

# Independent

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## Bilawal extends Sindh's hand to boost Punjab's healthcare

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari says the best hospitals in the country are in Sindh.

Speaking at the inauguration of the CyberKnife Unit at Jinnah Hospital, he highlighted that three Sindh hospitals — JPMC, NICVD, and NICH — are among the top healthcare providers in Pakistan.

He noted that the Sindh government significantly improved medical services and offered to assist Punjab in enhancing its healthcare sector.

The former foreign minister remarked, "Pakistan often receives negative coverage both domestically and internationally, but the success of these three hospitals showcases the country's good governance."

He also mentioned that Sindh has developed the world's largest hospital for

treating heart diseases, providing excellent care for children.

Additionally, he announced the launch of the city's third CyberKnife machine, which will offer free treatment.

APP adds: Chairman of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Monday said new state-of-the-art facilities at Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC) would ensure substantive relief to people of Sindh, including Karachi.

He said it was definitely a gift of Sindh government to the people and prove to be as another milestone in healthcare sector.

The newly inaugurated units include the 120-bed Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, the 110-bed Department of Neurology and Stroke Unit, and the cutting-edge CyberKnife S7-FIM, continuing the Sindh

province's commitment to providing quality and free healthcare services to people.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony at JPMC, the PPP Chairman said that the standard hospitals were located in Sindh province and added that Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC), National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD), and National Institute of Child Health (NICH) represented top healthcare institutions in the country.

He said that these three institutions stood as a beacon of hope and termed these as exemplary models of good governance and successful public-private partnerships by the provincial government.

He said this showed that how effectively the province had managed its institutions in the post-18th Constitutional Amendment.



KARACHI: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari inaugurates new facilities during inauguration ceremony held at Jinnah Hospital in Karachi.

## PM orders 50% of public sector cargo to be routed via Gwadar Port

Shahbaz Sharif views completion of IT Park Islamabad as milestone to achieve \$25 bn export mark

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has directed to bring 50 percent of all public sector cargo inland by sea through Gwadar port. He was chairing an important review meeting regarding Chinese investment in Pakistan, in Islamabad today.

The Prime Minister was given a detailed briefing on the visit of the delegation of Chinese experts to Pakistan. It was informed that a delegation of Chinese experts visited Pakistan from 30th of last month to 6th of this month. The Chinese delegation met representatives of various ministries in which the ministries gave suggestions regarding increasing cooperation in related fields.

During the visit of the delegation, significant progress was made in terms of cooperation and investment in the fields of trade

and investment, energy, agriculture, information technology, communication and infrastructure. It was briefed that services of Chinese experts will be hired to increase domestic exports and eliminate non-trade barriers. Sectoral road shows will be organized in different cities of China to increase exports of Pakistani products.

It was apprised that Chinese companies have increased interest in relocating Chinese industries to Pakistan. Pakistani students and research scholars will be trained in the field of agriculture in China for which 572 applications have been received so far. The Prime Minister directed to give equal participation to students from all provinces for this training.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said that the completion of Informa-

tion Technology Park project in Islamabad would help boost country's exports in this sector and prove as significant milestone in achieving \$25 billion IT exports target.

The prime minister, while chairing a meeting to review the ongoing projects of Information Technology, digitization and steps to increase IT exports, termed the progress on IT project in Islamabad as satisfactory. He further directed for taking steps to reduce its completion time-frame after consultation with the Korean experts, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The meeting was attended by Ministers Ahsan Iqbal, Ahmad Khan Cheema, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Attaullah Tarar, Minister of State for IT Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Deputy Chairman Planning Jehanzeb Khan, PM's Coordinators Malik Mukhtar Bharath.

## Murad directs irrigation authorities to keep vigilance on canal embankments, dykes

KARACHI (INP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Monday directed the irrigation authorities to plug the breach in Dadu canal besides keeping strict vigilance on canal embankments and dykes.

He issued the directives in the backdrop of the report submitted to him by irrigation department regarding fresh breach in eastern embankment of Dadu canal.

The report submitted to CM Sindh by secretary

irrigation stated that the continuous rainfall last night caused breach in eastern embankment of Dadu Canal.

"Irrigation department has closed Dadu Canal and submitted its report over breaches in Dadu canal and Main Nara Valley Drain (MNV) near Naudero," report read.

It further stated that breaches at two spots in the canal were filled earlier but the rain spell caused third breach in canal at RD 604.

## Secretary Defence of Iraq meets CJCSC

Independent Report  
RAWALPINDI: Lt Gen Ahmed Dawood Salman, Secretary Defence of Iraq called on General Sahir Shamshad Mirza, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, at Joint Staff Headquarters, Rawalpindi.

Matters of bilateral interests including, emerging security environment and enhancement of security and defence cooperation between the two countries were discussed during the meeting.

The visiting dignitary commended the professionalism of Pakistan Armed Forces and acknowledged the sacrifices rendered by people and Armed Forces of Pakistan in the war against terrorism.



Lt Gen Ahmed Dawood Salman, Secretary Defence of Iraq meeting with General Sahir Shamshad Mirza, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, at Joint Staff Headquarters, Rawalpindi.

## Sharjeel ordered a crackdown on items used in preparation of drugs

Independent Report  
KARACHI: The Sindh government has ordered an operation against items used for smoking or inhaling drugs. An important meeting of the Excise Narcotics Control Wing was held in Karachi, chaired by Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon.

In the meeting, Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon also ordered a crackdown on items used in the preparation of drugs. The Senior Minister, who also serves as the Provincial Minister for Information, Excise, Taxation, and Narcotics Control, directed

that the sale of narcotic-related items such as Rizla paper, rolling machines, meth pipes, glass pipes, and similar products in shops must be completely eradicated.

He emphasized that shopkeepers should cooperate with the Excise Narcotics Control Wing and refrain from selling items used for smoking or inhaling drugs. Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon clarified that action will be taken if there are any reports of drug sales at private locations, including houses, hotels, or restaurants.



KARACHI: Sindh Minister for Excise and Taxation, Transport, and Mass Transit, Sharjeel Inam Memon presided over the meeting regarding ordering an operation against items used for smoking or inhaling drugs to Excise, Taxation, Narcotics Control Department, held in Karachi.

## Imran Khan says: All drama of arresting Faiz Hameed being enacted to send me to military court

RAWALPINDI (Online): PTI founder Imran Khan has said all the drama of arresting Gen (Retd) Faiz is being enacted to take him to military court.

"Efforts are underway to make Gen (Retd) Faiz approve against me. They know all other cases against me have been discharged. Therefore, they want to take me to military court, he said this while talking to journalists in Adiala jail Monday. He held they want to get divulge some thing from Gen (Retd) Faiz. They will force Gen (Retd) Faiz to give some statement that May 9 was conspiracy.

If Gen (Retd) Faiz issued order of my arrest and stole CCTV footage then arrest him. Whosoever hatches conspiracy he does not demand for judicial commission.

Regime change was done against us and I was put into jail. They are saying now Gen (Retd) was mastermind. Faiz got me arrested. They don't feel ashamed that they are saying Gen (Retd) Faiz issued directives to Bushra Bibi. They fear when Qazi Isa will be retired their theft will open. He held Gen (Retd) Bajwa had removed Gen (Retd) Faiz by striking a deal with Nawaz Sharif.

When asked by a journalist you have always defended Gen (Retd) Faiz and now when he has been arrested why you fear he will become approver against you, he said I don't worry if he gives any evidence against me.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on Chinese investment in Pakistan.

## Maritime Minister for getting benefit from potential of ports to stabilize economy

KARACHI (APP): Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh on Monday stressed the need for getting benefit from the effective use and potential of ports of the country.

While addressing a one-day Conference titled "COLMAB 24" on Logistics, Maritime Affairs and Blue Economy at a local hotel, he said we need to make effective and efficient use of the ports to stabilize the economy of the country in addition to increasing the exports.

Sheikh said that there was a lot of potential in Karachi Port Trust (KPT) and Port Qasim (PQ). He said that they were trying to have the facility of dredging to increase the depth of the ports. This would not

only save our foreign exchange but also help earn dollars through dredging in other countries.

The minister said that the proposal to do all the cargo handling at KPT and then to send the cargo to Gwadar and Port Qasim in small vessels from there was feasible.

Later, talking to media persons, the minister said that the government was providing opportunities for investment and investors should take advantage from it. He said that the government was making all-out efforts to provide opportunities to the investors.

Replying to a question, Sheikh said that all ports of Pakistan were operational and no port was being closed.



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

## Instead of limiting relief to Punjab Hafiz Naeem urges nationwide reduction in power tariffs

KARACHI (INP): Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, Hafiz Naeemur Rehman, has called for a reduction in the basic electricity tariff across the entire country, rather than limiting relief to Punjab. He demanded this during a press conference in Karachi on Monday, emphasising that the proposed Rs14 per unit reduction for two months in Punjab should be extended nationwide.

Rehman criticised the heavy burden placed on the public by Independent Power Producers (IPPs), attributing the blame to successive governments, including those led by the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N),

Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q), and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

He stated that the public could no longer bear the excessive capacity charges imposed by these agreements. He warned that if the government failed to honour the agreement made with JI to provide relief to the people, the party would initiate long marches towards Islamabad from across the country. He also announced a nationwide shutter-down strike on August 28. Addressing the broader economic issues, Rehman said that the government's flawed policies have led to the closure of industries across the country, causing significant distress among industrialists and traders.

## President Zardari mourns martyrdom of three Pak army soldiers in Bajaur

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday expressed profound sorrow over the martyrdom of three soldiers of Pak army in Bajaur during their fight against terrorists and paid tribute to their sacrifice in defending the country.

A press release from the President House stated that the president praised the martyrs as the nation's pride and expressed deep gratitude for their supreme sacrifice. He highlighted that the security forces successfully thwarted the terrorists' infiltration attempt, defeating them decisively. The president affirmed that the entire nation salutes the Pakistan Army's spirit of patriotism and sacrifice.

The president stated that the entire nation honors its martyrs and will forever remember their sacrifices. He prayed for the departed souls to rest in peace and for their families to find strength and solace during this difficult time.

## Bus collides with trailer in Sukkur, killing 8 people

SUKKUR (INP): A speeding passenger bus collided with a trailer, resulting in the deaths of eight people, including women and children, and leaving seven others injured.

This incident took place in Sukkur Multan Motorway (M5) in the town of Ghotki.

According to the police, the ill-fated passenger bus was traveling from Manshehra to Karachi when the accident happened at a location near the village of Dring Malook in Ghotki. The bus collided with the side of a trailer, leading to the loss of 8 lives and 7 injuries. The deceased include women and children, and 3 of the injured are reported to be in critical condition. Upon receiving the information, the police and Rangers reached the site, rescued the injured, and transported them to the Tehsil Hospital in Ghotki. The motorway police stated that it was raining at the time of the accident, and the wet conditions may have been a contributing factor to the tragic incident.



KARACHI: Central Vice President PML (N) Shah Muhammad Shah meeting with Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori.

## MQM-P urges Sindh govt to provide Punjab-like relief in electricity bills

KARACHI (INP): Senior leader of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) Dr Farooq Sattar has called upon the Sindh government to take a cue from the Punjab government and offer relief in electricity bills to consumers in the province.

Farooq Sattar accompanied by members of the National and Provincial Assemblies held a press conference at the MQM-Pakistan House in Karachi on Monday.

Dr Farooq Sattar highlighted the growing frustrations of Karachi's residents over soaring electricity costs and load shedding in the city.

He pointed out that while the Punjab government, under the leadership of Maryam Nawaz, has provided a relief of Rs14 per unit in electricity bills to its consumers, the Sindh government has yet to take similar steps.

The MQM-P leader expressed concerns over the continuous increase in electricity bills and the persistent load shedding in Karachi, which he described as discrimination

against the city's residents.

He criticised the recent hike in electricity rates for Karachi's consumers, with some industries now paying as much as Rs50 to Rs55 per unit.

Dr Farooq Sattar warned that such increases would inevitably lead to a surge in inflation, further burdening the people of Karachi, a city that contributes over Rs4000 billion in revenue to the national economy.

He questioned why Karachi, a major economic hub, continues to be treated unfairly, asking, "Is Karachi not part of Pakistan?" He urged the government to address the grievances of the city's residents and industries, emphasising the need for equitable treatment in the distribution of electricity and related charges.

The press conference underscored the growing discontent among Karachi's citizens and the pressing need for policy interventions to alleviate their financial burdens amid rising utility costs.



KARACHI: Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM-P) Leaders, Farooq Sattar along with others addressing to media persons during press conference held at Pakistan House in Karachi.

Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

**Reluctant austerity**

The time for tokenism has long gone. Unless the current government gets serious about introducing and implementing a long-term sustainability plan, the financial pain the nation is being made to suffer now will yield few positive outcomes for the future.

Under pressure to curtail its expenditures, the government is reportedly mulling various measures to 'right-size' its footprint. The proposals currently under consideration include merging some ministries, and either collapsing, shutting down, or transferring a total of 28 departments under five identified ministries to the private sector.

Another proposal seeks to consolidate 12 institutions running under these five ministries, while yet another suggestion is to abolish the around 150,000 positions currently lying vacant in the federal government and gradually phase out various posts in grades 1 to 16. Meanwhile, the prime minister is also said to be insisting on shutting down or privatising any state institution "which has not shown adequate performance".

But the question is, will these measures make any real difference? It may be recalled that PM Shehbaz Sharif has previously announced not one, but two government austerity drives at different points during the last two odd years. Both failed and have since been quietly shelved.

Meanwhile, the federal government's total expenditures have more than doubled since the ouster of the PTI government in April 2022. Within the same period, the combined budget for the National Assembly and the Senate has been increased by more than 100pc; from Rs9.9bn in fiscal 2022-23 to a total of Rs19.98bn for this fiscal year. Furthermore, government salaries have been increased by 25pc this year, while additional financial resources of around Rs40bn have been allocated for civil servants in the form of loans and advances. At a time when ordinary citizens have been forced to tighten their belts in extremely painful ways, this profligacy cuts in inexpressible ways.

There is no question that the size of the government needs to be reduced post-haste. However, these efforts need to go beyond mere sound bites. Pakistanis have paid dearly for their government's inability to run the country within its means. Public debt, which has continued to accumulate at an accelerated rate over the past few years, has seemed not to be as much of a problem for those responsible for its accumulation than for ordinary citizens, who have paid for it in the form of runaway inflation and higher taxes.

The only way to demonstrate a commitment to righting this wrong is by the government cutting its expenditures in meaningful and painful ways. It must take back all unnecessary perks and privileges given to certain categories of public servants, such as free fuel, electricity and air tickets. Austerity should begin at the top. Otherwise, it will be little more than just for show.

**COP in Pakistan**

Aisha Khan

As the climate crisis continues to escalate, the pressure to implement sectoral policies will also increase. It is often said that climate change is multi-sectoral therefore making it difficult to implement policies after the 18th Amendment. However, beyond that no mention is made of how to bridge the gap between policy and implementation, affix responsibility, monitor progress and make systemic functions ro-bust and accountable. It has become common practice to identify problems and attribute inaction to lack of finance, capacity and technology without examining the core issues responsible for slow progress or taking action to make policy implementable.

All the major sectors affected by climate change have a policy that serves as the guiding document for coping with emerging threats. The National Climate Change Policy 2021, National Water Policy 2018, National Food Security Policy and Disaster Risk Reduction Policy are comprehensive documents that outline the challenges and provide a roadmap for action. The implementation frameworks provide targets and timelines but fall short of sharing means of implementation or any mechanism for monitoring, reporting and verification.

However, with the institutional arrangement in climate governance after the 18th Amendment raises many questions. The fundamental question of responsibility stands diluted. Every province has developed its own climate change policy with place-based and people-centred priorities. While ostensibly sub-national policies feed into the National Climate Change Policy, there is no mechanism under which the centre can demand timely implementation from the provinces.

The Pakistan Climate Act, 2017, was designed to strengthen the technical capacity of the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, build capacity of provincial stakeholders and provide a forum for discussion between the centre and the provinces for coordinated action. After a delay of seven years, the notification for operationalising the Climate Authority was done at the behest of the Supreme Court but questions about procedural due diligence still remain.

The lack of human capital and short-changing the system in procurement are two big hurdles. Recruitment routinely ignores merit. This has caused a steady decline in functions and now reached a point where we are confronted with a critical capacity crisis. In climate governance, the world has moved into a domain where technical qualification, subject specific knowledge and quality research is needed to address challenges. This was the fundamental objective of creating a provision for setting up a 'Climate Authority' under the Climate Act. However, if roles are not assigned on merit, it will become another white elephant providing people with high salaries for low performance.

In order to improve coordination, build consensus, and enhance transparency and accountability, developing a customised model of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change would be useful. An annual COP in the country will bring all stakeholders together to discuss country climate issues and how best to agree on an agenda of solutions. The Paris rule

book can serve as the toolkit for steering the process.

The modalities and responsibilities of the parties can be developed once the concept is actualised and representative bodies identified. Hosting an annual COP in Pakistan will allow for a systemic review of policies and compliance with 'Provincially Determined Contributions' that feeds into the Nationally Determined Contributions. The issues of mitigation, adaptation, finance and means of implementation can also be discussed at this annual convening, making the process both transparent and accountable with 'Common but Differentiated Responsibilities' for developing an equitable and inclusive roadmap that leaves no one behind.

In 2016, Pakistan had also signed the Open Government Partnership at the Paris Summit but that agreement, too, fell by the wayside. The OGP offered the perfect tool for strengthening good governance by co-creating policies with agreement on priority actions between civil society and sector-specific government agencies. This participatory approach to development would have made it possible to create collective ownership and a transparent mechanism for monitoring progress.

However, with mounting threats, the country can no longer afford inaction on climate. The judiciary in Pakistan has always taken a proactive stance on climate justice, upholding human rights. The best way forward is to enhance parliamentary oversight and increase judicial vigilance to ensure that the system is not derailed by vested interest groups. -- Courtesy Dawn

**Predatory instincts**

Huma Yusuf

The government installs a 'web management system'. Unidentified men whisk away a YouTuber who posts satirical content. A fashion designer threatens legal action against the director and cast of a TV serial. A legislator objects to a female professional's outfit and calls for SOPs for women's attire. These may seem like disconnected matters. But they are signs that a surveillance society is becoming entrenched in Pakistan, an outcome we must resist.

Anxieties about surveillance have been mounting globally and are largely linked to 'surveillance capitalism', ie, the commodification of personal data, particularly by Big Tech. There is a growing focus on the extent to which individuals are aware of what personal data they are surrendering, to whom, and why.

Concerns about surveillance capitalism mounted when it became clear that customer data collection was enabling not only targeted advertising and improved user experience but also behavioural manipulation, for example, by skewing voting preferences. The regulation of Big Tech and its use of personal data will soon be a key human rights battle.

In this context, old-fashioned state surveillance — in the sense of the state collecting information about its citizens — seems passé. But it continues to be a major concern globally, and certainly in Pakistan.

In an article for Constitutional Political Economy, Alshamy et al argue that state surveillance can either be protective-productive or predatory. In the former case, the state collects personal information to support citizens and im-

prove welfare service delivery. In the latter, state data collection "reduces citizen welfare by violating the rights of citizens or by extracting resources from citizens to benefit a small group of politically connected elites. This harms individual agency, freedom and self-governing democracy."

The authors note that predatory data collection is non-transparent, poorly legislated and regulated, and often in the service of nebulous national security considerations that can be interpreted variously by whichever stakeholder has most power. In this scenario, the courts become helpless to challenge surveillance, as they too become subsumed by the state narrative. The plight of missing persons in Pakistan is the perfect illustration of a predatory surveillance state in action.

Increasing attention is paid to the links between capitalist and state surveillance, in the sense of public understanding that private sector players, such as internet service providers or social media platforms, are required to surrender customer data when the state comes calling.

But what is less considered is the impact of surveillance becoming normalised — the de facto approach to political and social interaction. When power becomes synonymous with the ability to surveil the activities of others — shame them, report them, and so ultimately control them — then it will contaminate society. Those who seek status and control will increasingly use surveillance as a tool to shape public behaviour to their own ends. Meanwhile, self-censorship, the survival tactic of Pakistani media, will become the default mode of all citizens.

Pakistan has already seen the toxic effect of this kind of social surveillance through the misuse of the blasphemy laws — the fear that someone may perceive something you say, do, or absent-mindedly forward to be profane, and wield that ultimate power of an accusation, resulting in conviction or lynching.

But we are now on the precipice where social control and abuse previously linked to state monitoring of 'anti-establishment' activities is becoming more pervasive. We are moving from the realm of state and capitalist surveillance to one of social surveillance, one in which citizens, taking a cue from the state itself, are willing to police each other's clothing, artistic output and sense of humour.

The powers that be may be pleased by this ripple effect. But they should tread with caution as no good comes of surveillance states. The most obvious toll is economic. We have heard all week about the millions lost to internet disruptions while the state installs its 'web management system', but that may not be the extent of it. Academic research on the Stasi in East Germany (admittedly an extreme example) has documented economic losses from lack of innovation, less self-employment, widespread unemployment and brain drain. More material is the social toll of less inclusive, more predatory societies. In our highly weaponised and already conflict-prone context this would manifest as surveillance as a trigger for violence. The ultimate problem with surveillance is that its parameters are necessarily non-transparent and ever-shifting, meaning everyone is vulnerable. Who knows who already has eyes on your data? -- Courtesy Dawn

**Commerce News**

**Govt taking measures to facilitate investments into country: FM**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Reiterating government's commitment to provide a stable and conducive business environment, Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb said here Monday that all necessary measures were being taken to facilitate investments.

The minister was talking to President and Group Chief Executive Officer (GCEO) Mashreq Bank, Ahmed Abdelaal, who virtually called on him to discuss the economic outlook and explore investment opportunities in Pakistan, according to press release issued by finance ministry. The meeting was also attended by Minister of State, Ali Parvez Malik, and senior officers from the Finance Division and State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) the press release added. The Finance Minister underscored the

significant potential of Pakistan's IT and Agriculture sectors, calling for increased investment from both local and international stakeholders to drive economic growth.

He expressed appreciation for Mashreq Bank's interest in Pakistan's financial landscape and expressed keen interest of the government to re-engage with Mashreq Bank.

The Minister provided an overview of the economic outlook of the country and mentioned the recent improvements in the macroeconomic indicators and stability of the currency and financial markets. He also mentioned the economic policies and initiatives of the government, emphasizing the ongoing efforts to stabilize the macroeconomic environment and enhance investor's confidence.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb in a virtual meeting with Mr. Ahmed Abdelaal, President / GCEO of Mashreq Bank to discuss the economic outlook and explore investment opportunities in Pakistan.



KARACHI: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh unveiling the plaque during the one-day conference titled 'COLMAB 24' on Logistics, Maritime Affairs and Blue Economy.

**Pakistan's earns \$297m from IT services' export during July 2024**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan earned US \$297 million by providing different Information Technology (IT) services in various countries during the first month of the current fiscal year 2024-25.

This shows a growth of 32.46 per cent as compared with the US \$ 224.950 million earned through the provision of services during the corresponding month of the last fiscal year 2023-24, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

During the month under review, the computer services grew by 23.09 per cent as it surged from US \$187.470 million last year to US \$230.750 million

**Shipping activity at Port Qasim**

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity remained active at the port where four ships namely One Reliability, Suzy, Ullswater and Marangas Kalymnos scheduled to load/offload Containers, Iron ore, LPG and LNG, berthed at Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Engro Terminal and Gasport Terminal respectively on Sunday.

Meanwhile three more ships, Agios Dimitrios, Two million Ways and Fairchem Mako carrying Containers, Mogas and Palm oil also arrived at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim during the last 24 hours. A total of eight ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them two ships.

**SECP roundtable on 'Insured Pak through promoting Takaful'**

ISLAMABAD (APP): The SECP organized a roundtable discussion to support its 'Insured Pakistan 5-year strategic plan' by promoting the development of the takaful sector in Pakistan with the CEOs and heads of takaful operations of all insurance companies. The session titled "Takaful: Unlocking the Growth Potential" was a half day event, held at Karachi.

The aim of the roundtable was aimed at exploring avenues for the growth and development of the takaful sector in Pakistan in the Journey towards an insured Pakistan, said a press release issued here Monday.

SECP Chairman, Mr. Akif Saeed in his welcome address highlighted Takaful's acceptability among masses, and that SECP placed specific focus on takaful as a strategic priority in the 5-year plan for the insurance sector. He assured the takaful sector of SECP's support to work together for the sector's advancement.

**JazzCash transforms 350,000 businesses' smartphones into POS machines**

ISLAMABAD (APP): JazzCash, Pakistan's leading fintech platform has launched its latest feature, 'Tap-Pay for Businesses', enabling over 350,000 businesses across the country to accept payments through their Android smartphones.

This cutting-edge feature allows businesses to seamlessly receive payments from any contactless debit or credit card or another smartphone with a simple tap on the businesses' NFC-enabled device, said a news release.

The launch closely follows JazzCash's recent introduction of the 'Tap-Pay' feature for customers, which allows customers to make payments directly from their phones. Together, these features will help establish an end-to-end contactless payment ecosystem in Pakistan.

Murtaza Ali, President of JazzCash, said, "Our goal is to empower both customers and businesses. With Tap-Pay, we aim to enhance Pakistan's payment ecosystem with innovative solutions."

**9th Colour & Chem Expo to open on 24th**

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan's leading and dedicated exhibition for dyes, chemicals, and allied sectors, the 9th Colour & Chem Expo is being organized from 24th August 2024 at Lahore International Expo Centre.

The event will host more than 300 exhibitors representing the forefront of innovation in Dyes, Chemicals, and allied industries. Companies and their representatives from China, Malaysia, Turkey and Iran are also participating in the expo.

Exhibition is being organized by the Event and Conference International, Rainbow Group and Punjab Dyes & Chemicals Merchants Association.

**PSX loses 214 points**

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) shed 214.97 points on Monday, showing a negative change of 0.28 percent, closing at 77,830.34 points against 78,045.31 points on the last working day.

A total of 471,749.071 shares were traded during the day as compared to 600,719,724 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 16.915 billion against Rs 17.071 billion on the last trading day.

**ICT exports remittances surges to US\$286 mln in July: Shaza**

ISLAMABAD (APP): ICT exports remittances reached US\$286 million in the first month of Financial Year 2024-25 (July).

ICT exports increased 33.64% over the US\$214 million remitted during corresponding period last year FY2023-24 (July), said Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja.

She in a statement said that the present government is committed for increase in IT exports.

Minister of State for IT said that the Prime Minister of Pakistan is fully focused upon uplift of the IT sector.

She said that on the directives of the Prime Minister of Pakistan and the full support of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), Ministry of IT and Telecommunication, and Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB) are taking steps to increase country's IT exports.

**Internet disruption adversely affecting the business activities: CAP**

LAHORE (INP): The Chainstore Association of Pakistan (CAP) has expressed serious concerns over the recent internet disruptions, primarily affecting mobile internet and Whatsapp, warning of significant impact to export-oriented and domestic commercial activity across the country.

Chairman CAP Mr Tariq Mehboob, along with CAP Co-Founder and National E-Commerce Council Member Mr Asfandyar Farrukh, highlighted the far-reaching consequences of these disruptions, stressing the urgent need for permanent resolution. They were of the view that Pakistani businesses were already grappling with multiple challenges, including high taxes, soaring electricity costs, and increasing liquidity challenges. Amidst these difficulties, inconsistent and unreliable internet services were creating additional hurdles, severely affecting revenue streams and service quality.

Chairman CAP Mr Tariq Mehboob said, "These internet disruptions not only impact large-scale businesses but also individuals running small enterprises who rely on stable connections."

## Governor KP acknowledges tribal people services to nation

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, on Monday acknowledged the valuable services of the tribal people to the nation and measures will be taken to redress undertaken their problems and grievances.

The Governor expressed these views during a meeting with a representative delegation of the Koki Khel tribes from the merged district of Khyber at the Governor House in Peshawar.

The delegation included Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) candidate Malik Naheed Shah, Khan Muhammad, and Sanullah, among other tribal elders. They informed the Governor about the difficulties faced by the Koki Khel tribes' displaced persons.

The delegation highlighted that they have been living as temporary displaced persons (TDPs) since 2012. Although approximately 60 percent of the area has been cleared since 2017, they are still forced to live as TDPs.

They also mentioned that the provincial government has not shown serious commitment to resolving their issues, including the compensation for completely destroyed homes, which remains unimplemented.

The delegation requested the Governor to raise their issues before the federal government and seek cooperation for resolving their problems.

Governor Kundi assured the delegation that, since taking office, he has been engaging with the federal government to address the issues faced by both the province and the merged districts. He committed to continuing to advocate for the resolution of these problems at all relevant forums.

## Health minister chairs provincial outbreak committee meeting

**Independent Report**  
PESHAWAR: Health Minister Syed Qasim Ali Shah presided over a crucial meeting of the Provincial Outbreak Committee in Peshawar, emphasizing the importance of public precautions and social distancing to prevent the spread of diseases.

He urged the media to collaborate with the Health Department in raising awareness about monkey pox virus, vaccination and other vital health measures. In response to potential outbreaks, the Health Department has established Rapid Response Teams and is setting up isolation wards across districts. The current patient, who arrived in Pakistan on August 10, has been isolated at the Hayatabad Medical Complex.

Genetic sequencing revealed that the patient had contracted the virus, prevalent in West Africa. A Provincial Control Room has been established at the Directorate General of Health Services, with additional district-level control rooms in the works.



LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Communication and Works Malik Sohaib Ahmed addressing the ceremony organized in the honour of officers of Excise Department those who made best recovery.

## 3 children die of measles in Ahmadpur East

BAHAWALPUR (APP): According to the report issued from the Chief Executive Officer of Bahawalpur, the deaths of three children from a single household in the neighboring union council of Rajroho, Ahmadpur East were not due to any mysterious illness.

Medical reports indicated that the three children of Mahboob Ahmed, a resident of Rajroho, were afflicted with measles.

Their parents opted for home treatment, but two of the children passed away on August 3 and August 5, respectively.



PESHAWAR: A delegation of District Bar Association Peshawar meeting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi.

## Punjab leads in modern technology usage: Marriyum

LAHORE (APP): Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb announced that under the visionary leadership of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the province has taken the lead in utilising cutting-edge technology across Pakistan.

Punjab has embraced a new era of modern technology to safeguard wildlife and protect endangered species, she added. In a groundbreaking initiative, Punjab has begun using advanced thermal technology to detect blackbucks and houbara bustards, both of which are facing threats to their survival.

Following the guidance of CM, the senior minister spearheaded the deployment of thermal drone technology.

She said that with the expertise of modern specialists, the Punjab Wildlife Department has successfully implemented the technology, which identifies animals by detecting the heat they emit.

## ANF recovers 85 kg drugs in 11 operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting 11 operations across the country managed to recover 85 kg drugs worth Rs 25 million and arrested 11 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday.

He informed that 1 kg ice was recovered from a parcel sent to Qatar at a courier office in Rawalpindi.

In second operation, 250 grams ice was recovered from a passenger going to Bahrain at Faisalabad Airport.

In third operation, 189 grams ice was recovered from a passenger going to Bahrain from Lahore Airport.

40 kg hashish and 14.4 kg ice were recovered from a vehicle intercepted near RCD Road Lasbela and an accused was arrested during the operation.

## Minister Ramesh Arora extends greetings to Hindu community

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Minority Affairs Ramesh Singh Arora has extended heartfelt greetings to the Hindu community in Pakistan on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan.

In his message, he stated that Raksha Bandhan is a symbol of love, protection, and brotherhood, reminding us of the values of sacrifice and safeguarding one another.

He highlighted that Raksha Bandhan reflects the eternal bond between brothers and sisters, where a sister prays for her brother's long life and prosperity, and in return, the brother vows to protect and ensure his sister's happiness. This festival promotes love and unity within families, which is the foundation of any strong society.

The Provincial Minister further emphasized that all religious and cultural minorities in Pakistan have complete freedom to celebrate their customs and traditions.

The Government of Punjab is committed to protecting the rights of minorities and is taking all possible measures for their welfare, he added.



MULTAN: Chairman Senate Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani offering feteiha on the death of Makhdoom Syed Hamad Raza with his brothers and other relatives.

## Minister for public-private partnership to improve education's quality

**Independent Report**  
PESHAWAR: Provincial Minister for Education Faisal Khan Tarakai on Monday directed the management of eight selected schools under the Public-Private Partnership for the current academic year to improve the quality of education in the province.

He was chairing a meeting regarding Public-Private Partnership (PPP) where significant measures to enhance the quality of education in the province were discussed.

The meeting was attended by Additional Secretary Reforms Jahangir Azam, Additional Director Dr. Iqbal, and the Public-Private Partnership team.

The provincial minister further directed that a case be prepared for management of eight more schools in the next phase-2.

During the meeting, a list of over 100 newly established primary schools for boys and girls in various districts of the province was also presented.

It was decided to make these schools functional as soon as possible under the PPP to provide quality and modern education to children in underprivileged areas.

## Bail of Cheema confirmed in 12 May 9 related cases

LAHORE (Online): Bail of PTI leader Musarrat Jamsheed Cheema has been confirmed in 12 cases related to May 9.

Musarrat Jamsheed Cheema appeared in Anti Terrorism Court (ATC) along with lawyers team of Insaf Lawyers Forum.

The court confirmed bail of Musarrat Jamsheed Cheema after lawyers arguments.

Talking to media men later Musarrat Jamsheed Cheema said "I refute it strongly what allegation has been leveled by a journalist. I swear that PTI founder has never asked me to contact General (Retd) Faiz Hameed.

What has been said about using name of Azam Swati as code word for making contact with Faiz Hameed or Atta Bandial is only presumption.

The day Imran Khan was arrested he did not ask me to contact Faiz Hameed at all. She indicated the journalist evolved presumption that PTI founder Imran Khan made me call and asked me to contact Azam Swati. In code word Azam Swati meant Justice (Retd) Bandial or Gen (Retd) Faiz Hameed.

On that day I would have contacted any one with whom Imran Khan asked me to contact because that was most trying time.

## Man gunned down by rivals

SARGODHA (APP): A man was gunned down by his rivals over old enmity here at Kacha Tari Khalil area on Monday.

Rescue 1122 sources told that Nusrullah Khan (45) r/o Tari Khalil had an old enmity over domestic issues with Hameed-ullah and Muhammad Nawaz.

On the day of incident, they killed him after opening fire at him.

The body was shifted to hospital whereas Musa Khalil police.

# International News

## Blinken, in Israel, says now is 'maybe the last' chance for a Gaza cease-fire deal

**Monitoring Desk**  
TEL AVIV: U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Monday the time is now to conclude a Gaza cease-fire agreement that would return hostages held by Hamas and bring relief to Palestinian suffering after 10 months of devastating fighting in Gaza.

Blinken's ninth urgent mission to the Middle East since the conflict began came days after mediators, including the United States, expressed renewed optimism a deal was near. But Hamas has expressed deep dissatisfaction with the latest proposal and Israel has said there were areas it was unwilling to compromise.

The trip, days ahead of new talks expected this week in Egypt, comes amid fears the conflict could widen into a deeper regional war following the killings of top militant commanders in Lebanon that Iran blamed on Israel.

"This is a decisive moment, probably the best, maybe the last, opportunity to get the hostages home, to get a cease-fire and to put everyone on a better path to enduring peace and security," Blinken said as he opened talks with Israeli President Isaac Herzog in Tel Aviv.

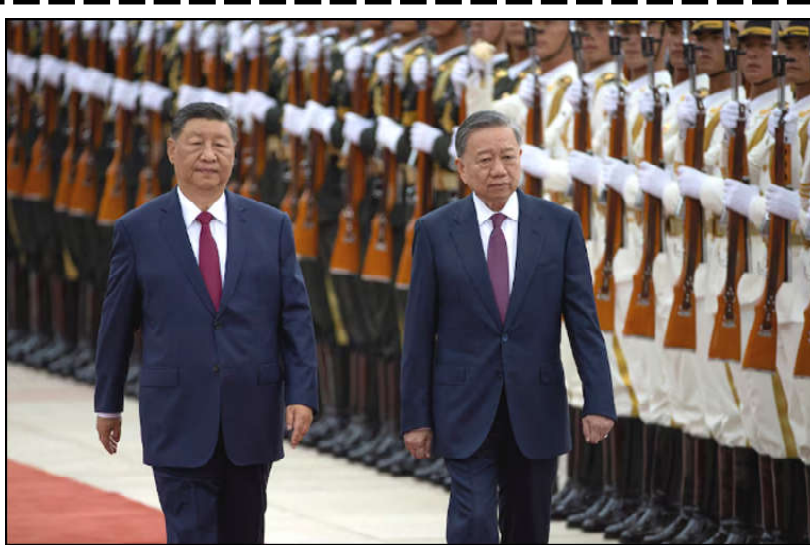
"It's also time to make sure that no one takes any steps that could derail this process," he said in a veiled reference to Iran. "And so we're working to make sure that there is no escalation, that there are no provocations, that there are no actions that in any way move us away from getting this deal over the line, or for that matter, escalating the conflict to other places and to greater intensity."

Herzog thanked Blinken for the Biden administration's support for Israel and lamented a spate of recent attacks against Israelis in the past 24 hours.

"This is the way we are living these days," Herzog said. "We are surrounded by terrorism from all four corners of the earth and we are fighting back as a resilient and strong nation."

Mediators are to meet again this week in Cairo to try to cement a cease-fire. Blinken will travel to Egypt on Tuesday after he wraps up his Israel stop in meetings with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant later Monday.

The war began Oct. 7 when Hamas-led militants broke into Israel, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting around 250.



Chinese President Xi Jinping walks next to Vietnam's President To Lam as they pass by the honour guard during a welcome ceremony at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China.

## China and Vietnam's top leaders meet in Beijing

**Monitoring Desk**  
BEIJING: China's President Xi Jinping held talks on Monday with Vietnam's new leader To Lam in Beijing on his first state visit since he took office, Chinese official media Xinhua said. The meeting signals the close ties between the two communist-run neighbours, which have well-developed economic and trade relations despite the occasional boundary clashes in the energy-rich South China Sea.

China, displaying exuberance over Lam's choosing China for his first official trip, said last week it "fully reflects the great importance he attaches to the development of ties between both parties and countries". Lam arrived in China's southern province Guangzhou on Sunday for a three-day visit that would include meetings with Chinese Premier Li Qiang and other Chinese top officials.

While in Guangzhou, he visited some Chinese locations where former President Ho Chi Minh conducted revolutionary activities. Last December, China and Vietnam signed more than a dozen agreements when Xi visited Vietnam.

The agreements, specifics of which were not announced, covered strengthening railway cooperation and development, investments in various fields and establishing communication to handle unexpected incidents in the South China Sea. In a lengthy joint declaration, both countries said they would work on cross-border railway connectivity, naming three rail projects that included one connecting through mountainous Lao Cai in the Vietnam's northwest to the port city Haiphong.

## Putin arrives in Azerbaijan for state visit

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin arrived in Azerbaijan's capital Baku on Sunday for a two-day state visit, Russian news agencies reported.

Russian television broadcast images of the Russian president's plane as it arrived in Baku in the evening.

His visit to the Caucasus country, a close partner of both Moscow and Turkey but also a major energy supplier to Western countries, comes against the backdrop of an unprecedented Ukrainian military offensive on Russian soil.

Putin is due to hold talks with his Azerbaijani counterpart Ilham Aliyev on bilateral relations and "international and regional problems", the Kremlin said.

The two leaders are dining Sunday evening at the Azerbaijani president's official residence, local official news agency Aser-tac said.

On Monday, Aliyev and Putin will sign joint documents and make statements to the press, said Russian agency Ria Novosti.

Putin will also lay a wreath on the tomb of Heydar Aliyev, father of the current leader, who was president from 1993 to 2003.

Earlier, the Kremlin said they would also discuss "the question of settling (the conflict) between Azerbaijan and Armenia".

Azerbaijan reconquered the mountainous enclave in September 2023 from the Armenian separatists who had held it for three decades.

## Kamala Harris labels Donald Trump as cowardly in campaign speech

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: U.S. Vice President and Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris has labeled her Republican opponent, Donald Trump, as "cowardly."

During a campaign speech in Pennsylvania, Harris criticised Trump, stating that the upcoming presidential election on November 5 would be a contest against a cowardly candidate whose political strategy revolved solely around undermining opponents.

Harris pointed out a troubling trend in recent years, where a leader's power and capability were judged by their ability to bring others down.

## Ukraine destroys second key bridge in Russia's Kursk region

**Monitoring Desk**  
KYIV: Ukraine said on Sunday it had struck a second key bridge in the Kursk region, seeking to disrupt Moscow's supply routes as Kyiv's unprecedented incursion on Russian soil stretched through its second week.

Russia meanwhile ramped up pressure in east Ukraine, claiming to capture another village just a few kilometres from the Ukrainian-held logistics hub of Pokrovsk.

"Minus one more bridge," Ukrainian Air Force Commander Mykola Oleschuk said on Telegram, publishing an aerial video of a blast tearing through a bridge near the Russian town of Zvanoye.

"The Air Force aviation continues to deprive the enemy of logistical capabilities with precision air strikes," he said.

## Yemen flood toll climbs to 60

**Monitoring Desk**  
DUBAI: Flooding caused by torrential rainfall in war-torn Yemen has led to at least 60 deaths since July, with 13 others still missing and a total of 268,000 people affected, the United Nations said Monday.

Yemen, already grappling with an almost decade-long war, suffers from severe floods on a near-annual basis that are triggered by torrential rainfall, while climate change is increasing the frequency and intensity of precipitation.

Since July, flash floods have caused 36 deaths in Hodeida province, nine in Ibb, eight in Marib, and seven in Taiz.

## Bangladesh leader Yunus reassures on Rohingya refugees, garment exports

**Monitoring Desk**  
DHAKA: Bangladesh will maintain support both for its immense Rohingya refugee population and its vital garment trade, Nobel laureate and new leader Muhammad Yunus said on Sunday in his first major policy address.

Yunus, 84, returned from Europe this month after a student-led revolution to take up the monumental task of steering democratic reforms in a country riven by institutional decay. His predecessor Sheikh Hasina, 76, had suddenly fled the country days earlier by helicopter after 15 years of iron-fisted rule. Setting out his priorities in front of diplomats and UN representatives, Yunus vowed continuity on two of the biggest policy challenges of his caretaker administration. "Our government will continue to support the million-plus Rohingya people sheltered in Bangladesh," Yunus said.

"We need the sustained efforts of the international community for Rohingya humanitarian operations.

## Russian forces capture town of Zalizne in Ukraine's east, defence ministry says

**Monitoring Desk**  
MOSCOW: Russia's Defence Ministry said on Monday that its forces had captured the town of Zalizne in eastern Ukraine's Donetsk region, as its offensive against the nearby city of Toretsk gains steam.

Zalizne, which Russia calls by its Soviet-era name of Artyomovo, adjoins Toretsk, a mining town and longtime bastion of Ukrainian forces operating in the Donbas region.

## Thousands of activists expected in Chicago for Democratic convention to call for Gaza cease-fire

**Monitoring Desk**  
CHICAGO: Thousands of activists are expected to converge on Chicago this week for the Democratic National Convention, hoping to call attention to abortion rights, economic injustice and the war in Gaza.

While Vice President Kamala Harris has energized crowds of supporters as she prepares to accept the Democratic nomination, progressive activists maintain their mission remains the same.

Activists say they learned lessons from last month's Republican National Convention in Milwaukee and are predicting bigger crowds and more robust demonstrations in Chicago, a city with deep social activism roots. Demonstrations are expected every day of the convention and while their agendas vary, many activists agree an immediate cease-fire in the Israel-Hamas war is the priority. Police lined the march route and there were no signs of major conflict. At one point, anti-abortion activists staged a small counter-protest.

Police did not immediately respond to an email asking if there had been arrests more than three hours into the march. Organizer Linda Loew said even though Democrats have pushed to safeguard reproductive rights at home, the issue is international. They marched in solidarity with people everywhere who struggle for the right to control what happens to their bodies, as well as to protest the money the U.S. spends to back wars that could be used for healthcare, she said.

"We believe that the billions of dollars that continue to flow to the state of Israel and the flow of weapons are having an inordinate and horrific impact, but in particular on women, children and the unborn," she said. "All of these things are tied together." The largest group, the Coalition to March on the DNC, has planned demonstrations on the first and last days of the convention.

## Political stability, continuous policies must to overcome economic challenges: Ahsan

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal has stressed upon the need of political stability and sustainable policy framework to overcome the prevailing challenges to the economy including the food security and climate change.

He stated this while addressing the 2nd National Conference on Food Security organized under the auspices of the National School of Public Policy (NSPP) here on Monday.

The Minister termed the food security, water scarcity and unplanned population growth as the biggest problems being faced by the country. He said that the rapid increase in population was a serious threat that hinders the progress and development of the country. He added that Pakistan became the major victim of climate change in the world and the heavy floods in 2022 damaged the national economy up to billions of dollars.

He said that Pakistan was blessed with multiple

resources and there was a dire need to utilize these resources amicably and effectively. Referring to the China Pakistan Economic Corridor introduced during PML-N previous tenure 2013-18, he deplored the neglecting of this game changer project which led to the shifting of Chinese investment to other global destinations. He was of the opinion that policies must need more than 10 years.

The Minister also urged the provincial governments to come forward and play their due role to eliminate poverty by adopting effective policies in consultation with the researchers.

Ahsan Iqbal said that through 5Es i.e., Export-Led Growth, Environment, Equity and Empowerment, Energy Efficiency and Affordability, the country could progress. He added that youth empowerment and the role of women in the national economy were vital for the progress of the country.

Ahsan Iqbal said that

"we have to adopt modern technology". He informed that under the special initiative by the Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif, Pakistan will be sending 1,000 agricultural scientists to China in the coming months, who will learn modern techniques aimed at increasing average yield in agriculture and livestock productivity. He assured the government's all-out support to implement the recommendations of this conference. The objective of the conference was Food for All: Available, Accessible, Affordable, Edible.

The Planning Minister said that incumbent government will soon unveiling 2024-2029 five years plan aimed at steering the country out of the economical crises. The two days national conference was also addressed by Dr Ejaz Muneer Rector of the NSPP, researchers and agri experts. The scholars presented their research papers and suggested possible solution to the issues of food security.



LAHORE: Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal addressing the conference on food security SPP (National School of Public Policy) during the opening ceremony.

## Bilawal highlights enduring relevance of Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai's teachings

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, on Monday, emphasized the enduring relevance of Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai's teachings.

He said that the great Sufi saint and poet's message of love, harmony, and universal brotherhood transcends time and continues to inspire the quest for a just and peaceful society.

In a statement released by the Media Cell Bilawal House on the occasion of the annual Urs of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, Chairman PPP highlighted that Bhittai's poetry not only captures the spiritual and

cultural essence of Sindh but also serves as a guiding light, steering society toward the values of tolerance, inclusivity, and compassion.

He noted that Bhittai's teachings stand as a timeless reminder of the need to resist oppression, champion social justice, and foster unity across all communities.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said, "On this revered occasion, I encourage everyone to delve into the teachings of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai and aspire to embody the principles of love, humility, and selflessness that he so profoundly articulated."

## AJK PM says: Govt committed to serve people indiscriminately

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister, Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq Monday said that the government was working with a missionary spirit to provide all possible reliefs to masses without any discrimination.

He stated this while talking to different delegations that called on him in his home town of Bhimber.

Anwar-ul-Haq said that financial assistance would be provided to the poor and needy under the Social Protection Program.

He said that the people would get economic benefits soon from different mega projects, the incumbent government had launched during the past couple of years.

## Senate body takes notice of alleged malpractices in housing scheme

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate Functional Committee on Problems of Less Developed Areas has ordered an inquiry into widespread power theft across Pakistan and took notice of alleged malpractice by a NESPAK consultant involved in the Park Road Housing Scheme under the Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA).

The meeting, chaired by Senator Agha Shahzaib Durrani, scrutinized both the ongoing electricity theft concerns and the alleged corruption within the housing project. During the session, the Committee reviewed the implementation of recommendations from previous meetings, particularly focusing on actions taken against corrupt officials of the Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) over the past five years.

Senator Shahzaib Durrani highlighted discrepancies in QESCO's disciplinary actions, criticizing

the seemingly inconsistent grounds for the termination of certain individuals.

He noted that while some individuals were dismissed for not showing enough interest in anti-theft initiatives, others received only minor penalties for more serious misconduct and corruption. Despite the removal of these allegedly corrupt officials, power theft in QESCO's jurisdiction persists. Consequently, the Chairman directed the Power Division to conduct a thorough examination of QESCO's disciplinary actions and submit a detailed report within 30 days.

The Committee also received updates on ongoing projects in less-developed areas. Managing Director NESPAK, Muhammad Zargham Eshaq Khan, briefed the Committee on NESPAK's supervision of the construction of 83 roads across 11 districts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including seven districts in the former FATA region.



KARACHI: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addresses during inauguration ceremony of new facilities, held at Jinnah Hospital in Karachi.

## MPA Paras Dero urges for action against responsible of Rohri Canal breach

HYDERABAD (APP): Member Sindh Assembly Paras Dero has said that efforts were underway to assist the people of the area, with a focus on shifting those affected by the breach in the Rohri Canal to their homes as quickly as possible. He expressed these views during a visit to various villages including Achar Saand, Saand Mori, and Hashim Sand along with Deputy Commissioner Sanghar Dr Imran ul Hassan Khuwaja.

Dero said that the breach in the Rohri Canal had caused damage to the local population, impacting

crops and livestock. He criticized the breach as a result of negligence by the concerned department and called for accountability for the responsible officials and staff.

He urged party leaders to assist the flood victims in Tando Adam and to establish a permanent system to address such disasters.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner Dr. Imran ul Hassan Khuwaja informed the media that efforts were in place to address the concerns of the flood-affected people and expedite their recovery.

## Advisor to CM for immediate steps to protect livestock

KARACHI (APP): Advisor to Sindh Chief Minister on Livestock and Fisheries, Syed Najmi Alam on Monday, directed to take immediate measures in rain affected areas for protection of livestock from disease and mosquitoes.

The advisor to CM, while presiding over a meeting, instructed to start vaccination programs to protect animals from various diseases on government as well as private farms immediately and fumigation spray should also be arranged to prevent diseases and eliminate mosquitoes.

Syed Najmi Alam also directed officers concerned to immediately contact the Divisional Commissioners for getting complete data of the relief camps and move their staff there to take practical measures for protecting the displaced families as well as their animals from various diseases.

The Advisor stressing on immediate results sought performance report on daily basis from the Deputy Directors of all the districts.



KARACHI: SSP District Keamari, Captain (Retd) Faizan Ali along with others addresses to media persons during press conference regarding ongoing operation against criminals, held in Karachi.

## Larkana Mayor praises admin for effectively tackling rain emergency

LARKANA (APP): Larkana Municipal Corporation (LMC) Mayor Advocate Anwar Ali Lohar on Monday lauded the preemptive measures and coordinated efforts of the administration to tackle rain emergency and draining the rainwater in Larkana.

He said this while talking media persons at the Larkana Press Club here on Monday. Anwar stated that contrary to concerns about sudden monsoon rains, forecasts had predicted the weather conditions 2 to 3 months in advance. Consequently, all 33 disposal machines had been activated in preparation.

Mayor highlighted

the collaboration between elected representatives, Sindh Solid Waste Management, and Rescue 1122 in addressing the situation. "Our team has been working around the clock to drain the rainwater," he said.

With a city of population 800,000, the Deputy Mayor, town committees, and UC chairman have been actively involved, successfully removing 80% of the accumulated rainwater over the past three days.

In contrast to previous years, where drainage could take months, recent improvements in infrastructure have accelerated the process.



KARACHI: Secretary General JUI Sindh Maulana Rashid Mahmood Soomro meeting with Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori.

## District Central administration demolishes illegal hydrant

KARACHI (APP): The administrations of districts Central and Korangi Monday during an anti-encroachment drive arrested 20 persons and demolished an illegal hydrant nearby the Lyari River.

The illegal hydrant was consisting of four generators, said a statement issued here. The action was taken as a part of the ongoing campaign against encroachments by the city administration.

Deputy Commissioner Central Fawad Ghaffar Soomro submitted a report to the Commissioner Karachi. According

to the Deputy Commissioner, he received information that an illegal hydrant was being constructed on the Lyari River bed. This is a large hydrant with four big generators that operate 24/7, extract underground water, and supply it to industrial areas.

The report states that the owner claimed to have paid the water board bill. However, the report states that construction on the river bed is illegal and equivalent to encroachment on government land. Therefore, this action was taken with the cooperation of police and relevant agencies.

## DC visits protective embankments of Indus River

HYDERABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner Shaheed Benazirabad, Shehryar Gul Memon, on Monday visited the protective embankments along the Indus River in Sakrand and Qazi Ahmad. He also visited the villages of Hamza Jatoi, Abdul Karim Bhutto, and Pir Syed Nazir Muhammad in the Kacha area of the river.

The DC reviewed the water situation in the Indus River and the concerned

villages. During the visit, he said on the appeal of the residents that medical camps will be established in villages and mosquito sprays will be made.

The DC advised that as the water level in the river Indus is increasing, the villagers should move to the paddy fields.

Residents of the area said that they are currently safe in their homes and will contact the district administration if necessary.



LARKANA: Larkana Mayor, Anwar Ali Lohar addresses to media persons during press conference, at Larkana press club.

## Tree Plantation is virtuous act, national necessity: Shafqat Shah

SUKKUR (APP): Prominent Political and Social figure, Advocate Sayed Shafqat Ali Shah has instructed his workers and subordinates to plant a tree as part of the "Plant a Tree for Motherland - Green Pakistan" campaign, as tree plantation is a virtuous act and a national necessity.

Speaking to workers and civil society members through video conference here on Monday, Shafqat said that district administrations, government and private institutions and the public, are planting millions of trees, marking a new chapter in history. He said tree plantation is extremely important in Pakistan for several reasons.

He directed his staff

and workers to make all out effort for the government's climate change mitigation efforts. He encouraged them to engage school children, non-governmental organizations, private institutions, and schools, providing guidance and support to foster environment-friendly citizens. This initiative will raise awareness about the importance of trees among children, inspiring their parents to plant trees as well.

Advocate Shah further said that Trees help combat climate change, prevent soil erosion, and reduce air pollution. Trees provide habitats for various species, helping to protect Pakistan's rich biodiversity, he added.

## Arif Alvi says he is not scared of Article 6

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former president Dr Arif Alvi said on Monday the government should go ahead with its plan to impose Article 6 on him as he was not scared.

"Let the government impose Article 6 on me; I am here and will go nowhere," the former president said in an interaction with journalist in the Islamabad High Court.

Answering a question, he said: "They (government) should go ahead and fulfill their wish of imposing Article 6 on me."

The government, he said, instituted hundreds of cases and it could add to these. This would afford him an opportunity (to plead his case), he added.

He said he was born and bred in Pakistan, and would stay in the country. "Article 6 is a matter of life and death and I am here to face it," the former president reiterated.

Speaking about the audio leaks, he said he had always been against the audio leaks and no one had the right to intrude into his privacy.

## AC inspects SMC progress of rain water drainage

SUKKUR (APP): Assistant Commissioner (AC) Sukkur city, Sobia Falak Rao on Monday conducted a thorough inspection of various pumping stations in the city to oversee the progress of rainwater drainage.

On the occasion, she emphasized that the district administration is fully vigilant and proactive in ensuring swift drainage of rainwater to minimize difficulties faced by the public.

She said that the drainage work in Sukkur has been completed by 98% by the dynamic efforts of Sukkur Municipal Corporation (SMC).

According to her, the highest rainfall was recorded in Sukkur city with 281mm while other areas recorded less rainfall than Sukkur city.

## Section 144 imposed around filter plants and pumping stations

HYDERABAD (APP): In an official notification issued by the Divisional Commissioner Hyderabad, Section 144 has been enforced in the district, prohibiting any rallies, gatherings or protests near filter plants and pumping stations for 30 days in order not to obstruct the functioning of filter plants and pumping stations.

According to a hand-out issued on Monday, the Hyderabad Development Authority (HAD) employees' union held protests near filter plants on August 18, 2024, which disrupted the drainage of rainwater and to ensure the continuous supply of clean drinking water to the public, the Managing Director of the Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) requested the enforcement of Section 144 around filter plants and WASA offices.

## Slow internet threat to IT industry, online business, also hurting masses: Zahid

KARACHI (INP): Chairman of the FPCCI Advisory Board and National Business Group Pakistan, the President of Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum and All Karachi Industrial Alliance and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain has termed the slow internet a serious threat to the IT industry and online businesses besides hurting the masses.

The IT industry's and online businesses' future was at stake due to the government's efforts to control the internet, according to the general perception.

In a statement issued here on Monday, Mian Zahid Hussain said that many businesses were affected and freelancers were losing their source of income.

He said that controlling the digital terrorist group's misuse of social

## 281st Urs of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai to begin today

HYDERABAD (APP): The 281st three-day Urs of the great Sindh poet and Sufi saint Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai will commence on Tuesday, August 20 (the 14th of Safar) in Bhit Shah.

The Culture Department, Auqaf, district administration, police and local government departments have completed all arrangements.

According to the district information department Matiari, the culture department, under the supervision of provincial minister Syed Zulfiqar Ali Shah has organized various events for the Urs, while the beautification and decoration work of the shrine under the provincial secretary and Chief Administrator

Auqaf Farukh Shahzad Qureshi has also been completed. Over 1600 police personnel including two SSPs, 16 DSPs, 12 SHOs, 26 inspectors will perform security duty for three days event under the supervision of SSP Matiari Syed Asghar Ali Shah. A central control room has been set up with 52 CCTV cameras, and six walk-through gates have been installed at the shrine. Moreover, Rangers personnel will also be on duty alongside the police.

On the first day, the provincial minister Culture Syed Zulfiqar Ali Shah will inaugurate a Cultural Village in Bhit Shah, featuring over 40 stalls showcasing handicrafts, while more than 45 artists will perform in Shah jo Bagh (Shah's Garden).



ISLAMABAD: General Secretary Jamiat Ulema-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri addressing during Aalimi Majlis Tahaffuz Khatme-Nubuwwat protest in favor of their demands in front of Parliament house, in the Federal Capital.

## Slow internet threat to IT industry, online business, also hurting masses: Zahid

media was very important as the gang's activities were creating uncertainty and ruining the economy. However, the policy of playing with millions of people's businesses to control the gang was wrong, he remarked.

The business leader said that companies doing business online were fleeing the country in large numbers, and Pakistan's reputation was also at stake.

He said that many other countries have also controlled the internet, but in Pakistan, those who do so were incompetent and sink the economy.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that after the shocking revelation that Pakistanis invested billion dollars in Dubai's property market, the Dubai Chamber of Commerce has said that 3968 Pakistani companies have registered in Dubai in the last six months.

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HYDERABAD: A view of flooded water accumulated at Sehrish Nagar following increasing water level downstream Kotri.

## Hindus celebrate 'Raksha Bandhan' in Sukkur

SUKKUR (APP): The Hindu community of Sukkur observed their brotherhood festival commonly known as 'Raksha Bandhan' at the main Sadhu Bela Temple here on Monday.

Wearing colorful clothes, the participants observed their religious festival by tying the knot of protection and distributed sweets.

They said that they used to observe the festival every year in this month, adding that Hindus celebrated the festival on the sighting full moon in the lunar calendar's Savan or Sravna month, during which Hindu women used to tie a thread of Rakhi around their brothers' wrist and pray for their safety.

## Rangers, Police arrest two notorious criminals

KARACHI (APP): In a joint intelligence based operation conducted by Pakistan Rangers Sindh and the City District Police in Lyari area, two suspects involved in robbery and street crimes were arrested.

According to a Rangers spokesperson on Monday, the operation was carried out based on intelligence reports. The suspects, identified as Syed Jawad Shah and Sardar Muhammad, were apprehended. Law enforcement agencies recovered arms and ammunition from their possession.

During the investigation, Syed Jawad Shah confessed to his involvement in multiple robbery incidents across the city. Notably, he, along with his accomplices, Waheed and Waqas, robbed a petrol pump in Nazimabad in January 2022, an event captured in a viral social media video.

Meanwhile, Sardar Muhammad was reportedly part of a gang involved in armed robberies and assaults on citizens.

## Man arrested for killing bike rider after altercation in Sachal

KARACHI (APP): A man accused of fatally shooting a bike rider following a heated argument at a petrol station in the Sachal area was arrested.

According to police on Monday, the incident occurred on July 24th when the accused, identified as Tufail, opened fire after a bitter dispute at the petrol pump. Tufail, who is reported to be a drug addict, opened indiscriminate firing due to which the bike rider was killed.

The CCTV footage of the incident also went viral on social media. Legal action is being taken against the arrested.