

# Independent

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Karachi

Ph: 0300-3898091 Vol: 06. No. 184 Safar 15, 1445 AH Wednesday August 21, 2024 Pages 04 Price Rs. 12.00

## Agreements with friendly nations to be implemented soon: Governor Sindh

**Independent Report**  
KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori has announced that agreements with friendly nations will soon be implemented, expressing confidence that Pakistan will also exit the IMF program shortly. He reassured the nation, stating, "There is no need to panic; better days are coming, and Pakistan will soon overcome its economic crisis."

Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori shared these views while speaking to the media after his visit to Indus Motor Company. During the visit, he inspected the company's plants, manufacturing processes, and various departments. He emphasized the urgent need for a 20-year industrial policy, noting that such a plan is essential for sustained industrial growth.

In response to a question, Governor Sindh

Kamran Khan Tessori suggested that transitioning to solar and Thar coal energy could significantly alleviate the country's electricity problems. He mentioned that he has written to the federal government and the Chief Minister of Sindh, requesting a special electricity package for the public.

He praised the dedication and hard work of Indus Motor Company, highlighting their provision of technical assistance to 35 international companies as a commendable achievement. He also lauded the company's initiatives in education, health, and road safety, acknowledging the significant contributions of all those involved in the industrial sector.

Upon his arrival at Indus Motor Company, Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori received a warm welcome from the company's Chief Executive Officer and staff.



KARACHI: Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari chairs a video link meeting of the irrigation departments of Sindh and Balochistan, held at Bilawal House in Karachi.

## Sharjeel Inam takes a swipe at Punjab gov't power subsidy plan

KARACHI (INP): PPP leader and Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon expressing disappointment over the statements of Punjab chief minister, said that PML-N led government in Center was increasing power prices while PML-N government in Punjab was giving subsidy in Punjab for two months.

Addressing a press conference in Karachi, Sharjeel Memon asked the Punjab government to tell the nation what next after two months. PPP leader said country was getting cheap electricity from Tharparkar coal, from where the power is going to national grid.

He said, "The federal government increased electricity rates all over Pakistan and you made electric-

ity cheap only in Punjab". He said that the younger brother (PM Shehbaz Sharif) increased the electricity bills across the country and the elder brother (Nawaz Sharif) announced relief for 2 months only in Punjab. He questioned what will happen in the third month?

Sharjeel Memon said visionary leadership gives long-term planning as a leader has vision, mind, intellect and understanding. He said Shaheed Benazir Bhutto had a vision and President Zardari was working on her vision.

He said Sindh government was working on such a project that the whole of Pakistan will get cheap electricity. He said the government can export Thar coal for more than two hundred years.



KARACHI: Sindh Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit, Excise Taxation and Narcotics Control, Sharjeel Inam Memon addresses to media persons during press conference, held in Karachi.

## Ayaz Sadiq meets President of Belarus, reaffirms strengthening of ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Tuesday said that both Pakistan and Belarus enjoy cordial ties based upon shared interests. He expressed resolve to further strengthen ties between both nations.

The Speaker said, "Pakistan has a vast potential of investment in the energy, trade and agriculture sectors".

He expressed these views during his meeting with the President of the Republic of Belarus Mr. Alexander Lukashenko in Minsk, Belarus, said a press release was issued here.

Pakistan-Belarus bilateral relations are characterized by mutual respect and trust. He underscored that Pakistan-Belarus ties would further expand by collaboration in economic, industrial, and agriculture sectors.

Furthermore, he emphasized to deepen parliamentary contacts between both nations.

The President of Belarus Mr. Alexander Lukashenko stated that Belarus attaches great importance to its close ties with Pakistan.

He also expressed the desire to further expand bilateral cooperation with Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of the Federal Cabinet.

## Instead of politicking, provinces should copy Punjab's electricity bills' relief: PM

**Federal Cabinet greenlights skills development initiative for enhanced training**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said that instead of politicking, the provincial governments should follow the Punjab government's course of providing relief to electricity consumers, scraping a chunk from the trillions of rupees transferred to them under the National Finance Commission.

The prime minister, chairing the meeting of the federal cabinet, said that the Punjab government had spared Rs 45 billion out of its own development budget to provide Rs14 per unit relief to the electricity consumers utilising 200 to 500 units for a two-month period.

"This is the right of the people. The federal government has zero contribution to this relief package... Other provinces should also do the same. If the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government

wants to give such relief to the people, we will be happy. But politicking should be avoided and facts should not be distorted," the prime minister commented.

Rubbing the criticism by a KP government representative alleging any discrimination by the federal government, he explained that the federal government had nothing to do with that package.

He told the cabinet members that almost 60% of the NFC funds went to the provinces. The federal government had to face immense challenges in the form of the payment of loans and interests on foreign-funded projects that benefited the whole of the country. He told the meeting that the federal government had also allocated Rs50 billion to provide a three-month relief to domestic consumers using up to 200 units of electricity which constituted

around 86% of the total domestic consumers.

Besides, he said, in partnership with the Balochistan government, 28,000 tube wells would be solarised in the province costing Rs 70 billion, out of which Rs55 billion would be borne by the federal government. This would benefit 28,000 farmers besides addressing the issue of power theft, he added.

The prime minister said that the federal government, in consultation with the provincial governments, was working on long-term measures to stabilise the economy and boost the country's trade and exports.

He said the federal government would take all such measures after taking the IMF on board, unlike the PTI's "irrational" step of violating the agreement which had taken the country to the brink of default.

Highlighting the outcome of the government's economic policies, Prime Minister Shehbaz told the meeting that inflation was reduced from 38% to 11.5% but more efforts were yet needed to improve the situation further. He also emphasised the efforts to meet the revenue target of Rs13.5 trillion and overcome the losses of the power sector.

The prime minister drew the cabinet's attention to the deaths and destruction caused by the heavy rains and consequent flash floods in parts of the country and lauded the efforts of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), in collaboration with the provinces and PDMAs. The cabinet also offered Fateha for the people who lost their lives in the rain and flood-related incidents and also the soldiers who sacrificed their lives in different incidents of terrorism.

## Bilawal felicitates scientists, engineers on successful test of Shaheen-II missile

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Tuesday felicitated the scientists and engineers on the successful test of the Shaheen-II ballistic missile.

According to a press release issued here by the party secretariat, Bilawal Bhutto said "Our missile technology reflects the expertise and dedication of our scientists and engineers."

Chief PPP said that the successful test of Shaheen-II is a message of fear for Pakistan's enemies.

"It is a matter of pride that this missile technology is a gift to the homeland from my mother," Bilawal Bhutto added.

## Governor KP attends 281st Urs of Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai

**Independent Report**  
BHIT SHAH: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi attended the 281st Urs of Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai in Hyderabad/Bhit Shah. He paid homage to the Sufi saint and emphasized the importance of promoting love, brotherhood, and peace.

Governor Kundi said that Sindh is the land that has given the message of peace to the world. He added that Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai is a Sufi saint who has spread the message of love and brotherhood globally.

He emphasized that such gatherings promote peace and harmony in the country. The Governor laid floral wreaths at the shrine, offered special prayers for national security and development, and listened to the traditional raag at the shrine.

Speaking to media representatives, Governor Kundi mentioned that he had also organized a conference at the Governor's House in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on August 13 to discuss the personalities of Khushal Khan Khattak and Allama Iqbal.



BHIT SHAH: Governor Sindh, Kamran Tessori laying floral wreath on the grave of Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai during 281st Annual Urs of Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai festival held in Bhit Shah.

## Three BLA terrorists involved in killing of DC Panjgur killed in Mastung IBO

**President, PM laud security forces for eliminating killers**

RAWALPINDI (APP): The security forces on Tuesday killed three Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) terrorists and killed as many during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) conducted on the night of August 18th and 19th in Mastung District.

During conduct of the operation, after an intense fire exchange, the three BLA terrorists were killed while three of them got injured, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said. These terrorists were involved in numerous terrorist activities in the area and were also responsible for shahadat (martyrdom) of Deputy Commissioner of Panjgur, Zakir Ali, on August 12th.

"Today's operation has avenged the heinous act and has brought the perpetrators to justice. Security forces of Pakistan in step with the Nation, remain determined to thwart attempts at sabotaging peace,

stability and progress of Balochistan," the ISPR said.

Meanwhile President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday paid tribute to the security forces for carrying out a successful intelligence-based operation in Mastung to eliminate the killers of Deputy Commissioner of Panjgur Zakir Ali.

The president appreciated the professional expertise of the Pakistan Army for carrying out an effective anti-terror operation. The actions against terrorism will continue till the complete elimination of the scourge, he remarked.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday lauded the security forces for eliminating the terrorists involved in the martyrdom of Deputy Commissioner of Panjgur Zakir Ali.

"The elements involved in spreading terrorism in the country should learn a lesson from the fate of the killers of Panjgur DC.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Privatization, Board of Investment and Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan while speaking at the meeting of the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Communications.

## CM Murad reacts to Punjab gov't 'bizarre' power relief package

KARACHI (INP): Sindh Chief Minister (CM) Syed Murad Ali Shah reacted to the Punjab government's decision to reduce electricity tariff for two months, terming it a 'bizarre' announcement.

Addressing a ceremony in Karachi, CM Murad Ali Shah said that such 'strange' announcements put them in a quandary. "We (Sindh government) find it difficult how to respond to these foolish statements. But I don't want to go into politics" he added.

The chief minister wondered how people find time to appear on TV.

"My party chairman and Sindh information minister often get unhappy with me as I don't appear on television to project the works being done in the province," CM Murad Ali Shah added.

The chief minister asked if speaks on TV all the time, when would he get the time to work.

Earlier, Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab also responded to the Punjab government's decision and said that there is a need for long-term relief measures for the people.

"When we (PPP's Sindh government) think of relief, we also think of many options. What will happen after two months of relief to the people of Punjab?" he asked.

Barrister Murtaza Wahab also criticised the Punjab government's approach, saying that rulers should make long-term decisions, not 'short-term'.

On Friday, former Prime Minister and PML-N supreme Nawaz Sharif has announced a major relief for electricity consumers in Punjab.



LARKANA: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah being briefed by Secretary Irrigation Department of Sindh during his visits to Moria Loop Bund in Larkana.

## Pakistan, Netherlands strengthen ties with focus on human trafficking, cricket cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi welcomed the Ambassador of the Netherlands, Henny de Vries, on Tuesday at the Ministry of Interior to discuss issues of mutual interest.

The meeting focused on enhancing bilateral cooperation across various sectors, with a special emphasis on combating human trafficking and strengthening cricket ties between the two nations.

Naqvi emphasized Pakistan's commitment to deepening relations with the Netherlands, particularly in areas such as human trafficking prevention, where he highlighted the importance of collective international action.

"Human smugglers are a powerful mafia, and no country can tackle them alone," Naqvi remarked. The discussion also covered the upcoming visit of an Italian team to Pakistan, aimed at furthering these collaborative efforts.

Additionally, both sides agreed on the need to

bolster support for Afghan refugees, with Pakistan reiterating its long-standing commitment to hosting displaced populations.

The conversation also extended to the realm of sports, where plans to promote cricket between the two countries were discussed.

Ambassador de Vries congratulated Minister Naqvi on his nomination for the presidency of the Asian Cricket Council and underscored the importance of sports diplomacy. He expressed hope that closer cricket ties would provide the Netherlands team with valuable learning opportunities from Pakistan's experience.

The meeting concluded on a positive note, with both sides agreeing to further enhance cooperation in various fields, reinforcing the strong and growing relationship between Pakistan and the Netherlands. Federal Interior Secretary Khuram Ali Agha and Additional Home Secretary Rifat Mukhtar Raja were also present at the meeting.



RAWALPINDI: Pakistan conducted successful training launch of surface to surface ballistic missile Shaheen-II.

## Pakistan conducts successful training launch of surface to surface ballistic missile Shaheen-II

RAWALPINDI (APP): Pakistan on Tuesday conducted successful training launch of surface-to-surface ballistic missile Shaheen-II.

The training launch was aimed at training of troops, validating various technical parameters and performance evaluation of different sub-systems incorporated for improved accuracy and enhanced survivability, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

"Today's training launch was witnessed by senior officers from Strategic Plans Division, Army Strategic Forces Command, scientists and engineers of strategic organizations," it said.

Director General Strategic Plans Division appreciated the technical prowess, dedication and commitment of scientists who contributed towards this landmark achievement.

President, Prime Minister of Pakistan, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and Services Chiefs congratulated the scientists and engineers on this achievement.



# Daily Voice of Masses Independent

## Digital doublespeak

The state minister for IT continues to waffle. On Sunday, Shaza Fatima Khawaja was back on TV screens, categorically denying her government's responsibility for the anaemic internet speeds being experienced by millions of users across the country.

The frequent, unannounced degradations in internet connectivity, widely suspected to be a consequence of the opaque firewall technology being secretly implemented by the state, was, in fact, due to more people using VPNs to access the internet, the minister claimed.

"I can say under oath that the government neither shut down nor slowed down the internet," Ms Khawaja insisted. Claiming that the issue has now been resolved, the minister then said a meeting had been set up with the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority this week to "ensure that users in the country do not face similar problems again". But if the issue was simply more people using VPNs, why was there a need to get the PTA involved?

It is precisely because of this opacity around the new system that is being rolled out that the masses have remained deeply suspicious of the government's words and actions. Despite the significant disruptions that have already been caused, there is still very little that is known about what exactly the authorities are hoping to achieve, what the timeline for its rollout will be, and what ordinary users can expect once the new 'web management' system has been implemented in full.

Consider X, which has remained inaccessible in Pakistan for the better part of this year despite no good reason being provided by the authorities. In fact, the government itself does not seem to believe in the ban on X, as everyone from the prime minister to state ministries has apparently been using VPNs to continue to access and post on the platform. When the state itself has double standards about these restrictions, how does it expect the people to respect them?

This is the main reason why VPNs have suddenly become so mainstream. Once the purview of those attempting to bypass censorship or access morally repugnant services, they are now being adopted by ordinary users as well. Now, even those who simply want to share a multimedia message on WhatsApp or would like to find out what the world is talking about on popular social media platforms must use a VPN to tunnel through to the global internet. Therefore, while the government may blame VPNs for slowing down the internet, it should acknowledge that its own policies have pushed people down this path. The people deserve more than clueless representatives gaslighting them for suffering poor internet connectivity. At the very least, there needs to be much greater transparency about what is being done to the internet, especially since it is being done without the public's input.

## Street protests

Dr Niaz Murtaza

The amazing ease with which street protests in Bangladesh and earlier Sri Lanka toppled hated regimes has left many Pakistanis envious as to why we can't do the same. But we were perhaps the first regional state to do so twice — angry protests in 1969, oddly most intense in the very cities that gained most from his elitist progress, toppled Ayub Khan's regime and in 1977 Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's. Protests weakened Ziaul Haq and Pervez Musharraf to cause their fall later.

The Carnegie Global Protest Tracker lists over 700 street protests in 147 states since 2017. Street protests now rival armed struggles as the main way of opposing and toppling regimes. These global and our own events raise the issue of what street protests achieve. Nearly two-thirds of the 700-plus protests led to no policy or regime change; about half lasted a week or less and attracted less than 10,000 people. Those that led to some policy changes were usually spearheaded by organised entities with a clear agenda. Spontaneous protests led by unorganised groups fizzle out, without lasting change.

Less than 10 toppled regimes — and the media labels them as revolution. But the iconic revolutions in Russia, France and China had three outcomes: people's power (armed or street) toppled long-ruling, autocratic regimes; more crucially there was a change in the political or economic ideological system from an elitist to a pro-masses one, for example, from capitalism to communism or monarchy to one-party rule/ democracy; the old order of the army underpinning autocracy

too collapsed. However, even those street protests that topple regimes usually don't lead to the other two outcomes. Iran's revolution didn't lead to a pro-masses system. Some states, such as those that witnessed the Arab Spring, fell into chaos (Libya and Yemen) while Egypt soon reverted to autocracy. Thus, street protests can at best topple autocrats but don't ensure good governance. That only emerges if those leading the protests can convert themselves into sustainable social or political movements with strong egalitarian agendas and management capacities. Revolutions or protests may act as the sledgehammer that breaks the mighty rock of autocracy. But to craft the rock pieces into refined good governance structures, societies need the chisels of social movements.

This will also be the challenge for students in Bangladesh, which had sustained economic stability and growth but not equity under Hasina Wajed. Do they have a clear agenda to do better than her? It is instructive to note that they initially started with the single-point agenda of job quotas, which Hasina had scrapped but the courts reinstated. So, in starting to protest, they oddly had little focus on her autocratic actions, including rigging in polls and a crackdown on the media and opposition. Gradually, they expanded their agenda but their future vision is still unclear.

So, while Hasina met her rightful end, the country faces future risks. The Awami League was the centre-left grassroots party, which became autocratic over time while Khaleda Zia's party is a right-wing entity sans a grassroots presence and was cre-

ated by an army general. With the Awami League in disarray, more right-wing politics could surge, unless the students quickly provide a liberal alternative, which is a tough ask.

Why do street protests no longer emerge to topple our inept regimes even though they are worse than the Bangladeshi and Sri Lankan ones? There are many reasons. The earlier toppling of multiple autocrats via protests didn't deliver able rule. So, there is fatigue and dejection. Also, the state crushes prog-r-essive social movements and encourages reactionary ideas and groups that divert focus from egalitarian ideas. Finally, there is the veiled and evo-ling nature of our autocracy which doesn't let anger build against one regime or face. Our civilians last four to five years; even the real establishment autocrats retire after three to six years at the top. This allows them to pin blame on past villains. So, the case against retired Lt-Gen Faiz Hameed is being depicted as a one-off, while the reality is that he had the backing of top individuals.

Such autocracy is the root cause of our key problems. But one-off street protests will not help demolish such shadowy, shifting autocracy. We need strong and sustained social movements that use protests as just one tool. The rise of the Baloch Yakjehti Committee under the brave lead of Mahrang Baloch is progress in this regard as it has emerged from and addresses the survival issues of most marginalised groups. Similar grassroots groups in other regions coordinating with each other are our best hope for egalitarian rule. -- Courtesy Dawn

## The Taliban concern

Touqir Hussain

Regardless of who has ruled Afghanistan, it has always been a problem neighbour. The Pakistani establishment may have thought the problem would be solved with the Afghan Taliban's return to power but it has worsened. Afghanistan has become both a critical foreign policy challenge and a serious domestic policy concern.

There are many issues between the Taliban's Afghanistan and Pakistan but the main point of contention is Kabul's harbouring of the TTP, whose acts of terrorism against Chinese nationals and projects are hurting Pakistan's most important relationship. Their alleged nexus with Baloch insurgents and extremist groups in former Fata threaten Pakistan's internal security and its already fragile development prospects. Diplomacy, economic pressure, military action, and threats of isolation have not moved the Taliban to act against the TTP. Their advice to Pakistan to talk to the Taliban who, in time, TTP is an attempt to deflect pressure from themselves. They know from their own experience that such groups do not believe in talks, unless held on their terms.

There are complex reasons for their lack of action. There are ideological links between the Taliban and TTP as well as historical reasons. Even during the Raj, Afghanistan offered protection to any Pakhtun fleeing Pakhtun-majority areas in the subcontinent.

The Taliban lack both the political will and capacity to act against the TTP. They are worried about domestic threats and fissures within their own ranks. The TTP reportedly enjoy strategic affinity with the Islamic State-Khorasan and could merge with it if threatened

by the Taliban, taking disaffected Taliban members with them.

The Taliban may even benefit from the TTP's presence in Afghanistan. They treat them and other militant groups operating from Afghan soil as allies to meet potential external aggression and obtain concessions — recognition, commercial ties, etc — from regional countries. The group is the Taliban's leverage against Pakistan and Washington.

Did our security establishment miss something? They failed to see how much Afghanistan, and indeed Pakistan, changed — following the overthrow of the monarchy in 1973 — because of the Soviet invasion, America's two Afghan wars and the war on terrorism, and Pakistan's strategic ambitions. And how Pakistan's jihadist currents mingled with the militant groups and transnational terrorist networks produced by these wars and the global Islamist revival. All this led to the creation of the Taliban who, in time, became the flagship of the extremist network in the region.

As an insurgent group, the Taliban's dependency on Pakistan gave Islamabad false hope that they would remain compliant even as a government. It may have worked the first time but Pakistan incurred reputational and diplomatic damage for questionable benefits. Much has changed since.

The Afghanistan of 2021 was not the same as when the Taliban first came to power. The Taliban have greater internal challenges now and more international acceptance, and thus different priorities. Nor is it the same Pakistan, which is struggling on multiple fronts. This has necessitated a different approach by the Taliban

towards Pakistan and the region. Thanks to their shrewd diplomacy, countries, including India and Iran who opposed the Taliban the first time, have been anxious to connect with them this time. The Taliban have been successfully cultivating a network of allies including China.

The Taliban won't act against the TTP. Pakistan itself will have to do it. Kinetic measures are necessary but not enough. They should be an adjunct to political action that must be taken to address the grievance of disaffected groups among the Pakhtun and Baloch communities. The TTP needs to be politically isolated from these communities, which can only be done by addressing their grievances via increased socioeconomic opportunities, reduced political marginalisation, and better governance.

Pakistan's body politic has been hollowed out by decades of authoritarian rule and deformed democracy, leading to a weakened institutional architecture. With institutions crumbling, the rule of law and social stability have been degraded and are preyed upon by extremist forces. But the state is lacking in political will, moral authority, and effective instruments of law and order, resulting in the strengthening of the extremist infrastructure.

A weakened Pakistan will enhance the Taliban's leverage by exposing the country to instability and extremist influences. Pakistan's struggle with the Taliban's Afghanistan must begin at home. Pakistan has been fighting terrorism but not the groups or extremist societal attitudes that inspire it. That must change. -- Courtesy Dawn

# Commerce News

## IFAD strengthens partnership with Pakistan for food security

ISLAMABAD (APP): The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is reaffirming its commitment to collaborate with Pakistan in reducing rural poverty and improving food security. This comes as the country faces ongoing challenges from climate change, impacting its agricultural sector, said in IFAD press release issued here. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is determined to continue its partnership with Pakistan, focusing on reducing rural poverty and enhancing food security. Fernanda Thomaz Da Rocha, IFAD's new country director for Pakistan, highlighted this commitment during her recent introduction to Pakistan's Foreign Secretary, Ambassador Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi. Da Rocha emphasized that the collaboration between IFAD and Pakistan has been strong for over 40 years, with both parties working together on inclusive rural development.



HYDERABAD: Members of Anjuman-e-Tajran Chicken Market are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, at Tower Market in Hyderabad.

## LCCI, UPTIB sign MoU to boost economic cooperation

LAHORE (INP): The Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry and the UK-Pakistan Trade & Investment Board (UPTIB) have officially signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen economic ties between the business communities of Pakistan and the United Kingdom. The agreement marks a significant step towards enhancing trade, investment, and economic collaboration between the two countries. The MoU was signed by LCCI President Kashif Anwar and CEO-Pakistan of UPTIB Tajammal Hussain at the LCCI premises in Lahore. In his address, Kashif Anwar expressed his optimism about the partnership,



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan meets with the Sectoral Council, urging comprehensive reforms to boost Pakistan's Gems and Jewelry industry.

## Commerce minister emphasizes reform, growth in Pakistan's gems, Jewelry Sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Tuesday emphasized on reform and growth in Pakistan's gems and jewelry Sector for sustainable growth in country's economy. Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan reaffirmed the government's commitment to revitalizing Pakistan's gems and jewelry industry during a key meeting with

the Sectoral Council for gems and Jewelry, said a press release issued here. The meeting, which gathered virtually, senior officials from the public and private sectors, focused on enhancing the sector's export potential and aligning with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's vision to make this billion-dollar industry a cornerstone of Pakistan's economy. Minister Jam Kamal highlighted the Prime Minister's active engagement with the sector, noting that PM Shehbaz Sharif has personally convened three to four meetings over the past few months to address the industry's challenges and opportunities. The Minister underscored the government's dedication to this sector, emphasizing that the policy-making process must be driven by input from private sector stakeholders to ensure its success.

## ICCI President presents Rs1 m cheque to Arshad Nadeem

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari on Tuesday presented a cheque of Rs1 million to Arshad Nadeem, Pakistan's javelin superstar. Addressing the ceremony held at ICCI on Tuesday, Arshad Nadeem attributed his success to hard work and dedication, stating that there was a long journey behind his achievement. He vowed to maintain his performance in upcoming events. It is mentioned here

## SCCI chief inaugurates Facilitation Desk for provision of grant to SMEs

PESHAWAR (APP):Fuad Ishaq, president of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry on Tuesday inaugurated a Facilitation Desk for provision of grant to small and medium scale businesses and industries announced by International Organization of Migration. The initiative aims to facilitate business community regarding availing of a cash grant of International Organization of Migration (IOM) for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), said in a statement here. It is mentioned here

## Ignite – NICAT Pakistan hosts Asia-Pacific's first Meta Llama Pitchathon

ISLAMABAD (APP):The National Incubation Center for Aerospace Technologies (NICAT), in partnership with Meta, the Ministry of IT & Telecommunication, and Ignite National Technology Fund, hosted the first-ever Meta Llama Pitchathon in the Asia-Pacific region. This groundbreaking event highlighted the tremendous potential of artificial intelligence (AI) by applying Meta's cutting-edge Llama 2 and Llama 3 models, said a news release. On the occasion, Minister of State for IT & Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja said, "This Pitchathon is a testament to Pakistan's growing capabilities in AI and technological innovation. The government is dedicated to creating an environment that nurtures talent and encourages the development of cutting-edge solutions that address both local and global challenges. Events like these are crucial in our journey to position Pakistan as a leader in the global digital economy."



RAWALPINDI: Workers busy in making wooden items on their workplace at Banni chowk area in the city.

## PR to outsource more trains through transparent bidding process

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways has planned to outsource the commercial management of additional trains to private entities under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model through a transparent and competitive bidding process. "The basic purpose of outsourcing the trains is to provide better facilities to the passengers and generate more revenue for the department, official sources in the Ministry of Railways told APP. The department initially invited tenders for this outsourcing initiative, but only three companies participated, offering bids below the benchmarked amount, they added. As a result, they said Pakistan Railways deemed it unfeasible to proceed with these firms under the rules and regulations set by the Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA). Consequently, the department plans to re-advertise the tenders soon. They said a committee within Pakistan Railways observed that the bids submitted in the initial tender process were lacking in both technical and financial aspects, which would have resulted in a lack of competitiveness."



## KP gets first practicing specialists in diagnosis of Autism

PESHAWAR (APP): In a commendable development, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa got first practicing specialists in diagnosis of Autism, a complex neuro-developmental disorder among children, registering constant surge in the province during the last few years. Ms. Rutaba Arif and M. Kashif Khan both serving as Speech Language Pathologist and Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Therapist, respectively at Center for Excellence for Special Children with Autism in Peshawar have qualified as 'Practicing ADOS-2 Specialists'.

"The Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule-Second Edition (ADOS-2) is a standardized assessment tool that helps in diagnoses of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) in children and adults," apprises Rutaba Arif. Talking with APP, Rutaba informed that Ados-2 is designed to obtain information in the areas of communication, reciprocal social interactions, restricted and repetitive behaviors associated with a diagnosis of ASD. "It can only be used by ados-2 certified clinicians," she added.

Due to lack of ADOS-2 Specialists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, parents had to take their children to Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Lahore for diagnosis of autism that was very difficult exercise due to physical stress and financial burden as well.

After qualifying as ADOS-2 Specialists, both Rutaba and Kashif can provide diagnosis services to the autism patients in Peshawar. It merits an insertion that Autism is an overlooked neuro developmental disorder among children and is on rise in the country with very scanty cure options.

According to rough estimates by experts in curing autism, there are around 500,000 number of autistic children in Pakistan and 150,000 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In most parts of the country, autism patients are in dire need of treatment from qualified therapists in diagnosis and treatment. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, there is an institute in the name of Center for Excellence for Special Children with Autism in Peshawar having the capacity of providing rehabilitation.

## Isolation Ward and PCR Lab established at PHQ Hospital Gilgit to tackle Monkeypox

GILGIT (APP): On the orders of Secretary Health Gilgit-Baltistan, Dildar Malik, an isolation ward and PCR lab have been established at PHQ Hospital Gilgit to tackle the expected cases of monkeypox.

According to a statement released by the spokesperson of the Health Department Gilgit-Baltistan, Secretary Health GB visited PHQ Hospital Gilgit on Tuesday. On this occasion, Secretary Health

said that such "monkeypox isolation wards" are being established in all RHQ hospitals, Shaheed Syed Rahman Hospital and DHQ hospitals. The task will be completed by tomorrow evening.

Secretary Health said that no stone will be left unturned to prevent the spread of monkeypox in Gilgit-Baltistan.

Screening centers will also be established at airports and bus stands in Gilgit-Baltistan.

## ANF seizes over 10 kg drugs; arrests a drug dealer

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting an operation in Sialkot managed to recover over 10 kg drugs, weapons and arrested a drug dealer, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Tuesday.

He informed that in a joint operation conducted in Tehsil Daska, Sialkot by ANF and Punjab Police, 10.2 kg drugs, two motorcycles and weapons were recovered.



HYDERABAD: Governor KPK Faisal Karim Kundi lays floral wreath on the shrine of Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai on the concluding day of 281th urs celebrations.

## Hearing of money laundering case against Pervaiz Elahi others adjourned till Sep 19

LAHORE (Online): Special Central Court (SCC) Lahore has adjourned till September 19 hearing of money laundering case against Former Chief Minister (CM) Punjab Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi and others.

Money laundering case against Pervaiz Elahi and others came up for hearing in SCC Lahore Tuesday. FIA filed challan in the court against Pervaiz Elahi, Moonis Elahi, Zara Elahi and others. Under this challan other 8 accused including Moonis Elahi have been declared proclaimed offenders.

Pervaiz Elahi, Zara Elahi and other accused appeared in the court and signed the rolls.

Aamir Saeed Ran advocate appeared on behalf of PTI leader in the court.

During the hearing of the case, Pervaiz Elahi while moving to the judge said he is indisposed.

The court directed him to sit in court room.

Counsel for former CM Punjab said Zara Elahi is burqa clad (veiled) lady. Application for her permanent exemption from attendance has been filed. She will come when indictment is framed against her.

The court summoned arguments from the respondents on exemption plea of Zara Elahi.

## 07 dead, 1397 injured in 1292 road traffic crashes in Punjab

LAHORE: The Emergency Services Department (ESD) responded to 1292 Road Traffic Crashes (RTCs) in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours. In these RTCs, 07 people died, whereas 1397 were injured. Out of these, 585 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 812 victims with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by Rescue Medical Teams thus reducing the burden of Hospitals.

The majority (76%) involved Motorbikes, therefore effective enforcement of traffic laws and lane discipline are essential to reduce the increasing number of road traffic crashes.

Furthermore, the analysis showed those 764 drivers, 50 underage drivers, 154 pedestrians, and 486 passengers were among the victims of road traffic crashes. The statistics show that 261 RTCs were reported in Lahore which affected 282 persons placing the Provincial Capital at the top of the list followed by Faisalabad 99 in with 104 victims and at third Multan with 80 RTCs and 79 victims.

The details further reveal that 1404 victims were affected by road traffic crashes including 1152 males & 252 females.

## Federal govt dividing people instead of uniting them: Saif

PESHAWAR (INP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Advisor Barrister Saif on Tuesday blamed the federal government for dividing people instead of uniting them.

He stated that KP was producing the cheapest electricity in Pakistan which was being sold at exorbitant prices from the federal government, adding that people of KP were being deprived of any relief in power bills despite producing maximum electricity.

He blamed the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz president Nawaz Sharif for announcing reduction in power bills by saying that an MNA elected on Form-47 can't announce lowering in rates of electricity.

He criticised the government for selective development in Punjab, imploring that small provinces needed the most share of all development as they had been left behind by large spending in Punjab.

## PFA unearths counterfeit ghee unit, discards 4,800kg hazardous ghee.

LAHORE: The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) has unearthed a counterfeit ghee manufacturing unit on Jaranwala Road and discarded a huge quantity of unwholesome food including 4,800kg hazardous ghee, 375kg caustic soda, 150 litre loose cooking oil and 125kg bleaching powder.

Meanwhile, the PFA enforcement team also seized 1,700 counterfeit cartons of famous edible oil brands, 775kg packing material, four storage tanks and a packing machine during a raid.

This was informed by PFA Director General Muhammad Asim Javaid while talking to the media at PFA Headquarters. He said that acting on the tip-off, the PFA raided a unit

and caught the adulteration mafia red-handed while an FIR has been registered against the culprits in the respective police station, leading to the arrest of people from the spot.

He said that ghee was extracted from the filth and fat of animals. He said that germs-infested ghee was stored in rusty tanks and packed in the counterfeit packaging of popular brands to deceive customers.

He further said that FBO had mentioned the wrong addresses on the labelling of ghee packaging.

The food business operator also failed to present the necessary records to the raiding team, such as an agreement with a bio-diesel or soap manufacturing company, he said.



PESHAWAR: Members of Women Teachers Welfare Association Hayatabad are holding protest demonstration for their rights, outside KPK Assembly in Peshawar.

## Photo exhibition on independence movement organized at DPS

RAWALPINDI (INP): A photo exhibition, book stall and documentary show on independence movement was organized by Punjab Arts Council in collaboration with Nazariya Pakistan Trust Lahore at Divisional Public School Rawalpindi on Tuesday.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Headquarters Rawalpindi, Ms. Zonaira Aftab along with

Deputy Director Muhammad Shakoor was the Chief Guest of the inaugural ceremony.

Addressing the participants of exhibition, Ms. Zonaira Aftab said that it was extremely important for the younger generation to thoroughly study the history of Pakistan so that they can understand how this country was established and who played a key role in its creation.

# International News

## Egypt's Sisi, Blinken discuss ways to move forward in Gaza ceasefire negotiations

CAIRO: Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken met in Cairo on Tuesday to discuss ways to move forward in negotiations on a ceasefire in Gaza, the Egyptian presidency said.

Sisi warned of the risk of the Gaza war expanding regionally in a way "difficult to imagine".

"The ceasefire in Gaza must be the beginning of broader international recognition of the Palestinian state and the implementation of the two-state solution, as this is the basic guarantor of stability in the region," he added.

Blinken was in Cairo pushing for areas of possible progress on a Gaza ceasefire and hostage release deal in talks planned for later this week, with major areas of dispute left unresolved.

With the unabated strikes by Israeli military killing at least 40 more Palestinians across the Gaza Strip taking the death toll to at least 40,139 and a Palestinian group announcing the resumption of bombings inside Israel after many years, there are few signs of conciliation on the ground.

"In a very constructive meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu today, he confirmed to me that Israel accepts the bridging proposal — that he supports it," Blinken told reporters in Tel Aviv.

"It's now incumbent on Hamas to do the same, and then the parties, with the help of the mediators — the United States, Egypt and Qatar — have to come together and complete the process of reaching clear understandings about how they'll implement the commitments that they've

made under this agreement."

Despite US expressions of optimism and Netanyahu's office describing the meeting as positive, both Israel and Hamas have signalled that any deal will be difficult.

Hamas accused Netanyahu of "thwarting the mediators' efforts" and Turkiye said Hamas envoys had told it that US officials were "painting an overly optimistic picture" despite their clear stance of abiding by the earlier understanding and rejection of the new conditions being set by the US.

Ahead of talks in Qatar last week, Hamas had called on mediators, rather than holding more negotiations, to implement a framework outlined in late May by US President Joe Biden. After the Doha meeting, the US submitted what mediators called a "bridging proposal".



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken meets with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and Egypt's Foreign Minister Badr Abdelaty, in El-Alamein, Egypt.

## India, Japan agree to bolster defence and security ties

NEW DELHI: India and Japan agreed on Tuesday to bolster defence and security ties and backed a "common strategic vision" of a free and open Indo-Pacific - a region where both countries have troubled relations with China.

Foreign and defence ministers of both countries held talks under the so-called 'India-Japan 2+2' dialogue in New Delhi, the third such bilateral engagement in five years.

The ministers discussed progress on the transfer of battleship communication antennas and related technology from Japan to India, according to a joint statement.

The move would mark Japan's first export of defence equipment and technology transfer to New Delhi under a 2015 pact, as Tokyo seeks to strengthen its defence industry.

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## Saudi King Salman chairs cabinet meeting, state news agency says

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz chaired a cabinet meeting on Tuesday, state media said, for the first time since a royal decree issued by him on Aug. 8 allowing the cabinet to convene in the absence of the king, crown prince or both.

Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman chaired the Aug. 13 cabinet session. The 88-year-old king of the world's biggest oil exporter, a major US ally in the Middle East, received medical care for lung inflammation in May.

## Biden says 'I gave my best' as he passes torch to Harris

WASHINGTON: An emotional US President Joe Biden passed the torch to Democratic nominee Kamala Harris with a hug on Monday, saying he gave everything for his country in a bittersweet farewell speech at the party's convention in Chicago.

"America, America, I gave my best to you," the 81-year-old Biden said, quoting a patriotic hymn during a nearly hour-long address that ran through his achievements while urging voters to back his vice president against Donald Trump in November.

Harris joined him on stage after the speech and the pair embraced, as the crowd gave Biden a rapturous reception following his stunning decision less than a month ago to drop out of the

2024 White House race. In a remarkable turnaround, Harris has reemerged the party and wiped out Republican rival Trump's lead in the polls, but Biden insisted that he was not bitter about stepping aside. Instead, as he contemplates the imminent end of a five-decade political career, he said that he had done what he thought best to ensure that his nemesis Trump does not return to the Oval Office.

"I love the job, but I love my country more. I love my country more," said Biden. "And all this talk about how I'm angry at all those people who said I should step down — that's not true." Both Biden and Harris appeared to wipe away a tear as the US leader won a huge four-minute ovation when he first took to the stage.

## Philippines to host a US visa processing center for up to 300 Afghans resettling in America

MANILA: The Philippines has agreed to a request by the United States to temporarily host a U.S. immigrant visa processing center for a limited number of Afghan nationals aspiring to resettle in America, the treaty allies announced Tuesday. The Philippine government's approval of the request, which initially faced local concerns over potential security and legal issues, reflects how relations between Manila and Washington have deepened under President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who took office in 2022. The Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila said the agreement was undergoing final domestic procedures and needs to be finally ratified by Marcos before it takes effect. It did not provide other details, including how many Afghans would be allowed to temporarily stay in the Philippines at any time while their special immigrant visas for resettlement to the U.S. are being completed.

A senior Philippine official, however, told The Associated Press that only 150 to 300 applicants would be accommodated in the Philippines under the "one-time" deal. The official who had knowledge of the negotiations agreed to speak on condition of anonymity because of a lack of authority to speak publicly. Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Assistant Secretary Teresita Daza said Afghan nationals should secure a visa to enter the Philippines and would be subjected to "full security vetting." Each visa applicant can stay not more than 59 days. The U.S. government will shoulder the costs for the stay of the Afghan nationals, including food, housing, security and medical and transportation expenses, Daza said. She added that the U.S. government and the International Organization for Migration as manager of the unspecified facility where the Afghans visa applicants would be billeted.

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## India's top court orders medical safety task force after doctor rape protests

NEW DELHI: India's Supreme Court on Tuesday ordered a national task force to examine how to bolster security for healthcare workers after the "horrific" rape and murder of a doctor sparked medical strikes and furious protests.

The discovery of the 31-year-old doctor's bloodied body at a state-run hospital in the eastern city of Kolkata on August 9 has stoked nationwide anger at the chronic issue of violence against women.

Doctors' associations from government-run hospitals in many cities across India have launched multiple strikes that cut non-essential services, with protests in

their second week.

Demonstrators marched through Kolkata on Tuesday, holding up signs demanding "justice", while the country's top court issued orders in the capital New Delhi.

"The brutality of the sexual assault and the nature of the crime have shocked the conscience of the nation," the three-judge bench said in its order, calling the details "horrific".

Chief Justice D. Y. Chandrachud read out the order, which called for the formation of a "national task force" of top doctors to prepare a plan to prevent violence in healthcare facilities and draw up an "enforceable national protocol" for safe working conditions.

## Iran closes centres linked to Germany, which summons ambassador

DUBAI: Iran's judiciary has closed two branches of organisations linked to Germany due to "illegal activities and financial fraud", the judiciary's Mizan news agency said, in a move protested by Berlin with the summoning of the Iranian ambassador.

Mizan published pictures on Tuesday of security forces removing the banner of the German Language Institute of Tehran, which is linked to the German embassy.

"Additionally, there have been reports of violations by other German-affiliated centres and investigations in this matter are ongoing," Mizan added.

## Fears for children's health as polio re-emerges in Gaza

DEIR EL BALAH: In Gaza, a mother worries that her month-old son, Mohammed, could be infected with polio after the Palestinian health ministry confirmed the first case in the enclave on Friday, ending a 25-year period in which the strip was polio-free. Just three days after his birth, Ghada al Ghandour's son Mohammed started developing skin rashes. "He had skin rashes as if he was burnt," she said. A doctor told her there were no

creams to treat her child. She later brought him to Al Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in Deir el Balah in central Gaza to seek a diagnosis and treatment. The rash fueled his mother's fears that other symptoms and diseases could follow due to a lack of hygiene and medical supplies in Gaza after more than 10 months of conflict.

In a statement, the Palestinian health ministry confirmed the first case of polio in the city of Deir el Balah had been detected in a 10-month-old baby who had not been vaccinated.

## Russia's FSB detains scientist on suspicion of treason

MOSCOW: Russia's FSB security service has detained a scientist in Moscow on suspicion of state treason, the Interfax news agency reported on Tuesday.

The scientist allegedly carried out distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks on critical infrastructure on behalf of Ukrainian security services, it quoted the FSB as saying.



## Ahsan Iqbal urges swift completion of CPEC Phase-II corridor concept papers

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal Tuesday chaired a review meeting on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects, stressing the urgency of preparing concept papers for five new corridors proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping in August 2023. "The concept papers for all CPEC Phase-II projects should be completed as soon as possible, aligning with these five new corridors," he said while chairing a review meeting on CPEC projects in Islamabad on Tuesday.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Planning Awas Manzoor Sumra, secretaries of relevant ministries, heads of institutions, and senior officials. Ahsan Iqbal reiterated that all Working Groups (WGs) have been directed to expedite the preparation of these concept papers.

Ahsan Iqbal informed the meeting that Pakistan and China have agreed to initiate work on these five corridors, which were aligned with Pakistan's 5Es framework (Export, Energy, Equity, E-Pakistan and Environment) for its economic development. Elaborating the five new initiatives, he said that under the Livelihood Corridor provision of the best amenities to the people and creating employment opportunities were included.

Under the Innovation Corridor, the minister said new projects would be initiated through modern technology and imparting information technology skills to the youth. "While the CPEC would be used to promote

connectivity and establish more friendly relations with Central Asian states under the Open Regional Cooperation." The Regional Connectivity Corridor will utilize CPEC to foster relations and promote connectivity with Central Asian states under the Open Regional Cooperation framework.

Ahsan Iqbal expressed confidence that comprehensive documents on these five corridors would be finalized by the end of August and presented during the visit of China's Prime Minister to Pakistan. He instructed relevant stakeholders and ministry officials to collaboratively develop joint plans for these corridors and prepare five-year strategic plans under the CPEC portfolio for submission to the Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC).



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Meta calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, in the Federal Capital.

## Sindh Governor Tessori writes to CM Murad for Punjab-like relief in electricity bills

KARACHI (INP): Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori has asked the provincial government to provide relief to the people in the electricity bills just like what the Punjab government has done.

In a letter to Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, the governor has asked him to cut down the provincial government's expenditures so that the people could be provided relief. "At least slash the power tariff by Rs14 per unit for the households consuming up to 500 units of electricity for August and September," he has said, adding, "This will certainly

be a good step, and would not only reduce burden on the people's purse, who are already grappling with inflation, but will also enhance the prestige of the Sindh government."

Otherwise, Tessori has said, a sense of deprivation will increase in the people of the province, and they will feel neglected.

In the end, the governor writes that he is optimistic that the provincial government will take this step to rescue the people during these tough times. "I am looking forward to a positive response from you," he has written to the CM.

## President pays tribute to Rashid Minhas Shaheed

ISLAMABAD (INP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday paid tribute to Pilot Officer Rashid Minhas Shaheed (Nishani-Haider) lauding his bravery and sacrifice to safeguard the country.

The president, in his message on Rashid Minhas Shaheed's martyrdom anniversary, said that the pilot officer had sacrificed his life for the country's security. "The whole nation salutes Rashid Minhas Shaheed for his patriotism and passion for martyrdom. The nation feels proud of the soldiers like him," he remarked.

## Pakistan Education Endowment Fund to support higher education of underprivileged students: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said that the government had established the Pakistan Education Endowment Fund to support children from low-income families to obtain higher education.

The prime minister, in a meeting with Israr Khan Kakar, the newly elected President of Oxford Union of UK's Oxford University, said that a 20% quota had been allocated for the youth of Balochistan under the Pakistan Education Endowment Fund.

Prime Minister Shehbaz warmly welcomed Israr Kakar at the PM House, appreciated him for bringing fame to Pakistan, and viewed that talented youth like him could guarantee a bright future for Pakistan.

He lauded Kakar for contesting and winning the

Oxford Union election as a manifestation of his steadfastness and firm resolve. He expressed the hope that Pakistani youth like Israr Kakar would continue to bring laurels to Pakistan.

"Winning scholarship throughout the academic career and then his election as president of a great body like Oxford Union by a youngster coming from a backward area of Balochistan is a matter of pride," the prime minister remarked.

Inviting him to address the Oxford Union, Israr Kakar appreciated Prime Minister Shehbaz for his government's measures for youth empowerment and providing them equal opportunities.

"All of the youth like me, are resolved to offer all-out services for Pakistan's progress and prosperity," Kakar remarked.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi in a meeting with Ambassador of the Netherlands, Henny de Vries.

## Musadik Malik says Gas tariff to remain unchanged until December-January

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Petroleum, Dr. Musadik Masood Malik Tuesday said that the current gas tariff would remain unchanged until the winter months of December and January. Addressing a press conference, he said that the gas tariff has not been increased, and the government is striving to avoid placing any additional burden on the people.

"If the need arises to provide relief, we will make decisions in consultation with all provinces and move forward together. However, our aim is to avoid increasing gas prices," he said.

The minister said that 98% of domestic electricity consumers, who use up to 500 units, have been provided relief by the Punjab government. He added that 86% of those consuming up to 200 units have also received relief from the federal government. He urged other provincial governments to offer similar relief if they wish.

He urged political leaders to refrain from spreading chaos and to participate in parliamentary committees to contribute to the nation's development.

## JUI-F chief Maulana Fazal rules out any alliance to oust government

DERA ISMAEL KHAN (INP): Regretting that the party's experience of entering into alliances with other parties in the recent past was not a good one, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) Chief and veteran politician Maulana Fazlur Rehman said on Tuesday that the party would launch an anti-government movement on its own.

Talking to newsmen at his residence in Dera Ismael Khan, he said that neither the party wanted to embarrass others nor get embarrassed itself. "However, there could be alliances with other parties on any issue," Fazl explained.

"Not only will we play the role of an opposition inside the parliament but also outside the parliament," he said, and added, "This is for the first time in the country's history that the establishment has taken its internal matters seriously."

However, he added, the JUI-F was not a party to any such move by the establishment.

The veteran politician was of the view that the parliament had lost its importance following the 2018 general elections.

## APHC stresses need for greater unity to effectively pursue freedom cause

SRINAGAR (INP): The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has emphasized the need for greater unity among Kashmiris to effectively pursue their rightful demand for a plebiscite to ascertain the political future of Jammu and Kashmir.

According to Kashmir Media Service, APHC spokesman Advocate Abdul Rashid Minhas issued a statement in Srinagar, terming the Kashmir dispute a political and human problem. He noted that the freedom-loving people of Kashmir have made unprecedented sacrifices for the sacred mission of justice and freedom from Indian subjugation since 1947.

Minhas stated that India is misleading the

world about the situation in Jammu and Kashmir, as it cannot retain its illegal occupation through military might and state terrorism forever. He emphasized that Kashmir is an internationally recognized dispute between Pakistan and India, which needs to be resolved according to the aspirations of the Jammu and Kashmir people.

The statement highlighted that in the changing geopolitical situation, war is not an option, and all disputes should be resolved through diplomacy and dialogue to allow peace to prevail. Minhas urged Pakistan and India to live in peace and tranquility as good neighbors, but this requires settling their conflicts, particularly the Kashmir dispute.



Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Ambassador Kairat Sarybay called on Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, in Islamabad.

## Mustafa Kamal urges PM for national policy on electricity

KARACHI (INP): Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) leader Syed Mustafa Kamal has called on the prime minister to develop a comprehensive national policy, instead of a particular provincial-centric policy, to address the country's electricity crisis.

He stressed that Karachi, despite current challenges, continues to contribute 51% to the national economy so any policy for relief in electricity bills should include Sindh and particularly Karachi, he said while

speaking to a private TV channel. Syed Mustafa Kamal expressed concerns over the high electricity tariffs and capacity payments, urging the government to provide immediate relief to the public. Referring to his recent meeting with the prime minister, Syed Mustafa Kamal clarified that the meeting with the prime minister was not focused solely on Punjab, where electricity prices have been reduced by Rs. 14, but on the broader electricity issues affecting the entire country.

## Dar reaffirms commitment to CICA's vision of sustainable security

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Tuesday reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to CICA's vision of sustainable security in Asia and highlighted the need for enduring peace and development in the region.

Talking to Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Ambassador Kairat Sarybay, who is currently on a visit to Pakistan, Dar reaffirmed the need for conflict prevention; addressing the root causes of endemic disputes, according to a press release issued by Foreign Office.

He also stressed the importance of preventive diplomacy, multilateralism, and regional collaboration to tackle emerging global challenges.

Dar highlighted the need for addressing the root causes of persistent disputes, and seeking sustainable solutions for enduring peace and development in the CICA region.

## Ji announces country-wide shutter down strike

KARACHI (INP): Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Pakistan Ameer Hafiz Naeemur Rehman said that a country-wide 'peaceful' shutter down strike will be observed on 28<sup>th</sup> August.

Addressing the party's office bearers at the Idara Noore Haq in Karachi, Hafiz Naeemur Rehman said that the other opposition parties are confused about protests against the government.

"The JI cannot support confused parties. We have a clear position that we will not be part of any political alliance," he added Hafiz Naeemur Rehman said that the JI's alliance is with the youth and the people of Pakistan.

Earlier, the JI chief vowed to force the government to implement the agreement with his

party. Talking to media, the JI Ameer said that the law and order have also worsened in Punjab in comparison to the past.

He said 74 per cent people of Pakistan could not spend owing to their incomes. "A large number of the youth don't want to stay in the country due to lack of opportunities". Hafiz Naeem said that the expensive RLNG agreements have destroyed the economy. "The government warns that the IPPs will go to the international court if contracts with them are violated", he said. He said that the FBR's interference will affect exports. Pakistan bearing losses of 250 billion owing to the border smuggling. "We promise to the people, we will force the government and implement the agreement", he vowed.

## Protest erupts in Larkana over suspected murder Allah Dad Chandio

LARKANA: A protest was held at SSP Chowk in Larkana after the death of Imdad Sheikh, who was injured in a clash between the Baddani and Sheikh communities in Juma Shaikh village. The heirs of the deceased demanded the arrest of the accused and staged a sit-in against Shaheed Elahi Bakhsh Sial Police Station.

The relatives, including Peersan, Ayaz Sheikh, Shaukat Sheikh, and Nizamuddin, alleged that the police released the suspect, a relative of Union Council Chairman Wadda Mahar, after receiving a bribe. They claimed that the suspect was involved in the murder of their family member 15 days ago. The protesters demanded the immediate arrest of the murderers and the chairman of the Union Council, seeking justice for the deceased. They accused the police of corruption and partiality in the case.

## Several outgoing flights at Karachi Airport cancelled again

KARACHI (INP): The flights' schedule at Karachi's Jinnah International Airport was again disrupted on Tuesday morning as several outgoing flights were cancelled on account of different technical and operational reasons.

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) Karachi to Multan flight PK-331, the airline's Karachi to Sukkur flight PK-536 were cancelled. Similarly, Fly Baghdad's

Najaf-bound flight IF-334, SereneAir's Karachi to Islamabad flight ER-504, and the airline's Karachi to Lahore flight ER-524 were also cancelled.

Likewise, Airblue's two Islamabad-bound flights PA-200 and PA-206 were cancelled as well. AirSial's Karachi to Islamabad flight PF-125 was cancelled while the airline's flight PF-123, also heading to Islamabad, was delayed by five hours.



KARACHI: Managing Director & CEO of Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) Farrukh H. Khan, addressing a press conference at his office, in the Provincial Capital.

## Economic Woes, IPPs Have Ruined the Economy: Anjum Nisar

KARACHI (INP): Former President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and Chairman of the Businessmen Panel, Mian Anjum Nisar, stated that the economic conditions in Pakistan are deteriorating. He blamed Independent Power Producers (IPPs) for destroying the national economy. He noted that not only is it difficult to establish new industries, but even existing ones are struggling. He supported small traders in their protest against turnover tax and urged the government to engage with them before it's too late. He announced his support for the small traders' strike scheduled for August 28.

Nisar expressed these views during a meeting titled "National Economy and Trade Bodies" organized by the Businessmen Panel at a local hotel. The event was hosted by Mian Naseer Hayat Mago, former Presi-

dent of FPCCI and Senior Vice Chairman of the Businessmen Panel. Other speakers included former FPCCI Presidents Zakariya Usman and Abdul Rahim Jano, and Suleman Chawla and former Vice Presidents Hanif Lakhani. The event also saw participation from former REAP Chairman Rafiq Suleman, Amjad Rafiq, Khalid Ameen, Shoahid Bashir, Haji Ghani Haji Usman, Javed Ilyas, Aun Ali Syed, Wasim Rahman, and other leaders. Mian Anjum Nisar highlighted that the IPPs have led to a catastrophic economic situation in Pakistan, with money rapidly flowing out of the country and investors fleeing to acquire citizenship in other nations. He also mentioned that the IT industry is on the brink of collapse due to internet issues, with Pakistani freelancers struggling to find work because of slow internet speeds.



SUKKUR: Water level increases while medium grade flood water reaches at Sukkur Barrage on River Indus due to heavy downpour of monsoon season, in Sukkur.



KARACHI: Construction works of new development projects is underway under the supervision of local government department, as slow pace of construction work is creating problems for commuters due to traffic jam and they demand to concerned department to complete work as soon as possible, located on University road in Karachi.

## Punjab govt committee agrees to reduce court fees for litigants

ISLAMABAD (INP): In an important development in reducing court fees in line with the instructions of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, the committee formed for the purpose on Tuesday agreed to reduce the fees so that people could be provided immediate justice and that too at cheaper rates.

The committee, which met with Federal Law Minister Azam Nazir Tarrar and Punjab Law Minister Malik Sohaib Ahmed Bherth in the chair, agreed

that the court fee for obtaining the attested copy of a civil court's decision or order would be Rs100, while Rs500 would be charged for obtaining the copy of a decision by a high court. It was also concurred to reduce the per page fee of an attested copy from Rs100 to Rs10.

The meeting also agreed that the Board of Revenue or commissioners would be charged Rs500 for filing a review petition under the Punjab Tenancy Act, 1887.