

# Independent

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www.dailyindependent.com.pk

Gwadar

Ph: 2841470/2841473 Vol: XX No. 56, Safar 28, 1446 AH Tuesday September 03, 2024, Pages 04, Price Rs.15



RAWALPINDI: Chief of the Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir presiding over Corps Commanders' Conference.

## Pay tribute to counter-terrorism sacrifices Military's top brass vows not to let hard-earned successes be reversed

Military commanders deliberate on measures to neutralize threats posed by Pakistan's external and internal adversaries; Underscores critical need to safeguard national cyber space through stringent measures

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Pakistan Army's Corps Commanders' Conference (CCC) held here at GHQ on Tuesday underscored the critical need to safeguard national cyber space through stringent cybersecurity measures.

Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir presided over the Corps Commanders' Conference, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

At the commencement of the conference, the participants offered Fateha and paid profound tribute to the ultimate sacrifices made by the Shuhada of the Armed Forces, Law Enforcement Agencies, and citizens who

have laid down their lives in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in pursuit of peace and stability of Pakistan.

The forum was briefed on the prevailing geo-strategic environment, national security challenges, and strategic and operational responses to emerging threats.

In assessing the inimical forces, malicious actors, subversive proxies, and the facilitators of Pakistan's external and internal adversaries, particularly those active in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the forum deliberated on a range of measures to neutralize these threats.

## Elements behind Balochistan ghastly killing not to be spared, says CM Bugti



QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti on Tuesday said that those who took innocent lives would not be spared at any cost reiterating government resolve to establish its writ, elements behind ghastly killing of innocent Pakistani people were not Baloch but terrorists and the state would go all out against them.

He expressed these views on the joint condemnation resolution of the government and the opposition in the Balochistan Assembly, on 26th August massacre.

CM Balochistan in a

strong term, flayed the ghastly incident of Musakhail in which 23 passengers were offloaded and killed for their specific identity.

"Those who killed were not Baloch, rather terrorists and unfortunately, those killed were not Panjabis but the proud Pakistanis," the CM clarified.

He dispelled the prevailing misconception about the certain gathering under the garb of political rights was struggling for the legitimate and constitutional rights of the people as saying "The proxies of our countries enemies are furthering the single agenda

of breaking Pakistan which would not be allowed. "There is no need to launch a major operation, he said adding that intelligence based raids would be carried out to crush the elements challenging the writ of the government.

He offered that our doors are always open for those who agreed to set on dialogue table with us for any kind of talks in order to maintain peace in the province, adding, the dialogues would not be held with those who took the path of violence and killing people.

CM Bugti said that the government is providing higher education to Baloch girls in the world's top universities while these elements were leading the youth towards violence and the youth should decide their future goals.

Sarfaraz Bugti said that there is cleared evidence of RAW-driven war initiated in Balochistan to create unrest and boost terrorism to divide the country.

## PM stresses redoubled efforts for economic stability as inflation down to single-digit

Federal Cabinet endorses Trade Framework Agreement between Pakistan, Southern Common Market

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said that after bringing the inflation rate down to the single digit of 9.6%, more efforts were required to bring in economic growth and stability besides addressing the challenges of circular debt and tax evasion.

"Alhamdulillah, the burden of inflation is reducing gradually. A single-digit inflation rate of 9.6% was reported in August this year which was 27% this month of last year. But we have to keep up our efforts to achieve economic growth and stability, create productive employment, reduce expenditures by rightsizing and downsizing, shrink circular debt, curb evasion of receipts and eliminate smuggling," the prime minister said addressing the meeting of the federal cabinet chaired by him.

He congratulated the finance minister, State Bank governor and other economic team members for the achievement and said that serious and tireless efforts were underway to achieve the challenging task.

## Akhtar Mengal resigns from NA over Balochistan crises

"I am announcing my resignation today. I am unable to do anything for my people. There is a lack of interest in the issues of Balochistan, and whenever we discuss these issues, they are blacked out"



ISLAMABAD (Online): Chief of Balochistan National Party (BNP) Sardar Akhtar Mengal has announced to resign from National Assembly (NA) seat.

Talking to media men with Mehmood Khan Achakzai after NA session he said whosoever he is Pushto speaking, Balochi speaking, Urdu speaking or any one else has been killed, the courts are killers of them which don't administer justice.

He went on to say the key murderers are politicians who used politics for business. There was a meeting in PM House on

July 23, 2023 wherein I said if you don't need my politics then I abandon politics. No one will be responsible for my workers who go where and join what party.

It is better to run shop of pikoras than this politics, he held. Who has advised me has passed away and I have come here leaving his burial. I came here to talk but I was not heard. Today I announce to resign from assembly. If this assembly does not hear our voice then there is no use of sitting in this assembly.

65000 voters will become displeased with me. But I apologize.



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

## "Terrorism incidents are part of international game": BA unanimously adopts resolution condemning recent incidents of terrorism in Balochistan

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Balochistan Assembly unanimously adopted the resolution condemning incidents of terrorism took place in different parts of the province, here on Tuesday.

The Speaker, Captain (Retd) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai was in the chair with Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti also in attendance.

The joint condemnation resolution was tabled by the Provincial Minister

for Agriculture, Mir Ali Madad Jatak on behalf of some fellow Ministers and parliamentary secretaries.

The resolution was approved after lengthy debate on it. The Chief Minister wended up debate on the resolution.

Expressing view on the resolution, the Provincial Minister for Livestock, Bakht Muhammad Kakar said that there was blood bath of innocent people on highways of the province on August 26.

He said that the passen-

gers were assassinated in front of their families. He also said that the conspiracy was made against the federating units of the country.

He said that the elements involved in the incidents of terrorism are closing doors of livelihood on the Balochi and Pashto speaking people doing business in other provinces by carrying out such acts.

He said that the economic massacre of the truck drivers of the province is also being done.

## Deputy PM, US Ambassador discuss bilateral ties

ISLAMABAD (Online): US Ambassador Donald Blome called on Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar in Islamabad Tuesday.

The discussion covered various aspects of Pakistan-US bilateral relations including avenues for enhanced cooperation in diverse fields.

They also discussed matters relating to the upcoming session of the UN General Assembly.

## SSGC MD Imran Maniar steps down

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Managing Director (MD) of Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) Imran Maniar has resigned from his position to "pursue other opportunities".

Imran Maniar was already working on a six-month contract extension going to be ended on September 13.

Imran Maniar excused from taking another extension as Managing Director SSGC and maintained that he would not be available after September 13.

Imran Maniar was appointed as managing director of SSGC in February 2021.

Meanwhile, the SSGC informed the Stock Exchange about the resignation of the development through a notice.

## Appreciates active role of CTP to eliminate miscreants: CM assures to extend wholehearted assistance to police deal with challenge of terrorism

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfaraz Bugti has assured that the government would extend wholehearted assistance to the police force to deal with the challenge of terrorism in the province.

He said that we would provide all required resources to the police, however, we would also review its performance on permanent basis.

The Chief Minister was speaking to the newly posted



Inspector General of Police Balochistan, Moazzam Jah Ansari, who called on him here on Tuesday.

The Chief Minister issued certain directives to the IGP for bringing improvement in the overall law and order situation and prevention of the crimes and terrorism in the province.

He directed to the IGP to take effective steps for prevention of the incidents of kidnapping for ransom, robberies and street crimes in addition to the terrorism.

He further directed to take those involved in the kidnapping for ransom and land grabbers to the task.

In addition to this, he directed to make coordination among the police stations more effective by updating the profiling of the criminals.

Similarly, he also directed to improve the process of interrogation making the training courses of the police compatible with the current circumstances.

## Bill moved in NA seeking ban on dual nationality of judges, bureaucrats

ISLAMABAD (INP): An amendment bill to impose a ban on the dual nationality of judges and bureaucrats has been laid in the National Assembly on Tuesday.

According to media reports, the bill was moved by the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl group (JUI-F) parliamentarian Noor Alam Khan in the assembly.

Noor Alam Khan argued in the house that dual citizenship for judges of the

Supreme Court and High Court, as well as for bureaucrats, should be terminated to uphold the integrity and impartiality of these key public service roles.

The JUI-F parliamentarian highlighted that a similar ban is already in place for the President, Prime Minister, and members of Parliament. The bill has been referred to the Standing Committee by the Chair, where it will undergo review.

## SC issued judgment for removal of restaurants to protect environment: CJP

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa on Tuesday remarked that the top court has issued judgment for removal of restaurants from Margalla Hills National Park to protect the natural environment.

The court reserved its verdict on the review petition against the verdict for removal of restaurants including Monal from national park.

A three-member bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa

heard the review petition against the verdict for removal of restaurants. Lawyer Naem Bukhari appeared before the court on behalf of the petitioner.

The CJP remarked that the country was destroyed by climate change, but the goal here is to just make money. If permission was given to build a small hut, big palaces were built.

He said that if restaurants are built everywhere in the National Park area, then Islamabad may be affected by landslides.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq addressing the participants of the Seminar on "Parliamentary consultation on strategic options for electricity distribution system in Pakistan."

## Deputy Commissioner's Special Directive: Tehsildar inspects 250 market at Pak-Iran border

Independent Report

GWADAR/JIWI: On the special instructions of Deputy Commissioner Hamoodur Rehman, Tehsildar Jiwni Azam Khan Gichki conducted a detailed visit to the 250 Market located on the Pak-Iran border. The purpose of the visit was to address public complaints regarding the high prices of essential items in the market.

During the visit, Tehsildar Azam Khan Gichki thoroughly inspected various shops, restaurants, barber shops, and other business centers in the market. He not only re-

viewed the prices of items but also paid special attention to cleanliness and quality to ensure that the public receives quality items at reasonable prices.

After the visit, Tehsildar Jiwni announced that a government-approved price list will be issued for the market to control the prices of essential items. This will enable the public and travelers to access items at reasonable prices and eliminate inflation.

The Tehsildar's visit has not only promptly addressed public complaints but also improved price control and quality in the market.

## Use of social media without permission by govt employees banned

ISLAMABAD (Online): Federal government has imposed ban on government employees for using social media without permission.

It has been said in a circular issued by establishment division that government employees cannot use social media platform without permission.

According to memorandum this decision has been taken for preventing official information and documents from becoming leaked. The government employees therein have been directed to uphold government servants (conduct) rules 1964.

It has been said in the memorandum government employee cannot express views or give statement on social media without permission. Government employee cannot share documents or information with irrelevant persons. The government employees cannot give any opinion or state the facts which affects government prestige.

## Durra Baloch posted as Secretary Industries & Commerce

QUETTA: The Grade-19 Officer of Balochistan Secretariat Service (BSS), Durra Baloch, who was posted as the Secretary Industries and Commerce, Balochistan.

This was announced in an official notification issued here on Tuesday.

According to the notification, Secretary Public Health Engineering, Imran Taj Gichki, who was assigned additional charge of the Secretary Industries, has been relieved from the responsibilities.

## IMF rejects Punjab's electricity bill subsidy, warns of loan program risk

ISLAMABAD (INP): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has rejected the proposal to provide subsidies on electricity bills, warning that such measures could jeopardize Pakistan's ongoing loan program.

According to sources, the IMF has taken a firm stance, asserting that neither the central nor provincial governments are authorized to offer subsidies on electricity bills. The IMF specifically raised concerns over the Punjab government's recent subsidy initiative, which provided a significant relief of PKR 14 per unit for consumers using between 200 to 500 units of electricity.

The IMF has emphasized that subsidies in the energy sector, including electricity and gas, are not permissible under the current agreement with Pakistan. The financial institution has demanded that all such subsidies be withdrawn by September.



QUETTA: Commissioner Quetta Division Hamza Shafqaat meeting with Provincial Ombudsman Balochistan Nazam Muhammad Baloch



Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

Wednesday September 04, 2024

## The way out

Our politicians seem to have no appetite for politics: they would all rather ride to power in a jeep than on the shoulders of the masses they claim to represent. Despite the wanton destruction wrought on the structural framework of Pakistani democracy over the last two years, neither its victims nor its beneficiaries seem to have had enough.

Instead of reverting to the constitutional order, they want things to continue hurtling towards more instability and disorder. Politicians repeatedly reject the most sensible paths forward, thereby ensuring that any salvation for the country keeps being put off. This is an immense disservice to the people of Pakistan. Politics and leadership are not a zero-sum game, yet they are now regarded as such. Perhaps this is an inevitable outcome of the militarisation of politics, but the notion needs to be consciously rejected for the country to move forward.

The PTI has once again ruled out the possibility of talks with the government. The snub came in response to a proposal made by PML-N chief Nawaz Sharif for an all-parties effort to pull the country out of its crises. The PTI's position is that it does not see the PML-N or its allies in the coalition government as legitimate counterparties because it believes they won through a rigged election. Instead, the PTI only wishes to speak to the security establishment, which, paradoxically, it also repeatedly condemns as the main force behind its ongoing victimisation.

But if the PTI is willing to let bygones be bygones when it comes to the armed forces, why can it not extend the same courtesy to its rival parties, which, for all their flaws, represent the people of Pakistan? For this, it has no reasonable answer.

Meanwhile, the PML-N and its allies continue to dig deeper into the hole. Once seen as the protectors of Pakistan's democratic order, they have lately defaulted to using scorched-earth tactics in their desperation to keep the PTI out of power. In April 2022, when they ousted the PTI government over its oppressive policies, few would have expected they would midwife Pakistan's rapid slide towards totalitarianism.

Yet here we are, with each day bringing with it a new scheme to thwart the Supreme Court or subvert the constitutional order. Due to their clumsy wielding of power, they have made it progressively more difficult for all stakeholders to retreat from their positions. For instance, negotiation and dialogue would have seemed much more plausible had the government kept its distance from the persecution of political opponents and refused to upend democratic principles in exchange for retaining power.

There are now only difficult ways out of this mess. Politics requires compromise. Till the civilian leadership accepts this, nothing can be expected to change.

Arifa Noor

Delulu is the solulu  
Origin: Gen Z fans  
Meaning: The latest version of 'fake it till you make it' or being delusional is the solution

Current location: In the minds of the boomers and Gen X ruling the roost in the land of the pure

Over the weekend, a university professor in Karachi was picked up for some hours after he tweeted about the pressure on the university syndicate which was faced with a case about a student's degree.

It may seem like a small, local issue, but it was not. Students, degrees and university administrations are hardly out of the routine. But as the professor spent hours at one police station and then another while his wife, colleagues and others tweeted up a storm of protest, those of us who were following it on X just couldn't look away.

And not just because of the professor's incarceration but because of who the 'student' he

tweeted about was. A judge of the high court, the same high court, by the way, the judges of which had complained in a letter about being harassed.

And since then, it seems there is no end to the skeletons in their closet so much so that cases about their 'misconduct' have reached the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC). One of them had a fake degree and another dual nationality. And while the SJC slept on, the university where he studied was alerted to his 'fake' degree, after decades of his practice as a lawyer and years of 'judgery'.

But to return to the professor.

He spent hours at two police stations, was then released after which he proceeded to speak publicly about the matter before the university syndicate. And how his 'arrest' (or was it a detention?) meant he was unable to voice his views during the syndicate meeting. And he wasn't wrong — because after his quick 'arrest' and return, the newspapers the next day reported that "a

judge" has had his degree cancelled!

In some of the reports, the judge remained nameless while in others the cancellation was reported without any official confirmation. The ever-reliable zari or 'sources' come to the rescue of those who matter. That the degree was revoked without the 'student' having been given the opportunity to defend himself is perhaps a minor issue. Very minor.

To some extent, none of this was surprising. The manipulation by those in power is now about as subtle as Mr Bean's expressions or Joan Rivers' cosmetic procedures.

And yet, some think they can explain it away.

So the next day, the police in Karachi put out a tweet (remember the app is banned) to 'explain' the 'incident'. Apparently, the police were informed about a 'wanted' (ishthehaar) and this is why the professor was brought in for questioning. But once he explained why the case had been registered against him but that he was acquitted by the courts, he was

allowed to leave.

Indeed! In a country where militants carry out attacks on a regular basis, mullahs and others on the Fourth Schedule even leave the country for travel before returning and cases against politicians open and shut with surprising ease, the police in one thana became an efficient machine for a few hours and were not willing to relent till they had reached the truth in the case of one professor.

As Gen Z says, delulu is the solulu. And so the powers that be are convinced they will continue to fake it, till they make it because the rest of us have been lobotomised.

In Islamabad, parliamentary sessions are called abruptly, with much speculation over the agenda. As the government looks away, lone rangers in parliament, many of them newbies who are quick to please, present complicated legislative bills, as private members' bills. The government ministers bat their eyelashes like innocent Disney princesses while the

backbenchers on the treasury benches along with allies all decide to vote for bills. Because the legislation put together by individuals was so brilliant, it was backed by all other individuals who just happen to be entire parties in the legislatures.

If these bills happen to deal with difficult decisions or judges who are causing a few headaches to some people somewhere on elections, and related matters, what a coincidence. Just like a meet-cute sets up for a rom-com which will lead to happily ever after and a couple of hours of oblivion for the viewers. No one is there to look for loopholes.

So if the judiciary wanted to give the independent members in parliament to be given the chance to join PTI, the new laws passed by our legislators say members can't make this choice after three days. Another new eager beaver has presented a bill, which as law, will give the government power to move judges from one high court to another. If these

judges happen to include the one with the "fake degree" or "dual nationality" it will be another coincidence.

And why shouldn't the people believe it? After all, there was no ban on X for the longest; there was no firewall or "fibre wall" slowing down the internet, till one day a web management system was being upgraded which then gave way to bad, bad VPNs slowing down the internet. But then it turned out the cables had been damaged. The issue will be fixed in October, though this remains subject to further updates.

And on the other side of the aisle, the PTI tells us it believes in democracy and the rule of law and will hence hold talks with the military establishment within the confines of the Constitution.

The boomers and Gen X have gone delulu, convinced that they will make it eventually by faking it. The rest of us watch on, knowing no one has a solulu.

## Stop fearing ordinary people

Jawed Naqvi

The legendary public intellectual and political analyst Abdul Ghafoor Noorani, who passed away at 93 in Mumbai last week, had believed that Narendra Modi's foreign policy flowed from his ideological prejudice cradled in Hindutva.

What that entailed was threefold: making India umbilically inseparable from the West given Hindutva's visceral hatred of communism from its inception. It is another matter that the Cold War is over and the hatred of communism has outlived its utility. The US is courting communist Vietnam without giving up entirely on communist China. Second — even though it required a marked paring down of Hindutva's love of Hitler — a fawning relationship with Islamophobic Israel has defined India's recent policy preferences.

Modi's seeking a second term for Donald Trump in 2020 was of a piece with his anti-Muslim politics. India's recently unveiled citizenship laws came from this prejudice. A third constant

in the Modi foreign policy, according to Noorani sahib, was the lure of acceptance with the Indian diaspora, chiefly the type managed and plied by Hindutva's overseas infrastructures. The Howdy Modi element has thus remained a mainstay of the policy.

How does the South Asia neighbourhood appear in this preordained ideological posture?

"The era of uninterrupted dialogue is over," says India's foreign minister although the claim is problematic on two grounds. First, there's scant evidence of any uninterrupted dialogue happening ever with Pakistan. Two, who will talk to Pakistan about issues raised by India on the political violence in Kashmir if not India?

The foreign minister's remarks, reportedly made at a private event last week, were said to re-frame the country's future ties with Pakistan. S. Jaishankar said India would respond in kind to adverse signals from Pakistan. The threat has been milked dry by the current government. Many Indians, including a former

governor of Jammu and Kashmir, once closely allied with PM Modi, have learnt to take such claims with a pinch of salt. S. Jaishankar also said India would yield to positive gestures from across the border. That's a relief.

Given that the current ruling dispensation in Pakistan is also known to take its cue from Washington, there should be room for some kind of rapprochement between the leaders who belong to the same international corner. Except that with his vague remarks, the foreign minister has added needless mystery to the suspense about whether Modi would attend the Shanghai club's summit in Islamabad in October or skip it as he did with the one in July in Kazakhstan.

Now, Kazakhstan has had no axe to grind with New Delhi over Kashmir or any other dispute that Pakistan obviously does. Yet Modi didn't go to Kazakhstan, citing engagements at parliament, reportedly. Ergo: India can have more than one reason to skip an international gathering, particularly if led by China or Russia.

One can't be faulted for concluding that India thinks hard about being on a diplomatic circuit if it has the potential to rile its Western minders. It has been argued that India kept the Russian oil imports going, which deserved to be hailed as a brave and defiant stand. A closer scrutiny reveals that the embargoed trade suited the West in a duplicitous way given that substantial quantities of refined petroleum from Russian oil treated in Indian refineries were destined for European markets. The BBC did once report that the UK government was looking into the "loophole" about its indirect imports of Russian oil refined in India. We have been waiting for a follow-up on the story by the outlet ever since.

The Modi government's unusual business interests had somehow eluded Noorani's radar in assessing Indian foreign policy. One such interest reportedly underpinned the policy towards the unpopular and autocratic Hasina Wajed government in Bangladesh. A controversial coal-fired thermal

power deal with Dhaka was struck with the Adani group whereby electricity produced allegedly with imported dirty coal in Jharkhand would be sold to Bangladesh.

The Adani group has been in the crosshairs of Indian opposition parties for its unhealthy proximity to the prime minister. His deal doesn't seem to have found favour with the drastically changed circumstances in Dhaka and is cited as one of the lapses by the ousted regime in dealing with India. In an interview with Karan Thapar, a Bangladeshi editor regrettably noted that there was palpable antipathy in his country towards India.

One had asked a similar question of former military ruler Gen H.M. Ershad in 1997. Ershad was the host of the first Saarc summit in Dhaka in 1985. I asked him the reason for hosting the disparate group and then setting up a formal club. His comments were recorded in a TV documentary on Saarc sponsored by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs. "We were all allergic to India. So, we decided to come together to deal with

our common challenge."

Looking back at the 1985 meeting, it comprised leaders who didn't see eye to eye with India. Junius Jayewardene from Sri Lanka, Gen Ziaul Haq from Pakistan, King Birendra from Nepal all had a Cold War mistrust of Delhi. It was difficult to understand Bangladesh's grouse with Rajiv Gandhi though. "India helped you win independence, so why this bristling?" Ershad's reply could at least partly explain the journalist's complaint to Thapar the other day. "First you sent the army to help us. Then you sent the baniya to subjugate us."

The remedy? Try removing our governments from the frame in dealing with each other in South Asia. What you would find are ordinary people from a different stratosphere. Like the one shared by the javelin heroes of the two countries whose mothers told us ever so movingly that they prayed for Arshad Nadeem and Neeraj Chopra with equal love and faith.

As Noorani sahib would say, the bonding was the missing antidote to the narrowness with which South Asians are kept separate from each other.

## Schools and climate

Dure Sameen Akhund

As a mother of two school-going children, the record-breaking heatwave experienced in Karachi this year has heightened my concern about the growing impact of climate change on our children's health, safety, and education. According to the Asian Development Bank, heatwave days in Pakistan increased by 31 days annually between 1980 and 2007, with coastal temperatures rising by one degree Celsius. Pakistan's temperature rise is set to exceed the global average, making this relentless heat our new reality. Despite this, educational institutions have remained disturbingly inactive. With climate risks now the norm, the education ministries and schools must step up, take decisive action, and ensure our children have a safe and supportive learning environment in the face of this escalating crisis.

Schools, as microcosms of society, are on the front line of this crisis. The intense heat is more than uncomfortable — it's harmful, impacting students' health and learning. Reports of dehydration and heat-related illnesses highlight our education system's inadequate infrastructure, with many schools lacking proper ventilation and shade. The response from institutions and policymakers has been sluggish, relying on temporary fixes like adjusted timings. It's time for meaningful, structural changes.

The 2022 floods destroyed over 30,000 schools, underscoring the vulnerability of our educational infrastructure. This crisis is an opportunity to rebuild climate-resilient schools. We must

implement a uniform building code that prioritises climate adaptation — improving ventilation, installing reflective roofs, and creating shaded areas. Schools should lead in sustainability by adopting solar panels, which reduce energy costs, cut reliance on non-renewable sources, and ensure power during outages, providing a more comfortable learning environment for our children.

The National Climate Change Policy adopted in 2021 overlooks the impact of climate change on educational institutions, leaving them without clear guidelines for adapting to rising temperatures and extreme weather. This gap highlights the urgent need for the climate change and education ministries to collaborate on long-term strategies that go beyond short-term solutions like reduced school hours or rainy season closures, which disrupt education. Private schools should engage consultants to develop sustainable plans that address climate risks and protect the education and well-being of our future generations.

All education ministries must revise the academic calendar to align with new climate realities. Adjusting summer and winter vacations to account for delayed winters and earlier peak summers will better protect students' health and ensure effective learning, rather than relying on temporary schedule changes. Schools also play a crucial role by making small but impactful adjustments, such as planting trees and creating green spaces all around school premises. Research shows that vegetated areas lower temperatures, creating cooler, more comfortable spaces. This

is a cost-effective way for schools to enhance the learning environment, while fostering ecological awareness among students.

The standard school uniform needs a redesign to suit the hotter climate. Lightweight, breathable fabrics and mandatory caps during peak summers should become standard to enhance student comfort and safety. Schools must ensure that uniform vendors meet quality standards to protect all students adequately. Scheduling school activities also requires immediate revision. Out-do--or sports and other activities should be held during cooler parts of the day to minimise heat-related illnesses. Scho-ols can enhance outdoor areas by planting trees and installing canopies to provide ample shade, ensuring a safer environment for students.

Curriculum reforms are crucial for shaping how students understand and respond to climate change. By integrating comprehensive environmental education, students will not only learn about climate impacts but also develop the skills to take sustainable actions. Practical experiences, like gardening and recycling, foster environmental stewardship and a deep connection with nature.

Schools can lead by example, demonstrating sustainable operations and green infrastructure as real-world applications of classroom lessons. This approach ensures students practice sustainability daily, embedding these critical values in their lives. By embracing these changes, Pakistan's schools will not only become safer and more conducive to learning but will also prepare students to lead sustainable lives in a climate-challenged world.

## Election imbroglio

Dr Niaz Murtaza

More than six months after one of our most blatantly rigged elections, we have barely inched forward on resolving election disputes. A recent Faen report shows that 23 election tribunals have so far decided only 25 petitions, on average one each, with 16 rejected and nine abandoned by petitioners.

Balochistan tribunals alone have decided 14 of them. But tribunals in Islamabad and Punjab — the sites of the most serious rigging charges and handling nearly 50 per cent of the 377 national and provincial petitions against 36pc of all assembly seats — have decided only one case. They have been largely inoperative due to disputes between the executive, ECP and courts over their formation. Common sense and justice say that since the executive and ECP stand accused of rigging, high courts must decide this matter. Yet, the matters drag on in the SC and IHC strangely even after months.

Thus, the deadline for petitions' disposal will be violated in most cases. Such delays are routine in Pakistan. However, delays this time are more iffy as in many cases, the rigging charges centre simply on the ECP having doctored the consolidation in Form 47 to change the Form 45 results issued by each polling station for a seat. Such a simple matter should have taken two to three weeks to resolve for all cases. That it remains in limbo even after months suggests foul play and foot dragging by the ECP, executive, and the invisibly omnipresent establishment and even parts of the judiciary.

This is unsurprising as their quick disposal may cause a political

earthquake. PTI-backed candidates have filed the most petitions: 188 or nearly 50pc of all petitions, including 76 for national and 72 for Punjab assemblies. Smaller progressive parties have petitions too. There are also the contested reserved seats that rightfully are PTI's. If all these issues are justly resolved, the rigged centre and Punjab set-ups led by the uncle-niece Sharifs may quickly fold. The key person for resolving matters is the Supreme Court chief justice. That is why we see the tornado of gossip engulfing Islamabad about the PML-N's devious plans to retain the current CJP to protect its interests. The new CJP may not nix the 2024 polls directly, as some fear, but by acting quickly on the tribunals and reserved seats issues, he may open the floodgates that quickly drown the sorry-looking PML-N setup.

This would not just be a blow for the PML-N but also for the establishment. The fundamental logic governing Pakistan is not its Constitution but the unwritten law that every institution and law, including Constitution, courts, ECP, executive, parliament, bureaucracy, media and civil society can be manipulated or damaged to give even tactical gains to the establishment. If the new CJP takes over and acts freely, one may see a ferocious reaction. Thus, the coming months may see much mayhem.

These are not the first elections to be rigged. The 2018 ones were rigged too, though not as badly as 2024. But the 2018 rigging had its own significance as it came after two relatively fair polls (2008 and 2013). That had given hope to diehard democrats that we are finally seeing the political le-

gitimacy that may lead to political stability, security and economic progress. Yet, that was not to be and now we are so far from all those outcomes that it is hard to even see a U-turn back to them in the foreseeable future. And then there are numerous earlier polls rigged by the powers that be against only one rigged by civilians (1977). The victim parties in one election have often been aggressors/victims in others, like PTI and PML-N, but with the establishment always being the real covert winner.

Neutral caretakers was our way to stop rigging. They do have their value aga-i-nst rigging by ci--vilians as Ba--ng-l-adesh's case shows. It had three fair polls under them and three rigged polls after nixing them. But even they fail when the elephant in the room tramples over electoral integrity. Constitutional tools won't stop it; only huge political mobilisation will.

Our four partly fair polls ('71, '88, '08 and '13) were all held after each of the three eras of open establishment rule for around a decade each and there was immense foreign, domestic and even pressure within the ranks for it to quit politics.

It has ruled covertly since 2018 but has caused huge problems to Pakistan in every field.

Thus, the time is ripe for civil society actors to organise themselves to put pressure on the three major and other parties to stop being pawns and sign charters of democracy and governance to keep the establishment out and deliver civilian sway and able rule.



## NA told Plan devised to bring barren land for cultivation under Green Pakistan Initiative

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Water Resources Dr Musadik Masood Malik on Tuesday informed the National Assembly that under Green Pakistan Initiative, a plan has been devised to bring barren land in the country under cultivation and enhanced per acre crops productivity through employing various modern techniques.

Responding to a calling attention notice raised by Syed Naveed Qamar and others regarding the news in the media of 4.8 million acres of land being given for corporate farming resulting in diversion of water, he said 812,000 acres of land has been acquired so far to bring barren land under cultivation.

He said it would be a joint venture and so far

Punjab and Sindh have transferred land. However, other provinces and Gilgit-Baltistan have not yet transferred land.

The minister said a company has also been registered under green initiatives. Under the plan, 40 per cent revenue each would be given to the respective province and investors while remaining 20 per cent revenue would be purely specified for research and development (R&D) in this sector.

He said required irrigation water for the scheme would be provided from share of the respective province. Around 400,000 acres command area would come under the Cholistan scheme in Punjab, he said.

He said the project would cost Rs 211 billion under which 296 kilometer long canal would be constructed. It would

consist of 176 km long Cholistan Canal and 120 km Marur Canal, he added.

He categorically said that water distribution in the said canals would be purely met through the share of respective provinces and Indus River System Authority (IRSA) would issue proper certificate in this regard.

The Cholistan Canal would get water for four months from share of Punjab province while for 2 months it would feed through flood water, he said.

Responding to a point raised by Syed Naveed Qamar, the minister said the federal government could not ask from the provinces about their water share distribution in their respective provinces after the 18<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb held a meeting today with Mikko Keto, the Global CEO of FLSmidth, a leading global provider of engineering and equipment for the mining and cement industries.

## PBC launched in Sharjah to enhance Pak-UAE economic, investment cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) has officially launched the Pakistan Business Council in Sharjah, aimed at expanding economic cooperation between the business communities of the Emirates and Pakistan.

This initiative aims to boost trade and investment exchanges, capitalize on available opportunities for mutual benefit, and contribute to the growth of the private sector while enhancing its role in comprehensive economic development, according to a press release received here Tuesday.

Held at SCCI's headquarters, the inauguration ceremony was attended by Abdallah Sultan Al Owais, Chairman of the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce, and Industry; Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, Ambassador of Pakistan in the UAE, and Waleed Abdul Rahman Bukhatir, Second Vice Chairman of the Sharjah Chamber, Hussain Muhammad, Consul General Pakistan along with key members of the Chamber's Board of Directors.

Also present were Mohammad Ahmed Amin Al Awadi, Director-General of SCCI; Abdulaziz Al Shamsi, Assistant Director-General for Communication and Business Sector at SCCI; Fatema Khalifa Al Muqarrab, Director of International Relations Department at SCCI, and Syed Muhammad Tahir, Chairman of the Founding Committee of Pakistan Business Council, as well as representatives of the Pakistani business community in Sharjah.

In his remarks, Abdallah Sultan Al Owais affirmed that launching the Pakistan Business Council in Sharjah marked a significant new addition to the network of business councils operating under the umbrella of the Sharjah Chamber.

These councils offer ideal platforms for companies to connect, collaborate, and form win-win partnerships that benefit everyone involved, he added.

He further noted that the new council was a key part of SCCI's strategy to expand the number of business councils and capitalize on their role in enhancing economic collaboration, fostering cross-border partnerships among entrepreneurs and investors, and strengthening investment

## Finance Minister discusses investment opportunities with FLSmidth's Global CEO

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb here on Tuesday held a meeting with Mikko Keto, Global Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of FLSmidth, a leading global provider of engineering and equipment for the mining and cement industries.

The meeting was also attended by Ambassador of Denmark, Jakob Linulf, senior officials from FLSmidth and the Finance Division, according to press release issued by finance ministry.

The Finance Minister

emphasized Pakistan's strategic shift towards an export-led growth model aimed at ensuring sustainable economic development across various sectors.

He also highlighted the government's ongoing efforts in the form of comprehensive reforms in the energy and power sectors, privatization of state-owned enterprises, and restructuring of the tax system and public expenditure.

The minister underscored the government's commitment to facilitating private sector-led growth, with the

state focusing on creating a business-friendly environment.

"We are determined to pursue our change agenda despite resistance from those favoring the status quo. The private sector must lead the way, and our role is to ensure maximum facilitation," he added. The minister assured the delegation of Pakistan's dedication to providing a favorable and conducive investment climate for foreign investors. On the occasion, Mikko Keto expressed his appreciation for the support provided by the government of Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja chairs the 50th Universal Service Fund (USF) Policy Committee meeting.

## Jazz, Mobilink bank forge strategic alliance to strengthen digital financial inclusion

ISLAMABAD (APP): Jazz, Pakistan's leading digital operator, and Mobilink Microfinance Bank Limited (MMBL), the country's leading digital microfinance bank, have combined their strengths to advance financial inclusion and empowerment throughout Pakistan.

This partnership marks a significant milestone in the digital transformation of the nation's financial services, with the dual objectives of substantially enhancing customer engagement, and expanding digital literacy and inclusion, said a news release.

By synergizing their unique capabilities, this partnership will spearhead a women's entrepreneurship initiative dedicated to empowering female customers by providing them with essential digital assets.

As part of this initiative, female lenders will be provided with complementary smartphones equipped with Jazz SIMs, which will come with 12 months of free data and preloaded applications to improve data accessibility and

ensure smooth access to essential financial services.

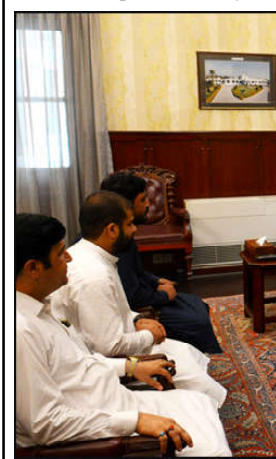
In addition, the collaboration introduces an innovative RRBT (Reverse Ring Back Tone) loan recovery campaign, which will deliver personalized MMBL messages to customers during their calls, thereby fostering more effective engagement.

This RRBT service, while serving as a tool for payment reminders, also presents an opportunity to showcase MMBL's new products and services, cultivating a more informed and engaged customer base.

Kazim Mujtaba, President Consumer Division at Jazz, commented, "This partnership with Mobilink Bank underscores our commitment to innovation and customer-centric solutions. By drawing on each other's strengths, we are leveraging digital technology to not only enhance customer communication but also advance women's empowerment through digital inclusion and entrepreneurship. This initiative aligns with our new ServiceCo model and our broader vision of a digitally inclusive Pakistan."

## PSX gains 73 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) gained 73.02 points on Tuesday, showing a positive change of 0.09 percent, closing at 78,356.32 points against 78,283.30 points on the last working day. A total of 436,672,976 shares were traded during the day as compared to 457,280,204 shares the previous day.



PESHAWAR: A representative delegation of Clearing Agent Association led by Ziaulla Afridi called on Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi at Governor House.

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where two ships, Meratus Jayawijaya and DSI Pyxis carrying Container and Coal, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal and Pakistan Bulk Terminal respectively on Monday.

Meanwhile four more ships, Ph Minh Giang, CP Shenzhen, New Levant and Clipper Kythira scheduled to load/offload River Sand, Cement, Peas and Coal are arrived at outer anchorage port during last 24 hours.

A total of nine ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them three ships, Lusail.

## Pak-US trade witnesses over 9% surplus in July

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's goods and services trade with the United States (US) witnessed a surplus of 9.62 per cent during the first month of the current fiscal year (2024-25) compared to the corresponding month of last year.

Trade surplus during the month under review was recorded at \$290.962 million against \$265.411 million last year showing 9.62 per cent growth, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported.

The overall exports to US were recorded at US \$476.017 million during July (2024-25) against exports of US \$439.892 million during July (2023-24), showing an increase of

5.16 per cent.

Meanwhile, on a month-on-month basis, the exports to US rose by 7.26 per cent during July 2024 compared to the exports of \$443.789 million in June 2024, the SBP data revealed.

Overall Pakistan's exports to all other countries increased by 12.84 per cent in the first month, from US \$ 2.118 billion to US \$ 2.390 billion, the SBP data revealed. On the other hand, the imports from US into the country during the month under review was recorded at US \$ 185.055 million against US \$174.481 million last year, showing growth of 6.06 per cent in July (2024-25).

## Rs 23 bln USF, Rs 3.960 bln Ignite budgets approved

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Universal Service Fund (USF) Policy Committee approved a budget of Rs. 23 billion for the financial year 2024-25 during its 50<sup>th</sup> policy meeting on Tuesday.

The meeting was chaired by Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja, with Secretary IT Azfar Manzoor also in attendance, said a news release.

The committee also approved the release of the first quarter's budget for the current financial year, amounting to Rs. 5.5 billion, to the USF. USF Chief Executive Officer Chaudhary Mudassar Naveed briefed the meeting on ongoing and future projects.

Shaza Fatima Khawaja also presided over the 44<sup>th</sup> Ignite Policy Committee meeting, where a budget of Rs. 3.960 billion for FY 2024-25 was approved for Ignite.

## LESCO chief holds meeting on net metering

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Engineer Shahid Haider chaired a meeting to make the net metering process more transparent and easy here at LESCO Head Office on Tuesday.

The CEO directed the officers concerned to put in place more effective measures to prevent corruption in the net metering process, adding that zero tolerance policy should be adopted to prevent corruption so as to provide complete facilities to customers regarding net metering.

Superintending Engineers (SEs), Executive Engineers (E-Xns) and SDOs (Sub-Division Officers), Director (HR) Zameer Hussain Kolachi,



SHARJAH: Hussain Muhammad, Consul General of Pakistan meets Abdallah Sultan Al Owais, Chairman of the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce, and Industry speaking at the official launch of Pakistan Business Council in Sharjah by the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI).

## KP govt to implement 10-year new agri policy to ensure food security

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Agriculture Sajjad Barkwal has said that the provincial government would soon approve a 10-year new agriculture policy to ensure food security in the region.

Presiding over a review meeting of the Joint Coordination Committee of the Agriculture Department here, he said that under the new policy, the barren land would be made cultivable while additional suitable land would be selected for the successful cultivation of

Saffron and other crops and increase the production.

He directed that a committee should be formed to ensure the use of the funds allocated by the government for various agricultural projects promptly and in the best interest of the landowners.

The meeting attended by Secretary Agriculture Atta-ul-Rehman, DGs of all wings, and other relevant officials gave a detailed briefing to the provincial minister and told that agricultural projects in the province include 21 ADP schemes.

## Pakistan's meat exports to China surpass \$2.6 mln

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan's meat exports to China have surpassed the US\$2.6 million mark from January to July 2024, according to data released by the General Administration of Customs of China (GACC). This notable achievement underscores the growing demand for Pakistani meat products in the Chinese market, further solidifying Pakistan's position as a key exporter of quality meat.

Owais Mir, Chairman of the DEA Group and a leading meat exporter, highlighted that boiled beef

has been the primary export item driving this growth. "The surge in popularity of Pakistani boiled beef among Chinese consumers is due to its exceptional quality and competitive pricing, making it an attractive option for importers in China," he said. Mir emphasized that this development reflected the concerted efforts by both Pakistan and China to further strengthen their economic ties. "This growth in meat trade is a testament to the collaborative initiatives.



QUETTA: WAPDA Hydro Union Central Joint President and Provincial Chairman, Muhammad Ramzan Achakzai, along with others addresses to media persons during press conference held at Quetta press club.

## Milk Business: A key to alleviating poverty in rural areas of Pakistan

PESHAWAR (APP): Amidst the ongoing struggle to combat poverty in rural Pakistan, the story of Fawad Khan from Nowshera district stands out as a beacon of hope and resilience for many unemployed youth.

At just 28-year-old, Fawad's journey from unemployment to becoming a successful milk seller highlights how a simple business could transform the lives of youth of Pakistan. After completing his matriculation, Fawad faced the harsh reality of unemployment, a challenge that many in rural areas of Pakistan are grappling with.

Determined to provide a better life for his

family, he ventured into the milk business, a decision that has since proven to be life-changing. "Initially, I struggled with unemployment after completion of my matriculation," Fawad recounted in an interview with APP. "But diving into the milk business was a turning point for me. It allowed me to earn a decent livelihood and support my family besides fulfilling the education and other essential expenses of my relatives."

Fawad's daily routine begins before dawn as he travels to various villages, including Mohib Banda, Amankot, and Dheri Mian Ishaq for collection of milk from local livestock owners. The collected milk

is then sold throughout the day, often extending into the night. His dedication and hard work have paid off, allowing him to earn a reasonable income.

Describing the milk business as highly profitable, Fawad said that he collects about 20 kilograms of milk daily, purchasing it at Rs200 per kilogram and selling it for Rs240 per kilogram meaning by earning Rs40 per kilogram.

The success of his venture has not only improved his financial situation but has also enabled him to secure a visa for his brother, Akhtar Ali, to work in Dubai. Encouraged by his achievements, Fawad is now planning to further

expand his business. He intends to open a new shop in the main bazaar of Pabbi, which he hopes will boost his income and create additional opportunities.

Fawad Khan's story exemplifies how small-scale businesses like milk selling can play a crucial role in alleviating poverty in rural regions. His success underscores the potential of local enterprises to drive economic development and improve the quality of life in underserved areas.

To promote livestock and dairy development in KP, the then Govt had launched three mega projects worth Rs3,214 million under 'National Agriculture Development Program' worth over Rs309.7 billion, which

played key role in alleviation of poverty, increase meat and milk production in the province.

These gigantic projects include 'Poverty Alleviation Through Development of Rural Poultry' amounting to Rs.834 million, 'Save the Calf' worth Rs1,554 million and 'Feedlot Fattening Programme of Rs826 million, which provided much-needed relief to price-hike stricken people, women, persons with disabilities and underprivileged segments of society.

Gul Bibi, a poor housewife and mother of nine children at village Chamkani, Peshawar is among thousands of poor people and women.



HYDERABAD: Members of All Pakistan Marble Association block road as they are holding protest demonstration against prolong electricity load shedding and change the electric transformer in their area, at Maki Shah road in Hyderabad.



### Gilani emphasizes comprehensive efforts to ensure human dev., address climate crisis

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Tuesday emphasized the need for concerted and comprehensive endeavors to effectively prioritize focus on human development, invest in human capital, and address the challenges of climate change.

In this regard, he called for forging robust partnerships between government institutions, UN agencies, and civil society organizations to ensure a cohesive and effective humanitarian response. The Chairman Senate was addressing the Pakistan Humanitarian Forum (PHF) annual report launch event to acknowledge INGOs' contributions to Pakistan. He acknowledged PHF and its member organizations for consistently providing much-needed relief and assistance to the deserving and the affected during challenging circumstances over the years. He said that the true strength of a nation lies in its ability to empower marginalized and vulnerable communities. "Coming from South Punjab, I can personally relate to the struggles and aspirations of communities seeking opportunities and support to not only uplift their lot but also fuel national progress", the Chairman Senate remarked in his address.



QUETTA: Chairman Balochistan Public Service Commission Abdul Salik Khan meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of MQM (P) call on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

### Effective legislation to be made for contract policy: Govt. decides to recruit teachers on vacant posts for making closed schools functional

Chief Minister directs to make final announcement of "SBK" tests according to the orders of court

**Independent Report** QUETTA: The Government of Balochistan has decided to make recruitments of teachers on the vacant posts in order to make the closed schools functional.

All the recruitments would be made on contact while extension would be made on the basis of individuals' performance. The effective legislation would be made for the contract policy.

The decision to this effect was made during a meeting chaired by the Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti here on Tuesday. The Provincial Minister for Education, Ms. Rahila Hameed Khan Durrani, Chief Secretary, Shakeel Qadir Khan and other concerned high ups were in attendance.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister directed to make final announcement of the tests conducted by the Sardar Bahadur Khan Women University according to the orders of court.

He reiterated his government's pledge that no job would be sold out at all and added that all recruitments would be made on merit. He said that the sale of jobs is an intolerable act and as such, he directed to the concerned authorities to prepare effective mechanism for its prevention. He said that no irregularity would be tolerated at all.

### Pakistan Navy to observe two newly built warships induction in national fleet on Defence Day

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Pakistan Navy is going to observe induction of two newly built warships in the national fleet amid a massive increase in naval defence capabilities; on the occasion of Defence Day.

Pakistan Navy Ship (PNS) Babar and PNS Hunain will join the fleet of Pakistan Navy simultaneously, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

PNS Babar, the first Miljum/Babar class ship being built in Turkey, will officially become part of the Pakistan Navy.

### PM condoles demise of Saudi Princess Latifa Bint Abdulaziz

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday expressed grief and sorrow over the sad demise of Princess Latifa Bint Abdulaziz Al-Saud of Saudi Arabia.

The prime minister, in a social media post on X, conveyed his condolences to Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. "Deeply grieved to learn about the sad demise of Princess Latifa. We convey our deepest condolences to the Royal family, the leadership and the people of Saudi Arabia," said the prime minister.

### MQM delegation meets PM; lauds pro-business, export growth policies

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) Pakistan on Tuesday called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and appreciated his economic policies which led to the reduction in the inflation rate to a single-digit.

The MQM delegation, which was headed by party chairman and Minister for Science and Technology, Federal Education and Professional Training Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui and comprised MNAs Dr Farooq Sattar, Mustafa Kamal and Syed Aminul Haq, also lauded the prime minister's business-friendly policies and measures to boost country's exports, according to a PM Office press release.

The delegation members put forward their proposals for economic development and uplift of the people of the country's economic hubs, particularly those of Karachi. Calling the MQM a key coalition partner, the prime minister said that the work on national development initiatives was at a swift pace in coordination with the coalition parties.

He assured the delegation that the resolution of the issues confronting Karachi city was among the government's priorities for it being the most important one and a backbone of the national economy.

### CDWP okays eight development projects worth Rs144.3 bln

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives (PDSI) & Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday chaired a meeting of the Central Development Working Party (CDWP) that approved eight development projects worth of Rs144.3 billion.

"Out of these, five projects worth Rs15.35 billion have been approved by the CDWP forum, while it recommended three projects of Rs129 billion to the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) for its consideration," a news release said. The meeting was attended among others by Secretary Planning Awaiz Manzoor Sumra, Additional Secretary Planning, Members of the Planning Commission, JCE (Ops), JCE (Ep), as well as respective federal secretaries, heads of provincial departments and representatives from federal ministries and provincial governments.

During the meeting, Ahsan Iqbal expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the prime minister for entrusting him with the position of Deputy Chairman for the fourth time.

He highlighted the significance of the forum in relation to developmental projects, emphasizing that approval for development projects by CDWP exceeding one billion rupees was granted. He pointed out that in 2018, the PML-N government left Pakistan's development budget at 1,000 billion rupees.

However, six years later, the challenge remained to even maintain this figure due to the country's economic crises and the 2018-2022 era's mismanagement. He stressed that the shrinking development budget demanded a focus on sustainable growth, currency stabilization, and economic stability through resource mobilization.

The deputy chairman also noted that a more than 50 percent of the total expenditure was consumed by debt servicing.

He emphasized the need to expand the tax net and promote exports. Despite these challenges, he expressed optimism, acknowledging the government's efforts to reduce the inflation rate from 35 percent to 9.5 percent.

Ahsan Iqbal further stated that as 100 percent of federal government's net resources were consumed by debt servicing and development budget was based on borrowing essen-

relation to ensure value for money through due diligence.

He called on all provinces and ministries to exercise the utmost caution and responsibility when planning new projects.

He urged that no compromise should be made on quality while preparing PC-I documents, and that national priorities should be considered while formulating any project. "Poorly prepared project documents should be promptly returned to the respective ministries."

Ahsan Iqbal said the government was committed to turning around the economy by implementing 5Es National Economic Transformation Plan and restore 6 percent annual growth by 2029.

The CDWP approved a project "Reaching Out of School Children (OOSC) in AJK" worth Rs 7183.515 million, besides recommending the Establishment of Nawaz Sharif Institute of Cancer Treatment & Research, Lahore at the cost of Rs52772.520 million to ECNEC for consideration.

They forum also okayed four projects titled "Establishment of National Center of Artificial Intelligence (Revisited)" worth Rs1854.446 million.



QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfaraz Ahmed Bugti presiding over a meeting regarding appointment of teachers and reforms in Education Department

### Aurangzeb vows to continue with tax reforms, rightsizing for macroeconomic stability

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb here on Tuesday reaffirmed the government's resolve to carry forward the reforms agenda, aiming at broadening of the tax base and rightsizing of the federal government to achieve macroeconomic stability what he called 'basic hygiene' for sustainable growth.

In a televised message, the minister said 43 percent of sectors in the economy were paying less than 1 percent tax, curtailing the tax to GDP ratio to as low as 8.8 percent adding that this ratio needed to be lifted up to over 13 percent.

The minister requested all the potential taxpayers to come forward and contribute in country's

economy. He particularly requested wholesalers, retailers and distributors to contribute in the economic uplift of the country, adding the government would try its best to bring simplicity in tax system and accommodate their recommendations.

However, the minister stated in clear terms that government was not going to take back its decision as it would be counterproductive and create difficulties for other sectors. "One thing I want to be very clear, this is not going to be taken back, because if we do this, the other sectors, who are annoyed, would go in further difficulties."

The minister, who is also Chairman of High-Powered Committee on Rightsizing of the Federal

Government, also expressed resolve to right-size different ministries and autonomous bodies to bring down the size of federal government. He said six ministries have been given two weeks to prepare implementation plan for rightsizing, keeping in view their employees, resources, properties and litigation matters. "Once the programme is executed, other ministries would be taken for the same process."

He said, ministries and autonomous bodies were given opportunity to share their performance and justify what they have contributed in national economy. He said, the government would need to bring legislative changes in Civil Servant Act 1973 with the help of coalition partners.

### Ministers, ACS, IGP participate in funeral: Police Sub-Inspector gunned down by unknown armed assailants in Quetta

**Independent Report** QUETTA: A Sub-Inspector of Police, Amanullah was shot dead by unknown armed men in Killi Deba area of Quetta on Tuesday morning.

The police sources informed that the Sub-Inspector of Police was on his way riding in his personal vehicle when some unknown armed assailants approached him and shot him from the close range. They fled from the scene leaving the police cop in pool of blood.

As a result of firing, the police cop got injured seriously. He was brought to the Sandeman Provincial Hospital, however, he succumbed to his serious wounds and died.

In the meantime, the police reached the spot and cordoned off the area. However, no arrest could be made.

The investigations have been started into the cold blooded murder of the Police Sub-Inspector, who was posted in the Shaheed Ameer Dasti police station.

Meanwhile, the funeral prayer of Amanullah was offered at the Central Police Office the same afternoon. The Provincial Ministers Mir Ali Madad Jatak and Bakht Muhammad Kakar, Additional Chief Secretary Home, Shahabuddin, Inspector General of Police, Moazzam Jah Ansari and other police officers participated in the funeral prayer.



ISLAMABAD: The Central Development Working Party (CDWP) has approved 8 development projects worth of Rs. 144.3 billion during its meeting chaired by Minister PDSI & Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Ahsan Iqbal.

### Drowned body recovered from Surap river in Turbat

QUETTA (APP): The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) team recovered the body of the person who drowned in the Surap river area of Turbat and handed it over to the relatives. The deceased person drowned while bathing in Surap Dam on Monday. According to PDMA, a person named Khalil Ahmed son of Rafiq Ahmed resident of Apsar drowned in Surap Dam while bathing. On which immediate action was taken by the PDMA team under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Ketch Ismail Ibrahim on special directives of DG PDMA Balochistan Jhanzaib Khan and Commissioner Makran Division along with DD PDMA Turbat.

### 5 dead in Balochistan and 4 in KP in rain related incidents

QUETTA (INP): Five children died across Balochistan while four people lost their lives in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa over the past day as monsoon rains continued to wreak havoc countrywide, officials said on Tuesday.

Deaths mount countrywide as various areas continue to receive monsoon showers along with the remnants of cyclonic storm Asna that brought with it heavy rains for Sindh and Balochistan. Since July 1, a total of 39 people have died in Balochistan in rain-related incidents. Younus Mengal, head of the Provincial Disaster Management Authority's control room, (PDMA) told.

The deceased include 19 children, five of whom died in three separate incidents on Monday, Mengal said. The PDMA official said a new spell of rain entered Balochistan a day ago and was expected to continue till tonight in 22 districts. Relief and rescue efforts were under way in the province, he added.



QUETTA: Leaders and members of Pakistan Peace Forces are holding protest demonstration to express solidarity with Pakistan Army armed forces and to condemn Terrorism in Balochistan, held at Quetta press club.

### Armed men attack marble-laden trucks in Noshki

**Independent Report** NOSHKI - Unidentified armed men opened fire on trucks carrying marble in the Sarml area of Noshki, setting one of the vehicles ablaze. According to sources from the Nushki district administration, the attackers also fired at the tires of another truck, causing them to burst. The armed men managed to escape after the incident, and no casualties have been reported, sources from the district administration confirmed. This incident has raised concerns about the security of vehicles transporting goods in the region. An investigation into the matter is underway.



QUETTA: Inspector General of Police, Balochistan is Moazzam Jah Ansari, and other offering funeral prayer of Sub-inspector who lost their life in last night firing incident.

### Fateha khawani for Zareef to be held at Governor House

**Independent Report** QUETTA: The fateha khawani for departed soul of relative of Governor Balochistan, Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail and former Senator Zareef Khan Mandokhail is scheduled to be held at Governor House tomorrow (Thursday). According to an official hand out issued here on Tuesday, the Governor Balochistan and other relatives of Sheikh Zareef Mandokhail would take fateha from 10:00 AM to Asr prayer.

### New sewage line project initiated on instructions of DG GDA

**Independent Report** GWADAR: On the instructions of Gwadar Development Authority (GDA) Director General Shafaqat Anwar Shahwani, the long-awaited new sewage line project in Mullah Kareem Bakhsh Ward has been initiated. The project was formally launched by Chief Engineer Haji Syed Muhammad and Director Environment Fazal Shahsawar yesterday.

Under this project, the new sewage line will be connected to GDA's central sewage line, which leads to the Sewage Treatment Plant. This project will not only benefit Mullah Kareem Bakhsh Ward but also nearby areas such as Captain

Murad Bakhsh Ward, Sohrahi Ward, and Sheikh Omar Ward. This is a project that has been demanded by the residents of the area for a long time, and now it has been initiated.

GDA has previously laid approximately 23 kilometers of sewage lines in various areas of the city, which is playing a crucial role in improving the health and sanitation situation in the city. Furthermore, GDA is also taking vigorous measures under the Old Town Rehabilitation Project, including road construction, improvement of sewage and drain lines, and renovation of historical buildings.

### Initiatives for women's legal aid to be supported in Balochistan, says Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi

**Independent Report** QUETTA: The Advisor to Chief Minister of Balochistan for Women Development Department, Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi has said that provincial government is committed to creating a strong support system for women across Balochistan, and legal aid is a crucial part of this effort.

These remarks were given during a meeting with a delegation of female lawyers. During the meeting, the delegation expressed their enthusiasm about the presence of a female minister leading the Women Development

Department and emphasized the need for enhanced collaboration to uplift the status of women across Balochistan.

The women lawyers proposed the creation of a new organization focused on the welfare of women, which would provide free legal aid and services to women facing legal challenges.

The initiative aims to support women who lack access to legal representation due to financial constraints, ensuring that their rights are protected and their voices heard.

Buledi welcomed the proposal and appreciated the proactive approach of the female lawyers in addressing issues faced by women in the province. She emphasized the importance of empowering women through legal support and reiterated her department's commitment to advancing women's rights and welfare.

"The Women Development Department is ready to work closely with the legal community to ensure that women have access to justice and their rights are upheld," said Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi.