

# Independent

dailyindkhi@gmail.com

Chief Editor: Syed Farooq Shah

Karachi

Ph: 0300-3898091 Vol: 06. No. 168 Muharram 26, 1445 AH Friday August 02, 2024 Pages 04 Price Rs. 12.00

## Govt, allied parties urge world to address genocide of Palestinians

**Nation to observe day of mourning today to show solidarity with Palestinians; Funeral prayers in absentia after Friday prayer; special resolution in parliament to express solidarity with Palestine**

ISLAMABAD (APP): The government allied parties on Thursday decided that the nation would observe a day of mourning across the country on August 2 (Friday) in solidarity with the Palestinian brothers and sisters and to condemn the Israeli state-sponsored terrorism in Palestine.

A consultative meeting of the allied parties on the deteriorating situation in Palestine, in a joint declaration, also announced that the funeral prayer in absentia for Ismail Haniyeh, chief of Hamas Political Bureau, who was assassinated in Tehran on Wednesday, would be offered by the nation after Friday prayers. The meeting, which was presided over by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, also decided to present a resolution in the Parliament to express full solidarity with the people of Palestine.

The participants of

the meeting strongly condemned the ongoing Israeli brutalities in Palestine for last nine months, and expressed full solidarity with the Palestinian brothers and sisters.

They also expressed deep sorrow and grief over the martyrdom of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairing a consultative meeting of Allied Parties regarding deteriorating situation in Palestine.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah presides over a meeting of the Education Department, at CM House in Karachi.

## Governor Sindh calls for non-political resolution of IPP issues, launches plantation drive

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori announced on Thursday that the issues surrounding Independent Power Producers (IPPs) should not be politicized, as the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) is actively working towards a resolution.

He made these re-

marks while speaking to the media at the Governor House during the "First Sindh Plantation Day," an initiative led by the Governor.

Addressing a question about the Jamat-e-Islami (JI)'s sit-in outside the Governor House, Kamran Tessori invited them to protest within the Gover-

nor House premises rather than blocking the roads, which he noted causes inconvenience to the public. "The doors of the Governor House are open for them. I would request Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman not to block roads and create difficulties for citizens," Tessori stated.

The Governor also revealed plans for grand Independence Day celebrations at the Governor House, which will be open to the public. The event will feature a cake-cutting ceremony, fireworks, and a musical night with performances by renowned singers. Additionally, 100,000 flags and around 50,000 badges will be distributed.

Regarding the plantation drive, Kamran Tessori emphasized its importance, announcing a large-scale initiative to plant trees across the province.



KARACHI: Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori plants a sapling to inaugurate the spring tree plantation drive. US Consul General also present.

## P&D Minister warns of action for non-completion of development schemes

KARACHI: Provincial Minister for Planning and Development Sindh Syed Nasir Hussain Shah on Thursday said that strict departmental action will be taken against the concerned officers who do not com-

plete all the ongoing development schemes in the province as per the target.

He expressed these views while chairing a high-level meeting of P&D at his office to review the development schemes.

Nasir Shah expressed his displeasure at the non-completion of the development schemes on time and

reprimanded the concerned officers and said all the ongoing development schemes in the province must be completed within the given time frame with quality work otherwise action would be initiated against responsible officials.



Chairman P&D Najam

## Jam Ikramullah says Govt. would provide all possible cooperation to eliminate environmental pollution

KARACHI: Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce Jam Ikramullah Dharejo has said that global warming is a problem of the whole world but this problem is more serious in countries like Pakistan.

Therefore, a large-scale plantation campaign should be started in the industrial zones across Sindh and the industrialists should establish green belts in front of their in-

dustries. This he said while speaking on the occasion of the inauguration of the plantation campaign. MD SITE Ghazwan Ali Qadri was also present on this occasion. President of the association Shaheen Ilyas, Shehanshah Alam, Aamir Sarfaraz and other office bearers welcomed him.

Provincial Minister Jam Ikramullah Dharejo also inaugurated Go Green Plantation Drive on this occasion.

## Haniyeh's martyrdom in Tehran a flagrant violation of International laws: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday strongly denounced the attack that led to martyrdom of Ismail Haniyeh, chief of Hamas Political Bureau, in Tehran, terming it a barbaric act that was a flagrant violation of international laws and rules.

The extraterritorial assassination, he said, had sparked widespread condemnation across the world including Pakistan, Turkey, Russia, Iran, China and Malaysia which had denounced the attack in the strongest words.

Ismail Haniyeh's children and grandchildren had also been ruthlessly martyred, he added.

The prime minister was chairing a meeting on the situation of Palestine which was attended by the parliamentarians representing the government's allied

political parties.

Shehbaz Sharif said that the bloodshed in Palestine continued for last nine months claiming lives of many innocent Palestinians everyday. Over 40,000 Palestinians including thousands of children had been martyred till date.

"The world is silent over this barbarism," he said. "Such terrorism and extremism is highly condemnable."

The prime minister said Netanyahu was out to destroy Palestine. Despite clear verdicts of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and resolutions of the United Nations, Israel could not be stopped from its barbaric acts.

He expressed gratitude to the countries from the West such as Ireland and Spain who had openly supported the Palestinian cause and its two-state resolution.

## Sindh decides to digitalize transport department, commercial vehicle sectors

Independent Report KARACHI: The Government of Sindh has decided to digitalize and automate the transport department

On the occasion of the meeting, Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon received a detailed briefing on the digitization and au-



tomation of the transport department and commercial vehicle sectors.

The digitization of the Transport Department and its subsidiaries—SMTA, PTA, RTA, and Trans Karachi—has also commenced. A high-level meeting was held in Karachi under the chairmanship of Sindh Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, Excise, Taxation, and Narcotics Control, Sharjeel Inam Memon.

Speaking at the meeting, Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that with the digitization and automation of the transport department, PTAs are being connected under a software system. This will facilitate inter-provincial route permits and streamline the entire process.

## PSA continues to make significant strides in empowering WAW

Independent Report

KARACHI: The Provincial Stakeholders Alliance (PSA) continues to make significant strides in empowering Women Agricultural Workers in Sindh. The third meeting, held on August 1, 2024, in Karachi, was a significant milestone in addressing the various challenges faced by rural women in Pakistan's agriculture sector. Organized by the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) in support of women's rights organizations



like NARI Foundation and others. The third PSA meeting brought together representatives from government agencies and non-governmental organizations, to review progress, discuss challenges, and strategize future actions. This diverse assembly reflects the PSA's commitment to fostering collaboration across various sectors to champion the rights of women agricultural workers.

During the meeting, representatives from various departments provided updates on their initiatives and contributions towards the empowerment of women agricultural workers.

## CM orders Education Dept to distribute textbooks before end of vacation

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah said that the school education department must enhance enrollment by bringing out-of-school children to school and introduce a school inspection system by checking teaching and learning methods.

Chairing a meeting of the Education Department here Thursday, he instructed the department to ensure the distribution of 4,453,686 textbooks by Aug 14 and enhance education standards. The chief minister said that schools would reopen on August 15. Therefore, the school education department made necessary preparations to ensure the proper functioning of the schools, distribution of textbooks, and running of classes. He emphasized the need for a complete plan for the academic year, including a work plan and preliminary/mock examinations.

During a presentation to the CM, Education Minister Sardar Shah mentioned that there were 40,991 schools in the province, including 36,203 primary schools, 1,051 elementary schools, 1,670 secondary schools, and 492 higher secondary schools. He also stated that the province had 160,473 teachers, out of which 107,550 were male and 53,051 were female. The total enrollment in schools was reported as 5,236,307, comprising 3,081,696 boys and 2,154,611 girls.

The CM noted that the teacher-student ratio stood at 1:32 and emphasized the need for quality teaching and engagement of students in curriculum activities.

An issue was discussed regarding the lack of communication and teaching skills among most of the teachers. It was proposed that teachers should be required to pass a teaching test every five years in order to continue their teaching careers.

Furthermore, CM Shah directed the education department to take measures to improve the education standard by introducing an inspection system.

He stressed the importance of officials visiting schools, checking the teaching and learning procedures, and submitting inspection reports to address any shortcomings.

UNSC convenes emergency meeting to discuss issue after Haniyeh assassination

NEW YORK (Online): United Nations Security Council has convened an emergency meeting to talk about the assassination of Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh.

Speaking at the meeting, members of the United Nations Security Council have voiced deep concerns over the assassination.

At the meeting China termed this act as a blatant attempt to sabotage peace efforts.

UAE envoy calls on Defence Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al Zaabi called on Minister for Defence and Defence Production and Aviation Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Thursday.

The Minister lauded the vision and efforts of President and Supreme Commander of UAE Armed Forces, Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan for development and transformation of UAE, a news release said.

Khawaja Muhammad Asif said: "Pakistani Nationals are playing a productive role in various fields for the progress of UAE."

PTI vows to form 'grand opposition alliance' against PML-N govt

Monitoring Desk ISLAMABAD: As the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is all set to hold a power show next week, the party's senior leader Asad Qaiser said Thursday that incarcerated party founder Imran Khan gave the nod for forming a "grand opposition alliance" by expanding the existing platform—Tehreek Tahafuz-e-Ayin-e-Pakistan (TTAP). "PTI decides to expand the opposition alliance in meeting with Imran Khan," said former National Assembly speaker while addressing the media.

side should ensure that their land is not used for terrorist activities inside Pakistan.

Referring to the killing of Chief of the Political Bureau of Hamas Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, she said targeting individuals inside sovereign states is a violation of international law and global norms. Such acts carry the seeds of further escalation.

She said it is yet another demonstration of indiscriminate and disproportionate Israeli aggression that has continued unabated to the detriment of regional and global peace and security.

The spokesperson said Israel must be held accountable for its transgressions and actions.

## Pakistan urges Afghanistan to ensure their land isn't used for terrorist activities

ISLAMABAD (Online): Foreign Office says the latest UN Security Council report endorses Pakistan's view that Afghanistan has hideouts and sanctuaries for terrorist groups including "Fitna al-Khawarij", the banned TTP.

At her weekly news briefing in Islamabad today, Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said the report contains the view that the TTP could transform into an extra-regional threat as well as umbrella organization of other terror groups.

Mumtaz Zahra Baloch urged Afghanistan to take immediate, effective and robust action against the terrorist groups including Fitna al-Khawarij.

She said the Afghan



KARACHI: Members of Traders Community Action Committee block road as they are holding protest demonstration against the government new tax schemes and the increase in electricity bills, at M.A Jinnah road in Karachi.

## Zulfiqar Shah Bukhari directs for full preparations for 281st Urs of Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai

HYDERABAD (APP): Provincial Minister for Culture and Tourism Syed Zulfiqar Ali Shah Bukhari on Thursday directed the officials to make complete arrangements for the 281st annual Urs of Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai.

He said that all possible facilities should be provided to the devotees during Urs days. The minister issued these directives while chairing a meeting regarding the arrangements for the 281st annual Urs of Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai at Bhatti Shah rest house.

According to a hand-out, the minister directed the HESCO administration to avoid load shedding during

the Urs days so that the devotees do not face any difficulties. The meeting also discussed security, facilities and other issues related to the annual Urs.

Talking to the media, the provincial minister said that all relevant departments were put on alert to provide better facilities to the devotees during the Urs.

He said that there were many complaints of load shedding, and in this regard, HESCO officers have been strictly directed to avoid load shedding during the Urs.

In response to a question, he said that the Latif Award was given on the basis of merit, and the committee decides it.

Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

**Haniyeh's murder**

The shocking assassination of Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh early on Wednesday in Tehran has plunged the entire Middle East into the unknown, with the threat of a regional conflagration increasingly high.

The Palestinian leader was in Tehran to attend the inauguration of Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian. While Israel has not accepted responsibility for this grievous provocation, there can be little doubt who is responsible. Only a few hours before Haniyeh's killing, the Israelis had bombed a Hezbollah stronghold in Beirut, apparently to target a top commander.

Following Haniyeh's murder, an Israeli minister 'celebrated' this grim achievement on the social media platform X. The Israelis are playing with fire, and their brinkmanship can push the entire region into a catastrophic maelstrom.

With the assassination, Tel Aviv has thrown the gauntlet at Tehran, and it will be very difficult for Iran not to respond to this grave provocation on its soil. Israel has struck one of Iran's closest allies in the heart of the 'axis of resistance'. Tehran needs to conduct a thorough internal investigation to determine just how such a high-profile individual was targeted. This would not be the first time Israel is believed to have struck inside Iran. Top Iranian nuclear scientists and generals have been targeted in similar fashion.

However, whatever the investigation reveals, security was ostensibly lax, and the Iranians should have strengthened their defences considering the string of previous assassinations. Yet retribution is almost certain. The Iranian supreme leader — who has the final say on all major policy decisions — has asserted, with reference to the Haniyeh killing, that it is "our duty to avenge his blood".

Condemnation of the killing has been pouring in from various quarters. Iran's brothers in arms in the 'axis of resistance' — Hezbollah, the Houthis — have slammed the crime, while Russia has dubbed it an "unacceptable political murder". China, on the other hand, has said it is "deeply concerned" while Pakistan has criticised "Israeli adventurism".

The fact that they have been unable to crush Hamas in Gaza over the last nearly 10 months has led Benjamin Netanyahu and his cabal to destabilise the wider Middle East, violating the sovereignty of Syria, Lebanon and Iran. The only way out of this crisis — and the window for peaceful resolution appears to be closing fast — is for an immediate halt to the massacre in Gaza.

Of course, with the Haniyeh assassination, the prospects of a ceasefire appear to have been buried for the foreseeable future. The US can still prevail upon Israel to wind down its murderous campaign. But in an election year, this will be highly unlikely as both contenders compete for the blessings of the Zionist lobby in Washington. The Middle East will surely be on tenterhooks for the next few days.

**Raining athletes**

F.S.Aijazuddin

The opening ceremony of the 2024 Olympics in Paris was like baking a soufflé in the rain. Even French expertise could not make it rise.

The French, defying convention, decided not to hold the inaugural ceremony in a stadium. They used the Seine, its ornate bridges and the iconic Eiffel Tower instead. The French should have consulted the British. In 2012, they ignored the Thames. Rain has ruined many a royal regatta.

A century has passed since Parisians last hosted the Olympics. In 1924, 3,089 athletes took part, of them 2,954 men and 135 women. In 2024, there are 11,040 competitors, half of whom are female.

Athletes compete as countries and also as members of National Olympic Committees. This year, there are 206 such NOCs — an insidious ruse by which the IOC will decide which country to admit and which to punish.

The Olympics imitate the power politics of the UN. In 1964, South Africa was excluded for its apartheid against blacks. In 1972, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) was excluded for its racist policies. In 2000, Afghanistan was excluded from Sydney for its misogynist policies.

In both 2016 and 2020, the IOC banned Russian athletes from competing under their national flag because of 'doping violations'. In 2024, Russia and Belarus have been banned over the war in Ukraine. However, their athletes can still compete as 'individual neutral athletes', under a neutral flag.

Meanwhile, Nato and its allied countries suffer no such strictures. Ukraine — their battleground — has sent 140

competitors. Israel mired in Gaza is fielding 88 competitors, the State of Palestine eight. Even the stateless have been admitted. The IOC has allowed 37 athletes to compete as a Refugee Olympic Team.

It would be a simpleton who still believes that the Olympic motto ('Faster, Higher, Stronger — Together') carries any meaning. The Olympics remain a white man's Coliseum, albeit with an increasing number of black gladiators.

The majority of the Summer Olympics have been held in white countries — in Western Europe, the US, Canada, and Australia. Four Summer Games have been hosted in yellow countries (all in East Asia), three have been hosted in Eastern Europe, and two in Latin America. Black Africa has yet to host any Olympics.

The first black Olympian George Poage won two bronze medals in the St Louis Olympics, 120 years ago. In Berlin 1936, Jesse Owens won four gold medals. Hitler chose not to meet Owens. In 1960, an Ethiopian Abebe Bikila (the son of a shepherd) startled the world by winning the marathon (running barefoot). He repeated his success in Tokyo 1964.

Today, colour is no longer a badge of nationality, nor gender a divisor of sex. (Some liberal Parisians were shocked at the tableau of drag queens performing a parody of Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper.) One needed the stamina of an Olympian to watch the opening ceremony (it spanned four hours) until its shimmering finale at the Eiffel Tower, where the Canadian chanteuse Celine Dion sang Edith Piaf's signature L'Hymne à l'Amour. In between, about 10,500 rain-soaked athletes with their supporting team officials

waved national flags in a nautical armada that cruised slowly down the Seine. From its banks, viewers were entertained by Lady Gaga performing Mon Truc en Plumes in a flurry of pink ostrich feathers, reminiscent of the legendary chanteuse Mistinguett.

Other distractions were a frenetic group of Can Can dancers ending with splits, and a team of spirited dancers splashing mindlessly (like the cast of Friends) in a fountain.

Frankly, some of the images were horrific — multiple ones of a de-ca-pitated Queen Marie Antoinette framed in the windows of a public building, or famous portraits half-submerged in the Seine. The surrealist artist Salvador Dali would have loved these.

To be fair, there is only so much you can do with a river of flowing water, just as a Son et Lumière using the flat-faced pyramids at Giza offers limited options.

Pakistan's lean participation in the Olympics is a triumph of private endeavour over public neglect. In 1960, 1968, and 1984, we won the gold in hockey. For the past three Olympics, we failed even to qualify. As in our politics, we no longer play team sports.

This year we have sent seven self-motivated athletes to Paris. The talented javelin thrower Arshad Nadeem (27); the sprinter Faiga Riaz (24); sharpshooters G.M. Bashir (37), Gulfam Joseph (24), and Kishmala Ta-lal (22); and two minor swimmers Jeha-nara Nabi (20) and Ahmed Durran (18). They are old enough to compete, and young enough to succeed in future Olympics.

They owe nothing to the state. Over 245 million Pakistanis owe everything to them — for loving our country, despite what it is. — Courtesy Dawn

**Parallel tracks**

Syed Sheheryar Raza Zaidi

A highly polarised nation is in the throes of one of its most divisive election campaigns. One candidate is on the wrong side of 70 and the other is backed by the incumbent in power. The candidate mentioned first has not only recently survived an assassination attempt, he has also been convicted on charges of a personal nature that he denies. Yet, most signs point to a victory for this candidate, who has already had one crack at power. At the same time, he is the one who many observers believe caused irreparable damage to his country's international relations when he was in power.

The irony is that this description of the maverick American presidential candidate Donald Trump can very easily apply to Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan. The two men, despite being geographically apart, seem to be on similar trajectories.

When Imran Khan was in power, he and then president Trump had a public spat on the online platform Twitter. Back then, it appeared that Pakistan would be headed in the direction of fractured relations with the US as long as these two men were at the helm of affairs. Yet, we soon saw Trump and Khan give a display of public bonhomie, with the latter visiting the US at the invitation of the former and coming back to loud fanfare, reminiscent of the time when he had lifted cricket's holy grail.

Those were the good old days as far as the two were concerned. Since then, one of them lost a hotly contested election to President Joe Biden, while the other first lost a no-confi-

dence vote, leading to his ouster, and then 'lost' a disputed election, despite the widespread public adulation for him. What stuck on both Trump and Khan, however, was the 'anti-establishment' tag — largely because both individuals have had a hard time accepting their fate and continue to challenge established norms, even if it means calling into question national elections.

Donald Trump at the time of his ascent to power had witnessed an almost meteoric rise. Running on the back of his notorious television appeal and the fanfare associated with it, he built an almost cult-like following of individuals who even today are ready to back him despite all odds, forgive him for the gravest of gaffes and overlook all his faults. All because Trump has carefully cultivated an image of himself as the only saviour who can make his nation great again. Compare this with the high regard that the supporters of Imran Khan hold the PTI leader in. An icon for his supporters, Khan may have enjoyed excellent relations with those at the helm of affairs once, but now stands for all things anti-establishment.

As fate would have it, both found themselves facing various dates in courts, having to defend themselves against charges of misuse of authority, mishandling of state documents/ secrets among others. While legal challenges for opposition leaders is not a new phenomenon in Pakistan, as far as the US is concerned, the barrage of legal challenges faced by Trump is unprecedented. Whether such charges have any basis in reality or are an attempt to undermine a worthy opponent are

questions best left to the courts to answer.

Yet, what sets Trump, the presidential candidate apart from Pakistan's incarcerated former prime minister — notwithstanding the recent favourable court decisions in the latter's case — is his ability to still have his skin in the game. For all of the alleged lobbies in America working overtime against Donald Trump, the former president enjoys the backing of a lopsided supreme court, which has recently ruled in favour of a partial immunity for former US presidents in matters related to the exercise of their professional duties while in office. As such, despite being convicted on 34 charges by a court in New York state, Trump is still legally empowered to run for president.

A lot can be said about the justice system in the US and Pakistan and how Pakistan often finds itself having to face a lot of bad press for the supposedly ineffective way its courts operate. Nothing quite amplifies this like the fate of the two leaders in Pakistan and the US.

One despite being convicted finds himself free to conduct his electioneering, appear on television, take part in debates and ride high on the back of the inflation-hit incumbency of the Democrat presidency.

The other finds himself incarcerated for convictions and allegations, kept so far away from the public's eye that he now captures their imagination.

Whether the two men can come back to power remains to be seen, but that their ideas are here to stay is not for argument anymore. — Courtesy Dawn

**Commerce News**

**Pakistan's huge potential to join G-20 countries: Dar**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar said on Wednesday that Pakistan has huge potential to join G-20 countries through structural reforms in the country's economy. The government is fully committed to structural reforms in the country's economy by capital market and corporate sector regulation for sustainable economic development, he said.

Office Building of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), along with Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb here. Deputy Prime Minister said today is a very special day on the occasion of laying the foundation stone of Security and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP). "I still remember that, "We have a huge journey for evolving capital market and corporate sector reforms in the economy from 2013 to 2017 in the country. He said that SECP's

energetic and committed team in 2013 fully supported the government vision and executed the government reform vision for SECP and regulation of the corporate sector. Ishaq Dar said that in the previous government of PML-N, "We have had a huge challenge and resistance faced for establishing an integrated Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) in the country and the government was successful and established the PSX which was a huge achievement. He said that after the new integrated stock exchange.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar delivering remarks at the Ground Breaking Ceremony of the Head Office Building of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan.

**Pak, Ethiopia agree to foster deeper ties**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Ethiopia agreed to strengthen bilateral relations and explore new collaborations in trade, finance, education and economic reforms, acknowledging the mutual benefits that could be derived from such initiatives. According to press release issued by finance ministry, Ambassador of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to Pakistan, Jemal Beker Abdula on Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb.

Pakistan. These reforms are part of a broader home-grown agenda aimed at achieving economic stability. The Minister highlighted recent positive developments, including improvements in foreign exchange reserves, state-owned enterprise (SOE) reforms, and advancements in the power sector.

The Finance Minister extended a warm welcome to Ambassador Abdula and provided an overview of the economic reforms currently underway in

International Rating agencies have started acknowledging the economic stability as a result of government's economic decisions, he said adding country's economic outlook has improved as confirmed by recent Fitch reports and now government aims at achieving economic sustainability.



HYDERABAD: Motorcyclists queue up at PSO, ready to fill their tanks and hit the road with newfound savings after the fuel price drop by Government.

**Data regulation, cybersecurity topmost priorities: Shaza Fatima**

ISLAMABAD (Online): Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja said that data regulation and cybersecurity are the topmost priorities of the present government.

and Meta representatives attended the Roundtable session. Convener Digital Pakistan Committee Tania Aidrus and Secretary IT Aisha Humera Chaudhry were also present.

She said that Ministry of IT & Telecom is committed for the growth of IT sector, as taking IT exports up to \$25 billion is our target.

Shaza Fatima said that on the directives of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, private sector is being fully supported and facilitated. She said that steps are being taken for transforming Pakistan into Digital Economy. Detailed discussion was held on data localisation, and the participants also gave recommendations regarding data hosting and data sensitivity.

She was addressing Roundtable on Open Data Flows & Pakistan's Digital Economy held at Ministry of IT on Thursday.

Managing Director Asia Internet Coalition (AIC) Jeff Paine, Google

**Gold rates up by Rs.1,400 per tola to Rs.254,900**

ISLAMABAD (APP): The price of per tola of 24 karat gold increased by Rs.1,400 and was sold at Rs. 254,900 on Thursday against its sale at Rs. 253,500 on last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs. 1,201 to Rs. 218,536 from Rs. 217,335 whereas that of 10 gram 22 karat gold went up to Rs. 200,324 from Rs. 199,224, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained stagnant at Rs2,900 and Rs.2,486.28 respectively.

**SCCI president visits BFC**

SIALKOT (APP): Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) President Abdul Ghafoor Malik with a three-member delegation visited the Business Facilitation Centre (BFC) and reviewed facilities on Thursday.

On this occasion, Ghafoor Malik expressed satisfaction over the issuance of NOCs to the business community from the BFC. He said the business community was getting benefits from the BFC, adding that the objective of the BFC was to provide services under one roof to businessmen.

**PQEPC briefs Aurangzeb on company's working, confronted issues**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, and Minister for Power Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari on Thursday held a meeting with the delegation of Port Qasim Electric Power Company (PQEPC) which was led by CEO Liang. The delegation briefed the minister about the operations of the power company and certain issues it faced due to overdue receivables, a news release said.

It said that Power-China was a major state-owned Chinese enterprise and key investor in Pakistan's energy market. The company would continue to work with the Government of Pakistan and play its role in the improvement of power sector. The finance minister welcomed the suggestions made by the delegation and stated that Pakistan acknowledged and appreciated the investment made by PQEPC China.

**K-Electric RE Projects garner local, Int'l interest**

ISLAMABAD (APP): K-Electric (KE) completed another significant milestone in its ambitions to enhance its share of renewable energy in its generation mix, envisaged under the company's Power Acquisition Program (PAP). The company announced the receipt of a total of 15 bids for the first of its ambitious renewable energy initiatives of 150 MW solar projects at Winder and Bela, Balochistan, said a press release issued on Thursday.

process for multiple renewable energy projects earlier this year following a successful nod of approval from NEPRA.

This transparent approach is a testament to KE's commitment towards sustainable energy solutions. Over the next 5 years, KE aims to add a total of 1300 MW of renewable energy projects, furthering its commitment to sustainable energy solutions. Syed Moonis Alvi, CEO of KE, expressed his enthusiasm about this development, stating, "Garnering 15 bids for the first cohort of the solar energy project is a huge milestone for KE."



ISLAMABAD: The joint meeting of the Sugar Advisory Board and Cabinet Committee on Monitoring Sugar Export was presided over by Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain.

**CPI inflation decelerates further to 11.1% in July**

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based inflation decelerated to 11.1 percent during the month of July 2024 as compared to 12.6 percent recorded during June 2024, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported Thursday.

According to PBS data, the CPI based inflation during the same month of last year (July 2023) was recorded at 28.3%.

On month-on-month basis, it increased to 2.1% in July 2024 as compared to an increase of 0.5% in the previous month and an increase of 3.5% in July 2023.

According to data, CPI inflation Urban, increased to 13.2% on year-on-year basis in July 2024 as compared to an increase of 14.9% in the previous month and 26.3% in July 2023. On month-on-month basis, it increased to 2.0% in July 2024 as compared to an increase of 0.6% in the previous month and an increase of 3.6% in July 2023.

**Syed Najmi Alam says Livestock deptt should take all possible steps to timely vaccinate animals of cattle owners of Sindh**

**Independent Report**  
KARACHI: Advisor to Chief Minister of Sindh on Livestock and Fisheries Syed Najmi Alam has said that the raiding team conducts raids twice a month through its campaign to catch illegal nets from all the coastal areas of Sindh. However, the Livestock Department should take all possible steps to timely vaccinate the animals of cattle owners of Sindh. He expressed this while presiding over two separate high-level meetings of the Marine Fisheries and Livestock Department in his office on Thursday.

In meeting Secretary Livestock and Fisheries Dr. Kazim Hussain Jatoti, Director General Marine Fisher-

ies Dr. Ali Muhammad Mastoi, Director Marine Dr. Asim Karim, Director Red Farm Khaliq Ahmad Soomro, Director Coastal Fisheries Ijaz Ahmed Memon, Managing Director Karachi Fish Harbor Safdar Hussain Rizvi, Director General Livestock Sindh Dr. Hizbullah Bhutto, Director General of Sindh Institute of Animal Health Dr. Nazir Hussain Kalhor, Director General Poultry Production Dr. Manoor Hussain Rana, Director Livestock Animal Breeding Dr. Naubat Khan Khoso, Director Central Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (CVDL) Tando Jam Dr. Madan Lal, Director Poultry Dr. Kabir Ahmed and Project Director Dr. Shah Murad Rand participated.



**FAISALABAD:** People are carrying coffin of stage actor late Sardar Kamal after offering funeral prayers in the city.

**22 brands of mineral water declared harmful for human consumption**

**Independent Report**  
KARACHI: As many as 22 brands of mineral water have been declared harmful for human consumption. Among the mineral waters which have been declared harmful for human consumption are Fiji, BRO-H 20, Koh Noor, Rayaal Silver, Smart, Aqua Qismat, Asha Premium, Drinking Water, Buxton, Cliff Water, Health Drinking Water, Crystal Pure Life, Dream Pure, Neo Health Drinking Water, Oriel, Faraz Water, Premium Safa, Pure Refined Water, Smart Indus Pure

Water, Splash Water, Still, Starlite Water, Vivo Water Plus Premium Drinking and Masafi. Director General Sindh Food Authority Muzamil Hussain Halepoto has directed the management of the said mineral water to withdraw their products from the market within seven days. He said that action would be taken under the Sindh Food Authority Act against those who didn't follow the orders of Sindh Food Authority. He said that no one would be allowed to play with the health of the people.



**PESHAWAR:** Opposition members and MPAs KP Assembly are participating in the dinner hosted by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi at Governor House.

**Governor KP expresses concern over worsen law and order situation, developmental schemes in province**

**PESHAWAR (APP):** Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi has expressed concern over the worsening law and order situation and neglected developmental schemes in the province.

The Governor hosted a dinner in honor of the opposition members of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly at the Governor's House on Wednesday night.

The dinner was

attended by key opposition members including Dr. Ibadullah, Leader of the Opposition in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, Parliamentary leader of PPP Ahmed Karim Kundi, Arbab Usman of ANP, Malik Tariq Awan of PML-N, Rehana Ismail of JUI-F and others.

During the event, the discussions focused on the current political, economic, and law and order situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The Opposition members expressed grave concerns over the deteriorating security situation in the province, highlighting the recent incidents of terrorism, extortion, kidnapping for ransom, and general unrest in Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan and the merged district of Kurram Parachinar. They voiced their disappointment that the provincial government

**3 people die, seven injured in rain-related incidents**

**LAHORE (APP):** Heavy rain in several parts of the provincial capital on Thursday resulted in loss of three lives and injuries to seven people.

According to a Rescue-1122 spokesman, the roof of a house in a suburban village near Baba Bulleh Shah Interchange at Gajjumata Lahore collapsed, which resulted in one death and injuries to five people.

Another roof collapsed at Shaukat Khanum Chowk, in which two people suffered injuries.

**C&W staff put on high alert during rains: Bharth**

**LAHORE (APP):** The Punjab government has put all the field formation of Communication and Works (C&W) Department on high alert during the rains with an aim to avert any difficult situation by storm water. The engineering and field staff under the supervision of executive engineers remained in the field while visiting the important roads, public buildings, particularly hospitals in Lahore and across the province.

The Minister for Communication and Works Sohaib Ahmad Bharth, after Thursday rain, visited

**Minister welcomes WHO collaboration on health initiatives**

**LAHORE (APP):** Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique has expressed gratitude for the ongoing collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO) on various health projects.

The minister made these remarks during a meeting with a WHO delegation at the Pakistan Kidney and Liver Institute (PKLI) on Thursday.

Highlighting the provincial government's commitment to enhancing healthcare services, the minister stated, "Under the leadership of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, we are striving to provide better health facilities to the people." He emphasized that raising public awareness is crucial for significantly reducing the prevalence of hepatitis in Punjab. "Teamwork is essential to achieve positive outcomes from our policies, and improving the health system is our top priority," he added. He also mentioned that the scope of hepatitis screening has been expanded throughout the province.

He noted the growing challenge of controlling Pakistan's population and stressed the importance of intensifying screenings for Hepatitis B and C. Dr. Meg Darthy, HIV Global Director from WHO, reaffirmed the organization's commitment to supporting the Punjab Health Department.



**PESHAWAR:** UNICEF Chief Field Officer Mr. Radolslaw Rzehak giving shield to a participant during the Launching ceremony of Global Breastfeeding Month at a local hotel in Provincial Capital city.

**CS inspects drainage work during heavy rain**

**LAHORE (APP):** During the heavy rainfall, Chief Secretary Punjab Zahid Akhtar Zaman visited different areas of the city including Services Hospital, Lakshmi Chowk, Qartaba Chowk, Circular Road and other major points. He directed that special measures should be taken for smooth flow of traffic during the rains. He asked the administrative officers to remain in the field and check the underpasses and disposal stations. He said that the relevant departments should be on alert to deal with any situation due to rain. Commissioner Lahore

**International News**

**Calls for revenge at Iran funeral for Hamas chief Haniyeh**

**Monitoring Desk**  
TEHRAN: Iran held funeral processions on Thursday amidst calls for revenge after the killing of Hamas political chief Ismail Haniyeh in a strike in Tehran blamed on Israel.

The Islamic Republic's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei led prayers for Haniyeh ahead of his burial in Qatar, having earlier threatened a "harsh punishment" for his killing. In Tehran's city centre, thousands of mourning crowds carrying posters of Haniyeh and Palestinian flags gathered for the ceremony at Tehran University before a procession, according to an AFP correspondent.

Haniyeh's death was announced the day before by Iran's Revolutionary Guards, who said he and his bodyguard were killed in a strike on their accommodation in the Iranian capital at 2am on Wednesday. It came just hours after Israel targeted and killed

top Hezbollah commander Fuad Shukri in a retaliatory strike on the Lebanese capital Beirut, sending fears of a wider regional conflict soaring in the fallout from the Israel-Hamas conflict in Gaza. Israel has declined to comment on the Tehran strike.

Iran's state TV showed the coffins of Haniyeh and his bodyguards covered in Palestinian flags during the ceremony attended by senior Iranian officials. President Masoud Pezeshkian and Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps chief, General Hossein Salami, were present.

Haniyeh had been visiting Tehran for Pezeshkian's inauguration ceremony on Tuesday.

Senior Hamas figure Khalil al-Hayya, the movement's foreign relations chief, vowed during the funeral ceremony that "Ismail Haniyeh's slogan, 'We will not recognise Israel', will remain an immortal slogan" and "we will pursue Israel until it is uprooted from the land of Palestine".

Iran's conservative parliamentary speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf said Iran "will certainly carry out the supreme leader's order [to avenge Haniyeh]". "It is our duty to respond at the right time and in the right place," he said in a speech with crowds chanting "Death to Israel, Death to America!"

The caskets, with a black-and-white pattern resembling a Palestinian keffiyeh scarf, were borne on a flower-bedecked truck through leafy streets where cooling water mists sprayed the flag-waving crowds.

Khamenei, who has the final say in Iran's political affairs, said after Haniyeh's death that it was "our duty to seek revenge for his blood as he was martyred in the territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran".



**Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei performs prayer at the funeral of assassinated Hamas chief, Ismail Haniyeh, in Tehran, Iran.**

**Trump attacks Harris' racial identity, says she opted to 'turn Black'**

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: Donald Trump suggested on Wednesday that Vice President Kamala Harris had decided to "turn Black" for political gain, as he attacked his Democratic White House rival during a combative interaction with African American journalists in Chicago.

The Republican former president's inflammatory comments marked an escalation of the 78-year-old's vitriol against Harris, whom he falsely accused of having identified as Indian but then, "all of a sudden, she made a turn, and she became a Black person".

Harris, 59, has long identified as Black and graduated from a historically Black university.

"So I don't know, is she Indian or is she Black?" asked Trump during a heated interview at the National Association of Black Journalists conference.

Harris later denounced the attacks as "the same old show" of "the divisiveness and the disrespect" from Trump.

The combative remarks by Trump, who has been eager to improve his performance with Black voters, are likely to send shockwaves through the 2024 White House contest.

They come as the former president, convicted two months ago of felony fraud related to hush money payments to a porn star, struggles to formulate a new strategy less than 100 days before the election.

Later on Wednesday, he held a campaign rally in Pennsylvania, a battleground state where he narrowly survived an assassination attempt earlier this month, and continued the verbal assault on his rival.

**Protesters in Nigeria demonstrate over high cost of living**

**Monitoring Desk**  
ABUJA: Police fired tear gas to disperse crowds of protesters in Nigeria's capital city Abuja on Thursday, as thousands rallied against escalating cost of living and governance issues in Africa's most populous nation, according to eyewitness accounts.

Protesters demonstrated in Abuja, the commercial capital Lagos and several other cities to show discontent with economic reforms that have led to rampant inflation and inflicted increasing hardship on ordinary Nigerians. President Bola Tinubu has vowed to pursue the changes that he says are needed to keep the country afloat.

Authorities deployed armed security personnel in an effort to preempt potential violence.

**Ukraine receives first F-16 fighter jets to bolster defenses against Russia, officials tell AP**

**Monitoring Desk**  
NEW YORK: Ukraine has received the first F-16 fighter jets that it has sought for months to fight back against an onslaught of Russian missile strikes, a U.S. official confirmed to The Associated Press.

A Ukrainian lawmaker also confirmed Ukraine had received a small number of F-16 fighter jets. The two officials spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not permitted to speak on the subject publicly. Ukraine has been pushing its Western allies for F-16s for Ukraine for months, saying they were critically needed to fight back against the onslaught of missiles Russia has fired against it. The F-16 is specialized in suppressing enemy air defenses.

**South Korea offers humanitarian aid to flood-hit North Korea**

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: South Korea on Thursday offered to send aid supplies to North Korea to help the country recover from heavy rains and floods that submerged thousands of homes and huge swaths of farmland.

It's unclear whether North Korea would accept South Korea's proposal for help. Antipathy between the war-divided rivals is at its highest in years over the North's growing nuclear ambitions and the South's expansion of combined military exercises with the United States and Japan to counter the North's threats.

South Korea's Unification Ministry, which handles inter-Korean affairs, said the South was willing to swiftly provide supplies to address the "humanitarian difficulties" facing North Korean residents following the recent storms. The ministry in a statement urged North Korea's Red Cross to promptly respond to its calls for discussions to determine the types and amounts of South Korean supplies and how to deliver them.

**Israeli strike kills two Al Jazeera journalists**

**Monitoring Desk**  
DOHA: Two Al Jazeera journalists were killed on Wednesday in an Israeli strike in Gaza, the Qatar-based channel reported as the crisis rages in the Palestinian territory.

"Al Jazeera Arabic journalist Ismail Al Ghoul and his cameraman Rami Al Refee have been killed in an Israeli attack on the Gaza Strip," the network reported adding the strike "targeted a car near the Aidia area, west of Gaza City".

**UN gravely concerned over Israeli attack on Beirut**

**Monitoring Desk**  
NEW YORK: The UN expressed "grave concern" on Tuesday over an Israeli strike on a densely populated suburb of the Lebanese capital Beirut that killed at least three people and injured 74 others. "As we await further clarity on the circumstances, we again urge the parties to exercise maximum restraint and call on all concerned to avoid any further escalation," Stephane Dujarric, the spokesman for the UN Secretary-General, said in a statement. "All parties must comply with their obligations under international law."

**Khaled Meshaal, who survived Israeli assassination attempt, tipped to succeed Haniyeh**

**Monitoring Desk**  
CAIRO: Khaled Meshaal, tipped to be the new Hamas leader, became known around the world in 1997 after Israeli agents injected him with poison in a botched assassination attempt on a street outside his office in Amman, the Jordanian capital. The hit against a senior figure of the Palestinian group, ordered by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, so enraged Jordan's then-King Hussein that he spoke of hanging the would-be killers and scrapping Jordan's peace treaty with Israel unless the antidote was handed over. Israel did so, and also agreed to free Hamas leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, only to assassinate him seven years later in Gaza. Meshaal, 68, became Hamas's political leader in exile the year before Israel tried to eliminate him, a position that enabled him to represent the Palestinian group at meetings with governments around the world.



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari speaking to a delegation of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry, comprising of businessmen and office-bearers of 40 regional business associations, led by Gohar Ejaz, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## PM Sharif vows to revamp Pakistan's economy by emulating Chinese model

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday pledged to revamp Pakistan's economy by emulating China's model, with the objective of achieving similar economic success on a smaller scale.

Speaking to a 12-member Chinese delegation led by Wang Fukang, the prime minister said that during his recent visit to China, he requested President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Li Qiang to send experts to Pakistan. "The goal is to model Pakistan's economy after China's. Today, these experts are here, and we're confident that progress will follow soon."

Welcoming the delegation by emphasizing that China and Pakistan were

eternal friends, with a friendship that knew no bounds, he emphasized that industrial cooperation was crucial at this time and expressed hope that it could be shifted to Pakistan.

He believes that joint ventures and cooperation would create a win-win situation.

He said the delegation's visit was highly reassuring, and expressed hope that it would be both useful and productive for Pakistan.

He anticipated that it would enhance bilateral arrangements in areas such as industry, agriculture, economic zones, and help increase Pakistan's capacity to produce agricultural items in high demand in China. He noted that Paki-

stan could meet Chinese requirements by exporting high-quality goods and exploring opportunities in mining and minerals, IT, and export zones. He also suggested relocating certain industries to Pakistan due to China's shift towards more advanced and sophisticated industrial ventures.

He stated that the federal cabinet has decided to offer free visas to Chinese citizens starting August 14, demonstrating Pakistan's commitment. He emphasized that Sino-Pak relations were higher than the Himalayas and deeper than the oceans. The delegation, comprising representatives from 10 different Chinese ministries, was visiting Pakistan to enhance cooperation across various sectors.



KARACHI: Dr. Asim Hussain meeting with Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori.

## UAE to take action against Pakistanis spreading propaganda against politicians, institutions

KARACHI (INP): The United Arab Emirates has warned that Pakistanis in the Gulf state that if they are found to be involved in spreading propaganda against their country, institutions, or politicians, they would not get visas for the oil-rich countries.

Bakheet Ateeq al-Remeithi, the consul general of the UAE in Karachi, has asked the Pakistanis to refrain from spreading propaganda, saying that those living or visiting the Gulf nation were noticed on social media for which many were arrested and sentenced to 14 to 15 years in jail.

More than five Pakistanis were sentenced to life imprisonment while most of them were deported, said the consul general.

"They should avoid sharing or forwarding any such matter on the social media," he said, adding: "Strict action will be taken against them as per law if they do so."

Bakheet said citizens of some 200 countries having different religions and nationalities live in peace in the UAE. The number of Pakistanis in the UAE has exceeded 1.8 million, he said.

The envoy appealed to Pakistanis not to bring their political differences to Dubai. He said citizens involved in such propaganda in Pakistan are being questioned for obtaining Emirates visas.

In response to a question, Bakheet said there was no restriction regarding the UAE visas.

"Not only visas are being given to Pakistanis, all possible facilities are being provided in the Consulate," he said, adding that the rules for the UAE visas have been tightened. He asked Pakistanis to visit their northern areas of their country or other tourist places before going to Dubai.

## Govt negotiators have no answer to our questions: Hafiz Naem

ISLAMABAD (INP): Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Hafiz Naem has said that the government negotiators have no answer to our questions.

Talking to media Hafiz Naem said the government should receive the price of the electricity not additional taxes. "The people are paying price of the contracts made by the government". "We have asked them to show us the agreements with the IPPs", he said.

"We will not lift the burden of the incompetence of the government," JI leader said. "The rulers should surrender their luxuries, free petrol and free electricity," JI chief demanded.

"If anyone want to drive car, run his own private car. The nation will not pay for carrying your children to school and shopping of your wife," he said.

## ATC awards death sentence to four accused of rape-cum-murder of two children

KARACHI (INP): An Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) here on Thursday awarded death sentence to four accused who kidnapped two children for ransom and killed them after rape.

The court also sentenced the culprits of life imprisonment after being found guilty of rape.

The ATC directed the culprits to pay Rs2 million each to heirs of the murdered children besides imposing Rs50,000 on each of the culprit.

The court issued permanent warrants for absconding Raju, accused of abducting 8-year-old Shahbaz and 10-year-old Hasan while they were playing outside the house.

According to the prosecution, the accused had demanded a ransom of 50 thousand rupees from the parents of the children.

## Heavy rain lashes parts of Karachi

KARACHI (INP): Heavy rain lashed various parts of Karachi on Thursday. Significant downpours were reported in areas including MT Khan Road, Sultanabad, Hujrat Colony, and Keamari, Shahr-e-Faisal, Gulistan-e-Jauhar, Scheme 33, Safoora Goth, Hasan Square, Saddar, I.I. Chundrigar Road, M.A. Jinnah Road and other parts also experienced significant rainfall.

Nazimabad, Habib Bank Chowangi, and the SITE Area also received heavy rain.

The weather also impacted Landhi, Korangi Shah Faisal Colony, Malir, and the areas around the Airport.

## Reforms must to make EFF last IMF program

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb here on Thursday reiterated the need for structural reforms to ensure the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) with International Monetary Fund (IMF) is the country's last programme, highlighting the importance of privatization, export-led growth, and foreign direct investment to sustainable macroeconomic stability.

Addressing the Ground Breaking Ceremony of the Head Office Building of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), the minister said, the Staff Level Agreement (SLA) has been signed with IMF and it would go to fund's board for final approval.

"So under the fund umbrella, it is not only getting the fund but making sure that this time we do the structural reforms," he remarked.

"If we have to make it last programme of the fund then whether it is on taxation side, energy side, or SOE reforms and the privatization side, we have to move forward because we do not have the space and room any more to dither on this agenda," the minister remarked.

## Pakistan condemns Israel's adventurism; calls for holding Haniyeh's killers to account

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan on Thursday strongly condemned Israel's continuing adventurism in the region and its aggression against Lebanon with its strikes of July 30, calling for holding to account the killers of Ismail Haniyeh, the Chief of the Political Bureau of Hamas in Tehran. "Targeting individuals inside sovereign states is a violation of international law and global norms. Such acts carry the seeds of further escalation. It is yet another demonstration of indiscriminate and disproportionate Israeli aggression that has continued unabated to the detriment of regional and global peace and security," Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said at her weekly press briefing.

Calling Israel's military aggression in Beirut a "grievous infringement" on Lebanon's sovereignty and the blatant violation of international law and the United Nations Charter, she said that Pakistan stood in solidarity with the people of Lebanon and reaffirmed its support for their right to live in peace and security and to enjoy their sovereignty.

"Israel must be held accountable for its transgressions and actions. Israel's extraterritorial acts have endangered regional security. The backers of Israel should prevail on Israel to end its unlawful military operations in violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries in the region," she said. The spokesperson said the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran on Wednesday was an act of dangerous escalation in an already volatile region and undermined efforts for peace.



KARACHI: Leader of MQM Farooq Sattar plants a sapling to inaugurate the spring tree plantation drive at Bagh Ibne Qasim in the Provincial Capital.

## Second edition of "FOODAG-24" to generate \$1b business: Zubair

KARACHI (APP): Chairman Trade and Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) Zubair Motiwala on Thursday announced that the second edition of "FOODAG-24" would be held from August 9 to 11 at Expo Centre and hoped that it would generate \$ 1 billion business as compared to previous event's \$ 450 million. He said this while addressing a press conference here at TDAP office.

The Chairman TDAP said that Pakistan's agriculture sector demonstrated impressive growth, with agro and food product export surpassing \$ 8 billion in the fiscal year 2023-24, which is 37 percent increase compared to previous year. This remarkable surge underscores the sector's growing significance in the global market.

"TDAP is organizing second edition of the International Food and Agriculture Exhibition "FOODAG-2024" which is scheduled to be held from August 9 to 11 here at Expo Centre.

Under the theme "Growing a Sustainable Future", the exhibition will showcase Pakistan's substantial contributions to global food security, empowering exporters to display their products, explore joint venture opportunity with international partners and elevate the qualitative standards of Pakistan's agricultural produce, Motiwala added. He said China has been designated as Guest of Honour country for the event. An exclusive Pak-China Agro Trade and Investment Conference will be held on the second day of the event, highlighting the robust trade relationship between the two nations, Motiwala said, adding that the exhibition will feature over 350 companies, showcasing a wide range of Pakistan's strengths in both raw and processed agro and food products.



NAUNDERO: Assistant Commissioner Ratodero, Kainat Shaikh along with a team of Sindh Food Authority (SFA) inspecting several dairy shops and tea hotels during awareness campaign to create awareness on hygiene foods, in Naundero.

# President for viable solution to rising energy costs

ISLAMABAD (Online): President Asif Ali Zardari has called for finding a win-win solution to address the issue of rising energy costs in the country. He proposed that the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) should form a committee and work with the President's office to develop a viable solution to the issue of paying capacity charges to Independent Power Producers (IPPs).

The President gave these remarks while talking to a delegation of FPCCI comprising of businessmen and office-bearers of 40 regional business

associations, led by Dr Gohar Ejaz, at Aiwan-e-Sadr today.

Talking to the delegation, the President announced that the President's office would collaborate with a smaller committee from the business community to find a win-win solution for the Government, the people, the business community and IPPs. He urged the for evolving a consensus solution so that none of stakeholders lose out. He said that he was aware of the problems being faced by Pakistani businesses, that were in a "triple-whammy" due to high input, energy, and fuel costs.

Dr Gohar Ejaz highlighted that rising energy costs were overburdening the people, industry, agriculture and exports sector. He emphasised the need for reforming the energy sector to bring down energy prices.

Dr Gohar Ejaz requested the President to intervene in the matter and play his role in resolving the issues faced by Pakistan's industries and businesses due to high electricity prices. The President assured the delegation of his support in coming up with a solution to their problems and taking up the matter with relevant quarters.



A high level delegation of Chinese experts calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad.

## Special status of IIOJK; 5 August to be marked at the parliament

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Thursday called on Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFRON Engineer Amir Muqam and discussed matters of mutual interest including Kashmir Day on August 5.

During the meeting, the minister apprised the Speaker Ayaz Sadiq about the solidarity walk from Radio Pakistan to D-Chowk and other initiatives regarding Kashmir Exploitation Day on August 5, said a press release.

They decided, in the meeting, to bring a resolution in the House on the occasion of Kashmir Exploitation Day on August 5.

## Shirazi emphasizes significance of Sufi shrines across Sindh

Independent Report KARACHI: The Minister for Auqaf, Religious Affairs, Zakat, and Ushr, Syed Riaz Hussain Shah Shirazi, conducted visits to several Sufi shrines. His itinerary included the shrines of Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai (Bhitt Shah), Sakhi Jam Datar (Nawabshah), Hazrat Sachal Sarmast (Nawabshah), and Hazrat Sadruddin Shah Badshah (Rohr). Upon arrival at the shrines, the provincial minister was warmly welcomed with traditional Sindh topi and ajrak. During his visits, he paid respects by laying floral wreaths and offering prayers (Fateha). He also held meetings with officials from the Department of Auqaf, Religious Affairs, Zakat, and Ushr, as well as with committee members to review the facilities provided to devotees.

The provincial minister addressed the issues faced by devotees and instructed relevant administrators and staff to ensure complete cooperation and provision of necessary facilities.

extending every possible cooperation to the NIC Karachi for its success. A partnership with LMKT and Orbit Startups, has been awarded the project of managing the National Incubation Center (NIC) Karachi under an agreement for the next five years by Ignite, Ministry of IT & Telecom. Pro Vice-Chancellor of NED Engineering University Karachi, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Tufail, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Ignite Adeel Aijaz Sheikh, Ali Sohaih Tabba of YBG, Syed Azfar Hussain of NIC Karachi and other notables were present in the signing ceremony held at the NIC Karachi-NED Engineering University on Thursday. Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Tufail said that the NED University was

## Lucky Landmark-led consortium signs agreement with Ignite to manage NIC Karachi

KARACHI (APP): Lucky Landmark, part of Yunus Brothers Group (YBG), in partnership with LMKT and Orbit Startups, has been awarded the project of managing the National Incubation Center (NIC) Karachi under an agreement for the next five years by Ignite, Ministry of IT & Telecom. Pro Vice-Chancellor of NED Engineering University Karachi, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Tufail, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Ignite Adeel Aijaz Sheikh, Ali Sohaih Tabba of YBG, Syed Azfar Hussain of NIC Karachi and other notables were present in the signing ceremony held at the NIC Karachi-NED Engineering University on Thursday. Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Tufail said that the NED University was

extending every possible cooperation to the NIC Karachi for its success. A partnership with LMKT and Orbit Startups, has been awarded the project of managing the National Incubation Center (NIC) Karachi under an agreement for the next five years by Ignite, Ministry of IT & Telecom. Pro Vice-Chancellor of NED Engineering University Karachi, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Tufail, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Ignite Adeel Aijaz Sheikh, Ali Sohaih Tabba of YBG, Syed Azfar Hussain of NIC Karachi and other notables were present in the signing ceremony held at the NIC Karachi-NED Engineering University on Thursday. Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Tufail said that the NED University was

## Former Info Secretary Ismail Patel passes away

KARACHI (APP): Ismail Patel, a former Information Secretary who served in senior government positions, passed away in Karachi on Thursday after prolonged illness. He was 74.

Patel was buried in a graveyard of the Defence Housing Society.

He leaves behind his wife, Anjum and a brother, Ibrahim, to mourn.

Patel, who was from the first CSS batch of the Information Service, had a distinguished career, including as press officer at the Pakistan Mission to the United Nations in New York in early 80s.

## Bike snatchers kill youth over resistance

KARACHI (INP): Bike snatchers gunned down a youth over resistance and sped the scene, police said on Thursday.

According to details, the bike snatchers attempted to snatch Honda CG 125 motorcycle from 30-year-old Bilal.

The youth offered resistance after which the bike snatchers shot him dead and sped the scene.

The body was shifted to hospital for postmortem. The police registered a case into the incident and have constituted special team to arrest the culprits.

## Police arrest 4 dacoits, recover stolen goods in Mirpurkhas

MIRPURKHAS (APP): Mirpurkhas police on Thursday arrested four members of an inter-district dacoits gang, including two main suspects, and recovered stolen goods and weapons, in a breakthrough in the double murder case that shook Deh 333 village. According to SSP Mirpurkhas Captain @Asad Ali Chaudhry, the accused were arrested in a joint operation conducted on his instructions.



LARKANA: Deputy Commissioner Larkana, Sharjeel Noor Chana presides over the meeting regarding 14th August National Independence Day celebrations coming ahead, held at his office in Larkana.

## Awareness rally led by MNA Mahesh Malani for "Sarsabz Thar" campaign

HYDERABAD (APP): An awareness rally led by MNA Dr. Mahesh Kumar Malani was held in Tharparkar, focusing on the "Sarsabz Thar" campaign. The rally began from the Deputy Commissioner office and concluded at the NADRA office, which was attended by the Deputy Commissioner Tharparkar Abdul Haleem Jagirani, SSP Shabbir Ahmed Sethar, officers from various departments and a large number of citizens.

Speakers, including Dr. Mahesh Kumar Malani, Abdul Haleem Jagirani and others highlighted the ongoing tree-planting initiative under

the "Sarsabz Thar" campaign adding that this initiative aims to combat climate change and rising temperatures, and a target of 200,000 saplings has been set in Tharparkar district which will be completed, and plantations were also being done in villages along with government and non-government institutions established in different cities and villages of the district.

They said that keeping in view the threat of drought in the Thar desert, we all need to plant trees and this campaign was not only for environmental improvement but it can make the area of Tharparkar more green.