,400 security officers deployed for extra security measures.

IGP Islamabad mentioned that thorough searches have been conducted within a five-kilometer radius from the main procession routes. Bomb disposal squads and special branch officers are present, alongside police officers, civil administration, Pakistan Rangers and military personnel, all ensuring security. Emergency forces also remain on high alert.

IGP Islamabad added that procession organizers and scouts are collaborating closely with police for

comprehensive security arrangements. Scout volunteers are stationed at key points and Islamabad Police have implemented foolproof measures for procession security. Mobile services have not been disrupted anywhere.

He further said that the central procession on the 9th of Muharram is very important for Islamabad and Rawalpindi. "We have a great responsibility which we are always ready to fulfill," he added.

Earlier, Islamabad Police ensured foolproof security arrangements for the main procession of 9th Muharram. Over 3,400 police officers and personnel from other law enforcement agencies were deployed. The procession routes were secured with barbed wire and canal barriers.

Furthermore, drone cameras and Safe City surveillance monitored the procession, and participants were allowed entry only through designated routes, undergoing searches with metal detectors.

### IWMB releases 17 rehabilitated kites into wild after successful treatment

ISLAMABAD (APP): As many as 17 Common Indian Kites have been released into wild who have healed up after rehabilitation under expert care and treatment at the Margalla Wildlife Rescue Centre of the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB) after they were found dehydrated during the peak heatwave season by volunteers and civil society.

The Margalla Wildlife Rescue Centre revealed that the animal rehab facility had received around 3-4 dehydrated Common Kites during heatwave season that were being rehabilitated successfully.

The general public mostly reported birds of prey including kites and others groggy during extreme hot season that were found unconscious or unsteady with sprawled wings as they fell at different places due to dehydration, Deputy Director Re-

search and Planning, IWMB, Sakhat Ali told APP while explaining a crucial issue making rounds over social media as the mercury spiked up at extreme levels in the federal capital.

Sakhat Ali said the Common Indian Kites were either affected from dehydration or injured mainly after getting broken or damaged wings due to entangling into kite string.

He said during dehydration of animals or wild birds was treated through intake of ORS water which was highly recommended due to its easy availability other than the re-hydration fluid fed under the supervision of expert and trained medical practitioners and vets. He mentioned that the general public was advised to keep dehydrated birds in shade and feed ORS water as first aid prior to relocating the affected bird to rehab and rescue clinic.



ISLAMABAD: Police personals searching body of Shiite Muslim mourners during 9th Muharram Ul Haram procession at Imam Bargah Asna Ashri, in the Federal Capital.

### Ahsan Iqbal says: Third Plenary Session to contribute more Chinese experience to world

BEIJING (APP): On the occasion of the Third Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal said that China's success is an unprecedented innovation in human history.

The Third Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China is being held, and he believes that it will provide a new road map for China's basic socialist modernization in 2035.

Ahsan Iqbal in an interview with China Daily said that the world is in the stage of the fourth industrial revolution, and new technologies are changing the basic mode of development.

China's economy is changing from labor-intensive to technology-driven

### 'Emerging Technologies Centers' to be established at 350 schools soon

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a bid to transform Pakistan into a global IT hub, the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training is all set to launch a landmark project aimed at equipping school children with cutting-edge skills in emerging technologies.

According to the Ministry of Education and Professional Training, the project will establish "Emerging Technology Centres" in 350 schools across Islamabad, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan.

The initiative is part of the government's strategic planning to strengthen its initiative to make Pakistan a global IT destination.

The centres will serve as catalyst for introducing children to emerging technologies such as virtual reality, artificial intelligence, and data analytics, preparing them for the increasingly digital landscape they will encounter in their future endeavors.

The project is aimed at developing skills and ca-



ISLAMABAD: A view of blocked a pedestrian bridge for motorcycles at Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed Road in the Federal Capital.

### Ghusal ceremony of Data Ganj Bakhsh shrine held

LAHORE (APP): The 981st annual ghusal of the shrine of Al-Shaikh Al-Syed Ali Bin Usman Al-Hajveri popularly known as Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh was held here on Tuesday.

The ceremony started with recitation of the Holy Quran while renowned Naat Khawan Marghoob Ahmad Hamdani and others presented Naat Rasool-e-Maqbool (SAW).

Later, ghusal of the shrine was performed with rosewater and wreaths were laid besides "Chadar Poshi".

Special prayers were offered for peace, stability and prosperity of the country.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar attended the ceremony as the chief

and making remarkable progress.

The minister believes that this is not only a good thing for the Chinese people, but also for Chinese friends.

He looks forward to the Third Plenary Session to contribute more Chinese experience to the world.

The 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) started its third plenary session in the Chinese capital yesterday.

Xi Jinping, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, delivered a work report on behalf of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and expounded on a draft decision of the CPC Central Committee on further comprehensively deepening reform and advancing Chinese modernization.

capacity in the IT sector, preparing students for a digital future, enhancing Pakistan's export and capability in the IT sector, and making Pakistan a global IT destination.

The Emerging Technology Centres will be divided into two facilities - Class A and Class B. Class A facilities will provide state-of-the-art spaces for co-working and will also function as co-working spaces during off hours to address the challenges faced by freelancers and professionals locally.

Class B facilities will provide STEM, entrepreneurship, and computer science education to 40,000 students in 320 middle, and high schools.

The project is set to revolutionize Pakistan's IT landscape and pave the way for a brighter future for the nation's youth.

This project will be executed by highly trained 175 Tech fellows hired and trained by service providers hired through Open competitive process.

### Ayaz calls for unity on Ashura Day, condemns aggressions in Kashmir and Palestine

ISLAMABAD (APP): On the solemn occasion of Ashura Day, Speaker of the National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq emphasized the significance of Muharram-e-Haram's message, urging scholars and religious leaders to promote peace, self-sacrifice, tolerance, and unity.

He highlighted that the Muslim Ummah can overcome its current challenges by embracing the spirit of self-sacrifice exemplified by the martyrs of Karbala.

In his message, Sadiq described the incident of Karbala as an enduring testament to faith, bravery, and martyrdom, values upheld in the Holy Quran.

He called on the Muslim Ummah to foster unity, stressing that only through solidarity and brotherhood can the community address its pressing issues.

Referring to the ongoing aggressions in Kashmir and Palestine, Sadiq condemned the severe state terrorism inflicted upon

innocent civilians. He noted that over the past nine months, more than 40,000 Palestinians, including children, women, and the elderly, have been martyred due to Israeli actions.

Similarly, he highlighted the dire situation in Kashmir, where residents face relentless oppression.

He urged Muslim countries to unite and voice strong opposition against these human rights violations.

### AJK Police devises foolproof security plan during Muharram

ISLAMABAD (APP): An integrated security plan has been devised by AJK police to ensure maintaining complete peace and security during the sanctified month of Muharram ul Haram across Azad Jammu and Kashmir, official sources said.

"The plan involves the deployment of additional police forces in all major cities and towns, as well as at all seven entry and exit points of Azad Jammu and Kashmir facing neighboring Punjab and the KPK prov-

inces, the sources told APP here on Tuesday.

"A SOP (standard operating procedure) for ensuring complete peace and order at the sensitive key installations across AJK has also been devised," the sources disclosed.

"Ahead of the sanctified day of Ashura, the 10th of Muharram ul Haraam, being solemnized on Wednesday, July 17, tomorrow, security has been beefed up

across Azad Jammu and Kashmir to deal with any eventuality," according to the official sources.

The sources continued that well-alerted police personnel have been posted before almost all 90 Imam Bargahs across AJK to maintain peace and order during the scheduled Majalis (religious meetings) to mark the sanctified month, right from the 1st day to the 10th of Muharram ul Haram, the Youm-e-Ashur, falling on Wednesday.



ISLAMABAD: Children served milk among the people from a Sabeel along a road at sector G-7 during a procession on the 9th day of Ashura in the Islamic month of Muharram, in the Federal Capital.

### 25 outlaws arrested; cache of drugs recovered

**Independent Report**

ISLAMABAD: Following the special directives of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, Islamabad Police has launched a special "Nasha Ab Nahi" movement to eradicate narcotics and keep the youngsters safe from the curse of drugs, a public relations officer said.

He said that, during the last 24 hours, the Islamabad Police apprehended 25 outlaws from different areas of the city and recovered heroin and ice from their possession.

Following these directions, the Golra police team arrested an accused namely Sarfraz involved in illegally selling petrol. The Industrial Area police team arrested an accused namely Salman and recovered one 30 bore pistol from his possession.

Likewise, the Shams Colony police team arrested an accused namely Allison and recovered 19 liters of liquor from his possession. The Khanna police team arrested an accused namely Muhammad Naveed and recovered 260 gram hashish from his possession. Similarly, the Koral police team arrested two accused namely Awais and Muhammad Ifthikhar and recovered two 30 bore pistols from their possession. Humak police team arrested an accused namely Yasir Mehmood and recovered one 30 bore pistol from his possession.

### Imran Khan, Bushra Bibi interrogated by NAB in new Toshakhana case

RAWALPINDI (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder and wife, Bushra Bibi were interrogated for four hours at Rawalpindi's Adiala jail by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in a recently filed case related to the sale of state gifts (Toshakhana). A team from Rawalpindi's accountability watchdog, led by Deputy Director Mohsin Haroon, interrogated the PTI founder and his wife, the couple was recently acquitted in the Iddat case by a sessions court.

Judge Afzal Majoka's short order stated to release Imran and Bushra Bibi unless they were wanted in other cases, the couple was technically free until the government charged them with a new NAB case.

He added that the May 9 incident was not acceptable at all and those behind it should be taken to task as per law.

He added that the May 9 incident was not acceptable at all and those behind it should be taken to task as per law.