

# Independent

dailyindkhi@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

Karachi

Ph: 0300-3898091 Vol: 06. No. 150 Muharram 04, 1445 AH Thursday July 11, 2024 Pages 04 Price Rs. 12.00

## Roll up your sleeves as nation wants results; won't tolerate laxity in downsizing plan: PM tells ministries

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday, warning against any laxity in the implementation of the government's downsizing agenda, asked the ministries to work hard for making a difference and meeting the nation's expectations.

"I will not allow my time to waste and I am sure you will not allow your time to be wasted. The only thing that will make the difference is action and implementation. Roll up your sleeves as this is a matter of country, its resources and resolution of its issues," the prime minister said in his remarks while chairing the meeting of the federal cabinet.

Apprising the members of his visits to Tajikistan and Kazakhstan, he referred to his interactions with world leaders particularly Russian President Vladimir Putin, and said he had formed a committee under Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal for follow-

ups. Similarly, he said he had chaired a meeting a couple of days ago to review the progress on the follow-up of "very productive" discussions with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang during his China visit and would hold another meeting on July 20.

The prime minister said the government had launched solarisation of 28,000 tube-wells in Balochistan to save bleeding of annual Rs 80 billion. He also appreciated the Balochistan chief minister and other relevant ministries and departments for taking the project to the implementation stage.

He told the meeting that the finance ministry had been tasked to work out a business plan for solarisation of a million tube-wells in the country which were currently running on imported fuel, putting a burden of \$3.5 billion in the from of foreign ex-

change. The prime minister highlighted that Pakistan had immense solar energy potential which must be exploited to save energy costs and provide low-cost electricity to the farmers.

"Time is running fast and we are racing against time. You have to accept the challenge and deliver. You will become the nation's heroes... if you bring about a revolution of development in your ministries. For this, we will have to work day and night," he remarked.

Coming to the downsizing agenda, the prime minister categorically said that he would not listen against the closure of PWD as the government had also found an alternative solution on the pattern of Punjab. He said the two-week time he had given for PWD's closure, was already over.

"I will not tolerate if any ministry using delaying tactics.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses the federal cabinet.

## Faizan Global Relief Foundation meets Governor Sindh

KARACHI (APP): A six-member delegation of Faizan Global Relief Foundation led by Chief Executive Officer of the Foundation Haji Abdul Habib Attari met Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori at the Governor's House here on Wednesday.

In the meeting, public welfare initiatives, services of Dawat-e-Islami, as well as welfare activities and tree plantation campaign were discussed among other issues.

The Governor Sindh said that along with the religious teachings of Dawat-

e-Islami, welfare activities are also excellent.

He further said that assistance to the poor, the needy, especially the training of the youth, are praiseworthy measures.

Kamran Tessori said that under the governor's initiative, a tree plantation campaign will be started across the province from August 1, this campaign will also include the participation of Faizan Global Relief Foundation.

The delegation described the welfare projects of Governor Sindh as a milestone for the society.

## Establishment will have to withdraw for transparent election: Imran Khan

RAWALPINDI (Online): Former Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan has said if establishment has to save country then we will have to head towards transparent election.

"which is that democracy where trials of civilians are held in military courts. I am being treated in such way as if I have committed the highest treason in Pakistan, he said this in his informal talk with the journalists in Adiala jail Wednesday.

He went on to say if Pakistan has to be saved then there is no other option except transparent election.

In 2021 the country's loan stood at 2.8 trillion. The

country's loans reached 8 to 9 trillion in four years. The poor man who received electricity bill Rs 2000 now he receives electricity bill Rs 10000.

The money of all elite is lying outside the country. The present government has ended the hope of Pakistan. No one relies on this government. Historical rigging has taken place in the election. Chief Justice of Pakistan is sending us to election commission for justice. All know election commission held fraud election.

He went on to say that such person takes difficult decision on the back of whom people stand.

Qazi Faez Isa is asking

## Govt to establish Mother Child centers in all Union Councils of Sindh: Khuro

LARKANA (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Sindh President and MPA Nisar Ahmad Khuro said on Wednesday that the provincial government had done a lot of work in the health sector so that common man remains healthy.

He said, "We have already established many modern institutions including NICVD and SIUT hospitals." Addressing the orientation day ceremony of the nursing department at Chandka Institute of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences, he said the mother and child health centers should be established in the rural areas of Sindh and to be expanded to the Union Council level so that pregnant women have the facility of delivery in the health center.

Nisar Ahmad said that Chandka Institute of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences is appreciated for a prestigious profession like nursing, through which medical education is provided to the youth. These institutions have a very important role. The field of nursing is providing complete treatment facilities and attention to the patients through which women have recognized themselves in the world, he added.

Chairman of the institution and ex-President Larkano Press Club S. Iqbal Babu said Chandka Institute of Nursing will start programs of doctor of physiotherapy, nursing and paramedical soon and two-year program of pharmacy as well. He announced that free laptops would be provided to the male and female students who would take positions in the university affiliated to the institution.



LARKANA: President PPP Sindh, MPA Nisar Ahmad Khuro distributing certificates among medical students during Orientation Day ceremony of the Department of Nursing at Chandaka Institute of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences.

## CM Murad Ali Shah reviews progress of major development works in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, reviewing the progress of major development works in progress in the city, directed the Local Government department to expedite work on the Malir Expressway so that its first phase (one segment) could be opened for the public in the second week of August. He also directed the Water Board to start work on the rehabilitation of the Hub Canal project on the first of August so that it could be completed within a year.

The CM issued these directives while chairing a meeting at the CM House here Wednesday. The meeting was attended by Minister Local Govt Saeed Ghani, Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, PSCM Agha Wasif, Commissioner Karachi Hassan Naqvi, Secretary LG

Khalid Hyder Shah, Secretary Transport Asad Zamin, CEO Water Board Salahuddin, PD Malir Expressway Niaz Soomro and other concerned.

Briefing the progress of the Malir Expressway project, the CM was told that the first segment of 1 to 15 km from Jam Sadiq to Shah Faisal was 77 percent. The physical progress of Segment-2 Shah Faisal to Kathore (15 to 38 km) has been achieved at par 29 percent.

Minister Local Govt Saeed Ghani informed the chief minister that the progress on Jam Sadiq Bridge connectivity had reached 13 percent. Additionally, the EBM Interchange, Pir Bukhari Nullah Bridge, Chakora Nullah Bridge and Shah Faisal Interchange have reached 96, 99, 99 and 90 percent completion respectively.

However, work on Quaidabad connectivity stands at 8 percent. It may be noted that work on the 38.681 km Malir Expressway was started on May 12, 2022 and is scheduled to be completed in June 2025. It has three into three (six lanes) and the width of the carriageway is 30.9 km. It would have six interchanges and two Toll plazas.

The CM directed the Local Government department to expedite the work on Segment-1 and he would open it on August 14 for the public.

The CM was informed that his government has started the Rehabilitation of the existing canal and appurtenances construction of a new canal 100 MGD and upgrade the existing canal for Rs12.73 billion.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah reviews the Development Projects in Progress in the capital city.

## Sharjeel for initiating second auction of premium number plates in Sindh

KARACHI (APP): Senior Minister Sindh for Information, Excise, Taxation, Narcotics Control, Transport, and Mass Transit, Sharjeel Inam Memon, presided over a high-level meeting of the Excise and Taxation Department and directed to initiate second auction of premium number plates.

The meeting held at Excise and Taxation Department on Wednesday, discussed on initiating the second auction of premium number plates and establishing a separate office for the issuance of these numbers.

It was decided to issue premium number plates featuring the initials of the vehicle owners' names and to arrange proposals related

to increasing the fee for preferred number plates.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon issued instructions that all legal requirements for the premium number plates issued in the first auction should be fulfilled as soon as possible for the convenience of the citizens.

He stated that for the installation of premium number plates, the concerned vehicle must be registered; premium number plates can only be displayed on registered vehicles. In the meeting, Senior Minister also discussed the ongoing campaign against unregistered vehicles and the construction of check posts for the Excise Department.



Planning Minister Prof. Ahsan Iqbal meets with Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, H.E. Jiang Zaidong, to discuss ongoing and upcoming initiatives under the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in Islamabad

## Ahsan Iqbal, Chinese Envoy discuss CPEC-2 progress, future initiatives

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday met with Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong to discuss the ongoing and upcoming initiatives under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Phase 2.

During the meeting, he underscored the government's unwavering commitment to ensuring the timely implementation of CPEC projects, said a news release.

to advance to the next phase of CPEC, which includes the operationalization of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) aimed at facilitating Chinese investment in Pakistan.

Ahsan Iqbal is scheduled to visit China to attend the high-level forum on the Action Plan for Global Development and a Shared Future, organized by the China International Development Cooperation Agency.

This visit follows up on the agreements reached during the recent visit of Pakistan's Prime Minister to China.

## President condoles deaths in jeep accident in Neelum Valley

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday expressed grief over the deaths after a jeep plunged into a river in Neelum Valley of Azad Kashmir.

The president prayed to Allah Almighty for peace for the departed souls, sympathized with the bereaved families, and also prayed for strength to bear the loss.

## ECP sets September 29 for Islamabad local body elections

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Election Commission has confirmed September 29 as the date for local body elections in Islamabad, marking a pivotal development in the ongoing legal proceedings. Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani presided over the case concerning Islamabad's local body elections. During the hearing, Election Commission officials assured the court of their readiness to conduct elections on the specified date.

## Terrorist Commander among three killed, four soldiers embraced martyrdom in Peshawar IBO

RAWALPINDI (APP): A terrorist commander among three were killed in a joint intelligence-based operation conducted by the Security Forces and Police in Hassan Khel area of Peshawar District while four brave sons of the soil embraced martyrdom amid gallantly fighting against the terrorists. During conduct of the operation, after intense exchange of fire, three terrorists including high value target, Terrorist Commander Abdul Raheem were killed whereas weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the killed terrorists, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

## Pakistan-US Infantry Rifle Company Exercise 2024 concludes at Pabbi

RAWALPINDI (INP): The closing ceremony of two-week-long Pakistan-United States Infantry Rifle Company Exercise - 2024 was held at National Counter Terrorism Centre in Pabbi, said a statement issued by the ISPR on Wednesday.

General Officer Commanding 17 Division attended the Closing Ceremony as chief guest.

Commanding General, 34 Infantry Division from United States Army Major General Charles G. Kemper, also witnessed the ceremony.

## Man killed, 20 injured in Jamshoro clash

JAMSHORO (INP): A man was killed and 20 others injured when members of two groups clashed here on Wednesday, police said.

According to details, the incident took place in Mohallah Gul Muhammad Shah of Sehwan in district Jamshoro where members of two communities attacked each other over bilateral issue. In clash between two the two communities, a man identified as Mihar Bhabro was killed while 20 others were injured. The injured were shifted to Syed Abdullah Shah Institute of Medical Sciences.

The police registered a case into the incident and started investigations.

## Commissioner Karachi chairs meeting to review arrangements for evacuation of dangerous buildings

KARACHI (APP): Commissioner Karachi Syed Hassan Naqvi on Wednesday presided over a meeting to review the arrangements for evacuation of dangerous and dilapidated buildings in the city.

The Sindh Building Control Authority briefed that most of the dilapidated and dangerous buildings are located in District South, numbering 450.

The meeting was attended by Additional Commissioner Karachi-1, Syed Gulam Mehdi Deputy Commissioner South Altaf Sario, Assistant Commissioner Revenue Commissioner Karachi Office Sajjad Abro, senior officers of Sindh Building Control

Authority, and Culture Department.

The meeting was informed that notices have been served to evacuate all dangerous buildings.

The meeting presented a list of extremely dangerous and dilapidated buildings, stating that 40 buildings are in extremely dangerous conditions and need to get evacuated on priority.

It was decided that Deputy Commissioner South Altaf Sario would hold a meeting with the KE and SSSGC to get disconnected utility connections of 40 buildings and complete the process so that the residents can be evacuated immediately for their safety.

## We are waiting for court's decision on reserved seats case: Maulana Fazlur Rehman

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (Online): JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has said we are waiting for court's decision on the matter of reserved seats case.

Approval of resolution in US Congress has no importance but it is weakness of our diplomatic mission. Instead of operation Azme Istehkam we should sit together to ascertain basic reasons to the problems related to terrorism and move to-

wards its solution, he said this while talking to media men here Wednesday.

He went on to say Supreme Court has now to give decision on the matter of reserved seats. It is hoped the court will give the best decision. To a question he said the approval of resolution in US Congress does not hold importance because resolutions continue to be passed about other countries in the world parliaments.



Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

Thursday July 11, 2024

**Policed state**

Pakistan is under grave threat from its own citizens, or so the interior ministry would have us believe. According to a recent statement made before the Sindh High Court on behalf of the ministry, the government feels it necessary to keep the ban on X in place because it considers the social media platform a "threat to peace and national security".

The statement reads: "hostile elements operating on X have nefarious intentions to create an environment of chaos and instability, with the ultimate goal of destabilising the country and plunging it into some form of anarchy". For anyone aware of Pakistan's sociopolitical context, it is not difficult to guess who is being described as 'hostile elements'. There are many disgruntled and disillusioned citizens who have taken to using the platform to vent their frustrations against state institutions that clearly appear unnerved by the unchecked criticism and would like to see them silenced.

The ban on X, the interior ministry says, does not curtail freedom of expression or restrict access to information. In fact, 'it is a measure aimed at ensuring responsible use of social media platforms'. But how does completely blocking access to a global platform encourage responsible use of social media? And how does silencing all Pakistani citizens on X contribute towards national stability and democratic governance? The government does not shed light on these questions. Meanwhile, another recent development provides a fresh example of how extensively constitutional freedoms are being encroached upon. Following the uncovering of a mass surveillance apparatus spying on potentially millions of citizens, the government has, through an SRO, formally allowed intelligence personnel to intercept and trace calls of any citizen "in the interest of national security". To be clear, this was already being done, albeit without warrants or legal sanction. It will now continue with legal sanction, but likely still without warrants. The PML-N-led government must be asked: what is it thinking, giving up important personal protections under the pretext of 'national security'? Even if the circumstances demand enhanced powers for security institutions, these should not be conceded without adequate checks and balances in place. There are many seasoned politicians within its ranks who should know better than to expect such measures to yield positive results in the long run. Likewise, silencing social media is no solution to the actual problem of growing public discontent, which is being augmented by the government's poor policies.

What is needed most right now is for Pakistan to be as accommodative of competing narratives as possible. It would be prudent, therefore, to spend more energy understanding and addressing public concerns rather than treating everyone as an enemy. Suppressing a restless public and blocking dissent will only create more frustrations, which may spill over in unforeseen ways.

**Rafia Zakaria**

One of the most enduring mysteries of life is the capacity of human beings to believe that everything will go well. Most of us grow up imagining that the course of life will proceed without any hiccups. It is this belief that things will proceed as we expect them to that inevitably is the material of tragedy. It is as if we walk along the path of life and expect that we will proceed on course without many hurdles — and when a wild animal jumps out of the bushes and confronts us, we are frightened and eventually disappointed.

The difference between what we expect of life and what life dispenses during our journey is the measure of human suffering.

Another one of the ironies of life is that even though we all confront surprises along our path, and thus experience suffering, we somehow imagine suffering to be unique to ourselves. When faced

by unfortunate events, such as the loss of a loved one, an unexpected illness, being fired from a job, etc, we automatically ask ourselves what it is that we have done to deserve sorrow, illness or anxiety.

We review our actions; we consider our decisions, and we imagine that we have tremendous control over averting unexpected events in the future. This is simply not true; life is as it is, and living involves having to put up with unexpected events that will inevitably befall us.

This is not to say that suffering is futile or that we have no control over it. The story of our suffering or the narrative around it is entirely within our control. If we submerge ourselves in its specifics, in the unfairness of it all, in the feeling that it is exclusive to us then the impact of suffering is to isolate us from the rest of the living beings who surround us.

One example of this

can be found in Russian author Leo Tolstoy's book *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*. The novel is told from the perspective of a man who knows that he will soon die. Because of this, he is on his sickbed alone while life goes on around him. Instead of considering the remainder of his time as precious, he is immersed in self-pity, and feels like his family members including his wife are already planning for a life without him. He feels that there is no one at all who understands how he feels.

All of it is, of course, interpretation and perspective. Such are the delusions of self-pity that they blind him from considering things from the perspective of others. He cannot, for instance, see the fear his wife has of becoming a widow and for having to provide for the family and for her children by herself. He cannot see the concern of his children who now have to deal with the prospect of being orphans. Instead, he does what we all do — we

place ourselves at the centre of the drama that is life and imagine all others as incidentally present and beyond the suffering that is so real in our own case.

If the narrative and interpretation that we impose on our lives is of such crucial importance, then it follows that literature is of greater service to the task of living life than most people might think. The central goal of good literature is to enable the reader to do what may otherwise be impossible, ie, to inhabit the life of another person.

In this sense, good literature provides, at least to an extent, an escape from the self and a chance to immerse ourselves in perspectives and narratives other than our own. In a secondary sense, literature equips those that read it with an ability to create more varied narratives about their own lives; it enables flexibility and variety in interpreting suffering in a constructive way. The greater

our ability to inhabit the lives of others, the more we can escape our own self-centredness and the limiting belief that it is only our own suffering that is real. The more we can understand that suffering unites all human beings and that all of us are in some way or another engaged in struggles, the more likely it is that we can endure life without becoming bitter and intransigent in the face of constant change.

It is a testament to the curious psychology of human beings that we persist in believing that if we can somehow amass enough wealth, or have a certain number of children or marry the right partner that we can put an end to suffering in our lives. Our behaviour resembles that of a baby sitting on a high chair, who drops an object but then begins to cry when he can't retrieve the object. Yet when you give the object back to the baby he will often drop it again.

The experience of suffering or pain is in this sense dependent on the absence of pain — we only know freedom from suffering because of the existence of suffering. None of this makes life's challenges any easier when we are in the midst of them. The more focused we are on ourselves the more acute suffering can be; the more focused we are on the good of others the easier it is to endure life's challenges. One antidote to suffering then is to cultivate the selflessness that comes from focusing on the greater good. Few of us can achieve this, sadly, and so most of the rest of us plod on wearily on the path of life, deluded into believing that once we achieve X or Y or Z we can somehow avoid the curveballs thrown our way and the catastrophes whose regular occurrence is an ironic testament to the fact that we are indeed alive. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Targeting upright judges****Zahid Hussain**

It can't get more sordid than this. The judges of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) who dared to speak out against the interference of intelligence agencies in judicial matters are now the target of a sleazy campaign questioning their integrity. It's not hard to fathom who is behind this character assassination drive. The deep state, it seems, has struck to silence resistance. But that may not be so easy with the bench and the bar rallying behind upright judges.

It all started with trolling on social media, particularly of two of the six IHC judges who had earlier this year penned a letter to the Supreme Court chief justice, detailing the harassment that they had allegedly experienced at the hands of the intelligence agencies. Then complaints were filed by some obscure persons against two of the judges — Justice Babar Sattar and Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri — in the Supreme Judicial Council on fabricated charges.

It is apparent that

the move was meant to pressurise the two who are hearing politically sensitive cases. Lately, questions were also being raised about Justice Jahangiri's law degree. The judge is heading an election tribunal in Islamabad. Nothing could be more preposterous than such suspicions being levelled at a high court judge who has previously served as advocate general. The timing makes the allegations more dubious, with the judge hearing appeals against the election of PML-N MNAs.

Similarly, Justice Sattar has been hearing the audio leaks case. He seems to have drawn the ire of the deep state for questioning the role of the intelligence agencies in unauthorised phone tapping. In a letter to the IHC chief justice sometime ago, Justice Sattar said he was asked by a top security official not to pursue the charges. Before withdrawing its plea, the Intelligence Bureau had sought the judge's recusal from the case.

While slapping a fine of Rs500,000 each on FIA, PTA and Pemra, Jus-

torism court in Sargodha alleging harassment by the agencies.

All that raises questions about the motive behind the complaint, which was based on a car accident, which took place some two years ago, and that allegedly involved a family member of the judge. There is something devious about the timing of the reference. It is not just the security establishment; there are also questions about the role of the executive in orchestrating the campaign against the judges. The government is completely silent on the matter. In fact, remarks by some cabinet ministers and PML-N officials give credence to suspicions of the government's encouragement to the campaign by sections of the media.

Meanwhile, there seems to be no cessation of the harassment of judges by the establishment or the executive's meddling in the judicial process. The media trial of upright judges on concocted charges is the independent judiciary's biggest challenge. The campaign indicates the growing shadow of the se-

curity establishment over the system. It also threatens whatever is left of the democratic process. The resistance of the judges against intimidation is indeed commendable.

A full IHC bench has initiated contempt proceedings against the FIA and some other federal agencies. The court has warned that there would be an institutional response to the smear campaign. The IHC chief justice has rightly pointed out that it was the responsibility of Pemra, PTA, and FIA to stop such campaigns. Bar associations have also extended support to the targeted judges.

Most worrisome is the role of a section of the electronic media, which is being used to malign the judges who refused to bow to pressure. It also shows the blatant misuse of social media in spreading fake news. But the main question revolves around stopping the security establishment's alleged meddling and harassment of judges. The rot is much deeper than it seems.

The main responsibility lies with the apex court and its chief justice to safe-

guard the independence of the judiciary. Unfortunately, the Supreme Court has yet to take action on the letter by the six IHC judges narrating incidents of intimidation. It is certainly not the first time that cases of harassment and interference by the security establishment in the judicial process have been reported. But the collective letter by the IHC judges was most damning.

After some apparent hesitation, the chief justice took suo motu notice of the letter and initially a seven-member bench was formed to hear the case. Later, it was decided to bring the case before a full court. But some three months on, the hearing is yet to begin. Delaying such an important issue is beyond comprehension. The inaction provides impunity to the illegal action by the establishment and the executive. The smear campaign against the judges who dared to speak out is one such example. The IHC judges have refused to surrender before the blackmailing and intimidation and now it is up to the chief justice to uphold the sanctity of the judicial institution.

**France unbowed?****Mahir Ali**

In the run-up to last Sunday's second round of French parliamentary elections, opinion polls and much of the media commentary chiefly focused on whether the far right would succeed in its aim of securing an absolute majority or fall short by a couple of dozen seats. Either way, it was widely assumed that Rassemblement National (RN) leader Marine Le Pen's youthful protégé Jordan Bardella would be the next PM.

Ice buckets with bottles of champagne lay in waiting for a cork-popping moment that never came, as exit polls on election night revealed that not only had RN failed to repeat its first-round triumph, but that it had been relegated to third place, behind the left-wing National Popular Front (NFP) and the centrist alliance of President Emmanuel Macron. One party stalwart was overheard declaring: "The French are idiots! A nation of morons!"

Her opinion wasn't shared by the vast crowds gathered in Parisian city squares, which reacted to the projected results with rapturous applause. In the preceding week, more than 200 candidates — mostly from the left, but also from the centre — had stepped away from three-cornered contests in order to coalesce the anti-RN vote. The tactic worked, not least because voters spooked by the idea of a far right government turned out in their largest numbers since 1997.

A surge in turnout also appeared to propel the purportedly reformist Iranian presidential candidate Masoud Pezeshkian to a decisive lead over his rival in the second round. The UK, whose electoral system must be among the least democratic in Europe, propelled Keir Starmer's

Labour to a nearly two-thirds parliamentary majority with around one-third of the popular vote. The RN won an almost identical share in the French first round. We'll never know what a second round in Britain might have thrown up.

Across the Channel once you get past the justified jubiliations about thwarting the far right (for the time being, at least), what it has thrown up is a degree of incoherence and a recipe for instability. The NFP — a distant echo of the 1936 Popular Front that briefly kept France safe from fascism — combines the radical La France Insoumise with the socialists, communist and green parties. There is basic agreement on key policies, but plenty of scope for dispute on details, not to mention ructions within the LFI. The latter's charismatic leader, Jean-Luc Mélenchon, is invariably described as controversial in the media and smeared as antisemitic by his rivals (much as Jeremy Corbyn was, and for the same reason: a refusal to compromise on Palestinian rights).

The short-lived 1930s Popular Front under Leon Blum notched up a few significant achievements, such as annual vacations for workers, but those were based on a parliamentary majority. The NFP today, around 100 seats short of a majority, will struggle to come up with a prime ministerial candidate acceptable to the Macronists, some of whom consider the LFI more alarming than the RN (whose racism and hostility to immigrants many so-called centrists have assimilated).

RN is a rebranding of FN (Front National), the more overtly fascist party founded by Marine's dad Jean-Marie Le Pen, whose Holocaust-denying legacy she sought to disown with some suc-

cess — to the extent that some French Jews prefer a historically antisemitic entity that today approves of the Netanyahu regime's fascist tendencies to anyone who dares to challenge the Gaza genocide.

There is no easy answer to the question of whether Macron's gamble in calling a snap election after the RN did exceptionally well in European elections has backfired. It would have been much worse for France had the hard right been able to build on its first-round triumph. Its failure to do so can be credited more to the left's tactic than Macron. The president has muddled through over the past couple of years without a parliamentary majority, decreeing policies that have enraged many of his compatriots.

He might be able to cobble together some kind of a coalition with the non-RN right and the non-LFI left, but it will be inherently unstable. Besides, if the policy settings responsible for the popular antagonism to the Macron government do not shift, there's every chance that Marine Le Pen's dream of entering the Elysée Palace in 2027 could come true. Bardella, meanwhile, will head a far-right European parliamentary group called Patriots for Europe that includes like-minded MEPs from Hungary, Austria, the Czech Republic, Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands, Denmark and Belgium.

It would be unfair to scoff at what French voters have achieved, but it was just one battle in a protracted pushback. The spectre of Europe's 1930s descent into fascism still haunts the continent. There's little excuse for complacency, but there's cause to relish last Sunday's reminder that resistance is never futile. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Jamil Ahmad**

The sizzling heat that parts of Asia and other regions are grappling with is a phenomenon that is now far from a climate anomaly; it is becoming the new norm. This extreme weather carries grave socioeconomic implications, claiming lives and leading to health problems that affect daily lives, jobs, and productivity. This year is set to become the hottest on record, and if current trends continue, the record may not stand for long.

Trees and green cover are part of nature's way of protecting humans and other species from extreme heat while providing essential ecosystems. Forests absorb large amounts of carbon dioxide, reduce risks from floods and landslides, and increase environmental resilience to climate change. Beyond sequestering greenhouse gases, forests offer multiple services vital for planetary health and human well-being, including water, clean air, food, biodiversity habitats, and recreational spaces.

A staggering 1.6 billion people directly depend on forests, as do countless animals, plants, insects, and other species. However, this dependence is threatened by rapid deforestation, with around 10 million hectares (25m acres) lost annually. This rate of deforestation not only threatens biodiversity but also disrupts life-supporting ecosystem services.

Approximately 4bn hectares (9.9bn acres), or 31 per cent, of the landmass is covered by forests. However, this green cover is unevenly distributed. According to FAO's State of the World's Forests report, just 10 countries account for 66pc of global forests. The remain-

**Green shields**

ing are scattered across more than 180 countries. Many developing countries with insignificant forest cover are at a disadvantage in combating environmental degradation.

The vulnerability of these developing countries to climate change is amplified if they suffer from high levels of deforestation, a major contributor to rising temperatures, especially in regions with low forest cover.

With the global population expected to reach 10bn by 2050, the demand for food will rise. Two-thirds of the world's accessible freshwater is sourced from forested watersheds and wetlands. However, land-use changes such as clearing forests for agriculture to boost food production are flawed strategies. Without sustainable forests, prolonged high temperatures will dry up the soil, reduce crop yields, jeopardise food security, aggravate water scarcity and increase inequality.

Conserving biodiversity is another critical aspect of forests' roles. They provide habitats for plants, pollinators, and animal species, and act as barriers to wildlife interaction with humans, thus intercepting zoonotic diseases.

Pakistan's meagre forest cover, less than 5pc of its area, is dwindling fast due to deforestation at an annual rate of 0.75pc, the highest in the region. The country loses 27,000 hectares (66,000 acres) of forest per year to land-use changes and unregulated logging. Deforestation increases the risk of landslides in mountainous terrains and endangers exotic birds and wildlife. The beautiful high-altitude pheasant Himalayan monal, once abundant in mountain forests, is rarely spotted anymore.

As a party to UN environmental conventions,

Pakistan must utilise this multilateral mechanism for long-term action to halt deforestation. At the local level, improving forest management and promoting sustainable business practices that benefit local communities is imperative.

Building on earlier declarations, 145 countries at the UN Climate Change Conference in 2021 committed to "halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030". However, little progress has been made on this and a UNEP report released last month found that countries are falling short of meeting the agreed target to stop deforestation. The report outlines that pledges to reduce deforestation and financially support this transition from developed countries are insufficient to halt deforestation by 2030. This shortfall will worsen the climate and biodiversity crises and exacerbate poverty.

The report recommends developing long-term integrated policies to reduce deforestation and emphasises empowering local communities to manage their lands as a proven strategy to protect forests within their lands. Noting that deforestation is driven by complex interaction between global, national, and local factors, the report calls for coordinated action to conserve forests "for the sake of people, climate, and nature".

The escalating heatwaves and their socioeconomic ramifications underscore the urgency of addressing deforestation and promoting sustainable forest management. As the world faces unprecedented environmental challenges, preserving and restoring forest ecosystems is imperative for a sustainable future. -- Courtesy Dawn



## No decision made regarding export of wheat: Shehbaz

ISLAMABAD (Online): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said that no decision regarding export of wheat has been made.

Taking to the floor of the House, he made this clarification, while responding to points raised by the opposition benches.

The Prime Minister recalled that it is also part of the record that sugar and wheat were first exported and then imported during the reign of PTI in the past.

Meanwhile, responding to a calling attention notice, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Azam Nazeer Tarar informed the House that providing the best health facilities to the people is priority of the government. He said there is an acute shortage of nursing staff in the federal capital. He said evening classes have been started at different nursing schools to meet the requirement.

The House today

passed "the State Owned Enterprises (Governance and Operations) Bill, 2024.

According to the statement of objects and reasons, the bill is aimed at reconstituting the boards of SOEs to better align them with the reform initiatives for restructuring and the transformation as well as privatization of certain entities.

Besides, "The Pakistan Citizenship (Amendment), Bill, 2024 was introduced in the

House today.

Earlier, The House offered feteiha for the departed soul of Captain Osama bin Arshad and others embraced Shahadat in South Waziristan.

The House also prayed for the victims of the Neelum Valley incident.

The House has now been prorogued. However, referring to the PTI government's sugar and wheat scams, he recalled that it was also on record that in the past wheat



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb in a meeting with the Representatives from Standard & Poor's (S&P) Global Rating Agency.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal addressing the Seventh Agricultural Census at a ceremony held by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

## FM meets Standard & Poor's Global delegation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Wednesday met with the delegation of Standard & Poor's (S&P) Global Rating Agency at Finance Division.

The meeting was attended by a delegation from S & P Global led by Directors of Sovereign and International Public Finance Ratings Yee Farn Phua, Andrew David Wood, and senior officials of the ministry, said a news release.

The minister welcomed the S&P delegation and gave an update on Pakistan's current economic situation.

He highlighted the successful completion of the 9 month Stand By Arrangement (SBA) with International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the

improving macroeconomic indicators of Pakistan.

Aurangzeb also highlighted some of the indicators including building up of foreign exchange reserves to USD 9.4 billion, robust performance of the stock exchange, declining trend of inflation rates with CPI inflation clocking in at 12.6% in June 2024, and increase in foreign remittances by 7.7% as compared to last year.

He emphasized the government's efforts to broaden the tax base as tax collection during FY 2024 increased by 30% as compared to FY 2023 and also to further improve the tax-to-GDP ratio.

During the meeting the ongoing reforms in the energy sector, and State Owned Enterprises including privatization were discussed.

## Azerbaijan eyes multi billion-dollar investment in Pak: Musadik Malik

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Petroleum Musadik Malik said on Wednesday that Azerbaijan was considering an investment of \$2 to \$3 billion in Pakistan.

Speaking exclusively to a private news channel, he said that Azerbaijan was particularly interested in the mineral sector, including oil and gas.

The minister said that Azerbaijan was focusing on the oil and gas exploration sector, noting their keen interest in expanding investments in the LNG sector as well.

eager to increase economic cooperation with friendly countries, Malik said and added, the government prioritizes investment over aid from friendly nations.

He further mentioned that Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev's visit to Pakistan was very much expected to boost trade relations. Discussions will include increasing textile exports and promoting the IT sector between the two countries, he said.

Malik expressed optimism that these initiatives will significantly enhance economic ties between the two countries.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Secretary Board of Investment Rahim Hayat Qureshi addressing at workshop on "Modernised Inspection Regime (MIR)".

## Poultry sector must be facilitated for cheap protein: FCCI

FAISALABAD (APP): Senior Vice President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FCCI) Dr Sajjad Arshad has said that the government should facilitate the poultry sector for provision of cheap protein to the public.

Addressing a meeting of the poultry farmers, he said that the poultry sector is at the verge of collapse as every poultry farmer is bearing hefty losses of Rs. 7 million. This loss has now become unbearable and if this situation continued, it would not only have an ill impact on the export of eggs and chicken meat but also

deprive people of cheap source of protein readily available in Pakistan at affordable rates, he added.

He said that Pakistan is annually producing 17,500 million eggs and 1440-million-kilogram chicken meat. In 2022, we exported 16.8 million eggs while in 2024, chicken meat and chicken products of 115,664 tons were also exported.

He said that in Pakistan the ratio of consumption of chicken meat is only 7.20 kilogram while every Pakistani take only 88 eggs per annum which is far below than the international standard.

## Rupee sheds 11 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD (APP): The exchange rate of the Pakistan rupee witnessed a devaluation of 11 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading on Wednesday and closed at Rs 278.51 against the previous day's closing of Rs 278.40.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market, however, were Rs 278.75 and Rs 280.75 respectively.

The price of the Euro increased by 12 paise to close at Rs 301.29 against the last day's closing of Rs 301.17, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen came down by 01 paise and closed at Rs 1.72, whereas an increase of 01 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 356.40 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 356.39.

## SCCI president holds meeting with federal ministers

SIKOT (APP): Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) President Abdul Ghafoor Malik held a detailed meeting with Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan and Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif. Multiple matters of significance importance particularly revival of the Final Tax Regime (FTR), the launch of the new LTLD and DDT Scheme, formation of the EDF Board and the issuance of note verbale for Sialkot Chamber's Brazil delegation were discussed.

Both the ministers assured of their full support on the issues presented by the President SCCI Abdul Ghafoor Malik and shared that the issue of withdrawal of the Final Tax Regime (FTR).

## Banks to observe Ashura holidays on July 16, 17

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and all banks and financial institutions will remain closed on July 16 and 17, 2024 on the occasion of Ashura 1446 A.H. The central bank, in a statement issued here on Wednesday, informed that SBP will remain closed on July 16 and 17, 2024, (Tuesday and Wednesday) being public holidays on the occasion of Ashura (9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Moharram 1446 A.H).



ISLAMABAD: Senator Jam Saifullah Khan, chairman senate standing committee on railways presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.

## Government has to fix FBR system to increase tax revenue: Atif Ikram

Independent Report ISLAMABAD: President Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Atif Ikram Sheikh has said that the government has to fix the FBR system to increase the tax revenue, new taxes of 1700 billion rupees will bring a storm of inflation. The burden of government expenditure is being put on the public and the business class by increasing the tax rate. It is possible to reduce the government expenditure by reducing the interest rate by 550 basis points, otherwise the relief that the people got from the

reduction in inflation will not remain. Federation President Atif Ikram said that the State Bank gradually reduced the interest rate to 16%. The interest payment on loans is 9775 billion rupees in the current financial year, while 8736 billion rupees will be spent on the payment of interest rate on internal loans. Atif Ikram said that in the current budget, the tax payers have been burdened with billions of rupees of taxes, after electricity and gas become expensive, businesses will be affected. Relief should be given to the public and businessmen.

## Kisan Ittehad hails PM's initiative of agri-tubewells' solarization

QUETTA (APP): Chairman of Kisan Ittehad, Khalid Hussain Bath on Wednesday lauded Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif's initiative of converting 28,000 tube wells to solar panels in Balochistan.

Addressing a press conference here at Quetta Press Club, he said shifting of tube wells to solar energy will pave the way for Balochistan's development and prosperity.

"Balochistan has fertile land and making agricultural lands cultivable can increase the country's resources," he said, urging

that the province has around 40,000 tube wells, and an additional 16,000 tube wells should also be converted to solar energy.

The Chairman Kisan Ittehad thanked Chief Minister of Balochistan Sarfraz Bugti and the Prime Minister of Pakistan for their orders to convert thousands of tube wells to solar power.

He requested Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chief Minister Balochistan to take measures to promote tourism in the province, ensuring the security of tourist areas to increase the province's resources.



QUETTA: Chairman Kissan Ittehad, Chaudhry Khalid Hussain Baath along with others addresses a Press conference at Quetta Press Club.

## Decrease in power tariff for protected consumers laudable: Mian Zahid

KARACHI (INP): Chairman of the FCCI Advisory Board and National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain has said that

the business community supports the decision of Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif regarding decrease in power tariff for 51% of consumers using upto 200 units per month.

Talking to business community on Wednesday, he was of the view that it was proper to withdraw the increase in tariff on electricity for protected consumers who are facing very high costs of living.

Mian Zahid Hussain also advocated for reducing the burden of electricity bills on other consumers.

Public protests and angry demonstrators'

attacks on distribution company employees led to the decision to provide relief to lifeline consumers, he explained.

The business leader said that the move was necessary to prevent violent incidents from spreading across the country.

He said that the Prime Minister's decision will reduce the burden of electricity bills for around 15 million protected consumers by Rs 50 billion, which the government will cover by cutting the development budget. The electricity sector will receive a subsidy of Rs. 1700 billion this year, with IPP owners receiving most of it.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that consumers who use more than 200 units will have to bear higher bills for six months. This policy should be abolished as it flagrantly violates human rights and justice.

## Ahsan Iqbal inaugurates 7<sup>th</sup> agricultural census

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday inaugurated the 7<sup>th</sup> Agricultural Census-2024 at a ceremony held by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

In his address, he emphasized the significant achievement of conducting a highly transparent digital census with the consensus of all provinces using advanced technology, a news release said.

The minister congratulated the PBS on the successful launch of the seventh agricultural census. He highlighted the importance of agricultural statistics for a

predominantly agrarian country like Pakistan and praised PBS for introducing an automated local system. This new system will facilitate decision-making based on reliable data, helping to enhance agricultural productivity in line with the growing population. The data collected will be instrumental in formulating agricultural policies, identifying areas with potential for increased productivity and providing necessary resources to achieve better yields.

It will also support initiatives aimed at improving farmers' productivity and overall welfare.

The minister further

noted that Pakistan's future economic stability hinged on increasing exports, particularly in the agricultural sector.

He stressed the need to learn from other countries, such as India, which has conducted eleven agricultural censuses compared to Pakistan's seven.

"Despite facing similar challenges, other nations have progressed, and it is crucial for Pakistan to catch up." He acknowledged the difficult economic situation, stating that any government would struggle with the current fiscal deficit, making it essential to focus on increasing revenue and exports.

## SNGPL disconnects 19 gas meters

MULTAN (APP): Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) punished 19 citizens in a crackdown during two days. According to officials of Task Force, the consumers were using gas illegally as they were found making commercial use of gas, offering illegal connections to others and had also shifted meters at different sites by themselves. Gas metres of all the 19 consumers were disconnected for violation of the laws. The department urged citizens to cooperate and informed about illegal use of gas at phone number.

He was addressing at the launch of the Treasury Management Certification, that has been jointly developed by CFA Society Pakistan and National Institute of Banking and Finance (NIBAF) in collaboration with SBP and Financial Market Association, said a statement issued here.

Dr. Inayat Hussain underscored the

## Deputy Governor SBP terms skill development as key to success in financial industry

KARACHI (APP): Deputy Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Dr. Inayat Hussain on Wednesday highlighted the pivotal role of continuous learning in ensuring the long-term success of professionals within the financial industry.

He commended the collaborative efforts of the SBP, National Institute of Banking and Finance (NIBAF) Pakistan, the CFA Society Pakistan, and the Financial Market Association for developing the certification program tailored to meet local market requirements.

importance of providing treasury professionals with the skills necessary to navigate the challenges of an evolving financial landscape. Investing in staff development enables professionals not only to effectively manage risks and ensure compliance, but also to leverage new technologies, and adapt to dynamic market conditions, he stressed.

## PR plans to introduce smart Railway cars on multiple routes

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate Standing Committee on Pakistan Railways (PR) was informed on Wednesday that Pakistan Railways would introduce four smart railway cars on routes between Lahore-Islamabad, Lahore-Faisalabad, Lahore-Multan, and Karachi-Hyderabad at a cost of around \$45 million," stated Secretary of the Ministry of Railways, Syed Mazhar Ali Shah, during the meeting. He noted that under this public-private partnership, private parties will contribute a portion of the profit to maintain the tracks.

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) detected a total of 471 connections from where customers were pilfering electricity in all its circles of five districts: Lahore, Sheikhpura, Nankana Sahib, Kasur and Okara, on the 28<sup>th</sup> day of anti-power theft campaign.

ALESCO spokesman told the media on Wednesday that the company had also submitted FIR applications against electricity thieves, out of which 140 FIRs had been registered in respective police stations, while 18 accused arrested by the respective police.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> consecutive day of the anti-power theft campaign, the spokesman added, large commercial consumers were also found involved in electricity theft and all of them were also disconnected and charged with detection units.

## Shahid Rasheed says: Current economic policies unsustainable

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt has said that the current economic policies are unviable. In a statement issued here on Wednesday, he was of the view that in the presence of unworkable policies, production and exports will stay the same, and the country will continue to borrow. Shahid Rasheed Butt said that for the next five years, the growth rate cannot go beyond four

percent in any case. The ruling elite has targeted the urban middle class in the budget, so the troubled middle class is shrinking rapidly, he added. The business leader said that a country could only progress with the middle class, the economy's main driver.

This time, too, the people have to swallow the bitter pill while the ruling elite has increased their expenses, and the influential sectors have also been kept out of the tax net, he observed.



PESHAWAR: Vendor selling and displaying colorful decoration frames to attract the customers at Sadar Bazar.



## Murad directs to overcome water shortage at Sukkur Barrage's right bank

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Wednesday presided over a meeting regarding water shortage on the Right Bank of Sukkur Barrage and directed the Irrigation department to overcome the shortage and provide water to growers, otherwise Kharif crops would be affected badly.

The meeting held at CM House, was attended by Sindh Minister Irrigation Jam Khan Shoro, Secretary to CM Raheem Shaikh, Secretary Irrigation Zarif Khoro and others.

The CM said that the Sukkur Barrage Right Bank, Larkana was created so that 2,094,975 acres of land could be irrigated on the right bank properly. At this, Minister Irrigation Jam Khan Shoro said that 185,000 acres of Balochistan were irrigated by the Right Bank Canals.

The CM was informed that three canals – Dadu Canal, Rice Canal and North West Canal were off-taking from the Right Side of the River Indus.

Irrigation Minister

Shoro told the CM that the Rice Canal feed more than 100 off-taking channels including Branches, Major and Minor Distributaries. The command area of Rice Canal is scattered over four Districts, and no major complaints of water are reported by "Khatendars" of tail-enders.

The CM was told that the availability of water in Rice Canal is 80-89 per cent of its allocated discharge and functioning satisfactorily. The supply of water to tail-enders is maintained by proper monitoring and vigilance.

Secretary Irrigation Zarif Khoro said that 12800 cuses against an allocation of 14355 cuses were flowing in the Rice Canal which showed a shortage of 11 per cent as of June 10, 2024.

It was pointed out that the availability of water in Warah Branch Canal was 85-90 per cent of its requirements and the water was available up to the last X-Regulator of the Main Branch System.

The command area of Warah Branch Canal is scattered over three Districts i.e. Shikarpur, Larkana & Kambar Shahdadkot. The Warah Branch Canal feeds 47 off-taking channels including Branches, Major and Minor Distributaries. Water is available in the entire system of Warah Branch. There is also no major complaint of water shortage in the Warah branch, the CM was told.

The CM was informed that about 50 per cent of the allocated share is available in Dadu Canal. The tail ends below Dadu City are severely affected.

It was pointed out that the distribution system of Dadu Canal is comprised of about more than 60 off-taking channels including Branches, Major and Minor Distributaries experiencing a shortage of water after the Sukkur Barrage gates problem. Dadu Canal feeds command areas of three Districts and is experiencing a shortage of water. At this, the CM directed the Secretary Irrigation to overcome the shortage in the tail ends by operating the pumping stations.

alone, the CDA collected Rs7.9 billion, he said, adding that the revenue target for the fiscal year 2023-24 was set at 41.8 billion rupees.

Randhawa emphasised that instead of selling assets, the CDA is focusing on alternative sources of revenue to make the authority financially stable.

The Federal Interior Minister praised the CDA Chairman and his team for achieving record revenue collection.

Mohsin Naqvi commended the hard work over the past two months that resulted in surpassing the revenue target.

He added that the same dedication is required for revenue generation in the current fiscal year.

In May and June



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi chairing a meeting of Core Committee regarding Security of Chinese Citizens.

## Mohsin Naqvi lauds CDA for achieving historic revenue of Rs52b in 2023-24

ISLAMABAD (INP): For the first time in history, the Capital Development Authority (CDA) has achieved a record revenue of 52 billion rupees during the fiscal year 2023-24.

Federal Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi highly appreciated the department for the achievement on Wednesday.

CDA Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa stated that unique measures were taken for revenue generation under the directives of Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi.

The CDA chairman said that through effective strategies, the revenue exceeded the target of the previous fiscal year by 23%.

LAHORE (Online): Lahore High Court (LHC) has discharged PTI leader Sanam Javed from Gujranwala case.

A two members bench of LHC presided over by Justice Asjid Javed Ghural accepted the plea while hearing appeal filed by Sanam Javed against physical remand in Gujranwala case Wednesday. Mian Ali Ishaq advocate gave arguments in the court on behalf of Sanam Javed. It is pertinent to mention here Sanam Javed has challenged the Anti Terrorism court Gujranwala decision about physical remand in LHC.

## Khuhro calls for new NFC Award for 2025

LARKANA (APP): President of Pakistan People's Party Sindh and Chairman of Public Accounts Committee Sindh Nisar Khuro has said that National Finance Commission (NFC) Award was given to the provinces in 2010 but since last 10 years the award was not given.

Therefore, we request the federal government to give the NFC award to the provinces in 2025 so that they become stronger financially and economically. He expressed these views while addressing a press conference at the Larkana Press Club on Wednesday.

## LHC discharges PTI leader Sanam from Gujranwala case

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses a session of the National Assembly.

AJK PM advises 100% free supply of medicines to OT, gynecology, and emergency patients by AIMS in AJK

MIRPUR (APP): Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq on Wednesday paid a surprise visit to Ch. Ghulam Abbas Institute of Medical Sciences in the state metropolis and assessed the health cover facilities being delivered to the ailing humanity by the state-run institution.

During his visit, the PM went round to various hospital departments and ordered the provision of quality treatment facilities to patients, early purchase of medicines, and necessary equipment, including MRI and CT scanners.

He also directed to ensure 100% free supply of medicines to OT, gynecology, and emergency patients.

He said that provision of additional funds for the supply of medicines and purchase of necessary equipment would also be ensured.

## President highlights socio-economic challenges related to population growth

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari has underlined the need to understand the profound impact that rapid population growth had on the socio-economic development of Pakistan and suggested steps to address the related challenges which directly affected country's resources.

In a message on the occasion of World Population Day being observed on 11<sup>th</sup> July, the president said on this day, they reflected on the critical importance of population dynamics in shaping the nation's future.

He said population of Pakistan, counted as 241 million (Census-2023), and was growing at a high rate of 2.55% and this population was projected to reach 263 million by 2030 and 383 million by 2050.

"Our young population, which constitutes the majority, is a vibrant and dynamic force that holds immense potential for driving our nation towards prosperity. However, to harness this potential, we must ensure that our youth have access to quality education, healthcare, and employment opportunities which are significantly affected by imbalance between the available resources and the size of our country's population," President Secretariat Press Wing, in a press release quoted, the president said.

The president said Pakistan faced significant challenges in managing its population growth, which directly affected their resources and public services.

Despite being water-abundant at the time of independence, he said, they were now one of the water-stressed countries in the world; the agricultural land was being converted into housing areas, threatening their food security and consequently affecting the nutritional status of their citizens especially children.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses a session of the National Assembly.

## AJK PM advises 100% free supply of medicines to OT, gynecology, and emergency patients by AIMS in AJK

MIRPUR (APP): Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq on Wednesday paid a surprise visit to Ch. Ghulam Abbas Institute of Medical Sciences in the state metropolis and assessed the health cover facilities being delivered to the ailing humanity by the state-run institution.

During his visit, the PM went round to various hospital departments and ordered the provision of quality treatment facilities to patients, early purchase of medicines, and necessary equipment, including MRI and CT scanners.

He also directed to ensure 100% free supply of medicines to OT, gynecology, and emergency patients.

He said that provision of additional funds for the supply of medicines and purchase of necessary equipment would also be ensured.

## Administration prepared to deal with potential emergencies during monsoon: Commissioner

SUKKUR (APP): Divisional Commissioner, Fayaz Hussain Abbasi on Wednesday said that all relevant departments have been activated before the monsoon season, and the administration is prepared to deal with any potential emergency situations that may arise during the monsoon season. While visiting several water pumping stations in the city, along with Deputy Commissioner (DC) Sukkur, Dr Raja MB Dharejo and other officers, the divisional Commissioner also visited the water pumping stations at Makka, Shalimar, Qureshi Road, Dubba Road, Jail Road, Miani, Police Line, and Bachal Shah Disposal Pumping Stations, and reviewed the preparations for the monsoon season.

He said that the purpose of the visit was to ensure the readiness of the pumping stations to deal with the potential flooding and drainage issues during the monsoon season. Abbasi emphasized the importance of taking proactive measures to mitigate the effects of heavy rainfall and directed the relevant authorities to ensure backup power arrangements at the pumping stations and strengthen coordination between municipal services and public health departments.



HYDERABAD: Residents of Hosri are holding protest demonstration against high handedness of influential people, arranged by Human Rights Protection Forum, at Hyderabad press club.

## Karachi weather: More monsoon rains predicted

KARACHI (INP): The monsoon season in Karachi has entered its third day, bringing much-needed rain but offering little respite from the city's intense heat.

Despite the clouds and rainfall, the temperature remains high, with the Met Department forecasting a possibility of light rain today. Karachi is experiencing partly cloudy, hot, and humid weather conditions. The chief meteorologist confirmed the likelihood of rain in Karachi today, following the heaviest rainfall in Surjani Town yesterday.

Looking ahead, the next spell of monsoon rains is expected to hit Karachi after July 20. In the meantime, the city continues to grapple with sweltering temperatures, which are predicted to reach up to 37 degrees Celsius today.

Additionally, winds are blowing at a speed of 11km per hour, while the humidity level stands at a high 83%, according to Sardar Sarfaraz, the chief meteorologist. He also said the sea breezes are likely to return from Wednesday evening or tomorrow. As Karachiites navigate the challenging weather, the authorities urge residents to stay hydrated and take necessary precautions to beat the heat while enjoying the seasonal rains. The Met Department had forecast more rain-wind/thunderstorms for Karachi, Hyderabad, and various parts of Sindh on Tuesday night, as light to moderate monsoon currents from the Arabian Sea.



ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi addressing International Conference on CPEC Enhancing Community with a Shared Future for Mankind.

## Sindh Government Orders Immediate Removal of Dangerous Billboards and Hoardings

Independent Report KARACHI: The Sindh General Administration and Coordination Department on Wednesday issued directives to Additional Chief Secretary of the Local Government & HTP Department, Government of Sindh and all Divisional Commissioners in Sindh for the urgent removal of billboards and hoardings that pose a danger to public safety.

This action follows the forecast by the Meteorological Department, Ministry of Aviation, Government of Pakistan, predicting heavy rains in Sindh during the monsoon season of 2024. Given the devastation caused by torrential rains in recent years, it is imperative to implement safety measures to protect lives and property.

The presence of large billboards and hoardings on buildings and other structures poses a significant risk, particularly during thunderstorms and heavy rains. The Honourable Supreme Court of Pakistan, in its order passed in CP No. 18-K/2010 & CMA 209-K/2014 in CP 152-K, has also mandated the removal of such dangerous installations.

DC, SSP reviews security arrangements for Muharram processions

HYDERABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner Zain-ul-Abdeen along with Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Dr Farukh Ali visited different areas of the city to review security arrangements for Muharram ul Haram.

According to the Police Spokesman, DC and SSP visited Imamia trust Latifabad, Al Sadat Colony and Imambargah Hazara Colony Hussain abad.

Incharge DIB Inspector Akber Lund, DSP Cantt Iftikhar Ahmed Burro, DSP Hussain abad Saghir Hussain Mugheri, SHO Hussain abad Inspector Ayaz Ali Bhugio, SHO B Section Inspector Hashim Brohi and others were also present.

## DC, SSP reviews security arrangements for Muharram processions

Protestors surround office of electricity utility in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): A group of residents in North Nazimabad, Karachi took to the streets and raised slogans late Tuesday night, demanding the K-Electric administration to provide reasonable and scheduled load shedding.

The agitated citizens protested outside the K-Electric office near the DC office. Upon the arrival of the protesters, the K-Electric administration closed the office doors. The protesters chanted slogans against K-Electric.

They said that electricity remains absent for 14 to 16 hours daily. The citizens protesting said that even if a fault occurs, it takes several hours to rectify it.

## Massive fire devastates Islamabad's H9 market, over 70 stalls engulfed

ISLAMABAD (INP): A massive fire erupted in the H9 market of Islamabad, ravaging over 70 stalls and drawing a large-scale emergency response.

Rescue 1122 personnel, five fire brigade vehicles, and CDA staff are actively battling the blaze at Bachat Bazaar. Deputy Commissioner Islamabad, Rana Waqas, reported that the fire's intensity prompted assistance from the Pakistan Navy, Air Force, and additional fire brigade units.

The fire originated in the shoes and clothes section and rapidly spread, consuming more shops. Efforts to control the fire are ongoing, with authorities striving to extinguish the flames swiftly.

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has taken notice of the incident, contacting Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Muhammad Ali Randhawa for updates. On the minister's directive, Chairman CDA arrived at the scene to oversee operations.

Minister Naqvi instructed the deployment of all available resources to control the fire, emphasizing the need for increased rescue and fire brigade teams.

Additional measures are being taken to manage the situation and prevent further damage.

8 LPG shops sealed for violating law

HYDERABAD (APP): On the instructions of Deputy Commissioner Shaheed Benazirabad Shehryar Gul Memon, actions were taken by the Assistant Commissioners against the shopkeepers selling illegal LPG gas.

On the instructions of Commissioner Shahrar Gul Memon, Assistant Commissioner Nawabshah Iqbal Ahmad Tanio took action against the vendors selling illegal LPG gas in Nawabshah city, sealed 8 shops and imposed a fine of 45000 on several vendors.



LARKANA: Political Secretary to PPP Chairman, MPA Jameel Ahmed Soomro is listening the problems of public during open court program held at Awami Markaz Ghalib Nagar in Larkana.

## DC chairs meeting regarding washrooms at public, private institutions

HYDERABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner Shaheed Benazirabad, Shehryar Gul Memon Wednesday said that washrooms for women, men and special persons should be established in public and private institutions and ensure the cleanliness and maintenance of them.

He said this while presiding the meeting at his office regarding the petition filed in the Sindh High Court for establishing separate washrooms for men and women in government offices and cleaning them.

Deputy Commissioner further said that separate washrooms should be established for all departments, especially primary health centers, hospitals, union committees and other government institutions, for the employees working in the buildings and for the people coming for essential work.

The report of the negligent officers will be submitted to the High Court.

Deputy Commissioner added that the basic needs of the people should be taken care of.

The condition of the washrooms should be improved and they should be reserved for men and women, while new washrooms should be built in offices and public parks as per the need.

Chairman Zakat Committee Mir Muhammad Syal, District Zakat Officer Abdul Latif Chanar, Assistant Commissioner Skrand Rameez Raja, Assistant Commissioner Hasan Zafar, Assistant Commissioner Qazi Ahmad Arsalan and other officers of various departments participated in the meeting.



KARACHI: A view of traffic jam at at Shahrah-e-Pakistan in the Provincial Capital.

## IATA asks Pakistan to revoke recent tax hike on air tickets

KARACHI (INP): International Air Transport Association (IATA) has demanded of Pakistan government to lower tax on air tickets.

The federal government jacked up the FED on the international flights in the budget 2024-25. According to the notification, the FED on economy and economy plus tickets has risen by 150 per cent.

In a letter to Pakistan's finance ministry, the IATA has demanded to immediately roll back the imposition of 150pc tax on international air tickets.

The body stated that increasing tax on the tickets without taking stakeholders into confidence is against the rules and regulations of international civil aviation.

Increase in tax, affects the business of airlines and the agents, the IATA further said in its letter. The government of Pakistan has been urged to revoke the decision of massive tax on the air tickets.

On July 6, the Travel Agents Association of Pakistan (TAAP) declared the recent increase in taxes on air tickets as illegal, stating that the sharp rise has plunged the industry into a severe crisis.

During a press conference held at their office, former chairman and member of the executive committee Nadeem Sharif emphasized that the industry could face destruction due to these measures.

Young Pakistani students shine in Battle of Chefs 2024, Malaysia

KARACHI (APP): The female students of Pakistan Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (PITHM) Sindh have won laurel for the country by securing two gold and two bronze medals in the international food competition 'Battle of Chefs 2024' in Malaysia.

At the Battle of Chefs 2024, Ayesha Ali bagged gold medal in seafood while Sehrish Ayub secured gold in the chicken main course. Similarly, Irum Shaikh won bronze in Roasted Chicken Freestyle while Fatima Sistan also bagged a bronze medal.

Sindh Minister of Culture, Tourism, Antiquities and Archives Syed Zulfiqar Ali Shah, on the return of the medal winning students, met them and lauded their efforts.

He presented gift of traditional Sindhii Ajraks, felicitated the successful students and their parents.



HYDERABAD: Residents of Hosri are holding protest demonstration against high handedness of influential their area police department, outside SSP Office in Hyderabad.

## Security plan for Ashura finalized: SSP

MIRPURKHAS (APP): The district police has finalized the security plan regarding processions and congregations of Ashura.

SSP Mirpurkhas, Captain @, Asad Ali Chaudhry told APP here on Wednesday that during holy month of Muharram, 445 majalis would be organized in the district, of which 110 majalis were declared sensitive and 107 mourning processions would be taken out, of which 23 declared sensitive.

More than 1500 police officers and jawans had been deployed in the district to supervise the assemblies and processions, he added. Rangers and plainclothes police personnel had been deployed, the SSP said, adding the processions' routes and congregations would also be monitored with the help of CCTV cameras.

He said the police would perform the duties while the National Action Plan would be implemented along with snap checking on the internal and external routes throughout the district.

SMC cleanliness drive in Muharram-ul-Haram

SUKKUR (APP): Deputy Mayor Sukkur Dr Arshad Mughal on Wednesday ordered for proper cleanliness of the venues of Muharram Majalis and mourning processions routes.

Visiting the routes of mourning processions here, the deputy mayor directed the Sukkur Municipal Corporation to provide extraordinary cleanliness arrangements specially during 15th of Muharram-ul-Haram.

Deputy Mayor along with Municipal Commissioner Muhammad Ali Shaili visited the various routes of processions and Imam Bargahs in different areas and ensure the best services were provided to the mourners during Muharram.

The SMC Commissioner gave a briefing on cleanliness arrangements.