

# Independent

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## President Zardari says Pakistan committed to further strengthening ties with KSA

PM reaffirms Pakistan's commitment to collaborate with KSA to promote peace, stability, development in region

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday reiterated Pakistan's commitment to further strengthening bilateral cooperation with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) in the areas of economy, trade, defence, culture, education and people-to-people contacts. The president expressed these views while addressing the National Day Reception of KSA, hosted by Saudi Embassy to celebrate the 94th Anniversary of the National Day of the KSA here. The event was attended by the federal ministers, diplomats, dignitaries, and civil and military officers. While extending heartfelt felicitations to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saud, Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin

Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saud and the people of Saudi Arabia on their National Day, the president highlighted that both brotherly countries enjoyed excellent relations in various fields and had always supported each other during challenging times. The president expressed deep appreciation for the vision of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and the significant progress achieved by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He remarked that the bold initiatives taken by the Crown Prince would propel the country towards greater progress and prosperity. The president wished Saudi Arabia continued success on this transformative journey. President Zardari expressed gratitude to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for its continued support to

Pakistan and as well as hosting nearly 2.7 million Pakistanis, who are making contributions to the Kingdom's social and economic development. He expressed confidence that the bilateral relations between the two brotherly nations would continue to further strengthen in the years to come. He emphasized that both countries would work together for the advancement of their nations, the unity of the Muslim Ummah, and the promotion of peace and stability in the region and beyond. Meanwhile Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to a strong and enduring friendship with Saudi Arabia, pledging to work together to promote peace, stability and development in the region.



President Asif Ali Zardari, Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan, Nawaf bin Saeed Ahmed Al-Malki and Chief Minister Punjab and Governor Sindh are cutting cake on the National Day of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), in Islamabad.

## SC's detailed verdict declares PTI eligible for reserved seats

## Election authorities denying major political party recognition infringes electorate's rights: SC

Constitution doesn't prevent any party from fielding candidates; Judgment nullifies ECP's decision to allocate seats to other parties

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Supreme Court on Monday released its detailed verdict on the July 12 order in the reserved seats case, which had declared the PTI a parliamentary party. The 8-5 majority July order had declared ex-premier Imran Khan's PTI eligible for seats reserved for women and minorities, dealing a major setback to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's ruling coalition. Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah had announced the majority verdict, which was supported by seven other judges: Justices Munib Akhtar, Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Ayesha A Malik, Athar Minallah, Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Shahid Waheed and Irfan Saadat Khan. The case had been heard by a 13-member bench — Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa and Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail had penned a minority judgment; Justices

Aminuddin Khan and Naeem Akhtar Afghan in their ruling had rejected the pleas for reserved seats; and Justice Yahya Afridi had also dismissed the Sunni Ittehad Council's petitions. Despite the 8-5 split, all 13 judges had declared the PTI a parliamentary party as they ruled that out of a list of 80 MNAs, 39 belonged to the PTI while 41 were given the chance to resubmit their party affiliation.

## CM Murad directs IT dept to introduce electronic mode of filing

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has directed the Information, Science and Technology Department to work out a plan to deploy an e-Office application in the departments to increase efficiency, enhanced transparency, cost-effectiveness, improved data security and better collaboration.

He issued these instructions while presiding over a meeting here at CM House on Monday. The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, Secretary to CM Raheem Shaikh, Secretary IT Noor Samoo, Secretary Service Ghulam Ali Brahmani and others concerned. The chief minister said that he wanted the government departments should adopt an electronic mode of filing/correspondence system in replacement of a manual filing system. built to perform the function/business assigned to it in the Sindh Government Rules of Business, 1986." Mr Shah said that he has a plan to introduce a paperless system in government departments by introducing a digital system or e-office. In the first phase, the departments do their official work through a digital system and phase-wise connect other departments. Secretary Information, Science & Technology Noor Samoo told the CM that in the first phase deployment of the E-Office application would be made in the IS&T Department, the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPD), Minorities Department, Social Welfare Department, Rehabilitation Department, Mines and Mineral Development Department, Inter-Provincial Coordination Department, College Education Department and STEVTA in the first phase.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah presides over the Information Technology Department meeting, held at CM House in Karachi.

## Sends birthday wishes to PM Shehbaz President Xi reaffirms time-tested Pak-China ties

PM thanks President Xi for "gracious gesture" of birthday greetings

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday sent a congratulatory letter to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, extending his warm birthday wishes and reaffirming the promotion of China-Pakistan strategic cooperation and the construction of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The letter received by Prime Minister Shehbaz on his 73rd birthday from President Xi is an extraordinary development in solidifying the diplomatic relationship between both countries, according to a

PM Office press release. Conveying his good wishes to the prime minister, Xi said that Pakistan and China had been enjoying a strategic partnership through thick and thin marked by mutual trust and support which remained unaffected by any changing international scenario. The Chinese president recalled Prime Minister Shehbaz's "successful" visit to China in June this year wherein two sides reached agreements on various matters and said that the strengthening of China-Pakistan ties was of great significance to him.

## Lt Gen Asim Malik appointed new DG ISI

ISLAMABAD (APP): Lieutenant General Muhammad Asim Malik has been appointed as the Director General Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) succeeding current Chief Lieutenant General Nadeem Anjum, and he will assume his new responsibility on September 30.



Lieutenant General Asim Malik is currently serving as Adjutant General in GHQ who has previously commanded the Infantry Division in Balochistan and the Infantry Brigade in Waziristan. Addressing a gathering in Karachi, JUI leader said that the Parliament and other institutions have also not been safe. He said Pakistan's friendly nations are also worried, how to save the country? "We are not prepared for compliance of the constitution," Fazlur Rehman said. "Bring changes (in constitution), but those changes that should not reflect your specific political interests," JUI leader said. "We have talked with the People's Party, they will give us their draft (of amendments) and we will give ours," Fazlur Rehman said. "We will pick mutually agreed points from these drafts," the JUI leader said while referring to the constitutional legislation under consideration. Pakistan People's Party's leader Nayyar Bukhari also talking with media said that the PPP working on a draft of amendments, which will be shared with the JUI and the PML-N for further discussion.



KARACHI: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) Chief, Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman exchanges views with Former Pakistan Captain and All-Rounder, Shahid Khan Afridi during meeting held in Karachi.

## Neither constitution nor law safe in country, says Fazlur Rehman

KARACHI (INP): JUI-F head Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that "neither the constitution nor the law has been safe in Pakistan. Addressing a gathering in Karachi, JUI leader said that the Parliament and other institutions have also not been safe. He said Pakistan's friendly nations are also worried, how to save the country? "We are not prepared for compliance of the constitution," Fazlur Rehman said. "Bring changes (in constitution), but those changes that should not reflect your specific political



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar addressing an important press conference.

## Azam Tarar says Lot of questions still unanswerable in SC reserved seats judgement

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar on Monday said that a lot of questions were still unanswerable in the detailed judgement announced by the Supreme Court in the reserved seats case. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), he said, had not been a party in the reserved seats case at any forum, including the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), Peshawar High Court (PHC) or the SC. He said courts were used to give decisions on principles that who had filed the case and what relief was prayed by the petitioner. Such questions were not answered in the reserved seats case as the apex court seemed to have not examined those aspects, the law minister said while addressing a press conference. Azam Tarar said that independent candidates had joined the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) willfully and that their move was irreversible as per the law. He said that the ECP was an independent institution working under constitutional oath and it had to render its responsibility under the law. Similarly, he said, that the legislation was the sole prerogative of the Parliament. The judgment had not commented on the amendments in the election law, he added.



Qatar Emiri Naval Forces delegation offering Fateha at Mazar-e-Quaid during visit to Karachi.

## Naqvi visits Saudi Embassy on National Day of Saudi Arabia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Monday visited the Saudi Embassy on the occasion of National Day of Saudi Arabia in the diplomatic enclave. He was received by the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia on his arrival. Interior Minister met with the Saudi Ambassador Nawaf bin Said Ahmed Al-Maliki. The Interior Minister congratulated Ambassador Al-Maliki on Saudi Arabia's National Day and expressed good wishes for the Saudi Royal Family and the people of Saudi Arabia. He thanked the Saudi Government and ambassador for their cooperation during difficult times, saying, "Saudi Arabia has always stood by Pakistan, whether during floods, earthquakes, economic or other challenges. Their support has been unparalleled." Mohsin Naqvi emphasized that Every Muslim holds Saudi Arabia in special esteem. He said that Saudi Arabia has consistently supported Pakistan through thick and thin, and every Pakistani takes pride in our historic friendship. Saudi Ambassador said that Saudi Arabia highly values its relations with Pakistan as Pakistan is our brotherly country.



KARACHI: View of huge fire flames and dark smokes rise from burning vehicles after fire broke out incident near Qurtaba Mosque Clifton in Shireen Jinnah Colony in Karachi.

## Iranian Consulate organizes event of traditional cuisines

KARACHI (APP): Iranian Consulate in collaboration with Consumers Association of Pakistan celebrated a mesmerizing event of traditional cuisines titled "Two Nations, One Taste" bringing together the delicious tastes and flavors of both Iran and Pakistan. Also during the event, the sanctity of the month of Rabiul Awwal was enlightened in various speeches and the teachings of Holy Prophet (PBUH) were recalled which gives a lesson of respecting humanity, implementing the system of justice, equality and brotherhood. Among the distinguished guests were the Ministers from the Sindh Cabinet, MNAs, MPAs in-

## Ji announces Gaza Million March on Oct 6, nationwide protest on Oct 7

Independent Report KARACHI: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Pakistan Ameer Engr Hafiz Naeemur Rehman has announced that the party is going to observe Gaza week with effect from Oct 1 to 7, featuring Gaza Million March in Karachi on October 6 and nationwide protest on October 7 among other highlights.



The JI supreme announced this at a press conference held at Idara Noor-e-Haq, the JI Karachi headquarters, here on Monday. He was accompanied by the JI Karachi Ameer Monem Zafar and other leaders. The JI leader was on a visit to the mega city. Talking to the media, he demanded the government to observe October 7 on the national level as an expression of solidarity with the people of Palestine and their freedom fighters. He appealed to the nation to take to roads at 12 in the noon on October 7 to express solidarity with their Palestinian brothers and sisters.



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## Fancy tax scheme

Governments propose, bureaucrats dispose — often relegating 'plans' to an existing pile of schemes gathering dust. The 'drastic measures' suggested by the country's tax bureaucracy to strengthen 'enforcement and compliance' are no different from similar, discarded strategies to boost revenue collection. To begin with, the new tax enforcement mechanism goes against the very objective of broadening the tax net and documenting the economy, as it is squeezing middle-class taxpayers further while letting tax evaders off the hook.

That is not surprising, since the new measure perpetuates a tax policy that burdens compliant taxpayers, instead of bringing tax evaders into the net. The enforcement scheme, approved by the prime minister, stops those who do not pay their income tax from purchasing assets such as cars, immovable property and financial instruments, and from opening bank accounts. However, it does not propose any step to abolish the category of non-filers that exists only in Pakistan. Likewise, FBR proposes penalising unregistered and non-compliant businesses — manufacturers, retailers, wholesalers, etc — hoping that the new steps against non-filers and non-compliant businesses will force them to eventually become taxpayers. The scheme divides active taxpayers into two distinct classes: those who declare their annual income as less than Rs10m, and those who report an income above this threshold. The proposed tax enforcement and compliance project assumes, without any evidence though, that every taxpayer falling in the first category must have underreported their incomes and should be treated as tax thieves and at par with those who do not file their taxes.

Thus, they are also liable to face the same restrictions when they go shopping for cars and immovable property or invest their money in financial instruments, unless they can explain their 'source of income'. They, nevertheless, are allowed to maintain bank accounts. However, no questions will be asked of those whose declare an annual income that is greater than Rs10m. For them, everything will be kosher.

More importantly, the mechanism increases the discretionary powers of the taxmen and opens new avenues of corruption for them, while simultaneously overriding the provisions contained in the laws to selectively and randomly audit the accounts of a certain percentage of taxpayers every year to detect underreporting of incomes. Similarly, the tax laws also provide for punitive actions against those who under-declare their incomes in their annual tax statements or do not pay taxes at all. If there are any legal loopholes, those should be plugged forthwith. We do not need new fancy mechanisms or schemes to tax those who do not pay their taxes or punish those who steal taxes. What we need is an equitable and just tax system, an efficient and honest machinery, and, above all, strong political will to broaden the base and boost revenues.

**Maleeha Lodhi**

At a time when the country is facing mounting economic, political and security challenges, the government has been expending most of its energy on either countering the opposition or trying to arbitrarily amend the Constitution. This has become a fatal distraction from governance. It is also counterproductive. Far from weakening the opposition, it is injecting greater resolve in opposition ranks to push back against the government's actions.

On the constitutional amendment, the government beat a hasty retreat as it failed to muster the necessary parliamentary numbers for the sweeping changes it sought.

Earlier this month, the PML-N government and its allies made a frantic attempt to push a controversial constitutional package through parliament in a politically motivated move. It kept the contents of the amendment under wraps, allowed no debate, yet expected lawmakers to blindly support what they had not even seen.

The aim of the judicial

re-engineering was to undermine the independence of the superior judiciary and subordinate it to the executive. Members of the legal fraternity rightly condemned this as an assault on the Constitution. The proposed establishment of a constitutional court packed with judges and headed by a judge chosen by the prime minister will denude the Supreme Court of its jurisdiction in constitutional cases.

Another provision was designed to ensure the continuance of Qazi Faez Isa, who is due to retire in October, as chief justice. The move came after a series of clashes between the government and judiciary and official frustration with judgments seen as advantaging the opposition. But for all its frantic efforts, the government faced a setback and was compelled to 'postpone' tabling the constitutional amendment for lack of the needed two-thirds majority. But it is now set to defy the Supreme Court order on reserved seats.

Meanwhile the government's efforts to contain Imran Khan's PTI have continued. It was ex-

plified by the restrictions and obstacles placed in the path of the party's public rally in Islamabad and arrests of several of its leaders. Its Lahore jalsa encountered similar impediments. This was only the latest coercive measure taken against PTI, which over the past year has involved innumerable cases against its leaders.

Aggression, however, begets aggression. The opposition sought to resist such actions by becoming more combative. PTI lawmakers are adamant on continuing their protests in parliament and outside.

The PML-N-led government has failed to see it has more to lose from unremitting confrontational politics. The political calm needed for the country to solve its fundamental problems is obviously being upended by escalation in political tensions. This has fuelled uncertainty and left the public in a state of despondency. No surprise, then, that a recent opinion survey conducted by Ipsos found 89 per cent of people felt the country was headed in the wrong direction. Nine out of 10 Pakistanis lacked confidence in the country's

future.

Parliamentary proceedings have been reduced to theatrical displays of unseemly conduct and slanging matches between the treasury and opposition benches. Instead of debating the issues that confront the country and worry the public, parliamentarians on both sides of the aisle seek to demonise each other. Talk of a dialogue between the government and opposition has remained just that — talk about talks, with neither side showing any seriousness.

Every so often, statements in parliament by government leaders about a dialogue have not led to any outreach to the opposition. For their part, PTI leaders have reiterated they will only talk to the establishment as they see the government lacking any power or legitimacy. In any case, the constitutional amendment attempt, vigorously opposed by PTI, only widened the government-opposition divide.

All this has familiar echoes of the past — a government unwilling to engage with the opposition, jailing opposition leaders, trying

to steamroll legislation and a desperate opposition in constant protest mode against a backdrop of economic gloom, weak governance and ubiquitous establishment pulling the strings from behind the scenes.

This seems like the rerun of an old movie. But it doesn't minimise the risks for the country's stability. The risks are even greater than in the past because of the intensely polarised state of the country and unprecedented confluence of challenges.

The economic challenge is, of course, the most consequential. The government might think that with the IMF expected to soon approve a \$7 billion bailout package, the worst of the country's economic troubles will be over. But the real task lies ahead to implement a tough Fund programme and take other difficult measures to stabilise an economy that is not yet out of the woods.

What the government seems unwilling to acknowledge is that political turmoil and uncertainty puts any sustainable economic recovery at risk. It also makes it harder to implement necessary but

unpopular measures. An economic rebound can only be sustained by building a high level of confidence which requires a stable and predictable political environment.

The country's deteriorating internal security situation also merits greater attention from the government. In the first eight months of the year, 757 people were reportedly killed in violent incidents. August was a particularly deadly month, with over 100 people killed in a fresh wave of militant attacks in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. On one day alone — Aug 26 — terrorism violence claimed the lives of over 50 people across Balochistan as militants stormed police stations, executed passengers on a bus, blocked roads and blew up railway tracks.

This should have prompted an urgent meeting of the National Security Committee. But the government did not convene one, while the interior minister made the astonishing claim that only one SHO (station house police officer) was enough to handle terrorism in the province. — Courtesy Dawn

## Fatal distraction

## Resolving power sector woes

**Shahid Kardar**

The task of the country's population has been reduced to keeping power sector entities afloat, by bearing unaffordable tariffs. And yet the sector's financial viability remains in doubt. How did we get here? The reasons include incompetence, misgovernance and unadulterated theft. The terms were poorly negotiated with investors.

Agreements with private IPPs were drafted with limited professional input, stained by issues of patronage and lack of transparency. The issues include currency mismatch — payments to them were denominated in dollars against revenue streams in rupees — generous concessions (for example, sovereign guaranteed returns on equity of 15 per cent in dollar terms and income tax exemptions during the contracted period), and the government covering all risks.

What's more bizarre is that government-owned power plants, managed by non-professionals, were established on the same terms as those bestowed on privately owned ones. 'Circular debt' is the outcome of these fundamental issues

that have rendered the economy uncompetitive and thus a huge constraint to sustainable growth.

Examples of incompetence include the slow pace of expansion of transmission and distribution (T&D) systems compared with the installed capacity of generation. Their capacity today is merely 22,000 MW (add to it the Lahore-Matari transmission line operating at 40pc of its designed capacity), resulting in 50pc of the generation facility being utilised but still receiving capacity payment. This liability has become excruciating, with the idle capacity payment increased from 60pc to 85pc under the 2015 policy.

The currency mismatch has induced tariff increases following the sharp adjustment in the rupee's value — from the rate when agreements were signed — and higher interest rates. This contributed to reduced demand, for reasons including the closure of several textile units and the shift off-grid by some with their own power arrangements. Sluggish growth and subdued demand necessitated that obligations for capacity payments be discharged by raising the rate per unit for

recovery from fewer consumers, a subject of widespread debate, if not anger. The burden is made more painful by taxes of almost 30pc of the electricity price.

The result is that whereas capacity utilisation costs are 30-35pc globally, ours are now 62-70pc. More importantly, 50pc of capacity payments are to government-owned generation plants. Of the remainder, 35pc goes to Chinese-imported, coal-fired, dollar-indexed projects, with the unit cost much higher than that of local coal-based plants. Other sectoral issues have been over-invoicing by IPPs, with the Central Power Purchasing Agency looking the other way, supplemented by Nepra's lack of regulatory oversight. Several public sector Gencos are old and outdated plants, resulting in inefficient fuel consumption, with low utilisation (2.7pc in the case of Jamshoro) but with a bloated idle workforce.

To address the issues, the starting point should be the Gencos commissioned by the public sector. The old ones should be quickly phased out, thereby not only minimising the payout on capacities but also enabling the operation of effi-

cient units. The terms should be renegotiated for the remaining, with lending banks (contract period, invoicing currency considering that even local resources are being priced in foreign currency, the dollar-indexed rate of return on equity, etc.). Public sector Gencos being dollar-based and dollar-indexed, the government cannot expect to negotiate different terms for privately owned IPPs. In fact, the government should take the entire associated debt onto its balance sheet to be serviced through general revenues, instead of burdening the economy's competitiveness through high tariffs.

The decision to extend the tenure of the contracts of IPPs set up under the 1994 policy was a poor one. The sustainable choice is to persuade them — the contracted period having been completed and the debt paid off — that generated energy would be procured in rupees, and only if it is at competitive rates.

The units established under the 2002 and 2006 policies, mostly by Pakistanis, should be persuaded to accept upfront a significant percentage — not the full dues — of capacity-related commitments for the

remaining contracted period of roughly two to three years, with their debt obligations discharged. Thereafter, their contracts should be renegotiated along the lines proposed for the 1994 policy.

However, for Chinese IPPs launched in 2016-17 (guaranteed 20pc in dollars), a different treatment will be required as they would resist any revision in the contracts, arguing that their contracts factored in the lessons learned from the projects commissioned under the 1994 and 2002 policies. Two possible options could be: a) extend the contract period, and b) the release of some capacity to be freely traded in the market. Finally, taxes on bills should be lowered, employing several other options to control the fiscal deficit. These interventions will enable, in the medium (three to five years) term, full exploitation of rapid technological developments in renewable energy options.

These efforts should be complemented by adequate and timely investments to address the technical inadequacies and governance issues of T&D systems.

To this end, several reforms are required in service delivery, including: a) simplification of the tariff structure, which is littered with several bands for each consumer category and encumbered by a host of cross-subsidies; b) examining the potential to outsource Discoms' management and installation of smart meters (the prepaid variety) to tackle the 17pc technical and distribution losses, corruption, consumer theft of electricity and the weak effort to collect bills amounting to some Rs600 billion (factors constraining this option, especially the single-buyer, single-seller in the value-chain, were discussed in the 'Privatisation of Discoms' in these columns); c) pricing energy on a marginal cost basis to stimulate demand and contribute to capacity payments (the scope will depend on the transmission system's capacity); d) forcing public sector defaulters to pay up or get disconnected; e) withdrawing concessional electricity provisions; and f) adopting transformer-based load-shedding, instead of the present feeder-based one. — Courtesy Dawn

## Unsustainable demand

**Waqas Bin Najib**

Pakistan's energy problems are broader than those in the electricity sector. Our domestic natural gas reserves are depleting. We import liquefied natural gas (LNG) to meet the country's increasing demand.

The demand for natural gas, like electricity, is becoming increasingly unsustainable. Households account for 35 per cent of the country's total gas consumption. The power sector consumes 30pc, while industry uses only 15pc for various processes. The fertiliser industry consumes 8pc of the total.

Some industries use natural gas to generate power for self-consumption. These captive power industries, around 1,200 in number, account for 11pc of gas consumption. This equals 10,000 GWh of annual electricity consumption and roughly 3,000 MW of power capacity.

Transitioning this industry to the power grid will improve the electricity consumer mix, reduce transmission and distribution losses, and help lower electricity costs. The power sector can see a positive annual impact of over Rs350 billion. An estimated one per cent reduction in the average transmission and distribution (T&D) loss and improved revenue can reduce the average power tariff by 10pc.

However, like electric utilities, the industry is also a critical consumer of gas utilities. The industry's transition will negatively affect the gas consumer mix and increase gas utility losses. Essentially, we will be transferring the issues of the electricity sector to the gas sector. If the transition is planned correctly, the gas sector could be in a better posi-

tion to manage risks than the electricity sector.

In terms of implementation, the main challenge for shifting the captive industry is the electric grid interconnection for independently operating industries. It is estimated that about 40pc of captive industries, particularly larger ones, do not have a grid connection. To shift these industries, they must be connected to the grid. Industry must provide land and pay the interconnection cost, which varies depending on the industry's size. Smaller industries (less than 5 MW) will need an 11 kV feeder connection requiring substations, while larger industries will require a dedicated high-voltage grid station.

Electric utilities must assess the capacity of their T&D networks to supply power to industries moving to the electric grid. They must also guarantee a reliable and high-quality electricity supply, free from outages or fluctuations, especially for the continuous process industry, which cannot afford interruptions. This will necessitate improved asset management and operations. Utilities should also provide compact grid station options to minimise the land requirement and interconnection costs.

Most captive industries already have a grid connection, so they can be immediately shifted if grid capacity is available. However, a transition plan must be developed in consultation with the industries, especially those that do not have existing connections. Building the interconnections and enhancing the transmission and distribution grids will require careful planning and may take up to two years.

Gas utilities must also adapt to the changing

landscape to manage its impact. The government's gas allocation policy significantly affects their financial viability. With reduced industrial consumption, losses will increase if the gas is redirected to domestic consumers. The policy should target lowering domestic gas consumption and transitioning the residential sector to LPG, a more efficient alternative. Any surplus gas should be allocated to the power and processing industries rather than the residential consumers.

Natural gas pricing will play a crucial role in managing the transition and reducing losses for gas utilities. Currently, the industry subsidises domestic gas consumption while paying for imported LNG. Like the electricity sector, the gas sector faces a 'circular debt' build-up due to unrecovered service costs.

The gas tariff should be based on the actual cost of service. Therefore, it is critical to move to a pricing model based on the Weighted Average Cost of Gas, which covers the total cost of gas procurement, including domestic and imported LNG. Some provinces with sufficient gas reserves have opposed the WACOG so far. However, in a policy framework aiming for uniform national pricing for all energy sources (petroleum, electricity, natural gas), it is logical to implement WACOG pricing for natural gas.

Without a planned transition, improved gas allocation, and change in gas pricing, the industry's transition from gas to the electric grid will not be beneficial. Policymakers should consider all factors and develop a plan to improve service delivery to citizens, lower the industry's energy costs, and stimulate economic growth. — Courtesy Dawn

## Climate under siege

**Masood Lohar**

Following extreme heatwaves in almost every corner of the world, heavy rains and floods shocked the global community. This is becoming a pattern.

The recent past witnessed an unprecedented series of extreme weather events across South Asia and neighbouring regions, with devastating impacts on lives, infrastructure, and economies. A powerful monsoon system wreaked havoc, triggering catastrophic floods, landslides, and storms across India, Bangladesh, China, and Pakistan.

Not too long ago, a thunderstorm-laden monsoon swept into southern Sindh after causing significant damage in India's Gujarat and Rajasthan regions. The monsoon, which has been unusually intense this season, brought with it torrential rains, strong winds, and widespread flooding across large parts of the country.

Millions were reported to have been affected, with many residing in low-lying areas submerged and infrastructure damaged. We saw people being displaced due to rising water levels, with power outages and road blockages hampering rescue and relief efforts. An emergency was declared in parts of the country, as the authorities urged residents to stay indoors.

The disaster follows a broader pattern of extreme weather that has gripped the region. Lately too, heavy rainfall has been predicted in certain areas in the week ahead.

In India, the monsoon's fury and torrential rains, especially in Gujarat and Rajasthan, also led to flash floods that engulfed villages and towns, resulting in significant loss of life and property, with thousands rendered homeless. Emergency services were

stretched to their limit, and conducting rescue operations in flooded areas and providing relief to affected populations was difficult.

Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, too, felt the impact, with landslides triggered by the relentless rains. Entire villages were buried under mud and debris, with rescue efforts hampered by treacherous conditions. Further rains were also forecast for the current month, raising fears of additional inundation.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh is already prone to flooding due to its low-lying geography, and it was no surprise that it was severely affected by this year's monsoons. Incessant rains caused the major rivers — the Brahmaputra, Ganges, and Meghna — to overflow, leading to widespread flooding across large parts of the country.

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and Yellow River swelling to dangerous levels. In some areas, entire cities were submerged, leading to massive evacuations.

The extreme weather events in South Asia and China are stark reminders of the growing impact of climate change. Scientists have long warned that global warming is leading to more intense and unpredictable weather patterns, with monsoons becoming more erratic and storms more powerful. The consequences are devastating for countries in the region, many of which are densely populated and heavily reliant on agriculture.

As the region grapples with the re-cent disasters, the urgency for robust climate adaptation strategies is clear. Governments must prioritise investing in resilient infrastructure, strengthening early warning systems, and enhancing community-level disaster preparedness to better withstand extreme weather events.

If mitigation efforts are not significantly scaled up, these extreme weather events could become even more frequent and severe, making large parts of the world increasingly uninhabitable. Rising sea levels could inundate coastal cities, displacing millions and leading to unprecedented migration crises.

Agricultural systems, already under stress, could collapse, leading to widespread food shortages and economic instability. Without concerted global action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the changes already underway, the future could see a cascade of environmental, social, and economic disasters. The time to act is now, as the cost of inaction is far too great. — Courtesy Dawn



## Maryam emphasizes CPEC's importance for Pak-China ties

Attends 75th National Day of People's Republic of China

LAHORE (APP): Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif said on Monday the significance of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as a vital indicator of the robust and enduring relationship between Pakistan and China. The CM views CPEC as a crucial development initiative that not only enhances economic ties but also reflects the deep-rooted partnership and mutual cooperation between the two nations. She expressed her views while participating in the 75th National Day ceremony of the People's Republic of China, where she met Chinese Consul General Zhao Shirin to convey her congratulations on this significant occasion. The CM expressed greetings on behalf of the Pakistani people, stating, "On the occasion of

China's 75th National Day, I extend my warm wishes to the Chinese people." She conveyed that the people of Punjab also send heartfelt congratulations to their Chinese brothers and sisters, expressing pride in attending the event. She lauded the Chinese nation for achieving remarkable heights in development and innovation while extending a hand of friendship to the global community. Maryam Nawaz emphasized that China's greatness lies in its unwavering commitment to peace, cooperation, and humanitarian well-being. Highlighting the deep-rooted friendship between Pakistan and China, she remarked that their relationship was built on trust, respect, and a shared vision for a bright future. "Our bond is not merely based

on strategic interests; it is a connection of hearts and souls," she asserted. The CM acknowledged China's significant achievements in lifting millions out of poverty and praised its role as a model for the world in technology, infrastructure, and industry. She noted China's indispensable contribution during global crises, affirming its commitment to providing resources to countries in need. As a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, China has consistently promoted peace and development, exemplified by its Belt and Road Initiative, she said and added that the fruits of China's economic development are benefiting people around the world and that China is emerging as a leader with a vision that transcends borders.

## Mashhood says: Awareness drive on thalassemia to be launched across country

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister's Youth Programme Chairman Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan said on Monday that a vigorous awareness campaign was being launched across the country to spread awareness about thalassemia and hemophilia diseases. During his visit at Sundas Foundation here, he commended the foundation's work as a shining example of selflessness and compassion, adding that the foundation was doing great services for humanity. He praised the Sundas Foundation's dedication to providing free medical care and support to deserving patients. The chairman also met with children undergoing treatment for thalassemia and other blood disorders and distributed gifts among them. He termed the foundation work as a "beacon of hope" for underprivileged individuals suffering from deadly diseases. The Sundas Foundation's mission was truly admirable, and their commitment to serving humanity was unparalleled, he added. Rana Mashhood appreciated the foundation's administration for bringing advance and latest medical equipments to fight with thalassemia and hemophilia, saying that government was committed to provide all possible facilities to such institutions as serving the humanity was the motto of their government. He emphasized the importance of promoting pre-marital thalassemia testing to prevent the spread of the disease. "We will work together with the Sundas Foundation to create awareness about thalassemia and the importance of pre-marital testing.

on strategic interests; it is a connection of hearts and souls," she asserted. The CM acknowledged China's significant achievements in lifting millions out of poverty and praised its role as a model for the world in technology, infrastructure, and industry. She noted China's indispensable contribution during global crises, affirming its commitment to providing resources to countries in need. As a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, China has consistently promoted peace and development, exemplified by its Belt and Road Initiative, she said and added that the fruits of China's economic development are benefiting people around the world and that China is emerging as a leader with a vision that transcends borders.

## ANF unearths drug factory

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) unearthed a factory engaged in the production of drugs and intoxicating tablets, said ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday. He informed that ANF in a successful operation against a factory manufacturing chemical drugs and intoxicating tablets managed to arrest two suspects. Acting on a tip-off, a raid was conducted in Danishabad area, Peshawar and the factory was sealed while the ANF team recovered chemical drugs, intoxicating tablets and other equipment. A thorough search of the factory led to the seizure of a tablet punching machine, various equipment such as punches, dryers, mixers and scales. During the operation, both the accused were caught red-handed while preparing intoxicated tablets at the site.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah exchanges views with Abdul Qadir Patel and MPA Asif Khan during meeting held at CM House in Karachi.

## Governor Kundi attends Bilawal's birthday celebration

KARACHI (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi attended a grand celebration in Karachi to mark the birthday of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. The event was well-attended by senior party leaders, activists, and distinguished guests. During the celebration, a birthday cake was cut for Bilawal, and Governor Kundi offered heartfelt congratulations. He praised Bilawal as a leader for the younger generation and highlighted how under his leadership, the PPP has introduced new dimensions to Pakistani politics. Kundi commended Bilawal's commitment to democratic principles and public service, stating that he is successfully carrying forward the legacy of his grandfather, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, and mother, Benazir Bhutto Shaheed. Kundi said that the influence of former President Asif Ali Zardari's political acumen is evident in Bilawal's approach to politics. He emphasized that Bilawal is actively working towards realizing the true vision of Bhutto Shaheed, focusing on public service and the stability of democracy.

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari has said that KP Chief Minister Ghandapur's software has been updated in Lahore. Talking to the media at the Lahore High Court, she said that her case was adjourned because the FIA DG was not available. "Falak Javed's indecent remarks reflect her flawed upbringing. Her parents portray themselves as innocent whenever the law takes its course. Lawyer Azhar Siddique has been caught submitting fake affidavits and forging signatures for three times," she added. Azma Bokhari noted that Advocate Azhar had accompanied the father of Falak Javed, who again discussed her fake video. She said that Falak encouraged other women to follow her lead. Bokhari said that the language used about the Punjab Chief Minister during the Islamabad rally was inappropriate. She questioned why Falak had deleted the fake video if she had done nothing wrong. "The PTI has a team that engages in such activities," she added.

## Ghandapur's software updated: Azma bokhari

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari has said that KP Chief Minister Ghandapur's software has been updated in Lahore. Talking to the media at the Lahore High Court, she said that her case was adjourned because the FIA DG was not available. "Falak Javed's indecent remarks reflect her flawed upbringing. Her parents portray themselves as innocent whenever the law takes its course. Lawyer Azhar Siddique has been caught submitting fake affidavits and forging signatures for three times," she added. Azma Bokhari noted that Advocate Azhar had accompanied the father of Falak Javed, who again discussed her fake video. She said that Falak encouraged other women to follow her lead. Bokhari said that the language used about the Punjab Chief Minister during the Islamabad rally was inappropriate. She questioned why Falak had deleted the fake video if she had done nothing wrong. "The PTI has a team that engages in such activities," she added.

## CM KP directs to expand Sehat Card program

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Khan Gandapur on Monday chaired a meeting on Sehat Card program and took important decisions aimed at improving healthcare accessibility in the province. The meeting was attended by Health Advisor Ehtisham Ali, Finance Advisor Muzammil Aslam, administrative secretaries, officials from the health department, and representatives from State Life Insurance. Chief Minister agreed in principle to include life insurance for citizens under

the Sehat Card scheme. He directed concerned officials to prepare a detailed plan for its formal approval at the earliest. He also addressed complaints regarding the lack of heart surgeries at the Peshawar Institute of Cardiology (PIC) due to reduced rates under the Sehat Card. He ordered Sehat Card officials to ensure these surgeries continue, assuring that all costs related to heart operations would be borne by the provincial government, leaving no financial burden on the patients.



LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Speaker Punjab Assembly Malik Ahmed Khan and Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider alongwith Chinese Consul General Zhao Shirin and his wife cutting the cake to celebrate 75th National Day of the People's Republic of China.

## Sindh crackdown: Top officials suspended over encroachment scandal

LAHORE: In a surprise move, Sindh's top bureaucrat, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, has suspended two senior officials over rampant encroachments and mismanagement in the President's area. During an unscheduled visit, Shah expressed dismay at the poor state of roads and widespread encroachments. Municipal Commissioner President Noor Hassan Jokhio and Deputy Director Sindh

Solid Waste Management Board Manzoor Hussain Sheikh were promptly suspended. Shah vowed to tackle encroachments head-on, stating: "We will not tolerate any encroachments in the city. The sanitation system will be overhauled to provide better services to citizens." The suspensions signal a crackdown on inept officials and underscore Shah's commitment to effective governance.

# International News

## 274 dead, over 1,000 wounded in Israeli strikes on Hezbollah strongholds in Lebanon

Monitoring Desk TYRE: Lebanese Health Minister Firass Abiad said the death toll in Israeli strikes Monday rose to 274, including 21 children, the bloodiest daily toll in nearly a year of cross-border clashes. The toll stood at "274 dead, including 21 children and 39 women — that's who we know about until now", Abiad told reporters, adding "thousands of families from the targeted areas have been displaced". The dead also included two rescuers, with 16 other emergency workers wounded, he said, adding that "two ambulances, a fire truck and a medical centre were targeted". The attacks wounded 1,024 people who were treated in 27 hospitals, Abiad said. About 5,000 people had been wounded "in less than a week" of Israeli attacks, he said, after

Hezbollah pagers and walkie-talkies exploded and an Israeli strike on Beirut's southern suburbs. That number accounts for about half of the overall wounded toll of "10,000 to 11,000", he said, referring to nearly one year of cross-border clashes between the Iran-backed Hezbollah group and Israel after the eruption of the Gaza conflict. The conflict began when Hamas attacked Israel, with Hezbollah and other Iran-backed groups around the region drawn into the violence. The Israeli military said it had struck around 800 Hezbollah targets on Monday. "Since this morning, the IDF [military] has conducted proactive and extensive aerial strikes against Hezbollah terrorist targets in Lebanon," a statement said, adding that the strikes hit "approximately 800 Hezbollah terror targets in

southern Lebanon and in the area of Bekaa deep inside Lebanese territory". World powers have implored Israel and Hezbollah to pull back from the brink of all-out war, with the focus of violence shifting sharply in recent days from Israel's southern front with Gaza to its northern border with Lebanon. "We sleep and wake up to bombardment ... that's what our life has become," said Wafaa Ismail, 60, a housewife from the southern Lebanese village of Zawtar. Israeli military spokesman Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari told people in Lebanon to avoid potential targets linked to Hezbollah as strikes would "go on for the near future". Hagari said Israel's military "will engage in [more] extensive and precise strikes against terror targets which have been embedded widely throughout Lebanon". Millions of Sri Lankans had voted for the opposition parliamentarian, putting faith in his graft-fighting pledge and vow to bolster a fragile economic



NEW YORK: President of Brazil Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva speaks during 'Summit of the Future' on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly.

## Sri Lanka's new President Dissanayake promises change

Monitoring Desk COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's leftist leader Anura Kumara Dissanayake took office as president on Monday, promising change in the island nation long led by powerful political families which is emerging from its worst economic crisis in more than seven decades. Millions of Sri Lankans had voted for the opposition parliamentarian, putting faith in his graft-fighting pledge and vow to bolster a fragile economic recovery. "I pledge ... to demonstrate dedication to protecting and upholding democracy," Dissanayake, 55, said in inauguration remarks at the president's office, saying he was taking office at a challenging time in the Indian Ocean nation. "Our politics needs to be cleaner, and the people have called for a different political culture," he added. "I am ready to commit to that change."

## Tehran ready for nuclear talks in New York 'if other parties are willing', foreign minister says

Monitoring Desk TEHRAN: Iran is ready to start nuclear negotiations on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York if "other parties are willing", Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said on Monday in a video published on his Telegram channel. The United States, under then-President Donald Trump, withdrew in 2018 from a nuclear accord signed in 2015 between Iran and six world powers, which restricted Tehran's nuclear programme. status of eight people was unknown. Heavy rain pounded Ishikawa from Saturday, with more than 540 millimetres (21 inches) recorded in the city of Wajima over 72 hours, the heaviest continuous rain since comparative data became available. The region is still reeling from a magnitude-7.5 quake at the start of the year, which toppled buildings, triggered tsunami waves and sparked a major fire. Floodwaters inundated emergency housing built for those who had lost their homes in the New Year's Day quake.

## Six dead after floods in central Japan: media

TOKYO (AFP/APP): Heavy rain that triggered floods and landslides on a Japanese peninsula recovering from an earthquake this year killed at least six people, local media reported Monday. Public broadcaster NHK and other outlets said six were dead, while a fire department official told AFP that one had died and five were "in a state of cardio-respiratory arrest", a term used in Japan before a feared death can be confirmed by a doctor. The regional government in Ishikawa on the Sea of Japan coast said two were missing and the

## UN adopts pact to tackle volatile future for mankind

Monitoring Desk UNITED NATIONS: UN members adopted a blueprint for the future on Sunday to tackle the myriad wars, environmental threats and technological challenges facing humanity that was hailed by the organisation as "groundbreaking" but panned by critics as unambitious. Secretary General Antonio Guterres, who championed the "Pact for the Future" and its components, billed them as "landmark agreements — a step-change towards more effective, inclusive, networked multilateralism." As an opener for the annual high-level week of the UN General Assembly,

which begins on Tuesday, dozens of heads of state and government gathered for the adoption, which faced last-minute opposition from Russia and its allies. Leaders pledged to bolster the multilateral system to "keep pace with a changing world" and to "protect the needs and interests of current and future generations" facing "persistent crisis." "We believe there is a path to a brighter future for all of humanity," the document says. The pact outlines 56 "actions," including commitments to multilateralism, upholding the UN Charter and peacekeeping.

## Iran walls off part of border with Afghanistan: state media

Monitoring Desk TEHRAN: Iran's military has built a wall along more than 10 kilometres of its eastern border with Afghanistan, the main entry point for immigrants, local media reported Monday. "More than 10 kilometres of walls have been built on the border and another 50 kilometres are ready to be walled off," ISNA news agency said, citing General Nozar Nemati, deputy commander of army ground forces. Iran shares a more than 900km border with Afghanistan, and the Islamic republic hosts one of the largest refugee populations in the world. This comprises mostly well-integrated Afghans who arrived over the past 40 years after fleeing conflict in their home country. The flow of Afghan immigrants has increased since the Taliban took over in August 2021 after US forces withdrew. Tehran has not given official figures for the number of Afghan immigrants,

but member of parliament Abolfazl Torabi has estimated their number at "between six and seven million". The authorities have recently increased pressure on "illegal" refugees, regularly announcing expulsions through the eastern border. "By blocking the border, we want to control the country's entries and exits" and "better increase the security of border areas", General Nemati said. In September, Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni said Iran would employ other methods including barbed wire and water-filled ditches in addition to the wall to block the border. On September 13, the spokesman for the parliamentary National Security Committee, Ebrahim Rezaei, said police plan to "expel more than two million illegal citizens in the near future". According to the official IRNA news agency, Afghans represent "more than 90 percent of foreign nationals" in Iran.

## China 'testing us', says Biden in hot mic remarks to Quad allies

Monitoring Desk WILMINGTON: US President Joe Biden was caught on a hot mic on Saturday telling the leaders of Australia, India and Japan that an aggressive China is "testing us," in remarks that risked undercutting a summit declaration that carefully avoided mentioning Beijing by name. The comments came as Biden opened a farewell summit in his hometown of Wilmington, Delaware with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. "China continues to behave aggressively, testing us all across the region," Biden was heard in what were supposed to be behind-closed-doors remarks to the so-called "Quad".

Biden said that while Chinese President Xi Jinping was focusing on "domestic economic challenges" he was also "looking to buy himself some diplomatic space, in my view, to aggressively pursue China's interests." But he insisted that recent "intense efforts" by Washington to reduce tensions, including a call with Xi in April, were helping to prevent conflict. The hot mic blunder risked undermining careful diplomatic efforts by all four countries during the summit to insist that their grouping is about more than just providing a counterweight to China. In their joint statement after the summit, the four leaders made no direct mention of China, even as they expressed concern over tensions on its borders.

## Ukraine says it hit two Russian munitions depots overnight

Monitoring Desk KYIV: Ukraine said on Saturday it had hit two Russian munition depots overnight, in attacks that illustrated its growing capability to strike targets deep inside Russia. Russian officials acknowledged the Ukrainian attack on one of the depots in southern Krasnodar region, saying it was carried out with drones. They introduced local emergency measures to mitigate the effects of the assault. A statement by Ukraine's military general staff said the munitions depots were at Tikhoretsk in Krasnodar region and Oktyabrsky in the western region of Tver. "The (Tikhoretsk) facility is in the top three largest munitions storages of the occupiers.



## Poor governance, law & order in KP increase people's problems: Muqam

PESHAWAR (APP): Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions, Gilgit Baltistan and Kashmir Affairs, Engr Amir Muqam here Monday categorically stated that the deteriorating governance and law & order situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have negatively impacted the lives of people besides marred development works.

He strongly indicated that if the situation does not improve in KP, the imposition of Governor Rule may be considered as a last resort for the sake of people.

Addressing a press-conference here, Engr Amir Muqam, who is also the Provincial President of the Pakistan Muslim League-N, maintained that Governor Rule was a constitutional provision that would be considered as a last option if the ongoing grim situation in KP becomes uncontrollable. Expressing his deep concern over the deteriorating law and order situation, particularly in the southern districts and merged areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Engr Amir Muqam referred to the

recent IED blast in Malam Jabba Swat district that resulted in the death of one policeman and injuries to four others.

Muqam described the Malam Jabba blast was a deep-rooted conspiracy aimed at damaging the country's image. He accused the Chief Minister KP of focusing on agitation and leading public rallies rather than addressing governance and law and order issues in his province.

Muqam claimed that for the first time, policemen in KP had been incited to protest, making it unsafe for people to leave their homes after night, especially in southern districts and merged areas of the province. Strongly criticizing the KP government's poor performance especially in higher education sector in the province, where about 25 public sector universities are operating without Vice Chancellors, marring education standards and research works immensely.

Instead of appointing VCs, the Chief Minister KP had announced plans to sell

university properties, which Muqam argued would lead to economic collapse for these cash-starved educational institutions in the province.

The Federal Minister noted recent accusations of malpractices, nepotism and corruption among provincial ministers and advisers, stating that the public now sees the Chief Minister's statements as empty slogans and is mocking it.

After PTI's failed Lahore show, he claimed that the Chief Minister KP has intentionally delayed the convoy to the event, predicting similar outcomes for the upcoming planned shows of PTI in Mianwali and Rawalpindi.

Engr Amir Muqam praised the people of Lahore for distancing themselves from divisive, agitation and hollow slogans politics of PTI, indicating that the poor turnout at Lahore's gathering strongly reflected growing discontent of masses with PTI leadership due to their long stubbornness and rhetoric approach.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah along with PPP women wing leader, Faryal Talpur, former CM Sindh Syed Qaim Ali Shah, PPP Sindh President Nisar Khuhro, Jameel Soomro and others are cutting cake during the Celebration ceremony of in connection of the 36th Birthday Anniversary of Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, PPP Chairman, held at Sindh Assembly building in Karachi.

## Latest article in Israeli newspaper further exposed Imran's links with Jewish lobbies: Daniyal Chaudhary

ISLAMABAD (APP): Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting Daniyal Chaudhary said on Monday that the recent article published in Israeli news had further exposed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf founder Imran Khan Jewish lobbies.

Addressing his first press conference after assuming charge as parliamentary secretary, Daniyal Chaudhary said that Israeli newspaper Jerusalem Post through an article written by Harry Richer has once again exposed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf founder Chairman Imran Khan's Zionist connection.

Barrister Daniyal said that in the article, the newspaper had clearly stated

that Imran Khan was the only leader in Muslim Ummah who could play a central role "in changing both public opinion and military policy" in Pakistan towards Israel.

He said that Zionist lobbies believe that Imran Khan and his party could represent Israel in Islamic world in a better way.

He remarked that Imran was already representing Jewish sentiments as his children were with them and he had supported Zac Goldsmith against Pakistani Sadiq Khan in London mayoral elections.

He lamented that whenever Pakistan was on the path of stability, the anti-Pakistan lobbies became active to weaken it.

Daniyal Chaudhary said that the article had connection with the lobbyist firms hired by Imran Khan on behalf of India in the US to weaken Pakistan. He said that the objective of Imran Khan was to run a defamation campaign against Pakistan in international media and get legislation done against Pakistan in the US Parliament.

He alleged that the firms hired by Imran were involved in activities against Pakistan's interests and they formulated strategies to weaken it economically. They were also involved in conspiracies to weaken Pakistani armed forces which were not only defending it against external threats but also internal conspiracies.

## Pakistan should embrace materials suited to environment: Gen Inam

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Lieutenant General, Inam Haider Malik on Monday said Pakistan should must embrace not only traditional infrastructure but also materials suited to the country's environment.

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) hosted a seminar focused on "Disaster Resilient Infrastructure," in collaboration with Bahria University, aiming to address the pressing need for climate adaptation and infrastructure resilience in Pakistan.

Chairman NDMA, Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik led discussions on the country's preparedness for future disasters, highlighting the critical threats posed by climate change and the steps being taken to mitigate its impact. "Resilience won't

come solely from the type of construction but from adapting to what we have," he emphasized. He lauded NDMA's technological efforts, including simulations of the 2022 floods and advanced weather forecasting, noting that "technology today can not only address present needs but future ones as well."

In his keynote address, Lieutenant General Malik warned that if global temperatures exceed the 1.5°C threshold, countries like Pakistan would face unprecedented climatic disasters. "From glacial melting to recurring floods, we are already witnessing severe climate impacts," he said. He cited the 2022 floods, which caused massive devastation, with over 8,000 miles of roads and 480 bridges damaged, leading to significant economic losses. Recovery and rehabilitation remain ongoing challenges.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohnsin Naqvi in a meeting with Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Nawaf bin Said Ahmed Al-Maliki.

## National policy for conservation of energy should be initiated: Shabbar

KARACHI (INP): A lively and impactful seminar with the theme "energy crisis: challenges and opportunities", was held at DHA, SUFFA University, Karachi on Monday.

The seminar was organized by Karachi Editors Club in collaboration with DHA, SUFFA University.

Speaking on the occasion former Chairman of FBR, Shabbar Zaidi, in an impassioned speech said that it is the need of the hour that a national policy for the conservation of energy should be initiated.

He said that there should be a political will to solve the energy crisis but ironically it seems that political parties have no will to solve it.

Shabbar Zaidi suggested that in order to solve the issue of energy crisis, NEPRA should be dissolved and it should be transferred to Karachi and also a member of NEPRA should be taken from the IPP.

He further added that basic economic structure should be changed in order to solve the energy crisis. He said that the prevailing economic crisis in the country is due to the mismanagement in the energy sector.

Vice Chancellor of DHA SUFFA University, Brigadier (Retd.) Ahmed Saeed Minhas, welcoming the guests said that the costs of energy has gone high due to which our economy is suffering a lot.

Former MD of PSO, Sohail Wajahat, addressing the seminar said that energy is vital ingredient for the growth of economy and transparency is the key element to solve the energy crisis. Agriculture, industries and services are on decline due to self-destruction in the country, added Sohail Wajahat.

Chairman Malik Group of Companies, Malik Khudabakhsh, speaking on the occasion said that the IPP's which are not functioning but still we are paying them which is a heavy burden on the national exchequer and is also one of the many reasons for the energy crisis.



ISLAMABAD: The outgoing Ambassador of Uzbekistan, Mr. Oybek Usmanov, meeting President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## Kurram clashes claimed 12 lives, injured 22 in 3 days

PESHAWAR (APP): Clashes between the rival tribes in different areas of Kurram district have so far claimed at least a dozen lives and injured 22 others, said a police report on Monday.

Heavy and light arms were used by the tribesmen involved in the ongoing conflict that started after construction of trenches by the rival tribes in villages Boshetra and Ahmadzai.

Police informed that the firing took place over construction on a disputed land, which intensified into exchange of heavy fire in the Balashkhel area. The clashes resulted in losses from both sides.

The rival tribes were engaged in heavy firing and shelling in Balashkhel, Khaar Kali, Trimanal, Baghki, Maqbal and Kanj Alizai. Meanwhile, a bazaar in Sadda market, Kurram that belonged to one of the tribes involved in the conflict was blown up and fortunately, no casualty happened in this incident. Residents of the Bhagan tribe reportedly blocked the main Parachinar-Peshawar artery, creating troubles for commuters.

Elders of Turi-Bangash tribes urged the authorities to take quick action to resolve the issue amicably. They urged the government to take action against the violence mongers and restore law and order in the district.

Meanwhile, member of the National Assembly (MNA) Engineer Hamid Hussain and parliamentary leader of the Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimien (MWM) staged a protest sit-in outside the Parachinar Press Club.

He said that the sit-in was meant to draw attention of the high-ups towards the repeated outbreaks of violence in Kurram district. He demanded swift action against those responsible for the clashes and the deteriorating law and order situation in the region.

## 13 licenses issued for ground water extraction: Saeed

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Minister for Local Government, Saeed Ghani, Monday, said that Sindh government has enacted new laws regarding sub-surface water in 2024 and 13 licenses has been issued under the new legislation so far.

The minister, while responding to a call attention notice about issues being faced by residents of Korangi due to use of sub-surface water by industries during the ongoing session of Sindh Assembly here, informed that new licenses were being issued after enactment of new legislation.

Saeed Ghani informed the house that Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation (KWSC) was authorized under the 2024 Act.

## PIA inks partnership with Funadiq to promote Saudi Tourism

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) and Funadiq Travel & Tourism Services, the official marketing representative of the Saudi Tourism Authority in Pakistan, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to boost tourism and air travel between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

The partnership aims to promote Saudi Arabia as a top tourist destination for Pakistani travelers through joint marketing initiatives, co-branded travel packages, and sustainable tourism practices.

## BRICS Moscow Seminar: Mushahid welcomes 'winds of Change in South Asia'

MOSCOW (APP): Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed said 'Pakistan looks forward to joining BRICS' & welcomed 'winds of change blowing all across South Asia which reject hegemony, status quo and seek change', referring to recent radical changes in the Maldives, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

He expressed these views during a keynote address at BRICS seminar.

As a consequence, he said the so-called 'Indo-Pacific Strategy' is now drowning in the waters of the Indian Ocean', a news release said. BRICS (Brazil, India, China and South Africa) is an intergovernmental organisation comprising various nations including the BRICS and Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the United Arab Emirates.

Senator Mushahid criticised the recent US sanctions against Pakistan and China, terming these 'immoral, unjust, unacceptable and illegal' as sanctions under International Law can only be imposed by the UN Security Council.



KARACHI: Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Sindh President, Haleem Adil Sheikh talking to media persons during press conference after case hearing, at Sindh High Court premises in Karachi.

## Luncheon held in honor of Renowned Poet and Scholar Mahboob Zafar

KARACHI (INP): A luncheon was held to honor renowned poet and scholar Mahboob Zafar, who is visiting Karachi from Islamabad ahead of his upcoming 40-day trip to the United States.

The event, hosted by Manzar Naqvi, Executive Editor of The Financial Daily and Secretary General of the Karachi Editors Club, brought together a close-knit group of friends, literary figures, and media professionals to celebrate Zafar's exceptional contributions to Urdu literature and his lasting impact on the cultural scene.

The gathering provided a platform for a lively exchange of ideas on poetry, literature, and the broader cultural landscape of Pakistan. Mahboob Zafar, known for his profound verses and extensive scholarly work, expressed his gratitude for the warm reception and engaged in discussions about the evolving trends in literature. He also shared details of his upcoming trip to the United States, where he is scheduled to participate in numerous literary events and connect with the Pakistani diaspora across different states. Reflecting on the state of literature in Pakistan, Zafar underscored the importance of literature as a powerful means of cultural expression. He emphasized the need for continuous support and recognition of poets and writers, urging the literary community to foster a greater appreciation for their work.



HYDERABAD: Chairman Standing Committee Industry and Production MNA Syed Hafeezuddin addressing to press conference at press club.

## DUHS refutes mismanagement allegations during MDCAT-2024

KARACHI (APP): The Dow University of Health Sciences (DUHS) refuted all rumours regarding mismanagement while conducting the MDCAT-2024 on Sunday across the province and reaffirmed that the test was conducted smoothly and efficiently, despite the hot weather conditions.

To ensure the comfort of candidates and their families, proactive measures were taken to mitigate the effects of the heat.

According to statement issued here on Monday, the DUHS management categorically rejected all reports published in various newspapers suggesting that MDCAT candidates were left standing in the heat for hours. The university's administration clarified that entry into the exam centers was scheduled between 7 am and 9:30 am with an extended grace period allowing candidates to enter until 9:55 am. Addressing specific claims regarding Larkano, where it was reported that several candidates were allegedly denied entry despite arriving on time, spokesman stated that allegations are unfounded.

The university management reiterated that exam centres' gates were closed on 10 am and all candidates who reported till 9:55 am were allowed entry into the exam centres.

The university holds documented evidence to substantiate its position. Comprehensive arrangements were made for the convenience of parents at each exam center, including seating, water and restroom facilities. In Karachi, air-conditioned waiting areas were available for parents, ensuring their comfort throughout the day.

Additionally, DUHS emphasized that external traffic and logistical management, particularly at NED University, Ojha Campus, and the Larkano exam centres, were managed by the district administration and traffic police.

## PTI challenges practice, procedure ordinance in SHC


KARACHI (Online): PTI has challenged practice and procedure ordinance in Sindh High Court (SHC).

The petition said practice and procedure ordinance is sheer violation of Supreme Court (SC) decision. The bench led by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa had maintained ordinance can come only in the event of emergency.

It was further said in the petition it is decision of SC that no ordinance can be promulgated immediately after parliament session. CJP is violating his own decision. Government is involving the judges in the politics through ordinance.



KARACHI: Hamdard University Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Syed Shabib-ul-Hassan, Syed Muhammad Imran Ali, group VP B2B Strategy and Product Management PTCL and Ufone 4G and others attend a signing ceremony for the provision of PTCL managed ICT and Mobility solutions for the faculty and students of Hamdard University, held in Karachi.




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