

Loss-making SOEs bleeding one trillion rupees of national exchequer, Senate told

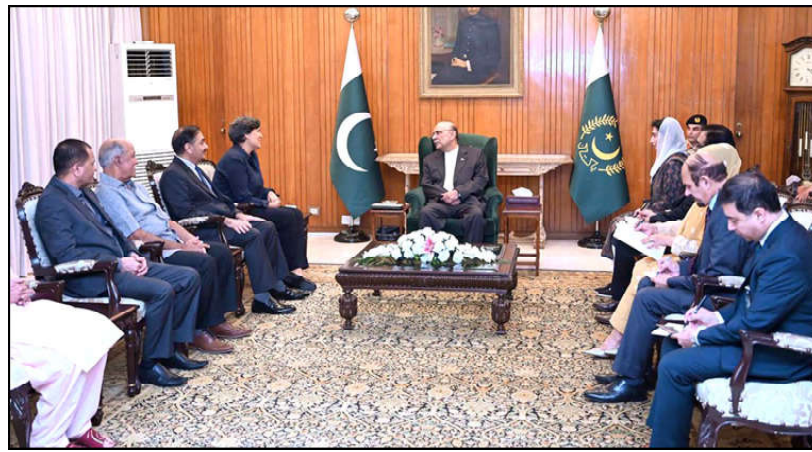
ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Tuesday informed the Upper House of the Parliament that the loss-making state-owned enterprises were bleeding one trillion rupees of the national exchequer.

He was responding to the questions during the question hour session of the seventh meeting of the 342nd Senate session here.

Senator Aurangzeb said the federal government had completed its work on rationalisation of six ministries, whereas under the PWD discussion servants package was on the cards whereas change in legislation was needed as without changing it would not be able to move forward. "The treasury benches need the support of the house to enact this critical legislation for austerity and privatization, whereas pen-

sion is a ticking bomb and contributory define contributions are under discussion for public servants that will be proceeded," he said.

Replying another query, he said the debt to GDP ratio scenario in June 2020 was 77% and in June 2024 it was at 67% whereas its gradient was on right track along with its rate of growth declining gradually. Moreover, he said in Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) increase in debt percentage was 30% that had reduced to 15% indicating all indicators in positive direction, he added. Commenting on the government's strategy to pull the economy out of debts, the Finance Minister said, "Its road to market and we have to change our DNA of economy from import-led to export-led and the federal government are incorporating FDI and financing into exports that will further strengthen the economy."



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Dr. A.Q.Khan Hospital Trust, led by the Chairperson of the Trust, Dr. Dina Khan, call on the President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Pak calls for mechanisms enabling UN peacekeepers to foster peace among conflicting parties

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Pakistan has called for strengthening the role and capacity of UN peacekeeping in hotspots around the world, proposing that the Security Council should create effective political mechanisms to promote peace agreements among parties to the conflict.

Speaking in the 15-member Council as it reviewed UN peacekeeping operations, Ambassador Munir Akram pointed out that such a mechanism would require greater cooperation among Security Council members, especially the permanent ones, notwithstanding their geopolitical rivalries.

The Pakistani envoy said that peacekeeping missions should also put greater emphasis on promoting local peace arrangements at the community level to reduce violence, citing the successful efforts of the Pakistani peacekeepers in restive Abyei, an area disputed by South Sudan and the Sudan.

Monday's Council meeting was organized by Slovenia as the rotating President of the UN Security Council for the month of September.

At the outset, Ambassador Akram said Pakistan has a long and close involvement with United Nations peace operations. Pakistan, he said, is host to one of the first United Nations missions — the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), which was established in 1949 to monitor the ceasefire along the line of control (LoC) in disputed Jammu and Kashmir.

For its part, Pakistan has also deployed 230,000 peacekeepers in 46 missions and has lost 181 peacekeepers in the service of international peace and security, Ambassador Akram added. In today's day and age, he said, United Nations peacekeeping missions find themselves facing new and growing challenges, including violence and chaos spread by terrorists, involvement of organized criminal networks in illegal extraction of resources and criminal activities; external interventions in local conflicts; limitations imposed on the resources for UN peacekeeping and erosion of unified support from member States, especially the Council's permanent members. The international community, especially the United Nations and the Security Council, must extend full support to those regional organizations — like the African Union — who are prepared to take more robust operations where necessary to enforce peace, Ambassador Akram said.

Opening the debate, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, UN Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, underscored the need for greater political support and resources for UN peacekeeping mission to carry out their duties safely as conflicts grow more complex.

Following Quaid's guiding principles vital for a strong, prosperous Pakistan: Zardari

PM calls on nation to renew commitment for building Pakistan as per Quaid's vision

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari has urged the nation to follow Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's principles of "unity, faith and discipline" emphasizing their significance as a beacon for the country's development. "I am sure that by acting upon his (Quaid-e-Azam) teachings and advice, we can make Pakistan strong and prosperous," the president said in his message to the nation on the occasion of the 76th death anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah annually observed on September 11.

Paying tribute to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the president said that the Pakistani nation was indebted to him for his efforts and contribution to the creation of a separate homeland for the Muslims of the sub-continent where they could live with dignity and exercise their political, cultural, and religious rights.

Calling him a visionary leader, who united the Muslims of India under one banner, the president said the whole nation was proud of Quaid-e-Azam's untiring struggle and unwavering commitment to the right to self-determination that shaped the destiny of millions of Muslims.

"Quaid-e-Azam's vision for Pakistan was fundamentally democratic as he firmly believed in a state where all citizens, irrespective of religion, would be equal before the law, Muhammad Ali Jinnah's struggle not only laid the foundation of Pakistan's democratic system but continues to influence our aspirations for parliamentary democracy and communal harmony," he remarked.

President Zardari said that Quaid-e-Azam successfully steered Indian Muslims through the complex political landscape of India while maintaining an unyielding stance on the rights of Muslims.

He said that Jinnah had envisioned a Pakistan based on Islamic principles of democracy and socio-economic justice. "It was due to his sheer will, hard work and successful advocacy of the cause of Muslims that the partition of India became a reality. On this day, we not only honour his efforts but also recommit ourselves to the values and ideals that he championed," the president added. Meanwhile Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif called on the nation to renew the commitment for building a Pakistan having peace.



MPA Asghar Khan Tareen receiving Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti upon arrival in Pishin

Noorzai vows to take concrete steps to improve literacy rate in province

Independent Report

QUETTA: In a bid to tackle the challenges of education in Balochistan, Parliamentary Secretary for Social Welfare Haji Wali Muhammad Noorzai has vowed to take concrete steps to improve the literacy rate in the province.

Speaking at a ceremony to mark International Literacy Day, Noorzai acknowledged that Balochistan lags behind in education, with 300,000 children out of school. He reiterated the government's commitment to activating non-functional schools and ensuring that education reaches every household.

Noorzai also expressed concern over the exploitation of school children in political rallies and promised swift legal action against such practices. He emphasized the importance of education as the greatest wealth and the key to unlocking the future of Balochistan's youth.

The Balochistan government has already taken steps to send over 3,000 children abroad for education, a move aimed at bridging the education gap in the province.

With a population of 1.5 million, Balochistan faces significant challenges in providing quality education to its citizens. However, with the government's renewed focus on education, hopes are high for a brighter future for the province's youth.

Gillani challenges NAB jurisdiction in Toshakhana vehicles' case

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senate Chairman Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani on Tuesday challenged the jurisdiction of the Accountability Court in hearing the Toshakhana vehicles reference filed by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) against him.

Accountability Court Judge Abida Sajjad, who heard the reference, sought comments from NAB.

During the course of proceedings, Gillani's lawyer pleaded that the reference did not fall in the jurisdiction of NAB after restoration of amendments in the NAB law.

At this, the court served notices to the respondents and adjourned the case till September 26.



QUETTA: Provincial Education Minister Raheela Hameed Khan Durran meeting with Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail

Ahsan accelerates transfer of PWD Project to province

ISLAMABAD (Online): In a meeting chaired by Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiative S Ahsan Iqbal, it was decided to expedite the process of transferring ongoing development projects under the dissolved Public Works Department (PWD) to the provincial governments.

The meeting was attended by the Secretary of Planning and senior officials from various provinces. It was agreed that the Public Sector Development Program (PSDP) projects would be transferred to the provincial governments as soon as possible so that work on these projects could continue without any hindrance. Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal said that only the projects are being transferred to the provinces but the funding allocated to these projects under the PSDP will continue. He directed all provinces to inform within a week, the names of the ministries to which these ongoing projects will be transferred.

The ongoing PWD projects in the federal capital will also be transferred to the CDA and the relevant ministries. He clarified that the ongoing projects under the PWD are not being terminated but are merely being transferred to different institutions. Ahsan Iqbal appreciated that Balochistan has completed its work in this regard first and the remaining provinces should also provide complete details within a week. He said that the purpose of this committee was to resolve the difficulties faced according to the law.

Two bills including SC (Amendment) Bill introduced in NA

ISLAMABAD (APP): Two bills including the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) (Amendment) Bill, 2024 and the Pakistan Environmental Protection (Amendment) Bill, 2024 were introduced in the National Assembly on Tuesday. Danyal Chaudhary sought the leave to introduce the bill to further amend the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1997 [The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) (Amendment) Bill, 2024] in the House while Nuzhat Sadiq moved the bill to further amend the Pakistan Environmental Protection Act, 1997 [The Pakistan Environmental Protection (Amendment) Bill, 2024].

Tarar visits residence of Asma Shirazi to condole her brother's death

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Tuesday visited the residence of Hum News Senior Anchor Person Asma Shirazi to express his condolences on demise of her brother. The minister extended his heartfelt condolences to the family on the death of Asma Shirazi's brother Mohsin Shirazi and recited Fataha for the departed soul. Prime Minister's Coordinator Badr Shehbaz Waraich, Information Secretary Ambreen Jan, Joint Secretary of Information and Broadcasting and Principal Information Officer also accompanied.



QUETTA: Parliamentary Secretary for Transport Abdul Majeed Badini meeting with Provincial Advisor Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi

Govt eliminates 150,000 vacant regular posts in federal ministries, divisions

ISLAMABAD (INP): The federal government has formally eliminated 150,000 vacant regular posts across various ministries and divisions.

According to the report, the Establishment Division has issued an official directive to all secretaries of ministries and divisions, following recommendations from the High-Powered Right Sizing Committee, says in media reports.

The decision to abolish these posts aims to streamline government operations and reduce unnecessary expenditures. According to the official letter, the authority to eliminate the posts has been delegated to the principal accounts officers of the respective ministries and divisions.

Each division is responsible for issuing a notification to close the vacancies within their sub-departments, and they must also send comprehensive information, along with the notification, to the Establishment Division by September 13.

The Establishment Division and the Finance Division are tasked with overseeing the implementation of this decision, ensuring that the federal cabinet's directive is effectively carried out.

To facilitate institutional coordination, Shahid Nawaz has been appointed as the focal person by the Establishment Division.

Advisor for Women Development emphasizes: Improving transportation facilities inevitable to enhance women's access to education & service

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Advisor to Chief Minister of Balochistan for Women Development, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi, emphasized the importance of improving transportation facilities to enhance women's access to education and employment opportunities in the province.

She expressed these views during a meeting with Parliamentary Secretary for Transport, MPA Abdul Majeed Badini, here on Tuesday.

Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi stated that in order to ensure women's education and training in the province, it is essential to provide them with safe, reliable, and convenient transportation services.

She highlighted the need for special buses for women, particularly female students, and called for fare reductions, stressing that such measures would help women achieve greater success in both educational and professional fields.

She further added that to empower women, all relevant institutions must collaborate to effectively promote gender equality and women's rights. Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi assured full cooperation regarding women-specific initiatives in the transport sector and reaffirmed that the Government of Balochistan is taking all possible steps to address women's issues. On this occasion, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi reiterated that Balochistan's development is not possible without ensuring women's inclusion, and the government is committed to providing all necessary resources to help women advance.

PTI loses another seat in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) lost another seat won in the February 8 general elections after a vote recount.

According to details, PTI's Sarbuland Khan lost to Asif Moosa of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) from Sindh Assembly constituency PS-112 after the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) held a vote recount.

After a notification issued by the ECP, PPP's Asif Moosa took oath as a member of the Sindh Assembly. After the revised results, PPP's Asif Moosa secured the seat with 11,724 followed by PTI's Sarbuland Khan who bagged 9,943 votes.



QUETTA: National Champion Martial Arts Sher Baz Marri meeting with Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan

No decision made to shut down Utility Stores: Rana

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain informed the National Assembly on Tuesday that no decision has been made to shut down Utility Stores.

In response to a Calling Attention Notice, he said that restructuring of the organization would be carried out in consultation with all stakeholders, including employee representatives from the union.

Rana Tanveer said that Utility Stores Corporation (USC) is a crucial organization providing essential services, and efforts are underway to improve its operations.

He highlighted that the ordinance concerning state-owned enterprises clearly mandates that essential institutions will not be privatized or shut down.

The minister reiterated that the USC, established by Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, was designed to provide relief to the common people.

He said that, alongside programs such as the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), which now has a budget close to Rs 600 billion, the government has approved a Rs 60 billion subsidy for Utility Stores to ensure the provision of affordable and quality goods to the public.

Regarding the Public Works Department (PWD), the minister said that the government has decided to shut down PWD and transfer repair works to the Capital Development Authority (CDA).

Repatriation of illegal Afghan nationals continues

ISLAMABAD (Online): The process of repatriation of the illegal Afghan nationals to their homeland is underway in a dignified manner.

According to latest statistics, the total number of illegal Afghan nationals who were repatriated till yesterday has reached more than seven hundred thirteen thousand. Twenty-one thousand one hundred and ninety three Afghan nationals including 7843 men, 6012 women and 7338 children left the country from 17th August to 09th of September.



QUETTA: Parliamentary Secretaries and MPAs meeting with Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly Ghazala Gola

Chinese business delegation visit SIFC

ISLAMABAD (APP): A high-level Chinese business delegation, comprising Xinjiang Iron Brothers Co Ltd with four other prominent Chinese business entities Tuesday visited Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC).

The delegation was headed by Mr Yuan Jianmin (Senior and renowned Economist) along with members representing various business enterprises, said a press release issued here.

The delegation was warmly received by officials of SIFC and comprehensive briefs were given covering potential and investment opportunities in priority sectors including Agriculture/ Livestock, IT, Energy, Minerals, Tourism, Industry, and policy level measures being undertaken to improve the overall investment climate in the country. The visit of delegation will further catalyze the ongoing engagements between Pakistan and China under Business-to-Business framework.

The delegation was also briefed about salient features of industrial development in Pakistan.

The delegation showed keen interest for investments in key sectors under SIFC and relocation of Chinese industries to Pakistan including Gilgit Baltistan. The visit of delegation will further catalyze the ongoing engagements between Pakistan and China under Business-to-Business framework.