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## Pakistan has reached staff-level agreement with IMF for new \$7bln loan program

PM expresses satisfaction over IMF staff level agreement for \$7bln loan

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan has reached a staff-level agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a new \$7 billion loan program, the IMF said, the country's latest move to turn to the global lender for assistance in keeping its fragile economy afloat.

Pakistan completed a short-term \$3 billion IMF program in April this year, with the release of a final tranche of \$1.1 billion. The facility helped Islamabad

avert a default last year.

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb said his government planned to seek a longer-term loan from the IMF to help stabilize the \$350 billion economy after the end of the last program.

The IMF said the new loan deal, which will span 37 months, was aimed at strengthening fiscal and monetary policy as well as reforms to broaden the tax base, improve management of state-owned enterprises,

strengthen competition, secure investment, enhance human capital, and scale up social protection through increased generosity and coverage in major welfare programs.

"The program aims to capitalize on the hard-won macroeconomic stability achieved over the past year by furthering efforts to strengthen public finances, reduce inflation, rebuild external buffers and remove economic distortions to spur private sector-led

growth." IMF's mission chief to Pakistan Nathan Porter said in a statement.

The deal, which is subject to approval by the IMF executive board, came after the government of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif presented its first budget in parliament last month, promising an increase of up to 25 percent in salaries of government employees and setting an

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addressing officers during his visit to headquarters of the Federal Board of Revenue.



QUETTA: Provincial Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Lango presides over the meeting for talks with participants of Baloch Yekjehi Committee sitting on protest. Provincial Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and MPs are also present.

## Committee formed for negotiations with protesters in Quetta

Independent Report QUETTA: The Provincial government has formed a committee for holding talks with the protesters in Quetta on Saturday.

The committee was formed in a meeting presided over by the Provincial Minister for Home, Mir Ziaullah Langove here on Saturday.

The meeting reviewed the situation about protest sit-in being staged by Baloch Yekjehi Committee.

According to an official handout, the negotiation committee comprises the Provincial Minister for Livestock, Bakht Muhammad Kakar, Parliamentary Secretary, Mir Liaquat Lehri, Member of Provincial Assembly, Zarak Khan Mandokhail, Commissioner Quetta,

Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat and Director General PDMA, Jahanzaib Khan.

The committee would speak to the participants of dharna on their demands. Speaking on the occasion, Mir Ziaullah Langove said that we want solution to all issues through negotiations.

But no one would be allowed to take law in one's hands, he asserted.

The Minister said that the province has its own traditions and solution to all issues lies in talks. He announced that the protesters would not be stopped from holding dharna where they want to stage it except Red Zone. He said that it is our endeavour to resolve the issues through understanding.

## One killed, another injured in Quetta blast

QUETTA (INP): A man was killed and another sustained injuries in a blast near a vehicle of security forces personnel in Quetta on Saturday.

Rescue sources said that explosion took place near the bypass in Akhtar Abad where the vehicle was targeted.

On being informed of the explosion, the police

and officials of the law enforcement agencies reached the spot and began investigating the reasons of the explosion. Evidence was collected from the spot.

The injured person and the unidentified deceased were shifted to the hospital. The police, however, called in a team of the bomb disposal squad to clear the area.



QUETTA: Chairman Voice for Baloch Missing Persons Nasarullah, Mama Qadeer and others addressing a Press conference.

## Imran says ready for talks if three conditions are met

RAWALPINDI (INP): Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan on Saturday said that he was ready for the talks provided his three conditions were accepted; firstly all cases against him were withdrawn, secondly all PTI leaders and workers presently in jails were released, and last but not least the party was given back the mandate it had been given by the people in the February 8 general elections.

In an informal chat with reporters in the court-

room set up at Adiala Jail, Rawalpindi, the former prime minister, while describing the Supreme Court's yesterday's verdict in the Sunni Ittehad Council's reserved seats case as a positive development, said that he welcomed it.

He said that the decision had given PTI workers and supporters a ray of hope. "I thank the Almighty Allah that contrary to Justice Muneer, who had capitulated, this time the

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## Another hefty hike in petrol and diesel prices likely

ISLAMABAD (INP): Another hefty increase in the prices of petrol and diesel is on the cards from July 16 as Ogra forwarded its recommendations.

According to the proposals, a healthy hike of Rs7.67 per litre was recommended in the price of petrol while Rs3.72 raise in diesel rate was proposed.

If the recommendations got government's nod, the new petrol price would be Rs273.28 per litre while diesel rate would climb up to Rs281.17.

There is also a possibility that the kerosene price will go up by Rs2.73 per litre to Rs184.25 and light diesel oil rate will go up by Rs0.92 to Rs166.65.

## Pak reaffirms commitment to humanitarian aid in Gaza

ISLAMABAD (Online): Pakistan has reaffirmed commitment to humanitarian aid and reconstruction efforts in Gaza.

At the United Nations Relief and Works Agency's Pledging Conference in New York, Second Secretary of the Pakistan Mission to the United Nations Rabia Ijaz advocated for a comprehensive reconstruction plan for Gaza and reiterated readiness to partner in the reconstruction of educational institutions. She noted that since last October, Pakistan has dispatched over eight planeloads carrying more than 2,000 tons of humanitarian aid to Gaza.

## Imran Khan, Bushra Bibi arrested in NAB case after acquittal in Iddat case

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder and former prime minister, Imran Khan, and his wife, Bushra Bibi, were arrested by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on Saturday

hours after being acquitted in the Iddat case, sources revealed.

A NAB team, led by Deputy Director Mohsin Haroon, arrived at Adiala Jail, where the former prime minister and his wife were taken into custody under a new reference.

According to NAB sources, Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi were arrested in connection with a new Toshakhana reference. As prime minister, Khan and his wife allegedly obtained gifts from the gift repository at low prices and sold them at higher rates.

Sources stated that af-

ter completing the legal formalities, the NAB team formally arrested Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi.

Earlier, a team investigating the May 9 cases registered in Lahore had also arrived at Adiala Jail, indicating the possibility of further arrests of the PTI founder in those cases.

Meanwhile, the founder of PTI has challenged the rejection of interim bail in three cases in the high court.

In the petitions filed through his lawyer, Barrister Salman Safdar, Imran Khan argued that he is the former prime minister and that the Anti-Terrorism Court dismissed his bails in three cases related to the May 9 riots contrary to the facts. The petitions request the high court to overturn

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RAWALPINDI: President Asif Ali Zardari offering Faateha for Captain Muhammad Osama bin Arshad Shaheed, during his visit to Shaheed's family home.

## Children suffering from lack of attention of parents: It's not wisdom to leave children mere on mercy of educational institutions for upbringing and education: Governor

Independent Report QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has stated that it is also an important issue of the today's society that the parents are entangled in other social activities to such an extent that they have handed over their children to the teachers instead of paying attention on their upbringing.

As a result of this, the children are suffering from lack of attention and deprivation and the desired goals of their character and personality building are not being achieved. In a statement issued

here on Saturday, the Governor said that it is right that parents remain busy striving to increase their investment for the bright future of their children, but they just forgot their real investment is their children actually.

He said that the hard work and investment of the parents can also be wasted in case they are not imparted proper education and training timely.

The Governor exhorted the parents to spare time for their children despite their business because they (children) need closeness, love and presence of

## Home Minister chairs meeting on law & order: Govt's doors open for talks over issue of missing persons or any other, asserts Mir Ziaullah Langove

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home and Tribal Affairs, Mir Ziaullah Langove has categorically stated that the incumbent government is a political government and as such it has never refused to negotiations. The doors of government are open for talks over whether it is issue of missing persons or any other else.

The Minister said that the government is already demonstrating seriousness regarding protest.

Mir Ziaullah Langove was presiding over the meeting on law and order here on Saturday.

Those who were present in the meeting were included: Provincial Ministers Mir Shoaib Nausherwani and Bakht

Muhammad Kakar, Inspector General of Police, Abdul Khaliq Sheikh, Special Secretary Home, Abdul Nasar Dotani, Commissioner Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat, Deputy Inspector General of Police Quetta, Aitezaz Goraya, Director General Levies, Naseebullah Kakar, Director General PDMA, Jahanzaib Khan and other concerned high ups.

The Inspector General of police and Commissioner Quetta briefed the meeting about the law and order in Quetta.

During the briefing, it was informed that the protesters damaged the government property, CCTV cameras and police vehicles while taking law in their hands during violent protests in Quetta the other day.

It was also informed that it came to know during the investigations, Zaheer Zaib was in custody of any agency nor he was wanted to the police.

However, the government believes in negotiations and talks and it is also ready to extend cooperation to those staging protest.

The participants were agreed on that no would benefit from the allegations. However, the protesters would have to look that some people who are part of the protest are targeting the government property and forces, which is sorrowful.

The Provincial Ministers and high ups strongly condemned the attack on vehicle of security forces in

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## PM calls for exposing elements spreading uncertainty, instability

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday emphasized the need to expose elements spreading uncertainty and instability in the country.

He made these remarks during a meeting with Parliamentary leader of Pakistan Muslim League (N) in Senate and Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs Senator Irfan Siddiqui.

PM Shehbaz Sharif

stressed the government as well as PML-N to pay attention to evolve an effective strategy to let down the organized campaign against the government, state and national security institutions.

Appreciating the positive role of Muslim League (N) in the Senate, the prime minister said that the Upper House should guide all the elected houses for democratic values and dignified environment.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi presenting souvenir to US Ambassador Donald Blome.

## Focus on counter terrorism, law enforcement US, Pakistan committed to strengthen security ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Police will soon visit New York to explore further opportunities for cooperation including training programs.

Naqvi reiterated the Pakistani government's commitment to protecting all minorities while emphasizing their equal rights under the Constitution.

He also stated that all those accused in the recent Jaranwala tragedy have been arrested and brought before the court.

The meeting also touched upon the successful hosting of the T20 World Cup in the US, showcasing America's emergence as a new hub for international cricket.

Naqvi expressed his ongoing efforts to organize a tri-nation series between Pakistan, the USA and Canada as well as a cricket league between the USA and Canada.

Minister Naqvi emphasized the significance of US support in strengthening Pakistan's law enforcement agencies.

He also highlighted the recent discussions in New York to foster collaboration between the Islamabad Police and the New York Police Department.

A delegation from

## Ahsan Iqbal says: Global South could be transformed into hub of prosperity by embracing new pathways

BEIJING (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Prof Ahsan Iqbal said "Global South could be transformed into a hub of prosperity and progress by embracing new pathways and envisioning a future that is sustainable and innovative".

"The journey towards modernisation in the Global South is a collective endeavour that requires the concerted efforts of governments, private sector, civil society, and international partners", he said while addressing a parallel forum on "Promoting Modernization in the Global South: New Pathways, New Vision" during Second High-Level Conference of the Forum on Global Action for Shared Development. Stressing a need to

chart a new course and build a better future for all, the minister said that as we stand at the crossroads of history with the dawn of fourth Industrial Revolution,

we are presented with an unprecedented opportunity to redefine our future and reshape our world through innovative pathways and visionary approaches. Pakistan is enabling the new path of economic transformation through 5Es framework by focusing on export, E-Pakistan, environment, energy

and equity to make Pakistan \$1 trillion economy by 2035.

He said that modernization is more than just economic growth and technological advancement and is a holistic transformation that encompasses social, cultural, political, and environmental dimensions. For the Global South, modernization means improving the quality of life for all citizens, ensuring sustainable development, and fostering inclusive societies where everyone has the opportunity to thrive with dignity, he added. Terming technological innovation critical for new pathways to modernization, he said that the digital revolution offers the Global South an unparalleled chance to leapfrog traditional stages of development between 2015 and 2021, 4G network coverage doubled to reach 88% of world population with mo

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## Pakistan renews pledge to continue aiding Palestinians in Gaza at UNRWA's pledging conference

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Pakistan has commended the "indispensable" humanitarian services being rendered to the war-ravaged Gazans by UNRWA, the beleaguered UN agency for Palestinian refugees, amid intensive attempts by Israel to dismantle it.

"It is therefore imperative that we prioritize the continuity of UNRWA's operations to provide life-saving assistance to the people of Gaza," Pakistani delegate Rabia Ijaz told a pledging conference for the agency, at UN Headquarters in New York on Friday.

Pakistan, she said, was committed to providing relief and support to the Palestinian brothers and sisters, having already dispatched, since Oct. last, over 8 plane loads carrying more than 2,000 tons of humanitarian aid to Gaza.

The agency has been supporting critical services including education, health

and social services to some 5.9 million Palestine refugees, including vulnerable groups such as women, children, and persons with disabilities.

It also administers 58 refugee camps, addressing the dire humanitarian needs of over 1.6 million people across Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

The annual pledging conference, held under the auspices of the General Assembly, serves as a vital platform to raise funds for these operations.

UNRWA Commissioner General Philippe Lazzarini said at the start of the conference that the agency only had funds to operate through August.

At the end of the conference, he told reporters that, while the total amount in pledges won't be known until next week, he is confident there will be enough new money in its \$850 mil-

lion annual budget to keep the agency running until the end of September.

In her remarks, Ms Ijaz, a second secretary at Pakistan's mission to the UN, also called for a comprehensive reconstruction plan for shattered Gaza in accordance with the terms of the relevant UN resolution, promising to partner in the reconstruction of educational institutions, as announced by Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Ishaq Dar, at the High-Level Conference on Gaza held in Amman last month.

Over the past eight months, the Pakistani delegate highlighted that Israel's "genocidal" military aggression in Gaza had resulted in the tragic loss of over 37,000 Palestinian lives, with more than 84,500 injured, mostly women and children, as also displacing the entire Gaza population of Gaza.



**PESHAWAR: Security official stand alert to avoid any untoward incident as security has been tightened during the Holy month of Muharram-ul-Haram, at Gunj area in Peshawar.**

## Right to self-determination fundamental right of Kashmiri people: Ayaz Sadiq

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker of the National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Saturday paid tribute to people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir for rendering sacrifices for their freedom and the right to self-determination. In his message on the occasion of Kashmir Martyrs' Day, he said, "July 13, 1931, 22 Kashmiris laid down their lives while facing the Dogra forces."

On this day (13th July) in 1931, the troops of Dogra Maharaja had killed 22 Kashmiris, one after the other, outside Central Jail in Srinagar during the court proceedings against one Abdul Qadeer who had asked Kashmiri

people to defy the Dogra rule. Thousands of people had gathered outside the court to show their solidarity with Abdul Qadeer.

The speaker said that the people of Pakistan continue to remember the sacrifices of their Kashmiri brothers and sisters.

"History has witnessed that attempts to silence the voices of Kashmiris through force have failed," he added.

He strongly condemned the Indian government's attempts to alter the demographic structure of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, asserting that such plans would never succeed.

"The right to self-determination is a fundamental right of the Kashmiri people," he stated.

The Speaker demanded that India end its inhumane atrocities in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and urged the international community to take action against India's blatant violations of human rights.

He also appealed to the global community to play its role in resolving the dispute in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions.

"Pakistan will continue to extend full moral, political, and diplomatic support to our Kashmiri brothers and sisters," he affirmed.

## Announces compensation for martyrs Muqam condoles death of slain senator Hidayatullah

BAJAJUR (APP): Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFRON Engr Amir Muqam here Saturday visited the residence of slain Senator Hidayatullah Khan where he condoled with his family.

Engr Amir Muqam also expressed his deep condolences with his family members including former Governor Shaukatullah and Haji Bismillah on behalf of the PMLN Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Federal Government. Hidayatullah was the son of Haji Bismillah Khan.

He offered feteha for eternal peace of Senator Hidayatullah Shaheed who was martyred along with three other people in a bomb blast few days ago at Bajar.

Speaking with the affected and area elders at Nawagai, Engr Amir Muqam said that entire Federal Government under the leadership of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif was standing with the affected family. He said the entire nation whether it was Federal or Provincial Governments or central or provincial leadership would collectively fight the menace of terrorism. The Minister announced compensation for martyrs on behalf of the Federal Government.



**HYDERABAD: MQM Pakistan MNA Waseem Hussain and MPA Sabir Hussain Kaim Khani speaking at a press conference at HPC.**

## Pakistan has reached staff-level agreement with IMF.

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ambitious tax collection target.

The finance minister said Pakistan wanted to collect Rs13 trillion (\$44 billion) in taxes, which would be 40 percent more than the last fiscal year's. He said the government would ensure an increase in the number of taxpayers the country from the existing 5 million people who paid taxes in Pakistan.

Analysts said the new budget of about \$68 billion, up from \$50 billion in the last year, was likely to land a long-term IMF bailout of up to \$8 billion to help stabilize the economy.

Following is the text of the IMF statement:

In response to a request by the Pakistani authorities, an International Monetary Fund (IMF) team led by Nathan Porter, IMF's Mission Chief to Pakistan, held discussions during the May 13-23, 2024 staff visit to Islamabad and virtually thereafter on IMF support for the authorities' medium-term policy and reform plans. At the end of the discussions, Porter issued the following statement:

"The Pakistani authorities and the IMF team have reached a comprehensive program endorsed by the federal and provincial governments, that could be supported by a 37-month Extended Fund Arrangement (EFA) in the amount equivalent to SDR 5,320 million (or about US\$7 billion at current exchange rates). This agreement is subject to approval by the IMF's Executive Board and the timely confirmation of necessary financing assurances from Pakistan's development and bilateral partners.

"The program aims to capitalize on the hard-won macroeconomic stability achieved over the past year by furthering efforts to strengthen public finances, reduce inflation, rebuild external buffers and remove economic distortions to spur private sector led growth. Key policy goals of the authorities' program include:

"Sustainable public finances, through a gradual

fiscal consolidation based on reforms to broaden the tax base and remove exemptions, while increasing resources for critical development and social spending. In this regard, the authorities plan to increase tax revenues through measures of 1% percent of GDP in FY25 and 3 percent of GDP over the program. In particular, the recently approved FY25 budget targets an underlying general government primary surplus of 1 percent of GDP (2 percent in headline terms). Revenue collections will be supported by simpler and fairer direct and indirect taxation, including by bringing net income from the retail, export, and agriculture sectors properly into the tax system. At the same time, the FY25 budget provides additional resources to expand social protection by increasing both the generosity and coverage of BISP, education, and health spending.

"A fairer balance of fiscal effort between the Federal and Provincial governments, which have agreed to rebalance spend-

ing activities in line with the 18th constitutional amendment through the signature of a National Fiscal Pact that devolves to provincial governments higher spending for education, health, social protection, and regional public infrastructure investment, enabling improved public service provision. At the same time, the provinces will take steps to increase their own tax-collection efforts, including in sales tax on services and agricultural income tax. On the latter, all provinces are committed to fully harmonizing their Agriculture Income Tax regimes through legislative changes with the federal personal and corporate income tax regimes and this will become effective from January 1, 2025.

"Reducing inflation, deepening access to financing, and building strong external buffers are key to development and resilience. Monetary policy will continue to be focused on supporting disinflation, which will help protect real incomes, especially for the most vulnerable. To buffer against shocks and build

reserves, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) will maintain a flexible exchange rate and continue to improve the functioning of the foreign exchange market and the transparency around FX operations. On financial stability, the authorities plan to take measures to deepen access to financing, while strengthening financial institutions, addressing any undercapitalized banks, and upgrading their crisis management framework.

"Restoring energy sector viability and minimizing fiscal risks through the timely adjustment of energy tariffs, decisive cost-reducing reforms, and refraining from further unnecessary expansion of generation capacity. The authorities remain committed to undertaking targeted subsidy reforms and replace cross-subsidies to households with direct and targeted BISP support.

"Promoting private sector and export dynamism by improving the business environment, creating a level-playing field for all businesses.

## SIFC signs agreement with UAE company to attract investment

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) has signed an agreement with UAE's Consultancy Company AT Kearney Middle East Limited for promotion of investment in the country's diverse sectors.

The UAE company will provide expertise over a period of eighteen months focusing on a number of key areas to drive foreign investment, state-run Radio Pakistan reported Saturday.

The agreement includes strategies for attracting investment in key sectors and conducting pre-feasibility studies for selected projects.

The Kearney team along with the Public Private Partnership Authority held a detailed meeting with the National Coordinator of SIFC to discuss the roadmap for collaboration.

Islamabad established the SIFC, a civil-military hybrid forum, in June last year to attract foreign direct investment in agriculture, mining, information technology, defense production and energy sectors.

A team of AT Kearney and Pakistan's Public-Private Partnership Authority officials held a detailed meeting with the SIFC national coordinator to discuss the roadmap for collaboration, the Radio Pakistan broadcaster reported.

"The UAE company will provide expertise over a period of eighteen months focusing on a number of key areas to drive foreign investment," the report read. "The agreement includes strategies for attracting investment in key sectors and conducting pre-feasibility studies for selected projects."

The development comes amid a push for foreign investment by Pakistan, which has been facing low foreign exchange reserves, currency devaluation and high inflation.

The South Asian country is making desperate attempts to boost foreign investment and has reached a \$7 billion loan deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to support its \$350 billion fragile economy.



**ISLAMABAD: Gohar Ali Khan (front L), lawyer of Imran Khan celebrates with member of parliament Zartaj Gul (4R) after a court verdict overturned Khan's illegal marriage conviction, outside the court building.**

## Flour crisis deepens in Karachi, Lahore left with only 2-day of flour supply

KARACHI/LAHORE (INP): The flour crisis in Karachi city due to the strike by flour millers as the essential commodity is being sold in black market.

On the other hand, only one to two days' worth of stock remains available with flour dealers across Lahore, exacerbated by a surge in flour purchases amid the ongoing Ashura observances.

As per details, after the strike by the flour millers, the wholesale markets in Karachi, including the Jodia Bazaar ran out of flour, and prices hiked by Rs 5 per kilogram.

Abdul Rauf Ibrahim, a representative of wholesale grocers, said that the flour is being sold in the black market as well as at exorbitant prices in Karachi. He asked the government and flour mill owners to engage in talks to resolve the is-

sue. Meanwhile, Hyderabad, Mirpurkhas and other cities are also facing the crises as they ran out of flour. The price of fine flour has increased by Rs 5 per kilogram in the wholesale market, while the price of other flour hiked by Rs 2, reaching Rs 88 per kilogram. The retailers and chakki owners have also increased prices, with a 10-kilogram bag of flour now being sold at Rs 60 higher than the actual price.

Meanwhile, flour dealers and representatives of the Karyana Association have raised alarms over an imminent flour crisis in the city as stocks dwindle rapidly. Currently, only one to two days' worth of stock remains available with flour dealers across Lahore, exacerbated by a surge in flour purchases amid the ongoing Ashura observances.



**LASBELLA: Deputy Commissioner Hub Rohana Gul Kakar talking to community people during inaugural ceremony of ALP Centre Bhawani.**

## Govt's doors open..

Continued from page 1

Quetta. They said that the forces have rendered sacrifices in the war against terrorism.

Referring the presence of some veiled people present in the protest, the Provincial Minister Home noted with concern that there is threat of spreading chaos and disorder due to the suspected persons.

He stressed that the Baloch Yakjehti committee should pay attention to the issue.

He asked the protesters to cooperate with police and administration keeping in view the law and order situation.

He said that the restoration of law and order is prior of the government and it would be fulfilled.

The Provincial Minister for Finance, Mir Shoaib Nausherwani said that solution of all issues lies in talks and negotiations. He said that the gov-

ernment is ready to accept the demands remaining in the juris of law.

However, the government can't allow anyone to take law in one's hands, adding he asserted.

He said that the government's team held negotiations with the protesters at least for four times.

Addressing the meeting, Bakht Muhammad Kakar termed it sorrowful not to hold talks with the delegation of Ulemas by participants of protest.

He stressed that the people of Baloch Yakjehti Committee should have met the religious leaders.

The IGP said that the police would cooperate with the protesters observing protest in peaceful manner, but action would be taken against those sabotaging peace. At the outset, the participants were agreed on it that it is not an appropriate act to hold protest in honour of Muharramul Haram.

## Imran Khan..

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the trial court's decision and grant interim bail to the PTI founder.

Earlier in the day, Islamabad's District and Sessions Court led by Judge Muhammad Afzal Majoka had earlier reserved its decision on the appeals against the sentences of Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi in the iddat marriage case.

Short order issued by court said Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi should be immediately released unless they were wanted in other cases.

Several PTI activists and supporters of Imran Khan had gathered outside the court premises to stage rallies, but the atmosphere reportedly changed to celebration as soon as the verdict was announced.

Imran and Bushra Bibi were sentenced in the Iddat Nikkah case a few days before the February 8 general elections in the country. Several civil rights activists and legal experts had condemned the initial conviction handed to the PTI founding leader and his wife.

The couple had filed an appeal against their convictions.

## Imran says..

Continued from page 1

apex court judges stood by the rule of law." "Where there is a rule of law, those who are powerful are subordinate to the laws of the land," he commented.

Imran further said the verdict of the country's establishment and Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Qazi Faez Isa were looking for in the reserved seats' case was in everybody's knowledge. He complained that the PTI was not allowed to run the election campaign right from the word 'go'. "Our candidates were not even allowed to file their nomination papers. The chief justice even deprived the PTI of its election symbol," PTI founder said, adding, "Now our opponents fear that in the event of votes recount they might lose several seats they had won in the elections."

"They are particularly worried about the three constituencies of Islamabad." Demanding the trial of the chief election commissioner (CEC) under Article 6 of the constitution, the former prime minister said if he had an iota of shame left in him, he should resign and go home.

The question, he went on to say, he wanted to put to Justice Isa was whether he deemed it morally fit to sit on the benches hearing his cases.

## Global South could..

Continued from page 1

bile broadband providing connectivity to internet.

but 35% have access to internet in developing countries compared to 80% in developed world. Increasing 35% to 75% could \$2 trillion to their economies.

Embracing cutting-edge technologies such as artificial intelligence, block chain, and the internet of things can drive efficiency, transparency, and innovation across various sectors. Providing access to Internet is a basic for development in now economy, he added.

Prof Ahsan Iqbal said that modernization requires inclusive governance structures that are transparent, accountable, and responsive to the needs of all citizens.

Strengthening public institutions for superior service delivery and promoting good governance based on merit and respect for citizens will ensure that the benefits of modernization are equitably distributed and don't create inequality and exclusion, he added.

"Highlighting importance of regional cooperation, the minister said that the challenges faced by the Global South are often transnational in nature.

Strengthening regional cooperation and fostering partnerships can enhance collective resilience, facilitate knowledge sharing, and drive coordinated efforts towards achievement of shared goals, he added.

"We must promote BRI to bring greater regional connectivity for regional cooperation."

Sharing new visions for the future, he observed, "Our vision for modernization must prioritize the well-being and dignity of every individual."

economy in which many of today's skills are likely to be redundant.

Currently, only 34% of young people in low-income countries complete secondary school. Emphasizing STEM education, vocational training, and lifelong learning will empower individuals and boost economic productivity, he added.

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**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Hadi Rahimi with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Muhammad Jan, citizen number 544003553633 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs:  
1. Safia (Daughter) 2. Fozia (Daughter) 3. Habiba (Daughter) 4. Zakia (Daughter) 5. Sajjad Ali (Son) 6. Muhammad Sharif (Son) 7. Muhammad Hadi Rahimi (Son) 8. Muhammad Mehdi (Son)  
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.  
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA QUETTA-SFU

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Farzana with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Muhammad Banaras citizen number 5440035560141 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs:  
1. Farzana (Spouse)  
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.  
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA QUETTA-SFU

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Naveed Uz Zaman Khan Sherwani with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Jamil Khan Sherwani citizen number 5440006280847 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs:  
1. Anum Jamil (Daughter) 2. Naveed Uz Zaman Khan Sherwani (Son) 3. Waheed Uz Zaman Khan Sherwani (Son) 4. Saeed Uz Zaman Khan Sherwani (Son)  
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.  
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA QUETTA-SFU

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Anjum Anwar with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Malik Muhammad Anwar citizen number 3520115808099 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs:  
1. Anjum Anwar (Daughter)  
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.  
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA QUETTA-SFU

PI03032724



## French Ambassador expresses commitment for strengthening bilateral ties on 'Bastille Day'

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a show of friendship and co-operation, the French Ambassador to Pakistan, Nicolas Galey, hosted a reception Friday night to mark France's National Day, known as Bastille Day.

Bastille Day, or "le Quatorze Juillet" in French, commemorates the storming of the Bastille prison on July 14, 1789.

This event was a significant moment in the French Revolution, symbolizing the fight against oppression and the beginning of a new republic based on liberty, equality, and fraternity.

Bastille Day is celebrated across France with various festivities, including a grand military parade on the Champs-Élysées in Paris.

French Ambassador Nicolas Galey and Pakistan's Minister for Privatization, Investment Board and Communica-

tions Aleem Khan expressed their commitment to strengthening the friendship between their two countries.

French Ambassador Nicolas Galey on the occasion highlighted historical and cultural connections between France and Pakistan and also appreciated Pakistan's active participation in the celebrations.

He emphasized that cultural exchanges are crucial for enhancing mutual understanding and cooperation.

Ambassador Galey also highlighted France's support for Pakistan's development initiatives, particularly in sustainable energy, infrastructure development, and vocational training.

Privatization Minister Aleem Khan, who was a chief guest on the French National Day highlighted the importance of strong economic and trade rela-

tions between Pakistan and France.

He reaffirmed Pakistan's dedication to working closely with France to explore new areas of collaboration, especially in trade, education, and technology.

"The friendship between Pakistan and France is not only based on cultural ties but also on economic cooperation. We are dedicated to expanding our trade relations and exploring new opportunities for collaboration," he said.

Both officials acknowledged the contributions of the Pakistani community in France and the French community in Pakistan, recognizing their role in bridging cultural and social gaps.

They vowed on the occasion of potential initiatives to further enhance people-to-people contacts and promote cultural and academic exchanges.



ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to PM on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Romina Khurshid Alam chairing PM's committee meeting on establishing a mountaineering school in Gilgit Baltistan.

## Chairman CDA wants swift progress on key Islamabad projects

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman, Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa, conducted a comprehensive tour of various ongoing projects across the city on Saturday, accompanied by senior officers from relevant formations.

Kicking off his visit at the Islamabad Model Jail, Chairman Randhawa underscored the urgency of completing the construction work at the earliest.

He directed the CDA's engineering wing to closely monitor the progress to ensure timely delivery.

In Sector C-16, the Chairman expressed satisfaction with the development progress in C-16/3

and C-16/4.

He addressed the issue of built properties in the sector, instructing immediate resolution and promising that rehabilitation benefits for affected residents would be provided directly to their doorsteps through a one-window operation.

At Sector C-14, Chairman Randhawa set a clear deadline of September 20 for the completion of the road network, drainage, and sewerage systems.

He emphasized the necessity of maintaining high-quality standards and warned of strict action against consultants for any negligence in quality control.

Addressing environmental concerns, Chairman Randhawa mandated an im-

mediate halt to construction activities within and around the Margalla Hills National Park, aiming to preserve the natural landscape.

During his visit to the Park Road expansion project, Chairman Randhawa expressed dissatisfaction with the pace of work and urged for its swift completion. He instructed that all sections of the project be finished promptly to avoid further delays.

Concluding his tour at the Stray Dog Population Control Center, the Chairman directed staff to improve care for the dogs, particularly in light of the summer weather. He emphasized enhancing the ventilation and cleaning systems to ensure the well-being of the animals.

## Secretary information, PIO extend condolences

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Information and Broadcasting Secretary Shahera Shahid and Principal Information Officer Mubashir Hassan on Saturday expressed their grief and sorrow over the death of the mother of senior journalists Aon Sahi and Nokhaiz Sahi.

Federal Secretary Information and PIO expressed heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the family of the deceased.

Shahera Shahid said

she was deeply saddened to hear the news of the death of the mother Aon Sahi and Nokhaiz Sahi.

She said the demise of a mother was a great tragedy. The secretary information and PIO said that they stood with the bereaved family in this hour of grief.

They prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear this loss with fortitude.

## Competition tribunal maintains Penalty, upholds CCP's findings

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Competition Appellate Tribunal upheld findings of the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) in the appeal filed by M/s NFC Employees Cooperative Housing Society.

In 2016, the residents of the society complained to the CCP that they were being deprived of choice in terms of cable television. They were forced to sub-

scribe to the sole cable television network provider i.e. MC Networks, said a press release issued here on Saturday.

The Commission's order imposed a penalty of Rupees One Million on the NFC Employees Cooperative Housing Society Limited for granting exclusivity to a cable service provider and restricting residents' choices, thereby violating Section 4(2)(a).

## Study reveals cigarette smoke poses greater risk than vaping

ISLAMABAD (APP): A recent study conducted at University College London's Institute of Epidemiology and Healthcare has revealed that cigarette smoke is significantly more harmful than vape smoke.

The research indicated that vape smoke contains less nicotine compared to regular cigarette smoke. Blood tests on children exposed to vape smoke showed they inhaled less than one-seventh the amount of nicotine compared to those exposed to regular cigarette smoke.

Researchers also noted that second-hand exposure to harmful substances from e-cigarettes is likely even lower. While vaping contains similar levels of nicotine, it has significantly lower levels of the toxins and carcinogens found in tobacco smoke. A senior researcher at the institute, Professor Sher Shahab, stated, "The study suggests that concerns about second-hand vaping are somewhat overblown, but the results for children confirm the dangers of smoking, which should be avoided at all costs."



Federal Minister for Privatization, Investment Board and Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan addressing as a Chief Guest on the occasion of National Day of France

## Gilani pays tribute to Kashmir martyrs

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Saturday paid tribute to the martyrs of Kashmir, honoring their sacrifices and struggle against the Indian occupied forces.

In a message on "Kashmir Martyrs' Day," he said that the martyrs of July 13, 1931, laid the foundation for today's freedom movement.

He said that generations of Kashmiris have been making sacrifices and struggling against the Kashmiri Hindutva

government's conspiracy to destroy their identity.

Gilani condemned unlawful and tyrannical occupation of Indian forces on Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

He reiterated Pakistan's unwavering support for the right of self-determination of Kashmiris, affirming Pakistan's commitment to supporting the freedom movement until the liberation of occupied Kashmir.

He expressed confidence that the day to end India's illegal occupation is not far off.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif laying a floral wreath at the Yadgar-e-Shuhada at the FBR Headquarters

## Kashmiris observing Martyrs' Day today

ISLAMABAD (APP): Kashmiris on both sides of the Line of Control and the world over observed Kashmir Martyrs' Day on Saturday, with the reaffirmation of the pledge that they would continue the mission of their martyrs till the achievement of the inalienable right to self-determination.

According to Kashmir Media Service, the call for the observance of the day was given by the leadership of All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) which had also called for a march towards Naqashband Sahib in Srinagar where the martyrs of 1931 are buried to pay tributes to the martyrs.

On this day in 1931, the troops of Dogra Maharaja had killed 22 Kashmiris, one after the

other, outside Central Jail in Srinagar during the court proceedings against one Abdul Qadeer who had asked Kashmiri people to defy the Dogra rule. Thousands of people had gathered outside the court to show their solidarity with Abdul Qadeer. As the time for obligatory Zuhar prayers approached, one of the youth stood up and started reciting Azan. He was shot dead by the Dogra soldiers and next youth started the Azan where it was left by the martyred youth. He was also killed and in the process of completing the Azan a total of 22 Kashmiris were martyred, one after the other. This carnage is the blackest chapter in the history of Jammu and Kashmir.



ISLAMABAD: Laborers busy digging at roadside for installing new pipeline at Lehrar Road.

## PMD forecasts more rain-thundershower across various regions

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has predicted further rain-thundershowers accompanied by windstorms and gusty winds for several regions over the next 24 hours.

According to a private news channel, monsoon currents from the Arabian Sea are penetrating the upper and central parts of the country, while a trough of a westerly wave is impacting the upper regions.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, northeast and central Punjab, Potohar region, Islamabad, Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, and northeast Balochistan were expected to be affected.

Heavy rains may occur in isolated locations within Kashmir, northeast and central Punjab, Potohar region, northeast and central Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Kashmir, and northeast Balochistan.

In the last 24 hours, rain-wind/thundershowers with isolated heavy falls were reported in Islamabad, Potohar region, northeast and central Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Kashmir, and northeast Balochistan.

In contrast, other parts of the country experienced hot and humid weather. Dadu was the hottest place in the country on Friday, with temperatures soaring up to 46 degrees Celsius.

## Experts at ISSI Round-table recommend 'strategic patience' on Pakistan-India relations

ISLAMABAD (APP): In order to analyse the possible future policy approach of India under the third term of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and consider policy options for Pakistan, the India Study Centre (ISC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), organised a round-table titled "Modi 3.0, What to Expect Regarding Pakistan-India Relations?"

The Round-table was attended by senior diplomats, academics, heads of think-tanks, journalists, and area specialists, said a press release issued on Saturday.

The panellists had the

consensus view that at the moment, given the developments in post-election India and the dynamics of BJP-led NDA government, no major breakthrough was expected as far as relations between India and Pakistan were concerned.

They noted that the BJP leadership's sharply anti-Pakistan rhetoric during the Lok Sabha election campaign, relentless smear against Pakistan by Indian Ministers internationally, and continuation of the same security and foreign policy team, clearly indicated that there was no likelihood of a change in New Delhi's general outlook towards Pakistan or of posi-

tive movement in India-Pakistan relations.

The panellists cautioned that statements from Pakistan indicating its willingness to talk to India on all issues were at times misinterpreted by New Delhi as a sign of weakness. They stressed that while Pakistan should remain open to the possibility of constructive engagement, the onus remained on India to create an enabling environment for result-oriented dialogue. They recommended 'strategic patience' while discussing policy options for Pakistan - underlining that Pakistan should pursue good-neighbourly relations on the basis of mutual respect.

## Mirwaiz putt under house arrest

ISLAMABAD (APP): The authorities today put senior leader of All Parties Hurriyat Conference Mirwaiz Umar Farooq under house arrest in Srinagar, Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, to prevent him from paying homage to the martyrs of July 13, 1931 and offering Fateha for them. According to Kashmir Media Service, the All Parties Hurriyat Conference in a statement issued in Srinagar said that the administration put Mirwaiz under house arrest to prevent him from going to the Martyrs' Graveyard in Naqshband Sahib.

## APHC-AJK remembers July 13, 1931 martyrs in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (APP): The All Parties Hurriyat Conference Azad Jammu and Kashmir (APHC-AJK) chapter organized a seminar, today, to pay tributes to the martyrs of July 1931.

According to Kashmir Media Service, in the seminar chaired by Convener Ghulam Mohammad Safi, the speakers paid glowing tributes to the martyrs and said that July 13 is an unforgettable day in the his-

tory of Jammu and Kashmir when in 1931, on this day, the soldiers of the cruel Dogra ruler attacked the Central Jail Srinagar.

They said the history of Kashmir is full of eternal sacrifices. In 1947, they added, the cruel era of Dogra ended when India occupied Jammu and Kashmir by force. They said India has made the lives of Kashmiris hell at this time.



ISLAMABAD: Supporters of former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party leader Imran Khan, celebrate after a court verdict overturned his illegal marriage conviction, outside the court building in Federal Capital.

## IRSA releases 292,000 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Saturday released 292,000 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 347,100 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1523.34 feet and was 125.34 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 182,400 cusecs and 139,400 cusecs respectively.

The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1194.00 feet, which was 146.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 32,100 cusecs and 20,000 cusecs respectively.

The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 164,600, 180,600, 151,400 and 82,300 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 69,200 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 33,600 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

## Dr Abid nominated only South Asian expert member of COP29 advisory body

ISLAMABAD (APP): Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri has been nominated as member of the prestigious COP 29 international advisory committee, the only South Asian expert, to assist the chair on the global environmental moot's negotiation agenda.

The decision was made during the inaugural meeting of the COP29 international advisory committee (IAC) held on July 11.

The 29th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP29) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP29) will be held in Baku, Azerbaijan, this year from November 11 to 22.

The Republic of Azerbaijan as the President and host nation of the COP29 is committed to engaging a diverse array of stakeholders, including state parties, international organizations, financial institutions, businesses, academia, and civil society, with the aim to deliver an inclusive and impactful outcome of the conference.

The committee will comprise eminent personalities who can offer valuable perspectives on the various pillars of climate action.

It may be mentioned that Dr Suleri is the only expert from South Asia on this committee, who will be supporting the COP29 President in steering the negotiation agenda of the conference.



ISLAMABAD: Children enjoying in muddy water on the side of Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed Road in the Federal Capital.



ISLAMABAD: President Young lawyers Forum for Judicial Reforms along with other officials addressing a press conference at NPC in the Federal Capital.



Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

Sunday July 14, 2024

**Injustice undone**

The verdict is in. It was the PTI, not 'PTI-backed independents', which won the most seats in the Feb 8 general election. This distinction, for those not familiar with the twists and turns of the reserved seats saga, is especially significant as it has been made by the Supreme Court itself.

The majority judgement means that not only will the PTI be restored as a lawful political party in the national and provincial assemblies, but it will also be able to claim a large share of reserved seats for minorities and women and, thereby, solidify its position in the various legislatures.

This is a stunning reversal of fortunes for a party that was, both before and after the recent general election, being treated as a defunct entity with seemingly no political rights based on the ECP's gross misinterpretation of the Supreme Court's Jan 13 verdict that denied the PTI the use of its 'bat' symbol.

"The PTI was and remains a political party," the Supreme Court clarified shortly after noon to an anxious crowd gathered on its premises on a sweltering Friday. On this point, 11 of the 13 judges seemed to agree. The majority upheld that the denial of an election symbol to a political party does not affect its constitutional and legal rights to continue functioning as a political entity, including its right to participate in an election or to field its candidates.

It was these rights that the ECP had so blatantly subverted when it repeatedly refused to let PTI candidates contest on their party-issued tickets and insisted on treating its returned candidates as independents. Now, through its judgement, the Supreme Court has, as a form of restorative justice, allowed the PTI to reorganise itself in parliament and make a fresh bid for the reserved seats that were denied to it, as is its right.

In so doing, the Supreme Court has undone a historic injustice. The PTI-SIC alliance was always an abnormality, a marriage of convenience necessitated by the unique and arbitrary conditions and restrictions imposed on the PTI by the ECP. To make matters worse, the ECP not only refused to recognise the coalition's right to a share of reserved seats, it also gifted them to other parties.

The decision flew in the face of reason and the principles of proportional representation and, therefore, had to be undone. Fortunately, the majority of the judges decided to go further and do complete justice by undoing the series of wrongs that had been caused by the ECP's reprehensible decisions based on the 'bat' judgement. It is now hoped that this judgement will preclude the kind of blatant engineering that defined this last general election. The government and establishment must not stand in the way of its implementation.

**Tariq Afghan**

The illegal cutting and commercial exploitation of glaciers within the regions of Dir, Chitral, Swat, Shangla, Kaghan, Naran, and other parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa pose a significant threat to the ecological and climatic stability of the province. These activities are in direct violation of the environmental protection statutes and regulations governing KP.

With over 7,000 known glaciers, Pakistan forms the largest mass of ice outside the polar regions. Northern Pakistan, crisscrossed by the Karakoram, Himalayan, and Hindu Kush mountain ranges, is a landscape carved out of ice and rock. These glaciers provide much-needed irrigation to local communities, acting as the lifeblood of civilisation in the north. Local communities have developed intricate systems of canals to utilise glacier meltwater for crop irrigation.

However, climate change has profoundly affected Pakistan, leading to rapidly rising temperatures and melting snow, which cause massive flooding.

devastating villages and leading to frequent drownings. Like many alpine areas worldwide, glaciers in Pakistan are retreating.

KP is home to approximately 3,050 glaciers, primarily located in its northern regions. These glaciers are crucial for the region's water resources and ecological balance. It has come to light that certain individuals and entities are engaged in the unauthorised extraction and transportation of glacier ice for commercial purposes, cutting glaciers into large blocks.

This exploitation causes the rapid depletion of these critical natural resources. Local sources report that during the past few years, especially during Ramadan, 200 to 300 mini-trucks loaded with ice blocks were transported daily from Upper Dir to other parts of Dir, Bajaur, Malakand, and even Mardan District. The local population remains largely unaware of the glaciers' importance to their area's ecological system.

Ironically, despite Pakistan's obligations under international environmental laws, no specific legislation

addresses glacier protection at the national or provincial levels. The Environmental Protection Act of 1997, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Environmental Protection Act of 2014, and the Climate Change Act of 2017 do not mention glaciers. This legal void is alarming, given the critical role glaciers play in the region's ecological and climatic stability.

In 2010, lawmakers in Argentina passed the world's first national glacier protection law, which prohibits mining, industrial activities, and other harmful activities near glaciers in the country. In January 2024, the parliament of Tajikistan also passed a law for the protection of glaciers.

Keeping in view the situation, Pakistan, especially the provincial assembly of KP as well as the legislative assembly of Gilgit-Baltistan, needs to pass glacier protection and preservation laws immediately to stop further damage.

The unauthorised cutting of glaciers constitutes a clear violation of environmental protection laws and regulations in force within KP. These actions require immediate investigation

and enforcement of the relevant legal penalties against the perpetrators. The depletion of glaciers disrupts the fragile ecological balance, adversely affecting local flora and fauna. The loss of these glaciers undermines efforts to preserve biodiversity and protect endangered species within these regions. Glaciers play an essential role in regulating Earth's climate by reflecting solar radiation and maintaining the global temperature balance. The reduction of glacier mass accelerates global warming and climate change, leading to severe consequences for weather patterns, agricultural productivity, and human health.

These glaciers serve as important freshwater reservoirs. Their degradation will result in a significant decrease in water availability for local communities, agricultural activities, and wildlife, thereby threatening food security and livelihoods. The natural beauty and unspoiled environment of these regions attract a substantial number of tourists, contributing significantly to the local economy. The destruction of glaciers will adversely

affect tourism, leading to economic losses for communities that depend on this sector. Pakistan is a signatory to the Paris Agreement and several other international laws on climate issues and environmental protection, which mandate the protection of our glacier reserves.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, along with its subsequent protocols and agreements such as the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement, commits parties to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change, which directly impact glacier melt and preservation.

Article 2 of the Paris Agreement aims to limit global warming to well below two degrees Celsius, with efforts to limit the increase to 1.5°C, a critical target for reducing the rate of glacier melting. The Convention on Biological Diversity promotes the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources. Article 8 of the CBD emphasises in-situ conservation, including

protecting ecosystems and natural habitats such as glacier regions to maintain viable populations of species in their natural surroundings.

The United Nations Convention on Combat Desertification addresses land degradation and desertification, including protecting water sources and glaciers that contribute to regional hydrological stability. Articles 10 and 11 of the UNCCD focus on national action programmes and strategies to combat desertification and promote sustainable land management practices.

The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes 17 SDGs, several relevant to glacier protection. SDG 13 (climate action) asks countries to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts, which includes the preservation of glaciers. SDG 15 (life on land) promotes the sustainable management of forests, combating desertification, halting and reversing land degradation, and stopping biodiversity loss, indirectly supporting glacier conservation. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Shahid Kardar**

The provinces have become the favourite punching bag of Islamabad, donors and commentators. They are being chastised for failing to generate adequate resources to fund their constitutional responsibilities and provide social and economic services, such as law and order, education, health, water and sanitation, etc. This article examines the fairness of this censure, without getting into the merits of the last NFC Award that has given the provinces close to 60 per cent of the national divisible resource pool.

The revenue-raising capacity of the provinces is somewhat limited because of the taxation powers in the Constitution and the structure of GST in VAT mode. This is not to suggest that the provinces have done enough to generate revenue. Historically, they haven't been sufficiently aggressive in collecting taxes on incomes derived from agriculture (AIT) — making it worse by also treating land rented out as agricultural income — or to make urban property tax more

progressive and robust. However, they have made a decent effort in recent years to mobilise additional revenues by widening their base of GST on services. As for AIT, there are outlandish claims about what can be generated from the crop sector as well as exaggerated estimates of the size of the livestock sector.

Over the years, Islamabad has pre-empted and exploited the revenue base of the provinces that everyone wants them to exploit — motor vehicles, real estate and services. It has levied a variety of silly withholding taxes on motor vehicles and property — in the latter also a capital gains tax — a tax on 'deemed income' and now even excise duty.

Similarly, it has narrowed down provincial options to exploit the full potential of GST on services. For instance, by what twisted logic can Islamabad levy GST on the distribution of electricity, gas, etc treating them as goods, and impose excise duties on financial services in lieu of GST that the provinces could have levied, and have conceptually bizarre legisla-

**Expecting too much**

tion that empowers it to levy GST on retail outlets by treating them as selling goods whereas all they are doing is adding value as a service by selling finished goods? These entities are providing services — which are treated as services under the national income accounts — and GST on services is a provincial tax under the Constitution.

There is certainly an issue at the provincial level of multiple revenue-collecting authorities: one agency collects GST on services, one collects property tax and motor vehicle tax and one registers property transfers and collects stamp duty. Resultantly, taxpayers have to contend with different authorities for different taxes. This multiplicity of revenue-collecting agencies is adversely affecting administrative and economic efficiency, leading to higher transaction and operational costs, the unnecessary duplication of functions and databases, and inconsistent legal and other treatment of similar taxes. Such a complex arrangement has raised the cost of compliance for taxpayers, caus-

ing increased aggravation. What is, however, worrying is that instead of correcting these anomalies in tax structures, Islamabad, commentators and the IMF are intent on consolidating and strengthening flawed existing systems. They want the provinces to generate, by hook or by crook, more revenues to plug some magical number of the budget deficit. So much for their refrain that tax reforms are being studiously implemented.

The demand that the provinces should raise more revenues is also somewhat bizarre when examined against the political economy fallout of related decisions were they to heed such advice. Why on earth would any government impose or increase a tax — and, resultantly, provoke the ire of its constituents — to muster additional resources, which it would be required to save for the federal government to spend? For this year, the provinces are required to produce surpluses in excess of Rs1,215 billion! Why would they accede to such a ridiculous demand to generate sur-

pluses for Islamabad to spend? For KP, it would be even more politically peculiar to do so, with large sums owed to them for hydel profits, and the local economy struggling to function in an insecure and debilitating environment.

Furthermore, the biggest share of provincial expenditures is that of salaries and pensions. Whereas Islamabad is itself bloated and continues to show little serious intent to right-size its workforce it has this year revised salaries by close to 25pc and pensions by 15pc, demanding belt-tightening from the rest of the population to be able to loosen theirs. The resulting increases have imposed a huge burden on the provinces, which employ close to 80pc of the civilian workforce in the public sector — excluding defence personnel. It is politically impossible for them to deny their employees similar pay hikes even if they cannot afford it. There are other recurrent expenditures of the provinces, resulting from decisions taken by the federal government. Until the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment, the federal government determined

both the level and the terms at which the provinces could borrow from a source. Islamabad used this provision to lend to them at interest rates substantially higher than what it itself was paying. The provinces were also forced to accept foreign loans without regard to their capability to service the debt even for projects of dubious value, because the federal government needed foreign exchange to discharge its external liabilities. To summarise, it is easy to be critical of the provinces for not marshalling adequate resources. One must be mindful of this given the context in which the provinces are operating, the baggage they are either already carrying or that is being placed on them because of federal decisions that impact their budgets or expect them to share the expenditure on a host of schemes initiated and designed by Islamabad, and launch politically harsh tax-augmenting measures to generate savings for Islamabad to fund politically driven wasteful and unproductive recurrent expenditures and projects.

**Typhoid peril****Naseem Salahuddin**

In Pakistan, typhoid is a severe endemic public health problem; the obvious reasons are lack of access to safe water and an unsanitary environment. It is frequently diagnosed poorly and treated improperly; if allowed to linger, serious, sometimes fatal complications may ensue. As of 2019 global estimates, nine million cases of typhoid fever are reported annually, causing 110,000 deaths per year. Children are at the highest risk, especially those fed powdered milk with contaminated water.

In Karachi's sweltering heat, a young man gulps sherbet with crushed ice from a roadside vendor. Invisible to him are millions of microscopic bugs called *Salmonella typhi*, swarming in the thirst-quencher. Some bacteria get killed in the stomach acid, while others escape and lodge inside the lining of the small intestine, where they multiply rapidly. For a few days, the person feels unwell and has abdominal discomfort, perhaps diarrhoea and low-grade fever. As bacterial load reaches a critical mass, they enter the bloodstream and circulate throughout the body.

A week or two later, the second phase begins with high fever, chills, headache, vomiting and abdominal pain that can continue until the infection is diagnosed and treated. If untreated, the bugs multiply and migrate to the rest of the gut, liver, and spleen, occasionally into the bones and rarely other body tissues. Tiny ulcers may form in the intestine, which may erode and bleed.

Diagnosing and treating typhoid has become a nightmare for patients and doctors. Antibiotics prescribed casually before

the critical blood culture is drawn for definitive diagnosis muddle the interpretation of results because the bacteria fail to grow in the presence of antibiotics. Moreover, spurious tests such as 'Widal' and 'Typhidot', which have been banned but are still prescribed by charlatans or substandard labs, lead to erroneous diagnoses and unnecessary medicines. Frequently, patients land in emergency rooms in a state of shock with a perforated gut or haemorrhage from an eroded blood vessel, requiring emergency surgery. At the same time, infectious disease specialists ponder selecting an antibiotic that may work. Consequently, hospitalisation is prolonged, and many patients succumb to complications.

Diagnosing the cause of fever without cough/cold, skin rash, urinary symptoms, or other pointers may confuse the patient and doctor, as many viral illnesses initially present similarly. If a high fever without other symptoms persists beyond a week, it is time to suspect typhoid. Rather than procrastinate, an astute doctor, after ruling out other frequent causes of acute fever, will draw blood for culture, send it to a qualified lab, and then prescribe an antibiotic. Doing things in reverse order will only confound the diagnosis, prolong the patient's misery, and increase expenses. *Salmonella typhi*, if present, grows in the lab usually within three to seven days; the result will suggest the drug to which it is sensitive, thus leading to a conclusive diagnosis and focused treatment.

Decades ago, *Salmonella typhi* was susceptible to commonly available, inexpensive oral antibiotics, but the bacteria, in time, became resistant. Newer drugs against *Salmonella*

were introduced, but have become redundant with indiscriminate use. We have reached a serious situation: the only effective oral antibiotic for typhoid is gradually mutating towards resistance. At this time, salvage lies in an expensive carbapenem antibiotic, which is administered intravenously over a week or two of hospitalisation. If overused, this too will fail in time, and we will witness a slew of mortality-ties.

Typhoid and non-typhoid other food and water-borne infections must be prevented. A wishful thought is for our municipalities to provide clean drinking water rather than the sewage-contaminated water supplied to the population. While this remains a pipe dream, individuals should consume only boiled or chlorinated water, keep food protected from flies, and wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Only food and drink that can be trusted to be hygienic should be consumed.

Vaccinating against typhoid can mitigate the ordeal. The older vaccine was partially protective and only for two to three years. Recently, a new conjugate vaccine was introduced that provides 80 per cent protection for four to five years and can be administered to all ages along with other childhood vaccines. The Sindh government has done well to hold an extensive campaign to vaccinate over 10m children in the province. Adults can receive it through private means.

The least our metropolitan service can do for its citizens is to provide clean drinking water and a trash-free environment. This will save us from many deadly infectious diseases. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Befits the bill****Shahzad Sharjeel**

Utility bills will not decrease, and natural gas outages and electricity loadshedding will continue until we hold ourselves and all state and government components accountable. The right questions, policies, and priorities will make Pakistan sustainable. We can't rob the coming generations of their future.

Not a day passes without a new saviour appearing on the horizon, promising the moon. A litany of snake oil salesmen is peddling 'to pay or not to pay electricity bills' as the existential question. A do-gooder is making bids for K-Electric through video shorts. All that stands between long-suffering Karachiites and an affordable and reliable power supply is for someone to tell him how power companies are acquired, he proclaims.

Many an adviser to the Ministry of Finance can regale you with stories of shysters willing to pay the entire national debt if the ministry issues them a letter of support. The surest way of getting rid of these bleeding-heart patriots is to ask them to deposit a letter of guarantee worth only a million dollars.

Returning to the latest superhero to the rescue, after you get over his chutzpah, one wants to ask, 'Really! K-Electric? The same entity that Shanghai Electric could not buy?' He would buy it and run it like a soup kitchen.

A legislator's speech is also making the rounds. The MNA raves and rants about 'bias' against Sindh, which causes 18-hour-long power outages. The legislator is also livid at the buck being passed to the masses for electricity theft and non-payment of bills. Such bravado is

possible because we are all accomplices in allowing the situation to come to this.

Who does not know of rural electrification schemes for sparsely populated hamlets across the country incurring infrastructure costs running into hundreds of millions, line losses, and theft? Rural areas have as much right to essential amenities as anyone in the country, but how come everyone plays along as if free lunches exist? These schemes are aimed at getting votes. The constituents believe they elect their representatives to get subsidised, if not free, electricity, teaching jobs, transfers and postings, and to sort out matters with the local police.

To cut to the chase, we behave silly because it suits us. We have not asked the questions that we should have, for instance, 'why does my village have to get electricity from the national grid?' 'Why can't more localised solutions like run-of-river, small hydro generation, and renewables like wind and solar energy be used?' 'Why should K-Electric be allowed to keep its generation plants idle and demand the national grid provide cheaper hydro units? Governments are responsible for ensuring the energy portfolio has the right mix of renewables and hydrocarbons to balance tariffs and the environment. Have citizens ever asked which government should be making these policies? Why the federal government and why not the provincial?' 'Why should Ilesco consumers pick up the tab for AJK? Because it involves strategic interests? But the interests are national, aren't they? Shouldn't consumers everywhere in the country shoulder this responsibility then? Why should K-

Electric consumers bear the brunt if Hesco cannot collect bills? If PESCO suspends transmission upon non-payment of bills, how can the PTI government force it to resume power supply to defaulting consumers?

If KP feels short-changed on royalty for the hydroelectricity generated there and supplied across the country, why are its grievances not addressed? In the same vein, Balochistan and Sindh enable access to the sea for the rest of the country; why shouldn't their residents get credit points for every good that passes through their ports for transmission northward and to Afghanistan? These credits can then be traded with the Punjab, KP and AJK governments against the liquid gold they so graciously allow to flow through their territories to lower riparian provinces.

None of this is meant to sow discord among the citizens or the provincial and federal entities. By now, we should all know that life offers no solutions; it only has trade-offs. We are not paying through our noses for utilities but for our individual and collective decisions. Never mind the energy pipelines crisscrossing the region and the cheaper hydroelectricity from Central Asia; until we turn off the militancy taps, the investment environment will remain unattractive. If we want to resent debt servicing, we should follow up with questions about whether the loans were spent on human development or fireworks. If we don't ask the right questions, we will remain on the dole even if we strike oil. India earned more in software and related services exports in 2021 than Saudi Arabia did in oil. -- Courtesy Dawn



## Punjab Cabinet Committee visits main procession route of Rawalpindi

RAWALPINDI (APP): Punjab Cabinet Committee on Law and Order here on Saturday visited the main procession route of Rawalpindi and reviewed all the arrangements.

The Cabinet Committee members under the leadership of Khawaja Salman Rafique reviewed all the arrangements in detail and issued instructions to the authorities concerned to ensure law and order.

The Committee was briefed that the main procession would start from Imambargah Colonel Maqbool Hussain and culminate at Imambargah Qadeemi.

The Cabinet Committee also visited Madrasa Taleem-ul-Quran and met with Mohtamam Maulana Ashraf Ali.

Khawaja Salman Rafique said, "We witnessed an atmosphere

of interfaith harmony, unity, peace and tolerance throughout the province during visit of different cities.

Apart from the security arrangements, peace committees were active for interfaith harmony, he added.

"We have to forget the differences and talk about commonalities," the Chairman Cabinet Committee said.

He informed that three security tiers had been set up for security of the processions and majalis across Punjab.

In addition to monitoring the use of the loudspeakers and social media, records of majalis and muharram processions were being compiled, Khawaja Salman Rafique added.

There should be a strong briefing for the officials deployed in the field, he instructed.



LAHORE: The Ambassador of Iraq to Pakistan, Hamid Abbas Lafta meeting with Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan.

## KP Governor for improvement in health, education system

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Faisal Karim Kundi here Saturday underscored the need for improvement in health and education sectors and bringing workable and goal oriented reforms in existing systems of universities, medical colleges and hospitals on solid basis in the province.

He was addressing a representative delegation of education experts led by Dr Aasia Khan and comprising Dr Qibla Ayaz, Dr Jamil Chitrali, Dr Abdul Rehman Khattak, Dr Sajjad Khan and others here at Governor House.

The delegation presented various suggestions for improvement of education sectors especially administration and financial affairs. The

delegation was of the view that the systems of hospitals and universities in Sindh province in public interest was better than the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The delegation informed about a formal coordination/connection cell setup at Governor Secretariat Sindh for speedy disposal of matters pertaining to the public sector universities of the Sindh province.

Dr Qibla Ayaz requested for review on Education Policy 2003 and establishment of a university for tribal youth either in Peshawar or Islamabad.

The Governor also informed about appointment and promotion of the faculty at medical colleges, loopholes in admission system and legal lacuna.

On this occasion, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa underlined the need of maintaining highest standard in education imperative to enhance youth abilities.

He said that a letter has been written to vice chancellors of public sector universities to inform about use of properties of all universities and income obtained from it besides other resources.



LAHORE: Provincial Minister and Chairman Cabinet Committee on Law and Order, Khawaja Salman Rafiq, Mujtaba Shuja ur Rahman, Bilal Akbar Khan, Special Assistant, Zeeshan Malik and other being briefed by members Safe City Authorities.

## PDMA issues flood alert fact sheet

LAHORE (APP): In line with the instructions of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) has issued a flood alert fact sheet.

The fact sheet includes data on the monsoon rains situation, and water levels in rivers, barrages, and dams across Punjab.

According to the report, rain was recorded in Lahore, Sargodha, Toba Tek Singh, Faisalabad, Kot Addu, and Bahawalpur in the last 24 hours. Due to

the heavy rains, 12 citizens lost their lives, 14 houses were affected, and 27 citizens were injured, including 5 children, 3 females, and 4 males. Additionally, 3 civilians were killed by lightning in Narowal and Multan.

Financial assistance will be provided to the bereaved families as per government guidelines.

Monsoon rains are expected to continue across the province until July 15. The water flow in all the rivers and barrages of Punjab is currently at normal levels.

## Line marking underway to improve traffic flow

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore district administration, adopting a comprehensive strategy to make the city encroachment-free, has carried out a line-marking process on major thoroughfares and markets to prevent business owners from conducting their business activities outside the designated boundaries.

Deputy Commissioner Rafia Haider's mission to free the city of encroachments is progressing rapidly under a comprehensive strategy.

Metropolitan Corporation Lahore (MCL) Chief Officer (CO) Ali Abbas Bukhari is overseeing the finalization of line marking on major roads and markets.

The DC informed that the line marking process has been completed near Pir Makki, Data Darbar, LOS Road Samanabad, and other important roads. Business owners are being informed to conduct their activities within their designated boundaries to ensure smooth traffic flow.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi called on by the Educational Experts delegation of KP Province at Governor House.

## CM KP chairs cabinet meeting, discusses MoU on shared FY 2024-25 responsibilities

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister, Ali Amin Gandapue here on Saturday chaired the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of provincial cabinet and discussed matters including Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) regarding shared fiscal responsibilities for financial year 2024-25 that was intended to be signed between the federal and provincial governments.

The meeting was attended by Ministers, Advisors, Special Assistants, Senior Member Board of Revenue, Additional Chief Secretaries and concerned administrative secretaries.

The MoU regarding shared fiscal responsibilities for financial year 2024-25 was presented in the cabinet meeting. The cabinet has approved communicating the provincial government's stance to the federal government stating that KP would agree to proposed budget surplus of Rs. 178 billion only if commitment to resolving the province's financial issues as discussed with the Federal Finance Secretary be fulfilled.

Additionally, the approval is contingent on FBR completely achieving the revenue target set in

Budget Estimates 2024-25. While debating draft Gandhara Corridor Act 2024 proposed by federal government, the provincial cabinet asserted that Gandhara Corridor was a cultural heritage and a provincial matter. Consequently, the cabinet approved the decision to communicate its reservations to the federal government and advised against legislating on this provincial subject.

A detailed report from the cabinet's ministerial committee, that was tasked to investigate engagement of private testing agencies by various departments and offices of KP in

violation of government orders, was presented to the provincial cabinet. The cabinet approved the committee's recommendations. The ministerial committee was established by provincial cabinet to assess capacity of ETEA, examine cases of tests assigned to private testing agencies and seek explanations from administrative departments that did not adhere to the cabinet's decision regarding conducting tests through ETEA. The tenure of the committee was extended to further six months with the responsibility to oversee the function.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Local Government Zeeshan Rafique presides over the meeting to review arrangements of security on the eve of Youm-e-Ashoor.

## CM Maryam to start distribution of solar systems from Aug 14

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, fulfilling her promise made with people, has decided to launch distribution of solar panels from Aug 14, the Independence Day.

People using up to 200 units could get free solar panels, while those using up to 500 units would receive solar panels on 10 per cent payment. The Punjab government would pay 90 per cent of the total amount for provision of solar panels.

The interest-free loan would be provided for provision of solar panels, which would be paid back in five years through banks. In the light of the CM announcement, methodology regarding provision of solar panels to people had been settled.

The chief minister said that people's electricity bills would be reduced by 40pc with provision of solar panels. "It is my sole mission to provide maximum relief to people. Despite difficult circumstances, we are standing with the people and will continue to do so," she said.

## Ramesh Arora visits home of murdered Christian man

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Minorities Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora visited the home of the murdered Christian man, Marshal Yaqoob, at Patiala House near GOR, here on Saturday to express his condolences and solidarity with the bereaved family.

The young man was shot at and killed by a neighbour due to a personal grudge. The minister met the affected family and offered his condolences. He stated that the tragic incident had shaken the entire community and area. He expressed deep sympathy with the affected family and assured them that the Punjab government stands with them during this difficult time.

Speaking to media representatives later, the minister said that he was there on the special instructions of Chief



LAHORE: Opposition leader Malik Ahmed Khan Bhachar holding a press conference outside the Punjab Assembly in the Provincial Capital.

## Man shot dead in Judicial Complex of Tehsil Havelian

HAVELIAN (APP): A long-standing feud turned deadly as man shot his father's murderer at Abbottabad, while the suspect was in police custody. The incident occurred amidst high security, highlighting lapses in the handling of sensitive cases within law enforcement.

According to the police sources, The accused Zahid Khan resident of Dhok Hasso Rawalpindi, who was facing charges under Section 302, had been transferred from Abbottabad to Havelian for a scheduled court appearance, the suspect managed to escape after committing the murder, raising serious questions about the security protocols in place.

## 200 law enforcers deputed in flood hit areas for security

DG KHAN (APP): About 200 police officials have been deputed in flood hit areas of Dera Ghazi Khan in order to provide security to people. According to official sources, the law enforcers were deputed in areas including Jutt Dagr, Paigan, Jatt Sargani, Chah Jehdari, Maamori, Bait Jhat Leghari. The law enforcers will also facilitate people in shifting of their house articles and animals. The police officials will also ensure security at the safer place where the flood hit people will set up their camps.

## ANF seizes 411kg drugs in seven operations; arrests four

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting seven operations across the country managed to recover over 411 kg drugs and arrested four accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Saturday. He informed that 2.1 kg ice was recovered from a passenger.

## Justice Mohammad Shafi Siddiqui takes oath as CJ SHC

KARACHI (APP): The Sindh Governor Mohammad Kamran Khan Tessori on Saturday administered oath of the office to Mr. Justice Mohammad Shafi Siddiqui as the Chief Justice (CJ) of Sindh High Court (SHC) on the premises of SHC.

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, Chief Secretary Sindh Syed Asif Haider Shah,

IGP Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon and other high level officials were also present in the oath taking ceremony.

Later, the Governor Mohammad Kamran Khan Tessori and the Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah congratulated the new CJ Justice Mohammad Shafi Siddiqui for taking the charge of the office as the CJ of SHC.



KARACHI: Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori administering the oath to new Chief Justice of Sindh High Court, Justice Muhammad Shafi Siddiqui in the Provincial Capital.

## Pak has strong diplomatic relations with Iraq: Saleem

LAHORE (Online): The Ambassador of Iraq to Pakistan, Hamid Abbas Lafta, met with Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Punjab House Islamabad. Both sides discussed promotion of bilateral relations in the meeting. The Punjab Governor appreciated the role of the Iraqi Government for providing facilities to the pilgrims going for pilgrimage to the holy places. The departure of pilgrims from Lahore through PIA and Iraqi Airline was also considered in the meeting.

During the meeting, Punjab Governor, Sardar Saleem Haider said that Pakistan has strong diplomatic relations with Iraq. Both countries share a common Islamic and cultural background. He said that the hearts of the people of Pakistan and Iraq beat together. He said that both countries have the same stance against Israeli atrocities on the issue of Palestine. He further said both countries should collaborate with each other in various fields to further deepen the bilateral relations.

## Health Minister visited construction site of Nawaz institute of cardiology

SARGODHA (APP): Provincial Minister for Health Punjab Khawaja Salman Rafique on Saturday paid his visit to under construction site of Nawaz Sharif institute of cardiology Sargodha and reviewed the under construction work.

According to the spokesperson, health minister inspected all the under construction sections and areas and directed construction company to complete the work within stipulated time.

The minister said that Punjab government was going to build a state of the art cardiology hospital in Sargodha which will be of 200 beds hospital and all kind of facilities regarding the heart will be available there. Khawaja Salman

Rafique also said on the occasion that the OPD service of the under construction hospital would be started from 25<sup>th</sup> of Dec 2025.

Commissioner Sargodha Muhammad Ajmal Bhutti, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Sargodha, Aurangzeb Haider Khan and Medical Superintendent (MS) Dr. Mushtaq Bashir Akif were also present on the occasion.

The Minister further told that Punjab government under the leadership of Chief Minister of Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has a great wish to provide basic health facilities to masses on their door steps and all his cabinet was working for days and nights in this regard.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Information Azma Bukhari in a group photo with delegation of All Parties Hurriyat Conference.

## CCPO Lahore says: No lapses in justice delivery to be tolerated

LAHORE (APP): Capital City Police Officer Bilal Siddique Kamayana asserted on Saturday that no lapses in delivering justice to victims would be tolerated.

He was presiding over a performance review meeting of the Investigation Wing at his office, here on Saturday. The meeting reviewed progress on the ongoing cases, road certificates and crime prevention related to women and children. DSPs (Investigation) Gujjarpara, Civil Lines, Gulshan Ravi and Township were issued explanation letters due to their poor performance.

The CCPO Lahore directed the DSPs to prioritise resolution of pending cases, road certificates, and ongoing investigations. He emphasized the enforcement of a zero-tolerance policy for crimes against women and children. He instructed

supervisory officers to review the progress of such cases on a daily basis. He also urged investigating officers to enhance coordination with forensic science laboratories and the Prosecution Department to expedite cases and ensure that culprits receive appropriate punishment based on scientific investigations.

He highlighted that timely FIR registration, merit-based investigations and providing justice to victims are important duties of the police. The CCPO emphasized that the Investigation Wing plays a key role in achieving justice and reiterated that a peaceful and secure Lahore is our mission. He urged the Police officers to play a proactive role in providing immediate relief to the citizens. DIG (Investigation) Zeeshan Asghar, SSP (Investigation) Dr. Anoush Masood Chaudhry.



## Federal Minister announces establishment of Creative Industries, Blue Economy units

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Saturday unveiled a transformative step towards economic diversification and sustainable growth with the establishment of dedicated units for Creative Industries and the Blue Economy within the Ministry of Planning and Development.

These new units are part of the broader 5Es National Economic Transformation Plan, a comprehensive strategy aimed at driving Pakistan towards a resilient and prosperous future, said a news release.

According to a press release, the Creative Industries unit will focus on harnessing the potential of Pakistan's rich cultural heritage, vibrant arts, and innovative design sectors.

This initiative aims to foster economic growth through the promotion of creative talents and the development of creative hubs that will support entrepreneurship, job

creation, and cultural exchange.

The minister said that "The creative economy is a vital component of our national development strategy," adding that "By investing in our creative industries, we are not only preserving our cultural heritage but also creating new economic opportunities that can contribute significantly to our GDP and employment rates."

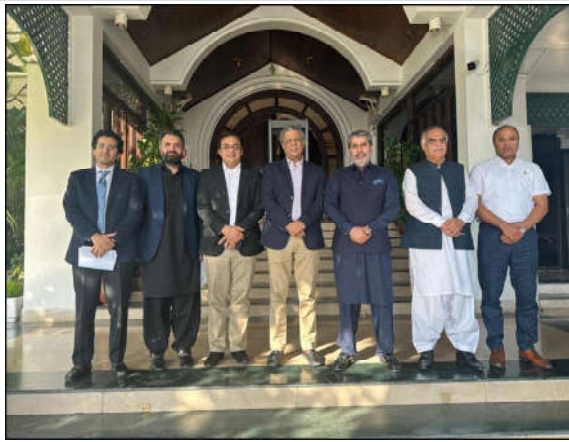
Globally, the Creative Industries are one of the fastest-growing sectors of the world economy. According to UNESCO, the creative economy generates \$2.25 trillion annually and provides nearly 30 million jobs worldwide.

With over 60 percent of Pakistan's population under the age of 30, the country boasts a vast reservoir of youthful energy and creativity. This young demographic presents a unique opportunity to drive innovation and entrepreneurship in the creative sectors, a press

release added. By providing the necessary infrastructure, training and support, the Creative Industries unit aims to unlock the potential of Pakistan's youth, enabling them to contribute to the national economy and compete on a global stage.

Meanwhile, the Blue Economy unit will concentrate on the sustainable utilization of Pakistan's vast maritime resources. This unit will work on developing policies and projects that enhance the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and the preservation of marine ecosystems. Key areas of focus will include fisheries, maritime tourism, marine biotechnology, and renewable ocean energy.

The minister said that "The Blue Economy holds immense potential for Pakistan, given our extensive coastline and marine resources," adding that "Through sustainable practices and innovative policies,



A delegation from the Pakistan Flour Mills Association met with a high-level committee, formed under the directive of Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, to discuss the ongoing flour strike.

## China-Pakistan JVs to boost expansion of Pakistan's leather industry

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan and China are forging joint ventures expected to propel Pakistan's leather industry to new heights.

These collaborations involve setting up manufacturing plants, tanneries, and R&D centers dedicated to leather product innovation, according to Khalid Waleed, advisor to the Pakistan Tanners Association.

In June, the Association of Guangdong Shoe Manufacturers visited Pakistan to explore relocating their operations to the country. These companies are prepared to invest between USD 5 and 8 billion in the local industry.

Pakistan's leather industry, a crucial export-oriented sector and the second most dynamic after textiles, has recently faced competitive challenges. It is the only country in the region to see a decline in leather exports, signaling a critical issue within the industry, as per a media report.

In fiscal year 2022-2023, Pakistan's leather exports fell by 7%, dropping to USD 887 million from USD 953 million the previous year. This downturn was paralleled by an 18% decrease in other leather products and an 11% reduction in leather garments, as noted by the Pakistan Leather Garments and Exporters Association.

China, a leading global producer and exporter of leather products, manufactures over 4 billion square feet of leather annually. In 2023, China exported leather, fur, and related products worth USD 96.98 billion, according to the China Leather Industry Association.

The synergy between China's production capabilities and Pakistan's advantages—including high-quality leather and lower labor costs—presents significant cooperative potential. Pakistan's market also shows strong consumer demand for fashionable footwear and bags.

## Delegation of ADB calls on CM KP ADB supports KP in various sectors include road infrastructure, water, agriculture

PESHAWAR (APP): A delegation of Asian Development Bank (ADB) met with Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur here at CM Secretariat on Saturday.

Apart from Additional Chief Secretary Planning, Administrative Secretaries of concerned departments and other officials were also present in the meeting.

They agreed to start implementation of these projects early if prerequisites are completed soon.

The delegation expressed their willingness to release funds ahead of the timelines for the implementation of various projects under KP Sustainable Urban Mobility, KP Rural Roads Development, KP Cities Improvement Project, KP Food Security and Livestock Management Program.

The chief minister also instructed the concerned authorities to complete the required work as soon as possible in this regard.

Both discussed in details issues related to the ongoing important development projects in various sectors in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank in the province.

The ADB is supporting Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in different sectors include road infrastructure, water, agriculture, energy, urban development and health.

A detailed discussion was also held on the progress on these



FAISALABAD: Chairman APTMA, Muhammad Asghar Qadri inaugurates the ERA Expo Exhibition at Punjab College UCP Campus Faisalabad.

## Traders meet LCCI President; demand withdrawal of sales tax on stationery

LAHORE (APP): A delegation of traders, led by Khalid Pervaz, visited the Lahore Chamber and met with President of Lahore Chamber Kashif Anwar.

The delegation expressed their concerns about the changes in the sales tax system introduced in the Finance Act. The participants included President of Lahore Stationery Association Urdu Bazaar Jameel Fazil, Secretary Information Mahboob Iqbal, Chairman Muhammad Raza, Vice President

Abdullah Khan, and others. The delegates stated that the changes introduced in the current Finance Act would have a significant impact on businesses and business costs, leading to

increased prices of these items. The business community has demanded that educational materials be exempted from taxes to avoid an increase in educational expenses.

They mentioned that imposing taxes on educational materials would increase educational costs, placing an additional financial burden on students and parents. The delegates noted that sales rates have dropped to very low levels, adding that if such taxes are imposed, it will become challenging to conduct business, forcing many traders to close their businesses.

It is noteworthy that the Finance Act 2024 has introduced changes in the sales tax system, affecting various stationery items.

## Rs 1.0235b imposed on 10,143 pilferers

FAISALABAD (APP): The Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (Fesco) imposed a fine of Rs1.0235 billion on 10,143 pilferers during the last 308 days its region.

Fesco Spokesman Tahir Sheikh said on Saturday the Fesco had launched an anti-theft drive in six circles of its region and during 308 days of this campaign the company caught 10,143 pilferers, including 42 during the last 24 hours.

The company had imposed a total fine of Rs 1.0235 billion on the pilferers under the head of detection units of 23.796 million in addition to getting cases registered against 9,988 accused.

The police had

arrested 7,520 electricity thieves so far besides recovering Rs.735.1 million.

He said the Fesco detected electricity theft at 2,437 points in First Circle Faisalabad and imposed a fine of Rs240.9 million on them under the head of 5722,000 million detection units.

In Second Circle Faisalabad, the teams caught 1894 electricity thieves and imposed a fine of Rs.191.4 million under 4855,000 detection units.

Similarly, 1130 cases of electricity theft were detected in Jhang Circle and the company imposed a fine of Rs111.9 million on the accused under 3253,000 detection units.

## Farmers informed about modern techniques

SIALKOT (APP): A farmers' gathering was organised at Sadarpura of Bajawar area in Sialkot under the auspices of the Department of Agriculture (Extension).

Addressing the gathering, Assistant Director (AD) Agriculture Extension Sialkot Jawahar Ali informed farmers about modern research, proportionate use of fertilisers, prohibited poisons for better production of paddy crop.

The AD Agriculture Extension said that farmers should adopt recommendations of experts for better production, promote the use of modern agricultural machinery.

He urged the farmers to avoid burning paddy residues after harvesting the paddy crop, doing so causes smog on which action can be taken, while setting fires also affects soil fertility.

## Governor highlights significance of business, agriculture sector for country's development

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi has said that promotion of business activities and agriculture sector is vital for country's progress and development.

He said this while talking to a delegation of Peshawar Traders Chambers (PTC) here on Saturday. The delegation that was led by Malik Mehar Elahi included President PTC, Ghulam Bilal Javaid, Chairman

Pakistan Travel Agents Association, Abiduddin and leading businessmen.

The delegation informed governor about their reservations regarding income tax urging him to resolve their problems. The governor was also urged to convey concerns of business community to Chairman Federal Board of Revenue. The delegation also demanded solarization of mosques in cantonment and highlighted problems of Small Industries.

## Gold rates up by Rs.400 per tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The price of per tola of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.400 and was sold at Rs.249,400 on Saturday against its sale at Rs.249,000 on last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs.343 to Rs.213,820 from Rs.213,477 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs.196,002 from Rs.195,687, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant.



RAWALPINDI: President Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce Saqib Rafiq holding a press conference at the Chamber of Commerce along with Flour Mills Association.

## Campaign against profiteers intensifies in Sialkot district: DC

SIALKOT (APP): Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Zulqarnain has said the campaign against profiteers has been intensified in the Sialkot district.

During the last 12 days, 63 profiteers were caught red-handed, 23 FIRs [first information reports] were registered against 37 shops under the Price Act, while 835 shopkeepers were fined a total of Rs. 4,676,000. He expressed these views while addressing a meeting of price magistrates in Sialkot

district to review the ongoing crackdown on profiteers.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner General (ADCG) Syed Asad Raza Kazmi, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Finance and Planning Muzaaffar Mukhtar and Assistant Commissioner (AC) Anum Babar besides all price magistrates.

Later, DC Muhammad Zulqarnain, while addressing a meeting, said that the of District

## SNGPL disconnects 11 gas meters

MULTAN (APP): Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) punished 11 citizens in a crackdown during last 24 hours.

According to officials of Task Force, the consumers were using gas illegally as they were found making commercial use of gas, offering illegal connections to others and had also shifted meters at different sites by themselves.

Gas metres of all the 11 consumers were disconnected for violation of the laws. The department urged citizens to cooperate and informed about illegal use of gas at phone number 061-9220085 as secrecy would be maintained.

According to Regional Manager Hussain Zafar, a special cell has been introduced to respond to complaints. Some officers have also been deputed in the special cell to ensure timely resolution of complaints.

## Export-led growth necessary for economic revival in country: Chairman FPCCI

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman, Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Capital office Karim Aziz Malik on Saturday said that export-led growth is necessary for economic revival in the country, which will increase the trend of economic development in the country.

At this time, search for new potential markets and product diversification is very important for export-led growth in the country to enhance the economic growth. Chairman, Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Capital office Karim Aziz Malik told

APP here. The Chairman Capital office FPCCI said that the government has to explore new markets for market diversification and increase regional trade, which will also improve the business trend in the country. Along with this, new sectors have to be brought into the field for Product diversification and for this, value added products have to be introduced in all important business sectors, he said. Malik said that after Covid-19, obstacles have arisen in the global supply value chain, Pakistan also has to align itself with the global supply value chain, which will increase domestic exports.



LAHORE: Workers putting onions and potatoes into baskets after sorting them at a Sabzi Mandi of the Provincial Capital.

## Local ruminant breeds posses enormous potential to enhance milk: Secretary

MULTAN (APP): Punjab Secretary Livestock Muhammad Masood Anwar has said that local breeds of big and small ruminant possessed enormous potential to take Pakistan's milk and meat production to new highs.

During a visit to the Livestock Complex in Multan, he said that the initiatives announced by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, as part of Punjab budget 2024-25, would speed up the Livestock development plan proceedings.

Masood Anwar specifically mentioned the Livestock card initiative for cattle rearers that makes their access to interest-free Rs 270,000 worth of quality mineral mixture and 'Wanda' easy to fatten their animals and free distribution of cattle heads among poor women.

Secretary Masood Anwar received a detailed briefing from Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, the director ERP livestock south Punjab during visit to different sections of livestock complex Multan.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi talks to representatives delegation of Peshawar Traders Chamber at Governor House.



## At least 71 Palestinians killed, Gaza officials say

### Monitoring Desk

CAIRO: An Israeli airstrike killed at least 71 Palestinians in a designated humanitarian zone in Gaza on Saturday, the enclave's health ministry said, in an attack that Israel said targeted Hamas military chief Mohammed Deif.

It was unclear whether Deif was killed. "We are still checking and verifying the results of the strike," an Israeli military official told reporters. The militant Islamist group Hamas said in a statement that Israeli claims it had targeted leaders of the group were false and aimed at justifying the attack, which was the deadliest Israeli attack in Gaza in weeks. Displaced people sheltering in the area said their tents were torn down by the force of the strike, describing bodies and body parts strewn on the ground.

"I couldn't even tell where I was or what was happening," said Sheikh Youssef, a resident of Gaza City who is currently displaced in the Al-Mawasi area. "I left the tent and

looked around, all the tents were knocked down, body parts, bodies everywhere, elderly women thrown on the floor, young children in pieces," he told Reuters. The Israeli military said the strike against Deif also targeted Hamas military chief Mohammed Deif. The Israeli military said the strike against Deif also targeted Hamas military chief Mohammed Deif. The Israeli military said the strike against Deif also targeted Hamas military chief Mohammed Deif.

The Gaza health ministry said at least 71 Palestinians were killed in the strike and 289 injured, the deadliest toll in weeks in the conflict-shattered enclave. Al-Mawasi is a designated humanitarian area that the Israeli army has repeatedly urged Palestinians to head to after issuing evacuation orders from other areas.

Reuters footage showed ambulances racing towards the area amidst clouds of smoke and dust. Displaced people, including women and children, were fleeing in panic, some holding belongings in their hands. The Israeli military published an aerial photo of the site, which Reuters was not immediately able to verify, where it said "terrorists hid among civilians".

"The location of the strike was an open area surrounded by trees, several buildings, and sheds," it said in a statement. The Israeli military official said the area was not a tent complex, but an operational compound run by Hamas and that several more militants were there, guarding Deif. Many of those wounded in the strike, including women and children, were taken to the nearby Nasser Hospital, which hospital officials said had been overwhelmed and was "no longer able to function" due to the intensity of the Israeli offensive and an acute shortage of medical supplies.



Palestinians inspect the damage, following what Palestinians say was an Israeli strike at a tent camp in Al-Mawasi area, amid Israel-Hamas conflict, in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip.

## 'Too old' Biden faces more calls to abandon re-election bid

### Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden faced more calls from fellow Democrats to abandon his re-election bid on Friday, following a news conference in which he delivered nuanced responses but occasionally stumbled over his words.

It was unclear whether Biden's performance would convince doubters in his party that he is their best bet to defeat Republican Donald Trump in the Nov 5 election and serve another four-year term in the White House.

## Gaffe-prone Biden refers to Zelensky as 'Putin'

### Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden mistakenly referred to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky as Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Nato summit in Washington on Thursday before correcting himself.

"And now I want to hand it over to the president of Ukraine, who has as much courage as he has determination. Ladies and gentlemen, President Putin," Biden said, referring to Zelensky.

## Mexico President-elect taps Lazaro Cardenas as chief of staff

### Monitoring Desk

MEXICO CITY: Mexican President-elect Claudia Sheinbaum announced on Thursday that she has chosen Lazaro Cardenas, a former congressman, governor and presidential advisor, to be her government's chief of staff. Cardenas, 60, is the son of Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, a former head of government of Mexico City and a three-time presidential candidate, and the grandson of former President Lazaro Cardenas.

## Iran president-elect ready for 'constructive dialogue' with Europe

### Monitoring Desk

TEHRAN: Iran's president-elect Masoud Pezeshkian said he looks forward to improved relations with European nations, even though he accused them of reneging on commitments to mitigate the impact of US sanctions.

"Despite these missteps, I look forward to engaging in constructive dialogue with European countries to set our relations on the right path, based on principles of mutual respect and equal footing," European Union spokeswoman Nabila Massrahi had earlier congratulated Pezeshkian on his election, adding that the 27-member bloc is "ready to engage with the new government in line with EU policy of critical engagement".

Pezeshkian is a heart surgeon whose only previous government experience was as health minister about two decades ago.

Washington unilaterally withdrew from the accord in 2018, reimposing sanctions and leading Iran to gradually reduce its commitment to its terms. The deal aimed to curb nuclear activity which Tehran maintains is for peaceful purposes.

Writing late on Friday in the English-language Tehran Times newspaper, Pezeshkian said that after the US withdrawal from the 2015 deal, European countries committed to try to salvage it and mitigate the impact of US sanctions.

"European countries have reneged on all these commitments," Pezeshkian wrote.

Washington unilaterally withdrew from the accord in 2018, reimposing sanctions and leading Iran to gradually reduce its commitment to its terms. The deal aimed to curb nuclear activity which Tehran maintains is for peaceful purposes.

Writing late on Friday in the English-language

## Intensifying Congo conflict puts 1 mln children at risk of acute malnutrition

### Monitoring Desk

GENEVA: More than one million children are at risk from acute malnutrition in Democratic Republic of Congo as rising violence drives up needs among millions of displaced people, the World Health Organization said on Friday.

The impact on civilians of the more than two-year conflict between Congolese forces and the Rwanda-backed M23 militia in eastern areas of the country is worsening, causing more people to flee with 2.7 million displaced in North Kivu alone.

Severe flooding and landslides as well as long-simmering conflicts affecting other parts of the country have worsened needs and around 25 million currently require humanitarian aid, according to the WHO.

"If immediate action is not taken to address ba-

sic needs in DRC over 1 million children will suffer from acute malnutrition," WHO's Senior Emergency Officer Adelheid Marschang told a press briefing in Geneva.

"The acute malnutrition is a result of widespread, increasing and also recurrent food insecurity in the areas that have seen conflict for years and decades now but where we now very recently see an escalation," she said.

The children at risk were mostly among the millions already displaced by fighting in eastern areas but also children in the central Kasai provinces, she said.

Already hundreds of thousands of children are suffering from acute malnutrition, she said, which can make them more vulnerable to infection and disease and requires sustained treatment.

## World population to peak at 10.3 billion in 2080s, United Nations says

### Monitoring Desk

NEW YORK: Earth's population will peak in the mid-2080s at around 10.3 billion people, then drop slightly to a level much lower than anticipated a decade ago, the United Nations said.

The current population of 8.2 billion people will rise to that maximum over the next 60 years, then dip to 10.2 billion by the end of the century, says a report released Thursday entitled "World Population Prospects 2024". It said the size of the world's population in 2100 will be six per cent lower, or 700 million people fewer, than what was anticipated in June 2013. "The demographic landscape has evolved greatly in recent years," said Li Junhua, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs. He said the unexpected

population peak stems from several factors that include lower levels of fertility in some of the world's largest countries, especially China. He said this lower maximum will also come earlier than previously calculated and this is a hopeful sign as the world fights global warming: fewer humans accounting for less aggregate consumption would mean less pressure on the environment.

"However, slower population growth will not eliminate the need to reduce the average impact attributable to the activities of each individual person," this official said. More than a quarter, or 28 per cent, of the world's population now lives in one of 63 countries or areas where the population has already peaked, including China, Russia, Japan and Germany, the report said.

## Cape Town braces for more wind and rain; thousands affected by stormy weather

### Monitoring Desk

CAPE TOWN: More stormy weather loomed over Cape Town after days of high winds and drenching rain that have displaced hundreds of people, flooded homes and uprooted trees, authorities said on Friday.

Close to 33,000 dwellings in both informal settlements and suburbs have been affected, the city's disaster management centre said.

Essentials such as meals, blankets, mattresses, roof sheeting and hygiene packs were being distributed to affected communities amid biting winds and plunging temperatures.

"We have a huge humanitarian situation to deal with and all authorities are working together to address this," Anton Bredell, Western Cape Minister for Local Government, said in a statement.

All the city's major catchment dams were full or nearing capacity, the Western Cape government said, warning the Breede River in Swellendam town was flowing at more than 1,000 cubic metres a sec-

ond and was in danger of breaching its banks as more rain is expected.

"In Lingsburg, the Floriskraal Dam is at 118% and communities in the immediate downstream vicinity have been alerted of the risk of flooding," Bredell said, referring to affected towns beyond the city's boundaries.

The South Africa Weather Service has warned that an approaching cold front will cause strong to near gale-force winds of around 40 to 60 kph (25-37 mph) between Table Bay and Plettenberg Bay on Sunday.

Wave heights of up to five metres (16 feet) were expected on Saturday morning. Ships at Cape Town port, one of the busiest in South Africa, were advised to take necessary precautions such as tending to moorings regularly to prevent snapping.

Despite the damage, some residents were enjoying the bad weather. Online videos showed youngsters frolicking about in flooded roads and even boogie boarding down saturated hills.



US President Joe Biden walks with pastor Cindy Rudolph at the start of a campaign event at Renaissance High School in Detroit, Michigan, U.S.

## Taiwan monitors Chinese military surge, calls China a threat to stability

### Monitoring Desk

TAIPEI: Taiwan said on Thursday that it was closely watching the Chinese military, which it said posed a rising threat to the region, after a flurry of warplanes passed near the island to join drills with China's Shandong aircraft carrier in the Pacific.

The Chinese military exercises coincide with a NATO summit in Washington, where a draft communique says China has become a decisive enabler of Russia's war effort in Ukraine and Beijing continues to pose systemic challenges to Europe and to security. The Shandong passed close to the Philippines on its way to the Pacific exercises, Taiwan's defence minister said on Wednesday. In its daily update on Chinese military ac-

## Seven bodies pulled from collapsed school in central Nigeria

### Monitoring Desk

ABUJA: At least seven lifeless bodies have been pulled from the rubble of a collapsed school building in central Nigeria's Plateau state on Friday, a Reuters witness said.

The two-story building, belonging to Saint Academy in the Busa Buji community of Jos north district in the state, gave way during school hours around 0730 GMT, raising concerns about student and teacher casualties.

So far, five students have been rescued alive. Rescue efforts are underway, with security personnel including soldiers and police at the scene.

## Meta lifts restrictions on Trump's Facebook and Instagram accounts

### Monitoring Desk

WASHINGTON: Meta said on Friday it was lifting restrictions on US presidential candidate Donald Trump's Facebook and Instagram accounts, ending measures put in place after his supporters violently stormed the US Capitol in 2021.

It said that "former President Trump, as the nominee of the Republican Party, will no longer be subject to the heightened suspension penalties".

Trump's Facebook and Instagram accounts were suspended indefinitely a day after his supporters attacked the US Capitol on January 6, 2021, and it was determined he had praised people engaged in violence on social media.

## Dozens of int'l news groups urge Israel to allow Gaza access

### Monitoring Desk

NEW YORK: More than 60 news organizations, including some of the world's largest, signed an open letter Thursday calling on Israel to immediately end restrictions on international news organizations seeking to access the territory, organized by the non-governmental Committee to Protect Journalists.

"Nine months into the war, international reporters are still being denied access to Gaza except for rare and escorted trips arranged by

## Mexico President-elect taps Lazaro Cardenas as chief of staff

### Monitoring Desk

MEXICO CITY: Mexican President-elect Claudia Sheinbaum announced on Thursday that she has chosen Lazaro Cardenas, a former congressman, governor and presidential advisor, to be her government's chief of staff. Cardenas, 60, is the son of Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, a former head of government of Mexico City and a three-time presidential candidate, and the grandson of former President Lazaro Cardenas.

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"Nine months into the war, international reporters are still being denied access to Gaza except for rare and escorted trips arranged by



Doug Stropes, Division Chief for the USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance speaks next to Scott Fontaine during a briefing at Larnaca Port, Cyprus.

## Japan disciplines military top brass for mishandling classified information

### Monitoring Desk

TOKYO: Japan on Friday disciplined more than 200 defence personnel, including the military's top brass and senior bureaucrats, for mishandling classified material and other incidents.

The information security problems have occurred as Japan seeks closer cooperation with the U.S. and other western democracies, including in intelligence sharing, to coordinate responses to

## Disaster-hit nations appeal for climate aid

### Monitoring Desk

PARIS: Countries on the frontlines of climate change have warned they cannot wait another year for long-sought aid to recover from disasters as floods and hurricanes wreak havoc across the globe.

The appeal came during a meeting of the "loss and damage" fund that concluded on Friday.

"We cannot wait until the end of 2025 for the first funds to get out the door," Adao Soares Barbosa, a board member from East Timor and a long-standing negotiator for the world's poorest nations, told AFP.

## India's Ambani wedding spectacle gets political with Modi posters

### Monitoring Desk

MUMBAI: The wedding of a scion from India's ultra-wealthy Ambani family - much in the news for its opulent celebrations and VIP-studded guest list - has suddenly developed more political overtones with posters of Prime Minister Narendra Modi now lining the road to the venue.

The four-day extravaganza will see Anant Ambani, 29 - the youngest son of Asia's richest person Mukesh Ambani - marry his long-time girlfriend Radhika Merchant, 29 on Friday, followed by three days of receptions.

"Heartfelt welcome to India's beloved and respected Prime Minister

Narendra Modi in Mumbai," read the dozens of posters recently erected by his ruling party workers along the road to Ambani's Reliance Industries-owned Jio World Convention Centre.

While attendees to the nuptials are expected to include reality TV star Kim Kardashian, former boxing heavyweight champion Mike Tyson as well as former British Prime Ministers Tony Blair and Boris Johnson, Modi's name had not figured on the guest list shared by organisers.

Modi is visiting the Mumbai area to inaugurate "a project" and may briefly attend the Ambani wedding, said Manoj Shinde.



Rescuers and paramedics carry a body of a child found at a site of an apartment building heavily damaged during a Russian missile strike, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Kyiv, Ukraine.



## PM Shehbaz directs FBR authorities to gird up loins for revenue generation with dedicated efforts, usage of latest technology

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday directed Federal Bureau of Revenue (FBR) authorities to tighten their belts and serve the nation by formulating a strategy and mechanism coupled with usage of latest technology to broaden the tax net base without further burdening the honest tax payers.

During a visit to FBR Headquarters, the prime minister said that the incumbent government had the sole agenda of putting Pakistan on path of progress with consistent improvement in the economic indicators. "Though it may be a difficult journey which requires collective and individual efforts, sincerity and sacrifices and putting forth the national interests supreme over all other interests," he emphasized.

Terming the staff level arrangement with International Monetary Fund (IMF) as a positive omen

for the country's economy, he expressed the hope that IMF board would also give a go ahead in this regard.

The prime minister said now it was their responsibility to act speedily and work tirelessly for making the IMF programme as the last one in the country's history, adding after which a journey of progress and prosperity would commence in the country.

The prime minister expressed the confidence that Pakistan could become a great and prosperous country with collective and individual efforts.

If we want to get rid of foreign debts, the FBR should levy taxes on those who had not been paying any taxes, he opined.

The prime minister said that the country's top taxmen should realize the issue of repeatedly burdening of honest tax payers including the government employees who filed their annual tax returns.



QUETTA: Provincial Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Lango presides over the meeting to review law and order situation on the eve of Muharramul Haram. Provincial Ministers Mir Shoaib Noshervani and Bakht Muhammad Kakar are also present.



MUZAFFARABAD: Kashmiri women and men raising slogans against Indian atrocities in a protest rally from Bank Square Chhatar Chowk in memory of Kashmiri martyrs of July 13, 1931.

## Protest democratic right, but bothering people by blocking roads condemnable, says Balochistan Minister for Home

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Provincial Minister for Home, Mir Ziaullah Langove has stated that the protest is surely a democratic right, but it is condemnable to bother people by blocking roads.

In an official statement issued here on Saturday, the Provincial Minister said that it takes time to resolve such cases by holding talks with the protesters sitting together.

The Provincial Minister for Home said that no one could be allowed to take law in one's hands under the garb of protest making the missing persons

base of it.

The Provincial Minister for Home said that the government had released five arrested women who had taken law in hand while demonstrating tribal traditions.

He said that the seasonal political parties are creating issues instead of serving the masses.

He questioned that why the political parties were silent on the issue of missing persons when they were in government.

He also said that some political parties are raising hollow slogans in order to save their "dead" politics.

He urged the Afghanistan government to play its role breaking it's silence for peace and stability in Pakistan.

He said that the terrorists want to create lawlessness and chaos, however, we can save our home by extinguishing the fire in it.

Besides, Mir Ziaullah Langove urged the people not to become part of such protest that ignite the lawlessness and chaos further.

He said that those creating chaos in the country are conspiring against it under the garb of issue of missing persons.

## Coming 45 days can change Pakistan political scenario

ISLAMABAD (Online): Former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry has said coming 45 days can change Pakistan politics.

"Maulana Fazlur Rehman and Hafiz Naem ur Rehman have given positive reaction on Supreme Court (SC) decision. Statement of Pir Pagara is awaited, he said in a statement issued here Saturday.

He held opposition alliance is near at hand. The efforts being made by Asad Qaisar and Mehmood Khan Achakzai are appreciable.



RAWALPINDI: Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan (TLP) hold a rally to express solidarity with the Palestinians at Murree Road in the city.

## 190 million pounds case: A closed envelope presented in cabinet meeting which approved on Imran insistence: Zubaida

RAWALPINDI (Online): Former state minister Zubaida Jalal while recording statement before Accountability Court (AC) in 190 million pounds case said a closed envelope was presented by Shahzad Akbar in cabinet meeting and the cabinet approved it on insistence of Imran Khan.

She further said there was note from Prime Minister (PM) on one document. The second was confidential deed. I don't know about these papers.

She stated that during PTT regime she discharged her obligations as state minister for defence production. I appeared before the investigating officer in May 2023 in connection with 190 million pounds reference. A closed envelope was presented by Shahzad

The entire nation is looking toward political strategy of this alliance. Next 45 days can change Pakistan political scenario

He has already said that the present politics and wrong decisions of Nawaz Sharif had surprised enormously. Nawaz Sharif is in the politics since the period more than our age.

Nawaz Sharif had last opportunity of February 8, he held.

Now this is the politics of Nawaz Sharif that Maryam Nawaz has to be made prime minister.

## Finance minister vows to ensure structural reforms after IMF loan deal

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has said that the new \$7 billion aid package deal reached between Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) would help bring macroeconomic stability to the country.

The programme, which needs to be approved by the IMF's Executive Board, should enable Pakistan to "cement macroeconomic stability and create conditions for stronger, more inclusive and resilient growth," the IMF said in a statement.

Commenting on the deal on Saturday, Aurangzeb said it would aid Pakistan in achieving macroeconomic stability.

Under the programme "we need to ensure structural reforms and bring self-sustainability in areas of public finance, energy, and state-owned institutions."

## PTI to stage power show at Minar-e-Pakistan on Aug 14

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has decided to stage a power show at Minar-e-Pakistan Lahore on August 14.

As per details, the party's senior vice president Akmal Baari has submitted an application to the deputy commissioner, promising to fully comply with the rules and regulations during the rally.

Last week, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) postponed the party's Islamabad power show after the federal capital administration cancelled the No Objection Certificate (NOC). Islamabad Chief Commissioner suspended the no-objection certificate (NOC) issued to PTI for public gathering just a day before the scheduled meeting. Speaking to media, PTI chairman Barrister Gohar said that PTI got a green signal for the power show four months after the request for the NOC was made, but the commissioner cancelled.

## Duties and scope of all institutions clearly stated in Constitution: Khawaja

SIALKOT (APP): Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif has said that the duties and scope of all institutions are clear stated in the Constitution. He said the judiciary had the right to interpret Constitution, but it is only the parliament which could amend or re-write the Constitution.

Addressing the media in Sialkot, the minister said the judiciary could not re-write constitution. He said Articles 51 and 106 of the Constitution were apparently rewritten in the reserved seats decision. He said unwanted relief was given to a party which was not even the petitioner.

Khawaja Asif said, "I have great respect for the judiciary." He said Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) had

not claimed the seats or sought any relief, and it was the Sunni Ittehad Council which had moved the court. He said legally the members sitting in the parliament at that time had submitted their affidavits, and that process could not be repeated.

He recalled that Pakistan Muslim League-N had to face such a situation in Senate in 2018.

Khawaja Asif said that no one in the Election Commission or Peshawar High Court said that he should be considered as a PTI member, all claimed that they had joined the Sunni Ittehad Council and the SIC was their party.

He said the PTI had lost its party symbol due non-holding of the party elections.

## Hafiz Naem calls Supreme Court verdict 'gust of fresh air'

KARACHI (INP): Jamaat-e-Islami's Ameer has termed the Supreme Court of Pakistan's decision in special seats case a gentle fresh air in current political situation.

Hafiz Naem ur Rehman talking to media demanded resignation of the chief election commissioner and all other concerned persons after the court's decision. "Those political parties, playing on both sides of the wicket, should accept the apex court's decision in totality," he urged. JI chief also demanded electoral reforms. Talking on local governments, Hafiz Naem said, "We don't talk about local bodies but the local

governments like the federal and provincial governments".

Hafiz Naem said that the supreme court's decision should be accepted in totality, while pleading to the court to form a judicial commission over the entire election. JI chief commenting on the hereditary politics called the murder of the democracy. The apex court, on Friday overturned the denial of reserved seats to the PTI. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah announced the 8-5 split verdict on a petition filed by the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), an ally of the PTI.



SIALKOT: Defense Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif addressing to the media persons at his residence.

## Jatak terms confrontation with state institutions under garb of protest of BYC as sorrowful

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Member of Central Executive Committee of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Provincial Minister for Agriculture, Mir Ali Madad Jatak has stated that the confrontation with the state's institutions under the garb of protest by Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) is sorrowful.

In a statement issued here on Saturday, Mir Ali Madad Jatak said that a power miscreant are making failed attempt to spoil the peace of province, which wouldn't be succeeded anyway.

He said that the respect of Baloch women is respect of all Balochs. He said that the sanctity of chadar and chaar deewari is kept in high esteem among Balochs.

But, what kind of tradition is this to stand the Baloch women against the patriotic institutions of the state?

Ali Madad Jatak said that the institutions are honour of the country and whose agenda and attitude they reflect?

He said that it is an insult of the Baloch social values and Balochism to challenge the writ of state and take shelter of the women.

He said that the state's institutions work very hard ensure protection and security of the people.

However, he government is determined to hold constructive dialogue with the real affected groups in order to find suitable solution mutually.

He also said that we do firm belief on this that the issues are resolved through peaceful negotiations, not through violence by the extremist elements who exploit the innocent persons.

## President calls for Eastern nations' collaborative efforts to ensure sustainable development

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Saturday called for collaborative efforts by the Eastern nations to ensure sustainable development and common prosperity through China's Global Development Initiative (GDI).

He highlighted that GDI had great potential to significantly shape the future of the world by promoting shared development and urged the developing countries to play a leading role in the global development process.

The president expressed these views while virtually addressing the 2nd High-Level Meeting of the Forum on Global Action for the Shared Development, organized by the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), in Beijing, President's Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

## Goods transporters announce strike over 'excessive toll tax'

LAHORE (INP): The Pakistan Goods Transporters Association has announced a strike in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from July 25, citing "excessive toll tax" and "unjust fines".

In a statement, transporters association president Nabeel Mahmood Tariq said that the strike was initially scheduled for July 15 but was postponed due to the sanctity of Muharram.

He said that they will initially observe the strike in two provinces - Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa - and may expand it to other provinces if their demands are not met.

The goods transporters are protesting against the excessive toll tax, which according to them increases every three months, and the exorbitant fines imposed on them.

## EC fixes July 23 for hearing PTI intra party election case

ISLAMABAD (Online): Election Commission (EC) has fixed for hearing PTI intra party election case.

The hearing of PTI intra party election case will take place on July 23.

A five members bench of EC under chief election commissioner will hear the case on July 23.

Political finance wing of EC has raised questions on intra party election.

PTI will satisfy EC on its questions.

## Court orders freezing of Moonis Elahi's properties

LAHORE (INP): A Special Central Court in Lahore on Saturday ordered freezing the properties PML-Q leader Moonis Elahi, Saghim Abbas and seven other accused in connection with a money-laundering case against them.

The order came after the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) declared Moonis Elahi and five others as absconders during the hearing where the agency presented an incomplete challan. The FIA's challan included Moonis Elahi and co-accused Faryasat Ali, Imtiyaz Ali, Aamir Sohail, Wajid Ahmed, and Aamir Fayyaz as absconders, while Zara Elahi, Ahmed Farhan, and Saghim Abbas were mentioned as being out on bail.

## President calls for Eastern nations' collaborative efforts to ensure sustainable development

Representatives of foreign countries, international organisations, foreign companies and non-governmental organisations attended the event.

In his statement, President Zardari underscored the importance of viewing global challenges such as progress, development, and health, from an Eastern perspective.

He pointed out that most of the global population lived in the Eastern hemisphere, particularly in countries like China, Pakistan, and other neighbouring nations.

The President emphasized that Pakistan was eager to see President Xi Jinping and the People's Republic of China spearheading GDI, leading the East and the entire world into the new millennium.

It is worth stating that through the Global Development Initiative (GDI),

China aims to help accelerate the implementation of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and solve the dilemma of global development.

China is collaborating with global partners to speed up the implementation of GDI by enlarging its Friend Circle, mobilizing resources, and building capacities for shared prosperity.

"China and Pakistan have also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Strengthening Development Cooperation and Promoting the Implementation of Global Development Initiative, focusing on areas including poverty reduction, medicine, education, infrastructure construction, agriculture, planning consultation, culture and sports, law-enforcement cooperation, and human resource development," it was further added.



ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary leader of Pakistan Muslim League (N) in Senate and Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs Senator Irfan Siddiqi calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## Speaker BA strongly condemns ongoing protest by sympathizer elements of terrorist groups

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Speaker Balochistan Assembly, Captain (Retd) Abdul Khaliq Khan Achakzai has strongly condemned the ongoing protest by sympathizer elements of the terrorist groups in Quetta.

In an official statement issued here on Saturday, the Speaker said that such protests have always created hurdles in daily lives of the common men and affected their business.

The protests have also destroyed the peace of our city as well, he added.

He asserted that permission would never be given to support the terrorist and challenge the writ of government.

The Speaker provincial assembly said that such elements use youth for their nefarious designs.

The government would never surrender before such elements, adding he asserted.

He said that the terrorist organizations and banned outfits are affecting our routine daily life by using these elements while blocking the roads and making our citizens hostage.

He said that the provincial government has the firm resolve to stand against such elements and ensure welfare and protection of the masses.

He stressed that the Section 144 is already imposed in Quetta, because the government is determined to protect life and property of the people, he added.

He urged the protesters to end their protest and dharna in the Muharramul Haram.

He stressed that it is binding on all of us to follow the law.

He said that it is our duty to respect the women



KARACHI: Jamat-e-Islami (JI) Chief, Hafiz Naem-ur-Rehman along with others addresses to media persons during press conference, at Idara-e-Noor-ul-Haq in Karachi.

## Blocking roads & bothering people under garb of protest inappropriate act, Rind

**Independent Report**  
QUETTA: The Parliamentary Secretary for Fisheries Department, Barkat Rind has stated that it is basic constitutional right of every citizen to lodge protest, but law and order issue can be created by protesting in the holy month of Muharramul Haram.

In a statement issued here on Saturday, Barkat Rind said that it is an inappropriate act to block the roads for traffic and bother general public.

He stressed that it is binding on all of us to follow the law.

He said that it is our duty to respect the women