



**JUI-F chief claims PTI ready to step down from assemblies, dissolve KP legislature**

After forming a committee to hold dialogue with the PTI, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazi (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Saturday claimed that the embattled party agreed to step down from the assemblies and dissolve the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) legislature to force the government into elections.



**CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif directs to expedite launch of Chief Minister Solar Panel Financing Scheme**

Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif and President PML-N Muhammad Nawaz Sharif presided over a special meeting in which matters pertaining to 'Chief Minister Solar Panel Financing Scheme' were reviewed. CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif directed to simplify the solar panel financing scheme. She directed to ensure early completion of the required process... (Details on Page 3)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

**Meeting**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting regarding Pak-China cooperation on Saturday.



Photo: Online

**PM orders speedy implementation of bilateral agreements with China**

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday directed the concerned authorities to expedite process of implementing the agreements and Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) made with the Chinese government and companies, saying that delay in implementation of the agreements would not be tolerated.

China is a time tested friend of Pakistan who helped Pakistan in every hour of need, the prime minister said while chairing a review meeting regarding

Pak-China cooperation here at PM House.

He said the Chinese leadership was determined to further expand investment in Pakistan. The prime minister pointed out that the transfer of the Chinese industry to Pakistan would help improving the country's overall economy, increasing Pakistan's exports, and creating new employment opportunities.

During the meeting, the prime minister was briefed on progress of different projects that were launched with the Chinese cooperation.

The prime minister was told that Sukkur-Hyderabad

Motorway would be completed through Public Private Partnership.

It was informed that the plan to send 1,000 students for modern agricultural vocational training at government expense had been completed.

The first batch of students was being sent to China at the beginning of this academic year while the next batch would be sent to the Chinese modern agricultural universities after learning Chinese in Pakistan.

It was informed in the meeting that the Chinese textile, medical and surgical equipment, plastic and leather indus-

tries will be partnered with Chinese companies to move to Pakistan.

"78 Pakistani companies have initially expressed deep interest in cooperation for the transfer of Chinese industries to Pakistan," the meeting was informed.

In this regard, the Board of Investment (BoI) presented a comprehensive report on the progress and action plan.

The prime minister appreciated the steps and recommendations of BoI in this regard.

He directed the relevant departments and officers to provide all kinds of facilities to Pakistani companies in collabo-

rating with Chinese companies.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Federal Ministers Jam Kamal Khan, Abdul Aleem Khan, Ahmad Khan Cheema, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Attaulah Tarar, Dr Musadik Malik, Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari, Minister of State Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Special Assistant Tariq Fatemi, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Jehanzeb Khan and other high officials. Federal Ministers, Ahsan Iqbal, Khawaja Asif and Rana Tanvir Hussain attended the meeting via video link.

**Bannu incident: KP govt to form commission for transparent probe**

**Bureau Report**

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government on Saturday announced to constitute a commission to investigate the Bannu incident that resulted in multiple fatalities.

Information advisor Barrister Saif said that CM Ali Amin Gandapur had taken notice of the ongoing situation in Bannu and decided to constitute a commission for a transparent investigation.

He emphasised that the commission would ensure an impartial and transparent investigation, with a report identifying those responsible.

Continued on Page 8

**Decision makers still need to reflect, says Nawaz Sharif**

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: The country was not treated well and the decision-makers still needed to reflect on their actions, PML-N President Nawaz Sharif said on Saturday, a week after twin court decisions favoured his political Imran Khan.

"The country, which was progressing, has been pushed into a ditch," he told party leaders in Lahore. "Those making the decisions need to think again."

Amid the legal battles, former prime minister Imran Khan and his PTI got major relief last week when an Islamabad judge overturned his illegal marriage conviction while the top court awarded the former ruling party more parliamen-



tary seats.

Both cases were considered a major blow to the coalition government of Prime Minister Shehbaz Shari as many believed the decision would end the treasury benches majority in the National Assembly.

Sharif, who has been calling the shots in the party, stated that the people's

concerns should be addressed and they should get relief.

In May, he was reelected the PML-N president as senior party leaders urged him to take up the reins after general elections. Many believed that Sharif's leadership would revive the party.

While speaking about the high electricity prices, he said that no one can pay the utility bill as the basic need has become a "calamity for everyone."

He claimed that the PML-N government had ended load-shedding and controlled the electricity rates during his tenure and the electricity bills were lower. Since 2018, the PML-N president alleged that the country has faced difficulties and the poor have been left behind.

**Imran Khan rules out possibility of talks with PPP**



**Monitoring Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister Imran Khan has ruled out the possibility of talks with the PPP on the no-confidence motion or any other topic, alleging that the Sindh-ruling party and the PML-N were the same, BBC Urdu reported.

"There is no difference between the PPP and the PML-N as they are both prod-

ucts of the same 'Form 47'," he said in an informal conversation with reporters during the £190 million case hearing at the Adiala Jail, Rawalpindi on Saturday.

Columnist Javed Chaudhry, who appeared on Aaj News show Rubaroo on Friday, claimed that there were reports of Latif Khosa trying to settle matters between the PPP and PTI. He claimed that the former PPP leader was trying to convince Khan to sit

with the Sindh-ruling party to dislodge the PML-N government.

"There will not be any talks with the PPP on any issue, including the no-confidence motion unless I want to regain power. I am willing to spend my entire life in jail and that the claims about me backing down from my stance are baseless," the PTI founder said.

He was of the view that if the

ECP does not give seats to PTI despite the SC's decision, then Article 6 (high treason) should be imposed on the commission.

Khan once again demanded the formation of a judicial commission on May 9 events.

"Our party was already banned. We were not even allowed to contest the elections. Banning any political party is a murder of democracy," Khan said.

**Three PML-N leaders file review petitions against SC ruling on reserved seats**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Three PML-N members affected by the Supreme Court's reserved case decision filed on Saturday a review petition in the apex court.

In their petitions, Huma Akhtar Chughtai, Mah Jabeen Abbasi, and Syeda Amnah Batool urged the court to

declare the short majority decision of July 12 as "null and void."

On July 13, a full-court SC bench awarded reserved seats comprising minority and women seats to the PTI. The bench set aside orders of the Peshawar High Court and Election Commission of Pakistan taking away reserved seats from the Sunni Ittehad Council.

**Reserved seats**

**CJP Isa says it will be unfair if review petitions not fixed urgently**



**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The minutes of the three-judge Practice and Procedure Committee's July 18 meeting were issued on Saturday which said that Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa called for 'urgently' fixing the review petitions against the reserved seats case ruling for hearing. But two other members - Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah and Justice Munib Akhtar - were not convinced, citing most of the judges of 13-member bench were on holiday and a detailed order of case was awaited.

"It would be unjust and unfair if the review petitions against the Supreme Court's reserved seats case ruling were not fixed urgently," CJP Isa was quoted as highlighting in the minutes of the meeting. "The order under review necessitated reopening of the court even if it

required cancellation of vacations."

Minutes of the committee meeting were released on Saturday. The committee comprising the three senior SC judges was formed under the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Act 2023.

Justice Akhat who is on vacation joined the meeting via video link.

According to the minutes, the registrar pointed out that two urgent applications had been filed with such review petitions wherein the petitioners had pleaded that the order under review had fixed a timeline of 15 days and if such an order was implemented the petitions would become "infructuous."

The ruling party PML-N and three of its members have filed review petitions against SC's July 13 ruling, awarding Imran Khan's PTI more parliamentary seats.

**Funeral prayer of father of PIO offered; Governor KP attends**



**Bureau Report**

PESHAWAR: Funeral prayer of Ghulam Sabir, the father of Principal Information Officer (PIO), Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Mubashir Hassan was offered here on Friday.

Besides others, the funeral prayer of the deceased was attended by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, officers of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, media persons, civil officers, journalists and elites of the city in large number.

Later, the deceased was laid to rest at his ancestral graveyard. The Quil of the deceased would be offered on Monday at Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE), Peshawar's colony at Jamrud Road Peshawar.

Late Ghulam Sabir was also the father of retired senior bureaucrat Ahmad Hassan and senior officer of BISE Peshawar Aftab Hassan.

The people and well wishers are coming to the residence of PIO Mubashir Hassan and are offering fatcha for eternal peace of his father who passed away due to protracted illness.



# CTD Punjab arrested Al-Qaeda Militant Leader Amin ul Haq

Asim Tanveer

ISLAMABAD: The Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD), Punjab claimed on Friday to have foiled several terror plots by arresting alleged militant and senior Al-Qaeda leader in the intelligence-based operations (IBO) across the province.

According to a spokesperson, in a significant breakthrough in the fight against terrorism, CTD, in collaboration with various intelligence agencies, successfully apprehended Amin ul Haq, a senior leader of the Al-Qaeda, during a meticulously planned operation based on human intelligence reports.

He said and added the arrested terrorist Amin ul Haq was a close associate of Osama Bin Laden since 1996, and he had allegedly planned sabotage activities across the province and



wanted to target important installations.

The CTD, demonstrating its exceptional operational capabilities and dedi-

cation, managed to locate and arrest Amin ul Haq. The CTD has registered a case against the arrested terrorist and shifted him to an unknown location,

he said. His name has been included in the United Nations international terrorist list.

The spokesperson further said that the arrest of Amin ul Haq represents a major victory in the ongoing efforts to combat terrorism in Pakistan and worldwide. His long-standing association with Osama Bin Laden and active role in Al-Qaeda led to his arrest and operation.

The apprehension of such a high-profile target illustrates the commitment and effectiveness of the CTD Punjab and the Pakistani government in dismantling terrorist networks and ensuring national and global security, he added.

He said that this arrest is a testament to the unwavering commitment of the Punjab Police and the CTD in eradicating the menace of terrorism.

## Naheed Khan strongly condemn the heinous incident in Bunnu, KPK

Kiran Asim



ISLAMABAD: Mrs Naheed Khan Political Secretary To Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto and Former Member of National Assembly said I strongly condemn the heinous incident in Bunnu, KPK, where a peaceful rally was met with unprovoked firing, resulting in the martyrdom of three innocent persons and leaving several others injured. This brutal act of violence is a gross violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The perpetrators and planners of this unfortunate incident must be held accountable for this. This incident in Bunnu is a continuation of the threats posed by terrorists to our great nation and particularly recent attacks in KPK. Being Pakistanis we must stand united against terrorism, putting aside our political differences and rallying behind our shared love for our country. Sovereignty of Pakistan should be our priority and there is need for the entire Nation to stand united to protect our country from internal and external threats. We appeal to all Pakistanis, regardless of political affiliation, to join hands in the fight against terrorism.

Let us honor the sacrifices of our martyrs by standing strong and united. Together, we can defeat terrorism and ensure a safe, prosperous future for our younger generations. May Almighty Allah rest the souls of martyred in eternal peace and give their families strength to bear this loss and I pray for speedy recovery of all injured.

## Faisalabad business groups protest against IPPs' excessive capacity charges

Abdul Majid



FAISALABAD: Industrial and trader's organizations have chalked out a comprehensive protest strategy individually and collectively to start a movement against unbearable capacity charges paid to the Independent Power Producers (IPPs). Government must rescind, amend or reschedule these agreements on top priority basis to restrain the business community to take extreme steps, said Dr Sajjad Arshad, Acting President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI). Addressing a hurriedly called "Press Conference" immediately after an emergent meeting of the executive committee of FCCI, he said that the episode of IPPs started in 1994 when the country was experiencing the worst ever menace of load shedding. "Hubco was the first IPP while the installed capacity of IPPs jumped from 3,000MW to 20,000 in 2013", he said and added that it would swell to 43,000MW in 2024 while the consumption of electricity was still restricted to only 13,000MW. He said that some IPPs are getting billions of rupees without producing even a single unit of electricity under the head of capacity charges. He said that the price of electricity has touched the figure of Rs.70-80 per unit only due to the addition of unrealistic capacity charges. He said that this year Rs. 2100bn was paid as capacity charges to the IPPs which would become Rs.2800bn next year and this process would continue till 2030. He said that this situation has crippled the industrial and business sectors in addition to making the life of the common man miserable. He said that the government must decide right now if it has to protect 40 IPPs or save 240 million people in Pakistan. He further said that the government must show seriousness to settle down this chronic issue before it is too late. He said that the IMF package has further aggravated the situation which has opened the floodgates of taxes and the majority of people are unable to pay their electricity bills. He criticized unlimited powers entrusted to the FBR including issuing non-bail-able arrest warrants for businessmen.

## Lahore police fully determined to curb drug peddling in the city

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Lahore Police have intensified their crackdown on drug peddlers, registering 5,573 cases and apprehending 5,747 suspects in a significant crackdown. This was stated by the spokesperson Lahore Police today. Over 3,985 kilograms of charrs, more than 197 kilograms of heroin, over 107 kilograms of ice and 39,817 liters of alcohol was seized by the police.

Capital City Police Officer Bilal Siddique Kamyana has announced the initiation of large-scale operations to combat drug trafficking. He emphasized that comprehensive strategies are being implemented to prevent drug smuggling and its abuse.

The CCPO stated that we are conducting indiscriminate actions against drug networks. He highlighted targeted operations to suppress drug dealers around educational institutions using intelligence-based operations. He underscored the arrest of suspects involved in supplying narcotics and the utilization of advanced technology to curb online drug activities.

Bilal Siddique Kamyana instructed supervisory officers to personally oversee anti-drug operations and appealed to the parents to closely monitor their children's activities.

## Expected monsoon rains in South Punjab from July 22 to 25: PDMA

News Desk

LAHORE: Monsoon rains have been predicted in Punjab from July 22 to 25. There are chances of rains with strong winds in most districts of the province. It was informed by PDMA that there are chances of wind and heavy rain in most of the districts of South Punjab during July 23 to 24. There are chances of rain in Rawalpindi, Attock, Jhelum, Chakwal, Mandi Bahaudin, Gujrat, Gujranwala, Hafizabad and Wazirabad. Moreover, rains are also expected in Lahore, Sheikhupura, Sialkot, Narowal, Sahiwal, Jhang, Toba Tek Singh, Nankana, Faisalabad, Sargodha, Bhakkar and Mianwali. South Punjab districts of Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar, Dera Ghazi Khan, Multan, Khanewal, Lodhran, Muzaffargarh, Kot Addu, Rajanpur, Rahim Yar Khan and Leh are also likely to receive rain. DG PDMA Irfan Ali Kathia said that in view of the instructions of the Punjab Chief Minister, the relevant departments should be on alert. Rains will reduce the intensity of heat and humidity. The rains may flood the rivers and canals of Punjab. Administrations of big cities should be alert and complete advance arrangements. In view of the weather situation, an alert has been issued to the concerned administration. Drainage of water from residential areas should be ensured as soon as possible. The PDMA control room is monitoring the weather conditions 24 hours a day. The people are requested to ensure the implementation of the government instructions. Stay in safe places to avoid old buildings, poles and lightning.

## Clearing the Road

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Administration clearing the roads, as TLP protesters wrap up Faizabad sit-in after a week in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

# Women University, HEC celebrate Olympic Day with great enthusiasm

Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: Directorate Sports, the Women University Multan and HEC collaborated to celebrate the Olympic Day 2024, with great enthusiasm and a strong display of sportsmanship at Katchery Campus. This event marks the commemoration of the birth of the Modern Olympics in 1894, spearheaded by Baron Pierre de Coubertin, who recognized the educational values of sports, now honored as Olympic Values. Olympic Day pays tribute to the legacy of the Modern Olympics and its core values of excellence, friendship, and respect. This day encourages individuals of all ages and abilities to engage in various sporting and cultural activities, promoting a healthy and active lifestyle. The event highlighted the universi-



ty dedication to promoting sports, physical fitness, and fostering a spirit of healthy competition among its

students. The day featured a series of games including race, badminton and table tennis matches, where talent-

ed athletes showcased their skills and sportsmanship. Chief guest Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Kalsoom Pracha

emphasized that the celebration of International Olympic Day underscored the values of fair play, respect, and friendship embodied by the Olympic spirit. She noted that the event provided a platform for students to demonstrate their sporting talents and celebrate the joy of sportsmanship. Director Sports Prof. Dr Mamoon Khan expressed pride in the achievements of the college athletes. She highlighted the role of sports in promoting physical and mental well-being among students and reiterated the department's commitment to providing opportunities for sporting development. District Sports Officer Mr. Farooq Latif said this gathering aims to foster a spirit of unity and Olympism within the community. The event was attended by faculty members and students.

# Constitutional Journey of Merged Districts in KPK (Ex-FATA)

The integration of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) in 2018 marked a profound constitutional shift aimed at unifying Pakistan's legal landscape and extending fundamental rights to long-marginalized communities. For decades, FATA operated under the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR), a colonial-era legal framework that severely restricted basic rights such as due process, freedom of speech, and judicial oversight. The merger was intended to dismantle these outdated and discriminatory practices, paving the way for a more equitable legal system in the newly integrated districts.

The transition has not been without its challenges. Replacing the FCR with mainstream Pakistani laws required extensive legislative reforms and admin-

istrative restructuring. Establishing functional courts, legal aid services, and administrative capabilities in remote and underserved areas posed logistical hurdles. Moreover, many residents were unfamiliar with their newly expanded rights and the procedural mechanisms of the reformed legal system. Overcoming these challenges necessitated comprehensive public awareness campaigns and legal education initiatives to empower communities and ensure effective implementation of constitutional protections.

Despite these obstacles, significant progress has been made in laying the groundwork for the full realization

of fundamental rights in the merged districts. Constitutional amendments have been introduced to ensure that all residents of KPK, including those from the merged districts, are entitled to the same legal protections and freedoms enjoyed elsewhere in Pakistan. Efforts to replace the FCR with regular legal procedures are underway, aimed at establishing a fair and transparent judicial system that upholds due process and individual rights. Government-led initiatives, in collaboration with civil society organizations, have played a crucial role in educating residents about their rights and promoting civic engagement in the legal and governance processes.



Analysis

Abdul Waheed Wazir





Islamabad  
30° - 38° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 3:33 am  
Zohr ..... 12:14 pm  
Asr ..... 5:10 pm  
Maghrib ..... 7:16 pm  
Isha ..... 8:55 pm

**EMERGENCY**

Rescue (Police) ..... 15  
Bomb Disposal ..... 15  
Fire Services Rawalpindi/  
Islamabad ..... 1122 & 16  
Emergency Ambulance ..... 1122 &  
& Rescue Services ..... 4451122  
Motorway Police ..... 9266044  
Motorway Police ..... 9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

Edhi Ambulance ..... 115  
PIA Flight Info ..... 114  
PIA Cargo ..... 9280979  
Railway Inquiry ..... 117  
Railway Exchange ..... 9270831-5  
WASA Rawalpindi ..... 5555489  
CAA ..... 9281092

**HOSPITALS**

CMH ..... 561111  
MH ..... 561116  
MH ..... 561116  
Cantt Hospital ..... 9270907-11  
DHQ ..... 5556311-4  
RGH ..... 9290301-7  
Holy Family ..... 9290322-7  
PIMS ..... 9261170-79  
Polyclinic ..... 9218300-09  
Shifa International ..... 4603666

**DEPARTMENTS**

CDA ..... 9221334-43  
CDA ..... 9208301-04  
Met Office ..... 9250360-6  
RDA ..... 5555864  
TMA ..... 5770886  
Cantonment Board ..... 9270151-3

*CM mission, prosperous, roshan, and progressive Punjab: Azma Bokhari*



**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Information and Culture Azma Bokhari said that CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif's mission is to ensure a prosperous, roshan, and progressive Punjab. If anyone wants to compete with Maryam Nawaz Sharif, they should do so on the basis of performance. No one can match PTI in verbosity, unrealistic promises, and empty philosophies. Instead of worrying about Maryam Nawaz Sharif's government, the PTI group causing unrest should care for themselves. The incumbent government will complete its five-year term and will set Pakistan on the path to progress, development and prosperity.

She said that how come those who burnt statues of martyrs, claim themselves to be true patriots. The first and foremost duty of patriotism is to honour and respect our martyrs and heroes. The "Tangah Party" even mocks those who sacrificed their precious lives for the sake of their country.

Azma Bokhari said that PML-N leadership is proud to have always played a front-line role whenever Pakistan faced difficult and turbulent times. Despite all the challenges today, we are striving to make Pakistan stand on its own feet. Anyone standing with the May 9 rioters will be considered their accomplice. No unconstitutional facilitation will be tolerated anymore, she concluded.

# CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif directs to expedite launch of Chief Minister Solar Panel Financing Scheme

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif and President PML-N Muhammad Nawaz Sharif presided over a special meeting in which matters pertaining to 'Chief Minister Solar Panel Financing Scheme' were reviewed. CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif directed to simplify the solar panel financing scheme. She directed to ensure early completion of the required process for launching of the said scheme.

Secretary Energy Naem Rauf while giving a comprehensive briefing about the Chief Minister Solar Panel Financing Scheme apprised that under the pilot project, test run of the Chief Minister Solar Panel Financing Scheme has been launched at various sites. Rating and perfor-

mance of solar panel system will be monitored as being installed at various sites. Online monitoring of solar system is ongoing through the Solar PV App.

It was further apprised in the briefing that the scheme will be launched from 14th August after reviewing its test run success. The eligibility for the scheme can be checked by sending a bill reference number and CNIC number on 8800. The successful consumers will be informed through SMS after conducting the balloting process by PITB. The district administration and Discos (Distribution Company) will verify credentials of the successful consumers in the balloting process. A Bar Code and QR Code will be imprinted on the solar panel and on the system as well so as to save the scheme from

being sold in the panel market.

In the first phase, more than one lakh consumers will be given solar panels through the balloting process. It was informed in the briefing that the consumers involved in electricity theft, having more than one meters, having out of order or tampered meters, and not paying electricity bills will not be eligible for the solar scheme.

CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif said, "Flour and electricity cost badly affects economic conditions of the people. We will definitely do whatever we can to provide maximum relief to the people. I want that every citizen of Punjab should be given relief in their electricity bill. We will gradually extend the scope of solar panel financing scheme." She added, "Punjab is the only province which took a lead by presenting rupees



625 surplus budget according to the IMF conditions."

Quaid PML-N Muhammad Nawaz Sharif said, "No one can pay the electricity bill as it has become a burden not only for the poor but for everyone. We ended

loadshedding in our tenure and kept the electricity bill under control as well. By 2017, the electricity bills were less and dollar rate was below as well. Since 2018, the poor have suffered alot. A man roaming about on the

road was assured that justice will be provided to him. We had sent back IMF and who brought them back again is known by everyone. The country is not being treated in a nice and fair manner. The country was prospering by leaps and bounds during our tenure and suddenly its progress came to a halt. Those giving decisions will have to rethink even now and they should care for the people. The government should undertake all possible measures to provide maximum relief to the citizens."

Senator Pervez Rasheed, Special Assistant to PM Rana Sanaullah Khan, Provincial Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Special Assistant Rashid Nasrullah, MNA Bilal Azhar Kayani, Chairman P&D, Secretaries and other relevant officers attended the meeting.

**Care**

ISLAMABAD: Green banana being preserved for ripening at I-11 Food and Vegetable Market in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## Leaked call: Pakistan to pursue 'legal action' against TTP chief

**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has decided to conduct a forensic analysis of leaked telephone call featuring banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan militant Noor Wali Mehsud.

On Friday, an alleged audio recording surfaced, attributed to Mehsud, who is reportedly in hiding in Afghanistan. In the recording, Mehsud purportedly directed attacks on hospitals, government buildings, and schools in Pakistan.

Sources said that the authorities would perform a forensic examination of the audio recording involving TTP militants Noor Wali Mehsud and Ghat Haji.

Based on the forensic findings, stringent legal actions would be pursued against both individuals, both domestically and internationally.

Besides it, Pakistan also planned to formally address

the interim Afghan government regarding Mehsud's presence in Afghanistan and his alleged involvement in terrorist activities targeting Pakistan.

The Afghan Taliban would be urged to extradite individuals implicated in ongoing terrorist acts and serious offenses against Pakistan.

A leaked call between the leader of the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) Noor Wali and his associate revealed the plans to carry out terrorist attacks on schools, hospitals, and security forces.

The TTP leader, Noor Wali, can be heard directing his associate to target government schools and hospitals with explosives and not to claim responsibility for the attacks.

He also directed his subordinate to attack the homes of police and military personnel, and to target schools and hospitals in order to create fear and chaos.

## Drug dealers behind bars after exporting 13 kg of Chars

**Raza Naqvi**

ATTOCK: According to the vision of Chief Minister Punjab, on the special instructions of IG Punjab, the Attock police crackdown on drug dealers under the leadership of District Police Officer Attock Dr. Sardar Ghayas Gul Khan continues.

After exporting more than 13 kg of Chars from across the district, dozens of drug dealers are behind bars, separate cases have been registered under the Narcotics Act.

According to the details, according to the vision of the Chief Minister of Punjab, on the special instructions of the IG Punjab, the Attock Police under the leadership of the District Police Officer Attock Dr. Sardar Ghayas Gul Khan is continuing the crackdown against the drug dealers. Drug dealer Abid Khan son of Ghayasuddin Sukna Peshawar and Tahir

Gul son of Sharif Gul resident of Charsada recovered 2800/2800 grams of Chras And Mohammad Akhtar, son of Shenchi Khan, resident of Mararia Hazro recovered 520 grams of Chras. Likewise, the team of Bsalpolice station arrested drug dealer Zulfiqar Ali, son of Muhammad Khan r/o Dumail and Taimur son of Rustam Khan r/o Jund along with drug from accused Zulfiqar Ali. 1620 grams of Chras while 1550 grams of Chras was recovered from Timor. A team of Rango police station recovered 1500 grams of Chras after searching the drug dealer Shah Zeb alias Lagai son of Pristan r/o Swabi in Hazro tehsil, while the police of Pandigheb police station recovered 640 grams of Chars during the patrol. A gram of Chars was recovered. The Attock police registered separate cases under the Narcotics Act and put the accused behind bars.

## Tarar grieved over death of father of PIO Mubashir Hassan



**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Ataullah Tarar on Saturday expressed deep grief and sorrow over death of the father of Principal Information Officer (PIO) Mubashir Hassan.

In a condolence message, the minister expressed his heartfelt condolences and sympathy to Mubashir Hassan and his family.

He said he was deeply saddened to hear the news of the death of PIO Mubashir Hassan's father. Terming the death of a father a great tragedy for the children, he said the "vacuum created by the death of the father will never be filled". The minister said at this hour of sorrow, he shared the grief of the bereaved family.

He prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear this loss with fortitude.

## Edu ministry plans to convert 100 primary schools to solar energy

**APP**

ISLAMABAD: In a bid to reduce electricity costs and promote sustainability, the Ministry of Federal Education has announced plans to convert 100 primary schools to solar energy in next two months.

The initiative is part of a larger effort to harness renewable energy sources and reduce the city's carbon footprint. "This project will not only reduce electricity costs but also provide a clean and sustainable source of energy for our schools," said a spokesperson for the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training.

In a statement, the spokesperson said the project, which is expected to be completed by the end of the year, will involve the installation of solar panels on the rooftops of the selected schools. The solar energy system will be designed to meet the energy needs of each school.

The initiative is expected to save the ministry millions of rupees in electricity costs annually, which will be used to improve educational facilities.

## Technical training on digital education helps polio victim in improving skills, getting job

**APP**

PESHAWAR: An all-inclusive technical training on market based modern digital programmes, helped a polio victim from Peshawar in improving his skills through delving into intricacies of app development and getting a suitable job at a reputed software house.

The technical training on Flutter App Development was jointly arranged under DECODE, Digital Empowerment Through Commerce Opportunities & Digital Education) programme, a collaborative initiative between Sustainable Energy and Economic Development (SEED), Consortium of Change Mechanics, and LMKT. A total of 300 youth from Peshawar were selected for the training including two persons with disabilities (PWDs) at Peshawar Incubation Center (PIC).

Sharing the benefits of training, Faiz Muhammad Khan, a young man of 32 years age and victim of polio virus, expressed special thanks to organizers for orchestrating this impactful program enabling him to improve his understanding and securing a proper job.

Faiz, whose right leg is totally paralyzed, told APP that life of a polio victim is very hard and totally dependent on others in physical movement to financial requirements.

In such circumstances, any assistance even in shape of skill development is like a blessing for person with disabilities, he comments.

Faiz said he studied IT from Peshawar University but free professional training and counseling on modern and market based skills, improved his professional competence besides bolstering confidence to search for suitable jobs. Faiz has regret over his disability caused by crippling polio, but is satisfied over economic empowerment he gained with the support of SEED, Consortium of Change Mechanics, and LMKT.

He urged such organizations to work more for support of physically disabled persons and make them stand on their feet by making earning through different skills, especially IT.

He also stressed upon PWDs to express courage and did not allow disability to become a weakness of life.

"With little courage, passion and hard work, persons with disabilities can spend their live with honor and dignity, he believed.

## Justice denied

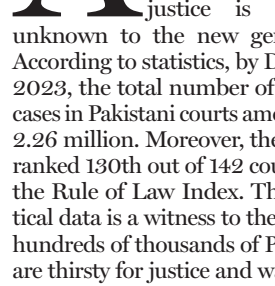
As Martin Luther King says, "Justice delayed is justice denied." In the Pakistani context, justice is a word unknown to the new generation. According to statistics, by December 2023, the total number of pending cases in Pakistani courts amounted to 2.26 million. Moreover, the country ranked 130th out of 142 countries in the Rule of Law Index. This statistical data is a witness to the fact that hundreds of thousands of Pakistanis are thirsty for justice and waiting for years and years to approach justice, but the scenario here is quite different. The judiciary sells the justice, and the tycoons and elites buy it in the

market. So, it is an expensive market, which is why the poor cannot afford this market. Concomitantly, the judiciary has tarnished its reputation by making justice expensive because the poor and middle class have extinguished the flame of hope from the judiciary, and they are now preferring the local jirga system to approach justice. Annihilation is at its climax as In Pakistan, there are 160,000 or so registered lawyers whose duty it is to advise their clients. They show them both sides of the coin and then pocket

the coin. But here, the judicial jungle is encircled by Over 1.86 million (82 percent) are at the district level, with the remaining 18 percent clogged at the upper tier. The matter of fact is that, as one wise observer observed, "You get justice in the next world; in this world, you have the law." To expatiate it well, one must quote the words of Sir Winston Churchill: during the Second World War, when the Luftwaffe (German air force) was wreaking havoc over London with its incessant bombing attacks, the

British Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill, took cognizance of the heavy casualties and economic devastation. He asked, "Are the courts functioning?" When told that the judges were dispensing justice as normal, Churchill replied, "Thank God. If the courts are working, nothing can go wrong." So as long as the judiciary of Pakistan does not work normally, all will await their devastating future. In the 1990s, Singapore's leader, Lee Kwan Yew, visited Pakistan. On his way out, he was asked his opinion of us. He replied, "I have never seen a country so determined to commit suicide."

The writer is a student of Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad.



Analysis

Jalaluddin Kakar



Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almas Ayoub Sabir**  
 Vice Chairman: **Asim Nazir Ahmad**  
 Managing Editor: **Naveed Ahmad Khan**  
 Head Editorial Advisory Board: **Amjad Mehmood**  
 Bureau Chief Karachi: **Saleem Zaman Khan.**  
 (mszk786@gmail.com)  
 Bureau Chief Lahore: **Syed Afraz Ali Nazish**  
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)  
 Islamabad Office: Rose Plaza, I-8 Markaz.  
 Karachi office: Flat No.C.3.A.One Comfort, Block No 11.  
 Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Main Rashid Minhas Road.  
 Lahore Office: 7-E,Samanberg, Johar Town.  
 Email: **spokesmanislambad@gmail.com**  
 Whatsapp: **0346-5008408**

# China's CPC Meeting and Lessons for Pakistan

The greatness of China is primarily due to the farsighted visions of the Chinese leadership which are conceived, evolved and implemented and overseen by the Central Committee Party, the most important policy making machine of the Chinese state. The CPC Central Committee meeting is held at strategic intervals and plays a crucial role in setting China's policy direction, addressing current challenges, and planning for the future. These meetings are timed to align with economic conditions, significant political milestones, and strategic planning needs, reinforcing party unity and the central leadership's authority while shaping China's development trajectory in various sectors.

The recently held Third Plenary Session of the 20th CPC Central Committee in Beijing from July 15 to 18, 2024, was a significant event marked by several important decisions aimed at further deepening reform and advancing Chinese modernization. The timing of the Third Plenary Session was important because it allowed for a thorough mid-term review, addressed pressing economic and social challenges, reinforced political unity, positioned China strategically in the global context, and set clear milestones aligned with significant future adversities.

Geopolitically, China must navigate complex trade relationships and regional tensions, such as territorial disputes in the South China Sea and relations with Taiwan, while promoting its Belt and Road Initiative. Governance challenges include continuing anti-corruption efforts, strengthening the rule of law, ensuring political stability, and improving access to quality healthcare and educa-

tion. Addressing these multifaceted challenges is crucial for China to maintain its growth trajectory and consolidate its position as a leading global power.

The CPC Central Committee meeting held from July 15 to 18, 2024, comprehensively addressed these multifaceted challenges and proposed several solutions to ensure its continued rise and modernization.

The meeting took stock of the economic slowdown, high debt levels, and real estate market issues and emphasized the need to build a high-standard socialist market economy by leveraging market mechanisms more effectively while maintaining robust regulations to ensure fairness and efficiency.

It proposed reforms in fiscal, tax, and financial sectors aimed at enhancing macroeconomic governance, promoting high-quality development, and fostering new growth drivers besides highlighting the importance of supply-side structural reforms and improving the mechanisms that incentivize and constrain development and continue improving and developing the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics and modernizing China's system and capacity for governance.

The meeting addressed the social challenges such as an aging population and income inequality and proposed comprehensive reforms in education, healthcare, and social security systems. It laid prime focus on improving income distribution, employment policies, and enhancing

population-related services to promote social cohesion and development. It also emphasized the importance of Urban-rural integration and proposed plans to promote equal exchanges of production factors and narrow disparities between cities and the countryside.

On the environmental front, the meeting underscored the need for coordinated efforts in pollution reduction, green development, and climate change response, with a commitment to improving ecological conservation systems and managing natural resources sustainably.

The committee took stock of the technological, geopolitical, and governance challenges and proposed bridging the innovation gap, counter cyber security threats and bring deeper reforms in education and talent development by fostering integration between the real economy and the digital economy. The meeting also stressed the importance of advancing whole-process people's democracy, strengthening the rule of law, and ensuring full implementation of the Constitution.

Geopolitically, the CPC aims to expand institutional opening-up, deepen foreign trade structural reform, and enhance cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative and expediting efforts to maintain political stability and continue anti-corruption measures to ensure that governance reforms support China's long-term strategic goals.

The CPC Central Committee setup timeline for short term, medium term

and long term reform. In the short term (2024-2025), the focus will be on economic social reforms, leveraging market mechanisms, stabilizing the real estate market and improving income distribution, and urban-rural integration coupled with mitigating environmental challenges. By the mid-term (2026-2029), China aims to foster innovation and establish new institutions for education and technology. Long-term goals (2030-2035) include finalizing the high-standard socialist market economy, maintaining high standards of living through advanced healthcare and social security systems and fully modernizing its governance systems.

Pakistan can benefit from adopting a similar approach by setting defined milestones to guide national development. Like China, Pakistan should focus on leveraging market mechanisms while maintaining effective regulation to balance free-market principles with government oversight, ensuring efficiency and fairness. Emphasizing high-quality development and innovation is crucial, which can be achieved by prioritizing structural reforms in education, technology, and talent development to foster sustainable growth. Additionally, integrating urban and rural development is essential to narrow disparities and promote common prosperity. Lastly, Pakistan must commit to ensuring the supremacy of the Rule of Law, upholding the constitution, and fostering national unity through legal reforms to strengthen its governance systems.

*Writer is Former Press Secretary to the President, Former Press Minister to the Embassy of Pakistan to France, Former MD, SRBC*



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

## Pakistan stands for boosting cooperation between the U. N. regional and sub-regional organizations

Pakistan stands for boosting cooperation between the U. N. and regional and sub-regional organizations in maintaining world peace and security, a top Pakistani diplomat has said, while also stressing that no state should be allowed to dominate regional organizations.

"We must strive for a collective vision that benefits all," Ambassador Munir Akram told the UN Security Council which held a debate on Friday under the chairmanship of Russia, the 15-nation body's president for the month of July.

In this regard, the Pakistani envoy underscored that the particular national interests of member states do not hinder regional integration.

"The quest for regional hegemony by one large state has undermined the potential of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)," the Pakistani said in an obvious reference to India.

Established in 1985, SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) comprises: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. But India has all along been an obstacle in promoting regional cooperation through SAARC, a body established to bring prosperity to the peoples of South Asian region. In his remarks, Ambassador Akram said, "Regional integration represents the next phase of institutional development in international relations — particularly in the realms of trade and industry.

He therefore recognized the crucial role of three bodies — the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) — in fostering economic growth and cooperation across borders, as well as in combating terrorism and drug-trafficking.

Highlighting SCO's "immense promise and potential", the Pakistani envoy said that with some of the world's largest emerging economies as its members, this organization is poised to advance integrated regional cooperation, especially by enhancing trade and investment opportunities.

"This was evident at the recent SCO plus Summit meeting in Astana, in which Prime Minister of Pakistan Shehbaz Sharif participated actively," Ambassador Akram said.

In addition, he said that CSTO can enhance connectivity between the East and West, fostering a more secure region.

Ambassador Akram also said that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is a flagship project, noting that Pakistan will expand this effort — including to Afghanistan, to realize its full potential for investment.

Pakistan, he said, also believes that other regional organizations such as the African Union (AU), the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), along with cross-regional groups, like the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), should also work towards expanding global integration through appropriate association agreements, and welcomed the establishment of the AU-AL-OIC Trilateral Commission.



Rasmi



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmi. (Courtesy of Ashraf Al-Awcat)

## 'Pakistan's Political Paradox Explained'

The political landscape in Pakistan is complex and has long been dominated by a few major parties that have cycled in and out of power over the decades. Despite the public's disappointment with these parties' performance, particularly their lack of significant developmental achievements, they continue to enjoy substantial support. This phenomenon raises critical questions about the underlying reasons behind the electorate's seemingly contradictory behavior and the challenges faced by new parties advocating for change and social development.

One of the primary reasons for the persistent support of established parties is the deep-rooted nature of political patronage and clientelism in Pakistan. Political loyalty often hinges on personal relationships and local influences rather than broader developmental policies. Established parties have entrenched networks that provide tangible benefits to their supporters, such as jobs, financial aid, and other resources. These networks create a sense of obligation and loyalty that newer parties, which lack such established systems, struggle to replicate.

Furthermore, the socio-economic structure of Pakistan plays a significant role in shaping voter behavior. A significant portion of the electorate lives in rural areas where feudal landlords, often aligned with traditional political parties, hold considerable sway. These landlords can mobilize votes en masse, ensuring continued support for the parties they back. The feudal system perpetuates a cycle of dependence, where the public relies on these figures for their livelihoods, making it difficult for new polit-

ical entities to break through.

Another critical factor is the pervasive mistrust in political promises. Over the years, the electorate has grown skeptical of grandiose pledges of change and development. This skepticism is a product of repeated disappointments, where successive governments have failed to deliver on their promises. As a result, voters often opt for the devil they know, rather than risking their support on untested and potentially unreliable new parties. This cautious approach is further reinforced by the media, which frequently highlights the failures and scandals associated with new political entities, thus undermining their credibility.

Additionally, the role of identity politics cannot be understated. In Pakistan, ethnic, sectarian, and regional identities significantly influence political affiliations. Established parties have long exploited these divisions to secure votes, appealing to specific demographic groups and fostering a sense of identity-based loyalty. New parties, advocating for broader national or ideological goals, often find it challenging to overcome these entrenched identities and build a cohesive support base.

The media landscape also contributes to the difficulty new parties face in gaining traction. Established parties typically have greater access to resources, allowing them to dominate media coverage and shape public discourse. They can afford extensive advertising campaigns and maintain a constant presence in the public eye, whereas new parties often struggle to achieve similar visibility. This disparity in media exposure reinforces the status quo, as the electorate remains more familiar with the narratives

and figures of established parties.

Moreover, the electoral system in Pakistan, which includes significant barriers to entry for new political actors, further complicates the political dynamics. High costs of campaigning, the need for extensive grassroots networks, and the bureaucratic hurdles of party registration and candidacy all pose substantial challenges. These systemic barriers ensure that established parties, with their greater resources and experience, maintain an advantage over new entrants.

Finally, the issue of political literacy and awareness cannot be overlooked. Many voters, especially in rural areas, have limited access to unbiased information and political education. This lack of awareness about the potential benefits of supporting new parties and policies oriented towards genuine social development means that voters are more likely to stick with familiar options. Efforts to increase political literacy and provide the electorate with comprehensive, unbiased information about their choices are crucial for fostering a more dynamic and competitive political environment.

In conclusion, the continued support for established political parties in Pakistan, despite their lack of developmental achievements, can be attributed to a complex interplay of factors including political patronage, socio-economic structures, identity politics, media influence, electoral system barriers, and political literacy. New parties advocating for change face an uphill battle in overcoming these entrenched dynamics. For genuine political change to occur, there needs to be a concerted effort to address these underlying issues, fostering a political culture where development and progress are prioritized over traditional loyalties and patronage networks.

*Writer is student at University of Sargodha.*



Analysis

M Azam Tariq

## Use of Colonial law to control peaceful protest - I

The crime of creating a revolt, disturbance, or lawful civil authority with the intent to cause its overthrow or destruction" is called seditious law (Blacklaw Dictionary, 11th edition). Seditious laws are legal provisions that criminalise conduct or speech

inciting rebellion against the state's authority. Historically, these laws have been controversial as they often suppress and infringe on freedom of speech and expression. These laws date back to ancient times, during the colonial era, when colonialists used them to control colonies. Many modern seditious laws in former British colonies, like Pakistan, have roots in colonial legislation. The touchstone of these laws is that they suppress freedom of speech and conduct. Hence, it defeats the purpose of civil rights. One prime example is Section 3 of the Punjab Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance 1960, which gives authorities the authority to arrest a person for acting in a manner prejudicial to public safety. This is a draconian law because immense powers are given to detain any person. Simultaneously, Article 16 of the Constitution protects the fundamental right of freedom of assembly, but it is also subject to reasonable restrictions implemented by the law in the best interest of public order. In the British colonial era, the Vernacular Press Act 1878 was enacted, which spoke of the seditious law. Seditious law addresses the conduct, suppression, and muzzle of people's voices of dissent against the government in power. It varies significantly across countries and is handled differently in international legal contexts. International human rights instruments, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), accentuate freedom of expression. Article 19 of the ICCPR allows for restrictions on freedom of expression but mandates they must be provided

by law and necessary for the existence of the rights. Furthermore, Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) (Yankov v. Bulgaria, 15 BHRC 592) holds the significance of freedom of expression but has similar restrictions to those in the ICCPR. Milton sought "the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all

liberties." The logic and concept of the "marketplace of ideas are especially sound in this age of technology and social media: in a marketplace with limited barriers to entry, let all ideas be expressed and debated, and let superior ideas drown out inferior ones. This is not to say that speech is not impactful or that human beings suffer criticism willingly. This is why the history of free speech has been

more a history of censorship of speech (PLD 2024 134). Legislations of different democratic governments have eradicated the seditious law to uphold the merits of law and justice. In Britain, the law has been abolished through the Coroners and Justice Act 2009. Australia amended the law after the recommendation of the Australian Law Reform Commission; and New Zealand also repealed the seditious law by introducing the Crimes (Repeal of Seditious Offences) Amendment Bill in 2007. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes remarked in the case of Abrams that "the ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideas—that the best test of truth is the power of thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market. That is the theory behind our Constitution." He further stated, "We should be eternally vigilant against attempts to check the expression of opinions that we loathe and believe to be fraught with death, unless they so imminently threaten immediate interference with the lawful and pressing purposes of the law that an immediate check is required to save the country."

*To be continued*



# U. S. lawmaker Sheila Jackson Lee, founder of Pakistan Caucus, dies

Spokesman Report

WASHINGTON: United States Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, founder and co-chairperson of the Congressional Pakistan Caucus, has passed away after a battle with cancer, her family announced Friday night.

Ms. Jackson Lee, 74, said in June that she had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and was undergoing treatment. The longtime congresswoman served in the House since 1995 and leaves a legacy of pushing for legislation related to civil rights "With incredible grief for our loss yet deep gratitude for the life she shared with us, we announce the passing of United States Representative Sheila Jackson Lee of the 18th Congressional District of Texas," her family said in a statement.



"A local, national, and international humanitarian, she was acknowledged worldwide for her courageous fights for racial justice, criminal justice, and human rights, with a special emphasis

on women and children," the statement added.

In September 2022, the Government of Pakistan conferred the high civil award of Hilal-e-Pakistan upon

Ms. Jackson Lee, in recognition of her outstanding services to Pakistan, especially in highlighting the magnitude of recent devastation due to floods.

She was also an ardent supporter of US assistance to Pakistan in the 2020 floods, and for expanding the scope of bilateral ties geared to improving lives and livelihoods of people in both countries, as well as for her support and commitment towards a strong and effective Pakistan Congressional Caucus.

Ms. Jackson Lee was then accompanied by her delegation members, including Congressman Thomas Souzzi, at the presidential ceremony honouring her in Islamabad.

Souzzi said last month he will lead efforts to reactivate the caucus.

No plans for her funeral were immediately announced.

*President Zardari, PM Shehbaz Sharif expresses grief over US Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee's demise*



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Saturday expressed grief over the death of the United States Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, founder and co-chairperson of the Congressional Pakistan Caucus.

He offered his heartfelt condolences to the family members and friends of the Late Congresswoman.

The president said that Congresswoman Sheila Jackson was a remarkable leader who always advocated for human rights, with a particular focus on women and children.

He highlighted that her contributions towards strengthening the relations between Pakistan and the USA would always be remembered.

The president stated that her efforts during the devastating floods of 2022 in Pakistan would never be forgotten. "Her advocacy and support during that difficult time provided hope and relief to the families affected by the floods", he added.

Meanwhile: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the death of Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee.

"As Co-chair of the Pakistan Caucus in the U. S. House of Representatives, she was a champion for stronger ties between Pakistan and the United States," the prime minister wrote on his X timeline.

"Her contributions will be remembered and missed for years to come. May her soul rest in peace. My heartfelt condolences to her family and her supporters," he added.

*Gilani condoles demise of U. S. Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee*

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani has expressed deep sense of grief and sorrow over the demise of U. S. Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee.

In his message he said, she was a great friend and supporter of Pakistan.

He expressed solidarity with family of Sheila Jackson and said that Pakistan has lost a true friend.

Her services for oppressed, the Chairman Senate said, would long be remembered.



*NA Speaker condoles passing of U. S. congress representative*

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, has expressed his profound sadness at the news of the passing of Ms. Sheila Jackson Lee, U. S. congress representative and Chairperson of the Pakistan Caucus in Congress.

The Speaker in his message said, "I am deeply saddened to learn about the passing of Ms. Sheila Jackson Lee."

She was a great friend of Pakistan and played a significant role in expanding bilateral ties between the two countries.

"Her support in addressing critical issues, particularly her efforts during the recent devastation caused by floods in Pakistan, were extremely commendable. My deepest condolences go to her family, friends, Congress, and the people of the U. S. in this hour of grief" he said.

The Speaker added that the National Assembly of Pakistan stands with the people of the United States in mourning the loss of a remarkable leader and a true friend of Pakistan.

She would always be remembered for her public service and efforts to uplift the marginalized segments of the society.

*LFK calls for global intervention for protecting legal professionals in IIOJK*

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Legal Forum for Kashmir (LFK) has issued a strong condemnation regarding the recent arrests of Kashmiri lawyers by Indian occupying authorities in Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

In a statement received here on Saturday, the Forum emphasized the urgent need for the protection of legal professionals in occupied territories and calls on international organizations to take action against the perpetrators of these human rights violations.

The LFK criticizes the arbitrary detention of prominent legal professionals, including the former President of the High Court Bar Association, Mian Abdul Qayoom and other notable lawyers such as Nazir Ahmed Ronga, Muhammad Ashraf Bhat, and Advocate Mian Muzaffar, the statement said and added, these arrests, made under the Public Safety Act (PSA), are viewed as blatant violations of human rights and attempts to silence voices advocating for the UN-guaranteed right to self-determination for Jammu and Kashmir.

The Forum highlights the draconian nature of laws such as the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and the PSA, which have been weaponized against lawyers, civil society members, and journalists, it said and added, this systemic oppression undermines the legal profession and threatens the fundamental rights of the Kashmiri people to legal representation and advocacy.

The LFK urged the international human rights organizations to take notice of these violations and intervene. They appeal for global action to prevent further oppression and uphold the rights of Kashmiri legal professionals. The forum has called upon the international community to impose sanctions against India for its ongoing human rights abuses.

It stressed the necessity for immediate action to protect the legal rights and freedoms of the Kashmiri populace. They vowed to raise this issue in various international legal forums, seeking justice for their colleagues and an end to unlawful detentions.

Meanwhile, the Bar Associations of Rawalpindi and Islamabad have also condemned the arbitrary arrests of lawyers in IIOJK.

# Israel wants to extend its territory by displacing Palestinians: Nader Al Turk

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: In a landmark visit that underscored diplomatic ties and shared aspirations for peace and prosperity, Nader Al Turk, Counselor and Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of the State of Palestine, made his way to Islamabad, the capital city of Pakistan. His journey was marked by a warm reception from the Islamabad Chamber of Small Traders & Small Industries, led by its President, Mr. Sajjad Sarwar, and other esteemed members of the chamber. This gathering served as a platform for dialogue, fostering mutual understanding and exploring avenues for collaboration between the two nations.

During his visit, Mr. Al Turk brought to light the current situation in Palestine, emphasizing the challenges faced by the Palestinian people amidst the ongoing conflict. He highlighted Israel's intentions to displace Palestinians and expand their territory, describing these actions as part of a larger scheme aimed at undermining the Palestinian cause. The Deputy Head of Mission spoke passionately about the plight of the people in the Gaza Strip, a region devastated by war and suffering under the weight of Israeli aggression.

Israel wants to extend its territory by displacing Palestinians: Nader Al



Turk's poignant aspect of his address was the discussion on the dire need for humanitarian aid in the Gaza Strip. Mr. Al Turk expressed the Palestinian government's desire to establish an integrated field hospital to cater to

the medical needs of the injured and sick, who have been severely affected by the destruction of hospitals and the blockade on essential medical supplies by Israel.

The visit also saw discussions on

broader themes of cooperation between Palestine and Pakistan. Mr. Al Turk outlined a vision that extends beyond immediate relief efforts, envisioning a future where Palestine and Pakistan collaborate closely in trade, economics,

# Turkmenistan, Afghanistan discuss ways of boosting transit in North-South

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: As part of the First North-South Trade and Logistics Forum taking place in Aktau (Kazakhstan), a trilateral meeting of the heads of transport departments of Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Afghanistan was held, during which a wide range of issues related to further capacity building were discussed cooperation between the three states in the transport sector.

In particular, the parties discussed the conditions for transporting goods along the Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Afghanistan route with further access to Pakistan.



At the same time, at the above-mentioned trilateral meeting,

the possibilities of participation of the turkmen, afghan and kazakh sides in

the implementation of a railway from the turkmen-afghan border to the city of Herat (Afghanistan) were considered.

Embassy of Turkmenistan in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan During the negotiations, it was emphasized that the transport route «Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Afghanistan» is an important component of the transit corridor «North-South», the effective use of which will ensure the transportation of goods in the amount of 5 to 8 million tons at the initial stage, and in the future - from 20 to 30 million tons.

Press service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Embassy of Turkmenistan Islamabad.

# Pakistan committed to maintain a strong and credible deterrence: Amb Zamir Akram

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to the Strategic Plans Division, Ambassador Zamir Akram, in a discussion organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), emphasized the importance of Pakistan's commitment to maintaining the credibility of deterrence.

Highlighting the evolving nature of deterrence in view of advancing technologies, the eminent expert on strategic stability underscored the need to preserve deterrence credibility to enduring peace.

Reflecting on the genesis of conflicts between India and Pakistan, Ambassador Akram emphasized that the territorial disputes stemmed from India's pursuit of hegemonic policies

since 1947.

Consequently, Pakistan's pursuit of security was primarily motivated as a response to India's aggressive ambitions.

He contended that Pakistan's acquisition of nuclear capability was essential to counter India's conventional dominance and establish a credible deterrent, which had effectively kept New Delhi from waging war on several occasions in the past.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Jauhar Saleem, President IRS, expressed concern that India's development and acquisition of advanced weapons was contributing to an arms race and eroding the essential strategic stability required



for peace in South Asia. He warned that India's ultra-nationalistic approach was aggravating mistrust among the nuclear states, with negative repercussions for the fragile strategic environment obtaining in the region.

During a vibrant Q & A session, while elaborating on Indo-US cooperation, Ambassador Akram noted that India - leveraging US cooperation - was adopting a more aggressive stance, as evident by Balakot incident and revo-

cation of Articles 370 and 35-A in IIOJK, while pretending to be a net security provider in the region.

He noted that it was in response to India's belligerent approach that Pakistan was forced to adopt a Full Spectrum Deterrence (FSD) to ensure credibility of deterrence between the two states.

Ambassador Akram also emphasized the importance of avoiding miscalculations in a sensitive security environment in South Asia and reiterated Pakistan's dedication to maintaining credible deterrence essential for upholding peace in the region, which necessitates embracing education in science and technology to stay abreast of the latest advancements in technology.



**Bull & Bears**  
PSX 100-Share  
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
80,117.89	81,839.86
Day's High	Day's Low
81,939.83	79,812.69
Index Value	Change
17,938,228,323	-1721.97
Percentage	Time
-2.1%	19 Jul, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,155.72	-49.17
Percentage	Time
-0.60%	19 Jul, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
40,349.45	-315.57
Percentage	Time
-0.78%	19 Jul, 3:15 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
40,063.79	-62.56
Percentage	Time
-0.16%	19 Jul, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	184.75	186.55
Bahrain Dinar	741.15	749.15
Canadian Dollar	203.5	205.5
China Yuan	38.35	38.75
Danish Krone	40.05	40.45
Euro	301.35	303.25
Hong Kong Dollar	35.70	36.05
Indian Rupee	3.33	3.43
Japanese Yen	1.91	1.99
Kuwaiti Dinar	908.25	917.35
Malaysian Ringgit	58.95	59.75
New Zealand \$	169.24	171.24
Norwegians Krone	26.04	26.34
Omani Riyal	722.87	730.89
Qatari Riyal	76.39	77.09
Saudi Riyal	73.70	74.42
Singapore Dollar	202	204
Swedish Korona	26.4	26.7
Swiss Franc	309.05	311.55
Thai Bhat	7.5	7.65
U.A.E Dirham	76.50	77.25
UK Pound Sterling	354.85	358.35
US Dollar	279.25	280.75

**Pakistan's weekly inflation up by 0.76pc**

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The weekly inflation measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.76 percent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on July 18, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday.

According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 321.40 points as compared to 318.96 points during the past week.

As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 24.36 percent. The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16=100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups.

The SPI for the lowest consumption group of up to Rs 17,732, increased by 0.49 percent and went up to 311.97 points from last week's 310.46 points.

The SPI for the lowest consumption groups of Rs 17,732-22,888, Rs 22,889-29,517; Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175 increased by 0.58 percent, 0.62 percent, 0.72 and 0.87 percent respectively.

During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 29 (56.87%) items increased, 05 (9.80%) items decreased and 17 (33.33%) items remained stable.

The items, which recorded major decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week basis included tomatoes (4.45%), bananas (2.25%), onions (0.99%), pulse masoor (0.19%) and LPG (0.12%).

The commodities which recorded major increase in their average prices on week-on-week basis included chicken (10.26%), powdered milk (4.56%), petrol (3.77%), eggs (2.76%), potatoes (2.30%), diesel (2.25%) and garlic (2.20%).

On-year basis, the commodities that witnessed decrease wheat flour (31.62%), cooking oil 5 litre (14.37%), vegetable ghee 2.5 kg (11.25%), vegetable ghee 1 kg (10.63%), mustard oil (8.63%), eggs (2.99%), rice basmati broken (2.93%) and tea packet (2.52%).

The commodities which recorded an increase in their average prices on year-on-year basis included gas charges for q1 (570.00%), onions (105.46%), tomatoes (57.70%), powdered milk (39.15%), pulse gram (38.55%), garlic (36.05%).

# IPPs paid Rs 450 billion in first three months of year: Gohar Ejaz

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The independent power producers (IPPs) have been made heavy payments of Rs 450 billion in first three months of the current year.

Former caretaker commerce minister Gohar Ejaz has shared the data of the capacity payments to IPPs. "Various IPPs were paid monthly 150 billion rupees from January to March," Gohar Ejaz said.

He said that among the independent power producers' 50 percent operating with below 10% of their generation capacity. "Four power plants getting 10 billion rupees monthly without generating electricity," former minister said.

"Our hard-earned money being paid to 40 families in capacity payments," he said. "These power plants should be made payments when they generate electricity,"



he said. Gohar Ejaz also demanded representation to all stakeholders in the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA). "The government should not run its business with the public money and avoid excesses with power consumers," he added. Gohar Ejaz had earlier demanded record of the payments made to the independent power producers. He demanded that the nation should be informed about how much electricity generated being generated by each power plant according to their capacity. He had also demanded the record of capacity payments made to the IPPs should be made public and the data of their generation costs should also be disclosed. He also demanded that the agreements with the IPPs should be converted into "take and pay" mode.

## Price Hike

ISLAMABAD: A vendor selling vegetables at H-9 in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## Competition Tribunal affirms penalty on Reliance Paints for price fixing tactics

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Appellate Tribunal has upheld the decision of the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) against M/s Reliance Paints Pakistan for fixing the retail prices of its products, in violation of Section 4 of the Competition Act, 2010.

The CCP initiated an inquiry after receiving a formal complaint from Akzo Nobel Pakistan Ltd, which alleged that Reliance Paint was fixing the minimum resale price for its products and also monitoring and penalizing the dealers/distributors/retailers for non-compliance with its price directives. The CCP's enquiry report concluded that these practices were restricting competition not only between the dealers and retailers but also between Reliance and

its competitors as the retail price became inflexible and no discounts could be offered by dealers to consumers for Reliance's products.

The Commission observed that the agreements/arrangements enforced by Reliance Paints restricted intrabrand competition amongst its dealers or distributors/retailers as the same impairs their ability to compete on prices in the sale and distribution of Reliance Paint's products. Consequently, the CCP imposed a penalty of PKR 5 million on Reliance Paints.

Reliance Paints filed an appeal against the CCP's order with the Competition Appellate Tribunal. The Tribunal upheld findings of the Commission regarding Reliance Paint's violations of Section 4 of the Act. However, it reduced the penalty to PKR 2.5 million.

## MNA Hanif Abbasi announces to provide professional courses to food handlers

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Restaurants Caterers Sweets and Bakers Association Muhammad Farooq Chaudhry and Chairman Mumtaz Ahmed met with MNA Hanif Abbasi.

MNA Hanif Abbasi's big announcement for food handlers, professional courses will be conducted at the government level for the employees related to the food sector.

President Rawalpindi Restaurants Caterers Sweets and Bakers Association Muhammad Farooq Chaudhry and Chairman Mumtaz Ahmed welcomed the announcement of MNA Hanif Abbasi.

President Rawalpindi Restaurants Caterers Sweets and Bakers Association Muhammad Farooq Chaudhry and Chairman Mumtaz Ahmed met MNA Hanif Abbasi, in which there was a detailed discussion about the problems faced by the food sector. On this occasion, MNA Hanif Abbasi made a big announcement for the food handlers and said that we will provide professional courses to the employees related to the food sector at the government level so that the people related to the food sector can be employed



not only in Pakistan but also outside the country.

He said that the food sector provides the most employment to the skilled people for whom regular classes will be started in the technical colleges of the government. Officials of the association should also visit technical colleges in this regard. For this formal approval will be taken from the

Prime Minister House so that the people can get the best employment opportunities and unemployment can be eliminated.

On which President Restaurant Caterers Sweets and Bakers Association Muhammad Farooq Chaudhry and Chairman Mumtaz Ahmed welcomed this initiative of MNA Hanif Abbasi and called it commendable.

## Sugar sale stopped at Utility Stores

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Utility Stores Corporation has stopped selling sugar under the Prime Minister's Relief Package across Pakistan/

According to the spokesperson, the development came in the wake of the newly imposed Federal Excise Duty (FED) of Rs 15 per kilogram of sugar.

The spokesperson said that the corporation has sought clarification from the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) on the new tax.

He said that the corporation has sufficient stock of sugar but has halted sales until the FBR provides clarification on the FED.

The USC spokesperson stated that as soon as the FBR issues a clear directive, sugar sales will resume immediately.

The price of per kg sugar is fixed at Rs109 for the

Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) consumers, while the same is being sold at Rs155 per kg to the general public.

Earlier sources revealed that Utility Stores Corporation (USC) procured 10,000 metric tonnes of sugar at Rs141.20/kg.

Sources privy to the development said the Utility Stores Corporation procured the 40,000 metric tonnes of sugar from the tender of 45,000 metric tonnes issued.

It is pertinent to mention here that a total of Rs 65 billion were allocated for the PM's and Ramadan packages in the budget out of which Rs 10 billion were allocated for the PM's Ramadan Relief Package, and remaining Rs 55 billion for the PM's Relief Package.

Additionally, Rs 35 billion were allocated under the PM's package for the ongoing financial year.

## Taxation and Common Citizen

Due to the instability of the country's economy, the government is facing a shortfall in revenue. For which increase in revenue is very important. According to a journal report, 94% of the revenue of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) is earmarked for debt repayment. Yet every year our people are indebted to the IMF. This is why corporations accomplish their goals by imposing additional tax burdens on the public. According to economist Dr. Ashfaq H Khan, the IMF made it clear in its conditions that if Pakistan wants to join the new loan scheme program, it has to accept our conditions.

On High Taxes and Low Incomes Economist Arthur Laffer explains that raising tax beyond a certain point can hinder revenue generation. Due to higher taxation, revenue collection from various sectors may decrease. On the other hand, the circles associated with different sectors of life are

of the opinion that it would be better to reduce the number of institutions rather than putting an additional tax burden on the people.

Institutions performing similar responsibilities should be merged.

Because when the country suffers from economic crisis, it becomes necessary to reduce the expenditure. For example, billions of rupees can be saved by merging Housing Urban Development and Public Health Engineering Department, Rawalpindi Development Authority RDR, Local Government and Community Development. Similarly, by merging Punjab Food Authority, Environment Protection Department, Primary and Secondary Health Care Department Punjab, Specialized Health Care and Medical Education Department,

Directorate General Health Services Punjab and other related institutions, the desired goal can be achieved. Because the work of all of them is to perform health related issues. To further improve the efficiency of institutions, implementation of one window system can create more convenience. A new super ministry could be created by merging the departments of business and energy, culture, media, sports, and transport.

We also need to take a quick look at our infrastructure, to understand why we have overburdened ourselves by creating additional departments. As a result, the public is having to bear the consequences in the form of various taxes. By merging additional institutions, the government can save billions instead of raising taxes on the white-

collar class. We also have institutions where ten people are doing the same job. Nine out of ten of these people's skills can be used elsewhere. By reducing the number of departments, it will be possible to save billions of rupees. According to Profit By Pakistan Today reported that in June 2024, the Punjab Revenue Authority earned a revenue of Rs 32.7 billion. Which is 16% higher than Rs 28.2 billion in the same month last year. Notably, Punjab's sales tax on services in June 2024 was Rs 29 billion, up 9 percent from earlier. Punjab Workers Welfare Fund collected Rs 3 billion, which is 150% more than before. And Punjab Infrastructure Development collected Rs 629 million, which is 83 percent higher than the month of June last year. But what is the benefit to the public from the collection of this tax, the increase in electricity, gas, water bills is continuing gradually. The continuous increase in the prices of petroleum products, trans-

port fares and daily essentials has left the people reeling. Revenue collection should also benefit the public at any level. Business and public sector are suffering from severe economic problems. Psychological problems have increased.

Horrible crimes are happening every day. People's stamina has died but the government is busy collecting revenue. Members of National and Provincial Assemblies are engrossed in showcasing development projects worth billions of rupees. But they forget that their white-clad class is falling below the poverty line, old parents are forced to beg on the side of the road. Rulers and people's representatives who live in luxury environment have forgotten that for the people and their children, two meals a day with dignity, cheap medicines, electricity and gas bills at a reasonable price, A roof to cover the head and decent employment are the most important.



Maryam Siddiq

Analysis



# Gov't determined to provide equal opportunities to all talented women: PM

ISLAMABAD, JUL 20 (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday, appreciating the Pakistani women for rendering valuable services in every field, said that the government was determined to provide equal opportunities to all talented women across the country.

He was talking to the globally acclaimed Pakistani mountaineer Naila Kiyani who called on him at the PM House.

The prime minister said providing

facilities to the women in various sectors including information technology, education, professional training, sports and other sectors was part of the government's top priorities.

The prime minister congratulated Naila on becoming the first Pakistani woman to conquer 11 peaks, above 8,000 meters, calling it a proud moment for Pakistan.

He also congratulated Naila Kiyani for recently scaling 8,485 meters high fifth-highest peak Mount Makalu.

PM Shehbaz Sharif also commended her work as an honorary ambassador for education and her efforts to promote professional training in the field of mountaineering.

Naila Kiyani thanked the prime minister for his focus on women's development and presented proposals for specialized training and vocational education in the mountaineering sector.

The prime minister directed relevant authorities to develop a comprehensive



plan to implement these suggestions. The meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Information and

Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change Romina Khurshid

Alam, Chairman PM's Youth Program Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan, and other relevant high-ranking officials.

## Jaffna Kings edge Kandy Falcons to set LPL 2024 Final with Galle Marvels

A Sports

COLOMBO: Asitha Fernando held his nerves calm to defend 17 runs in the last over and steered Jaffna Kings to the Lanka Premier League (LPL) 2024 final with a narrow one-run victory over Kandy Falcons in Qualifier 2 on Saturday.

However, it was not the easiest of defence for Fernando, who was hit for a six and a four as Ramesh Mendis had brought the equation down to four off one.

But Fernando somehow managed to get away despite bowling a low full-toss as Mendis could hit it towards mid-wicket and ran a couple.

Mendis remained unbeaten gutsy 30 off just 11 deliveries with the help of three fours and two sixes but his gutsy knock could not withstand the damage done by Fabian Allen and Vijay-akanth Vijayakanth.

Allen led the bowling charge for the Kings with a four-fer while Vijayakanth



made three scalps. West Indies international Andre Fletcher remained the top-scorer for the Falcons with a 21-ball 38 while Mohammad Haris (26) and Kamindu Mendis (32) were the other notable run-getters.

Earlier, Kusal Mendis' unbeaten century powered the Kings 187/7 in the allotted overs after they were

put into bat first.

Mendis smashed 12 fours and five sixes on his way to an unbeaten 105 off 54 deliveries and top-scored for the former champions.

Besides him, Azmatullah Omarzai contributed significantly to the Kings' total with a quickfire cameo down the order.

He struck one four and three sixes on his way to a

13-ball 26.

Mohammad Hasnain, Ramesh Mendis and Chaturanga de Silva bagged two wickets each for the Falcons while Wanindu Hasaranga made one scalp.

Former champions Jaffna Kings will now face Galle Marvels in the LPL 2024 final, scheduled to take place at R Premadasa Stadium on Sunday.

## India dominate Pakistan in Women's T20 Asia Cup opener

Sports Desk

LAHORE: The Indian women's cricket team got off to a strong start in the 2024 Women's T20 Asia Cup, defeating arch-rivals Pakistan by seven wickets in the tournament's second match.

Batting first, Pakistan could only manage to post a modest total of 108 runs, as the Indian bowlers put in a disciplined performance to dismiss the Greenshirts' lineup.

In response, the Indian opening pair of Smriti Mandhana and Shafali Verma laid the foundation for a comfortable chase. Mandhana scored 45 runs off just 31 balls while Verma contributed a quick-fire 40 off 29 deliveries to bring India within touching distance of the target.

Though Pakistan managed to pick up three quick wickets to slow India's progress, the defending champions ultimately chased down the runs in 14.1 overs, securing a comprehensive 7-wicket victory.

For Pakistan, Syeda Aroob Shah and Nashra Sandhu picked up two and one wicket respectively, but their efforts were not enough to stop the Indian juggernaut.

This loss means Pakistan has failed to get off to a winning start in the tournament. However, they will have an opportunity to bounce back when they face Nepal on Sunday, July 21.

In the day's earlier fixture, Nepal women's team registered their first-ever victory in the Asia Cup history, defeating the UAE.

## India to look beyond THIS all-rounder for ODI plans: report

A Sports

All-rounder Ravindra Jadeja, who retired from T20 Internationals after India's T20 World Cup 2024 glory, is no longer part of the team's plans for the One-Day Internationals, Hindustan Times reported Saturday.



India, on Thursday, named a full-fledged squad for their upcoming three-match away ODI series against Sri Lanka with Jadeja a notable exclusion.

According to a source in the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), the national men's team's selectors, led by newly-appointed head coach Gautam Gambhir, want to provide ample opportunities to Axar Patel and Washington Sundar ahead of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025, scheduled to take place in Pakistan.

"There are only six ODIs, including the three in Sri Lanka, before next year's Champions Trophy. The selectors want to utilise the handful of games by giving more opportunities to Axar Patel and Washington Sundar," Hindustan Times quoted a BCCI source.

Ravindra Jadeja boasts a formidable all-round record in ODIs, scoring 644 runs at an average of 40 and a strike rate of 84 since India's gut-wrenching defeat against New Zealand in the ICC Men's World Cup 2019.

His performance with the ball has also been up to the mark, picking 44 wickets at an average of 37 and an economy of 4.9 economy.

Consequently, the source dismissed the notion that Jadeja's performance may be the reason behind his exclusion and reiterated that the management wants to explore new options.

## Mohammed Shami opens up on marriage rumours with Sania Mirza

A Sports

Right-arm India pacer Mohammed Shami broke silence on the rumours regarding his alleged marriage with national Tennis star Sania Mirza.



Shami appeared at a local YouTube podcast and addressed the speculation about his alleged marriage to tennis star Sania Mirza, labelling the rumours as "unfounded" and "harmful".

Shami's response came after manipulated images and social media posts fueled speculation about the alleged union.

"It's weird and done purposely for some lame fun. But what can be done?" Mohammed Shami said. "If I open my phone, I see those memes. But I would only like to say that I think memes are made for fun, but if they are related to someone's life, then you must think about it and then share such things."

Mohammed Shami urged people to be mindful of the impact of their words, stating, "I urge everyone to be responsible with social media and refrain from spreading such unfounded news."

"If you have the guts to say all these things from a verified page, then I will reply," Shami said.

Notably, Mirza married Malik from 2010 until it was confirmed in January this year that she had sought separation from her ex-husband through Khula (the right of a Muslim woman to divorce her husband). She shares a son, Izhaan, 5, with the Pakistani cricketer.

On the other hand, Shami has been separated from his wife Hasin Jahan, with whom he got married in 2014. They have a child together.

## Mohammad Hurraira joins elite list with double ton in Australia

A Sports

Right-handed batter Mohammad Hurraira on Saturday, joined an elite list of batters with his double century for Pakistan Shaheens against Bangladesh A in Darwin, Australia.

Hurraira, who powered Shaheens to a mammoth total of 467/3 dec, became only the third Pakistan batter to score a First-Class double century in Australia, joining current Test captain Shan Masood and former batter Azhar Ali.

He also became only the ninth Asian batter to score a First-Class double ton in Australia, joining legendary batters like Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid and Ravi Shastri.

Mohammad Hurraira's 218-run knock against Bangladesh marked his third 200-plus score in just 39 First-Class matches.

Hurraira, who powered Pakistan Shaheens to 375-2 at Stumps on Day



1, added 57 more runs to his unbeaten overnight total of 161 to bring up his third double-century.

The right-handed batter conceded

247 balls amid his magnificent knock and struck 27 boundaries including a six.

Pakistan Shaheens will play two

four-day matches against Bangladesh 'A', followed by a tri-series with the Northern Territory side and Bangladesh in Darwin. They will also participate in the nine-team Top End T20 Series.

Notably, Pakistan's red-ball head coach Jason Gillespie is serving as the Shaheens' head coach in Darwin for the two four-day matches.

Pakistan Shaheens' white-ball squad Mohammad Haris (c), Abdul Faseeh, Arifat Minhas, Arif Yaqoob, Faisal Akram, Haseebullah (wicketkeeper/batter), Muhammad Irfan Khan, Jahadad Khan, Kashif Ali, Mohammad Hurraira, Mohammad Imran Jnr, Omair bin Yousuf, Sahibzada Farhan, Shahnawaz Dahani and Usman Khan Player Support Personnel: Abdul Rehman (head coach), Mohammad Masroor (Assistant coach-cum-manager), Mohammad Asad (physiotherapist), Imranullah (trainer) and Usman Hashmi (analyst).

## Hurraira's double ton keeps Pakistan Shaheens on top against Bangladesh A

A Sports

Bangladesh A put up a fighting display with the bat but Pakistan Shaheens remained in a dominant position, leading by 264 runs when the stumps were drawn on day two of the first four-day match at the DXC Arena in Darwin.

Shadman Islam (88, 167b, 15x4s) and Aich Mollah (70, 113b, 11x4s) resisted with a 153-run third-wicket partnership after Pakistan Shaheens had reduced Bangladesh A to 23-2 in 12.1 overs.

Mohammad Ali dismissed Parvez Hossain Emon for a paltry three while

Khurram Shahzad got rid of Amite Hasan for eight.

Shadman and Mollah batted for around 38 overs before the latter was run out by Sahibzada Farhan.

Two overs later Shahnawaz Dahani dismissed Shadman caught by Umar Amin. Ariful Islam retired hurt as he left the ground at the end of the 59th over.

Shahadat Hossain (15 not out, 32b, 2x4s) and Hasan Murad, yet to open his account, will resume the batting for Bangladesh A on day three.

For Pakistan Shaheens, Khurram, Ali and Dahani picked up one wicket each while Mubasir and Mehran

remained wicketless.

Earlier, Pakistan added 92 runs in 17.1 overs to their overnight score of 375-2 before declaring the innings at 467-3 after facing 96.1 overs. Mohammad Hurraira (218, 247b, 26x4s, 1x6) added 57 more runs to his unbeaten overnight total of 161 while also bringing up the second double ton of his first-class career.

Hasan struck to remove Hurraira in the 94th over, ending 204-run third-wicket partnership, as Omair Bin Yousuf (6 not out, 13b, 1x4) joined Kamran Ghulam (100 not out, 161b, 13x4s) in the middle. The declaration call came right after Kamran brought



up his 17th first-class century. Rapon Mondal, who picked up two

wickets, and Hasan, who plucked one, were the only successful bowlers for

Bangladesh A among the six players who bowled.



## Israeli brutality

Palestinian ambulance teams reported the three strikes that hit Nuseirat Refugee Camp and Bureij Refugee Camp.



Photo: AFP

# 13 Palestinians killed in central Gaza strikes as ceasefire talks between Israel and Hamas grind on

Agencies

DEIR AL-BALAH: At least 13 people were killed in three Israeli airstrikes that hit refugee camps in central Gaza overnight into Saturday, according to Palestinian health officials, as ceasefire talks in Cairo appear to make progress.

Among the dead in Nuseirat Refugee Camp and Bureij Refugee Camp were three children and one woman, according to Palestinian ambulance teams that transported the bodies to

the nearby Al-Aqsa Martyrs hospital. The 13 corpses were counted by AP journalists at the hospital.

The latest casualties follow a rare moment of hope in war ravaged Gaza, after a medical team recovered a live baby from a heavily pregnant Palestinian mother killed in an airstrike that hit her home in Nuseirat late Thursday evening.

Heavily pregnant Ola Al-Kurd, 25, was killed along with six others in the blast, but was quickly rushed by emergency workers to Al-Awda

Hospital in northern Gaza in the hope of saving the unborn child. Hours later, doctors told The Associated Press that a baby boy had been delivered.

The still-unnamed newborn is stable but has suffered from a shortage of oxygen and has been placed in an incubator, said Dr. Khalil Dajran. The baby boy's father was wounded in the same strike, but survived.

Since October, Israel has killed more than 38,900 Palestinian, according to the territory's Health Ministry. The attack on Gaza has created

a humanitarian catastrophe in the coastal Palestinian territory, displaced most of its 2.3 million population and triggered widespread hunger.

In April, a premature Palestinian baby was rescued from her dead mother's womb but died days later.

In Cairo, international mediators, including the United States, are continuing to push Israel and Hamas toward a phased deal that would halt the fighting and free about 120 hostages in Gaza.

On Friday, the US Secretary

of State, Anthony Blinken, said a ceasefire deal between Hamas and Israel that will release Israeli hostages captive by the group in Gaza are "inside the 10-yard line," but added "we know that anything in the last 10 yards are the hardest."

Fruitless stop-and-start negotiations between the warring sides have been underway since November's one-week ceasefire, with both Hamas and Israel repeatedly accusing each other of scuppering the effort as it approaches a deal.

## Trade with China to increase \$1 billion: A. Aleem Khan

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD JULY 20: Strategy for "Joint Ventures" among various companies and business organizations of China and Pakistan has been evolved and according to the details, Chinese companies will be invited here to invest in 7 major and important sectors of Pakistan. Moreover, 78 business organizations from China and 167 from Pakistan will participate in this gigantic session which is expected to make great progress in the investment sector.

This was expressed in the briefing of the joint meeting of the Board of Investment Headed by Federal Ministers Abdul Aleem Khan and Jam Kamal Khan. Federal Minister of Investment Board, Privatization and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan said that it



is possible to increase the trade volume of Pakistan by one billion dollars with the cooperation of Chinese companies. He said that there is no doubt that the ground realities and current conditions as compared to Bangladesh, India, Vietnam and other countries in the region, Pakistan is a more attractive and

important country for China in terms of investment. Abdul Aleem Khan directed the high-ups of Board of Investment to immediately finalize details with companies who have to go in "Joint Ventures" for mutual investment. He added that for this purpose Pakistani Embassy in Beijing should also be taken on board so that

companies in China could be facilitated as much as possible. Abdul Aleem Khan said that Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Trade, Industry and Production, Food Security and Maritime should also be taken in to loop for ensuring maximum coordinated efforts for investment.

Federal Minister of

Commerce Jam Kamal Khan also expressed in the briefing session regarding the investment of Chinese companies and said that the Ministry of Commerce has been instructed to fully coordinate and cooperate with the Board of Investment. Federal Secretary for Board of Investment while giving a briefing said that the 7 major sectors of Pakistan include medical and surgical equipments, plastics, clothing, leather industry, edible meat, fruits and vegetables and waste and fodder sectors are included. He told that the Board of investment is fully prepared to invite Chinese companies and associate them with Pakistani counter parts while initial homework has also been completed. He also presented a comparative review of various sectors during the briefing.

## More rain with thundershowers expected in Karachi today

KARACHI: More rain accompanied by thundershowers is expected today (Sunday) after various areas of the heat-hit Karachi received light to moderate downpours on Saturday.

The isolated rain in the city cooled down the temperature for a brief period which had soared up to 40.5°C during the past few days while feels like reaching 36°C.

However, the citizens got a little relief from the unbearable heat when it rained on Friday evening and further on Saturday afternoon.

As per the Met Office, the maximum temperature in megalopolis is shot as high as 39°C during the past 24 hours.

## Imran Khan's life in danger, claims wife Bushra Bibi

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister Imran Khan's life was in danger, his wife Bushra Bibi said on Saturday as the couple's legal battles after the May 9 events continue.

"He [Imran Khan] had been poisoned earlier as well. I am putting all these statements on record because I don't know whether I will survive," she told reporters in an informal conversation at the Adiala Jail.

Khan was rearrested in over a dozen May 9 cases after a court overturned his conviction in the "unlawful marriage case" last week. The couple is also facing a new state gifts case. The former prime minister and his party

have described such developments as "politically motivated" cases.

On Monday, an anti-terrorism court in Lahore approved a 10-day physical remand of Khan in several May 9 cases. At the state gifts case hearing, he urged the accountability judge to imprison him and free his wife. "You are answerable to Allah, not the ISI," Khan told the judge.

According to Bibi, police "dragged" Khan, covering his face with a cloth, following his arrest eight days earlier. She stated that during their meeting at the Attock Jail, the conditions were deplorable, with Khan being kept in a cell infested with insects.

She claimed that thieves, dacoits, and other criminals were given "VIP

treatment". She alleged that they were not allowed to contact Barrister Ali Zafar, a prominent PTI leader.

Bibi expressed her willingness to take an oath, stating that "all the cases against the PTI leadership are based on falsehoods." She challenged the authorities to also take an oath, confirming that the cases were not built on lies.

The former first lady has alleged that she was subjected to coercion and mistreatment by authorities.

Bibi claimed that she was pressured to leave jail after the court's verdict, but upon doing so, she was immediately re-arrested by the National Accountability Bureau officials. She further claimed that a female officer had even pushed her before the arrest.

## PM directs for early completion of Islamabad Technology Park



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday directed the project team of Islamabad Technology Park and the Information Technology Ministry to complete the project within current calendar year instead of the scheduled completion date of June 2025.

The prime minister, during his visit to the under-construction site of the country's largest Islamabad Technology Park, said that the project was launched in 2022 during the coalition government of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) and the contract was awarded to a South Korean company.

He said the project was being

completed at a cost of Rs 25 billion out of which \$70 million (soft loan) was being provided by the South Korean government.

"Soon after taking charge of my office, I issued directions to continue work on the project round the clock," he said adding that he as Chief Minister Punjab had introduced the system of 24 hours work on the development projects.

Expressing satisfaction over the progress of the project, PM Shehbaz Sharif asked the project management to try their best to complete the project by September or October this year.

He said after completion of the project, some 120 offices of different companies would be established in the Park.

## Pak Mission in Bangladesh in contact with students: Spokesperson



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's mission in Dhaka, Bangladesh was in contact with all the Pakistani students who were safe and accommodated at safe locations.

"DHM has visited Chittagong to meet the students there as well. All

students are safe," the Foreign Office spokesperson on Saturday posted on X account.

The High Commission had accommodated students at safe locations which included the High Commission premises, Ambassador's residence and some other safe locations, it was further added.

## Governor Kundi opposes govt's decision to ban PTI

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Governor Faisal Karim Kundi has opposed the federal government's decision to ban Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), emphasising that no one can impose ban on a political party.

In a statement, the KP Governor noted that the federal government did not take the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) into confidence regarding the ban on PTI.

It is pertinent to mention here that the Senior leadership of Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) voiced their opposition against the federal government's decision to ban Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

PPP leader Raza Rabbani stressed that banning a political party goes against the principles of democracy and urged the federal government to



avoid such actions.

He also called for an emergency meeting of the provincial cabinet to discuss law and order. Kundi also suggested holding an All-Parties Conference (APC) on security and an in-camera session of the assembly.

Governor Kundi criticised Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, saying that he will not remain silent on the latter's statements. He alleged that the provincial government has nothing to show for its performance.

## Bannu incident: KP govt to ...

Continued from Page 1

The report will be made public, and legal action will be taken against the culprits, said Saif.

Barrister Saif further said that security is usually on high alert in sensitive places. He highlighted that the sensitive nature of the area was also the reason behind the incident.

In light of the current terrorism threat, the public is urged to exer-

cise extreme caution, KP CM advisor advised.

Banu firing incident According to reports, four people killed and several others were injured during a protest rally against the worsening law and order in the district on Friday.

The protest was staged on the call of the trader community, where a complete shutter-down strike was observed.