

# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ اور ایسا کر کے نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم اس وقت بیٹھے ہوئے تھے کہ ایک صاحب نے آ کر سوال کیا کہ نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کی طرف سے جو چیزیں آئی ہیں ان میں سے کون سی چیزیں ہیں جو ہمیں بھی اپنی زندگیوں میں لے کر آنا چاہیے؟

انہوں نے فرمایا کہ تمہارا دل جو چاہے گا اسے لے کر آنا۔ (بخاری، حدیث نمبر 6027)

**Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited**



PILOT OFFICER RASHID MINHAS (SHAHEED)  
Nisham-i-Haider  
20 August, 1971 (Goth-Abad Shah, Suiabad)

## Tributes to Pilot Officer Rashid Minhas on 53rd martyrdom anniversary

The Armed Forces of Pakistan, the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, and the Services Chiefs pay solemn tribute to Pilot Officer Rashid Minhas on the occasion of his 53rd martyrdom anniversary. Pilot Officer Rashid Minhas stands as a luminous exemplar in the annals of Pakistan's history, embodying the very essence of valor and sacrifice.



## Kashmiri people have no interest in fake elections by India: Sardar Attique

AJK Muslim Conference President and former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan has said that Kashmiris the announcement of elections in occupied Jammu and Kashmir by India. India now wants to hold mock elections under the siege of a million army which will not be allowed to succeed under any circumstances. The hideous face of Narendra Modi, the killer of millions of Kashmiris, has been exposed (Details on Page 3)

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## Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding the review of ongoing projects of Information Technology, digitization and steps to increase IT exports on Monday.



Photo: PID

# PM views completion of IT Park Islamabad as milestone to achieve \$25 bn export mark

### Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said that the completion of the Information Technology Park project in Islamabad would help boost the country's exports in this sector and prove to be a significant milestone in achieving the \$25 billion IT exports target.

The prime minister, while chairing a meeting to review the ongoing projects of Information Technology, digitization and steps to increase IT exports, termed the progress on IT projects in Islamabad as satisfactory.

He further directed for taking steps to reduce its completion time-frame after consultation with the Korean experts, PM Office Media Wing said in a press

release.

The meeting was attended by Ministers Ahsan Iqbal, Ahmad Khan Cheema, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Attaullah Tarar, Minister of State for IT Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Deputy Chairman Planning Jehanzaib Khan, PM's Coordinators Malik Mukhtar Bharath, Rana Ahsan Afzal and relevant senior officials.

The meeting was appraised that work on the IT park project was in full swing and the Korean company had reset its completion date to February 2025 from earlier June 2025.

The Capital Development Authority's (CDA) teams were regularly visiting and monitoring the project site.

The meeting was further briefed over the digital smart

cities and the commencement of its pilot project from Islamabad, which would enable the residents of the city to get easy access to 150 government's services through City Super Application.

Through this mobile application, governmental and administrative services including CDA, Islamabad Police, health and educational services would be made available.

The prime minister said that the citizens should be encouraged to use mobile applications for availing of the government's services.

The meeting was also appraised of the IT sector performance over the past five months. Under the government's steps, IT exports saw a growth of 30 percent when compared with the figures in the

last year.

A total of 300,000 students had been registered to get training in IT skills programmes while four new incubation centers had been set up. Under the government's steps, the manufacturing of mobile phones in the country saw a surge by 30 percent whereas the number of its users had increased by further 800,000.

Under the prime minister's vision, all the relevant institutions and departments were collectively working on different projects to take Pakistan's IT exports to \$25 billion mark.

The meeting was briefed over investment in IT projects and the phased wise increase in IT exports. With the government's investment of \$77 million in the IT sector, an increase in IT exports

upto \$25 billion was expected.

About \$13 billion foreign reserves from the government's steps in IT exports, \$10 billion from the country's digital transformation and \$2 billion foreign reserves in the telecom sector were expected, the meeting was told.

The meeting was informed that throughout the country, federal government's services including financial, health, agriculture, education, administration and security were being made available to the citizens through mobile application and in this respect, a project was in the final stages.

The prime minister directed for accomplishment of all steps in the IT sector within the stipulated period.

## Three soldiers martyred, five terrorists killed as army foils infiltration attempt via Bajaur



### City Desk

RAWALPINDI: On night 18/19 August 2024, movement of a group of Khawarij, who were trying to infiltrate the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, was picked up by the security forces in Bajaur District.

Own troops effectively engaged and thwarted their attempt to infiltrate. Resultantly, five khawarij of Fitna al Khwarij were sent to hell, while four khawarij got injured.

However, during intense exchange of fire, three brave sons of soil; Naik Inayat Khan (age: 36 years, resident of District Khyber), Lance Naik Umer Hayat (age: 35 years,

resident of District Mansehra) and Sepoy Waqar Khan (age: 25 years, resident of District Peshawar), having fought gallantly, embraced Shahadat.

Pakistan has consistently been asking the Interim Afghan Government to ensure effective border management on their side of the border. Interim Afghan Government is expected to fulfil its obligations and deny the use of Afghan soil by Khwarij for perpetuating acts of terrorism against Pakistan.

Security Forces of Pakistan remain committed to secure its borders and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve.

## President Zardari mourns martyrdom of three Pak army soldiers in Bajaur

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday expressed profound sorrow over the martyrdom of three soldiers of Pak army in Bajaur during their fight against terrorists and paid tribute to their sacrifice in defending the country.

A press release from the President House stated that the president praised the martyrs as the nation's pride and expressed deep gratitude for their supreme sacrifice. He highlighted that the security forces successfully thwarted the terrorists' infiltration attempt, defeating them decisively. The president affirmed that the entire nation salutes the Pakistan Army's spirit of



patriotism and sacrifice.

The president stated that the entire nation honors its martyrs and will forever remember their sacrifices. He prayed for the departed souls to rest in peace and for their families to find strength and solace during this difficult time.

## Faiz Hameed predicted Nawaz Sharif's NAB sentence: former judge

ISLAMABAD: Former Islamabad High Court (IHC) senior puisne judge Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui made shocking revelations against the ex-Director General (DG) Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), Lieutenant General (ret'd) Faiz Hameed.

Speaking to a private news channel, Justice (ret'd) Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui claimed that the then ISI chief had visited him before the verdict in the case against Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif.

"Nawaz Sharif will be convicted, Faiz Hameed had informed me even before the verdict," Justice (ret'd) Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui added.

The former IHC senior puisne judge claimed that the former ISI chief also asked him what he would decide if Maryam Nawaz's case came up for hearing before his bench.

Justice (ret'd) Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui stated, "I replied that I cannot ruin



my hereafter." Faiz Hameed, on the other hand, retorted, "Our two years of hard work will go to waste."

"After a few days, Faiz Hameed came again and said I would have come earlier but went to Karachi to tighten screws of MQM," the former IHC senior puisne judge continued.

Justice (ret'd) Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui while quoting the former DG ISI added, "My boss General Qamar Javed Bajwa said that I am unable to control one judge." Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui also claimed that Faiz Hameed offered him the position of Acting Chief Justice, "which I refused."

## Provinces should follow Center, Punjab to ensure substantive relief to masses: Tarar

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information, Broadcasting, Culture and National Heritage Attaullah Tarar on Monday brushed aside the undue criticism about relief initiatives of Federal and Punjab governments in power bills, and called upon other provinces to follow suit for ensuring instant relief to the masses during summer season.

Talking to the media, he said it was the foremost priority of the government to provide substantive relief to the masses, reduce the price of electricity and bring down the inflation in the country.

"Provision of the relief to the people by the federal and Punjab governments during the summer season is a good move which should be welcomed by all," he added.

He said the federal government had already given upto Rs 5 per unit relief to all the protected and non-protected consumers in three months' electricity bills (June to August) with a generous allocation



of a subsidy of 50 billion rupees.

Tarar pointed out that all those consumers who used upto 200 units of the electricity per month, had already received the relief across the country.

Likewise, the Punjab government allocated Rs 45 billion from its own funds to give subsidies to those who

were using 200 units to 500 units per month.

Cumulatively, the relief initiatives of both the governments did provide the much-needed relief to the masses, he said, adding now it was up to other provincial governments to take identical steps to ensure relief for the masses.

## SC suspends IHC order in audio leaks case, removes ban on surveillance

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan has suspended the Islamabad High Court's orders in the case related to audio leaks involving Bushra Bibi, wife of PTI chairman Imran Khan, and Najam Saqib, son of former Chief Justice Saqib Nisar.

The court has also barred the High Court from further proceedings in the matter and suspended the order against surveillance in the country. The bench remarked that the order to stop surveillance was only effective for one hearing.

Justice Aminuddin, during the hearing, remarked, "It is possible that the people involved in the audio recordings themselves leaked them. Has this aspect been considered? Every mobile phone nowadays has a recording system."

A two-member bench of the Supreme Court, comprising



Justice Aminuddin and Justice Naem Akhtar Afghan, heard the federal government's petition regarding the audio leaks.

During the hearing, the Supreme Court stated that the Islamabad High Court cannot proceed with the audio leaks case. It deemed the High Court's orders of May 29 and June 25 as exceeding its powers, stating that the High Court does not have the authority to take suo motu notice.

The Supreme Court, upon the federal government's request, summoned the record of the audio leaks case and issued notices to Bushra Bibi and Najam Saqib.

# Kashmiri people have no interest in fake elections by India: Sardar Attique

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD/DHIRKOT: All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference President and former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan has said that Kashmiris the announcement of elections in occupied Jammu and Kashmir by India. India now wants to hold mock elections under the siege of a million army which will not be allowed to succeed under any circumstances. The hideous face of Narendra Modi, the killer of millions of Kashmiris, has been exposed to the whole world. He expressed these views at the residence of Sardar Shabbir Abbasi and Sardar Naem Abbasi



in Chamiyati regarding paying homage to the martyrs, ghazis and mujahideen of Kashmir. Addressing on the occasion of participating in the program,

he said that the burning movement of the martyrs of August 23, 1947 will never be extinguished and the freedom movement of Kashmiris will reach its logical end. Today, Kashmiri people are fighting a long war for their freedom. He said that Kashmiri people have no interest in India's fake elections, India has illegally occupied occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Kashmiri people want freedom from India, they will not accept any other measures.

He said that India now wants to mislead the international community by conducting mock elections under the siege of a million army, but it will fail. He said that Inshallah the sacrifices of these martyrs will pay off and

occupied Kashmir will become a part of Pakistan. He said that the Kashmir issue should be resolved according to the United Nations resolutions and Kashmiris should be given their right to self-determination. The United Nations has demanded them. Meanwhile, the President Muslim Conference participated in the reception given by Raja Babar Moazzam at the Forest Rest House. Raja Mohammad Munir Khan, Raja Shehbaz Khan, Raja Tabarak Ali Khan, Raja Sadat, Mishkur Abbasi, Chairman Shakeel Abbasi, Raja Sheesh Khan, Mohsen Tehbih Abbasi, Shah Rukh Arbab, Kashif Khizr Abbasi, Kamran Abbasi and others were also present.

## Traffic Officer Faisalabad addresses traffic awareness seminar to help prevent accidents



Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Traffic education is not only the need of the hour, but also plays a key role in preventing accidents. It is our legal, ethical and social responsibility to follow traffic rules. Let us all play our positive role in the completion of a civilized society" said Chief Traffic Officer Faisalabad Farhan Aslam on the occasion of "Traffic Awareness Seminar" with the teachers and students of the local medical college. The traffic awareness seminar was organized by the in-charge education unit of the city traffic police, Inspector Aram Naz and his team. In the seminar, the in-charge education unit and other unit members informed the attendees about the usefulness of traffic rules, lane discipline, benefits of helmets and driving seat while driving. Gave awareness lectures on belt use. The Chief Traffic Officer added on this occasion that

"In the light of the vision of Additional Inspector General of Police Traffic, Punjab Mirza Faran Baig and the instructions of City Police Officer, Faisalabad, DIG Kamran Adil in the factors of "traffic education", "traffic enforcement" and "professional attitudes". Further innovation and improvement will continue in the context of contemporary requirements.

## Intenticing Multan Police arrested 2 members of criminal gang after recovery of 12.6 million rupees



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: City Police Officer DIG Multan Sadiq Ali Dogar, Senior Police Superintendent Operations Rana Arslan Zahid, Senior Superintendent Of Police Investigation Rana Muhammad Ashraf Addressing to the Press Conference in Multan Police Line. He said Multan Arrested 2 Members of the gang who stole 48 and a half tolas of gold ornaments and 360 tolas of silver were traced and arrested in two different incidents of looting in two jewelers' shops in Gold Market in Jalalpur Peerwala.

During the investigation of the accused, total gold jewelry and silver stolen from two shops of jewellers, including stolen goods worth more than 01 crore 34 lakh rupees, including 48 and a half tolas of gold ornaments and 360 tolas of silver, 03 motorcycles, 03 mobiles Phones and other equipment recovered, 05 cases traced.

Multan Police is determined to eradicate crime from Multan district and vigorous action is being taken against the criminal elements. He said that more operations are being conducted to prevent theft, robbery, motorcycle theft and other incidents and soon more accused will be arrested. CPO Multan Sadiq Ali handed over the recovered Gold and Silver to the Original owners. They expressed their happiness on getting their wealth and thanked CPO Multan.

## DFP concerned over grim situation, plight of Kashmiri prisoners

Abdul Majeed Tahir

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party (DFP) has expressed grave concern over the continued bloodshed and violence in the occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

The DFP spokesman advocate Arshad Iqbal in a statement issued in Srinagar said that the Narendra Modi-led fascist Indian government had intensified its brutalities against the Kashmiris to punish them for challenging India's illegal occupation of Jammu and Kashmir.

Referring to the killing of youth in Doda and arrests of five youth in Kathua district, he said Indian troops operating under the protection of draconian laws have unleashed a reign of terror in the occupied territory. "Innocent people particularly youth are being harassed, humiliated and killed during cordon and search operations", the spokesman said, adding that extra-judicial killings, enforced disappearances, and killing of youth in fake encounters are being used by India as a war tactic to suppress Kashmiris' legitimate struggle for right to self-determination".

He said that the international human rights organizations must take stock of the situation and play their due role to bring an end to the brutalities being inflicted on Kashmiri people by Indian troops.

He also denounced the continued illegal detention of Hurriyat leaders, human rights defenders, journalists and civil society activists who have been arrested before and after 5th August 2019.

## Khanzada termed relief in electricity bill as "historic"

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Member district monitoring committee and former provincial Minister Jahangir Khanzada has lauded the relief package announced by Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif to subsidize the electricity cost for consumers in Punjab and termed the step as "historic". Talking to newsmen in Hazro town of Attock on Monday, Mr Khanzada has added that electricity consumers across the Punjab province would be provided a relief of Rs 28 per unit in two months terming the initiative as "in the giving relief to the masses at grass roots level". He was of the view that it a "truly public-friendly initiative" by Nawaz Sharif and the Punjab chief minister stating, "The government has prioritized public relief since taking office." Responding to a question, he said that the package offers relief of Rs14 per unit for consumers using up to 500 units of electricity providing much-needed respite from the heat and high electricity bills. "Public relief and reducing inflation are the PML-government's top priorities," he added. He pointed to the previous government's policies, particularly under Imran Khan, as the root cause of the current economic challenges.

## Remember

ISLAMABAD: Members of Human Rights Council of Pakistan are light candles to pay tribute to the victim Dr Moumita Debnath, on the eve of World Humanitarian Day, in front of National Press Club, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online Sultan Bashir

## AC Takht Bhai to establish municipal citizen academy to address social issues

Tariq Khan Yousafzai

TAKHT BHAI: Assistant Commissioner Takht Bhai, Junaid Khalid, visited the Takht Bhai Press Club and discussed registration and social mobilization issues with the media. He was accompanied by Additional Assistant Commissioner Madam Sahran, TMO Takht Bhai Rahman Sher, Chief Officer TMA Takht Bhai Usman Ali Nashad, and other officials. During the meeting, Assistant Commissioner Junaid Khalid and Madam Sahran emphasized the need to inform the youth of Takht Bhai about the issues they face and to utilize their capabilities to solve these problems. They announced the establishment of the "Municipal Citizen Academy" a first-of-its-kind institution in the province's history, aimed at bringing positive change through awareness sessions



and lectures. The academy is part of the Chief Minister's public agenda to change social attitudes and create a clean, healthy, and civilized society.

After consulting with Assistant Commissioner Junaid Khalid and obtaining approval, TMO Rahman Sher and Chief Officer Usman Ali

Nashad will establish the academy in TMA Takht Bhai to address social issues and bring about positive change in the region.

## Journalists protest in Mirpur against India's rule in Occupied Kashmir

Bureau Report

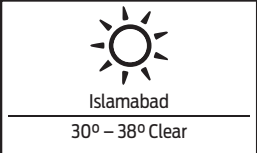
MIRPUR: Journalists of Mirpur Azad Kashmir also took to the streets against the ongoing oppression and persecution by India in Occupied Kashmir. They held a protest rally to pay homage to the martyred journalists, including the torture of Kashmiri journalists while on duty in Occupied Kashmir, and against atrocities on Kashmiris. Gaya, Kashmiri journalists demonstrated against India organized by Kashmir Press Club Mirpur. The demonstration was led by President of Kashmir Press Club Syed Abid Hussain Shah, Chairman of Kashmir Committee of KPC Zafar Mughal and senior most journalist Altaf Hameed Rao and other newly elected officials and members. The journalists raised placards and banners and shouted slogans against the Indian government on the Kashmir Press Club Road. Demanded to stop the atrocities. Addressing the protest, newly elected President Syed Abid Hussain Shah, Chairman Kash-



mir Committee Zafar Mughal and senior most journalist Altaf Hameed Rao said that India has transferred occupied Kashmir to the world's largest prison

and the Kashmiri people. His life has been made miserable and restrictions have also been imposed on journalists, including many journalists, millions of

innocent Kashmiris have been martyred so far. It should play a key role in realizing the recognized fundamental right of Kashmiris to self-determination.



**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 4:03 am  
Zohr ..... 12:12 pm  
Asr ..... 4:55 pm  
Maghrib ..... 6:49 pm  
Isha ..... 8:19 pm

**EMERGENCY**

Rescue (Police) ..... 15  
Bomb Disposal ..... 15  
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad ..... 1122 & 16  
Emergency Ambulance ..... 1122 & 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  
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation ..... 9209224

**OPF to address pressing issues of overseas Pakistanis**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Syed Qamar Raza, Chairman BoG, Overseas Pakistanis Foundation has said that overseas Pakistanis are our asset and Government is quite determined to accord priority and facilitate them maximally. We are taking steps to protect their rights at all costs. He reiterated his commitment to launch effective and tangible measures to deal with issues and problems of overseas Pakistanis. He was speaking at a function being organized by the Pakistani community at London, UK to commemorate Pakistan's 77th Independence Day. He also praised the patriotism and enthusiasm of overseas Pakistanis living in the UK and all around the world which they have shown while celebrating the Independence Day. He said that he will ensure not only to serve overseas Pakistanis but also maintain harmony among them. He also advised Pakistani Missions abroad to extend all out help to those Pakistanis coming to them for swift redressal of their grievances.

He also suggested that expatriates must explore avenues to bring investment to Pakistan to create employment opportunities for Pakistani youth and to help boost our national economy. He said that we should play our role collectively to strengthen our institutions to make a proud and strong Pakistan. On the occasion, he also assured that Defence Day of Pakistan falling on 6th September, 2024 will also be observed with national zeal and vigor.

# PM's climate change aide announces new projects to address air pollution in rural areas

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: PM's Coordinator on Climate Change & Environmental Coordination Romina Khurshid Alam stated that she was mobilizing resources for ongoing projects by engaging bilateral and multilateral donors as well as major banks to introduce Urban Environmental Initiatives and alternate energy sources in rural areas of Pakistan. She was holding a meeting with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) delegation at her office on Monday.

In view of proactive communication and coordination, the PM's aide emphasized on setting up a dashboard that would also be linked with the PM office, to review the progress and address the challenges to ensure fast tracking of the projects & achieve objectives.

To battle against air pollution MoCC&EC is kicking off the Montreal Protocol Project nationwide in collaboration with UNDP that would fix out ozone and Hydro Chloro fluoro carbon (HCFC). This project is funded by the Multilateral Fund Secretariat with a budget worth \$594, 748 and would be completed in 2027.

The meeting also discussed the GOLF-II project which was focusing on 10 districts of Gilgit-Baltistan and 08 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with a budget worth \$37 million being funded by Green Climate Fund (GCF). This project is aimed to reduce flood risks and 696,000 community members are direct beneficiaries of the project.

To combat climate change by reducing greenhouse gases emissions, the ministry is also initiating a fresh project "Promotion & Application of Sustainable Biomass Energy Technologies (PASBET)" in the country which

will cost US\$ 28,724,726. This project will be completed in 2028.

To promote environmental sustainability and building climate resilience at both national and sub-national levels the ministry is working on its flagship "Climate Resilience Program". This climate promise initiative aims to enhance cooperation and resilience among local and regional stakeholders to address climate change threats and risks.

The meeting also discussed the "Global Shield Against Climate Risks" Project that was aimed to increase protection for vulnerable people by providing and facilitating substantially more and better pre-arranged finance against disasters.

While assuring her fullest support to UNDP, PM's aide Ms. Alam directed the senior officers of the ministry to convene a



monthly progress review meeting about these projects adding that this government under the leadership of PM was committed to make the country climate resilient.

## Protest

ISLAMABAD: General Secretary Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri addressing during Aalmi Majlis Tahaffuz Khatm-e-Nubuwwat protest in favor of their demands in front of Parliament House, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## PARC Organized Reception in honor of Chairman PARC on Conferring of Civil Award "Sitara-e-Imtiaz"

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: A prestigious reception was held at NARC, Islamabad in honor of Chairman PARC on being conferred with civil award "Sitara-e-Imtiaz". The ceremony was organized by the scientists and staff of PARC and its research establishments across Pakistan. In his key address, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali emphasized that the award should not be viewed as an individual accomplishment, rather as a collective achievement of all PARC scientists and support staff.

Speaking at the occasion, Director General NARC Dr. Shehzad Asad said that Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali is a role model for young scientists and researchers. Dr.



Intiaz Hussain, Member Plant Sciences said that PARC introduced more than thirty varieties in three years under the leadership of Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, which is a remarkable achievement. Secretary Council, Dr. Muhammad Ishaq said that the award is an honor for all the scientists and employees of the council. Member Finance, Mr. Saeedullah Yousafzai,

Member Natural Resources Division, Dr. Shahid Maqsood Gill, Member Social Sciences, Dr. Ghulam Sadiq Afridi, Member Animal Sciences, Dr. Murtaza Hassan Andrabi, representatives of scientists, staff and retired employees of the council also congratulated Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali for securing the prestigious award and highlighted his efforts for the council and agri-

culture sector.

Dr. Ali's pioneering work has led to the creation of groundbreaking initiatives like establishment of National Institute for Genomics and Advanced Biotechnology (NIGAB), the Department of Plant Genomics and Biotechnology and Pakistan's first-ever Aeroponics and speed breeding facility. Dr. Ali also developed new crop varieties distinguished by their high yields and climate resilience including rice varieties GM ALI-5, GM ALI-76, GM ALI-48 and KM-52, wheat variety Wafaq-2023, four banana varieties namely NIGAB-1, NIGAB-2, NIGAB-3, and NIGAB-4. He successfully tested the first ginger variety at a farmer's field.

## AIOU Launches Tree Plantation Campaign



**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has initiated a major tree plantation campaign to address climate change. Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood inaugurated the campaign by planting a Moringa tree, emphasizing the university's commitment to environmental sustainability. Dr. Nasir Mahmood stated, "AIOU is dedicated to the national tree plantation effort, with plans to plant trees across all the 54 campuses and engage our students in this crucial cause." Deans, Professors, and other officials joined in. Earlier, during a briefing on the monsoon tree plantation, Wajih ul Hassan, the Horticulture Officer from the Department of Agricultural Sciences, informed the Vice Chancellor that the university is planting 300 trees today, including Moringa, Pelken, Brighanzia, Sukh Chain, and Arjun trees.

## To commemorate 78th independence day, vintage bikes and car rally held

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Vintage bike and car rally was held by DHA administration in DHA phase 2 Islamabad. Around 100 riders including female bikers participated in the event. Moreover, various sports events were conducted, including tennis, yoga, badminton, martial arts and cycling competitions in which participants from all age groups participated. Families, children and senior citizens attended the events in significant numbers to express their love for Pakistan and to commemorate 78th Independence anniversary.

## If you need more news please use this increase in electricity bills

Dear Editor,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the recent and significant increase in electricity bills that many residents have been facing.

One of the primary reasons for the increase in electricity bills is the rising cost of energy production. The price of raw materials, such as natural gas, has been steadily increasing, and maintaining aging infrastructure requires substantial investment. Additionally, as we move toward a greener energy grid, the initial investments in renewable energy sources, while beneficial in the long run, are contributing to higher costs in the short term.

Government policies also play a role in this situation. The increased demand for electricity, driven by factors like population growth and the rising use of electronic devices, further strains our energy infrastructure and necessitates further investment.

To overcome the issue of rising electricity bills, it's essential to focus on energy efficiency, regulatory oversight, and support for vulnerable households. Encouraging the use of energy-efficient appliances and home improvements can reduce overall consumption. Governments and regulatory bodies should ensure that any rate increases by utility companies are justified and not driven by excessive profit motives.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

Aqsa Rohail  
Department of English, University of Education, Attock Campus  
Email: abcxyz0572@gmail.com

## Future of athletics in Pakistan

Dear Editor,

The whole nation knows that Arshad Nadeem won a gold medal for Pakistan at the Paris Olympics 2024, but this victory is not just an ordinary one, as it has raised concerns among the citizens related to the future of athletics in Pakistan.

For decades, the people and the Pakistan Sports Board have supported cricket with no return. Now, some athletes are making Pakistan proud at the international level, with little to no support from anyone except their families. This win has indicated that the athletes in this country lack the resources that can be used for training and representing Pakistan. At the Paris Olympics 2024, just seven athletes were sent, which is a smaller number than the officials who accompanied them.

Amir Khan, a taekwondo player from Swat, secured a gold medal at the 7th Heroes Taekwondo Championship in Bangkok, and athletes from the Punjab University secured nine medals at the Asian rowing championships, including five golds this year.

The love, publicity, and rewards given to Arshad Nadeem were not given to these athletes by any of the citizens or government officials. The media needs to deliver such news to the public not just one day but every day. They should play news related to these and many other talented athletes who can make our country visible and proud at an international level.

Laiba Faisal, Lahore  
dandra45671@gmail.com

## ISSI signs MoU with CSAI at Russian Institute of Oriental Studies

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Center for Scientific and Analytical Information (CSAI) at the Institute of Oriental Studies (IOS), Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS) today. The signing ceremony was held virtually and marked the beginning of a new era of academic and research cooperation between the two institutions.

Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General of ISSI, and Prof. Dr. Nikolay Plotnikov, Head of CSAI, IOS, RAS, signed the MoU on behalf of their respective institutions. The event was also attended by Dr. Neelum Nigar, Director of the Centre for Strategic Perspectives (CSP) at ISSI, along with her research team and interns. Representing the Russian side, Mr. Alexey Marinin, Senior Researcher, was also present.



In his remarks on the occasion, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood emphasized the significance of this partnership, stating, "This signing today marks an important milestone in our joint endeavours to deepen academic and research cooperation. The world is

witnessing unprecedented changes, and the dynamics of international relations are evolving rapidly. Platforms such as these can enable us to understand the fast changing environment as well as its impact on the global order."

Prof. Dr. Nikolay Plotnikov, in his remarks, underscored the extensive practical research work conducted by CSAI and the diverse areas and themes

they explore, ranging from the Middle East to Japan in the Asia-Pacific region. He expressed confidence that collaboration with ISSI would open new avenues for joint research and dialogue.

Dr. Neelum Nigar highlighted that this MoU is the first formal document concluded between ISSI and a Russian research institute, marking a historic moment for ISSI. She expressed optimism about the potential for future joint research projects and the exchange of ideas between the two sides.

The MoU sets a framework for collaborative activities, including the exchange of researchers and data, joint events and programs, and the initiation of joint research projects. The ceremony concluded with reaffirmation of a mutual commitment to foster stronger ties and explore opportunities for further cooperation in the coming years.

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# On Understanding the blasphemy Law

In recent years, and particularly in recent weeks, the debate over minority rights in Pakistan has intensified, highlighted by the recent minorities' rights march. It was surprising to see Indian media inundating its audience with headlines such as "Minorities Demand Equal Rights" and "Minorities Demand Repeal of 295-C." What was even more interesting was that Pakistani media outlets echoed this sentiment, appearing to be aligned in their coverage. This raises concerns that our media may be conveying a misleading narrative to the world, portraying Pakistan as an intolerant nation. While it is true that minorities in Pakistan face certain challenges, their already vulnerable position complicates their situation compared to others. However, it is crucial to recognize that all Pakistanis are grappling with inflation, rising energy and food prices, and a declining standard of living. Shopkeepers and traders in local markets do not differentiate between customers based on faith. Thus, the assertion that Pakistan is a ghetto for minorities is fundamentally flawed and is often used by certain political and social groups to gain acceptance in the West.

Although the march aimed to advocate for minority rights, its true purpose seemed to diverge from this goal. Instead of addressing the socio-economic and political issues faced by minorities, the organizers and leaders crossed a critical line by demanding the removal of 295-C from the Constitution. Statements from various media outlets indicated that the primary objective of the march was the repeal of this law, rather than highlighting pressing issues such as unemployment or drug abuse within minority communities. The repeated focus on 295-C suggests that

the march was primarily about abolishing blasphemy laws in Pakistan.

The advertisement campaign for the march included several banners featuring Aasia Bibi, who was convicted of blasphemy by the high courts but later acquitted by the Supreme Court and flown to Canada on a chartered flight. Former Chief Justice Saqib Nisar reportedly stated even before the case was heard in the Supreme Court that Aasia would be released. It is both unfortunate and surprising that the minorities who marched for their rights seemed to focus solely on 295-C. Did they have no other issues to address? As a student of social sciences, I believe that someone else was speaking for them, presenting a narrative that this was their primary concern.

The west through its desi liberal supporters and NGO's incentivize blasphemy by providing support to the accused, promising them a life in the West with financial and social resources.

The love for the Prophet ﷺ is central to the Muslim identity; as stated in a hadith, a person cannot be a complete believer unless their love for the Prophet exceeds their love for themselves and their family.

Islam has been a liberating force as it liberated Arabia and perfected the message of Allah. It is the final message. It has also been the most influential force against western imperialism and it still offers resistance to west. The west views Islam and Islamic civilization as an enemy. This is why, when someone crosses a red line, the West often supports the accused,

as the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is at the core of Muslim belief.

Those advocating for the removal of 295-C and anti-blasphemy legislation present various arguments, primarily focusing on the misuse of the law, wrongful convictions, and claims of anti-human rights or anti-freedom of speech. Let's analyze these arguments one by one.

The claim of misuse of the law is largely unfounded. A Muslim risks losing their faith by wrongfully accusing someone without evidence, which ensures that extreme caution is exercised in such matters. Typically, it is scholars who report these cases, and they do so with careful consideration of the facts. In court, the accused has the right to hire a lawyer, present their side of the story, and provide evidence. Courts in Pakistan have often ruled in favor of the accused, as seen in the cases of Aasia and Mubarak Sani. While it is true that the Supreme Court's decisions can be influenced by political pressures, this does not justify allowing convicted criminals to go free.

The argument regarding wrongful convictions as a basis for removing 295-C is illogical. By this reasoning, we should also abolish laws against homicide or robbery, as they too can be misused. If we accept this line of thinking, it calls into question the validity of all laws, as any law can potentially be misapplied. Laws exist to maintain order, and courts are responsible for determining guilt based on evidence. Ironically, when courts acquit the accused, these same liberal groups trust the judicial process, but if the courts

convict based on evidence, they suddenly oppose the legislation.

Regarding human rights, the anti-blasphemy law aligns with the principles of human rights. Just as the faiths of minorities in Pakistan deserve respect, so too must the Muslim faith be honored. It is astonishing to see advocates for minority rights give speeches about respecting minority religions while simultaneously insulting the majority religion. Why should respect be demanded only for minority faiths? As for the death penalty, for Muslims, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ represents a fundamental red line. The increase in blasphemy cases can be attributed to certain individuals, supported by Western interests, who have been released despite their actions.

Minorities in Pakistan are free to practice their religions, and they do so without restriction. For instance, a grand mosque in Peshawar shares a wall with the city's largest church, and Christians have never faced issues practicing their faith. However, there are boundaries; Islam prohibits the abuse of any religion, and thus Muslims do not tolerate abuse directed at Islam.

The state must recognize the significance of the finality of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to the Muslim faith. Members of other communities should also understand the sensitivity of this issue. Likewise, followers of Islam should refrain from engaging in religious discussions that could lead to unnecessary conflict. It is the responsibility of scholars and religious leaders to navigate these discussions, as common individuals may inadvertently escalate tensions.

*The author is a Lecturer at the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Islamabad.*



Analysis  
**Dr. Fida Muhammad Khan**

## UN slams soaring violence faced by aid workers

Aid workers on the frontlines of the world's conflicts are being killed in unprecedented numbers, the U. N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said Monday as it marked World Humanitarian Day.

And OCHA warned that the Israeli war in Gaza is potentially fueling even higher numbers of such deaths this year.

With 280 aid workers killed in 33 countries last year, 2023 marked the deadliest year on record for the global humanitarian community, it was pointed out.

This outrageously high number represents a 137 per cent increase compared to 2022, when 118 aid workers were killed, OCHA said.

As of 7 August, 172 aid workers have been killed, OCHA said, citing the provisional count from the Aid Worker Security Database.

The UN agency said that more than half of the 2023 deaths were recorded in the first three months of the hostilities in Gaza, or from October to December. Most were due to airstrikes.

Since October, more than 280 aid workers have been killed in Gaza alone, the majority of them staff members of the UN agency that assists Palestine refugees, UNRWA.

Additionally, "extreme levels of violence" in Sudan and South Sudan have contributed to the death tolls in 2023 and 2024.

In all these conflicts, most of those killed were national staff. Meanwhile, many humanitarian workers also continue to be detained in Yemen.

Joyce Msuya, UN Acting Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, called for action.

"The normalization of violence against aid workers and the lack of accountability are unacceptable, unconscionable and enormously harmful for aid operations everywhere," she said.

Today, we reiterate our demand that people in power act to end violations against civilians and the impunity with which these heinous attacks are committed."

World Humanitarian Day is observed annually on 19 August – the date in 2003 when a bomb attack at the UN's headquarters in Baghdad killed 22 humanitarian workers, including Sergio Vieira de Mello, the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Iraq.

Each year, the commemoration focuses on a theme in efforts to advocate for the survival, well-being and dignity of people caught in crises, and the safety and security of aid workers.



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmī. (Courtesy of Asharq Al-Awsat)

## The Forgotten Pillar: Enhancing Pharmacists' Role in Pakistan

Around the world, the role of pharmacists has expanded far beyond simply dispensing medications. In countries like the United States and across Europe, pharmacists are valued as key healthcare providers who actively participate in patient care. They manage complex medication regimens, provide chronic disease counseling, and, in some cases, even prescribe medications. This expanded role has significantly improved patient outcomes, reduced the workload on doctors, and contributed to more efficient healthcare systems.

In stark contrast, the situation in Pakistan paints a different picture. Despite the presence of well-qualified pharmacists, their role is often limited to dispensing medicines, with little involvement in direct patient care. This limited scope not only restricts their professional growth but also undermines the quality of healthcare that patients receive. Pharmacists in Pakistan are rarely included in clinical decision-making processes, where their expertise in medication management could greatly enhance patient outcomes. This exclusion represents a missed opportunity in a healthcare system that could greatly benefit from their knowledge and skills.

One of the primary reasons for this underutilization is the lack of supportive government policies. Unlike in the United States, where pharmacists are recognized and reimbursed for providing clinical services like medication therapy management, Pakistan's policies do not support or encourage such roles. Without a structured framework to integrate pharmacists into broader health-

care teams, their potential remains largely untapped.

Moreover, public perception plays a significant role in this issue. In Pakistan, pharmacists are often viewed merely as dispensers of medications, with little understanding of the broader range of services they can provide. This narrow view limits the opportunities for pharmacists to engage with patients on a deeper level, such as offering advice on managing chronic conditions or providing preventive care.

The healthcare system in Pakistan is also highly fragmented, with minimal collaboration between pharmacists and other healthcare professionals. In more integrated systems like those in Europe and the United States, pharmacists work closely with

doctors, nurses, and other healthcare providers to deliver comprehensive patient care. This team-based approach ensures that patients receive the best possible treatment, with each professional contributing their expertise. However, in Pakistan, the lack of such collaboration means that pharmacists are not fully utilized, leading to gaps in patient care.

To address these challenges and fully harness the potential of pharmacists, several key steps need to be taken. First and foremost, the government should implement policies that recognize and reimburse pharmacists for their clinical services. This could include roles such as medication therapy management, patient counseling, and chronic disease management. By providing a clear framework for pharmacists to contribute more broadly to healthcare, these policies would

help integrate them into healthcare teams where their skills are most needed.

Public awareness campaigns are also crucial in changing the perception of pharmacists. These campaigns should educate the public about the critical role pharmacists can play in managing medications, advising on chronic diseases, and providing preventive care. By shifting the public's view of pharmacists from mere dispensers to essential healthcare providers, these campaigns can help pave the way for a more integrated healthcare system.

Furthermore, fostering greater collaboration between pharmacists and other healthcare professionals is essential. The healthcare system in Pakistan must move towards a more integrated model, where pharmacists work closely with doctors, nurses, and other healthcare providers. This can be achieved by establishing clear guidelines for collaboration and communication among healthcare professionals, ensuring that pharmacists are fully included in patient care teams.

In conclusion, pharmacists represent a forgotten pillar in Pakistan's healthcare system, one that, if strengthened, could significantly improve patient care and overall health outcomes. It is time for Pakistan to recognize the critical contributions that pharmacists can make and to ensure they are fully integrated into the healthcare landscape. By doing so, we can unlock a wealth of untapped potential within our healthcare system, leading to better health outcomes for all.

*She has over 16 years of experience in the pharmaceutical and allied health fields. She is Doctor of Pharmacy (D Pharm) degree from Punjab University, Lahore. She can be reached at attiyarizwani@gmail.com*



Analysis  
**Dr. Attiya Gul**

## Pak Army is not Elite of the Country - II

Xi Jinping, as the General Secretary of the Communist Party of China and President of the People's Republic of China, stands as one of the most powerful global leaders. He oversees China's economic strategies, domestic governance, and international relations, profoundly influencing global geopolitics and China's position on the world stage.

Mukesh Ambani, chairman and largest shareholder of Reliance Industries, is a prominent economic elite in India. His wealth and business acumen place him at the forefront of India's economic landscape. Reliance Industries, under his leadership, operates across various sectors, including petrochemicals, refining, telecommunications, and retail.

Elon Musk, CEO of Tesla and SpaceX, is a leading figure in technology and business, driving innovation and shaping the future of multiple industries. Elon Musk's ventures in electric vehicles, space exploration, and renewable energy have significantly impacted multiple industries. His influence extends beyond business, positioning him as a major force in advancing technological innovation and sustainability.

Sir David Attenborough is a celebrated broadcaster and natural historian renowned for his nature documentaries. His impactful work, including the "Planet Earth" series, has educated and inspired millions about the natural world, establishing him as a key cultural elite through his contributions to environmental awareness and education.

The South Korean boy band BTS, also known as Bangtan Sonyeondan, has gained global fame and influence. Their impact on music, culture, and social issues reaches far beyond South Korea, making them prominent cultural elites in the global entertainment industry. Their success has contributed to the global popularity of K-pop and fostered cultural exchange.

Noam Chomsky is a linguist, philosopher, and political activist famous for his pioneering work in linguistics and critical analysis of media and politics. His theories on language and cognition have profoundly shaped modern linguistics, while his writings on politics and media have had a significant influence on global public discourse.

Emmanuel Macron, the President of France, stands out as an intellectual elite due to his background in philosophy and his influence on European and global policies. His academic achievements and political leadership make him a prominent intellectual figure in contemporary European politics.

Elites are typically characterized by their substantial economic resources. They often acquire significant wealth through investments, high-income professions, or ownership of large enterprises, granting them access to luxury goods, exclusive services, and high-quality healthcare. This economic status provides them with financial security and opportunities that are less accessible to other social classes.

The middle class occupies an intermediate economic position, enjoying a comfortable lifestyle with moderate income levels but lacking the affluence of elites. Middle-class individuals can often afford homeownership, higher education, and some discretionary spending but may face financial pressures and are more vulnerable to economic downturns than elites.

The lower class, sometimes referred to as the working or poor class, faces economic challenges and limited resources. Individuals in this group often hold lower-paying jobs, rely on public assistance, or experience economic instability, which restricts their access to basic necessities, healthcare, and opportunities for advancement, making financial security a significant concern.

*To be continued*



Analysis  
**Abdul Basit Alvi**

# Indian Muslims keep out of India Day Parade featuring controversial Ram Mandir float

Spokesman Report

NEW YORK: Indian-American Muslims stayed away from India's Independence Day parade in New York City on Sunday to protest the inclusion of a float featuring Ram Mandir that they say glorifies anti-Muslim violence, the destruction of historic mosques, and Hindu supremacy.

Several U.S.-based civil rights organizations had written a letter to New York City Mayor Eric Adams and New York Governor Kathy Hochul, seeking their intervention to remove the controversial float, saying it was anti-Muslim.

Among the groups who signed the letter were the Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC), the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR), and Hindus for Human Rights.

But the parade organizers rejected calls to remove the float — which is 18 feet long, 9 feet wide, and 8 feet tall — saying it celebrates the inauguration of a sacred landmark that is significant to hundreds of millions of Hindus.

The Ram Temple stands on the ruins of the historic Babri Mosque in Ayodhya that was demolished in 1992 by a mob of over 150,000 right-wing Hindu militants. The demolition sparked widespread riots across northern India,

resulting in the deaths of thousands, predominantly Muslims.

In January this year, during and after the Ram Temple's consecration ceremony, Hindu nationalist mobs unleashed waves of anti-Muslim violence throughout India, including the desecration of mosques.

It was not just Indian Muslims who spoke out against the inclusion of the float. Ajit Sahi, advocacy director for the Indian American Muslim Council, said parade organizers are allowing Hindu extremist ideology to taint what is supposed to be a celebration of independence and secularism.

"I am a Hindu and from the bottom of my heart, I reject Hindu fundamentalism and Hindu extremism," Sahi said.

"There are Hindus in the United States and in India who oppose this temple and the politics that it brings this temple is politics. This temple is not culture, this temple is not faith," Sahi added.

At Sunday's parade, the float was decorated with garlands while the members of the Indian diaspora, dressed in traditional attire and holding the India's tricolour, danced around it.

Bollywood actress Sonakshi Sinha served as the grand marshal of the parade which took



place on New York City's Madison Avenue.

In a press release, the Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC) said it has withdrawn its float depicting the contribution of Muslims

to the humanity following the parade organizer's refusal to pull out the Ram Mandir float.

Imtiaz Siamwalla, the president of Indian Muslims of North America sent a letter to

parade organizers Saturday, notifying them of the decision.

"It is with a heavy heart that we find ourselves compelled to withdraw our float since the integrity of the parade has been called into the question," he wrote.

Siamwalla said the Ram Mandir float is political symbolism meant to intimidate Muslims in attendance at Sunday's parade.

"They want to show the minorities — look what we did in our country we can do it here too, this is all for intimidation," Siamwalla said.

Other groups had also called on parade organizers to not allow the float in Sunday's parade, saying it's an overt politicization of an event meant to celebrate Indian people, not their politics.

A number of New York lawmakers had already spoken out against the use of hate symbols during the event, at the urging of Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian, Jewish, and Black activists who labeled the Ram Temple float "divisive."

"No one should be using any anti-conversations in marching these parades," said Mayor Eric Adams at a press conference last week. "I want to send a symbolic gesture that the city is open to everyone and there's no room for hate."

# Polish Ambassador meets Pakistani Commerce Minister to discuss trade opportunities

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Poland to Pakistan, Maciej Pisarski, called on Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, in his office today to discuss new opportunities for enhancing trade between the two countries. The meeting highlighted the growing economic ties between Poland and Pakistan, with both sides expressing optimism about future collaborations.

Ambassador Pisarski congratulated Minister Kamal on the successful organization of FoodAg 2024, a major international food and agriculture expo held recently in Karachi. The event saw the participation of over 800 foreign delegates and generated significant

business activity. "The successful holding of FoodAg 2024 is a positive signal regarding Pakistan's economic and trade growth," said Pisarski, underscoring the importance of such events in showcasing Pakistan's potential on the global stage.

The Ambassador also noted that several Polish companies operating in Pakistan are not only profitable but are also looking to expand their networks within the country. "We are expecting more business delegations to visit Pakistan under the umbrella of the Polish government in the near future," he added, indicating Poland's growing interest in Pakistan as a trade partner.

Minister Kamal expressed his appreciation for the Ambassador's encouraging words and emphasized the

vast potential for trade enhancement between the two nations. He highlighted key sectors such as agriculture, coal, and textiles as areas where Poland and Pakistan could deepen their cooperation.

"The geopolitical situation in the region is prompting industries to seek new destinations, and Pakistan can be an attractive option, particularly in the textile and food industries," Kamal stated.

He further elaborated on the high quality of Pakistani agricultural products, citing the example of Pakistani apples. "Pakistan produces some of the best apples in the world. Nestlé, for instance, not only uses our apple pulp but also exports it from Pakistan," he remarked.



The Minister also pointed to the burgeoning potential in olive production, with large-scale culti-

vation underway in regions such as Balochistan and Potohar. He emphasized that value-added products from

olives could become a significant export item for Pakistan in the near future.



# Governor Punjab Praises Showcasing of Cutting-Edge Technologies at Lahore Exhibitions

LAHORE: (Aug 19th, 2024) Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan visited the 6th International Digital Printing & Signage Exhibition (DPS WORLD PAKISTAN) and the 8th International Building and Construction Industry Exhibition (BUILD PAKISTAN) at Expo Centre, Lahore. The events, organized by Fakt Exhibitions, showcase the latest advancements in digital printing, signage, building construction materials, and sustainable construction practices.

During his visit, Governor Punjab, Sardar Saleem Haider Khan, toured the various stalls, showcasing the latest technologies, products, and

services. He engaged with representatives from national and international companies, demonstrating his keen interest in the innovations on display.

Governor Punjab praised the exhibitions, acknowledging their significance in showcasing Pakistan's vibrant industrial growth, driven by the ingenuity and hard work of its people. He highlighted the crucial role of such exhibitions in promoting economic development through innovation, knowledge sharing, business connections, and showcasing Pakistan's industrial capabilities globally. By praising the exhibitions, Governor Punjab emphasized the importance of supporting initiatives that drive

Pakistan's industrial sector forward and promote sustainable economic development.

The exhibitions feature over 100 national and international companies displaying innovative technology and solutions, attracting a large number of attendees from across the country. The events will continue until August 18, 2024.

CEO of Fakt Exhibitions, Mr. Saleem Khan Tanoli, expressed his enthusiasm, stating, "DPS WORLD PAKISTAN and BUILD PAKISTAN bring together industry leaders, driving progress and enhancing the competitiveness of our industries on a global scale."

## Letter to the Editor

### Youth being compelled to leave Pakistan

Dear Editor,  
Brain drain is an imminent danger to the future of our country. When our youth, full of potential, leave-taking with them a country that could desperately use their abilities, energy and creativity- it is not only the departure of population but also impoverishment. Lack of employment opportunities, access to quality education, political uncertainty and intensifying inflation is increasing day by day.

It's been 77 years that Pakistan became an independent state but Pakistan's instability is quite concerning. Youth lacks basic needs in Pakistan. Over 700,000 educated youth had left Pakistan to pursue their dreams. While it is comprehensible that young people seek well prospects, the consequences of this trend are upsetting. Some of our brightest minds are leaving nowadays, people who could help Pakistan to develop and prosper.

Young people are not valued in Pakistan. It is imperative that the government and society in general recognize the seriousness of this issue and take some measures to deal with it. There should be an investment in quality education, fostering entrepreneurship, encouraging small businesses and ensuring that the job market can fascinate the skilled graduates.

To rebuild trust and credibility in the youth, it is encouraged to confront problems like political uncertainty, corruption, a lack of transparency, and bad governance.

The departure of youth at such large scale is a loss for Pakistan because Pakistan needs youth for progress and prosperity. We must bring the problem to the light before it's too late.

Sincerely,  
Komal Shahzadi, Islamabad  
komalshahzadi491@gmail.com

### Crucial Need of Enhancing Youth's Participation in Politics for Brighter Future

Respected Editor,  
I wanted to highlight the urgent need to increase youth involvement in politics. Nowadays, young individuals are not just future leaders but also essential contributors in the present. Unfortunately, their engagement in political affairs is significantly low, which could hinder societal progress and sustainability.

Young people bring innovative ideas, distinct viewpoints, and a deep understanding of contemporary challenges like climate change and social justice. However, many feel disconnected from

the political system, perceiving it as detached from their everyday experiences. This sense of disconnection, influenced by inadequate political education, limited resources, and a perceived gap between them and political entities, often leads to disinterest.

To address these obstacles effectively, it is crucial to incorporate civic education into school curricula, establish platforms for youth voices, and actively promote young leaders within political spheres.

I urge our leaders and society to recognize the value of youth engagement and take meaningful steps to involve them in politics, ensuring a more inclusive and dynamic political landscape.

Best regards,  
Malaika Gul, Rawalpindi  
malaika523223@gmail.com

### Growing Concern Over Garbage Accumulation Under Bridges and on Roads in Islamabad

I am writing to bring attention to the problem of garbage piling up under bridges and on roads in Islamabad. Our city is known for being clean and

green, but these trash piles are ruining its beauty and creating health risks.

The garbage often includes plastic, food waste, and other harmful materials that pollute our environment. These piles also attract pests and stray animals, making the situation worse for public health.

I believe the authorities should take quick action to solve this problem. Regular garbage collection and public awareness campaigns are needed to keep our city clean. There should also be strict penalties for those who dump trash illegally.

I urge the Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation to focus on this issue and take steps to keep our roads and bridges clean. A cleaner Islamabad is important for both our environment and the health of our people.

Thank you for considering this important matter.  
Sincerely,  
Rehma Abid Khan,  
Islamabad  
rehmaabid45@gmail.com

### Monsoon Rains

Dear Editor,  
As the monsoon rains have set in, the showers portend a reprieve for many from the unbearable heat. However, it is not all rosy for everyone. National Disaster Management Authority in its latest Hydrological Outlook report

evinced that some of channels of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ravi, and Chenab rivers are prone to flooding. Yet, it seems that the alarm bells are ringing on deaf ears as per the governmental tradition of letting the crisis balloon before actually fixing it.

Pakistan has a long history of disastrous floods, most notably in 2010 and 2022. Climate change has only aggravated the crisis, making extreme weather events more common. Pakistan is 5th most vulnerable nation to climate change yet ranks 27th on its preparedness to mitigate its adverse effects.

On the other hand, the trend of Climate Reductionism has also taken root in the country whereby all administrative failings are attributed to climate change. This must change. The authorities must wake up from their deep slumber and put their house in order. Measures such as sustainable utility of resources, capacity building of concerned authorities, and rigorous planning before the crisis strikes are paramount for the country's survival.

Muhammad Ukasha Wadood,  
Lahore  
Ukashawadood03@gmail.com

### Assault on Safe havens

Since October 7, the Israel-Palestine conflict has intensified, causing thou-

sands of civilian deaths and displacing millions. Schools, which should be sanctuaries, have become targets. Since July 4, 21 schools have been attacked, resulting in at least 100 deaths among civilians. This widespread destruction blatantly violates international humanitarian law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The most vulnerable—children and women—are bearing the brunt of this crisis. Many children have been killed, and thousands more injured, with the health system overwhelmed by the scale of casualties. Despite claims that these strikes target Hamas, the civilian suffering is undeniable.

A recent tragedy at the al-Tabin School on 7th of August in Gaza City starkly illustrates the crisis. Sheltering over 6,000 displaced individuals, the school was hit by three Israeli bombs during dawn prayers. This attack resulted in at least 100 deaths and numerous injuries, with survivors enduring severe trauma. Eyewitnesses described scenes of horrific devastation, with bodies scattered and dismembered.

Immediate action is imperative. We urgently need a ceasefire, international condemnation, and humanitarian aid to protect civilians and uphold human dignity.

Thank you for your time and attention.  
Aqsa Khalid, Alipur, Islamabad  
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## Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
77,830.34	78,045.30
Day's High	Day's Low
78,382.04	77,566.62
Index Value	Change
6,870,537,420	-214.96
Percentage	Time
-0.28%	19 Aug, 2024 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
8,356.94	+45.53
Percentage	Time
+0.55%	19 Aug, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
40,867.09	+207.33
Percentage	Time
+0.51%	19 Aug, 1:18 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
37,388.62	-674.05
Percentage	Time
-1.77%	19 Aug, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	185.65	189.25
Bahrain Dinar	734	739.50
Canadian Dollar	202.65	207.00
China Yuan	38.29	38.69
Danish Krone	40.03	40.43
Euro	306.40	308.60
Hong Kong Dollar	35.68	36.03
Indian Rupee	3.34	3.45
Japanese Yen	1.97	1.98
Kuwaiti Dinar	905.45	910.60
Malaysian Ringgit	58.99	59.59
New Zealand \$	169.34	171.34
Norwegians Krone	26.14	26.44
Omani Riyal	723.4	728.50
Qatari Riyal	76.44	77.14
Saudi Riyal	73.82	74.52
Singapore Dollar	202	204.00
Swedish Korona	26.27	26.57
Swiss Franc	319.5	324.50
Thai Bhat	7.57	7.72
U.A.E Dirham	75.90	76.32
UK Pound Sterling	360	362.3
US Dollar	279.60	280.3

# Better approach needed to address miscreants: Mian Zahid Hussain

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of the FPCCI Advisory Board and National Business Group Pakistan, the President of Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Monday that slow Internet is damaging the IT industry, online businesses, and hurting the masses.

According to the general perception, the IT industry's and online businesses' future is at stake due to the government's efforts to control the Internet.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that many businesses are affected and freelancers are losing their source of income.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that controlling the digital terrorist group's misuse of social media

is very important.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that many other countries have also controlled the Internet, but in Pakistan, those who do so are incompetent and sink the economy.

He said that after the shocking revelation that Pakistanis invested eleven billion dollars in Dubai's property market, the Dubai Chamber of Commerce has said that 3968 Pakistani companies have registered in Dubai in the last six months.

In 2023, 8036 Pakistani companies were registered in Dubai, which was 71.2% more than in 2022, which means that capital is rapidly fleeing the country.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that Dubai is the favourite destination of Pakistani software companies. There, electricity is cheap, the business environment is favourable, the payment system is better, and contracts are enforced.



Foreign companies only like to deal with Pakistani companies registered in Dubai because the situation in Pakistan is uncertain, and doing

business with Pakistani companies registered in Dubai provides a sense of security.

Representatives of foreign companies don't like to come to Pakistan, but they are always ready to travel to Dubai for business. Pakistan's payment system is also very weak, while there is no such weakness in Dubai. Corporate tax is only 9% on profits above 375,000 dirhams, while there is no tax on profits below 375,000 dirhams.

He further said that instead of giving better incentives to companies doing business in Pakistan, they are strangled. Such policies should be avoided, as they will deprive Pakistan of its talent and income, and the plan of increasing IT exports to 10 billion dollars in two years will remain a dream.

He noted that this vital sector has the potential to change the destiny of this country, but if neglected, it will go down like all other sectors of the economy.

## Call on

ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner to Pakistan Ms. Jane Marriott called on Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Monday.



Photo: PID

# PBA and SBP's strategic collaboration targets expanded financing and risk coverage

## Commerce Desk

KARACHI: In a collaborative effort to support the SME sector, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has recently increased the clean lending limit for SMEs to Rs. 10 million, following recommendations from the Pakistan Banks' Association (PBA). This strategic move aligns with the Government's objectives to boost SME growth and is part of the PBA's Priority Sector Initiatives aimed at enhancing financial access for SMEs, which are crucial for economic expansion and job creation in Pakistan.

Additionally, reflecting its shared commitment to strengthening the banking sector, the SBP has also introduced a risk coverage scheme, which will help the banking sector to double its SME exposure to Rs. 1.1 trillion during the next five years.

Speaking on the recent developments, Zafar Masud,

Chairman - PBA stated, "The introduction of the risk coverage scheme for banks and increased clean lending limit to Rs. 10 million is a game-changer for SMEs in Pakistan. It reflects the Central Bank's commitment to supporting the sector and aligns perfectly with PBA's Priority Sector Initiatives aimed at boosting SME financing. We are confident that this measure will lead to a substantial increase in SME lending, which is essential for economic growth and job creation."

Similar initiatives and policy recommendations are being developed, in close consultation with the SBP, for the Agriculture and Digital & Technology sectors to support the Government's broader economic objectives. The Association looks forward to continuing its collaboration with the Ministry of Finance, SBP, and other stakeholders on these priority sectors of national significance.

# Celebrating Descon Engineering's Excellence: Safe Completion of EnVen Project at EFERT



## Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Descon Engineering has successfully completed the EnVen Project at the ENGRO Fertilizer Plant (EFERT) in Dharki, Pakistan.

In recognition of this accomplishment, senior management from EFERT, including Mr. Syed Shahzad Nabi (SVP Manufacturing), Mr. Muhammad Majid Latif (VP Technical), and Mr. Muhammad Nauman

(GM Engineering Mechanical), visited Descon Headquarters. They were warmly received by Descon's senior leadership, which included Mr. Taimur Saeed (CEO), Mr. Yasir Siddique (CFO), Mr. Muhammad Khawar Khan (CRCO), Mr. Anwar Ul Haq (President Industrial Services Division), Mr. Muhammad Kamran Riaz (Head Finance), and Mr. Shahzad Malik (Head Operations), along with other team members.

Mr. Shahzad Nabi (SVP Manufacturing)

commented on exceptional management towards the challenges of the project by DEL. Furthermore, commenting on the achievement, Mr. Taimur Saeed, CEO of Descon, said: "The successful completion of the EnVen Project is a testament to the unwavering commitment and collaboration of our company. This project reaffirms our dedication to operational excellence and strengthens our partnership with EFERT."

# ICCI President lauds PM's initiative to unlock Gemstone industry's full potential

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has appreciated the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's instructions to relevant authorities to prepare a strategy for gemstone mining in the Gilgit-Baltistan region within a month to minimize unnecessary wastage and enhance export revenue from precious stones, highlighting his government's interest in launching a pilot project in Gilgit-Baltistan to align the gemstone mining,



cutting and value addition with international standards, assuring federal government's full support to GB government in this regard.

ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari in a statement on Monday said that under his leadership, the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry is tirelessly working to promote economic activities in Pakistan, with a focus on ease of doing business and unlocking the country's vast tourism potential. He highlighted the success of the recent 2nd ICCI International Tourism Summit in Skardu, which

brought together diplomats, business leaders and media representatives to explore opportunities in the sector.

Bakhtawari noted that the diplomatic community not only praised the tourism potential of Gilgit-Baltistan but assured its support in promoting the region's attractions to their respective countries. He emphasized the need to tap into Pakistan's significant gemstone reserves, particularly in the northern and northwestern regions, which boast high-quality stones like peridot, aquamarine, topaz,

ruby, and emerald. However, he pointed out that 80% of Pakistan's gemstone exports are in raw form, highlighting the need for internationally recognized certifications to enhance the industry's development and increase national exports and employment opportunities.

Bakhtawari further emphasized ICCI's commitment to exploring new trade and business relations with friendly countries, working closely with their envoys to benefit the business community, people, and governments of all nations involved.

## CCP issues show-cause notices to goods transport associations over freight rate fixing

### Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has issued show-cause notices to the Transporters of Goods Association (TGA) and the Local Goods Transport Association (LGTA) for allegedly fixing freight rates for transportation of goods from Port Qasim to various destinations across the country, a prima facie, violation of Section 4 of the Competition Act, 2010.

Transportation is a vital sector driving national economic growth, with local transporters playing a crucial role in supporting various industries, including automobile, textile, oil and ghee, chemicals, beverages, paint, flour mills, cement, steel, and food.

Recognizing the importance of this sector, the CCP took suo motu notice of concerns regarding collusion to raise and fix freight rates, through circulars.

The CCP's inquiry revealed that TGA and LGTA increased transportation rates through price circulars in 2018, 2021 and 2022, while imposing stringent conditions on member companies to adhere to fixed rates or face punitive measures. This constitutes a prohibited agreement, a prima facie violation of Sections 4(1) read with Section 4(2)(a) of the Competition Act of 2010.

As part of the investigation, the CCP conducted search and inspection, seizing relevant records and documents that provided substantial evidence of the alleged violations.

The enquiry further highlighted that the alleged anti-competitive behaviour of TGA and LGTA has spillover effect across territories of other provinces. Cargo arriving at Karachi Port Trust and Port Qasim, which is then distributed across Karachi and adjacent areas of Sindh (Hyderabad), Gharo and Balochistan, is impacted by changes in freight rates. Consequently, these changes can affect the cost of goods manufactured, potentially leading to broader economic implications.

# Hamid M. Ismail launches Ismail Global: A new venture rooted in legacy and innovation



## Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Hamid M. Ismail, CEO of Biconi & Executive Director of Ismail Industries, is proud to announce the launch of Ismail Global, a venture dedicated to transforming lives through innovative products and services in Pakistan and globally.

Reflecting on his family's legacy, Hamid Ismail shares, "Ismail Global is built on

the values and mentorship passed down through generations. Our mission, driven by a culture of excellence and innovation, is to create meaningful solutions that improve lives globally."

As Hamid Ismail embarks on this new journey, the future with Ismail Global stands as a testament to his commitment to pushing the boundaries—one that transcends profits and touches lives in meaningful ways.



## Defence cooperation between Pakistan & IRAQ

RAWALPINDI: Lt Gen Ahmed Dawood Salman, Secretary Defence of Iraq called on General Sahir Shamshad Mirza, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, at Joint Staff Headquarters, Rawalpindi.



# Govt proposes amendments to legalise 'revenue-based load shedding' in Pakistan

### Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The government is planning to redefine the concept of electricity load shedding by modifying the Nepra Act and Performance Standards. This move aims to legalize revenue-based load shedding across the country under the guise of Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT&C) losses, which has been a long-standing desire of the Power Division.

According to the Power Division, the government is continuously working to address the multifarious challenges in the country's power sector. The increasing trend of circular debt is making the

sector and the economy financially enviable.

The Power Division cited that major reasons for the growing circular debt, including high line losses, low recovery rates, and electricity theft. Distribution companies carry out revenue-based load shedding in areas with high line losses. Additionally, the sharp increase in power prices for the central pool has made it economically and financially imprudent to purchase such costly electricity for delivery to consumers.

The Power Division argued that due to economic compulsions, a well-structured load shedding is the only feasible solution to ensure the viability

of the power sector. However, Nepra and other legal forums have discussed economic load-shedding policies and implementation, highlighting the need to bring load-shedding due to economic or revenue compulsions into the legal framework.

They have advised incorporating certain amendments in the Regulation of Generation, Transmission and Distribution of Electric Power Act, 1997 (the "Nepra Act") to create a robust regulatory framework for this purpose.

In a series of meetings held on 15, 18, and 25 April 2024 to deliberate on power sector reforms, the Prime Minister directed the Power Division

to review and propose amendments to the existing legal and policy frameworks regarding Policy and Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT&C) based load management in the country.

To initiate these legal, policy, and regulatory changes, the Power Division has notified a committee comprising members from PPIB, CPPA, Law Division, Nepra, and independent legal and regulatory experts. The committee has conducted a comprehensive review of the existing arrangements, examined the provisions of the Constitution and Acts, as well as the economic, technical, and commercial

aspects of the policy measures on economic load shedding and distribution license obligations, which have deteriorated and exceeded the federal government's obligations.

The committee has reviewed the existing provisions, including Section 34 of the Nepra Act, the definition under 4 (f) of the Performance Standards Rules of 2005, the terms and conditions of distribution licenses, various judgments of superior courts, the National Electricity Policy 2021, strategic directive 5(b) of the National Electricity Plan, and the Nepra advisory to Distribution Companies (Discos) of February 2022.

## Finance Minister held a Virtual Meeting with President / GCEO of Mashreq Bank

### Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Ahmed Abdelaal, President / GCEO of Mashreq Bank, called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb virtually to discuss the economic outlook and explore investment opportunities in Pakistan.

The meeting was also attended by Minister of State Mr. Ali Parvez Malik, and Senior officers from the Finance Division and State Bank of Pakistan.

The Minister greeted Mr. Ahmed Abdelaal and expressed appreciation for Mashreq Bank's interest in Pakistan's financial landscape and expressed keen interest of the Government of Pakistan to re-engage with Mashreq Bank.

The Minister provided an overview of the economic outlook of the country and mentioned the recent improvements in the macroeconomic indica-



tors and stability of the currency and financial markets. He also mentioned the economic policies and initiatives of the government, emphasizing the ongoing efforts to stabilize the macroeconomic environment and enhance investor's confidence through key

initiatives of the government such as: broadening the tax base, improving the ease of doing business, digitalization within the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), the privatization agenda of the government, and SOEs reforms.

Mr. Ahmed Abdelaal, President / GCEO of Mashreq Bank, appreciated the policies and initiatives of the government towards improving the investors' confidence and creating a business-friendly environment in the country. He expressed Mashreq Bank's interest in deepening its engagement in Pakistan's financial sector and contributing to the country's economic development. He also mentioned that Pakistan is amongst one of the most strategic markets for investment opportunities.

In conclusion, the meeting highlighted the strong partnership between Pakistan and Mashreq Bank in promoting sustainable economic development. The dialogue reflected Pakistan's commitment to prudent fiscal management, investor-friendly policies, and inclusive growth, marking a positive step forward in enhancing economic collaboration.

## Faiz Hameed and Saqib Nisar were continuously in contact, senior journalist claims

### Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: The investigation into the facilitation of PTI chairman Imran Khan's stay in Adiala Jail is expanding, with new revelations emerging about retired General Faiz Hameed, who is currently in military custody.

Senior journalist and analyst Ansar Abbasi claims that former DG ISI, Lieutenant General (Retd) Faiz Hameed, and former Chief Justice of Pakistan were in contact with each other. However, the nature of their communication remains unclear.

Citing informed sources, Abbasi



stated that authorities have confirmed the existence of communication between the two. However, the nature of these contacts remains ambiguous, whether they were purely social or had political or criminal implications.

According to the senior jour-

nalist, authorities have also gathered evidence against former Chief Justice Saqib Nisar but have no intention of arresting him upon his return to the country.

It is worth noting that Federal Information Minister Atta Tarar, during a press conference yesterday, alleged that Imran Khan and Chairman Barrister Gohar Malik were the masterminds behind a conspiracy against the PTI, and those recently arrested, including Lieutenant General (Retd) Faiz Hameed, were their accomplices.

Tarar stated that the investigation will widen in light of the revelations

following General Fayyaz's arrest, implicating both Saqib and Nisar.

Recently, social media has been abuzz with speculation that former Chief Justice Saqib Nisar has fled to London and could be arrested in connection with a wider inquiry related to General Fayyaz's arrest.

However, the former Chief Justice has dismissed such speculation. In a conversation with Geo News, Saqib Nisar refuted claims circulating on social media linking his absence from the country to General Faiz's arrest.

He confirmed that he is in London on pre-scheduled leave.

## May-9 cases: ATC grants interim bail to Hafiz Farhat Abbas till Sept 7

### Bureau Report

LAHORE: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Monday granted interim bail to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) MPA Hafiz Farhat Abbas till September 7 in two cases involving the torching of police vehicles near Rahat Bakery during the May 9 riots.

The court ordered the PTI MPA to furnish surety bonds of Rs 100,000 in both cases.

ATC Judge Irfan Haider

conducted proceedings on the bail petitions of Hafiz Farhat Abbas, who also appeared in court.

It is pertinent to mention that the court had earlier rejected the interim bail of Hafiz Farhat Abbas in both cases due to his non-appearance, but he has again approached the court for bail.

The Sarwar Road police had registered cases against Hafiz Farhat Abbas and others for torching police vehicles near Rahat Bakery during the May 9 riots.

## ICT admin intensifies monkeypox screening at airport

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: In response to the growing threat of monkeypox, the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Administration has intensified its efforts to ensure the safety of citizens.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon recently inspected the screening measures at the Islamabad Airport to prevent the spread of the virus, said the spokesman of the ICT administration.

The DC arrived at Islamabad Airport to review the current screening procedures for passengers arriving from abroad. After the inspection, the DC directed health officials to speed up the screening process, ensuring that no passenger goes unchecked.

On the occasion, the DC expressed

his satisfaction with health department staff who were actively screening every passenger coming from foreign countries.

He directed that if any symptoms of monkeypox were detected, the patient would be immediately isolated and transferred to PIMS Hospital for further care.

He said that the PIMS Hospital has been prepared to handle monkeypox cases, with special arrangements made to isolate and treat affected patients.

The hospital has also been declared an isolation management unit and a special focal person has been appointed to oversee operations related to the DC Islamabad unit.

These steps reflected the district administration's proactive approach to controlling the spread of monkeypox and protecting public health, the spokesman added.

## IHC stops trial court from announcing verdict in £190 million case

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has temporarily halted the trial court from delivering its final verdict in the £190 million case against former Prime Minister Imran Khan, demanding the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to provide a response by Wednesday.

The IHC division bench, comprising Justices Mian Gul Hassan Aurangzeb and Babar Sattar, heard the case regarding Khan's request for the records of NAB's previous decision to close the £190 million case.

During the hearing, Salman Akram Raja, Arif Alvi, Shibli Faraz, Ali Muhammad Khan, Azam Khan, and others were present in the courtroom.

Salman Safdar, Khan's lawyer,

argued that the reference against Khan is currently being heard, with 35 witnesses already examined and the cross-examination of the final witness, the investigating officer, ongoing. He highlighted that there are eight accused in the case, six of whom are absconding, while the case against the remaining two, a husband and wife, is still ongoing.

Safdar further stated that the accusation against Khan is that he facilitated the £190 million transaction while serving as Prime Minister. He explained that according to NAB, the funds were supposed to be deposited in a bank but ended up in the Supreme Court's account. He emphasized that the reference mentions the Al-Qadir Trust case, which is active, and that this is not a "ghost project."

## Six Diamer-Bhasha Dam labourers killed in accident

### New Desk

ISLAMABAD: At least six labourers of the Diamer-Bhasha Dam were killed and two got injured when their vehicle lost control and fell into a deep ravine near Thor Manyar in Chilas on Monday.

Among the deceased, three were from Darel, one from Goharabad, one from Karora in Shangla, and one was associated with the construction

company FWO. One of the injured workers is from Darel while another is from Thor.

The Tourist Police, GB Police, and GB Scouts launched joint rescue operations.

Initially, three injured workers were pulled from the ravine and rushed to Chilas Hospital. One of the injured succumbed to his injuries before reaching the hospital, while two others are under treatment.

## ICT exports remittances surges to US\$286 million in July

### Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: ICT exports remittances reached US\$286 million in the first month of Financial Year 2024-25 (July). ICT exports increased 33.64% over the US\$214 million remitted during corresponding period last year FY2023-24 (July), said Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja.

She said that the present government is committed for increase in IT exports.

Minister of State for IT said that the Prime Minister of Pakistan is fully focused upon uplift of the IT sector.

She said that on the directives of the PM of Pakistan and the full support of the Special Investment Facilitation

Council (SIFC), Ministry of IT and Telecommunication, and Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB) are taking steps to increase country's IT exports.

Trade surplus of US\$ 252 million, highest in all Services (88% of total ICT export remittances) has been realized by the IT & ITES Industry during July 2024, an increase of 32.63% as compared to trade surplus of US\$ 190 million during July 2023. Whereas, the Services sector has overall recorded trade deficit of US\$ 159 million during the month of July FY2024.

ICT sector exports of US\$286 million are the highest among all Services (46% of total export of services) with 'Other Business Services' trailing at US\$ 128 million.