

# Independent

dailyindkhi@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

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Ph: 0300-3898091

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## Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh assassinated in Tehran

Deeply shocked by timing: Pakistan condemns assassination of Haniyeh; Political leaders see Haniyeh's elimination as a blow to Palestine cause

TEHRAN (INP): Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh was assassinated in the early hours of the morning in Iran, the Palestinian resistance group Hamas said on Wednesday, describing the strike as a "severe escalation" that would not achieve its goals.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) confirmed the death of Haniyeh, hours after he attended a swearing in ceremony for the country's new president, and said it was investigating.

"Early this morning, the residence of Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran was struck, resulting in his and one of his body guards' martyrdom. The cause is under investigation and will be announced soon," the Revolutionary Guards said.

There was no immediate comment from Israeli authorities.

The news, which came less than 24 hours after Israel claimed to have killed the Hezbollah commander it said was behind a deadly strike in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, appears to set back chances of any imminent ceasefire agreement in Gaza.

"This assassination by the Israeli occupation of Brother Haniyeh is a grave escalation that aims to break the will of Hamas," senior Hamas official Sami Abu Zuhri told media.

He said Hamas would continue the path it was following, adding: "We are confident of victory."

Meanwhile, another senior Hamas official, Moussa Abu Marzouk, said the assassination of Haniyeh is a "cowardly act that will not go unpunished".

Haniyeh, normally based in Qatar, has been the face of the Palestinian group's international diplomacy as the war set off by the Hamas-led attack on Israel on October 7 has raged in Gaza, where three of his sons were killed in an Israeli airstrike.

Appointed to the Hamas top job in 2017, Haniyeh has moved between Turkey and Qatar's capital Doha, escaping the travel curbs of the blockaded Gaza Strip and enabling him to act as a negotiator in ceasefire talks or to talk to Hamas' ally Iran.



KARACHI: Karachi Jamat e Islami hold protest against Israel Government after killing of Hamas political chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran.

## Murad, WFP country chief agree to strengthen disaster response, climate change adaptation

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and United Nations World Food Program (WFP) Country Director Ms Coco Ushiyama in their meeting agreed to strengthen their collaboration in Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Mitigation, Climate Change Adaptation, Acute Malnutrition & Stunting, School Meals, and expanding Food Silos under WFP's five-year Country Strategic Plan.

The chief minister recognized the enduring partnership between the Sindh government and WFP in addressing humanitarian and development challenges in the province.

The meeting was held at the CM House and was attended by Chairman P&D Najam Shah, Secretary to CM Raheem Shaikh and WFP representatives here on Wednesday.

Murad Shah mentioned the successful col-

laboration with WFP in conducting the Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) and the formulation of the 4RF (Resilient, Recovery, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Framework) for sustainable recovery in alignment with the Sindh Strategic Action Plan for Flood 2022. WFP is also involved in disaster preparation, mitigation and reduction in Sindh. Additionally, WFP and its partners implemented a \$200,000 Disaster Risk and Reduction Management Programme benefiting over 51,000 people in Dadu and Qambar-Shadkot districts in 2023. He said that provincial government with the support of WFP, under the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), was providing various services, including nutrition, health and social behaviour change to pregnant and breastfeeding women and their children enrolled in the

program. To date, over 830,000 individuals in 140 Static and Mobile Facilitation Centers across 30 districts have been enrolled in the program.

WFP also supports the Adolescent Girls Nutrition Programme and is expanding its wheat flour fortification initiative using small-scale wheat mills under the Chakki Fortification Programme in eight districts of Sindh. Regarding Food System Strengthening, the chief minister expressed the need to enhance wheat storage capacity in the province. He said that WFP, through the International Financing Corporation (IFC), was supporting the provincial Food Department to construct strategic grain reserves with a total capacity of 1.085 million MT through a Public Private Partnership to modernize storage infrastructure for efficient management of wheat reserves.

## Govt resolved for fast, uninterrupted internet connectivity, promotion of AI infrastructure: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that the government was taking all-out measures to provide fast and uninterrupted Internet connectivity to the people.

The prime minister, in a meeting with a three-member delegation of Asia Internet Coalition, headed by Managing Director Jeff Paine, said that the government was implementing a strategy to attract foreign investment in the information technology infrastructure.

The meeting featured the discussion on data security, code of ethics for Internet content, and prevention of electronic crimes. Prime Minister Shehbaz told the delegation that the government was working to promote a basic infrastructure based on artificial intelligence.

He said the government was resolved to make Pakistan achieve a distinction in AI infrastructure in the region.

He said under the Digital Pakistan Initiative, the whole system was being digitised and expressed the hope that the digitisation of Federal Board of Revenue would prove to be a milestone towards economic digitisation and automation. During the briefing, it was informed that consultation with all stakeholders on the draft of Personal Data Protection Bill was in progress. Prime Minister Shehbaz appreciated the services of Asia Internet Coalition in promoting IT and Internet infrastructure in the Asia Pacific Region. The delegation members apprised the prime minister of the Coalition's services in Pakistan's IT sector. Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecommunications Shaza Fatima Khawaja, IT expert Tania Aidiur and relevant senior officers attended the meeting.



KARACHI: Ethiopian Ambassador Jemal Beker meeting with Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori.

## Tessori expresses condolence on demise of over 230 people in Ethiopian landslide

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor Sindh, Kamran Khan Tessori on Wednesday visited the Ethiopian embassy to express condolence on demise of over 230 people in landslide incident, in Gofo Zone of the Southern part of Ethiopia.

Upon arrival at the embassy, Special Envoy, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ethiopia Jemal Beker Abdula, received the Governor Sindh.

The Governor Sindh expressed solidarity with the government and people of Ethiopia over the tragic incident and sympathized with the bereaved families.

He expressed his support and commitment to jointly work with the government of Ethiopia in addressing the climate change issues. Ambassador Jemal Beker briefed the governor about relief and rescue efforts of the government of the Ethiopia being carried out for permanent relocation of the affected persons in sustainable manner.

The ambassador also highlighted the Green Legacy Initiative of Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Dr. Abiy Ahmed which was aimed at combating climate challenges and ensuring food security in the country and region as well.

He informed the Governor that Ethiopia had planted more than 40 billion seedlings of indigenous plants of fruits, vegetable and animal feed in the last four years through massive mobilization of the masses.

Ambassador Jemal Beker expressed his commitment to work with the Government of Pakistan for addressing the climate change issues through joint initiatives under the Green Legacy Initiative.



KARACHI: Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Sindh President, Halem Adil Shaikh addresses to media persons during press conference, at Insa House in Karachi.

## Minister visits Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai Shrine

HYDERABAD (APP): Provincial Minister of Auqaf, Ushar, Zakat and Religious Affairs Syed Riaz Hussain Shah Shirazi visited the shrine of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai on Wednesday, and placed a wreath, recited Fateha, and inspected various parts of the shrine.

Syed Khawar Hussain Shah, Peoples Party leader Syed Fida Hussain Shah Latifi, Syed Gada Hussain Shah Latifi, Syed Ghulam Raza Shah, Syed Yasir Shah, Chief Administrator Awqaf Syed Ataullah Shah and others were present on this occasion.

Later, while talking to the media, provincial minister Riaz Hussain said that Sindh was the land of Sufis. PPP had consistently provided employment to youth of Sindh on merit basis. He added that following the footsteps of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto, it is the desire of PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari that every youth of Sindh be given a job on merit, for which we will advertise in various newspapers.

He directed Auqaf officials to complete all arrangements for the convenience of the thousands of devotees expected to come during the annual Urs of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai.

The provincial minister assured that development schemes would be implemented at all major shrines of Sindh including Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai and Abdullah Shah Ghazi to resolve issues over there.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Asia Internet Coalition calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

## Rana Tanveer for increasing exports to stabilize country's economy

KARACHI (APP): Federal Minister for Industries, Production, Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain on Wednesday emphasized to make the Department of Plant Protection more viable so that export target could be increased for stabilization of the economy.

He expressed these views during his visit to Department of Plant Protection, where he also held meeting with senior officers of the department and the stakeholders. The Minister also heard grievances of the stakeholders and assured for addressing their genuine issues. The Director General of Department of Plant Protection Tariq Khan and other senior officers also briefed the Federal Minister regarding the internal processes and operations of the department.

The Minister said there was a need of quality production so that exports could be increased as compared to our imports. Enhancing our exports could stabilize Pakistan's economy, Rana Tanveer said, adding that inefficient methods of agriculture management caused a lot of damage to the economy and now these methods be replaced with modern one to achieve required goals.

He stressed the need of restoring trust of the investors so that they come forward and invest their capital in agriculture and other sectors. Rana Tanveer urged the stakeholders to devise relevant strategies to counter a global concerns of the food security which posed severe challenges.

He stated that there was popular demand of the 'Halal' meat even from non Muslim countries, this shows that there exist markets for our products and through structural strategies.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with a delegation from Kurram led by MNA Hamid Hussain.

## Intercity bus stands to be shifted to Super Highway Bus terminal

KARACHI (APP): In order to alleviate load of heavy traffic inside the city area, Karachi Administration, on Wednesday, decided to shift all the intercity bus stands to Super Highway Bus Terminal within two weeks. The decision was taken in a meeting chaired by Commissioner Karachi Syed Hassan Naqvi. The Provincial Secretary Transport Asad Zamin, DIG Traffic Karachi Ahmed Nawaz, Additional Commissioner Karachi-I Ghulam Mehdi, secretaries of Provincial and Regional Transport Authorities attended the meeting while Deputy commissioners participated via video link.

In the first phase, according to a statement issued here, unauthorized intercity bus stands established at Karachi Cantt station, MA Jinnah Road, Taj Complex and Al-Karam Square will be removed and a shuttle service will be provided to passengers from these locations to the Karachi Bus Terminal on Super Highway. It has been decided that intercity buses will only be allowed to pick up passengers from the Super Highway Bus Terminal while police will be deployed at the mentioned locations.

## Kurram delegation calls on interior minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation from Kurram, led by MNA Hamid Hussain called on Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi on Wednesday.

The delegation included Munir Hussain, Professor Shabbir Bangash, Muhammad Bashir Bangash, Rahim Gul, and Haji Noor Rahman. Federal Secretary Interior Khurram Ali Agha was also present on the occasion.

The minister expressed concern over the unfortunate incidents in Kurram and discussed a comprehensive strategy to prevent such incidents in the future.

## Govt slashes petroleum prices by up to Rs10.86 per litre

ISLAMABAD (INP) - The federal government on Wednesday announced a significant decrease in petroleum prices for the first fortnight of August 2024.

The prices were reduced after getting an approval from Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, said a notification issued by the Ministry of Finance. The new prices will come into effect from August 1, 2024.

The petrol price was decreased by Rs6.17 per litre as new price has been fixed at Rs269.43.

## Two organisations banned for involvement in terrorism

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistani government has banned two terrorist organizations involved in terrorism. The National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) has declared Hafiz Gul Bahadur Group and Majid Brigade as proscribed organizations, following approval from the Ministry of Interior.

According to NACTA, both organizations were banned after two years of surveillance. Hafiz Gul Bahadur Group was banned on July 25, while Majid Brigade Group was banned on July 18.



KARACHI: Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Mr. Rana Tanveer Hussain chaired a meeting with officials and stakeholders of DPP.

## Women in Balochistan to be included in Benazir Kafalat programme: Senator Rubina

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid Wednesday said that women belonging to the Balochistan province having PMT score upto 60 are being included in the BISP Kafalat and other programmes.

She was speaking during a meeting with the Advisor to Chief Minister Balochistan on Commerce and Industry, Mir Ali Hassan Zehri. The meeting was held to discuss important issues related to BISP beneficiaries in Balochistan.

During the meeting, Senator Rubina Khalid said, on the special instructions of President Asif Ali Zardari, women belonging to the Balochistan province are being included in the Kafalat programme.

The meeting discussed several key issues

including the challenges faced by women beneficiaries in Balochistan and solutions to improve their well-being.

A significant focus was placed on skill development programs aimed at enabling beneficiaries and youth to start their own businesses, thereby helping them rise out of poverty.

This initiative also aims to uplift the lives of Benazir Income Support Programme beneficiaries and include more eligible families in the programme.

Additionally, the matter of registering women in BISP through Mobile Registration Vans to ensure wider reach and inclusivity was also discussed.

Senator Rubina Khalid highlighted the need for support and cooperation to enhance the effectiveness of BISP initiatives.



ISLAMABAD: Mir Ali Hassan Zahri, Advisor to Chief Minister Balochistan on Trade and Industry met with Senator Rubina Khalid Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme at BISP Headquarters in Federal Capital.

## ATC orders to produce Imran, Qureshi through video link

ISLAMABAD (APP): An Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) on Wednesday directed the jail administration to present PTI founder Imran Khan and Shah Mehmood Qureshi through video link in two different cases.

ATC Judge Tahir Abbas Sapra heard the case against the two accused. During hearing the judge questioned that whether Shah Mehmood Qureshi was a convicted prisoner and where he is housed currently.

The PTI's lawyer adopted the stance that Mr Qureshi was not a convict person and he is in Kot Lakhpat Jail Lahore.

The court instructed the jail superintendents to produce the two accused before it through video link on next hearing.

## Policemen among three killed in terrorist attack: DPO

PESHAWAR (APP): Three persons including two policemen were killed during terrorists attack on police check point in Khyber tribal district on Wednesday. District Police Officer (DPO) Khyber, Salim Abbas told journalists that police checkpoint was attacked at Charwazagai area in Landikotal tehsil near the Pak-Afghan border.

As a result, two policemen including Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) Alamzeb were martyred alongwith a civilian.

## Daily Voice of Masses Independent

### Extremism unbound

The state finally seems to have woken up from its slumber and, alarmed by the threats made against the country's top judge, has initiated action against the suspects.

On Monday, several federal ministers denounced the shocking threats made against the chief justice by clerics belonging to the TLP, and promised that such incitement to violence would not be allowed. The controversy stems from the recent Supreme Court judgement in the Mubarak Sani case, which has been misinterpreted by extremist elements to forward their dangerous agenda. On a deeper level, aside from the deplorable threat, the matter reflects the existential danger extremist forces pose to the nation, and the weakness of the state before these outfits. At least two TLP men have reportedly been held; hundreds more have been booked for inciting violence.

The reason that Pakistan stands at this perilous juncture today is that for decades, the state has pursued suicidal policies where extremist groups are concerned. Those at the helm have either looked away as jihadi, sectarian and extremist groups have proliferated, or in some cases have actively encouraged such violent outfits. Arguably, in no other Muslim country are vigilantes and extremists allowed such freedom to operate. But in Pakistan, these outfits can effectively blackmail the state, and issue death warrants against the highest officials of the land. The state either meekly asks them to desist, or takes belated action after these groups cross 'red lines'. On the other hand, protests by political parties or marginalised groups are met with the full force of the law. Unless firm action is taken against extremist groups — as envisioned under the National Action Plan — the day may not be too distant when these outfits have the power to set the nation alight, using emotive slogans to misguide radicalised sections of the populace.

The state's primary responsibility here is to bring all those responsible for incitement to deadly violence to justice, and in the long term shut down the outfits fuelling extremism in society. Making one or two arrests is not enough; wider action is needed. Moreover, security for the chief justice should be beefed up.

The ulama also have a major responsibility to restore sanity. Though the Council of Islamic Ideology has condemned the death threats, established scholars, particularly those belonging to the Bareilly school, need to denounce such violent vigilantism. There is religious and legal consensus about the finality of prophethood. Therefore, semi-literate clerics cannot be allowed to exploit this sensitive issue and create further anarchy in society.

The nation has lost Salmaan Taseer and countless others to assassins and raging mobs motivated by spurious accusations of blasphemy. Unless those who actually control the levers of state act with alacrity, the forces of darkness may be further emboldened.

## Caracas conundrum

Mahir Ali

There was barely a peep from the self-ordained paragons of democratic virtue when Paul Kagame was returned to power in Rwanda two weeks ago with more than 99 per cent of the vote, an improvement over his previous scores across the past three decades, after effectively ruling out any serious challenge.

No such luck for Nicolas Maduro, whose claim of a 51pc edge in last Sunday's Venezuelan presidential election is being disputed both at home and abroad.

It doesn't necessarily follow, of course, that either election was credible. What it does demonstrate again is the hypocrisy of the 'international community' — its boundaries determined by the West, and mainly Washington — as it chooses between 'good' and 'bad' autocrats. Occasionally an individual such as Saddam Hussein or Manuel Noriega can serve the American empire in both capacities at various times.

Hugo Chávez never fell in that category. He was pinpointed by the West as a foe soon after he emerged as Venezuela's elected leader at the turn of the century. His several triumphs in further votes made no difference, even after a US-backed corporate coup floundered within days of a popular revolt against the would-be usurpers.

Chávez was detested because he defied North America's global hegemony and also challenged Washington's so-called neoliberal 'consensus' — incubated in Chile under Pinochet — with policies encompassing the redistribution of wealth (to some extent) alongside measures that brought education facilities and healthcare to segments with little experience of either.

Even worse from the 'Norte-Americano' point of view was the Chávez

administration's inclination to share its oil wealth with its Caribbean neighbours, particularly Cuba. After the popularly backed regime change in Havana in 1959, Washington's chief concern — as in Guatemala three years earlier, and in Chile a decade later — was to inoculate its 'backyard' against further outbreaks of social democracy. The same instinct kicked in 40 years later.

But it was a different time, demonstrated not least by huge protests against global capitalism within the US. The advent of what has become known as 'Chavismo' launched a 'pink tide' across Latin America. It was eventually reversed in several nations, partly as a consequence of Washington's opposition, reflected via economic and political pressure.

The tide turned once again. From Honduras through Brazil and down to Chile, left-leaning governments are in power. Argentina is an exception, but hopefully not for too long. Amazingly (or perhaps not), Javier Milei attracts even less opprobrium from the godfathers of democracy.

Maduro, picked by Chávez as his successor not long before he succumbed to cancer in 2013, had working-class credentials as a bus driver, but lacked his mentor's charisma and driving force.

There were, no doubt, flaws in Chávez's conduct of affairs, but nothing approaching what has occurred under Maduro's watch. According to the New York Times, hardly a fan of socialist experiments, "businessmen and foreign investors had largely made peace with [Maduro's] government in recent years. Sanctions imposed by the United States had forced Mr Maduro to ditch some extreme policies like price and currency controls. The private sector was given an in-

creasingly prominent role, public attacks against business owners had stopped and hyperinflation and rampant crime subsided somewhat".

It's only in the NYT's dream world that "price and currency controls" can be described as an 'extreme policy' without raising too many eyebrows. What's more relevant is the hyperinflation and dearth of jobs that have persuaded almost eight million Venezuelans — almost a third of the population — to flee abroad, mostly to Colombia, with many hoping to reach the US. Cue the absurd apocalyptic warnings by Donald Trump and his ilk about murderers and rapists sneaking into their country.

It is not hard to see the various ways in which Maduro has been a disaster for his nation, but it's equally difficult to perceive his chief opponent Edmundo González as a viable option. The former diplomat was reportedly surging in opinion polls after replacing María Corina Machado as the opposition candidate.

Maduro's possibly pyrrhic victory has been greeted by Russia, China, Syria, Nicaragua, Cuba and a few other states, but the likes of Brazil and Chile are wisely holding out for more complete results. It is not hard to imagine how Maduro might actually have been defeated by an equally incompetent rival, or how neither of them would concede defeat. There is little likelihood that Venezuela would prosper under a reactionary regime, and no one can say what will emerge from the current protests in Caracas. Ultimately, though, history is likely to see Chávez as a hopeful disruptor and Maduro as a hopeless successor. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Elite finance ministers

Muhammad Usama Shahid

"I completely empathise and sympathise [with the people]," remarked Pakistan's finance minister as the tax-loaded Finance Bill 2024 was passed by the National Assembly. In a country where more than 10 million children are suffering from undernutrition, the finance minister was keen to observe that Pakistan is "making positive progress" before imposing a 'milk tax' on infant formula.

Such remarks beg the question what does the finance minister even mean by the word 'progress'? Is the imposition of exorbitant taxes a way of empathising with the people? To answer such questions, one has to understand the kind of people who become finance ministers in Pakistan in terms of their academic and professional credentials as well as their socioeconomic background. It is through examining these that one can understand their worldview.

Pakistan's current finance minister, Muhammad Aurangzeb, studied at Aitchison and graduated with a Bachelor's degree and an MBA from the University of Pennsylvania. He began his banking career at Citibank and later joined ABN AMRO and RBS International and led their businesses in multiple countries. Subsequently, he became a chief executive at JP Morgan and then president and CEO of HBL prior to becoming finance minister in March 2024. During his time at HBL, he was one of the highest-paid CEOs in Pakistan with a monthly salary of approximately three crore rupees.

However, he is not the only finance minister whose professional experiences mostly included working in execu-

tive positions. He was preceded by finance minister Ishaq Dar, who had a similar background though more oriented towards public institutions. Dar graduated with a Bachelor's degree from the University of Punjab and subsequently became a chartered accountant.

Dar's professional experiences included stints as director of finance at British Textiles Group, a senior auditor in the government of Libya, and a partner of a Pakistan-based chartered accountants' firm. Additionally, he was director at numerous multilateral organisations including the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. Though he had graduated from a domestic university, his career mostly comprised working in executive positions abroad. He became Pakistan's finance minister after Miftah Ismail resigned from the position.

Miftah Ismail holds a Bachelor's degree from Duquesne University along with a doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania. He initially worked as an economist with the IMF but then returned to Pakistan to work for his family's business — Ismail Industries Limited, which is one of the country's largest confectionary and snack food manufacturers.

This trend of appointing people from elite backgrounds to the post of Pakistan's minister of finance goes back even further. Asad Umar had an MBA from IBA Karachi and was the former CEO of Engro Corporation. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh had undergraduate and graduate degrees from Boston University and was the World Bank country head in Saudi Arabia. Shaukat Tarin, too, had an MBA from the University of Punjab and a

career in banking, with the names of Citibank and Habib Bank Limited on his resumé.

The question is whether such finance ministers with elite backgrounds realise what implication their economic policies have for the people of this country. At the end of the day, the decision to impose a milk tax is as much about making infant formula inaccessible to millions of impoverished babies in the country as it is about improving the country's revenues. While an increase in taxes may not have implications for someone who earned Rs3 crore per month, it definitely does for someone who has to work two jobs just to sustain their family.

A banker, accountant, or economist might analyse Pakistan's economic instability simply as a matter of manipulating numbers on an Excel sheet but for the common person, it is a matter of their standard of living.

The intention here is to neither question the professional acumen of these finance ministers nor argue that somehow having a finance minister from a non-elite background would automatically resolve Pakistan's economic issues. Instead, the aim is to analyse the analytical framework through which these finance ministers analyse Pakistan's economy and their blind spots due to their own elite background. Only when we have finance ministers who understand as well as relate to the implications their economic policies have for the common people, can we bridge the feeling of alienation in the people of Pakistan. Only then can we understand what the word 'progress' means — not to the elite, but the ordinary people of this country. -- Courtesy Dawn

## Commerce News

### Government steers economy back on growth path: Ihsan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Commerce and Industry, Rana Ihsan Afzal Khan said here on Wednesday that the country's economy, left reeling by the previous Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) government, has been put back on track by the incumbent political dispensation. "Ever since PTI Imran Khan is in jail, the economy of the country is moving towards betterment," he said while addressing a press conference along with Spokesperson of government on legal affairs, Barrister Aqeel Malik.

Highlighting some key indicators, he said that inflation had decreased significantly, falling to 12.6 percent in June 2024 from 38 percent in June of the previous year.

Ihsan said that the government is committed to reducing the inflation rate to a single digit by 2025, and efforts were currently underway to achieve this goal.

He said that the Pakistani rupee also stabilized, and things are moving in a positive direction. Although it was challenging to stabilize the exchange rate, we've successfully achieved it.



HYDERABAD: Labourers busy in preparing the wooden boxes at his workplace.

### S&P Global keeps Pak rating at 'CCC+'

ISLAMABAD (Online): S&P Global Ratings has affirmed Pakistan's long-term sovereign credit rating at 'CCC+' and short-term rating at 'C', maintaining a stable outlook. This decision reflects a balance between the challenges posed by Pakistan's external liquidity and fiscal performance, and the anticipated continued support from multilateral and bilateral partners over the next 12 months.

Despite economic challenges, international support and fiscal measures provide a degree of stability to the country's financial

The country's exports have also shown significant growth in the fiscal year 2024, with an increase of \$3 billion, reaching to a total of \$30 billion while remittances were also showing positive growth. Fitch rating has also upgraded the country's debt outlook, adding it happened only because of the restoration International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme.

He emphasized that the current government has a comprehensive plan to uplift every sector adding work on the privatization and rightsizing of the government was going on.

### Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where four ships, Apollon-D, Elim Grace, Kouros Queen and Butinah carrying Container, Palm oil and Coal, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Liquid Cargo Terminals and Multi-Purpose Terminal respectively on Tuesday.

Meanwhile three more ships, MSC Roma, YE CHI and Pacific Tulip carrying Container, Gas oil and Coal are also arrived at outer-anchorage of the Port Qasim during last 24 hours.

A total of nine ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them Gas carrier 'Epic Sunter' left the port on today morning while three more ships, Apollon-D, Endeavour and Sea Luck-III are expected to sail on today afternoon. Cargo volume of 122,590 tonnes, comprising 62,651 tonnes imports cargo and 59,939 tonnes export cargo carried in 2,470 Containers (980 TEUs Imports & 1,490 TEUs Export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chairing a meeting of the Committee on the issues of Gilgit-Baltistan.

### KP Agriculture Minister assures assistance for agriculture development

INDEPENDENT REPORT PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Agriculture, Major Retired Sajjad Barakwal, emphasized the critical role of agriculture in the nation's economy, highlighting that "22 percent of the country's GDP is dependent on agriculture." He underscored the necessity of adopting modern technology and research in the agricultural sector to drive economic growth in both the country and the province.

Addressing the attendees as the chief guest on the concluding day of the three-day international seminar organized by Bacha Khan University Charsadda at Nathia Gali, Minister Barakwal conveyed the directives of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Mr. Ali Amin Khan Gandapur. The Chief Minister has mandated the utilization of all available resources and the removal of obstacles to advance the province's agricultural development.

### KP-BoIT, TDAP to organize expo-investment conference in Chitral

INDEPENDENT REPORT CHITRAL: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment & Trade (KP-BoIT) in collaboration with Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) is organizing an Expo and Economic Development Conference in Chitral for showcasing the local economic and trading sectors to attract investors to invest in the potential sectors of the valley.

The proposed Expo & Economic Development Conference will be likely held during the first week of September this year. About 60 stalls regarding attractive sectors of investment wherein local potential

sectors of production and particularly crucial sectors of investment would be erected. In this connection, a meeting was held here at the KP-BoIT with Special Assistant to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister on Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Abdul Karim Khan Tordher in the chair on Wednesday.

Besides, the Director General (DG) TDAP Nauman Bashir, Director Business Facilitation (KP-BoIT) Iqbal Sarwar, Chairman All Pakistan Exporters Association (APCEA) Minhajuddin, president Chitral Chamber of Commerce and Industries (CCCI).

### Finance Minister chairs meeting on issues of Gilgit-Baltistan

ISLAMABAD (Online): Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chaired the meeting of the Committee on the issues of Gilgit-Baltistan. The meeting was attended by Minister for Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit-Baltistan Engr. Amir Muqam, Minister for Finance-GB Muhammad Ismail, Minister for Agriculture-GB Mohammad Anwar, Ex CM GB Hafiz Hafeez Ur Rehman, Chief Secretary GB, Member WAPDA and other officials from the relevant Ministries. The meeting commenced with a detailed briefing by the

Chief Secretary, who outlined the issues faced by the GB government. Some of these issues were related to insufficient fund allocations and delays in PSDP projects which lead to employee related and other liabilities. The Chief Secretary advocated for solar power projects designed to address the region's growing energy needs. He also proposed initiatives for the digitization of land records and the expansion of airports to enhance tourism potential. These proposals aim to modernize GB's infrastructure and capitalize.



LAHORE: Paper flags of Pakistan are being printed at the printing press in preparation for Independence Day celebrations.

### NEPRA launches 'NEPRA Asaan Approach' mobile app for electricity consumers

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) on Wednesday introduced a new mobile application, 'NEPRA Asaan Approach,' aimed at improving service for electricity consumers across Pakistan.

The app is designed to allow users to quickly register complaints related to electricity issues, including power outages, fluctuations, electrical fires, line faults, and billing discrepancies. By streamlining the

complaint process, the app ensures that issues can be reported and addressed in the shortest possible time.

At the launch event, NEPRA Chairman Waseem Mukhtar emphasized that the app is a crucial component of NEPRA's strategy to offer multi-channel service delivery to electricity consumers nationwide.

He addressed criticisms regarding NEPRA's efforts to enhance consumer facilities and highlighted the app as a step towards better service.

## Pakistanis has strong bond of love and respect with Irani people: Saleem

**Independent Report**  
LAHORE: Consul General of Iran to Lahore Mehran Movahed Far called on Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan and discussed ways to strengthen bilateral relations in the fields of education, culture and trade during a meeting at the Governor's House here on Wednesday. Governor Saleem Haider Khan, on the occasion, offered condolence over the martyrdom of Ismail Haniyeh, head of the political bureau of Hamas, during the meeting with Iranian Consul General Mehran Movahed Far.

The consul general congratulated the governor on assuming office. He informed about the ease of travel facilities for Pakistani pilgrims under the new policy of travelling by road. He also thanked the Pakistani nation for their help and unwavering support for the suffering Palestinian Muslims.

Governor Saleem Haider said Pakistan and Iran are bound together by religion, culture and historical ties. He said that Iran is a brotherly Islamic country and Pakistanis has strong bond of love and respect with Irani people.

The governor said the last visit of late president Ebrahim Raisi to Pakistan was a historic and memorable visit. He paid tributes to late Raisi for his role in strengthening Pakistan-Iran relations.

The governor said the late president Ebrahim Raisi during his last visit to Pakistan laid the foundation for new projects by signing various memorandum of understanding (MoUs) between Pakistan and Iran in various fields.

He said that the Pakistani government and people were shocked and saddened by the martyrdom of late President Ebrahim Raisi. He assured Irani consul general of considering steps to promote Persian language as chancellor of public and private varsities in Punjab.

Consul General Mehran Movahed Far said the Islamic Republic of Iran is trying to facilitate Pakistan pilgrims in their travel to sacred places in Iran. He said that there is a need to expand trade relations between Pakistan and Iran. He said work was being done on the exchange of delegations of students and teachers between Pakistan and Iran.



**KARACHI: Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Mr. Rana Tanveer Hussain Presented a Memento by the Director General of Department of Plant Protection.**

## KPITB's MD Government committed to vision of digital KP

**PESHAWAR (APP):** Managing Director of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Technology Board (KPITB) Akif Khan on Wednesday said that the government was committed to achieving its vision of "digital Khyber Pakhtunkhwa."

He expressed these views while addressing the three-day interactive Build Entrepreneurship Skills Training (BEST) boot camp organized by Research Education Development (RED) International with the support of the US Consulate Peshawar and the KPITB.

The boot camp was held at KPITB's incubation center, Durshal Peshawar, aiming to enhance the capabilities of entrepreneurs on concepts such as design thinking, business model canvas, finance, legal, and marketing.

During the training camp, 18 startups were screened, and participants were enabled to improve their business plans and prepare their sales pitches.

## Governor grieves over attack on check post in Landikotal

**PESHAWAR (APP):** Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday strongly condemned the attack on police check post located at Pak-Afghan road Landikotal district Khyber. In a condolence message, the Governor expressed grief and sorrow over the demise of three persons including two policemen. Governor prayed Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and early recovery of the injured and grant courage to bereaved family members to bear this irreparable loss with fortitude.

## PDWP approves 7 development schemes worth Rs 8.974bn

**LAHORE (APP):** The Provincial Development Working Party Punjab (PDWP), in its 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of current financial year, approved seven development schemes of roads, and P&S HC sectors worth more than Rs. 8974.993 million [Rs. 8.97 billion], here on Wednesday. Presided over by P&D Board Chairman Barrister Nabeel Ahmad Awan, the meeting approved the following schemes: 1) Rehabilitation of Shujabad Jalalpur Pirwala Length = 48.50 Km, District Multan at the cost of Rs 2700.697 million. 2) Dualisation of Metalled Road from Thalli Chowk Rahim Yar Khan to Iqbalabad (N-5) District R.Y.Khan at the cost of Rs 1025.247 million. 3) Rehabilitation of road from Kasur to Raiwind, Length 25.48 Km in district Kasur at the cost of Rs 2095.294 million. 4) Rehabilitation of metalled road from Shoria Gilania Chowk (N-55) to Samina Sadat Length = 8.80 Km at the cost of Rs 418.345 million. 5) Construction of Fly over at Jhal road railway crossing to Sahiwal City at Rs 914 million.



**LAHORE: Iran Consul General in Lahore Mehran Movahedfar meeting with Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan.**

## CS takes report on price difference in districts

**LAHORE (APP):** Taking notice of the difference in rates of vegetables in some districts, Chief Secretary Punjab Zahid Akhtar Zaman sought a report on the comparative evaluation of the prices.

The Chief Secretary chaired a video link meeting of all divisional commissioners and deputy commissioners to review the prices and availability of food items. The participants discussed various proposals to improve the price control mechanism such as mapping of shops in critical markets.

The Chief Secretary ordered the Agriculture Department to prepare SOPs for correct determination of price of commodities in the auction process.

He said that there was no justification for the clear difference in the prices of potatoes, onions and other vegetables in different districts, adding that the prices fixed in the markets of the districts should be compared and the report should be sent on a daily basis. The Chief Secretary said that implementation of the notified prices was the responsibility of the administration. He directed the deputy commissioners to take action against the price magistrates who are not performing their duties.

## Khawaja Salman ensures preparedness for flood risks

**LAHORE (APP):** The Punjab Health Minister and Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Disaster Management Khawaja Salman Rafique announced that Management Authority (PDMA) on Wednesday. In the meeting, he emphasized the importance of river erosion prevention schemes which will be approved following a detailed model study. This study will include an assessment of the affected population, agricultural land, and the economic situation in the regions at risk. He highlighted the proactive measures taken by the administration of Dera Ghazi Khan which provided a briefing on preparations for possible flooding in hill torrents.

The minister directed district administrations to remove encroachments



comprehensive arrangements are in place to tackle flood risks in vulnerable districts. This statement was made during a meeting of the Disaster Management Committee held at the Provincial Disaster

## 19 die, 15 injured due to rains, flash floods during last couple of days in KP

**PESHAWAR (APP):** Around 19 persons died and 15 received injuries due to rains, flash floods and wind storms during the last two days in different parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

According to a report issued by Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), among the dead around four are men, four women and 11 children. While among injured, six are men, three women and six children, adds the PDMA report issued here on Wednesday.

Torrential rains coupled with speedy wind storm damaged 61 houses in the province among which 37 are partially and 24 are fully.

The damage to life and property due to extreme weather events were received in districts including Kohat, Bajaur.

## ANF recovers 242 kg drugs in 7 operations

**RAWALPINDI (APP):** Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting seven operations across the country recovered 242 kg drugs and arrested 10 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Wednesday. He informed that 2.5 kg ice was recovered from a parcel booked for New Zealand at a courier office in Rawalpindi. 96 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of an accused rounded up near a restaurant in Quetta.

# International News

## Khan Yunis in ruins after Israeli assault kills 300

**Monitoring Desk**  
**GAZA STRIP:** Gaza's civil defence agency said on Tuesday that an Israeli operation in and around the territory's second city of Khan Yunis killed about 300 people since it began last week, while the army claimed it had "eliminated 150 terrorists".

"Since the beginning of the Israeli ground invasion of the eastern part of Khan Yunis province, the civil defence and medical teams have re-covered approximately 300 bodies of martyrs, many of them decomposed," agency spokesman Mahmud Bassal said.

The Israeli military launched the assault on July 22 to halt what it called rocket fire from the area, which already saw heavy fighting earlier this year.

Last week, it said troops had retrieved the bodies of five Israelis from the area.

They had been killed during the Hamas attacks of October 7 and their bodies taken back to Gaza, the military said.

Thousands of Palestinians returned to their damaged or destroyed homes in Khan Yunis after Israeli troops ended their attack and vacated the area.

Palestinian health officials said rescue workers had so far recovered 42 bodies of Palestinians killed in the Israeli incursion into eastern Khan Yunis. Gaza's Civil Emergency Service said search was underway with 200 people still reported missing.

After the Israeli forces left, people streamed back to their homes on foot and with donkey carts carrying their belongings. Many found their houses damaged or destroyed.

Witnesses said army forces had bulldozed the main cemetery in Bani Suhaila, the town on the eastern outskirts of Khan Yunis that was the main focus of the raid, as well as houses and roads nearby.

"I am coming back and I have faith in God. I don't know whether we



**Bystanders surround vehicles covered in debris near the site of an Israeli strike on Beirut's southern suburbs.**

## Israel targets Hezbollah commander in Beirut strike

**Monitoring Desk**  
**BEIRUT:** Israel struck Hezbollah's stronghold in southern Beirut on Tuesday in retaliation for rocket fire from Lebanon that killed 12 children over the weekend, saying it had targeted the commander responsible for the attack.

"The IDF (army) carried out a targeted strike in Beirut on the commander responsible for the murder of the children in Majdal Shams and the killing of numerous additional Israeli civilians," the military said in a statement, referring to the annexed Golan Heights where the children were killed on Saturday.

A source close to the Hezbollah group confirmed that "a leading commander" was the target of the strike, which hit near the group's decision making body, the Shura Council.

The source added that two people were killed in the strike, but was unable to confirm if the commander was among them.

Minutes after the explosions rocked Beirut, Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant posted on social media site X that "Hezbollah crossed the red line".

## Philippines, US navy hold joint exercise in South China Sea

**Monitoring Desk**  
**MANILA:** The Philippines and United States navies conducted on Wednesday a joint maritime exercise in the South China Sea, the Philippine armed forces said.

The activity, held inside the Philippines' exclusive economic zone, included two vessels and was designed to enhance communication and operational coordination between the two navies, the military said in a statement.

## Spanish PM files lawsuit against judge leading wife's graft probe

**Monitoring Desk**  
**MADRID:** Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez on Tuesday filed a lawsuit against a judge who summoned him to testify in a probe into alleged influence-peddling by his wife, accusing him of violating the law.

The lawsuit filed by Spain's state legal services argues the judge and others may have committed "criminal acts" in his summons by not allowing Sanchez to testify in writing as requested by the Socialist leader, according to the complaint.

## Israel's atrocities 'outshine Hitler': Erdogan

**Monitoring Desk**  
**ISTANBUL:** Türkiye's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Tuesday said the Gaza Strip has become the "world's largest extermination camp," and Israel has committed an atrocity that will "outshine Hitler."

"Western leaders and organisations whose duty is to ensure international security have only watched this brutality from afar for almost 300 days," Erdogan said in a speech in the capital Ankara.

"How many more children need to die to see that Israel's invasive policies endanger the entire region? Look, this is not a path that can continue," he added. Israel has killed more than 39,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, in Gaza since Oct. 7.

The Turkish president said Israel is the only country in the region that seeks its security through "aggression, massacres and land seizure," acting like a "terrorist organization."

He said the "lawless Israeli state is a threat not only to Palestine and Lebanon but to humanity as a whole, to the entire world at this point."

"Hitler had been stopped, even if belatedly, by the alliance of the US and the Soviet Union. This genocide, savagery, and barbarism must also be stopped immediately by the alliance of humanity before it is too late," Erdogan added.

"Those pulling the strings of the Netanyahu administration must say 'stop' to this massacre network without delay. We are aware of what the murderer called Netanyahu is seeking to achieve, what kind of a catastrophe he is trying to drag our region and the entire world into," he said.

"We also know very well the true motive behind his attempts to spread the fire in Gaza to the whole region."

## Iran's Khamenei says avenging Haniyeh's killing is Tehran's duty

**Monitoring Desk**  
**TEHRAN:** Avenging Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh's assassination is "Tehran's duty" because it occurred in the Iranian capital, Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei said in his message on the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh.

He said Israel had provided the grounds for "harsh punishment" for itself.

Newly elected President Masoud Pezeshkian has issued a statement saying Tehran will defend its territorial integrity and dignity.

"Today, dear Iran is mourning its sharer of sorrows and joys, the constant and proud companion of the path of resistance, the brave leader of the Palestinian resistance, the martyr of al-Quds, Haj Ismail Haniyeh. Yesterday I raised his victorious hand and today I have to bury him on my shoulders."

"Martyrdom is the art of men of God. The bond between the two proud nations of Iran and Palestine will be stronger than before, and the path of resistance and defense of the oppressed will be followed stronger than ever."

"The Islamic Republic of Iran will defend its territorial integrity, honour, dignity and pride, and make the terrorist occupiers regret their cowardly action," the president's statement concluded.

Hamas's armed wing said that the killing of its political leader Ismail Haniyeh takes the "war" with Israel to "new levels," warning of repercussions for the entire region.

"This assassination ... takes the war to new levels and will have enormous consequences for the entire region."

## Germany accuses China of conducting 2021 cyberattack on cartography agency

**Monitoring Desk**  
**BERLIN:** Germany accused China on Wednesday of having been behind a 2021 cyberattack on the federal cartography agency for espionage purposes and summoned Beijing's ambassador to Berlin to complain.

China's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

"We call on China to refrain from, and to prevent such cyberattacks," Interior Minister Nancy Faeser said in a statement, adding that the incident had shown just how big a threat such attacks now posed.

The German government was able to attribute responsibility for the cyberattack to Chinese state actors based on information from its intelligence services, the ministry statement said.

The hackers compromised the end devices of private individuals and companies, it added.

Germany's cartography and geodesy agency (BKG) plays an important role for multiple state and private organizations, including those involved in critical infrastructure, it said.

Security services expect China to further intensify its state-run espionage activities, the ministry said.

Tensions over Chinese espionage in Germany and other Western countries have increased in recent months, particularly after the high-profile arrest of a European Parliament aide in April.

## Jamaat faces ban in wake of Bangladesh student unrest

**Monitoring Desk**  
**DHAKA:** Bangladesh will ban the country's largest religious party Jamaat-i-Islami and its student wing Shibir in the wake of this month's deadly nationwide unrest, road transport minister Obaidul Quader told reporters on Tuesday.

Representatives of Bangladesh's governing coalition "unanimously decided to ban Jamaat-i-Islami and Shibir, taking into consideration their past and present activities," said Quader, who is also general secretary of the ruling Awami League. Jamaat is already banned from contesting elections but the new order would outlaw the party and prevent it from holding any public gatherings.

## Russia says the Middle East is teetering on the brink of war

**Monitoring Desk**  
**MOSCOW:** Russia said on Wednesday that the Middle East was teetering on the brink of a major war and that key players were continuing to raise the stakes. "The region is currently balancing on the brink of a global conflict," Andrei Nastasin, deputy spokesman for the Russian foreign ministry, said. "The parties continue to raise the stakes." Russia said the "manic desire" of the United States to monopolise the process of political settlement in the Middle East had led to this situation. "We strongly condemn the murder of the head of the political bureau of the Hamas movement, Ismail Haniyeh, as a result of a rocket attack on his residence in Tehran," Andrei Nastasin, Nastasin told reporters. "It is obvious that the organisers of this political assassination were aware of the dangerous consequences this action is fraught with for the entire region."

## CPEC 2.0 is making Pakistan an attractive investment destination: Ahsan Iqbal

ISLAMABAD (APP): A seminar was organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and emerging opportunities under the title, "CPEC 2.0: Prospects and Challenges".

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary was the Chief Guest on the occasion while Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed along with Minister Counsellor of Chinese Embassy in Pakistan, Yang Nuo, eminent economist Dr. Ashfaq Hasan Khan and other distinguished experts comprised the panel at the discussion attended by diplomats, academicians, intelligentsia and researchers, said a press release issued here on Wednesday.

He highlighted the strong bond of trust and shared vision between China and Pakistan, which has enabled them to overcome initial challenges. Now, as they enter the second phase of CPEC, the focus will be on industrial collaboration, regional connectivity, and socioeconomic development.

The minister also asserted that for CPEC to be successful, it is crucial to establish peace, political stability and continuity of policies while demonstrating a continuous commitment to reforms. CPEC 2.0 aims to enhance technologies, create job opportunities, and ensure food security through agricultural mechanization. As we embark on this journey, it represents a critical opportunity for Pakistan to build a brighter future for generations to come. We must unite as one nation and one team to ensure the success of CPEC 2.0.

Earlier, in his welcoming remarks, Ambassador Jauhar Saleem, President of the IRS, stated that the all-weather strategic cooperative partnership between Pakistan and China had reached new heights with the launch of CPEC 2.0, which focuses on high-quality development, technological innovation, and sustainable growth. The upgraded vision prioritizes clean energy, IT, and agriculture amongst other things aligning with Pakistan's 2025 goals and China's 5Cs framework.

CPEC 2.0 offers great opportunities for job creation, youth empowerment, and economic growth, provided security and institutional challenges are addressed to ensure productive investments.

Mr. Yang Nuo delivering special remarks on CPEC stated that the second phase of CPEC is poised to generate new momentum for Pakistan's development, building on the project's success over the past 11 years, which has attracted \$25 billion in investments and transformed the country's economic and social landscape.



KARACHI: Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Mr. Rana Tanveer Hussain, is cutting the ribbon to inaugurate the vehicle export section at Toyota Indus Motors Company in Karachi.

## Senator Sherry Rehman Criticizes MoCCE's Egregious Lack of Coordination

ISLAMABAD (Online): Chairing a meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Climate Change, Senator Sherry Rehman along with the Committee members expressed serious concerns about the Ministry of Climate Change's planning, priorities and preparedness in addressing Pakistan's climate and environmental policies. The meeting was attended by key stakeholders, including Coordinator for Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam, the Secretary of the Ministry of Climate Change, and officials from relevant departments.

Senator Rehman expressed her profound disappointment with the Ministry's presentation on climate change. "I am appalled at the lack of clarity, coordination, and capacity displayed in the presentation. As the Chair of the Standing Senate Committee, I expected to see a clear strategic plan, priorities, and initiatives to address this pressing issue."

Marking the urgency and scale of the challenges Pakistan faces, Senator

Rehman said that climate change is a national crisis requiring a coordinated, yet technically proficient response. "I am shocked to see an outdated last century presentation with no clear priorities, no flagship initiatives, and no strategic NDC agenda or updates." The Senator also voiced grave concerns over the Ministry's lack of ownership of key initiatives and policies, with a routinised approach that had little hope of impacting policy outcomes or meeting national commitments.

The party has announced to offer funeral prayers in absentia for Ismail Haniyeh at M.A Jinnah Road at 5pm today.

## Ji postpones Karachi sit-in following Ismail Haniyeh's assassination

KARACHI (INP): Following the assassination of Hamas Political Wing Chief, Ismail Haniyeh, Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) has postponed today's protest outside Sindh governor's house.

The JI was scheduled to stage a sit-in outside Sindh governor's house against inflated electricity bills, but now the protest has been postponed due to the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh in Iran.

## Sohail Rajput elected as chairman Advisory board of GCU Alumni Association

KARACHI (APP): Provincial Ombudsman Dr Mohammad Sohail Rajput has been elected as the Chairman of the Advisory Board of Alumni Association Government College University Hyderabad (Karachi Chapter).

The decision has been made in a meeting of the Alumni Association's Karachi chapter. According to press release, the Alumni Association's Secretary Amin Yousuf presented name of Dr Sohail Rajput as Chairman of the Advisory Board which was unanimously supported by all members.



HYDERABAD: Shopkeepers of Anaj Mandi are holding protest demonstration against withholding taxes, in Hyderabad.

## DIG stresses police men to resolve issues of citizens on priority basis

SUKKUR (APP): Deputy Inspector General (DIG), Police, Sukkur Region, Peer Muhammad Shah on Wednesday directed police personnel to adopt open door policy to resolve the issues of citizens and promote sense of protection in the society by equal implementation of law, observation of merit and full-fledged actions.

Presiding over a meeting at his office here, he said that special attention should be paid on inspection, punishment and reward processes of the force so that performance of the force may be enhanced.

He also said that good performers during the duty should be encouraged whereas there should be no delay in taking action

within the discipline matrix against those who trespass their powers, do corruption and show nonprofessional behaviour.

The DIG Sukkur said that police force should also ensure immediate resolution of issues of the citizens with their high moral values, professional skills and full fledge actions so that the citizens may be helpful to police for supremacy of law by securing the cooperation and trust of the public.

He further said that it is my target and mission to restore and win the prestige of Police force and public trust by the help of public friendly policing and in this regard, all police force will have to take side with me by showing best performance.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Mussadaq Malik, Governor Sindh Kamran Tesori, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco Mohamed Karmoun and others cutting cake to celebrate the Fifth Anniversary of the Accession to the throne of His Majesty King Mohammed VI at a local hotel in the Federal Capital.

## Govt pursuing vision of transforming Pakistan into a hub of innovation: Rana

KARACHI (APP): Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain, on Wednesday, said that the government was vigorously pursuing the vision of transforming Pakistan into a hub of innovation and self-reliance with commitment to strengthen the domestic industry.

The minister, while addressing a ceremony held here to mark achievement of significant milestones of export of vehicles from Pakistan and localization of production by Toyota Indus Motor Company (IMC), said that the government aims to boost the automotive sector by encouraging the export of localized parts and vehicles.

He felicitated the company on achieving remarkable milestones that resonated with the nation's aspirations and said that reaching an impressive 64% localization in operations through integration of local content into production processes was a remarkable accomplishment of the company that demonstrate a commitment to strengthening our domestic industry and underscore their pivotal role in the growth of industrial sector of Pakistan.

IMC has invested over \$700 million to expand its production capacity to 76,000 units, making it the largest sheet metal part producer in Pakistan, Rana Tanveer said and added that contribution of Rs258 billion to the national exchequer was a testament to the company's unwavering commitment to national development.

## Mayor Karachi pays tribute to Madar-e-Millat on birth anniversary

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi, Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Wednesday paid tribute to Madar-e-Millat Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah on her 131<sup>st</sup> birth anniversary.

In a statement, the Mayor said that Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah is an exemplary model for the Pakistani nation. Her services to the country and the nation are unparalleled, he said.

He recalled that in the struggle for the establishment of Pakistan, Madar-e-Millat played an important role alongside the

founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and dedicated her entire life to realizing the dream of Pakistan's creation. Her great role has left an indelible mark on our nation, and we are determined to follow in her footsteps, he said.

He further mentioned that on August 25, 1947, Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah accompanied Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah to a civic reception held in his honor at the KMC Building, which is a matter of great pride for us.



KARACHI: Jamat-e-Islami (JI) Karachi Chief, Munam Zafar addresses to his supporters during the protest demonstration against assassination of Hamas Leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, at University road in Karachi.

## IoBM, Huawei, New Horizon unveil IT innovations

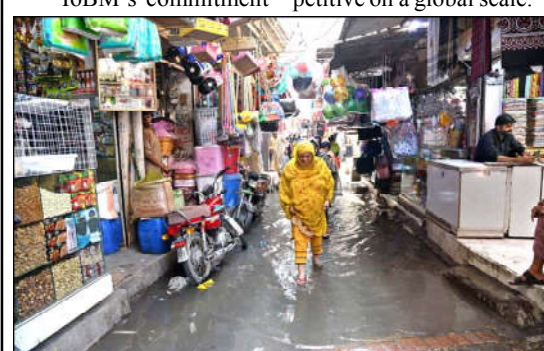
KARACHI (APP): The Institute of Business Management (IoBM), in collaboration with New Horizon and Huawei Technologies, hosted an event to showcase how its newly deployed IT infrastructure is transforming its work environment. This initiative aims to streamline day-to-day and strategic objectives, make IoBM a paperless institution, enhance its LMS software, improve data security, facilitate remote learning, enable efficient resource management, and support innovative teaching methodologies.

The event highlighted IoBM's leadership in digital transformation, with Huawei Technologies as the technology provider and New Horizon deploying the IT infrastructure.

IoBM's commitment to leveraging cutting-edge technology underscores its dedication to providing a modern and efficient educational environment, positioning itself at the forefront of digital innovation in higher education. On the occasion Prof. Dr. Tariq Rafi, Chairman of Sindh HEC said that only a select few universities have undertaken such significant IT initiatives.

He emphasized the importance of collaboration among universities, stating that working in isolation will not yield meaningful results. "Even with technological advancements, human interaction remains essential," he added. Talib Karim, President of IoBM emphasized the necessity of a robust IT infrastructure for researchers, students, and faculty to remain competitive on a global scale.

Addressing the budget session Mayor Kashif Shoro said that Pakistan People's Party (PPP) was a people friendly party and serving humanity was its priority. PPP was serving people without any discrimination and on-going development works were testimony of our mission. He said that during one year we not only worked on 52 development projects from the savings of Municipal Corporation which was exemplary and with the Grace of Allah we have 620 million in HMC's accounts.



LARKANA: Pedestrians are facing significant issues in Reshangali due to accumulated sewerage water from a clogged system. Immediate intervention from the authorities is required to address this problem.

## Governor pays tribute to Fatima Jinnah on her birth anniversary

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori on Wednesday paid rich tribute to Mohtrama Fatima Jinnah on the occasion of her birth anniversary.

In his message issued on the birth anniversary of the Mother of the Nation, Governor Kamran Tessori said she had mobilized women for the struggle for creation of Pakistan.

Governor Tessori said that Fatima Jinnah created a new history by playing the role of the mother of the nation.

Governor paid tributes to the great services of Fatima Jinnah for her struggle during Pakistan Movement.

## All power companies, K-electric involved in over billing: NEPRA

ISLAMABAD (INP): NEPRA officials have submitted a report to the authority detailing incidents of overbilling from April to June 2024, implicating all distribution companies, including K-Electric.

The report reveals that all distribution companies, including K-Electric, were involved in overbilling consumers. In response, the authority has demanded explanations from these companies and decided to issue directives to address the issue.

According to NEPRA's instructions, bills charged on an estimated basis due to lower-than-scheduled readings from April 2024 to June 2024 will be adjusted to reflect actual recorded units.

## HMC approves budget for fiscal year 2024-25

HYDERABAD (APP): The Hyderabad Municipal Corporation's (HMC) budget session for financial year 2024-25, held at Mehran Arts Council Latifabad under Chairmanship of Mayor Kashif Ali Shro on Wednesday.

Deputy Mayor Saghir Ahmed Qureshi, Municipal Commissioner Zahoor Ahmed Lakhani, council members, senior Accounts officer and HMC's staff also attended the budget session. The proceeding was started with the recitation of Holy Quran and Naat.

Addressing the budget session Mayor Kashif Shoro said that Pakistan People's Party (PPP) was a people friendly party and serving humanity was its priority. PPP was serving people without any discrimination and on-going development works were testimony of our mission. He said that during one year we not only worked on 52 development projects from the savings of Municipal Corporation which was exemplary and with the Grace of Allah we have 620 million in HMC's accounts.

## People warned to avoid rainwater exposure

SUKKUR (APP): Additional Medical Superintendent (AMS), Khairpur Medical College Hospital (KMCH), Dr Syed Najaf Ali Shah has advised people to avoid outdoor activities during rain as water-borne diseases were common during rainy season.

During his visit to different wards in the KMCH on Wednesday, he said the diseases associated with monsoon were malaria, jaundice, gastrointestinal infections like typhoid and cholera, and other skin infections were common.

## NA Body clears Election Act Amendment Bill 2024 amid controversy

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Standing Committee on Parliamentary Affairs has passed the Election Act Amendment Bill 2024 by a majority vote, despite significant opposition and absence of key parties.

Chairman Rana Aradat Sharif led the National Assembly Standing Committee's session, where the bill to amend the Elections Act 2017 was reviewed. Bilal Azhar Kayani provided a briefing on the proposed amendments.

Tensions flared during the meeting as opposition member Ali Muhammad Khan clashed with Parliamentary Affairs Minister Azam Nazir Tarar over the bill. Tarar defended the bill, asserting that the amendments are in line with constitutional and legal standards.

In contrast, PTI members voiced strong opposition, with Shahida Akhtar Ali emphasizing the need for thorough examination and suggesting that the amendments could be detrimental. JUI's Shahida Akhtar Ali also criticized the process, arguing that the bill requires more detailed scrutiny and re-evaluation.

The Election Commission's Secretary stated that the Commission could not comment on the bill's effects, as this falls outside their purview. Khan further criticized the Election Commission, alleging misconduct and undue influence on political parties.

Ultimately, the committee approved the Election Act Amendment Bill 2024 with six votes in favor and four against.



HYDERABAD: Mayor Hyderabad, Kashif Shoro presiding over the District Assembly Budget Session for the fiscal year of 2024-25 held in Hyderabad.

## Chairman HEC Sindh emphasizes significance of collaboration among universities

KARACHI (APP): Chairman Higher Education Commission (HEC) Sindh, Prof. Dr. Tariq Rafi on Wednesday observed that only a select few universities have undertaken significant IT initiatives and emphasized the importance of collaboration among universities.

He was speaking at the chief guest in an event hosted by Institute of Business Management (IoBM), New Horizon and Huawei Technologies to showcase how the newly deployed IT infrastructure is transforming the work environment.

Prof. Dr. Tariq Rafi said that scenario in education requires all stakeholders to serve in harmony because working in silos will not yield meaningful results. "Even with techno-

logical advancements, human interaction remains essential," he added.

He said that things across the globe are changing in front of our eyes and skills are more important in present era and if anyone possessed skills, he will be welcomed. The event highlighted IoBM's leadership in digital transformation, with Huawei Technologies as the technology provider and New Horizon deploying the IT infrastructure. The objective of the initiative was to streamline day-to-day and strategic objectives, make IoBM a paperless institution, enhance its LMS software, improve data security, facilitate remote learning, enable efficient resource management.

## Commissioner for timely completion of development projects

SUKKUR (APP): The Divisional Commissioner Sukkur, Fayyaz Hussain Abbasi on Wednesday directed monitoring organizations to examine and evaluate the development works and ensure that same were completed within stipulated period with qualitative material. He directed them to report him with immediate effect if they find the substandard work or any other defect in the work.

This he directed while addressing a meeting to review development works held at Commissioner House here. He said that government now was discouraging the trend of schemes to be completed with 5 or more than 5 years but increasing the investment to get such schemes completed within one or two years.

The Divisional Commissioner directed all the Deputy Commissioners (DCs) of the Sukkur division to bring complete data about their performance in the next meeting, which will be held next week.

held at Commissioner House here. He said that government now was discouraging the trend of schemes to be completed with 5 or more than 5 years but increasing the investment to get such schemes completed within one or two years.

The Divisional Commissioner directed all the Deputy Commissioners (DCs) of the Sukkur division to bring complete data about their performance in the next meeting, which will be held next week.



HYDERABAD: Activists of Jamat-e-Islami (JI) are holding protest demonstration against assassination of Hamas Leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, in Hyderabad.

## Sukkur-Karachi air ambulance service in pipeline: Kumail Shah

SUKKUR (APP): The eighth budget meeting for the fiscal year 2024-25 was convened at the District Council Hall, presided over by Chairman Syed Kamal Haider Shah.

During the session, council members tabled various proposals, which were subsequently approved by a majority vote. Key approvals included a grant of Rs 20 million for free medical treatment of underprivileged patients at Sukkur Blood Bank Hospital, as well as Rs 5 million for the construction of an additional emergency ward at Sukkur Civil Hospital.

The meeting gave the green light to a proposal to levy new taxes on industrial establishments, cold storage facilities, fueling stations, LPG outlets (registered), poultry farms, and other commercial ventures in Sukkur.

Furthermore, the meeting approved a revision of the existing tax structure and rental fees for shops of District Council.

It also approved to establish mud checkpoints to enhance the security of police personnel.

A proposal for transportation facilities for students from rural areas enrolled in Aror University's Art and Architecture programs was presented in the council, and a bus was approved by a majority vote.

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