

# Independent

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting regarding economic growth and investment.

## Nawaz Sharif likely to depart for London next month

LAHORE (Online): PML-N president Mian Nawaz Sharif is likely to leave for London next month.

According to party sources Nawaz Sharif can depart for London after Begum Kalsoom Nawaz death anniversary on September 11.

Nawaz Sharif has to undergo medical check up in London. Later he will spend his time with his sons.

Nawaz Sharif is likely to stay in London from two to three weeks.

## President stresses effective measures for improved law & order in Balochistan

### Independent Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari met with the newly appointed Inspector General (IG) of Balochistan, Moazzam Jah Ansari, and emphasized the need for effective measures to improve the law and order situation in the province.

The President expressed his good wishes for Ansari's successful tenure

as IG Balochistan and stressed the importance of fulfilling his responsibilities with dedication and diligence.

Ansari's appointment is seen as a significant step towards addressing the security challenges faced by Balochistan, and the President's meeting with him underscores the government's commitment to restoring peace and stability in the region.

Earlier the Grade-22 Officer of Police Service of Pakistan (PSP), Moazzam Jah Ansari has been posted as the Provincial Police Officer/Inspector General of Police Balochistan.

This was announced in an official notification issued here by the Government of Pakistan on Wednesday. Mr. Ansari has also served on different positions in the province earlier.

## Moody's raises Pakistan's ratings to CAA2, reflecting better outlook

PM Shehbaz lauds Moody's credit rating upgrade for Pakistan; commends economic team's efforts

ISLAMABAD (Online): Global rating agency Moody's has upgraded Pakistan's local and foreign currency issuer and senior unsecured debt ratings to Caa2 from Caa3.

According to one of the top international rating agencies, the upgrade to Caa2 reflects Pakistan's improving macroeconomic conditions and moderately better government liquidity and external positions, from very weak levels.

It noted that concurrently, the outlook for Pakistan is changed to positive from stable.

Accordingly, Pakistan's default risk has reduced to a level consistent with a Caa2 rating. There is now greater cer-

tainty on Pakistan's sources of external financing, following the sovereign's staff-level agreement with the IMF on 12 July 2024 for a 37-month Extended Fund Facility of seven billion dollars.

The rating agency expected the IMF will approve the Extended Fund Facility in the next few weeks, noting that Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves have about doubled since June 2023.

It highlighted that the positive outlook reflected a balance of risks skewed to the upside. It captures the possibility that the government is able to further lower its government liquidity and external vulnerability risks, and achieve a better fiscal

position than we currently expect, supported by the IMF programme.

Besides, sustained reform implementation, including revenue-raising measures, can increase the government revenue base and improve Pakistan's debt affordability.

A record of completing IMF reviews on a timely manner would also allow Pakistan to continually unlock financing from official partners, sufficient to meet its external debt obligations and support further rebuilding of its foreign exchange reserves.

APP adds: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday expressed his satisfaction with Global rating agency Moody's recent upgrade of

Pakistan's credit rating and attributed the achievement to the hard work of the economic team and the blessings of the Almighty.

Chairing a review meeting on the nation's economic development and investment strategies, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stated that Pakistan's economy had been rescued from default by prioritizing the country's needs over his own political career during his previous term as prime minister.

He expressed satisfaction that, after stabilization, the country's economy was now on the path of progressing and development. He noted that the benefits of the government's focus on national interests over political gains were now evident in the

economy.

The prime minister also pointed out that Moody's Caa2 rating for Pakistan was an international endorsement of the government's economic strategies. He expressed optimism that the economy would maintain its positive trajectory and continue to progress.

The prime minister commended the finance minister and his team for their significant progress and improvements in the overall economic situation.

He added that the interest shown by the friendly countries in investing billions of rupees across various sectors was a direct outcome of the government's business and investment-friendly policies.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Mr. Qaisar Ahmed Sheikh was chief guest in the special event program organized by Pak-China Institute in COMSTECH Auditorium.

## Political parties unite to reaffirm unwavering support for CPEC

Pakistan-China Institute hosts multi-party moot, pledges commitment to strengthen Pak-China ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan-China Institute (PCI), headed by Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, successfully organised a unique event under its 'Friends of Silk Road' series, which brought together leaders of eight political parties on one platform to reaffirm support for China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Leaders belonging to parties from Government and Opposition, PML-N, PPP, PTI, MQM, BAP, NP, NDM and JUI-F, from all provinces, were represented. They discussed the results of the recently-concluded 3rd Plenum of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and its impact on China and its foreign relations, a news release said.

Chairman Pakistan-China Institute, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed emphasised the pivotal role

of the CPC in China's on-going journey of reform and modernization, adding CPC is the world's biggest political party with 100 million members and longest-serving political party, which has transformed China. Citing figures of China's phenomenal progress since the 1979 Reform & Opening Up, he said then China had per capita income of \$157 while now it's \$12,000, then China's GDP was \$150 billion, now it's \$18 trillion. And Fortune 500 now counts China with 142, largest number of companies. Senator Mushahid Hussain listed 5 reasons for the China Success Story in such a short time: Quality of Leadership, Ability to do Course Correction, Continuity of Policy, Learning from others, and Peaceful Foreign Policy.

Senator Sherry Rehman noted that the

Third Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee will have far-reaching impacts not only on China but also on the world. "China has played a crucial role in the development of the Global South, and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has created numerous investment opportunities in Pakistan," Senator Rehman stated.

She praised China's Global Security Initiative, calling it a commendable effort that will ensure peace and stability globally. Additionally, she highlighted China's role in clean energy development under CPEC as a significant contribution to sustainable development in Pakistan and the region. Saadia Khaqan Abbasi commended China's leadership in technological advancement, human development, and labour productivity.

## High quality network of roads, motorways being built the country: Aleem

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Communications, Privatization, and Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan said on Wednesday that a network of high-quality highways and motorways was being laid in the country.

In future, no motorway will be constructed with less than six lanes while the motorways from Karachi to Sukkhar and Sialkot, Kharian to Islamabad will be the top priority of the National Highway Authority (NHA), these views were expressed by the minister in the departmental briefing of NHA where Chairman NHA, Federal Secre-

tary Communications, and other senior officers were present.

He further directed that all motorways should be constructed with at least three lanes on one side so that these can fulfill the needs of the future.

He said the NHA should collect maximum revenue by constructing a toll plaza for heavy traffic, and public and private transport. He said that to strictly ensure the implementation of axle load rules on these roads and motorways which should not be violated at any cost.

Abdul Aleem Khan further said that there was no room for corrupt and incompetent staff in the NHA.

He further said that in those areas where there were problems in revenue collection, the issue could be solved by handing over the toll collection to the private sector.



ISLAMABAD: Newly-appointed IG Balochistan, Mr Moazzam Jah Ansari, meeting with President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr

## UN urged to play role in stopping cross-border TTP attacks in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi held a meeting with the UN delegation led by UN Special Representative for Afghanistan Indrika Ratwatte.

The high-level delegation included UN Resident Coordinator Mohamed Yahya, Fady El Meouchy, Special Assistant to the DSRSG and Head of the UN mission in Afghanistan Malik Ceasy.

The minister welcomed the UN delegation at the Ministry of Interior. The UN Special Representative for Afghanistan strongly condemned the recent terrorist attacks in Balochistan.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said that terrorism is a global issue and Pakistan is the most affected country by it.

He highlighted that Pakistan's security forces, police, and people have rendered unparalleled sacrifices in the war against terrorism.

He also informed the delegation about the involve-

ment of banned TTP in the terrorist attacks in Pakistan. He stated that banned TTP is using Afghan soil for attacks, which must be stopped.

He said that Pakistan is desirous of peace and stability in Afghanistan and is providing all possible support in this regard. Mohsin Naqvi said that Pakistan has been hosting Afghan refugees for decades, adding, that the phase-wise repatriation of illegal foreigners has already started. He stated that no ac-

tion is being taken against individuals holding legal documents, adding that no one can be allowed to stay in Pakistan without a visa or other illegal documents.

UN Special Representative for Afghanistan Indrika Ratwatte praised Pakistan's role regarding Afghan refugees and Doha dialogue. He said that the UN is closely working with the Afghan Government for the permanent rehabilitation of Afghan refugees.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with the UN Special Representative for Afghanistan Indrika Ratwatte.

## Nationwide traders' strike against high electricity bills, heavy taxes, IPPs

ISLAMABAD (INP): Traders across Pakistan, from Karachi to Khyber and streets empty. In Karachi, markets such as Liaquatabad, Jodia Bazaar, Light House, Bolton Market, and Tariq Road have shut down, with banners protesting the IMF's grip, rising power bills, and the government's policies displayed prominently.

The strike has received broad support from various political parties, including the PTI, JUI-F, and JI, as well as associations like the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI).

The traders' strike has brought business activities

to a standstill in major markets, with shops closed and streets empty.

In Karachi, JI held a protest demonstration in the Sber Shah area against rising inflation and electricity prices, following the call of JI leader Hafiz Naqem. The protest disrupted traffic flow as demonstrators burned tyres and garbage on the road to voice their concerns. In Gujranwala, a complete shutdown strike was observed on the call of trader associations. All business centres, markets, and bazaars in the city, including Satellite Town, Cloth Market, Jinnah Bazaar, Urdu Bazaar, Rail Bazaar, Fish Market, Arainia Wali Gali, Sarafa Bazaar.

posed the strike and kept their markets open.

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However, the Karachi Transport Ittehad (KTI) did not join the strike, citing a lack of consultation. Similarly, a traders group in Lahore, the Anjuman Tajran Naqem Mir Group, has op-

## SCIB passes bill regarding protection of journalists and media professionals

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Standing Committee on Information and Broadcasting unanimously passed the Private Member Bill "The Protection of Journalists and Media Professionals (Amendment) Bill, 2022 with several amendments after examining all clauses starting from 20-D of the bill introduced by Senator Saleem Mandviwalla.

The bill was passed during the meeting of Senate Standing Committee on Information and Broadcasting held at the Parliament House under the chairmanship of the Committee Senator Syed Ali Zafar.

During the meeting, the minutes of the committee meeting held on 10 July 2024 were given approval, while Private Member's



Bill for "The Right of Access to Information (Amendment) Bill, 2023" presented by Senator Dr. Zarqa Suharwardy Taimur in the Senate session held on 20th November 2023 was also reviewed.

Similarly, the committee also discussed in details the Private Members Bills titled, "The Right of Access to Information (Amendment) Bill, 2020 introduced by Senator Manzoor Ahmed in the

Senate session held on 25th January 2021, and "The Protection of Journalists and Media Professionals (Amendment) Bill, 2022 introduced by Senator Saleem Mandviwalla in the Senate session held on 31 January 2022.

In addition to the Private Member's Bill for the Protection of Journalists and Media Professionals (Amendment) Bill 2022, the matters were reviewed in details regarding the law

of defamation, its objectives, and its future, in the light of Articles 19 and 19-A of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

On the special invitation of the Chairman Committee, eminent journalists of Pakistan like Muhammad Malik, besides representatives of electronic and print media also attended the meeting and gave their suggestions on the amendment bills.

Regarding the protec-

tion of journalists and media professionals, the committee agreed that journalists and media professionals are the fourth pillar of the state i.e. representatives of the media, so it is the responsibility of the state to protect them from physical violence, arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances etc.

The Senate Standing Committee on Information and Broadcasting has unanimously approved the establishment of a Commission for the Protection of Journalists.

The committee further suggested that media professionals and representatives of PFUU along with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting prepare a draft and define the official definition of a journalist.

## Internet slowdown likely to continue till Oct: PTA

ISLAMABAD (INP): The ongoing internet disruption across the country is likely to continue for over a month as the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) on Wednesday said the submarine cable, which caused degradation of the services, was expected to repair by early October.

The internet disruptions faced strong criticism from netizens and information technology (IT) sector, attributing the prevailing internet slowdown and limited connectivity to the purported testing of

an internet firewall to rein in social media, which is equipped with filters to block unwanted content from reaching a wider audience.

Last week, the PTA blamed the internet slowdown on fault in "two of the seven international submarine cables connecting Pakistan internationally".

In a statement issued today, the telecommunication authority said that the ongoing internet disruption was mainly due to fault in two submarine cables.

## ECP summons JUI-P head for not holding intra-party polls

ISLAMABAD (INP): Following the PTI, now it is the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Pakistan (JUI-P), which is on the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) radar as the commission on Wednesday directed the party head to show up at 10:00 on Thursday morning for not holding the intra-party elections.

A four-member bench of the ECP, headed by Nisar Durrani, will hear the case.



## Daily Voice of Masses Independent

### Balochistan attacks

Bad news keeps coming from Balochistan. Since Sunday night, in a series of coordinated militant attacks across the province, over 70 people, including security personnel, the assailants and ordinary citizens, have lost their lives.

Starting with the execution-style killing of 23 travellers in Musakhail, the terrorists blew up a railway bridge in Bolan, set several vehicles on fire at a Levis station in Mastung, and gunned down 11 people in Kalat before raiding an FC camp in Bela. This has been the most widespread assault in years. The separatist terrorist outfit BLA has claimed responsibility, maintaining that it had seized control of a big portion of the FC camp and most highways.

ISPR asserted that the security forces and law-enforcement agencies responded immediately to these criminal attacks, especially in Musakhail, Kalat and Lasbela, and killed 21 terrorists in ensuing clearance operations. However, it also said that 10 security forces soldiers and four LEAs personnel were martyred during the operation. These horrific attacks suggest that Baloch militants have intensified their violent campaign against the state and security forces. The army has vowed to bring the "instigators, perpetrators, facilitators and abettors of these heinous and cowardly acts to justice".

Balochistan has been in turmoil for many decades. The last two decades, especially following the killing of Nawab Akbar Bugti in an army operation, have seen the emergence of several armed secessionist groups. Strong evidence is said to link some of them to India and other neighbouring countries, who are opposed to the idea of a secure Pakistan.

These groups have targeted security forces, public installations, Chinese interests, unarmed Punjabi workers in Balochistan, and politicians who, as opposed to the militants, believe in a democratic struggle for the political and economic rights of the Baloch. Their violent acts and the killing of innocent people must be strongly condemned. The intensity of these attacks should put the whole country, especially its military and political guardians, on alert. That said, although kinetic action against those who target the province so mercilessly is necessary, the civil and security leadership must look deeper into the Balochistan question and identify the factors that have intensified the tension between the Baloch and the state. The reasons behind this wave of disaffection that have led young middle-class men and women to protest are well-known; they pertain to human rights violations, poor socioeconomic conditions, and the denial of political rights. These factors provide a fertile recruiting ground for terrorist groups on the lookout for angry, frustrated elements to join their ranks. The centre cannot ignore Baloch voices anymore, especially those who condemn violence and want peace and genuine efforts for change. It is only by listening to and cooperating with the people of Balochistan that the terrorists can be eliminated.

## Development first?

Syed Sikander Mehdi

Even a cursory review of discussions in Pakistan on the subject suggests that a desperate search for a shortcut to development has been going on for decades. How to attain fast-paced development seems to be the main concern of policymakers and institutions, and not what kind of development and development for whom.

Enthusiasts support the idea of 'development first' and 'development at any cost'. Some suggest, directly or indirectly, that democracy and freedom can wait and a 'transitional government' — a sort of national government, a government run by technocrats, a strong autocratic government — should be established for a period of 10 to 20 years to deliver. The Chinese, Malaysian, Singaporean, South Korean, and, until recently, the Bangladeshi models of development have been cited to justify authoritarian governance and market the narrative of development without freedom.

In the case of Bangladesh, the events following the Dhaka University students' protest against the quota system in government jobs, which led to the toppling of Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed's government earlier this month, clearly show that development without freedom is no guarantee of political stability and sustainable development.

Since it emerged as a sovereign country in 1971, Bangladesh has passed through many storms and evolved like a number of other post-colonial societies. Pre-1971, the eastern wing

struggled for equal rights and democracy. However, on attaining statehood, it drifted away from its cherished goals. By and large, its post-independence history remains overshadowed by authoritarian governance, mob violence, successful and unsuccessful military coups, the assassination of political leaders — including Bangladesh's founder Mujibur Rahman along with most of his family members in August 1975 and Lt-Gen Ziaur Rahman, the sixth president of Bangladesh, in May 1981 — stifling of the media, rigged elections and rampant corruption. A country created in the name of democracy, freedom, and prosperity for all ended up as a typical Third World country.

However, the long and uninterrupted autocratic rule of Sheikh Hasina Wajed from 2009 to 2024 did transform the country into a roaring economic success. Small wonder, then, that the rise of the country as one of the fastest-growing economies in Asia was noticed worldwide. What was less noticed, however, was its medieval style of politics. The new history of Bangladesh, written on the premises of the universities, colleges and schools of Dhaka and other cities and towns, and on the streets and paddy fields of the country, has revealed that spectacular development without freedom is akin to building a gigantic building structure on a very weak foundation.

In less than a few weeks, the pyramid of power and economy was brought down by a popular uprising. This uprising was not led by any towering opposition leader, nor by the front-ranking, military-

supported Bangladesh Nationalist Party, nor by prominent social reformers and civil society leaders, including Nobel laureate Dr Muhammad Yunus, who now heads the post-Hasina Wajed government. Led by little-known student leaders, this historic movement rejected the idea of development without freedom.

Amartya Sen, leading Indian economist and Nobel laureate, published an important study in 1999. This study, which is titled 'Development as Freedom', exercised considerable influence on the international discourse on development and change. In this study, he puts forward the idea that development is freedom, because it increases the freedom of choice.

The idea of development at any cost, and the Chinese, Malaysian, Singaporean, South Korean and, later, the Bangladeshi model of development, seem to have impressed many development experts and policymakers in Pakistan. The viewpoint is quite widespread that rapid development should be attained even if freedoms and rights have to be sacrificed. Being fascinated by the authoritarian brand, many pay little attention to the consequences of the rapidly spreading fascist tendencies in various societies around the world. Worse still, it is little noticed and much less appreciated that countries such as Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK and US, and several others, have been enjoying sustainable development because of the blending of democracy, freedom, rule of law and development in their political, economic and social system. — Courtesy Dawn

## Man and microbe

Naseem Salahuddin

The human body consists of trillions of individually living cells that breathe, fight, attack, die, rejuvenate, and replenish. The human cell is a world in itself, with a nucleus housing a DNA coil stretching out to construct protein-building enzymes, which are the building blocks of all organs. Each organ has a defined role and is responsible for its survival. The human body is a marvel of engineering and must be respected.

As an analogy, the microscopic bacterium is a single cell that, too, is a world in itself. Although it has no nucleus, it has its factory of particles whose primary function is to replicate by breaking itself into two, two into four, four into 16, and exponentially into millions — all within minutes. They inhabit our entire gut, from the mouth to the end of the five metres of convoluted intestine. The bugs live their own lives, not harming the host. But, if annoyed by unwholesome ingredients or unwanted competitors, they may revolt.

The battle between humans and microbes is an example of the arms race inherent in biological systems. If vandals threaten a household, the reaction will be to strengthen the walls and lock all entrances. If the intruders have guns, citizens will procure weapons. It is the hour of survival of the fittest.

The bacterium has comparable prowess. If the common bacterium called *Staphylococcus aureus* penetrates the skin, it may cause boils, abscesses, or septicemia, and must be destroyed with antibiotics. In the 1940s, penicillin containing a chemical ring of beta-lactam eliminated the Staph. With pro-

longed use and under pressure, the Staph started to produce an enzyme called beta-lactamase that destroyed penicillin. Scientists strengthened penicillin by adding a radical, but the resilient Staph counteracted with protein PBP2a that resisted the robust antibiotic called methicillin. The battle between Staph and methicillin continues, but Staph is coming ahead.

The same saga unfolds combat between antibiotics and the typhoid-causing *Salmonella*, the powerful *E. coli*, and its close cousins *Pseudomonas* and *Enterobacter*, that thrive in wet areas in hospitals and produce enzymes that destroy antibiotics. These tenacious bugs stick to equipment or the hands of doctors and nurses and are transmitted to sick patients, who get sicker with infection in the blood or internal organs. A few years back, infectious disease physicians could destroy bad bugs with conventional antibiotics and restore the patient's health. Today, we play Russian roulette: if the lab reports resistant bacteria, new generations of antibiotics costing Rs5,000-20,000 a day for two to four weeks in a hospital may or may not save the patient's life. No new drug molecules are in the pipeline in the world of pharmaceuticals. Treating deadly microbes is a game of thrones.

Other devious microbes that defy lifesaving drugs, like tuberculosis bacteria and fungi, invade an already weakened body and elude treatment with older drugs. Newer drugs are enormously expensive and toxic, and the humble sufferer has little choice between living and dying. As population and poverty increase in direct propor-

tion, multidrug-resistant TB is spreading more fiercely than ever to the marginalised population who can hardly afford nutritious meals and drugs at a monthly Rs20,000 for nine months or longer, in addition to frequent expensive tests.

Sadly, the trend of irrational antibiotics use by doctors originates in medical colleges, where the professor teaches in overcrowded classrooms, wards and clinics, leaving no room for arriving at logical diagnoses, and doctors are left to be brainwashed by pharmaceutical reps who promote their products, offering incentives that influence prescribing habits. Diagnostic laboratories either do not exist or are inept; roadside stores sell medicines randomly. Self-treatment, driven by the desire for quick solutions and without proper medical guidance, is another significant factor. Consequently, drug resistance is rising rapidly and poses a serious public health threat.

Addressing antimicrobial resistance requires a multifaceted approach. Antimicrobial stewardship programs in hospitals and clinics are crucial in guiding the appropriate use of antibiotics. By avoiding antibiotics against viral infections and limiting their use to treat only disease-causing bacteria, we may prolong their effectiveness for many decades.

AMR is not just an individual, local, or national issue. It is a serious global threat. We can only hope to manage and mitigate its impact through concerted action at all levels — individual, institutional, and international. As part of this global community, each of us is responsible for stanching the tide of further resistance by exercising caution in using antibiotics. — Courtesy Dawn

## Commerce News

### Ahsan calls for utilizing China's expertise, technology in agriculture sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister to China, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday stressed the importance of leveraging China's expertise and technological advancements in Pakistan's agriculture sector, once considered the backbone of the national economy.

He expressed these views while chairing a meeting regarding the recent visit of the Prime

Minister to China, according to a news release.

During the meeting, participants discussed the possibility of sending provincial experts from the agriculture sector to China for further development and knowledge exchange.

Ahsan Iqbal said the exchange of trade delegations would help build trust between the private sectors of the two

countries, adding Pakistan would raise the issue of easing visa procedures for its entrepreneurs with the Chinese embassy.

He also mentioned that Pakistan was utilizing all available resources to ensure the safety of Chinese investors and officials.

The minister reiterated the federal government's commitment to providing all possible facilities to private

investors and taking necessary steps to remove obstacles hindering foreign investment, ensuring a conducive environment for trade and investment.

He directed the relevant authorities to complete and submit a framework for the transfer of Chinese industries to Pakistan within a week, outlining the standards and outcomes required for the quality and success of industrial sectors.



Chairman Prime Minister's Steering Committee on Gem & Stones and Federal Minister for Privatization, Board of Investment and Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan presided over a meeting in Islamabad.



MULTAN: Farmer women busy in cutting grass in the field for their animals.

### PSO reports profit of Rs. 15.9 billion in FY24

ISLAMABAD (APP): Management has also announced a dividend of PKR 10/- per share, representing a 100% payout for the financial year 2023-24.

Furthermore, PSO's subsidiary, PRL, delivered a robust performance with a profit after tax of PKR 4.1 billion and gross revenue of PKR 403.6 billion. On a consolidated basis, the group achieved a profit after tax of PKR 18.3 billion, translating to an Earnings Per Share (EPS) of PKR 39.

In the intensely competitive white oil market, the company expanded its market share to 51.6% share, exceeding its previous record and solidifying its position as the market leader.

### PSX loses 486 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) shed 486.82 points on Tuesday, showing a negative change of 0.62 percent, closing at 78,084.24 points against 78,571.06 points on the last working day.

A total of 591,511,522 shares were traded during the day as compared to 512,337,206 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 17.177 billion against Rs 18.894 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 436 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 163 of them recorded gains and 222 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 51 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were Kohinoor Spinning with 74,333,884 shares at Rs 11.57 per share, WorldCall Telecom with 47,382,319 shares at Rs.1.26 per share and Energycico PK with 43,914,580 shares at Rs 3.98 per share.

Hallmark Company Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.56.87 per share price, closing at Rs 625.57, whereas the runner-up was Mari Petroleum Company Limited with a Rs 50.90 rise in its per share price.

### Government pledges to lead the country towards progress: Ali Pervaiz

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Finance, Revenue and Power Ali Pervaiz Malik said on Thursday that the government pledged its commitment to steering the country towards progress.

Talking to a private news channel, he said the government, took difficult economic measures to put the country on the right track.

He said we are making significant progress and will soon overcome the relevant issues.

### Pak apparel exports to China increase by 5% in 2024

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan's exports of men's and women's apparel to China have been increased by approximately five percent reaching over \$18.03 million in the first seven months of the year, said the latest data from General Administration of Customs of China (GACC).

Commercial Councillor at the Pakistan Embassy in

Regarding the International Monetary Fund, the Minister said positive news is expected in the coming days.

IMF is a necessary component to pull the country out of the economic quagmire, he added.

He said the government is doing all the efforts to support low-income electricity users. The federal government has given protection up to 200 units in consultation with IMF.

Beijing, Ghulam Qadir highlighted the growing popularity of Pakistani apparel in China, attributing this trend to the superior quality and competitive pricing of the products.

He also emphasized Pakistan's strategic advantage in land trade with China, coupled with the zero-tariff benefits under the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement (CPFTA).

### Govt maintains zero tolerance policy towards power pilferage: Awais

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Power Division Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari on Tuesday reiterated that the Federal Government and the Ministry of Energy (Power Division) had maintained a zero-tolerance policy towards electricity theft and their facilitators.

Presiding over a high level meeting at Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) headquarters, he emphasized the importance of 100% recovery of dues from both government and private consumers.

He stressed that any delay in this process would not be tolerated and that the entire relief distribution would be closely monitored to ensure

transparency in this regard. Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari further highlighted that consumers were the most valuable asset of any organization, and the provision of quality and timely services, accurate meter readings, and prompt bill delivery ought to be ensured.

He also mentioned that the complete eradication of electricity theft was possible through adopting modern technology in the power sector.

### PM orders to hold consultation with traders at all levels: Naem Mir

LAHORE (APP): Tajir Dost Scheme Chief Coordinator Naem Mir said on Tuesday that Prime Minister had ordered to hold consultation with traders at all levels. According to official sources, the Federal Board of Revenue Chairman had invited representatives of traders for dialogue at 3:00 pm today. He said, "We want to hold consultation with traders organizations before issuing new amended SRO."

### Export of footwear increases 2.62% in July 2024

ISLAMABAD (APP): The export of footwear from the country witnessed an increase of 2.62 percent during the first month of the current fiscal year (2024-25) as compared to the exports of the corresponding last year.

The country exported footwear worth US\$ 11.793 million during July 2024 as opposed to the export of US\$ 11.491 million during July 2023, showing growth of 2.62 percent, according to the

data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

Among the footwear products, the exports of leather footwear witnessed a decrease of 1.24 percent, from US\$ 9.570 million to US\$ 9.452 million during the month under review.

The canvas footwear exports also decreased by 43.64 percent by going down from US\$ 0.286 million last year to US\$ 0.161 million, the PBS data revealed.



## CM orders payments via Himmat Cards by September 15

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has said that the care of deserving special persons is responsibility of the state. The CM participated in a ceremony to sign an MoU (memorandum of understanding) between Department of Social Welfare and Bank of Punjab for the issuance of Himmat Cards (ATM Cards) to 65,000 special people across Punjab, through which Rs 10,500 will be paid to them every quarter.

The chief minister directed the authorities concerned to start payment through Himmat cards by September 15. She said: "Special people are very special to us." CM Maryam Nawaz was apprised that Himmat Cards will be issued to 40,000 people in phase-I and to 25,000 people in phase-II. She was also briefed that a 30 per cent quota had been reserved for women in the issuance of Himmat Card to deserving special persons. She was briefed that a

dedicated helpline 1312 has been set up for the assistance of deserving special persons. The MoU was signed by Secretary Social Welfare Javed Akhtar Mahmood and President Bank of Punjab Zafar Masood. Provincial Minister for Social Welfare Sohail Shaikat Butt, MPA Sania Ashiq, Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman, Chairman P&D Nabil Awan, DG Social Welfare Amna Munir and other relevant officers were also present.



LAHORE: Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman talking to media persons along with Traders Organization regarding countrywide shutter down strike during his visit to protest camp.

## KP govt announces Rs 10 mln for families of Balochistan martyrs

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has announced a compensation amount of Rs 10 million each to the families of those martyred in recent terrorist attacks in Balochistan. The announcement was made on the directives of Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur to show solidarity with the people of Punjab and martyrs. Muzammil Aslam, Advisor to the Chief Minister for Finance, said that the provincial government deeply sympathizes with the families of the martyrs. He emphasized that both the

government and the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, who have faced the scourge of terrorism, fully understand the pain and suffering caused by such tragic incidents. He said that the party's leadership strongly condemned the terrorist attacks and expressed their sorrow and solidarity with the affected families, underscoring their commitment to stand by them during this difficult time. Muzammil Aslam said that terrorist incidents in North Waziristan have also claimed the lives of five individuals.

## New Election Commissioner KP welcomed with luncheon party

PESHAWAR (APP): Provincial Election Commissioner Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Shamshad Khan and newly appointed Provincial Election Commissioner Saeed Gul on Tuesday arranged a luncheon wherein all the officers of the Provincial Election Commissioner KP headquarters were in attendance. The KP Election Commission Officers said during the function the Provincial Election Commissioner appreciated the services of Shamshad Khan.

## Two youths killed over issue in Swabi

PESHAWAR (APP): At least two youths were shot dead over a dispute in the vicinity of Yar Hussain police station in Swabi district, police informed on Tuesday. Police said the accused called the victims into an empty house and later shot them dead. The dead were identified as Jalal and Adnan, police said and added that both the victims were 22-years-old. The Yar Hussain police have registered a case on the complaint of the brother of the deceased Jalal and started investigation to nab.

## SMBR says: Comprehensive flood management plan to be developed across Punjab

LAHORE (APP): Senior Member Board of Revenue (SMBR) Punjab Nabeel Javed highlighted the need for a detailed plan to enhance drainage infrastructure and address urban flooding from heavy rains, aiming to minimize inconvenience to residents. Presiding over a crucial meeting held at the Board of Revenue here on Tuesday, he directed all commissioners and local

governments to submit comprehensive reports regarding the statistics of union councils across Punjab. Attendees included Secretary Irrigation Wasif Khurshid, Secretary Local Government Board Rizwan Nazir, Commissioner Lahore Zaid bin Maqsood, Additional Secretary Housing and Urban Development Umar Farooq, commissioners from across Punjab.



ABBOTTABAD: Mayor of Abbottabad, Sardar Shuja Nabi exchanging views with Neil Hawkins, Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan during meeting held in Abbottabad.

## LHC RWP bench Court cannot issue directives on assumptions

RAWALPINDI (Online): Justice Mirza Waqas Rauf of Lahore High Court Rawalpindi bench has remarked during hearing of petition against detention of deputy superintendent Adiala jail Rawalpindi the petitioner has no authentic information and the court cannot issue directives to any one on the basis of assumptions. He further remarked "The case has been registered and there is no such thing therein. Tell the court Muhammad Akram is in whose custody. The court while declaring reply of CPO Rawalpindi unsatisfactory summoned him again on

August 29. The petitioner along with her son and counsel Imaan Mazaari was present in the court during hearing of case Tuesday. The counsel for the petitioner told the court deputy superintendent is missing since August 14 and police and any other institution is not providing any information of any sort. We suspect Muhammad Akram is in the custody of intelligence agencies. The court inquired Muhammad Akram is in the custody of which agency so that the court may issue directive to some one because we can issue no directives on the basis of assumptions.

## CS KP shows solidarity with martyrs families

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry on Tuesday expressed profound sympathies with families of four security personnel who embraced martyrdom during an intelligence-based operation against terrorists in Tirah valley of Khyber District.

In his message, the Chief Secretary KP expressed solidarity with the bereaved families and prayed for high places in Heaven for the souls of the martyrs. He also prayed for fortitude to the affected families to bear the loss with patience.

## Two killed, three injured in traffic accident

MULTAN (APP): Two persons of the same family were killed and three others sustained injuries in a traffic accident that occurred near Kheera Chowk area of Multan, tv channels reporting Rescue sources quoted on Tuesday. According to details, a rashly driven bus hit the two wheeler near Kheera chowk area.

## AJK Govt channels funds to grassroots to improve public services

MIRPUR-AJK (APP): Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister, Chaudhry Anwar-ul-Haq on Tuesday highlighted the government's focus on completing development projects promptly and making funds accessible at the grassroots level to enhance public services. During a review meeting with District Officers in Kuttan Colony, Neelum Valley, the prime minister urged department heads to prioritize public service and perform their duties with dedication. He stressed that the benefits of allocated funds should reach the community. The prime minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to completing hydropower

projects in AJK within the given timeframe and assured that appointments of administrative officers would be made based on merit to promote good governance. He also highlighted plans to upgrade road infrastructure to boost tourism and create local job opportunities. The prime minister instructed the Electricity Department to improve revenue collection, noting that only 22% of residents in Neelum pay their electricity bills, despite affordable rates. He emphasized the need for community cooperation in timely payments of electricity and water bills and called for actions against defaulters.

He stressed that the benefits of allocated funds should reach the community. The prime minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to completing hydropower



LAHORE: Members of Professors and Lecturers Association are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, at Lahore press club.

## Gul Hasan Sheikh says Better treatment facilities should be provided to patients in time

Independent Report MIRPUR MATHELO: Better treatment facilities should be provided to the patients in time and the supply of free medicines should be ensured, Regional Director of Ombudsman Ghotki Gul Hasan Sheikh expressed these thoughts on the occasion of visiting Taluk Hospital Daharki. On the instructions of Chief Sindh Muhammad Sohail Rajput, he visited

Taluka Hospital Daharki, on this occasion, the director of ombudsman inspected the hospital medical room, X-ray machine room and other departments. They should be properly treated and properly cared for and no negligence or negligence should be done, on this occasion MS Dr. Fida Hussain Kalwar informed about the facilities available in the hospital.

## International News

## Israeli strikes across Gaza kill 18, including 8 children, Palestinians say

Monitoring Desk NEW YORK: Palestinian officials say Israeli airstrikes across the Gaza Strip have killed at least 18 people, including eight children.

Gaza, a strike on a home early Tuesday killed five people, including a man, his three children as young as 3 years old and a woman, according to a casualty list provided by Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis, where the bodies were taken.

Palestinian health officials do not say whether those killed in Israeli strikes are civilians or fighters. Israel says it tries to avoid harming civilians and accuses Hamas of putting them in danger by fighting in residential areas.

The Civil Defense, first responders who operate under the Hamas-run government, said three children and their mother were killed in an airstrike late Monday in the Tafah neighborhood of Gaza City. It said three other people were missing after the strike. Another strike late Monday hit a building in downtown Gaza City, killing a child, three women and a man, according to the Gaza Health Ministry. In southern

A n o t h e r airstrike early Tuesday flattened a home west of Khan Younis, killing at least four people, including a child, according to Nasser Hospital, where the dead were taken. Footage shared online showed residents digging through the rubble. A man carried a wounded child to an ambulance, while two others carried a dead body wrapped in a blanket.

But the military rarely comments on individual strikes, which often kill women and children. Gaza's Health Ministry says Israel's offensive has killed over 40,000 people in Gaza. The war began when Hamas-led militants stormed into southern Israel on Oct. 7, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting around 250 people.



Iran's new foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi, welcomes Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani ahead of their meeting in Tehran.

## Zuckerberg says Biden admin pressured Meta to 'censor' Covid-19 content

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: Meta Platforms CEO Mark Zuckerberg said the Biden administration had pressured the company to "censor" Covid-19 content during the pandemic, apparently referring to White House requests to take down misinformation about the coronavirus and vaccines. In a letter dated August 26, Zuckerberg told the US House of Representatives Judiciary Committee

that he regretted not speaking up about this pressure earlier, as well as other decisions he had made as the owner of Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp around removing certain content. In July 2021, President Joe Biden, a Democrat, said social media platforms like Facebook "are killing people" for allowing misinformation about coronavirus vaccines to be posted on its platform.

## Taliban promise to enforce morality law 'gently'

Monitoring Desk KABUL: Afghanistan's Taliban authorities said on Monday a recently ratified morality law would be enforced "gently", after the international community and Afghans voiced concern over new restrictions. Women must cover completely and not raise their voices in public, according to a 35-article law announced on Wednesday by the justice ministry. It imposes wide-ranging stipulations from behaviour to dress and social interactions.

## No intention to increase ME tensions, says Iran

Monitoring Desk DUBAI: Iran does not seek to increase Middle East tensions, Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi told his Italian counterpart Antonio Tajani, adding that its response to the killing of the Hamas chief in Tehran would be "definite and calculated". Iran blames Israel for the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh on July 31, which Araqchi was quoted by Iran's state media as saying was "an unforgivable violation of Iran's security and sovereignty".

## Russian attacks on Ukraine kill 5 in second day of major strikes

Monitoring Desk KYIV: Russia launched missile and drone attacks targeting scores of Ukrainian regions and killing at least five people, officials said on Tuesday, a day after Moscow's biggest air attack of the war on its neighbour. Two people were killed when a hotel was "wiped out" by a missile in the central city of Kryvyi Rih, regional officials said. Three died in drone attacks on the southeastern city of Zaporizhzhia.

with more than 200 missiles and drones on Monday. During Tuesday's attack, Ukraine downed five out of 10 incoming missiles and 60 out of 81 drones, the air force said. The Ukrainian air force lost track of 10 more drones that have likely come down somewhere on its territory, it said. It said that one more crossed into Belarusian territory; 10 more were still flying around in Ukraine's airspace on Tuesday morning.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Tuesday that Kyiv would retaliate against Russia for its attacks. He asked allies to consider joint air defence operations and provide long-range capabilities after Russia pummeled Ukrainian energy infrastructure. The Russian defence ministry said its forces had carried out a high-precision weapon strike on Ukraine overnight, the Interfax news agency reported. Moscow denies targeting civilians since launching a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, although thousands have been killed.

## UN forced to halt humanitarian operations in Gaza

Monitoring Desk UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations said on Monday it had been forced to halt its humanitarian operations in Gaza due to a new Israeli evacuation order for the Deir al-Balah area, a senior UN official said. "We are not operating today. As of this morning, we're not operating in Gaza," the official said, adding that since the start of the war the UN has sometimes had to "delay or take a pause."

solutions," the UN official said. "And if it means that we need to anchor down for 24-48 hours and reset, we do that. But we're not leaving." "Right now the challenge is to find a place where we can reset and effectively operate." Israel's military struck the Gaza Strip on Monday a day after truce talks in Cairo coincided with a major but brief cross-border escalation involving Hezbollah in Lebanon. In the latest flare-up between Israel and Hamas-ally Hezbollah, the Lebanese group on Sunday launched rockets and drones in retaliation for a top commander's killing as Israel carried out air raids the military said thwarted a larger attack. Israel swiftly revoked a state of emergency declared early on Sunday, and Hezbollah said its operation was "completed."

## Iran's supreme leader opens door to negotiations with United States over Tehran's nuclear program

Monitoring Desk DUBAI: Iran's supreme leader opened the door Tuesday to renewed negotiations with the United States over his country's rapidly advancing nuclear program, telling its civilian government there was "no barrier" to engaging with its "enemy." Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's remarks set clear red lines for any talks taking place under the government of reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian and renewed his warnings that America wasn't to be trusted. But his comments mirror those around the time of Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, which saw Tehran's nuclear program greatly curtailed in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions. Yet it remains unclear just how

much room Pezeshkian will have to maneuver, particularly as tensions remain high in the wider Mideast over the Israel-Hamas war. "We do not have to pin our hope to the enemy. For our plans, we should not wait for approval by the enemies," Khamenei said in a video broadcast by state television. "It is not contradictory to the same enemy in some places, there's no barrier." Khamenei, who has final say on all state matters, also warned Pezeshkian's Cabinet, "Do not trust the enemy." Khamenei, 85, has occasionally urged talks or dismissed them with the U.S. after then-President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew America from the deal.

## India's green energy wind drive hits desert herders hard

Monitoring Desk JAISALMER: Whirring wind turbines in India's Thar desert supply critical green energy for the world's most populous nation, but those living in their shadows say it comes at their expense. It illustrates the hard balance faced as India, the third-largest greenhouse gas emitter, scrambles to boost its non-fossil fuel capacity to stem the rising impacts of climate change. The big companies have come here and built the windmills, but they're useless to us," said 65-year-old livestock herder Nena Ram, describing an age-old farming system upended by the giant turbines.

## Indian police fire teargas at hundreds protesting over Kolkata doctor's rape, murder

Monitoring Desk NEW DELHI: Police in India fired teargas and water cannon to disperse hundreds of protesters marching in the eastern city of Kolkata on Tuesday to demand the resignation of a top state minister in the wake of a gruesome rape and murder of a trainee doctor. Protesters led by university students broke through the iron barricades set up on the route of their march to the West Bengal state secretariat, television footage showed, resulting in a baton charge by the po-

lice, who had earlier declared the protest illegal. The August 9 attack on the 31-year-old doctor has caused nationwide outrage, similar to the widespread protests witnessed after a 2012 gang-rape of a 23-year-old student on a moving bus in New Delhi, with campaigners saying women continue to suffer from high levels of sexual violence despite tougher laws. A police volunteer has been arrested for the crime and the federal police have taken over the investigation.



## Romina calls for policies for protecting breastfeeding women's from climate impacts

ISLAMABAD (APP): Environmental Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change and Environmental Coordinator said that breastfeeding is a vital practice with profound health benefits for both infants and mothers. Because, it provides infants with essential nutrients, boosts their immune systems, and fosters an emotional bond between mother and child.

"Breastfeeding supports healthy development, strengthens the mother-infant bond and yields positive economic and environmental impacts. However, promoting and supporting breastfeeding through education, policy and community support can lead to healthier individuals and a more sustainable future," Ms Alam said while addressing as keynote speaker at a seminar 'National Advocacy & Sensitisation with Parliamentarians on the World Breastfeeding Awareness Week' held here on Wednesday.

The event was organized by 'Save the Children' in collaboration with the Climate Change and

our national nutrition programmes and policies." "This means promoting sustainable agricultural practices, ensuring that our food systems are resilient to climate shocks, and prioritizing nutrition in our climate adaptation strategies. By doing so, we can protect our children from the dual threats of malnutrition and climate change," she elaborated. The PM's aide Romina Khurshid Alam emphasized that breastfeeding lies at the heart of our nation's future—empowering maternal, child, and adolescent nutrition in Pakistan. She remarked, "Achieving adequate and health-boosting nutrition is not just a health challenge for mother and child during breastfeeding age, it is also a cornerstone for the development of our society, our economy, and our resilience to the growing challenges posed by climate change." Romina Khurshid also highlighted that breastfeeding in Pakistan has long been recognised as a crucial practice for ensuring the health and survival of our children.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui along with Dr. Muhammad Shahid Soroya Director General PIE, Prof Dr. Nasir Mahmood Vice Chancellor AIOU and Ms. Fajer Rabia Pasha Executive Director Pakistan Alliance for Girls Education (PAGE) launching Report on Girls' Education in Pakistan and announcement on Statistics and Trends for 2022-23 at AIOU Auditorium.

## Governor KP stresses need for action against climate change

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Faisal Karim Kundi, on Wednesday underscored the devastating impact of climate change on Pakistan and stressed the need for comprehensive action at all levels to address these challenges.

During a meeting with senior officials from the World Wide Fund (WWF)'s Recharge Pakistan project, he pointed out that Pakistan, particularly the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, has been severely affected by climate variability and flooding. He noted that Dera Ismail Khan, among other districts,

has been particularly hard-hit and emphasized the importance of raising public awareness and implementing strategic protective measures. The governor assured support for the Recharge Pakistan program in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to maximize its benefits for the public. The meeting was attended by Senior Director of the Recharge Pakistan Project, Fawad Hayat; Manager of Gender, Shafiqullah Baloch; Livelihoods in Islamabad, and KP Assembly Member, Ahmad Karim Kundi.

Fawad Hayat provided a briefing on the project, explaining that it is designed to support Pakistan's climate-vulner-

able communities. He stated, "The need for the Recharge Pakistan project has never been greater than it is today."

The project has received backing from the Ministry of Water Resources, the Ministry of Climate Change, and the Federal Flood Commission and has been made possible with funding from the Green Climate Fund (GCF), US Aid, Coca-Cola Foundation, and WWF. With an investment of \$77.8 million, it is the largest national-level investment of its kind, directly benefiting over 680,000 individuals, with an additional 7 million people benefiting from project sites.

## Latif calls Opposition for table talks to address economic woes

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senior PML-N leader, Mian Javed Latif Wednesday appealed to the opposition parties to refrain from destabilizing the country and instead engage in constructive dialogue to find solutions to the economic challenges facing Pakistan.

Talking to a private news channel, he emphasized the need for table talks to address the issues, rather than resorting to anarchic measures that could further exacerbate the situation.

However, Mian Javed Latif suggested that opposition parties should engage in meaningful dialogue with the government to find solutions to the economic challenges facing Pakistan.

He emphasized that table talks could provide a platform for constructive discussion and consensus-building, rather than confrontation and agitation.

He also pointed out

that the country is already facing numerous challenges, including inflation and a sluggish economy. He warned that further destabilization could have severe consequences, including a decline in investor confidence, a decrease in economic growth, and an increase in unemployment.

Responding to a query about joint political movement of PTI and JUI-F, he disclosed that Maulana Fazlur Rehman's JUI-F party will go solo in its political movements, shunning any joint ventures with PTI due to Imran Khan's stubborn stance, which has soured ties between the two opposition parties.

"The PTI government's incompetence and lack of vision have led to the current economic crisis," Latif said adding, "their policies have failed to deliver, and the country is paying the price".



ISLAMABAD: A view of closed shops at Aabpara Market in the Federal Capital, during a nationwide strike called by trade organizations against the high electricity bills, excessive taxes and the absence of business-friendly policies.

## Shibli highlights CPEC as Pak development lifeline, supports China's Vision

ISLAMABAD (APP): Leader of Opposition, Senator Syed Shibli Faraz on Wednesday called the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), as a lifeline for Pakistan's development and future growth.

He remarked, while addressing the Third Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. The event was organized by the Pakistan-China Institute. Senator Syed Shibli Faraz praised China's policy of Reform and Opening-Up, which has propelled it to become the world's second-largest economy and stressed the relevance of these principles for Pakistan's economic and social development.

Emphasising the deep-rooted and enduring friendship between Pakistan and China, highlighting it as a model of bilateral

relations built on mutual respect and shared goals, he reaffirmed the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) commitment to this vital relationship, noting its importance not only in terms of bilateral cooperation but also as a cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy.

China's pivotal role in global affairs, particularly within the Global South, and expressed support for China's vision of a multipolar world, he highlighted China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as a transformative project with the potential to reshape global trade routes and foster the economic cooperation.

Senator Syed Shibli Faraz reiterated PTI's commitment to strengthening Pakistan-China relations and working closely with Chinese counterparts to explore new avenues of cooperation.

## Transparency and merit are forefront of our recruitment; IGP

ISLAMABAD: According to the details, Inspector General of Police (IGP)

ing, IGP Islamabad reviewed the ongoing recruitment process. At this occasion, AIG



Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi chaired a crucial meeting on new recruitment in Islamabad Police, a public relations officer said.

He said that the meeting was attended by AIG Establishment Abdul Haq Umrani and other senior officers. During the meet-

Establishment briefed the IGP Islamabad about all relevant matters. The IGP Islamabad said that the recruitment process in Islamabad Police will advance while adhering to legal requirements and ensuring merit and transparency at all costs.

## DC pushes for digital land record overhaul

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon has chaired an important meeting focused on revenue matters, with key officials from the Revenue Department and ADCR in attendance.

The meeting primarily discussed the auditing of fees charged by housing societies, alongside the implementation of decisions made in previous meetings, said the spokesman of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration.

In a crucial meeting, Islamabad's Deputy Commissioner (DC) emphasized the need for swift action on pending revenue cases and audits of housing societies, marking a significant

move towards transparency and efficiency in the city's administrative processes.

A thorough review of Islamabad's pending revenue cases was conducted. The DC stressed the urgency of resolving these cases to provide relief to the citizens, calling for daily reporting on progress from ADCR Revenue.

The DC also highlighted the need for action against revenue staff who delay cases without justifiable reasons.

In addition, the meeting addressed the digitization of land records, with the DC noting that the newly implemented digital policy would simplify the process for citizens, making it easier for them to access services.



ISLAMABAD: Employees of Utility Stores hold a sit-in protest (Dharna) at D-Chowk in favor of their demands in the Federal Capital. The Islamabad administration has sealed off D-Chowk with containers in anticipation of a potential protest by employees of the Utility Stores Corporation (USC) against the possible closure of the corporation.

## NA education body visits PAL, praises its role for promotion of languages

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation consisting of members of the National Assembly Standing Committee on Education and Professional Training and National Heritage and Culture Azim-ud-din Zahid Lakhvi (Chairman), Mahtab Akbar Rashdi and Usama Hamza along with the National Assembly officers on Wednesday visited the Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL).

The Chairperson of the PAL, Dr. Najiba Arif and the Chief Moderator, Sultan Nasir, welcomed the members of the delegation and informed about the aims and objectives, activities and literary projects of the institution.

The committee members paid tribute to the services of the Pakistan Academy of Letters for the promotion of literature and said that the PAL is performing

very important services for the expression of national and literary identity.

The members emphasized the importance of Urdu and English translations of literature written in various Pakistani languages. Highlighting the diversity and richness of Pakistani languages, President PAL said that the Academy will represent all the languages spoken in Pakistan in the literary museum of Pakistani languages. President Dr. Najiba Arif presented the gift of books and journals of the academy to the distinguished members of the delegation. The members of the delegation also visited the hall of honor and library of the academy and expressed special interest in the Hall of Honor, stating that bringing the services of prominent writers across Pakistan to the fore in this way is a very desirable act.

## NEPRA concludes hearing into FCA for July

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Electric Supply Company (NEPRA) on Wednesday concluded public hearing into fuel cost adjustment (FCA) for the month of July for WAPDA power distribution companies (DISCOs).

The Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPAG) on behalf of WAPDA DISCOs in its petition has sought 31 paise per unit reduction in power tariff for July which would be applicable in billing month of September.

The consumers had paid Rs 2.56 per unit under FCA in billing month of August. Similarly, Rs 2.87 per unit reduction in FCA is likely for the billing month of September. It is expected the consumers would likely to get relief Rs 1.91 per unit by combining both adjustments.

## AJKPM warns of stern action against those engaged in malicious propaganda

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has warned of stern action against those engaged in malicious propaganda targeting the national security institutions of the country. The Prime Minister Haq said this during a press briefing at Kuttan Colony today. Lauding Pakistan armed forces' unprecedented role in defending the territorial integrity of the country, he said it was due to the unprecedented sacrifices of our brave soldiers who perform their duties on borders and high mountains without caring about their lives to protect us and our homeland. He said that it was high time that we realize the armed forces' significant contribution and sacrifices they have been rendering to safeguard the country's ideological and geographical frontiers. About the development work carried out during the past couple of years, the PM said that over a billion rupees have been spent for the construction of Neelum highway.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Korea Park Ki Jun inaugurates an art exhibition, Matrix of Life: Impressions and Iterations by IRAM WANI at Pakistan National Council of the Arts.

## Rehman lauds China's 'Global Meteoric Rise', 'All-Weather Friendship' with Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson, Senate Standing Committee on Climate Change, Senator Sherry Rehman on Wednesday underscored China's meteoric rise as a 'global power', a power that not only influences the world but also profoundly shapes the mindset of nations, particularly in the Global South.

She was speaking at the "Friends of Silk Road-3rd Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the CPC" organized by Pakistan China Institute.

Senator Rehman highlighted the significance of the Third Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the CPC, under the leadership of President Xi Jinping, emphasizing its crucial role in shaping global history, a news release said.

She reflected on the deep-rooted and historic relationship between the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the CPC, nurtured by the visionary leadership of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, and Asif

Ali Zardari. "The PPP has the oldest relationship with CPC, curated and nurtured by our leadership," she stated.

Discussing the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Senator Rehman lauded China's commitment to the project, calling it a "spectacular opportunity" that has propelled Pakistan onto a historic pathway of development.

Senator Rehman emphasized the environmental aspects of the project, particularly the Green CPEC Initiative, which aims to decarbonize and green Pakistan's future.

She noted, "The CPC's Third Plenum placed a premium on pushing green development through carbon reduction, pollution reduction, and improvement of environmental governance systems."

Highlighting the Karot Hydropower Project as an example of this vision, Senator Rehman pointed out its significant environmental and economic contributions.

## Tahir Ashrafi condemns recent violence in Balochistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of Pakistan Ulema Council, Hafiz Tahir Ashrafi on Wednesday condemned recent incidents of violence in Balochistan, resulting in the loss of innocent lives.

Ashrafi, in a news conference, extended his condolences to the family of the late Maulana Qazi Abdul Rasheed and emphasized the importance of unity within the country.

He stated that the people of Balochistan are as patriotic as those from other provinces and condemned the silence of individuals and groups who claim to advocate for human rights.

The council chairman announced that the days from September 1st to September 10th would be celebrated as Defense, End of Prophethood, and Defense of Pakistan, promoting unity and solidarity within the country. Ashrafi urged the state to take strict action against elements spreading unrest in Balochistan, alleging an external agenda behind the recent incidents.

## Delegation of Argentina embassy visits Traffic Headquarters Faizabad

ISLAMABAD: According to the details, a delegation from the Argentine em-

system. Additionally, the delegation was informed that, following the vision of Inspector General of Police



bassy visited the Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) headquarters. During the visit, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Traffic Muhammad Sarfraz Virk provided a tour of various branches of the Traffic Police headquarters, a public relations officer said.

He said that the delegation was briefed on the ITP central system, the modern technological digital one-window operational hall, and other sections, including their processes and effectiveness.

SSP Traffic Islamabad informed the delegation that ITP is playing a vital role in various areas through modern technical projects, including traffic police field operations and the e-challan

(IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, ITP is deploying all resources to ensure that all facilities for obtaining driving licenses and for the protection of life and property are available under one roof through modern technology.

In this regard, the 24/7 Police Khidmat Markaz provides various services to citizens, and digital smart vans are being deployed to issue learner permits to students at various colleges and universities.

The delegation appreciated ITP's modern technical system and its effectiveness and expressed special gratitude to SSP Traffic Islamabad and his team for the successful visit.

## NHMP imposes Rs 350,000 fine on foodlets

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP), in its ongoing drive against overcharging and expired items of checking foodlets in the services area on Wednesday, inspected various sites and fined Rs 350,000 for violating Food Authority Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). NHMP North Zone spokesman Muhammad Saqib said that the teams comprising respective Assistant Commissioners, Motorway Police, and Food Authority officials, while inspecting on M-1, M-2, the Saat Expressway, and Hazara Expressway, found expired items at several outlets and discarded them on the spot.

The teams also sealed various outlets for overcharging and imposed Rs 350,000 on them. He further said that strict action was being taken against the violators on the motorways.

## Female thief busted, cash, gold ornaments recovered

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Anti-Robbery and Dacoity Unit (ARDU) of the Islamabad Police team have apprehended a notorious thief with a history of domestic thefts and recovered gold ornaments and cash totaling Rs 4.5 million from their possession.



ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Senator Rubina Khalid in a meeting with a team from GIZ, led by Johanna Knoess, Head of Sector Initiative Social Protection at BISP headquarters.