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Information Minister says

## Govt decides to ban PTI, initiate treason case against Imran, Alvi, Suri

Attaullah Tarar says government will file a review petition against Supreme Court's reserved seats verdict; Cites May 9 riots, foreign funding for case against PTI; Blasts PTI for creating false narrative around cipher controversy.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information, Broadcasting, Culture and National Heritage Attaullah Tarar on Monday announced four major decisions of the federal government of banning Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, filing of review petition in reserved seats case, references against PTI founder and others for subverting the Constitution and strict legal action against handful of overseas Pakistanis for anti-state activities.

He announced the decision at a press conference which mainly highlighted the activities of the PTI and

its leadership to weaken sovereignty of the country and harm its integrity at the international level.

The press conference also featured audio and video clips that allegedly showed involvement of the PTI and its leadership in the 'anti-state' activities.

The minister said: "This is a fact and on the record that the PTI has been involved in the anti-state activities and to this end, the government and its allies have decided to initiate legal proceedings to ban the PTI under Article 17 of the Constitution which empowers the federal gov-

ernment to ban any such a party."

Tarar justified the action of the government against the PTI which, he alleged, obtained foreign funding to attack the state institutions on May 9, default the economy by sabotaging Pakistan's negotiation with the International Monetary Fund, resettle the terrorists in the country and hire lobbying firms to get a resolution passed against the country in a foreign country's Parliament.

All these activities of the PTI were established,

### Imposing a ban is no child's play: PTI leaders lambast govt's decision

ISLAMABAD (INP): Leaders of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) have strongly condemned the proposal to ban their party, stating that such a move is not a child's play. The statement was made during a press conference by opposition leader Omar Ayub, PTI Chairman Gohar Ali Khan, and Shibli Faraz in Islamabad on Monday.

Khan addressed the media, saying, "Today, the

government announced its intention to ban PTI, and we strongly condemn this statement. It is a clear contempt of the Supreme Court, which has granted us relief. The Supreme Court has affirmed PTI's right to exist."

He added, "The PDM government is making such statements to divert attention from our seats. Out of



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar addressing a press conference.

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ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador-designate of Tajikistan, Sharifzoda Yusuf Toir presenting his diplomatic credentials to President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

### Political parties unite against PTI ban, calling it an attack on democracy

JUI, BNP, APP, QWP and JJ condemn government's decision

ISLAMABAD: The federal government's recent decision to ban the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has ignited backlash from other political parties, who view the move as a serious affront to democracy.

It should be noted that the federal government has decided to file a review appeal against the decision of the Supreme Court on reserved seats and ban Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

Federal Information Minister Atta Tarar announced plans to file a review appeal with the Supreme Court concerning the ban on PTI and certain electoral seats.

Maulana Fazlur Rahman, chief of Jamiat Ulema Islam (JUI), has asserted that to address the ongoing political crisis, the establishment must distance itself from politics. He emphasized that using force against political entities will only exacerbate the existing

turmoil. Fazlur Rahman noted that if all institutions adhere to their constitutional boundaries, the country can begin to heal. He urged authorities to recognize that the current hybrid system has failed, insisting that the key to resolving the nation's issues lies in holding transparent elections.

Sardar Akhtar Mengal, chief of the Balochistan National Party (BNP), has expressed strong opposition to the government's decision to ban the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). He noted that banning political parties is not a new phenomenon, recalling that the National Awami Party was similarly banned in 1973.

Mengal emphasized that such measures do not solve the underlying problems. He criticized the government's apparent confusion following the Supreme Court's decision

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QUETTA: Former Provincial Minister Mir Abdul Karim Nausherwani meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

### President Zardari determined to industrial development of Balochistan: Ali Hassan Zehri

Independent Report

QUETTA: The leader of Pakistan Peoples Party and Advisor to Chief Minister for Commerce and Industries, Mir Ali Hassan Zehri has stated that the President Asif Ali Zardari is determined to the industrial development of the province and raise standard of living of the people.

He said that 80 hospitals of the province including Jam Ghulam Qadir Hospital Hub are being handed to the Indus Hospital.

He mentioned that 100-bedded Shaheed Benazir Bhutto hospital is being established in Hub.

He said that development projects of Rs. 15 bil-

lion have been approved. The Advisor to Chief Minister was speaking on occasion of the briefing about different development projects under PSDP in LIEDA conference hall, Hub on Monday.

The Deputy Commissioner Hub, Ms. Rohana Gul Kakar, ADC, Ali Raza Khosa, Assistant Commissioner, Muhammad Ali Durrani and others were present on the occasion.

Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that the funds of Rs. 3 billion have been released for establishing a jetty in Gaddani.

He said that the development schemes of Rs. 11 billion have been included in the PSDP in Gaddani.

### Govt hikes petrol price by Rs. 9.99 per litre

Monitoring Desk  
ISLAMABAD: The federal government has announced a whopping increase in petroleum prices for second fortnight of July 2024.

A notification issued by the government said the petrol price was increased by Rs9.99 to Rs275.60 per litre.

Similarly, the price of high-speed diesel was jacked up by Rs6.18 per litre, with new price fixing at Rs283.63 per litre.

The new prices will come into effect from July 16, 2024 till July 31, 2024.

### Gov't committed to invest in modern skills, professional education for youth: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said the government was committed to investing in modern skills and professional education for the youth.

In his message in connection with the World Youth Skills Day, the prime minister said the greatest strength of Pakistan was its talented youth and equipping them with modern skills was the need of the hour to secure the future of the country.

He highlighted that the government was equipping its youth with modern education, equal development

opportunities as well as modern professional training to compete with the world.

The prime minister reiterated the government's resolve to send 300,000 youth for vocational training in the field of information technology and 1000 for modern agriculture to China. In this context, he said the government was prioritizing the women and the youth belonging to remote and backward areas of the country.

The prime minister said training programs in the field of information technology were also continued at the national level.



QUETTA: Provincial Ministers Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani, Mir Zahoor Ahmed Buledi, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani, Bakht Muhammad Kakar, Secretary Colleges & Higher Technical Education Hafiz Tahir and other officers attending meeting of sub committee of Provincial Cabinet

### Triage Unit established in Trauma Center of SPHHQ: Steps being taken to provide medical machinery, medicines in hospitals: Sardarzada Faisal Jamali

Independent Report  
QUETTA: The Provincial Minister Health, Sardarzada Faisal Jamali inaugurated the Triage Unit established in the Trauma Center of the Sandeman Provincial Headquarter Hospital here on Monday.

Also present on the occasion were the Managing Director Trauma Center, Dr. Arbab Muhammad Kamran, Director General Health Services, Dr. Farooq Hoth, Medical Superintendent of Sandeman Provincial Headquarter Hospital, Dr. Ishaq Panezai, Medical Superintendent of Bolan Medical Complex Hospi-

tal, Dr. Amin Mandokhail, Dean Postgraduate Medical Institute (PGMI), Dr. Naseebullah Zarkoon, Chief Surgeon Trauma Center, Iqbal Jaffar, Deputy Director Trauma Center, Dr. Humaira, besides other concerned.

The MD Trauma Center briefed the Provincial Minister Health about the newly established Triage Unit saying it is consisted of eight beds.

He informed that the immediate medical assistance would be provided to the critically injured persons during traffic accidents and other emergency pa-

tients in the Triage Unit.

He said that with establishment of the new Unit in Trauma Center, the waiting time would be reduced in the emergency department to great extent. The Minister Health went round of different sections of the Triage Unit and Trauma Center. He also met the patients being treated there and inquired about their health.

The Minister also appreciated overall functioning of the Trauma Center and said that services being extended at the center to the emergency patients are appreciable.

### PTI founder arrested in Jinnah House attack case

LAHORE (INP): The Investigation police have formally arrested Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder and former prime minister Imran Khan, in connection with the Jinnah House attack case on May 9.

The police reached Adiala Jail to execute the formal arrest. According to

the police, the PTI founder will be investigated under sections related to inciting against the state.

The police stated that PTI founder Imran Khan has been arrested in 12 cases related to May 9 riots, including the Jinnah House attack. The police requested the Rawalpindi court to transfer the suspect

to Lahore, but the court denied the transfer due to security concerns.

The police announced that the PTI founder would appear via video link before the Lahore Anti-Terrorism Court on Monday (today), where a request for his remand will be made for further investigation regarding the Jinnah House attack.



HUB: Advisor to Chief Minister Balochistan for Commerce and Industries, Mir Ali Hassan Zehri speaking on occasion of the briefing about different development projects under PSDP in LIEDA conference hall

### Muharram mourning processions & gatherings: Negligence & incompetency not to be tolerated in safety measures, asserts Governor Balochistan

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has categorically stated that any negligence and incompetency would not be tolerated with regard to the safety arrangements made and being made for the mourning processions and gatherings in the province including Quetta.

In an official statement issued here on Monday, the Governor stressed that there is a dire need to make effective and strong coordination among all the law enforcement agencies for the

sake of complete protection of life and property of the masses during the Muharramul Haram as it is responsibility of the government to do so. He directed to the concerned quarters to make strict arrangements for security of all the places especially the sensitive ones and worship places in view of the present sensitivity.

In addition to this, there is also need to make effective coordination with organizers of the mourning processions and gatherings.

The Governor also urged the government and general public to keep strict

vigil on the suspected persons around the processions and gatherings besides the religious places, and thus play their effective role to ensure peaceful situation in the province.

Similarly, it is duty of every conscious people to extend wholehearted cooperation to the government and concerned institutions.

The Governor believed that the Ashura Muharram would end peacefully because of the foolproof security arrangements made by the local administration and other security institutions.

### Shafqat Anwar Shahwani posted as DG GDA

Independent Report  
QUETTA: The senior officer of Balochistan Civil Service, Shafqat Anwar Shahwani has been appointed as the Director General of Gwadar Development Authority (GDA).

Meanwhile, Mr. Shahwani assumed the charge of DG GDA on Monday.

On charge assumption, the Chief Engineer GDA, Syed Muhammad briefed the newly appointed DG GDA about the ongoing development projects of the Authority, Gwadar Smart Port City Master Plan and other sectors.

### Pak, China friendship to move forward with greater integration in world, regional markets: Ahsan

BEIJING (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Prof Ahsan Iqbal, stated that as China finalizes its roadmap for the future, the friendship between Pakistan and China will certainly advance.

He said that it will involve greater integration of Pakistan and China in the world and regional markets.

On what the world can learn from China's development experience, the minister, who is currently in Beijing for an official visit, told CGTN, "I think China's experience of development gives us four very valuable lessons."

There are four prerequisites that any country needs for development:

peace, political stability, continuity of economic policies, and continuous commitment to reform.

The minister said that China has shown all four principles to practice, and that is the reason that China has developed so fast, adding, that China has shown a great success story to the whole world by pulling 800 million people out of poverty in the shortest possible time.

Prof Ahsan Iqbal said that China has shared its development, and has shared its experience of development with other countries through the Belt and Road Initiative and Global Development Initiative. Pakistan and China enjoy a unique relationship.



QUETTA: Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan presiding over a meeting regarding shifting of agriculture tubewells on solar energy

### Court orders to quash FIR against PkMAP chairman

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan High Court on Monday issued directives for quashing First Information Report (FIR) registered against Pashtunkhwa Mili Awami Party Chairman and MNA Mehmood Khan Achakzai.

A division bench of Balochistan High Court comprising Justice Mohammad Ejaz Swati and Justice Amir Nawaz Rana announced the verdict.

Advocate Kamran Mulakhail and Habibullah Nasar appeared on behalf of PkMAP chairman.

After hearing both the parties, the court on ground of insufficient evidences against PkMAP chairman directed the administration to quash the FIR.

It may be recalled that an FIR was lodged in March 2024, against MNA Mehmood Khan Achakzai for occupying government land illegally.

### Commissioner Quetta Division maintains: Over 5,000 personnels of police, Levies, FC to be deployed on 9th, 10th Muharram in Quetta

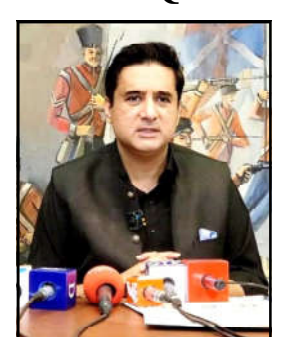
Independent Report  
QUETTA: The Commissioner and Administrator Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shafqat has stated that exceptional arrangements have been made to ensure security on 9th and 10th Muharramul Haram in Quetta.

He said that over 5,000 personnels of police, Levies and Frontier Corps (FC) would be deployed on 9th Muharram and Ashura (today and tomorrow) in Quetta.

He said that Pak Army would remain stand-by on Ashura-e-Muharram while the aerial surveillance of the procession would also be made.

In addition to this, the monitoring of the Ashura procession would also be done through 1,000 CCTV cameras installed in different parts of the city.

The Commissioner and Administrator Quetta was



speaking to the media persons about the arrangements made for 9th and 10th Muharram in the metropolis on Monday afternoon.

He informed that 20 suspects have been taken into custody. They are being interrogated at the moment, he added. Regarding cleanliness, Muhammad Hamza Shafqat said that around 300,000 tons of garbage have been lifted from different localities of Quetta as part of the special cleanliness drive.



## PCB goes back to 'old model' of one-year central contracts, no pay cuts

*"There will be zero-tolerance policy for players who lack discipline," Naqvi warns; PCB to check player's fitness every three months.; Technical process for NOCs to be worked out.*

### Sports Desk

**LAHORE:** The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Monday announced going back to its old model of granting a one-year central contract to the national side's players, conditional to their performance.

Among several decisions taken during a meeting of the board's top brass, the officials decided against cutting the salaries of the players, who are under fire after their dismal T20 World Cup 2024.

The monthly salaries of the players and their income were under discussion after the Pakistani side failed to live up to the fans' expectations and crashed out of the tournament before even entering the Super 8 stage.

In a statement, the board said: "The central contract's tenure will be of a year. The players' performance and fitness will be reviewed every year. Inclusion of players in different categories will be made under a well-defined process."

The PCB also decided that players' fitness would be checked every three months and that it would be mandatory for the athletes to participate in domestic cricket.

Currently, Category A players, which include

Babar Azam, Mohammad Rizwan, and star pacer Shaheen Afridi, are paid Rs4.5 million per month.

Meanwhile, Shadab Khan, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, and Naseem Shah are paid Rs3 million per month in Category B.

Category C players are paid between Rs750,00 to Rs1.5 million per month and include players such as Imad Wasim.

Meanwhile, Category D players are also paid the same as Category C and include players with the likes of Iftikhar Ahmed, Hasan Ali, Saïm Ayub and others.

It is to be noted that the aforesaid figures reflect only the monthly salaries of the players who also earn match fees and win bonuses across all three formats (Test, ODI, T20I) along with sponsorship perks.

The existing three-year central contracts were awarded last year and came into effect from July 1, 2023, after the then-PCB chairman Zaka Ashraf was pressurised by players for increased remunerations, sources had told Geo News.

NOCs and 'grouping'

The statement further added that a technical process for issuing non-objection certificates (NOC) to

the players would be worked out and those who would fulfil the requirements would be granted the NOC.

Several top players, including Babar, Naseem, Rizwan, and others have recently faced setbacks as they were not issued NOCs from the board for playing leagues abroad, which are also a source of income for them.

"The players will be promoted on the basis of their fitness and performance. There's no place for players who do not fit the criteria. There'll also be no compromise on discipline," Naqvi told the meeting.

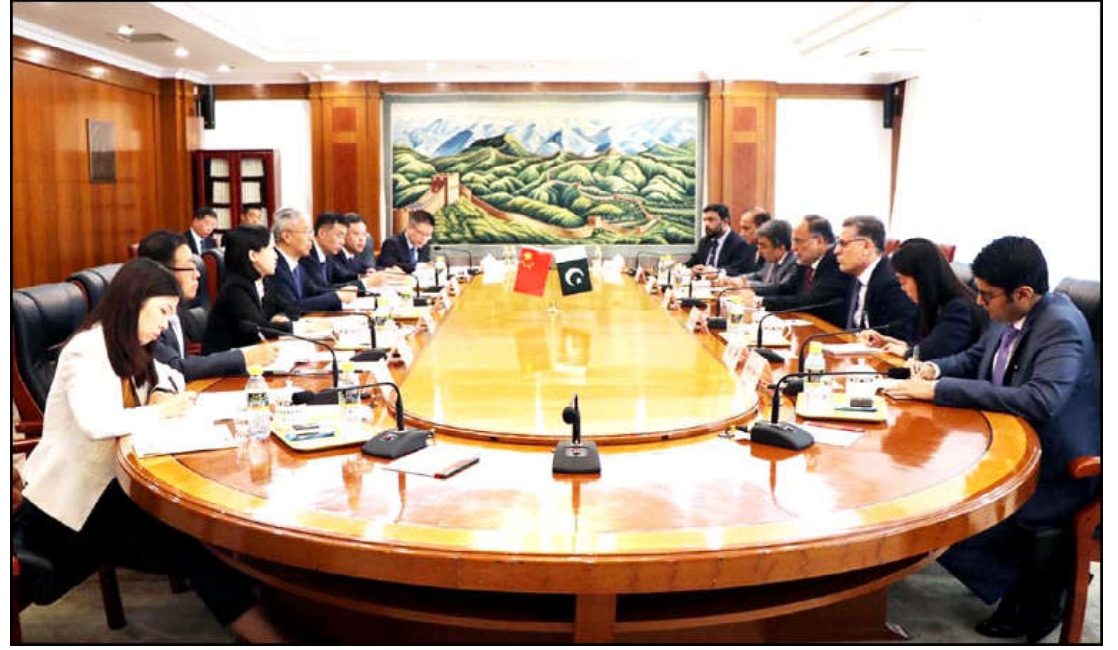
It came to light last week that fast bowler Shaheen had heated arguments with batting coach Mohammad Yousuf during Pakistan's tour to England, just before the World Cup.

"There will be a zero-tolerance policy for players who lack discipline. There should be unity and consensus within the team. Players involved in grouping will not be tolerated," he warned. The PCB chairman said that players who resort to grouping should face severe action, noting that the officials should also not consider anyone's recommendations for an undisciplined player.

## PM hails appointment of Sheikh Abdullah as Deputy PM

**ISLAMABAD (APP):** Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday extended warm felicitations to UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan on his appointment as Deputy Prime Minister. He also extended heartiest congratulations to the Crown Prince of Dubai, Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum on his appointment as Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister of the UAE.

"Wishing them both success in their new endeavors & looking forward to further strengthening of our bilateral ties & deepening cooperation between our two brotherly nations," the prime minister wrote on his official X timeline.



Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal held productive meeting with Mr. Zhao Chenxin, Vice Chairman of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) in Beijing, China.

## Editor's note

The Communist Party of China convene the third plenary session of its 20th Central Committee from July 15 to July 18 in Beijing to discuss the issue of further comprehensive deepening reform and advancing Chinese modernization. Reform and opening-up constitute China's second revolution, a monumental journey of development and progress for both China and the world. This process has profoundly transformed China and significantly impacted the global landscape. CGTN First Voice has put together a six-part series "To a Brighter Future: China's Reform and Opening Up in New Era" to delve into China's achievements in economic, political, social and ecological domains since the reform and opening-up period, exploring the directions and measures for China's continued comprehensive furthering of reform.

In the south of the province, Wenzhou used to be poverty-stricken due to its landlocked location and limited arable land per capita (approximately 353.34 square meters only). After 1978, Wenzhou took the lead in exploring a market economy. On December 11, 1980, the Wenzhou Municipal Administration for Industry and Commerce issued a business license to Zhang Huamei, an individual, for the first time in China since 1978, marking the beginning of Wenzhou's market economy.

Subsequently, Wenzhou also pioneered the establishment of the first specialized market, the first "peasant city" (the city of Longgang, built by peasants who were permitted to move into the town to establish rural enterprises), and other market-oriented reforms. Wenzhou succeeded in developing non-agricultural industries through household industries and specialized markets, creating the well-known Wenzhou Model in the early stages of China's marketization.

Thousands of individual household businesses overcame Wenzhou's disadvantages in geographical location and resource scarcity, leading to rapid economic development, a thriving commodity economy and significant improvements in people's living standards. Wenzhou's GDP skyrocketed from 1.32 billion yuan (\$182 million) in 1978 to 82.8 billion yuan (\$11.4 billion) in 2000, with an average annual growth rate of 15.6 percent.

Pet food is produced at a factory in Pingyang county of Wenzhou, east China's Zhejiang Province, June 21, 2017. Xinhua

The Wenzhou Model also became a vivid portrayal of China's early exploration of market-oriented reforms. Upon entering the 21st century, Wenzhou accelerated market-oriented reforms, pioneering the first joint-stock cooperative enterprise, implementing floating interest rate reforms, and particularly since 2012, promoting the "Number One Reform Project" to improve the business environment,

yielding significant results. Driven by these reform initiatives, Wenzhou's business environment continues to improve, ranking second among China's top 10 cities with the best business environment for two consecutive years, effectively unleashing the vitality of market entities. By the end of 2023, Wenzhou had 1.41 million businesses, which means one out of every seven Wenzhou residents is a business owner on average. From issuing China's first individual business license to now having over 1.4 million businesses, it shows how much Wenzhou has achieved in developing its market economy and the vigor of China's market economy.

Wenzhou is the epitome of China's deepening reform and opening-up, the continuous improvement of the socialist market economic system and the steady improvement of the business environment.

Particularly since 2012, China has comprehensively deepened reforms, attached great importance to the optimization of the business environment, advanced reforms to delegate power, streamlined administration and optimized government services, continuously relaxed market access, and enacted the Civil Code of the People's Republic of China, the Regulations on Optimizing the Business Environment, and the Foreign Investment Law. It has continuously reduced the number of items on the negative list for foreign investment access, expanded the foreign investment industry catalog, committing itself to creating a market-oriented, rule-of-law, and internationalized business environment.

In October 2019, the World Bank released its report Doing Business 2020, evaluating the business environment of nations and regions around the world. Of all 190 countries and regions evaluated, China ranked 31st in 2020, rising from 91st in 2012. This remarkable improvement positioned China as one of the top global performers in enhancing the business climate, with various types of enterprises such as state-owned, private and foreign-funded ones thriving with boosted vigor.

As of the end of September 2023, the number of registered business entities nationwide reached 181 million, an increase of over 100 million from the 55 million recorded at the end of 2012, underscoring an upward trend of common prosperity of all types of enterprises.

Booth of GE HealthCare at the 6th China International Import Expo (CIIE), east China's Shanghai, November 8, 2023. / Xinhua

In recent years, the world has been living through accelerating changes unseen in a century, with the rise of anti-globalization sentiments, as well as frequent regional conflicts and unrest. Amidst the volatile geopolitical landscape, China has persisted in deepening its reform and opening-up, continuously innovating in key areas, and has taken more profound and extensive measures with greater intensity to promote high-level opening-up in all respects, creating a safe and stable environment for businesses and contributing to the world's economic stability.

The choice of foreign investment is a strong testament to China's sustained improvement of its business environment. Schott AG, a German specialty glass manufacturer, has been in the Chinese market for over 20 years, continually expanding its investments in China. Albert Chen, managing director of Schott China, stated, "Over the past five years, the Chinese market has consistently been the fastest-growing market for Schott globally." He added that China's continuous relaxation of foreign investment access, delegation of the power to approve, streamlining of administration and reduction of the corporate tax burden have provided a highly efficient, fair, easy, and free market environment for foreign companies.

According to the Global Investment Trends Monitor by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Health Sardarzada Mir Faisal Khan Jamali inaugurating Triage Unit at Trauma Center Civil Hospital

## Political parties unite...

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and argued that if there is to be a crackdown, it should apply to all political parties equally. Mengal lamented that politicians have not learned from past mistakes, underscoring the need for more thoughtful approaches to political issues.

Liaquat Baloch, Acting Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami, condemned the government's decision during a press conference in Mansoorah, describing it as a "mockery of the constitution, democracy, and the parliamentary system."

He criticized the government for what he termed "negative politics," asserting that a controversial and unrepresentative government has no right to ban any political party.

Baloch emphasized that such undemocratic tactics pose a significant threat to both the constitution and democracy in Pakistan. He warned that the announcement would likely lead to increased instability and negative consequences for the country.

On the other hand, Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Emir Hafiz Naemur Rehman on Monday said that the decision to ban the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) reflects "fascism."

Reacting to the government's decision to ban the PTI, Rehman said: "There is no room for such decisions in democratic societies. There exist both the constitution and courts in this country."

He took a dig at the government, saying, "Only the political parties with the dictatorial mindset can think this way."

Former Prime Minister and Awam Pakistan Party convener Shahid Khaqan Abbasi responded to the government's announcement of banning the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) during a recent press conference. He questioned the intent behind the ban, pointing out that it follows a court ruling and highlighting the government's inaction since the events of May 9.

Abbasi remarked that while the PTI's founder may have made mistakes, repeating those errors could escalate tensions, particularly regarding Article 6, which could have widespread implications. He asserted that the government lacks the authority to ban a political party.

The Qaumi Watan Party has condemned the government's decision to ban the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), labeling it as non-political and undemocratic. Aftab Shehbaz, Chairman of the Qaumi Watan Party, warned that such actions will lead to increased political instability in the country.

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) has called for the immediate withdrawal of the government's ban on the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). In a statement, HRCP Chairperson Asad Iqbal Butt emphasized that the PTI is a legitimate political party and warned that the ban could lead to significant political chaos and violence.

Butt expressed that the government's decision has dealt a severe blow to democratic principles, potentially fostering widespread political frustration

## Imposing a ban...

**Continued from page 1**

60 million votes, PTI received 30 million. They plan to ban us over the foreign funding case and the cipher case, even though the PML-N spokesperson is unaware that the foreign funding case against us is no longer active."

Ayub stated, "The Supreme Court has declared PTI a legitimate party. Today's press conference reflects their desires. This 'Form 47 government' is a minority government. We demand that the PPP and MQM clearly state whether they support PML-N's statement. They must be explicit about their stance."

He also criticized the government for raising electricity rates and predicted an impending wave of inflation. "They are doing all this to distract the public from the real issues. They want to bring the judiciary under their control. They blocked roads and protested against the Supreme Court's decision. If PTI had done this, our homes would have been demolished."

The opposition leader accused the government of depriving overseas Pakistanis of their voting rights 'during phase 1 of PDM'. "This is the same government that set privatisation targets in its budget. They are selling assets worth a trillion rupees for just Rs30 billion. Where will the remaining Rs970 billion go?"

He further highlighted the issue of wheat procurement, stating, "This government bought wheat at low prices and now plans to sell it. We want these parties to stand with democracy."

record that how the PTI miserably failed to justify and defend the funding received from Israeli and Indian origin overseas persons.

He questioned the participation of the PTI leadership in a meeting and dinner which reportedly had a presence of an Israeli billionaire in London especially at a time when genocide of innocent Palestinians was being committed.

Recalling how the PTI misled the nation by orchestrating a cipher drama, he said it was on record that the PTI founder suggested his confidants to play with an official document. Even Ambassador Asad Majeed, the author of cipher, said there was no threat to the country in the cipher, but the PTI leadership was hell bent upon damaging the diplomatic relations of Pakistan with the other country.

He said PTI's former finance ministers Shaukat Tareen reportedly told the then provincial finance ministers to write a letter to sabotage a deal of the Government with the IMF.

Tareen said the entire family of the PTI founder was involved in May 9 attack as three of his sisters were found outside the Corps Commander House in Lahore and his nephew was seen defiling the official uniforms.

The workers were ordered to reach designated

## Govt decides to ban PTI, initiate treason case against Imran, Alvi, Suri...

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points for creating chaos and anarchy, he said, adding the video and audio evidences were available with the government. "We have irrefutable evidence and strong grounds to ban the party," he noted.

Speaking about the time when the then-government decided to dissolve the assemblies during the no-confidence motion against Imran Khan, the minister said the ruling alliance had also decided to move a reference against the then-prime minister, then-president Arif Alvi and then former National Assembly deputy speaker Qasim Suri.

He said that this reference, under Article 6 of the Constitution, would be sent to the Supreme Court after the cabinet's approval.

As regards anti-state campaign and conspiracies from abroad, he said a handful of overseas Pakistanis who collected funds to weaken Pakistan, did not represent the majority who had been contributing to the national economy by sending massive remittances.

A resolution would be passed in the House to take action against such elements, he added.

For the last some days, he said an orchestrated campaign was underway to create a volatile situation in the country.

The whole nation witnessed how an impression

was being created that "whatever worst one does, it could be forgone," he said referring to the relief given to what he described as "perpetrators of the May 9, orchestrators of cipher conspiracy against country and patrons of those who hired services of the lobbyist firms abroad to get approve Parliamentary resolution."

"Whatever happens whether they hold (intra) party elections or not, or there is an Iddat case or any other thing such as a case of 190 million pounds... the impression is that they are untouchables," he added.

"I want to respond to them in clear and unambiguous words that is no more," he said while ruling out any progress of the country amid the presence of the PTI.

As regards a decision on reserved seats, he said it had created an impression that "the given relief is uncalled for."

"The PTI was not a party to the case, nor their members claimed to be members of the PTI; all of them joined Sunni Ittehad Council and submitted their affidavits," he said while asserting that the Sunni Ittehad Council did not allow non-Muslim to be the members of the party which technically deprived the party of its minority seats.

"Keeping in view the legal loophole in this judge-

ment, the government and its allies have decided to file a review petition," he added.

Stressing that the review petition is justified, the minister said that the women and minorities, who suffered injustices, believed that this review petition should be filed.

"We will ask whether the MNAs who got relief were present in the court, were their affidavits present and did they ask for that relief and should the Election Act 2017 section be nullified," said Tareen.

Meanwhile, comparing political grooming of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers, he said the founder of the PTI was a "worst fascist" in the political history who set tradition of sending mothers and sisters of his political opponents behind bars and suspending the supply food and medicines to his opponents in the jail under his political witch hunt.

On the other hand, he said the PML leadership had trained its workers to share pain, grief and happiness of their opponents, but unfortunately, it seemed that our patience and far-sightedness was being taken as weakness.

He also lashed out the PTI for running a malicious campaign targeting the NAB Chairman.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori presenting bouquet to Consul General of France Alexis Chahatinsky during a ceremony on eve of national day of France



## Senate Committee addresses AUQAF rules objections and overviews legislative process

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Senate Committee on Delegated Legislation, chaired by Senator Naseema Ehsan, held a meeting today at Parliament House. The objection raised by Senator Maulana Atta-ur-Rehman against the Auqaf Rules, prepared by the ICT administration under the authority of the Waqf Properties Act, 2020, was considered in the meeting. According to Ministry of Interior representatives, all stakeholders were invited on February 9, 2023, to discuss and approve the proposed rules. The process was completed, and although the Ulema Council was not active, a Ulema Committee was formed. The process took one year, reaching its final shape in February 2024.

Senator Maulana Atta-ur-Rehman emphasized the need to consult with the Ulema and gain their trust. He suggested that the reasons should be discussed with the Ulema Council and the relevant

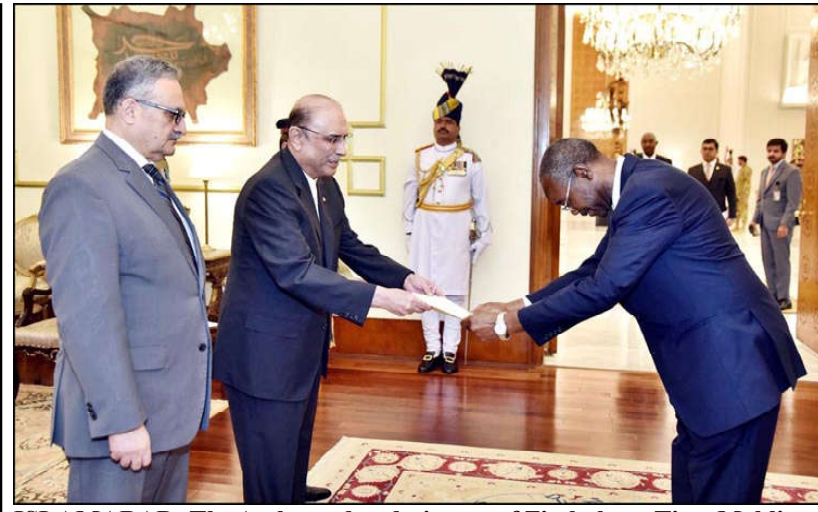
documents presented to them. The committee members unanimously agreed to keep the Ulema Committee on board and to proceed with the consensus of all stakeholders. The committee meeting featured the participation of Senator Bushra Anjum Butt, Senator Atta-ur-Rehman, Senator Rubina Qaim Khani, Senator Poonjo Mal Bheel, the Special Secretary of the Ministry of Interior, the Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Law and Justice, the Chairman of the Council of Islamic Ideology, and senior representatives from the concerned ministries.

Furthermore, a representative of the Ulema committee presented the challenges faced during the proceedings of the rules, adding that the Ministry of Interior deemed the rules incorrect and requested new rules.

Additionally, the Chairman of the Council of Islamic Ideology noted that in Islamabad, due to the

absence of a waqf manager, administrators have been given authority. It was observed that a knowledgeable leader should be chosen to facilitate societal harmony and goodness through their preaching.

Moreover, the Additional Secretary of Law and Justice briefed the committee members on delegated and subordinate legislation, reporting that the Rules of Business, 1973, provide for the procedure of making subordinate legislation. He highlighted that, according to Article 8, inter-division consultations with consensus are necessary before finalizing draft subordinate legislation. He further reported that after finalizing the draft subordinate legislation, the administrative division is required to consult the Law and Justice Division for vetting under Rule 14. However, if the legislation is to be made by the Federal Government, the administrative division must initiate a summary for the Cabinet.



ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador-designate of Zimbabwe, Titus Mchiswa Jonathan Abu-Basutu, presenting his diplomatic credentials to President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## Talal Chaudhary says: Govt to ban PTI due to its anti-state ideology

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-N leader Talal Chaudhary on Monday said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is committed to anti-state ideology, therefore the government has decided to ban it by sending a reference to the Supreme Court.

Talking to the mediapersons on current important issues, he said that this decision has been taken because of PTI's anti-state policies.

"The government will send a reference to the Supreme Court to ban PTI. We know that there will be a lot of criticism on this decision. However, history will bear witness that PML-N preferred to suffer political loss but saved the state".

Talal Chaudhary said that this type of punishment is very difficult for any party, but PTI forced

the government to take this difficult decision. He went on saying that all the information in the interest of state to be sent to the Supreme Court in that regard. He questioned that how can the accused of May 9 get bail, the citizens walk freely and the state does nothing? The reference should go to the Supreme Court, it is hoped that justice will be done, he added.

He said that those who say that we are afraid of political opponents, we have fought dictators, we have always fought within the constitution and law.

"Whoever stands against the state, it is the responsibility of the government to fulfill its duty. Politics in Pakistan can only be done by those who do not have a military wing". PTI is weakening Pakistan, he remarked.

## British lawmaker pledges to raise Kashmiris' plight in British Parliament

ISLAMABAD (APP): A newly elected UK lawmaker pledged that he will raise voice for right to self-determination to people of Jammu and Kashmir in and outside the British Parliament. According to Kashmir Media Service, MP Ayoub Khan, who won as an independent lawmaker, said his support for Kashmir will not any red line since he is not representing any particular party in the British parliament.

"Our fight for Kashmiris in occupied Kashmir has to capture the minds of the fair-minded public. That is important," Khan told an event in Birmingham which marked Kashmir Martyrs Day.

Lauding Tehreek-e-Kashmir UK President Fahim Kayani for being "instrumental" in mobilizing support among the British lawmakers, Khan said: "We have to be strategic."

## Shaza says: Govt. committed to empower women

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja Monday said that the present government was committed to empowering women as women's role was very important for putting the country on the path of development.

"Steps are underway to empower women by equipping them with digital skills" she expressed these views while addressing the Webinar titled "Women Shaping the Tech Landscape of Pakistan" organised by the Ministry of IT and Telecommunication on the occasion of World Youth Skills Day.

The minister was committed to implementing policies and programs that support skills development and empower women at all levels of the tech industry.

"It is our vision to create an inclusive and equitable tech industry where women have equal opportunities to succeed", she said.

The minister said it was very important to pave the way for more women to join and lead in the tech sector by addressing key barriers such as safe transportation and workplace inclusivity.

She said with better digital skills women can also work online while sitting at home and added that the Ministry of IT was focused on skills development and capacity building of our youth, especially women.

Shaza Fatima said that joint efforts were needed to create a future where women were not just participants but leaders in the tech landscape of Pakistan.

She said that seventy percent of Pakistan's population comprises youth which was our asset. She said in the present era of technology, it was extremely important to equip our youth with the latest digital skills to enable them to be employable.

Shaza Fatima said that a skilled workforce would take the country forward.



ISLAMABAD: Additional secretary West Asia and Afghanistan Ahmed Naseem Warrach, Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan Dr Mehmet Pacaci and others stand silent during Commemoration ceremony for the Martyred (Shuhadaas) on the July 15, 2016 thwarted coup attempted by Fethullah Gulen Terrorist Organization (FETO) and Democracy and National Unity Day, at the Embassy of Turkey, in the Federal Capital.

## PM stands firm on tax laws: Adviser

ISLAMABAD (APP): Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs, Rana Sanaullah, on Monday said that the Prime Minister has expressed his unwavering commitment to enforcing tax laws.

Speaking on a private news channel, he said that the prime minister showed resolute commitment and issued strict instructions to enforcing tax laws during a recent meeting focused on the economy and taxation.

"The prime minister said that tax laws are designed to address the country's economic challenges and must be implemented without exception," he said adding, "there will be no turning back, even if

he has to resign."

He clarified that the prime minister's statement was purely about economic and tax issues and not related to the current political scenario. He reiterated the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) readiness for dialogue, even in the face of adversity.

"When the entire party of the PMLN was jailed on false charges, we were in favor of negotiations even then. Today, while in government, we are still willing to negotiate for the broader interest of the country," he said.

He accused the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) of deliberately creating chaos and spreading hatred to weaken the country.

## AIOU announces admissions for autumn 2024 semester

ISLAMABAD (APP): Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has announced admissions for the Autumn 2024 semester's first phase.

The last date to apply for Matric, FA, and I.Com programs is September 5th, while for MBA, BS, MS, MPhil, and PhD programs, the deadline is August 20th, said a press release on Monday.

Application forms for Matric, FA, I. Com programs can be obtained from the University's main cam-

pus, regional offices, liaison offices, and prospect selling points. For MBA, BS, MS, MPhil, and PhD programs, admissions are strictly online, and application forms and prospects are available on the University's website.

International students residing worldwide can also apply for Matric, FA, and I.Com programs. Other programs for international students will be offered in the second phase starting from September 1st.

## ADC visits 8th Muharram procession in G-9

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) General, Abdullah Mahmood, visited the main procession routes for the 8th of Muharram ul Haram on Monday in the G-9 area of the Federal Capital.

He was joined by the Assistant Commissioner for the Industrial Area, Farwa Batool, according to the spokesman of the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Administration.

On the occasion, Abdullah Mahmood inspected the route, assessing both the overall arrangements and security measures. The ADC also met with the mourners, who expressed their gratitude for the well-planned arrangements.

The main procession organizers praised the efforts of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) and the Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) staff for handling sanitation.

## Naeem Jan assumes charge of IESCO CEO

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Engineer Muhammad Naeem Jan on Monday assumed the charge of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) as stop gap arrangement for a period of three months or till appointment of regular incumbent whichever is earlier after completion of contract period of Dr Muhammad Amjad.

Naeem Jan took the charge in pursuance of the Board of Director (BoD) IESCO decision made in 23rd meeting held on July 9, 2024, said a notification issued here.

Naeem Jan is a senior most officer in IESCO and has a vast experience in power sector.

## SC dismisses bail plea of accused involved in 99 case

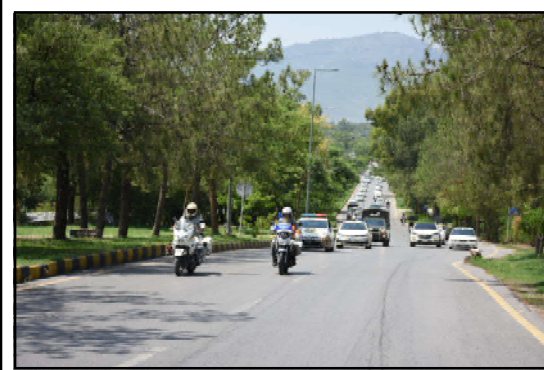
ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Monday dismissed a bail petition as withdrawn, of an accused involved in 99 cases.

A three-member bench headed by Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail heard the bail petition of accused Sajid. Prosecutor Punjab government informed the bench that the accused was involved in 99 cases. Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail asked that nominated in 99 cases? How is this possible? Are there really 99 cases against the accused? In so many cases, arrest and then bail would take time.

The defence counsel said that his client was disabled and previously cases of theft were registered against him. The police officials told the court that the rickshaw on which the accused was caught with drugs was also a stolen rickshaw. The police said that the accused is identified in most cases due to his disability in one leg. A case was registered against the accused in Lahore's Ravi Road police station on March 12, 2024.

## I'abad Police conducts flag march to maintain peace and tranquility

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Police and other law enforcement agencies conducted a flag march in the city with a purpose to maintain peace and tranquility in the city, a public relations officer said.



He said that, following the orders of the Inspector General of Police Islamabad (IGP) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, Islamabad Police has taken comprehensive security arrangements during Muharram Ul Haram

adding that flag marches are being conducted in various areas to make security more effective and added that strict vigilance would be maintained like previous years to maintain law and order in the city.

He added that the flag

the Islamabad Police are taking all possible steps to maintain peace in the city adding that all forces are always alert to tackle any untoward incident.

He said that the security has been enhanced at all entry and exit points while the Dolphin Squad is patrolling in different areas of the city, adding that all senior police officers have been directed to remain in their relevant areas and check the duty points according to the security point of view. He said that a crackdown against one-wheelers, tinted glasses, pillion riding, vehicles without number plates, and motorcycles is underway. He also appealed to the citizens to cooperate with police during checking and inform police about any suspicious activity around them through Pucar-15, adding that no stone would be returned to secure the lives and property of the citizens.

## President IIUI inaugurates computer labs funded by Saudi Arabia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Dr. Hathal Hamoud Alotabi, President, International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI), Monday, inaugurated the newly established Saudi funded software engineering computer labs in the Faculty of Computing & Information Technology at male and female campuses of the University separately.

According to the IIUI, these Saudi Funded Labs have been equipped with 210 computers.

The Department of Software Engineering has been provided with 40 computers on each side. It includes Artificially Intelligent Software Lab at Female Campus and Aspire Software Engineering Lab at Male Campus. Similarly, Department of Computer Science received 40 computers for each lab and same gadgets were provided for NextGen Computer Lab at Female campus and Digital Frontiers Computer Lab at Male Campus.

On the occasion, President IIUI, Dr. Hathal

said the inauguration of these latest labs equipped with the latest technology is an important step to strengthen our efforts which will enhance academic uplift and support the university's mission to adopt modern educational trends. The President IIUI emphasized the importance of formulating a comprehensive strategy to meet the technological needs and cope with the upcoming challenges in the present era.

Talking about the strategic planning, he stated it is vital to address the university's challenges and ensure its continued growth. Dr. Hathal expressed optimism about the positive impact of these labs that will help students for their academic development. The IIUI President stressed upon the faculty to utilize these facilities. Dr. Hathal reiterated his resolve that IIUI would keep providing a milieu of peace and high quality contemporary education integrated with teachings of Islam and latest trends of technology.

## IFA seizes 500 kg of rotten meat in Aabpara

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Food Authority (IFA) on Monday seized 500 kilograms of rotten meat destined for the Aabpara meat shop to ensure food safety during Muharram.

Talking to APP, Deputy Director Operations of IFA Dr Tahira Siddique said that the operation, led by the food safety teams (FSTs), resulted in the destruction of the tainted meat, the imposition of a heavy fine, and the filing of a case against those involved.

She said that the foul-smelling meat was discovered concealed in the supplier's vehicle.

The Deputy Director of the Islamabad Food Authority noted the presence of insects on the meat and the lack of essential records and documents, highlighting the seriousness of the offense.

Dr. Tahira Siddique, part of the food safety team, emphasized that consuming such contaminated meat poses severe health risks. The operation not only targeted the supplier but also led to the closure of several shops selling stale meat. She stressed the importance of complying with food safety regulations and warned that strict action would be taken to eliminate the adulteration mafia.



ISLAMABAD: Motorcyclists crossing road from a green belt due to road closed at Islamabad Highway during Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) sit-in protest (Dharna) at Faizabad flyover.

## Islamabad police announces comprehensive traffic plan for 9 Muharram procession

ISLAMABAD: In preparation for the 9 Muharram procession, Islamabad Police, under the orders of IG Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, has finalized a detailed security and traffic management plan.

The arrangements have been crafted under the supervision of DIG Islamabad Syed Ali Raza and Chief Traffic Officer Muhammad Sarfraz Virk.

The significant 9 Muharram Al Haram procession will commence from Mian Imambargah in G/6-2, follow its designated route, and return to its starting point.

To ensure the smooth flow of the procession, the traffic arrangements have been made.

The road from Fazal Haq Road, Polyclinic to Kulsom Plaza, will be closed to general traffic.

Citizens are advised to use Jinnah Avenue from Kulsom Plaza to China Chowk instead.

7th Avenue will be off-limits for general traffic on both sides from Daman Koh Chowk to Chand Tara

Chowk Blue Area Out Loop and from 7th Avenue Chowk Suhrawardy.

Alternative routes include Urban Alternate Road, Jinnah Avenue, Suhrawardy Road, and Margalla Road.

Sadar Road will be closed between Iqbal Hall and Melody Chowk on both sides.

Citizens can use Aabpara Suhrawardy Road as an alternative.

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ISLAMABAD: Security personals placed heavy shipping containers between the roads at sector G-6 for blocked road due to 9th Muharram Ul Haram procession in the Federal Capital.

## Education ministry to launch ambitious emerging technology education project

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

According to the statement of Education Ministry, the project, which will establish "Emerging Technology Centres" in 350 schools across Islamabad, AJK, and GB, is part of the government's strategic planning to strengthen its initiative to make Pakistan a global IT destination.

The centres will serve as conduits 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 endeavours.

The project aims to develop skills and capacity in the IT sector, prepare students for a digital future, enhance Pakistan's export and capability in the IT sector, and make Pakistan a global IT destination, it added.

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.

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



ISLAMABAD: Senator Naseema Ehsan, Chairperson Senate Standing Committee on delegated legislation presiding over a meeting of the committee at Parliament House.



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## Afghan challenge

The recently released UN monitoring team's report on Afghanistan captures the dilemma confronting the international community where dealing with the country's Taliban rulers is concerned. On the one hand, the Taliban have managed to stabilise Afghanistan after decades of conflict. But on the other, under the hard-line movement's rule, terrorist groups are flourishing on Afghan soil. A third scenario should also be of concern to foreign states, particularly Afghanistan's neighbours: IS-K — which is opposed to the Taliban — is believed to have between 2,000 to 6,000 fighters, and is using Afghanistan as a base for its external operations. Moreover, the terrorist outfit is also looking to poach fighters from other militant groups.

Though the Taliban regime is by no means a progressive pro-people entity, it has managed to bring a semblance of stability to Afghanistan after over four decades of war. The UN report says that as the Taliban "transition from insurgency to governing authority", they have brought down petty corruption and reduced poppy cultivation, while managing to keep the precarious economy afloat.

Perhaps it is because of these limited gains that there has been no mass opposition to the Taliban's obscurantist rule. Afghans are tired of forever wars, while the Western-backed Karzai and Ghani administrations were notorious for their corruption and bad governance. Yet if the Taliban seek full recognition from the international community, they need to do much more, particularly in the areas of women's rights and by creating a more inclusive governance structure, which guarantees fundamental freedoms for all.

With regard to militancy, as the UN report highlights, the global community must keep its eyes and ears open. For example, the report says that the banned TTP has become the largest terrorist group in Afghanistan, and has developed a working relationship with Al Qaeda. Moreover, endorsing what Pakistan has been saying for a while, the report points out that the Taliban rulers are "unable or unwilling" to tackle the TTP threat.

As per the UN, the TTP conducted over 1,200 attacks against Pakistan last year. But it is not anti-Pakistan militants alone that are using Afghanistan as a base. The anti-China ETIM group, Al Qaeda, as well as IS-K, which threatens Iran, the Central Asian states and Pakistan, are all using Afghanistan as a "permissive haven". This requires a coordinated response from the international community, particularly Afghanistan's neighbours, as they are most at risk from terrorist groups.

The Taliban should be told that they need to take action against 'good' militants who support them (TTP, Al Qaeda), as well as 'bad' militants who oppose them (IS-K). On this, there can be no compromise, and foreign states must emphasise that diplomatic recognition and trade relations all depend on greater counterterrorism efforts.

Maleeha Lodhi

In what is regarded as the biggest election year in history, with voters in over 70 countries casting the ballot in 2024, some common features have emerged in the polls that have taken place. In countries both in the West and East, the electorate's yearning for change has been evident. So has strong anti-incumbency sentiment that has dealt heavy blows to ruling parties. Driving this are fraught economic conditions and the cost-of-living crisis sweeping the world. Discontent in a landscape of economic inequality has motivated voters to punish incumbents. Another common aspect is the anti-establishment vote, with people holding establishment leaders responsible for the unifying state of affairs in their country.

Many countries that have held elections are deeply polarised and whose politics has become increasingly fractured and volatile. The political system is seen not to deliver at a time of heightened public expectations, magnified by the social media. In several cases, electoral mandates have not

matched the popular vote, with the first-past-the-post system disproportionately rewarding the election winner and obscuring underlying political realities. There are, of course, many differences among these countries reflecting their specific circumstances and political trajectories. The desire for change, for example, has led to different outcomes in different countries but the common trends hold even if their political expressions vary.

The election in France has been a political roller coaster, while exhibiting several common features described above. Buoyed by its strong showing in the European Parliament elections, Marine Le Pen's far right party swept the first round of the French poll. The incumbent President Emmanuel Macron's party came third in an atmosphere of popular disenchantment. Calling a snap poll seemed to backfire as fears grew of the country's throwback to the time of the Vichy regime when France was ruled by the far right during the Second World War. Those fears galvanised voters who in the run-off election produced an outcome that surprised poll-

sters. A newly assembled left-wing alliance and Macron's centrist party forged expedient, tactical arrangements to block the victory of Le Pen's National Rally party. The result put the left-wing alliance Nouveau Front Populaire in first place, Macron's party second and NR third. However, the fractured vote produced a hung parliament, with no party winning a majority. This has left France facing a prolonged period of political instability, even paralysis. The Economist warned of a crisis of governability. The far right's advance has been halted for now. But the prospect of turmoil in a polarised and economically troubled country could well create the conditions for the far right's comeback.

In Iran, voters' longing for change enabled the election of the first reformist president in over 20 years. Masoud Pezeshkian's victory over a hard-line rival in the run-off poll marked a dramatic break with the past as voters turned out to support a man who pledged change in his country's domestic and foreign policies. Pezeshkian promised to re-engage with the West and

resume the nuclear dialogue in order to secure an easing of the sanctions that have inflicted so much hardship on the Iranian people. He also promised to relax social restrictions imposed by previous hard-line governments, indicating there may be no return to the repressive policies of the past. While Pezeshkian's electoral victory was owed to enthusiastic voters it was also because he was allowed to run by the political/religious establishment, which had disqualified reformist candidates in the past and seen its legitimacy erode over the years as the economy deteriorated. Its decision was driven by fear of the return of ultra-conservatives represented, among others, by the Paydari, a hard-line political group, whose members are called "super revolutionaries" in Iran. It supported Pezeshkian's rival Saeed Jalili. The group opposes in principle any opening to the West and has hard-line views on other issues. It was rumoured that the Paydari, who backed Jalili, had their own plans on the future leadership, which would have influenced succession to Supreme Leader Ayatol-

lah Ali Khamenei. These power dynamics created an enabling environment for the Iranian electorate to vote for change in the election.

The Indian election also saw anti-incumbency sentiment robbing Narendra Modi's BJP of a majority. Although he was re-elected prime minister, his use of the Hindutva card as well as claims he had delivered a better economic future to India's underprivileged were rejected by voters, as were his high-handed ruling methods. The Congress party-led opposition alliance did much better than pollsters predicted and managed to capitalise on anti-incumbency dissatisfaction, especially with soaring inflation and rising unemployment. Like elections in other countries, voters in economic distress made their disenchantment with the status quo evident by denying the BJP a majority and forcing it to rely on allies to stay in power. The BJP still got 240 seats but with just 36 per cent of the popular vote. The polarisation that India has seen in the past decade looks set to continue.

Elections in Britain saw a stronger anti-incumbency wave with the

Labour Party inflicting a crushing defeat on the Conservative Party, in its worst-ever electoral performance. The Tory party's inept and scandal-ridden 14 years in power convinced voters it was time for a change especially as its economic management at a time of austerity evoked widespread public anger as it left people much worse off. Sweeping cuts in public services also deepened public discontent. Brexit divided the country and to some extent the vote against the Tories also reflected a backlash against a decision many Britons disagreed with. The vote was motivated more by rage at the Tories than enthusiasm for Labour, which also saw its Muslim support dwindle over its Gaza stance. It lost four seats to pro-Palestinian independents. The Conservative Party vote was eroded by the far right represented by Nigel Farage's Reform UK party, which polled 14pc of the popular vote. The Liberal Democrats trailed behind by polling only 12pc but taking 60 seats to just four won by Reform. This indicated how fragmented politics had become. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Surveillance central

Fariha Aziz

The Islamabad High Court (IHC) order in the audio leaks case has been challenged by the government in the Supreme Court and an SRO authorising the Inter-Services Intelligence Agency (ISI) to surveil citizens on the vague pretext of national security has been issued by the government. This SRO has already been challenged before the Lahore and Islamabad high courts.

Seemingly, the SRO is a reaction to the IHC's inquiry into the lawfulness of surveillance and whether any entity was authorised by law to intercept communication. The answer was a resounding no, so the government thought the fix to this would be to 'legalise' what was already being done in practice, post facto.

The SRO states: "The federal government in the interest of national security and in the apprehension of any offence, is pleased to authorise the officers not below the rank of grade 18 to be nominated from time to time by the Inter-Services Intelli-

gence to intercept calls and messages or to trace calls through any telecommunications system as envisaged under Section 54 of the Act."

The Act referred to here is the Pakistan Telecommunications (Reorganisation) Act, 1996. The authorisation, given under Section 54(1) reads as follows: "54. National Security — (1) Notwithstanding anything contained in any law for the time being in force, in the interest of national security or in the apprehension of any offence, the Federal Government may authorise any person or persons to intercept calls and messages or to trace calls through any telecommunications system."

This make-it-up-on-the-go modus operandi is a consistent feature. If the legality of a prevailing practice is called into question, issue an SRO, pass a law. Make it 'legal' if it isn't. But does it make it legal?

The Investigation for Fair Trial Act 2013 (IFTA'13) subjects all surveillance to warrants. The application for a warrant has to be filed by an appli-

cant who is defined under IFTA'13 as the directorate general of the ISI. The authorised officer is defined as an officer, "not below the rank of BPS-20" whereas the SRO authorises an 18-grade officer to be nominated by the agency.

Now the IHC order establishes that no warrant for surveillance has been sought in 11 years of the law's existence. Issuing an SRO does not explain or account for a violation of existing law for over a decade while the practice of surveilling citizens has persisted in violation of it. But what of the practice that has persisted all these years, absent this authorisation? And can such an SRO supersede IFTA'13?

Legal questions aside, which will now be settled in court, there have been varying reactions to the SRO. One view holds it to be blatantly unconstitutional, unlawful, over-broad, discretionary giving unbridled powers, whereas the other sees the SRO as a step towards transparency and accountability, that the gov-

ernment has been forced to put something on record, and now it will be known who is doing it, pinning responsibility paving the way for accountability. But how? How do you hold an intelligence agency that operates under the executive on paper but figures over and above it in reality, accountable through an SRO? Over the years, there have been attempts to bring it into the accountability framework under the civilian ambit, but these have not seen the light of day.

To the extent of having something on paper and invoking its existence is one thing. But what meaning do legal structures have absent a rule-of-law regime, in which executive overreach and lack of accountability is the norm? Today's Pakistan is akin to a Kafka-esque reality where supposedly a Constitution exists and there are laws and courts; but despite it all, people disappear and are jailed on whims; the process is punishment, and there are no guarantees vis-à-vis life, liberty or dignity. Abuse of power and political

victimisation are widespread. The law and Constitution serve no protection before or after an incident in a meaningful manner affecting the day-to-day lives of citizens. The SRO then is an announcement by the executive that rather than scaling back its excesses, they will only be codified further into the letter of executive notifications and laws.

National security cannot be an umbrella phrase simply thrown around, unqualified or accepted at face value. Who are the four million being surveilled under Lawful Interception Management System? Based on what criteria? When it comes to surveillance and methods of interception, the invasiveness of the tech tools matters.

Surveillance today is far more intrusive. Monitoring of voice conversations between two people earlier through a landline or now on the open line is very different today in the age of the internet and smartphones. How is a WhatsApp call being intercepted? If not through the telecommunications

network since it is end-to-end encrypted, is it by infecting the device? Through what methods? Where is the sanction for it? Once there is intrusion into a device, everyone communicating with the person becomes a subject of surveillance. What of journalists and their sources? Lawyers and their engagement with clients — particularly those trying to escape unlawful abductions and arrests? Smartphones contain an individual's entire digital footprint. They are a repository of someone's whole life — personal and professional.

Article 14 is an inviolable right. An intrusion into someone's device is an intrusion into their home and a violation of their dignity. Can such broad-based intrusion be considered legitimate or lawful by any measure? In an environment where information is extracted for the purpose of blackmailing, there needs to be scrutiny first of the excesses of the executive rather than justifications that someone must do it or that it must be done.

## Supreme injustice

Rida Hosain

In a way, some dissenting judgements reflect what could have been, and what can one day still be achieved. To quote Benjamin N. Cardozo, the dissenter speaks to the future. Recently, by a majority of 2-1, our Supreme Court converted a conviction of rape into 'fornication'. In a powerful dissent, Justice Ayesha A. Malik used her pen for a better tomorrow.

Before the court, a woman had accused her brother's friend of rape. The trial court and the high court ruled in the woman's favour. At the Supreme Court, Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmad Khan and Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail found that the woman was a consenting party.

Judges can have genuine disagreements on whether evidentiary standards have been met — particularly in a criminal case where the liberty of an individual is involved. There can be different views on whether the evidence before the court is enough to uphold the conviction. But instead of limiting themselves to the evidence, the majority went on to determine how a rape victim should have reacted.

Since the man was unarmed, the majority held, "a female who is not a consenting party would offer very strong resistance in a case of attempt to commit rape with her" and "no mark of violence whatsoever was noted on the entire body". The court effectively found that an 'actual' rape victim would have offered strong resistance, and there would be resistance marks on her body to establish this. This reasoning shifts the onus onto the victim, ie, she should have done more, she should have resisted, she should have fought back.

In sharp contrast, the dissent identifies studies by expert psychiatrists, which show that in cases of sexual violence, victims may have various different types of response — fight, flight or freeze. There is no fixed response in rape cases. To say that a woman must 'fight' looks at rape from a masculine lens, and undermines a woman's lived experience. Per Justice Malik, "the offence of rape is made on the body of the victim and her response to this offensive act cannot be standardised".

The New York Times magazine did a story, speaking to rape victims about the 'freezing' response. Some victims said they wanted to yell and push and resist, but their body simply would not respond. Others blanked out or were too shocked to react, and went into a state of involuntary paralysis. The majority assumes one type of response, the only type they are able to imagine.

Moreover, for fornication to be proved, it must be shown that sexual intercourse was consensual. The majority has imputed consent on behalf of the victim, whereas the dissent found that consent must be an unequivocal voluntary agreement. Consent must not be assumed.

The majority judgement then holds that there was a two-day delay in filing an FIR. This finding ignores precedent which clearly states that in cases of sexual assault, a lenient view should be taken on delayed reporting. In line with established precedent, Justice Malik writes: "With reference to delay, this Court has held that delay is of no consequence as such cases involve the victim and her family's reputation and honour, hence, some delay in reporting a crime of

sexual offence is immaterial."

The reasoning of the majority has a striking similarity with the Mukhtaran Mai case. In both cases, the court completely disregards the extreme trauma associated with rape, and how this may result in slower reporting. In Mukhtaran Mai's memoir, she expresses how she felt suicidal after the incident: "I have made up my mind. I want to kill myself... I'm already dead in the eyes of others." It takes time and strength to undertake a legal battle, to use this against a victim is an in-justice that ignores the cultural and social stigmas associated with rape.

The majority seem to have come up with a rulebook on how victims should react in order to get justice. The 'right' victim fights, the 'right' victim has marks of resistance, the 'right' victim reports immediately.

A few weeks ago, Justice Malik was speaking at a symposium on inclusive justice organised by the Federal Judicial Academy and UN Women. She explained that her reasoning may differ from her male colleagues: "my understanding may be very different because it's based on a different premise, because it's based on my life experiences, it's based on my perspective which is the gender perspective."

The tragic reality in Pakistan is, since men dominate the judiciary, our jurisprudence is dictated by the male lived experience. There is little to no gender sensitisation training in the judicial system, and gender stereotypes remain deeply embedded. The voice, perspective, and lived experience of nearly half the population continues to be overlooked. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Employment paths

Neda Mulji

Last month, the federal government reversed its decision to slash the HEC's budget but it seems to have been a case of 'too little, too late'. Federally administered universities can hope to cover the main component of their expenditure, which is salaries for teaching and non-teaching staff, but the urgency to improve standards will go unaddressed yet again.

Many of our higher education institutions churn out large numbers of graduates each year, but there are no systems in place to absorb them into the economic infrastructure, neither are there programmes to upskill the graduates for job requirements. Most find themselves navigating an extremely competitive market where they cannot match up to the skills needed to be hired.

With 58 per cent of our population under the age of 24, our higher education system has to step up to deliver the outcomes necessary for economic growth. Over two million Pakistanis are currently in higher education and only 60,000 get the opportunity to study in institutes abroad. Our 3,000 degree colleges have the massive responsibility to produce job-ready graduates, which requires investment in infrastructure, technology, industry ties and skills that can serve key economic sectors.

Any hope for building the economy must come from creating employment pathways for our young graduates, which implies that outdated curricula and traditional teaching cannot contribute to the change we need. We cannot expect to churn the same wheel and expect different results, and we can no longer afford to keep our young

population out of jobs.

In most developed societies, the vision for growth has come from humanities education — philosophy, literature and culture. Sadly, we've deprioritised humanities. We have also failed to retain our doctors and scientists, and we haven't upgraded our math, engineering and technology teaching. What are we looking at in an economy teetering on the brink of decline and we need quick solutions for uplift.

Pakistan Vision 2025 by the planning ministry highlights some key areas demanding urgent focus. Among these is the need to create jobs. Unfortunately, while it highlights the pillars for improvement and change, it doesn't lay out the strategy that will address the urgent need for employment.

Employment pathways such as establishing recruitment programmes that are backed by agencies serving particular geographical communities may provide quick and easy access to match graduates with available jobs in their area. Tax breaks for companies that hire a set quota of fresh graduates may create the impetus to hire and train for the skills needed for the jobs. Employed people spend more, pay taxes and boost the economy through generating money. Smaller companies can benefit from hiring graduates who have lower salary expectations and can be trained quickly.

Very few universities offer placement centres to help graduates find jobs, and fewer still have experimented with incubation centres to set up entrepreneurship opportunities for their students. This is mainly due to the costs attached. However, the long-term benefits outweigh the costs. Supporting entrepreneurship

by funding small and promising ventures may enable universities to create economic opportunities for their graduates, whilst earning themselves a sound reputation that will help attract and retain students, creating new revenue streams for the institution.

There is much to learn from developed societies. One study of the US economy from 1980 to 2005 found that the annual net employment growth in the US would have been negative without small business-essences. The cumulative effect of small businesses on job creation is massive, especially given that they tend to keep costs low by hiring fresh graduates on a relatively lower salary.

It also creates a pathway for development as the small businesses become training grounds for the young population who can then transition to the larger companies in due course. In fact, this isn't new to us. After independence, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah initiated a policy of funding small businesses and giving concessions to spur economic growth in key sectors. Jinnah made it clear that industrial power was Pakistan's hope to reduce dependence on external help for life's necessities.

Traditionally, developed societies have also created programmes that match small entrepreneurs with the more successful and established ones to create networking synergies within communities.

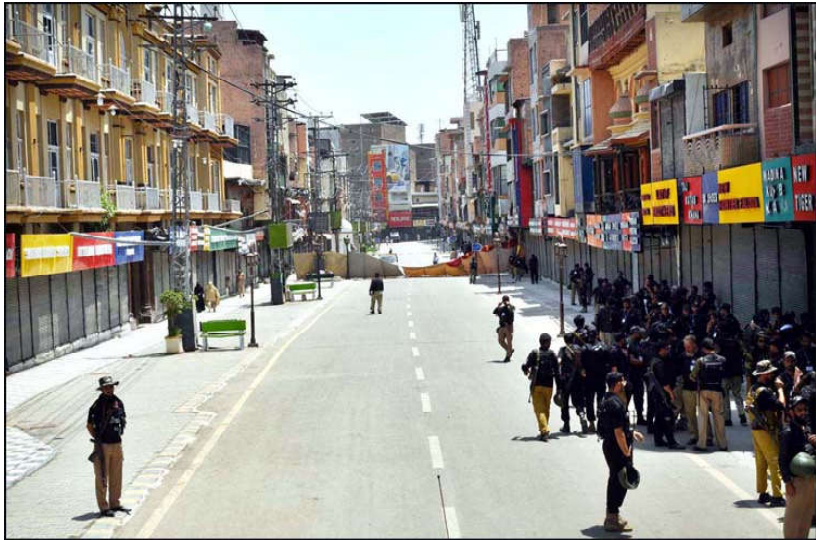
Nowhere is it possible to create jobs without enablement programmes and if we don't empower our growing population, we would be running after a train that is headed towards disaster. -- Courtesy Dawn



## Kundi for improving State Life health insurance programmes in KP

**Governor calls for easy loans to youth under NBP schemes**

KARACHI (APP): The Governor of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday said that the health insurance programmes initiated by State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan must be improved in KP. He said that the establishment of State Life Takaful Insurance Zone in Dera Ismail Khan was a welcome initiative and this initiative should also be expanded to other areas of the province so that more people of the province could benefit from it. In a meeting with CEO of State Life Shoaib Javed Hussain at the State Life Principal Office on Monday, he said that the problems faced by the people regarding health insurance should also be resolved. CEO Shoaib Javed Hussain said that the state Life taking steps to expand State Life Takaful Insurance to other areas of KP. Meanwhile, the Governor of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi has stressed the need for providing easy loans to the unemployed youth under NBP schemes here on Monday. Speaking to National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) President Rehmat Ali Hasnie during his visit to NBP head office, he said that NBP was an important national institution. He said that the institution should take steps to provide better facilities to its customers. Kundi said that facilities should be provided to pensioners and widows so that they did not face difficulties. Faisal Karim Kundi said that special arrangements should be made for senior citizens to sit in the branches. He said that NBP should open new branches in remote areas. The NBP President said that they were taking all such measures to facilitate the customers.



PESHAWAR: A view of Qissa Khawani Bazaar closed for Muharram procession.

## Departments lauded for Muharram arrangements

**Independent Report** PESHAWAR: Provincial Minister for Higher Education Meena Khan Afridi has lauded the relevant departments for making effective arrangements for Muharram. He said that Capital Metropolitan, District Administration, Rescue 1122, Water and Sanitation Services Peshawar (WSSP), and other relevant departments had made elaborate arrangements and that their efforts will play a crucial role in maintaining peace and order during Muharram. He expressed these views while visiting various Imambargahs, command posts, and the Supreme Command Post in Peshawar. On this occasion, the Director General of Capital Metropolitan, Waheed Rehman, ADC Peshawar, AC Peshawar, AACs, WSSP, and other officials also accompanied him. The provincial minister inspected various Imambargahs in the Qissa Khwani area and reviewed the facilities provided by the government. He met with the heads of the Imambargahs and was briefed on their issues. He also visited the command post at Khan Raziq police station in Qissa Khwani and the Supreme Command Post in Kohati.

## PDWP approves development schemes worth Rs5.56b

LAHORE (APP): The Provincial Development and Working Party Punjab (PDWP) in its 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the current financial year, approved two development schemes of SHC&ME and Environment sectors at a cost of Rs 56.560 billion. Preside over by P&D Board Chairman Barrister Nabeel Ahmad Awan here Monday, the meeting approved the following schemes: Establishment of Nawaz Sharif Institute of Cancer Treatment and



SIALKOT: DSPCIA crime organizer Rana Mahmood ul Hasan is handing over the money recovered from the accused of robbery Rs. 18 lakh to owner Haji Imran at SCCL.

## 8<sup>th</sup> Muharram processions end peacefully in DIK

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): The Tazia processions in connection with the martyrdom of Hazrat Ghazi Abbas Alamdar (R.A) on 8<sup>th</sup> Muharram ended peacefully in Dera Ismail Khan, here on Monday. The one of the huge processions in connection with the martyrdom of Hazrat Ghazi Abbas Alamdar (R.A) passed through the traditional routes and ended at the Imambargah Haider Shah Sherazi, the second big procession started from Imambargah Haider Shah Sherazi and ended at Jamia Masjid Lato Faqir. During the processions, the mourners recited Nohas and beat their chest for the Martyrs of Karbala. Langar, Niazi and Sabeel-e-Hussain were also arranged on different points on the routes of the processions.

## Aznavis Allied Hospital-I, inspects facilities

FAISALABAD (APP): Provincial Information Minister Azma Bukhari Monday paid a surprise visit to Allied Hospital-I. She inspected medical facilities available for patients in emergency and other wards, presence of doctors and paramedics. She inquired after the patients in different wards. She also inquired from attendants about treatment, availability of medicines and other facilities. She also checked the functioning of air-conditioners in wards and medicine stock in the hospital's store. The minister instructed the hospital management to mobilize resources to provide treatment facilities to patients. She also reviewed the upgradation of the hospital. She said that the government was taking measures for the health sector and its benefits should be passed on to the common man.

## 2 workers die while cleaning sewerage

FAISALABAD (APP): Two workers, including an employee of the municipal corporation, died when they were cleaning sewerage in Chak Jhumra police limits. A Rescue 1122 spokesman said here on Monday that 40-year-old Shakeel Masih, an employee of Municipal Corporation Chak Jhumra, entered into a sewerage at Chiniot Road but he became unconscious due to some toxic gas. Later, his coworker, Sohail Masih, 35, entered the sewerage to save him but he also fainted. Receiving information, Rescue 1122 rushed to the spot but in vain as both sewer men had died. Rescue 1122 pulled out both bodies and shifted them to the mortuary of Tehsil Headquarters (THQ) Hospital Chak Jhumra for postmortem while an investigation is ongoing.

## ANF recovers over 86 kg drugs in 5 operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting five operations managed to recover over 86 kg drugs and arrested 11 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday. He informed that 810 grams ice was recovered from a parcel booked for Bahrain at Karachi Airport. 150 intoxicated tablets were recovered from an accused arrested near a college in Peshawar. 15.6 kg opium, 8.4 kg hashish, and 7 kg ice.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Health and Chairman Cabinet Committee for Law and Order Khawaja Salman Rafique being briefed about security arrangements during Muharram ul Haram at Control Room of Home Ministry.

## Strict action will be taken on sharing hate material on social media: Minister

FAISALABAD (APP): Provincial Minister for Information Azma Bukhari said that Ashura would be observed under complete harmony and strict action would be taken on sharing hate material on social media. Presiding over a meeting at DC Office here on Monday, she took a briefing about Muharram arrangements and said that the government was committed to facilitating the masses during Ashura days. In this connection, Sharbat Sabeel would be arranged on the routes of mourning processions in addition to ensuring tight security arrangements for processions and participants in majalis, she added. She said that CCTV cameras would be used for monitoring security arrangements. "Muharram is a sacred month for Muslims and the government would try its optimum best to observe Ashura in a most befitting manner under tight security arrangements," she added. She said that activities of social media would also be monitored strictly especially during Ashura days and no one would be allowed to share hate material or promote sectarianism in the country. He also directed police officers to verify each information before taking any steps. In this connection, hot spots should be monitored strictly in addition to keeping a close liaison with religious scholars of all schools of thoughts and members of peace committees, she added. Earlier, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Abdullah Nayyar Sheikh briefed the minister about administrative and security arrangements in Faisalabad and said that 387 CCTV cameras were made functional across the district to monitor Muharram security in addition to keeping vigil eye on the movement of suspects.

## Health minister visits field hospital, inspects facilities

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique Monday paid a surprise visit to the field hospital, established in Union Council-143, Fatehgarh. The minister inquired about the medical facilities provided to people in the hospital. He also inquired from the attendants about treatment, availability of medicines and other facilities. Khawaja Salman Rafique said that the field hospital project was the flagship programme of the Punjab government. Thousands of people had been provided with best medical facilities at their doorstep across the province, he added. He said providing best medical facilities to people was the first priority, adding that facilities of lady doctor, free examination and medicine were also being provided in field hospitals. Hafiz Mohammad Aleem, Chudhry Sarwar, Mehar Mudassar, Mian Rashid and Malik Saif ur Rahman were present.

## Intel drugs smuggling gang busted

PESHAWAR (APP): Police on Monday arrested four accused including a wanted Afghan ring-leader of an international drugs supply gang during a raid in Tajabad area here. Police said, a team of Pishakhara police raided a house in Tajabad area and unearthed a heroin producing factory. Four accused were arrested from the factory. The arrested accused were involved in supplying drugs to Dubai, Afghanistan and other countries. During the intelligence-based raid, police also recovered 60 kilograms of heroin.



KARACHI: Security officials stand alert to avoid any untoward incident as security has been tightened during the Shiite religious mourning procession in memories of martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA), grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in connection of 8th Muharram-ul-Haram, at M.A Jinnah road in Karachi.

## Minister says: Mutual effort of stakeholders yielding peace in Ranjanpur

RAJANPUR (APP): Provincial minister for Mines, Sher Ali Gorchani said peace in the district among across the province was the result of mutual efforts of all the stakeholders. While presiding over a meeting at the local district complex here Monday, the minister informed the government was making all-out efforts to maintain law and order across the province like in the district. He said foolproof arrangements for religious congregations and processions were devised by the district authority. He said they're monitoring the security arrangements for the sacred events at the direction of the Chief Minister (CM) Punjab. He said the district had adopted exemplary security arrangements like happened in others of Punjab. He said the district government was vigilant to cope with any emergency-like situation in case emerging in future. He directed to implementation of the SOPs for the provision of municipal services at majalis and processions effectively. Deputy Commissioner Dr Mansoor Ahmed informing the minister about the number of processions and majalis, said there were 217 majalis with 517 processions due to be held in the ten days.



PESHAWAR: Journalists are holding protest to condemn the killing of senior journalist Malik Hussain Zaib, who was shot dead by two unknown assailants in the Akbar Pura village Nowshera district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), at Peshawar press club.

## CM Maryam says: Govt committed to empowering youth

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has said that the Punjab government is committed to providing vocational training opportunities to its youth. In her message on World Youth Skills Day, the CM said that skilled youth is our investment and asset, adding that World Youth Skills Day is a day to recognize the important role of youth in building a sustainable future. Youth must be exposed to the skills needed to thrive in a rapidly changing world, she asserted. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz said that information and communication technology is indispensable for the youth to compete in the global job market. She mentioned that under Chief Minister's Skills Development Initiative, the number of students would be gradually increased to 40,000 for TEVTA courses. The chief minister said that Middle Tech, Matric Tech and Intermediate Tech are being introduced for students in Information Technology. She added it is our vision to make every youth of Punjab skilled to ensure their economic empowerment.



KARACHI: Governor Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi being briefed by President National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) Rehmat Ali Hasnie on NBP affairs at NBP Headquarters.

## Minister directs early financial assistance to rain affectees

**Independent Report** PESHAWAR: Provincial Minister for Public Health Engineering, Puthunyar Khan on Monday directed for providing in time financial assistance to the people affected by the recent heavy rains. Following the directives, Secretary Relief KP, assured the minister that financial relief assistance will be provided to the affected people within the next few days. Former tehsil member, Masoom Wazir was also present on the occasion. Provincial Minister Pukhtunyar Khan said the provincial government stands with the rain-affected people at this critical juncture. The KP government will do its best to compensate for the losses of people incurred by the natural disasters. He said no effort will be spared in reaching out to the affected people and the financial assistance will be provided to every affected family without any discrimination. He said we do not believe in hollow slogans and rather in practical work adding that very soon the rain affected people will be provided relief assistance. The Minister added that all possible steps will be taken for the early rehabilitation of the rain affected families.

## Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) rendered supreme sacrifices for humanity, justice: Musvi

SUKKUR (APP): Regional Director of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU) Sukkur Region, Syed Atta Hussain Shah Musvi has said that Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) and his devotees rendered supreme sacrifices for humanity, justice and righteousness. Talking in a session, he said that the teachings of Islam are centered on social supervision in the community, the call for good, and the avoidance of corruption and selfishness. During his journey from Medina to Mecca and then to Karbala, Imam Hussein worked to revive religious teachings. Musvi said that Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) emphasized in his statements that the reason for his uprising was to revive the higher teachings of Islam and the true practice of his grandfather Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his descendants. He said the incident of Karbala was struggle for justice against cruelties and barbarism. He said Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) was an Imam of the whole Muslim Ummah and not for a particular sect. He kept Islam alive with his sacrifice at Karbala and there was great message of humanity for the whole world in it, he added.



KARACHI: Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Sindh President, Haleem Adil Sheikh talking to media persons during press conference regarding electoral fraud in NA-238 East Karachi at the Election Tribunal established in the Sindh High Court, in Karachi.

## PPC, KHUJ stage strong protest against killing of senior journalist

PESHAWAR (APP): The members of Khyber Union of Journalists (KHUJ) and Peshawar Press Club (PPC) on Monday staged a strong protest against the killing of senior journalist and reporter of Aaj News, Malik Hassan Zeb. The protest demonstration, attended by a large number of journalists with placards in their hands, chanted slogans in front of the Peshawar Press Club, opposite Railways Station here and demanded arrest of the killers. Senior Vice President Imran Yousafzai in his speech demanded of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to take notice of the incident and direct early arrest of the killers for an exemplary punishment. He said despite CCTV footage of the incident which showed clear faces of the killers of the journalist, police have so far failed to make any progress in the case. He said providing security to the journalist was the duty of the police adding the incidents of killing of journalists have seen a surge in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where journalists consider themselves as insecure.



## OGRA takes action against mixing of CO2 with LPG

ISLAMABAD (Online): The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has taken serious note of the issue of mixing carbon dioxide (CO2) with liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) by illegal decanters. In response, OGRA conducted a high-profile meeting chaired by Mr. Masroor Khan, Chairman OGRA, along with authority members, enforcement, legal, and LPG teams. The meeting addressed the potential life risks associated with this dangerous practice and urged provincial Chief Secretaries, the Attorney General, and provincial Advocate Generals to take appropriate action against the illegal decanters.

OGRA is determined to utilize all legal options under its rules and regulations to eliminate such illegal activities, aiming to safeguard precious lives and the properties of the general public. It is pertinent to mention that CO2 mixing with LPG has been reported in various locations of Sindh province, especially at Pano Aqil near Sukkur.

The Assistant Commissioner of Pano Aqil has raided four sites, discovered illegal decanting activities, sealed all the sites immediately, and lodged FIRs against the concerned individuals.

LPG is highly flammable, and the mixing of CO2 poses fatal risks, including adverse environmental impacts. CO2 has higher pressure than LPG which can cause serious safety concerns as equipment calibrated for LPG may not function properly.

OGRA's enforcement team visited the LPG sites in Pano Aqil and observed that all the sites were being operated illegally and in unsafe conditions. LPG bowlers were being used for storage instead of proper LPG tanks, and substandard equipment was found.

In response to these findings, OGRA has decided to exhaust all legal options to eliminate this illegal activity. The authority has advised its legal counsel in Pano Aqil to pursue the case and represent OGRA's point of view for the safety of the general public.

OGRA has also written letters to the Commissioner of Sukkur and the Custom Collectorate, urging them to ensure safety at the local level by curtailing the illegal sale of LPG in the area.



**BAHAWALPUR:** Laborers are busy packing mangoes in wooden boxes at the Mango Garden in the suburb of the city to transport them to the fruit market.

## Zong celebrates Digital Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): Zong 4G, Pakistan's leading mobile network operator, celebrated Digital Day 2024 in grand style.

The event served as more than just a celebration; it was a resounding endorsement of CEO Zong 4G's vision of positioning Zong 4G as an exemplary information service and technology innovation company.

While welcoming employees to the Digital Day celebrations, CEO Zong 4G HuoJunli said "This day was yet another positive step taken towards building Zong as an information services provider and the displays are a testament to that. Today, we align ourselves to our vision of an excellent Information Services and Technology Innovation company in Pakistan. From legacy network expansion, setting up state-of-the-art Data Centers as a backbone of cloud services, to building network-neutral product portfolio" said a news release.

"We had to adapt to the changing landscape of technology and the dynamic consumer demands. As we entered a new age of Zong, we also embodied our values of Integrity, Openness, Responsibility, and Excellence. In doing so, we were able to drive growth within and beyond the organization—growth that was crucial to the Sci-Tech transformation we wished to see in Zong" he added.

He further said, "I am delighted to see the product displays today, we have an attractive portfolio of digital products such as Zong Engage, Zong Road Assistance, and Banking as a Service (BaaS). These innovations, available through the Zong App, are designed to simplify our customers' lives." MediQ, a health services provider, offers convenient access to on-demand healthcare, both in-person and via a digital platform.

## Cement dealers go on nationwide strike against taxes

ISLAMABAD (INP): Cement dealers in Pakistan begin their nationwide strike for an indefinite period against higher withholding tax on cement in the federal budget 2024-25.

The government has increased the withholding tax to 2.5 percent for non-filers under Section 236H of the Finance Act 2024 which has made the cement business unsustainable given the current market conditions besides the new turnover taxes imposed on dealers and retailers.

All Pakistan Cement Dealers Chairman Sajid Chaudhry highlighted concerns that taxes and PoS measures have badly distributed their business. He criticized the requirement for Point of Sale machines, arguing that such demands are impractical for many dealers and retailers, who lack the necessary resources and education.

The association urged the government to intervene, suggesting a presumptive tax regime as a solution. They warned that failure to address these issues could force many businesses to shut down, worsen unemployment, and hurt the economy.

The federal government in budget 2024-25 has also imposed a higher FED on cement to Rs4 per kg compared to Rs2 in the previous fiscal year.

Meanwhile, the exports of cement witnessed an increase of 40.46 percent during the first eleven months of the financial year 2023-24.



**HYDERABAD:** A vendor displaying dates to attract the customers on hand cart at Qasimabad.

## PTA receives 11 EOIs for improvement of next-generation

ISLAMABAD (APP): A total of 11 expressions of interest (EOIs) were received from various reputed consulting firms through EPADS on the release of the IMT (International Mobile Telecommunications spectrum) to enhance Next Generation Mobile Broadband Services in Pakistan 2024.

PTA invited bids through advertisements published in national and international media and on the PPRa website.

PTA will shortlist the firms and accordingly RFP will be issued to the shortlisted consultants, said a news release.

The EOI for the consultancy on the release of the IMT (International Mobile Telecommunications spectrum) to enhance Next Generation Mobile Broadband Services in Pakistan 2024 was opened at PTA HQs on 15 July 2024.

## 17 arrested for overpricing essentials

LAHORE (APP): In a significant move to enforce official prices, the Price Control Magistrates have conducted inspections at 2,436 locations, leading to the arrest of 17 individuals for overpricing fruits, vegetables, and other essential items. Lahore Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rafia Haider told media on Monday that 15 cases have been registered for violations of government-set prices. Furthermore, fines totaling Rs 200,000 have been imposed for 78 instances of non-compliance. The DC emphasized that Price Control Magistrates are actively ensuring adherence to official rates. Supervision of the auction process in fruit and vegetable markets is also underway to prevent any malpractices.



**KARACHI:** Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi meets Managing Director Pakistan State Oil (PSO) Syed Muhammad Taha at PSO Head Office.

## World youth skills day: Investing in youth vital for sustainable economic development

PESHAWAR (APP): Like other parts of the country, world youth skills day was also observed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where public and private institutions and youth bodies organized functions and seminars highlighting significance of investment in technical education for sustainable economic development and prosperous future of the country. The civil society and youth organizations also staged a rally in front of the press club in connection with the day, stressing the significance of youth's role in peace, development and economic progress of Pakistan.

Every year, the day is marked on July 15 aimed at promoting empowerment of young people worldwide by focusing on their education and skills development besides employment.

Designated by the United Nations General Assembly in November 2014, the day emphasized the significance of equipping youth with necessary skills to tackle unemployment and poverty besides achieving sustainable development goals.

The theme of the day was 'Youth skills for peace and development' which highlighted the role of youth in peace building and resolution of conflicts.

"In an era of rapid technological advancements and evolving economic landscapes, the traditional approach of education is undergoing a profound transformation owing to mushroom growth of digitalization.

## PSX witnesses bullish trend, gains 1,211 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bullish trend on Monday, gaining 1,211.51 points, a positive change of 1.52 percent, closing at 81,155.61 points against 79,944.10 points on the last working day.

A total of 441,338,958 shares were traded during the day as compared to 437,315,657 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 27.228 billion against Rs 23.484 billion on the last trading day.

Around 457 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 265 of them recorded gains and 141 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 51 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were PIA Holding Company with 35,758,060 shares at Rs 19.01 per share, Pak Elektron with 25,836,722 shares at Rs 27.18 per share and WorldCall Telecom with 24,920,883 shares at Rs 1.21 per share.

Nestle Pakistan Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 105.00 per share price, closing at Rs 7,150.00, whereas the runner-up was Excide Pakistan Limited with a Rs 93.45 rise in its per share price to Rs 1,077.11. Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 99.27 per share closing at Rs 7,600.00, followed by Pakistan Tobacco Company Limited with a Rs50.45 decline to close at Rs 1,014.25.

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where four ships namely, MSC Positano, APL Mexico City, Eco Alice, and Ondo carrying Containers, LPG and LNG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Engro Vopak Terminal and Pakistan Gasport Terminal respectively on Monday, 14th July-2024.

A total of thirteen ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them six ships, Maersk Pelepas, APL Mexico City, Marangas Asclepius, Lila Confidence, Common Venture, and LPG OM left the port on Monday morning and four more ships, Ambrosia, Eco Alice, Atlantic Spirit, and Sara are expected to sail.

## PSO must find new sites for further expansion in KP: Faisal Karim Kundi

KARACHI (APP): The Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday visited Pakistan State Oil (PSO) head office and discussed foreign investment in oil refinery and other issues with Managing Director of PSO Syed Muhammad Taha.

They also discussed the transportation of oil, foreign investment in oil refinery, problems in this regard and their solutions.

Kundi said that the demand for petroleum products will increase after the completion of CPEC and plans should be chalked out to this effect.

He said that a large number of people associated with the transport business belonged to KP.

He further said that PSO should find new sites for further expansion in KP.

The MD PSO said that PSO had a big market and they were also working on new sites in KP.



**ISLAMABAD:** A vendor arranging and displaying clay pottery on handcart to attract the customers at his roadside setup in the Federal Capital.

## Drive on Railway safety, prohibited items in full swing

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways awareness campaign was in full swing in order to raise public knowledge of the dangers of trespassing, crossing railroad tracks, and carrying forbidden objects like gas cylinders, guns without a license, cartridges, drugs, and daggers.

"The campaign was launched on the directives of Secretary Syed Mazhar Ali Shah which will not help the department to control accidents but also win the confidence of the passengers of the rail" an official told APP.

The official said, "Pakistan Railways will use all the social media platforms including print, electronic media, twitter, Facebook, poster and pamphlets to create an awareness among the citizens about a safe train journey."

He said the department has also asked all the divisional superintendents to ensure checking of luggage of passengers at entry points with scanners, metal detectors and walkthrough gates.

The official said Pakistan Railways had always given importance to the safety of citizens and its passengers.

"It has been directed to discourage and stop those passengers who are carrying prohibited products. It is suggested to install emergency doors and auto-lock doors in coaches in case of any emergency," he added.

The official urged the citizens to stop at the level crossing before crossing the track, look on both sides of the track and wait for the train to pass if any train was coming.

## KP Special Assistant assures support to Wah Nobel Group in investment

PESHAWAR (APP): Special Assistant to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Industries Commerce and Technical Education Abdul Karim Tordher on Monday chaired a meeting held with representatives of "Wah Nobel Group", here at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment and Trade (KP-BoIT) office. The meeting besides others was attended by the officials of the board wherein the investment group showed keen interest regarding collaboration in different investment projects in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Similarly, the group representative Brig @ Shiraz Ullah Chaudhry intended to serve in the province through contribution in infrastructure development, hydro power projects and mines & minerals sectors. He also deliberated that departments concerned may approach Wah Nobel Group for provision of mining facilities etc. and drilling services at doorstep. On this occasion the Special Assistant ensured cooperation and support to materialize Wah Nobel Group joint collaboration on different investment projects. He expressed that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has a vast potential in various areas for investment opportunities.



**HYDERABAD:** Children toys are being selling at a roadside stall during the Holy Month of Muharram-ul-Haram, in Hyderabad.

## SIDB begins practical steps for construction of Industrial Park

PESHAWAR (APP): Small Industries Development Board (SIDB) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has begun initiating practical measures for the construction of the mega project of Industrial Park Peshawar. For the completion of Rs.3 billion mega Industrial Park, the Managing Director, SIDB, Habibullah Arif has issued work orders to the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of two construction companies, said a spokesman of the board here on Monday.

Besides, Deputy Managing Director (DMD) Planning & Development, Nauman Fayyaz and DMD Engineer Zulfikar Ali Sahibzada, Joint Director, Safdar Abbas Afridi was also present on the occasion.

The project will trigger economic activities in the provincial metropolis of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and generate employment opportunities for the locals of the Sara Khawra locality at Zangali area on the Kohat Road.

He said that Industrial Park Peshawar will be one of the unique type project wherein 400 industrial units.

## Inflation in Karachi: Prices of basic vegetables skyrocket

KARACHI (INP): The residents of Karachi are feeling the pinch of soaring prices as the cost of vegetables and pulses continues to climb, putting basic food items out of reach for many.

Profiteering is rampant in the city's markets, exacerbating the already critical situation.

According to market reports, tomatoes are now selling for Rs200 to Rs250 per kilogram, while cauliflower prices have surged to Rs200 per kilogram. The cost of bhindi (okra) has skyrocketed to an astonishing Rs400 per kilogram, further straining household budgets.

Staple vegetables such as potatoes and onions are also seeing significant price hikes, with potatoes being sold at Rs120 per kilogram and onions ranging between Rs120 and Rs150 per kilogram.

The situation is equally dire for pulses, a crucial protein source for many.

## Motorbikes, 3-wheelers sale decreases 3.10% in 2023-24

ISLAMABAD (APP): The sale of motorbikes and three-wheelers in the country witnessed a decrease of 3.10 per cent during the fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to sales of the corresponding period of the last year.

During July-June 2023-24, as many as 1,150,112 motorbikes and three-wheelers were sold against the sale of 1,186,969 units in July-June (2022-23), according to the Pakistan Automobile Manufacturing Association (PAMA).

The sale of Honda motorcycles dipped by 0.21 per cent from 1,005,408 units to 1,003,253 units whereas the sale of Suzuki motorcycles witnessed a decrease of 42.35 per cent from 29,274 units to 16,876 units during the year under review.

Similarly, the sale of Yamaha motorbikes also went down from 13,217 units to 6,562 units.

## Training session on e-procurement held

LAHORE (APP): As per the direction of Commissioner Punjab Social Security Nadia Saqib, a one-day training session was organized in collaboration with the Punjab Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) here on Monday.

The session took place in the auditorium of Punjab Social Security Hospital on Multan Road, Lahore. Sixty-five social security officers from hospitals and offices across Punjab participated in the training session.

Director Admin Khawaja Waqar Ahmed and other officers attended, while PPRA officers, led by MD PPRA Khawaja Waqar Ahmad, provided the training.

The participants were briefed on procurement cycles and received step-by-step hands-on training to familiarize themselves with the e-procurement system. The training included procedures for using the e-procurement portal, with a focus on tenders, quotations, and uploading of Requests for Quotations (RFQs).



## Gaza civil defence says 15 killed in Israel strike on Gaza school

### Monitoring Desk

GAZA STRIP: The civil defence agency in Hamas-run Gaza said Sunday that 15 people were killed in a strike on a school sheltering war displaced where the Israeli military said it had targeted "terrorists".

The strike on the UN-run Abu Araban site in central Gaza's Nuseirat camp was the fifth on a school-turned-shelter in eight days.

The Abu Araban school was housing "thousands of displaced people," civil defence agency spokesman Mahmud Bassal told AFP, adding that most of the dead were women and children.

Schools in Nuseirat were the target for two of the earlier school strikes as Israel keeps up its offensive against Hamas Palestinian militants who triggered the war with their October 7 attack on Israel.

The Israeli military said its air force "struck a number of terrorists who were operating in the area of UNRWA's Abu Araban school building in Nuseirat".

It said the building had "served as a hideout" and base for "attacks" on Israeli troops.

AFPTV images showed the three-storey complex standing, with clothes and bedding airing out over its railings. A wall bearing the UN logo had been blown out, and rooms inside were damaged.

On July 6, Israeli aircraft hit Al-Jawni school, also run by the United Nations relief agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA), in Nuseirat. UNRWA said about 2,000 people were sheltering there at the time.

The following day, four people died in a strike

on the church-run Holy Family school in Gaza City, in the territory's north, according to the Civil Defence agency.

On Monday, Israel hit another Nuseirat school, again saying it was targeting "terrorists".

The next day, a hospital source said at least 29 people died in a strike at the entrance to Al-Awda school in the Khan Yunis area, southern Gaza.

Israel says Hamas uses schools, hospitals and other public infrastructure for military purposes. Hamas denies the accusation. France and Germany on Wednesday called for an investigation into the school strikes.

After the Al-Jawni strike, UNRWA spokeswoman Juliette Touma told AFP that when the war began "we closed the schools and they became shelters."



A Palestinian woman wails as people gather following an Israeli air strike on a UN school sheltering displaced people in Nuseirat area of central Gaza Strip.

## Judge dismisses Donald Trump's classified documents case

### Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: A Florida judge appointed by Donald Trump has dismissed the criminal case against the former president on charges of mishandling top secret documents, ruling that Special Counsel Jack Smith was unlawfully appointed.

The decision is a major victory for Republican presidential candidate Trump, who had been accused of endangering national security after leaving the White House.

The decision comes days after an assassin's bullets flew by him during a campaign rally, streaking the Republican presidential candidate's blood across his face and prompting his security agents to swarm him, before he emerged and pumped his fist in the air, mouthing the words "Fight! Fight! Fight!"

Hours after the incident, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) said it had identified the shooter in the assassination attempt as 20-year-old Thomas Matthew Crooks of Pennsylvania, US media reported early on Sunday.

Federal Judge Aileen Cannon made her ruling after lawyers for the 78-year-old argued for a partial stay of proceedings to allow for an assessment of a Supreme Court ruling that a former president has broad immunity from prosecution.

"Former president Trump's motion to dismiss indictment based on the unlawful appointment and funding of Special Counsel Jack Smith is granted," Aileen wrote in her order.

## New Jersey governor says 2026 FIFA World Cup will be 'incredibly safe'

### Monitoring Desk

BERLIN: New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy on Sunday promised the 2026 World Cup will be an "incredibly safe tournament" hours after an assassination attempt on former US President Donald Trump and amid violence at Copa America matches.

MetLife Stadium, in Murphy's state of New Jersey will play host to eight games, including the final, of the 2026 World Cup which is to be held in the United States, Canada and Mexico. Trump was hit in the ear in an assassination attempt by a gunman at a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania on Saturday, while a bystander was killed. At Wednesday's Copa America — hosted in the United States — semi-final between Colombia and

Uruguay in Charlotte, violence broke out in the stands between fans at full time. It took more than 10 minutes for police to arrive and restore order while players, including Liverpool striker Darwin Nunez, were seen going into the crowd to protect family members.

Speaking in Berlin ahead of the Euro 2024 final between Spain and England on Sunday, Murphy told reporters he was confident the 2026 World Cup would be peaceful and secure. Speaking of the assassination attempt, Murphy said "that kind of violence has no place in American public discourse", while saying that New Jersey and neighbouring New York "have among the strongest gun safety laws anywhere in America".



US President Joe Biden delivers a statement a day after Republican challenger Donald Trump was shot at a campaign rally, during brief remarks at the White House in Washington, US.

## China, Russia start joint naval drills, days after NATO allies called Beijing a Ukraine war enabler

### Monitoring Desk

BEIJING: China and Russia's naval forces on Sunday kicked off a joint exercise at a military port in southern China on Sunday, official news agency Xinhua reported, days after NATO allies called Beijing a "decisive enabler" of the war in Ukraine.

The Chinese defense ministry said in a brief statement forces from both sides recently patrolled the western and northern Pacific Ocean and that the operation had nothing to do with international and regional situations and didn't target

any third party. The exercise, which began in Guangdong province on Sunday and is expected to last until mid-July, aimed to demonstrate the capabilities of the navies in addressing security threats and preserving peace and stability globally and regionally, state broadcaster CCTV reported Saturday, adding it would include anti-missile exercises, sea strikes and air defense. Xinhua News Agency reported the Chinese and Russian naval forces carried out on-map military simulation and tactical coordination exercises.

## Italian tax police free 33 Indian workers from 'slave-like' conditions on farms

### Monitoring Desk

ROME: Italy's tax police said Saturday they had freed 33 Indian farm workers from "slave-like working conditions" in the northern province of Verona, while seizing almost half a million euros from the two alleged gangmasters. Police said the two alleged abusers, also Indian, persuaded their fellow nationals to come to Italy, paying €17,000 each to obtain seasonal working permits. The men were then obliged to work in

farms for seven days a week and up to 10-12 hours a day, paid only 4 euros per hour, in conditions that the Italian police described as "slavery." Some of the migrants were also asked to continue working for free to pay an additional 13,000 euros for a permanent work permit, which in reality they would have never obtained, the police added.

The two alleged abusers are under investigation for crimes including enslavement and labor exploitation.

## Dubai crown prince appointed UAE defence minister

### Monitoring Desk

DUBAI: The crown prince of Dubai has been appointed as minister of defence for the United Arab Emirates as part of a broader cabinet shuffle, Dubai ruler and UAE Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum posted on X.

The 41-year-old Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum, who has served as Dubai's crown prince since 2008, was also named as one of the UAE's deputy prime ministers.

## Seven students drowned on summer holidays in Mexico

### Monitoring Desk

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. They were in a pickup truck that they were using to try to pull a boat from the Calzadas-Coatzacoalcos.



Demonstrators hold a rally to protest against a bill on "foreign agents" in Tbilisi, Georgia.

## Rescuers in Nepal recover 11 bodies after a landslide swept 2 buses full of people into a river

### Monitoring Desk

KATHMANDU: Rescuers in Nepal have recovered a total of 11 bodies from the river that two buses full of people were swept into by a landslide, officials said Monday.

Rescuers found the bodies in different spots along the riverbanks as they searched for the missing buses and some 50 people who were on board.

Government administrator Khima Nanda Bhusal said seven bodies were identified and relatives contacted. Three of the dead are Indians and the remaining four are Nepali nationals.

He said four more bodies were also recovered from the river, but because they haven't been identified, it was unclear if they had been on board the buses.

"We will continue the search as long as it is needed and have no plans to give up. We will work until all of them are found," he said.

## Syrian state media says soldier killed in Israeli strike on Damascus

### Monitoring Desk

DAMASCUS: A Syrian soldier was killed early on Sunday and three others wounded in Israeli strikes on several positions in and around Damascus, Syrian state media said.

The Israeli military, meanwhile, said it had targeted a Syrian military command centre as well as targets and infrastructure belonging to the Syrian army and air defence in response to two drones launched towards Israel from Syrian territory.

The statement was a rare acknowledgement by the Israeli military of action in Syria, where it has launched hundreds of strikes since the country's

civil war erupted in 2011, mainly targeting army positions and Iran-backed fighters.

"A soldier was killed and three others injured following an aerial aggression launched by the Israeli enemy after midnight" on Sunday, Syria's state news agency SANA reported. The strike "was launched from the occupied Syrian Golan Heights", which Israel seized in 1967, and targeted "several military positions in the southern region and a residential building in the Kafr Sousa district of Damascus", it added. SANA said that aerial defence systems had intercepted and downed a number of missiles "despite their intensity".

## Georgian president files lawsuit against foreign agent law

### Monitoring Desk

TBILISI: Georgian President Salome Zourabichvili said on Monday she had filed a lawsuit in the Constitutional Court against a law requiring groups that receive funding from abroad to register as foreign agents, which sparked mass protests.

Zourabichvili reposted comments on Facebook by her representative in parliament saying the law violated a clause in the Georgian constitution requiring the government to make all possible efforts to join the European Union and NATO.

## Spanish rescuers find remains thought to be of missing Briton Jay Slater

### Monitoring Desk

MADRID: A Spanish mountain rescue team in Tenerife found human remains in the area where British teenager Jay Slater went missing nearly a month ago, local police said on Monday, adding evidence strongly suggested the remains were his. The Guardia Civil police said in a statement that he may have died due to a fall in the difficult-to-access mountainous area, but that an autopsy would confirm whether it was an accident. A police spokesperson told Reuters by phone that the body was found on Monday morning by a Civil Guard mountain rescue group.

## After assassination attempt, Trump and Biden seek calm, unity

### Monitoring Desk

MILWAUKEE: Donald Trump arrived on Sunday in Milwaukee, where he will be formally nominated as the Republican presidential candidate later this week after surviving an assassination attempt that has aggravated an already bitter US political divide.

President Joe Biden, a Democrat, ordered a review of how a 20-year-old man with an AR-15-style rifle got close enough to shoot at Trump from a rooftop on Saturday. Trump, as a former president, has lifetime protection by the US Secret Service.

Trump, 78, was holding a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania — a key state in the Nov. 5 election — when shots rang out, hitting his right ear and leaving his face streaked with blood. His campaign said he was doing well.

"That reality is just setting in," Trump told the Washington Examiner on

Sunday. "I rarely look away from the crowd. Had I not done that in that moment, well, we would not be talking today, would we?"

One person in the crowd was killed and two others wounded before Secret Service agents fatally shot the suspect.

Both Trump and Biden on Sunday sought calm and unity.

Trump is due to accept his party's formal nomination at the Republican National Convention with a speech on Thursday. He pumped his fist in the air several times as he descended the stairs from his plane after arriving in Milwaukee. "This is a chance to bring the whole country, even the whole world, together. The speech will be a lot different than it would've been two days ago," Trump told the Washington Examiner. Biden delivered a televised address from the Oval Office in the White House on Sunday.

## Syrians vote for their next parliament, which may pave the way for Assad to extend his rule

### Monitoring Desk

DAMASCUS: Syrians were voting for members of a new parliament in an election Monday that was expected to hold few surprises but could pave the way for a constitutional amendment to extend the term of President Bashar Assad.

The vote is the fourth in Syria since mass anti-government protests in 2011 and a brutal crackdown by security forces spiraled into an ongoing civil war and comes as an economic crisis grips the country, fueling demonstrations in the south.

Syria's 2024 parliamentary election excludes rebel-held northern Syria and the country's northeast under U.S.-backed, Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces. The number of eligible voters hasn't been announced either, and unlike presidential elections, the millions of diaspora Syrians — whose numbers have ballooned since the civil war — are not qualified to vote for the legislators.

Western countries and Assad's critics say the polling in government-held areas in Syria is neither free nor fair.

This year, 1,516 government-approved candidates are running for the 250-seat People's Assembly. Some 8,151 polling stations were set up in 15 voting districts in government-held areas, with results expected to be announced Monday night or the following day. In the last round of elections in 2020, the outcome was delayed for days due to technical issues, according to officials.

Assad's Baath Party won 166 seats, in addition to 17 others from allied parties, while 67 seats went to independent candidates.

## Belarus's Lukashenko says border tension gone, extra troops go home

### Monitoring Desk

BELARUS: Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, a close ally of Kremlin leader Vladimir Putin, said that tensions had subsided at his country's border with Ukraine and extra troops deployed there were being sent back to their bases.

Belarus's defence ministry said late last month that it was reinforcing its border after a security incident and in response to a Ukrainian troop buildup. They said a division of multiple launch rocket systems had been deployed to test their combat readiness.

Lukashenko, quoted by the official BelTA news agency during a tour of a border region, said that Belarusian intelligence had determined that Ukraine had withdrawn troops from sensitive areas.

"That means that those (Ukrainian) troops which had been brought in as reinforcements are now gone," BelTA quoted him as saying. "There are now no difficulties with the Ukrainians and I hope there will be none."

BelTA said he told a meeting of regional officials that the additional Belarusian troops dispatched to the area should return to their assigned bases. "Well, friends, we have to pull back our troops from the border," he was quoted as saying. "So that it is understood that we have no intention of fighting or concentrating our armed forces here, apart from special operations forces." A spokesperson for Ukraine's border guards, in a statement posted online, dismissed the notion of an extra deployment.

## Greece fears water shortages after warmest winter ever

### Monitoring Desk

ATHENS: After Greece's warmest winter and earliest heatwave on record, authorities are sounding the alarm over the risk of dire water shortages in the heat of the Mediterranean summer. "Would you like some water? Turn off the tap!" one public service announcement in Athens implores; another daily spot urges the capital's residents to not fill their bath all the way to the top.

Recently placed on "yellow alert" by EYDAP, which urged people to reduce consumption to keep reserves at a sustainable level.

Across Greece's islands, which tend to rely on wells and desalination plants to meet water needs, the problem is even more acute.



Voters queue before casting their ballots at a polling centre during the presidential election in Kigali, Rwanda.



# Envoys of seven nations present diplomatic credentials to President

ISLAMABAD (APP): The envoys of seven countries including Zimbabwe, Tajikistan, Rwanda, Argentina, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Botswana presented their diplomatic credentials to President Asif Ali Zardari during a ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr on Monday.

The President received credentials from the Ambassador-designate of Zimbabwe, Titus Mchliswa Jonathan Abubasutu; the Ambassador-designate of Tajikistan, Sharifzoda Yusuf Toir; the High Commissioner-designate of Rwanda, Ms. Harerimana Fatou; the Ambassador-designate of Argentina, Sebastian Sayus; the Ambassador-designate of Myanmar, Wunna Han; the Ambassador-designate of Cambodia, Sok Chea;

and the Ambassador-designate of Botswana, Dr. Batlang Comma Serema.

Later, the envoys also held separate meetings with the President.

Talking to the envoys, the President said that Pakistan had great investment opportunities and foreign countries should benefit from its investment-friendly environment. He highlighted that foreign investors should explore investment opportunities in Pakistan's agriculture, livestock, Information Technology, energy and mining sectors.

The President stated that Pakistan wanted to broaden cooperation with all friendly countries in diverse fields, especially trade, investment, and culture.

He remarked that Pakistan attached great importance to expanding economic cooperation and further maximising trade volume with friendly countries to its fullest potential. He also called for increasing contacts among the business communities to boost economic and trade relations.

President Asif Ali Zardari congratulated the envoys on their appointment as ambassadors to Pakistan and expressed the hope that they would play their role in further improving mutually beneficial cooperation. Earlier, the envoys were presented guard of honour by a smartly turned-out contingent of Pakistan Armed Forces upon their arrival at Aiwan-e-Sadr.



QUETTA: Regional Head Federal Ombudsman Quetta Ghulam Sarwar Barohi addressing representatives of federal departments regarding payment of electricity bills. CEO QESCO Shafqat Ali and Deputy Registrar Federal Ombudsman Quetta Amir Muhammad Rind are also present

# PTI has done nothing but politics of hate and division: Barrister Danyal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Leader Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Barrister Danyal Chaudhary on Monday said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf has done nothing for the country but only promoted the politics of hatred and division.

Addressing a press conference here, he said that a specific political party was given that relief which was not demanded, adding, that some people think that they can achieve their goals by blackmailing.

He said the coalition parties decided to file a review appeal on the current decision of the Supreme Court regarding reserved seats.

"Sometimes they (PTI) waved ciphers and sometimes hired lobbying firms, the country was abused and burned, besieged, these people attacked the institutions of their own country, May 9 was an example of PTI's anti-state policies," he lamented.

The leader of the PML-N said that sometimes there were talks of burning and sometimes closing Pakistan, seeds of hatred were sown in the country, adding that today we say no more, we got this country in a destabilizing condition, and the economy was derailed during PTI's four-year tenure.

He further said that if PTI's agenda was political, then they would not have dissolved their assemblies. He said that when we were negotiating with the IMF, they (PTI) were raising slogans against Pakistan.

Danyal Chaudhary said that important decisions will be taken by taking all the parties on board, PTI founders Imran Khan, Arif Alvi, and Qasim Suri have weakened Pakistan, and action will be taken against those who sit abroad and talk about breaking Pakistan.

# British MP pledges unwavering support to Palestinian cause

LONDON (INP): Newly elected Pro-Palestine independent MP from Perry Barr, Birmingham constituency, Ayoub Khan has reiterated his unwavering commitment to championing the Palestinian cause, dedicating his victory to the resilient people of Gaza. He lambasted the global community's hypocritical stance on the issue, vowing to persistently raise awareness in the British Parliament.

This was stated by him during an exclusive session in London with prominent Pakistani business leader, former ICCI President and Secretary General UBG Zafar Bakhtawari. Ayoub Khan also drew parallels with the occupied Kashmir region, highlighting the similarities in the struggles faced by both populations. He acknowledged the critical role of social media in amplifying the Palestinian narrative, leveraging graphics to convey the severity of the situation. In contrast, Khan noted the technological limitations hindering the Kashmiri people's ability to share their stories, resulting in relatively less global attention.

The British MP reassured the Kashmiri community that they have a strong advocate in the British Parliament, pledging to vocally support their cause and echo their concerns.



LORALAI: Investigation Office Federal Ombudsman Ahmed Waqas Kashi visiting BISP Zonal Office

# Hang me, but save the country, Rashid appeals rulers

RAWALPINDI (INP) - Former federal minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed on Monday urged the rulers to save the country even at the cost of his life.

Talking to media outside Adiala Jail on Monday, the head of Awami Muslim League drew the attention of the rulers towards the political and economic turmoil in the country. He said the country is going to be that of Kenya.

"Watch the situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. People are cursing the government. For God's sake, save the country. Hang us by cranes; punish us, but save the country," he made a fervent appeal to the rulers.

He once again sought general amnesty from the establishment in the country.

He said as a minister he pardoned people [during his five-year term]. There are 686 cases registered against him; if hearing in one case take a week, it would take more than 10 years to end cases, he added.

The disgruntled leader said it would have been better if he was sentenced to two-year term.

Commenting on the arrest of PTI's Sanam Javed immediately after her release on Sunday, Rashid said she was taken into custody from the lawyer's chamber.

# 20th CPC Central Committee starts third plenary session

BEIJING (INP): The 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) started its third plenary session in Beijing on Monday morning.

President Xi Jinping, who is also the 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 deepening reforms and advancing Chinese modernization, Chinese State media reported.

The document centers on "further comprehensively deepening reform and advancing Chinese-style modernization."

The four-day meeting is important because the Central Committee will issue an authoritative "decision" that will guide policymaking for years to come.

# 6 dead, 4 injured in traffic accident on M-9 motorway

ISLAMABAD (APP): Six people died while four injured in a tragic traffic accident on Monday near the Loni Kot interchange on the Karachi-Hyderabad Motorway (M-9) in District Jamshoro, Sindh.

According to a private news channel, police said that a Mazda carrying fruits collided with a trawler while heading towards Karachi. The collision resulted in the deaths of six individuals, including two brothers. The victims were identified as 28-year-old Nanji, 30-year-old Imdad Hussain, 28-year-old Amerji, 35-year-old Ramesh, Jitan, and another Ramesh. The Mazda was traveling from Hyderabad to Karachi when the accident occurred. Four other individuals were critically injured and have been transported to the District Headquarters Hospital in Kotri for medical treatment.



QUETTA: Palwasha Jalalzai briefed Provincial Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durrani about UNICEF Education Sector Plan. Chief Field Officer Maryam Darvesh and others are also present

# Ahsan holds productive meeting with Vice Chairman, NDRC

BEIJING (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Prof Ahsan Iqbal, held a very productive meeting with Zhao Chenxin, Vice Chairman of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) of China, at NDRC headquarters here on Monday to discuss ongoing and future cooperation between the two countries.

The minister was accompanied by Pakistan Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi. The meeting underscored the mutual commitment of Pakistan and China to further strengthen their All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership.

Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which continues to be a cornerstone of bilateral relations. During the meeting, both sides reviewed the progress of the CPEC with an emphasis on ensuring the timely completion of projects and launching an upgraded version of the CPEC as per the agreement reached at the leadership level. Both the sides highlighted significance of CPEC projects in enhancing connectivity, trade, and socio-economic development in the region. It was agreed to fast-track the work on the ML-1 project, KKH realignment, for which both sides signed the framework agreement last month, and, the Sukkur-Hyderabad motorway.

# IMF loan accord lifts Pakistan Stock Exchange to new high

ISLAMABAD (INP): The latest loan agreement agreed with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) triggered brisk buying at the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Monday, lifting the index to new heights.

The benchmark KSE-100 index soared by 1,230.05 or 1.52 percent to 81,174.14, compared to the previous close of 79,944.10 points.

The stocks had Friday witnessed a volatile session after the decision of the Supreme Court on reserved seats, decreasing by 48.26 points or 0.06% to close at 79,944.10 points.

Pakistan Stock Exchange remained under pressure during the outgoing week ended on July 12, 2024 as the investors opted to book profit on available margins. The benchmark KSE-100 index declined by 268.69 points on week-on-week basis and closed at 79,944.10 points.

Trading activities remained dull as average daily volumes on ready counter decreased by 0.3 percent to 438.83 million shares during this week as compared to previous week's average of 440.31 million shares while average daily traded value on the ready counter increased by 13.7 percent to Rs 20.77 billion during this week against previous week's Rs 18.28 billion.

The foreign investors remained net buyers of shares worth \$3.959 billion during this week. Total market capitalization increased by Rs36 billion during this week to Rs10.630 trillion.

Sector-wise, auto assemblers, automobile parts & accessories, and woollen were amongst the top performers, up 7.0 percent/5.2 percent/5.0 percent WoW, respectively. On the other hand, miscellaneous, vanaspati & allied industries, and RIET were amongst the worst performers with a decline of 13.8 percent/3.7 percent/3.5 percent WoW.

Flow wise, major net selling was recorded by Individuals and Mutual Funds with a net sell of \$2.58million and \$2.48million, respectively. On the other hand, Foreigners absorbed most of the selling with a net buy of \$3.96million. Company-wise, top performers during the week were NBP (up 13.6 percent), FFBL (up 12.0 percent), UNITY (up 10.6 percent), ABL (up 10.3 percent) and PKGP (up 10.1 percent), while top laggards were SCBPL (down 8.1 percent), TRG (down 7.7 percent), THALL (down 6.2 percent).

# 35 MNAs submit affidavits to ECP expressing their allegiance to PTI

ISLAMABAD (INP): Following the Supreme Court's (SC) decision to allot reserved seats to the PTI, as many as 35 party members of the National Assembly (MNAs) have so far submitted to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) their affidavits of allegiance to the party.

Sources told that the party's nine members of the provincial assembly (MPAs) from Sindh and over 100 MPAs from Punjab too had submitted their affidavits.

They further disclosed that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, Omar Ayub Khan and Ali Asghar were yet to submit their affidavits.

On the other hand, 92 PTI MPAs in the KP Assembly have so far signed their affidavits.

The PTI will get 21 seats reserved for women and three seats for men. The JUI-F and the PML-N had already been allotted one seat each in the assembly, while the PTI-P, PPP and ANP were not entitled to these seats, they added.

# Shehbaz felicitates KP Sharma Oli for taking oath as Nepalese PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday congratulated KP Sharma Oli for taking oath as the Prime Minister of Nepal for the fourth time. "Congratulations to H.E. KP Sharma Oli on taking oath as the Prime Minister of Nepal for the fourth time," the prime minister wrote on his X timeline. The prime minister wished him every success and said that he looked forward to working with him to further strengthen bilateral ties and promote regional cooperation.



QUETTA: Parliamentary Secretary for Excise and Taxation Haji Khan Lehri meeting with Provincial Minister for PHE Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran.

# Aleem Khan praises Army's action against terrorists in Bannu

ISLAMABAD (APP): The President of the Isteqam-e-Pakistan Party and Federal Minister for Privatization, Board of Investment, and Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan on Monday paid glowing tributes to soldiers who sacrificed their lives and families for the future of Pakistan's children.

He called these soldiers the true heroes of the nation. In a tweet about the recent security operation near Bannu, he expressed gratitude, saying that soldiers are always ready and alert to counter anti-state elements.

Aleem Khan emphasized that the security of Pakistan is their first duty. He praised the Pakistan armed forces for timely action in Bannu, noting that their excellent performance thwarted the enemy's plans.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Livestock & Dairy Development Bakht Muhammad Kakar listening problems of people at his office

# Our's utmost endeavour to ensure provision of best services to people: Khetran

INDEPENDENT REPORT

QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Public Health Engineering (PHE), Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran has stated that as a minister it is his utmost endeavour to ensure provision of best services to the people.

The Minister PHE was speaking to the Parliamentary Secretary for Excise and Taxation, Mir Muhammad Khan Lehri and different other delegations who called on him here on Monday.

During the course of meetings, matters of mutual interest were discussed.

Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran said that the federal and provincial governments are delivering despite tough economic situation so as to improve the life of common men.

The Minister PHE also said that we would not leave any stone unturned in providing relief to the people.

# May-9 cases: ATC grants bail to Yasmin, 2 other PTI leaders

LAHORE (APP): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Monday granted bail to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders Dr. Yasmin Rashid, Omar Sarfraz Cheema, and Senator Ijaz Chaudhry in separate cases related to the May 9 riots.

Dr. Yasmin Rashid was granted post-arrest bail in connection with the torching of the PML-N office in Model Town. Similarly, Omar Sarfraz Cheema and Ijaz Chaudhry were granted post-arrest bail in a case involving the torching of a container in Gulberg. The court required each of the accused to furnish surety bonds of Rs 200,000 to secure their bail.

ATC Judge Khalid Arshad announced the verdict on the post-arrest bail petitions of the PTI leaders after the completion of arguments from both parties. The Gulberg and Model Town police had registered cases regarding the torching of a container and the PML-N office during the May 9 riots.

# Imran distances himself from May 9 violence

RAWALPINDI (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan said he never urged anyone for violence during his political career of 28 years, saying independent inquiry should be held in May 9 incidents.

The former prime minister stated this during his video-link hearing at an Lahore's anti-terrorism court in 12 cases related to May 9 violence.

During the hearing, Khan sought permission to say something and it was granted by Judge Khalid Arshad. He said, "I have never provoked anyone for violent protest in 28 years. An independent inquiry was not conducted into May 9 incidents."

The PTI founder added that he had also filed a petition with the Supreme Court, seeking a fair probe into the May 9 violence.

"I was attacked in Gujranwala and wanted to get the FIR registered against Major General Faisal Naseer but it didn't happen."

# Abbasi warns govt against dividing country

ISLAMABAD (INP): Awam Pakistan Party Chairman Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said on Monday that by banning the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, the rulers instead of uniting the country wanted to divide it.

The former PM asked, "do you want a clash between institutions." He said that with this decision (a reference to reserved seats), the Supreme Court had washed away its wrongs.

Abbasi said that perhaps the ministers do not realise that the government cannot ban any party. "They are very fond of imposing Article 6. They don't realise that Article 6 will apply on many people. You have to sit on the table, he asserted.

Former PM Abbasi said unfortunately parliament in the country had become a platform for backbiting.

He questioned the direction of the rulers. He advised the government not to create confusion in the country. "It has been more than one year since the events of May 9. You could not prosecute even one person."

He further said the system in the country should only be in accordance with the constitution.

# PR to run special train for pilgrims

SUKKUR (APP): A special train from Kotri via Tando Adam to Rohri on the 9th and 10th of Muharram will run to facilitate travellers. President Majlis-e-Wihadat-ul-Muslimeen (MWM), Sindh, Allama Maqsood Domki on Monday hailed the decision of the Government of Pakistan and thanked the Railway Authorities allowing pilgrims to attend religious observances and ceremonies. As per the special train's schedule, Allama Domki informed the pilgrims that will depart from Kotri at 2 PM.



QUETTA: Different delegations meeting with Advisor to Chief Minister Balochistan for Commerce and Industries Mir Ali Hassan Zehri

# AC reviews arrangement at Imam Bargah

INDEPENDENT REPORT

GWADAR: Assistant Commissioner Mir Javed Ahmed Zehri visited the Imam Bargah in Gwadar to review the preparations for the religious rituals of the Shia community during the holy month of Muharram.

On the special instructions of Deputy Commissioner Hamoodur Rehman, the Assistant Commissioner met with the administrators of the Imam Bargah, Syed Aun, and renowned religious scholar Allama from Karachi. He thoroughly reviewed the arrangements in the Imam Bargah and had a detailed discussion about security arrangements during Muharram.

The Assistant Commissioner assured the administrators that the district administration would provide all possible cooperation and security to ensure that the Shia community could observe their religious festival with peace and better arrangements.

He said that the security of Imam Bargahs is the top priority of the district administration during Muharram, and all resources would be utilized to provide the best security.

The purpose of this step is to ensure that the religious rituals of the Shia community are performed without fear and danger.