

# QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

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dquettavoice@gmail.com

## FC Driver Killed in Quetta Roadside Blast

**Staff Reporter:**  
**QUETTA:** In Quetta's Akhtarabad area near the Northern bypass, a Frontier Corps (FC) driver lost his life in a roadside explosion on Saturday, as confirmed by rescue officials.



Muhammad Zeeshan, the Edhi Foundation's in-charge, informed quettavoice.com that an FC vehicle was on routine patrol when the explosion occurred, resulting in the driver being critically injured. He was rushed to the Bolan Medical Complex Hospital but succumbed to his injuries.

Zeeshan, referencing information from Quetta police, reported that the blast was caused by approximately four kilograms of explosives.

Following the incident, a large number of police officers, bomb disposal squad members, and FC personnel quickly arrived at the scene and secured the area for further investigation.



## Release from jail remains elusive as Imran, Bushra 'arrested' in new case after Iddat conviction overturned

**NEWS DESK:** A possible release from prison remained elusive for former prime minister Imran Khan and his spouse Bushra Bibi on Saturday as the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) arrested them in a new Toshakhana case hours after they were acquitted by an Islamabad court in the Iddat case.

NAB Deputy Director Moinis Haroon confirmed while talking to Dawn.com that Imran and Bushra Bibi were arrested in a fresh Toshakhana case. "They have been arrested in a new Toshakhana case," he said.

Earlier, an Islamabad district and sessions court accepted the appeals filed by Imran and his spouse against their conviction in the Iddat case, clearing the last existing legal case at the time keeping the PTI founder

in jail. His sentences in the two Toshakhana cases were suspended while he was acquitted by the Islamabad High Court (IHC) in the cipher case. Various courts have also acquitted him in several other cases filed against him since the events of May 9, 2023 — the day when his first arrest had caused riots across the country, following which the state launched a crackdown against him and his party.

The IHC in May also approved Imran's bail application in the 190 million pound corruption case, saying that the investigation into the matter was complete and the PTI founder's "continued incarceration" would not serve any purpose.

However, a Lahore anti-terrorism court on Tuesday dismissed Imran's pre-arrest

bail petitions in three cases related to the May 9 riots. The couple was convicted in the Iddat case on February 3 — days before the general elections — on a complaint filed by Bushra Bibi's ex-husband, Khawar Fared Maneka, who alleged that they contracted marriage during the former first lady's Iddat period. Senior civil judge Qudratullah had sentenced the ex-premier and his spouse to seven years in jail and imposed a Rs500,000 fine each — a decision that was widely criticised by civil society, women activists and lawyers. The verdict had coincided with the Toshakhana and cipher case sentences.

Previously, District and Sessions Judge (DSJ) Shahrukh Arjumand was hearing the case and had reserved the verdict in May. However, on the day of its

expected announcement, he sought a transfer of the case, citing Maneka's request for recusal from hearing the appeals. Subsequently, the case was transferred to the court of Additional DSJ Azal Majoka. Last month, ADSJ Majoka had rejected another set of pleas filed by Imran and his wife seeking the suspension of their sentences. ADSJ Majoka announced the judgment today at 3pm after reserving the verdict earlier in the day.

After accepting their appeals, the judge said: "If they are not wanted in any other case, then PTI founder Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi should be released [from jail] immediately." Earlier today, a pair of applications was filed by Maneka — one was to carry out the medical checkup of Bushra Bibi, his ex-wife.

Officials provided a detailed briefing on the current peace and security situation in Quetta. They reported incidents where demonstrators had damaged government properties, CCTV cameras, and police vehicles. They were referring to protest demonstrations staged by the Baloch Yekjehi Committee for the recovery of Zaeher Baloch.

## High-Level Meeting on Peace and Security in Quetta Following Blast

**Our Reporter:**

**QUETTA:** High-level meeting focused on peace and security in Balochistan was held following a roadside blast in Quetta's Akhtarabad area, which claimed the life of a Frontier Corps driver.

The meeting, chaired by the Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Langove, saw the participation of Provincial Ministers Mir Saeed Noshirwani and Bakht Mohammad Kakar, alongside senior officials including IG Police Abdul Khaliq Sheikh, Commissioner Hamza Shafiq, DG Levies Naseebullah Kakar, and D/CCTD Aitzaz Goraya.

Officials provided a detailed briefing on the current peace and security situation in Quetta. They reported incidents where demonstrators had damaged government properties, CCTV cameras, and police vehicles. They were referring to protest demonstrations staged by the Baloch Yekjehi Committee for the recovery of Zaeher Baloch.

The meeting participants reiterated the government's commitment to negotiations and discussions, emphasizing the importance of cooperation with protesters. They stated that all avenues for dialogue remain open and condemned the recent attack on a security forces vehicle in Quetta.

The officials acknowledged the sacrifices made by security forces in the fight against terrorism and urged demonstrators to be vigilant against masked



miscreants who may be targeting government property and forces during protests. Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Langove highlighted the government's continuous efforts to address the protesters' concerns and called for peaceful protests.

Minister Noshirwani reaffirmed the government's openness to dialogue and negotiations to resolve issues within the bounds of the law. He also noted that the government had already made significant efforts to engage with protesters, including the release of five arrested women on the same day of their arrest as instructed by the government's commitment to negotiations and discussions.

IG Police Abdul Khaliq Sheikh urged protesters to cooperate with police and maintain peace and order. He warned that any attempts to sabotage peace would be met with legal action and requested the public not to partake in conspiracies aimed at disrupting peace, especially during the sacred month of Muharram.

## IHC to hear plea against ISI's call interception powers

**ISLAMABAD:** The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday admitted a petition for regular hearing filed by Pakistan Bar Council (PBC) members challenging the federal government's decision to empower the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) to intercept calls and messages.

The petitioners — Shafiq Mahmood Chauhan, Abid Shahid Zuberi, Chaudhry Ishiaq Ahmed Khan, Munir Ahmed Kakar,

Tahir Fraz Abbasi and Abid Saqi — argued that the notification dated July 8, 2024, is ultra vires the Constitution and the Pakistan Telecommunication (Re-Organisation) Act, 1996. They contended that wiretapping or intercepting calls could only be made after due process was followed, as prescribed under the Fair Trial Act 2013.

Advocate Zuberi pointed out that the rules for interception and wiretapping

calls have not been framed under the Telecom Act of 1996, despite the federal government's admission of the same.

He also drew parallels with a similar situation in 1998, which led to the Supreme Court's judgement in the case of Benazir Bhutto and others vs. the President of Pakistan and others. The court sought a report from the respondent authorities and adjourned further hearing till a date to be fixed by the registrar's office.

The federal government had authorised the ISI to intercept calls and messages through a statutory regulatory order (SRO) issued on July 8, citing national security concerns. **NEWS DESK.**

## Govt to review SC reserved seats before instituting legal challenge

**ISLAMABAD:** The government has decided to consult legal experts and carefully examine the Supreme Court's judgement that declared the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) eligible to receive reserved seats, before rushing to challenge it.

"We have decided to file a review petition after seeking legal guidance and going through the judgement of the apex court," said Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs and Inter-Provincial Coordination Rana Sanaullah at a press conference on Friday.

"The government will carefully review the details of the Supreme Court's judgement on reserved seats before determining its next move," he added.

The adviser made it clear that the decision to seek a review of the verdict lies with the cabinet. Also, federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar, when asked at a separate presser, said it was a prerogative of the federal cabinet and not a minister to decide about challenging the SC ruling.

Regarding PTI's stance, he said, "PTI never claimed the reserved seats. If the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) misinterpreted the ruling, PTI could have interpreted it correctly. Even if PTI has made a mistake, the court must rectify it."

He was of the opinion that the ruling did not favour the SIC whose petition was not accepted. He believed that members who joined the SIC by giving an affidavit could be de-seated by the ECP if they would join any other party. He warned that allowing members who joined one party under



an affidavit to switch parties would lead to further legal complications.

Explaining the case, he said that some individuals participated in the general elections as independent candidates and, after winning, provided formal affidavits within three days, as per the Constitution and law, to join the SIC.

He added that the SIC requested for reserved seats, but the ECP maintained that since the SIC did not participate in the election as a party, these seats could not be allocated to them. The SIC then appealed to the Peshawar High Court,

where this decision was upheld, and subsequently went to the Supreme Court.

"We hold the courts and judges in utmost esteem. They are the best at what they do. Judges have sworn to protect the Constitution, rewriting it contravenes this oath," he added.

Mentioning that the primary agenda of the current government was to steer the country out of economic crisis, the adviser said the government was open to political dialogue that the PTI had initially refused. The PM had extended an offer for talks during the budget session, he said. **NEWS DESK.**

## Parliament, not courts, should 'rewrite' Constitution: Khawaja Asif

**NEWS DESK:** Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader and Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Saturday announced that the party will consult its allies before filing an appeal against the Supreme Court's decision on reserved seats.

Speaking at a press conference in Sialkot, Asif criticised the judiciary for oversteering its jurisdiction. He emphasised that rewriting the Constitution is the prerogative of parliament, not the courts.

Asif stated that the Constitution was created and amended by parliament, and any future amendments will also be handled by the legislative body.

Asif questioned the Supreme Court's ruling to grant relief to a petitioner who did not even approach the court. The defence minister highlighted the importance of consulting allied parties before proceeding with the appeal.



A decision will be made in parliament on Monday regarding whether to challenge the ruling.

Asif also commented on the state of the judiciary,

noting that Pakistan's judiciary ranks 134th globally and lamented the lack of efforts to improve this standing.

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## Solarization Project: A Beacon of Hope for Balochistan's Agriculture

Editor: Asim Khan

### Editorial:

In a significant stride towards sustainable development, Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif has launched a visionary project to solarize nearly 28,000 agricultural tube wells in Balochistan. This transformative initiative, executed in collaboration between the federal and Balochistan governments, marks a pivotal moment in the province's agricultural landscape. By transitioning electric tube wells to solar power, the project ensures a consistent and sustainable water supply for farmers, heralding a new era of agricultural productivity and economic growth.

The \$5 billion rupee project, with 70% financing from the federal government and 30% from the Balochistan government, is not just a testament to intergovernmental cooperation but also a commitment to merit-based development. Prime Minister Sharif has set an ambitious three-month deadline for the completion of the solarization process, emphasizing the urgency and importance of this initiative.

Solar-powered tube wells promise a reliable water supply throughout the day, addressing the long-standing issue of limited electricity availability, which has previously restricted water access to a mere 2 to 6 hours per day despite substantial federal subsidies. This transformation will significantly enhance agricultural productivity, expand arable land, and ultimately improve the livelihoods of Balochistan's farmers.

During the signing ceremony in Quetta, Prime Minister Sharif highlighted the environmental and economic advantages of solar energy, reaffirming the government's dedication to promoting renewable energy sources nationwide. This project underscores the federal government's unwavering support for Balochistan's development, showcasing a model of cooperation and commitment to addressing the province's unique challenges.

Moreover, the Prime Minister's announcement of additional initiatives, including substantial quotas for Balochistan students in vocational training programs in China and the establishment of Danish schools in the province, reflects a comprehensive approach to uplift Balochistan. By investing in education and skill development, the government aims to empower the youth, fostering a generation capable of driving the province's future growth and prosperity.

Addressing Balochistan's provincial cabinet, Prime Minister Sharif called for collective efforts to alleviate deprivation and promote the province's development. His message was clear: the path to progress lies in merit-based initiatives and inclusive development strategies that leave no one behind.

The solarization project is more than just an infrastructure upgrade; it is a beacon of hope for Balochistan's agricultural sector. It represents a commitment to sustainable practices, economic empowerment, and the promotion of merit in developmental endeavors. As the project unfolds, it promises to pave the way for a brighter future for the province's farmers and youth, setting a precedent for other regions to follow.

In conclusion, the solarization of agricultural tube wells in Balochistan is a landmark initiative that embodies the principles of merit, sustainability, and collaboration. It is a shining example of how targeted, well-planned interventions can drive significant positive change, offering hope and prosperity to those who need it most.

## Befits the bill

By Shahbaz Sharif:

UTILITY bills will not decrease, and natural gas outages and electricity loadshedding will continue until we hold ourselves and all state and government companies accountable. The right questions, policies, and priorities will make Pakistan sustainable. We cannot rob the coming generations of their future.

Not a day passes without a new savour appearing on the horizon, promising the moon. A litany of snake oil salesmen is peddling to pay or not to pay electricity bills as the existential question. A lawmaker is making bids for K-Electric through video shorts. All that stands between long-suffering Karachiites and an affordable and reliable power supply is for someone to tell him how power companies are acquired, he complains.

Many an adviser to the Ministry of Finance can regale you with stories of shysters willing to pay the national debt if the ministry is-

sues them a letter of support. The surest way of getting rid of these bleeding-heart patriots is to ask them to deposit a letter of guarantee worth only a million dollars.

Returning to the latest superhero to the rescue, after you get over chattering about what to ask, 'Really! K-Electric? The same entity that Shanghai Electric could not buy?' He would buy it and run it like a soup kitchen.

We are not asking the right questions about power woes. A legislator's speech is also the MNAs' raves and rants about 'bias' against Sindh, which causes 18-hour-long power outages. The legislator is also livid at the buck being passed to the masses for electricity theft and non-payment of bills. Such bravado is possible because we are all accomplices in allowing the situation to come to this.

Who does not know of rural electrification schemes for sparsely populated

hamlets across the country incurring infrastructure costs running into hundreds of millions, line losses, and theft? Rural areas have as much right to essential amenities as anyone in the country, but how come everyone plays along as if free lunches exist? These schemes are not getting votes. The constituencies elect their representatives to get subsidised, if not free, electricity, teaching jobs, transfers and postings, and to sort out matters with the local police.

To cut to the chase, we behave silly because it suits us. We have not asked the questions that we should have, for instance, 'why does my village have to get electricity from the national grid?' Why can't we have localised solutions like run-of-river, small hydro generation, solar, wind, renewables like wind and solar energy be used? Why should K-Electric be allowed to keep generation plants idle and demand the national grid provide cheaper hydro units?

Syed Ali Shah:

In a significant stride towards sustainable development, Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif has launched a visionary project to solarize nearly 28,000 agricultural tube wells in Balochistan. While this transformative initiative marks a pivotal moment in the province's agricultural landscape, it raises two critical challenges that must be addressed.

First, Balochistan is prone to natural calamities and is already bearing the brunt of climate change and global warming. If the growers' community cannot access water through solar panels 24/7, the underground water table could deplete rapidly, posing a severe threat. Has our government analyzed this potential risk? In the past, subsidies on agricultural tube wells have caused depleting water tables in Quetta and other parts

By Tariq Afghan:

The illegal cutting and commercial exploitation of glaciers within the regions of Dir, Chitral, Swat, Shangla, Kaghan, Naran, and other parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa pose a significant threat to the ecological and climatic stability of the province. These activities are in direct violation of the environmental protection statutes and regulations governing KP.

With over 7,000 known glaciers, Pakistan forms the largest mass of ice outside the polar regions. Northern Pakistan, crisscrossed by the Karakoram, Himalayan, and Hindu Kush mountain ranges, is a landscape carved out of ice and rock. These glaciers provide much-needed irrigation water to the region, acting as the lifeblood of civilisation in the north. Local communities have developed intricate systems of canals to utilise glacier meltwater for crop irrigation.

However, climate change has profoundly affected Pakistan, leading to rapidly rising temperatures and melting snow, which cause massive flooding, devastating the region's ecological and climatic stability. In 2010, lawmakers in Argentina passed the world's first national glacier protection law, which prohibits mining, industrial activities, and other harmful activities near glaciers in the country. In January 2024, the parliament of Tajikistan also passed a law for the protection of glaciers.

Keeping in view the situation, Pakistan, especially the provincial assembly of KP as well as

of Gilgit-Baltistan, need to pass glacier protection and preservation laws immediately to stop further depletion of these critical natural resources.

The unauthorised cutting of glaciers constitutes a clear violation of environmental protection laws and regulations in force within KP. These actions require immediate attention and enforcement of the relevant legal penalties against the perpetrators.

The depletion of glaciers disrupts the fragile ecological balance, adversely affecting local flora and fauna. The loss of these glaciers undermines efforts to preserve biodiversity and protect endangered species within these regions. Glaciers play an essential role in regulating Earth's climate by reflecting solar radiation and maintaining the global temperature.

## Protecting KP's glaciers

The Environmental Protection Act of 1997, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Environmental Protection Act of 2014, and the Climate Change Act of 2017 do not mention glaciers.

This legal void is alarming, given the critical role glaciers play in the region's ecological and climatic stability.

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By Shahid Kardar:

THE provinces have become the favourite punching bag of Islamabad donors and commentators. They are being chastised for failing to generate adequate resources to fund their constitutional responsibilities and provide social and economic services, such as law and order, education, health, water and sanitation, etc. This article examines the fairness of this criticism, without getting into the merits of the last NFC Award that has given the provinces close to 60 per cent of the national divisible resource pool.

The revenue-raising capacity of the provinces is somewhat limited because of the taxation powers in the Constitution and the structure of GST in VAT mode. This is not to suggest that the provinces have done enough to generate revenue. Historically, they

haven't been sufficiently aggressive in collecting taxes on incomes derived from agriculture (AIT) — making it worse by also treating land rented out as agricultural income — or to make urban property tax more progressive and robust. However, they have made a sincere effort in recent years to mobilise additional revenues by widening their base of GST on services. As for AIT, there are outlandish claims about what can be generated from the crop sector as well as exaggerated estimates of the size of the livestock sector.

Over the years, Islamabad has pre-empted and exploited the revenue base of the provinces that everyone wants them to exploit — motor vehicles, real estate and services. It has levied a variety of taxes withholding taxes

on motor vehicles and property — in the latter also a capital gains tax — a tax on 'deemed income' and now even excise duty.

Similarly, it has narrowed down provincial options to exclude the potential of GST on services. One agency collects GST on vehicles, one collects property tax and one levies the excise duty and electricity tax and one levies property transfers and collects stamp duty. Resultantly, taxpayers have to contend with different authorities for different taxes. This multiplicity of revenue-collecting agencies is adversely affecting administrative and economic efficiency, leading to higher transaction and operational costs, the unnecessary duplication of functions and databases, and inconsistent legal and other treatment of similar taxes. Such a complex arrangement has raised the cost

of compliance for taxpayers, causing increased aggravation.

What is, however, more vexing is that instead of correcting these anomalies in tax structures, Islamabad, committed to the idea of GST, is intent on consolidating and strengthening flawed existing systems.

The demand that the provinces should raise more revenues is also somewhat bizarre when examined against the political economy fallout of related decisions were they to heed such advice. Why on earth would anyone work to increase a tax — and thereby provoke the ire of its

constituents — to muster additional resources, which it would be required to save for the federal government to spend? For this year, the provinces are required to produce surpluses in excess of Rs 115 billion.

Why would they accede to such a ridiculous demand to generate surpluses if they are to pay hikes even if they cannot afford it. There are other revenue sources available to them for hydel profits, and the local economy struggling to function in an increasingly debilitating environment.

Furthermore, the biggest share of provincial expenditures of salaries and pensions. Whereas Islamabad is self-bloated and continues to show little serious intent to right-size its government it has this year revised salaries by close to 25% and pensions by 15%, demanding bel-

tightening from the rest of the population to be able to loosen theirs. The resulting increases have imposed a huge burden on the provinces, which employ close to 80% of the civilian workforce in the public sector.

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tightening from the rest of the population to be able to loosen theirs. The resulting increases have imposed a huge burden on the provinces, which employ close to 80% of the civilian workforce in the public sector.

Salman Butt names ideal candidate for Pakistan's all-format captaincy

LAHORE (INP) Former Pakistan captain Salman Butt threw his weight behind Test captain Shan Masood to lead the side in all formats. Speaking on his YouTube channel, Salman Butt stressed the need for a strategic approach while criticizing the current leadership before going on to back Shan Masood for the all-format captaincy of the national team. "There is some fuss because of which despite having skill,

players haven't been able to execute. There is someone who doesn't have any strategy for planning but still has a lot of attitude. To silence that attitude, I would definitely make Shan Masood the captain," Butt said. For the unversed, Masood was given the reigns of the Test team after Pakistan's dismal campaign at the ICC Men's World Cup 2023 which led to Babar Azam stepping down as the all-format captain. He has thus far led the side in a three-match away Test series against Australia, which concluded in January this year. The Green Shirts suffered a 3-0 whitewash against the dominant hosts but Masood's captaincy was lauded. It is worth mentioning that Pakistan are set to embark on a busy home international season with a two-match Test series against Bangladesh. The Test series will commence on August 21 in Rawalpindi before concluding on September 3 in Karachi. Pakistan will host England for three Tests in Multan (7-11 October), Karachi (15-19 October) and Rawalpindi (24-28 October), and the West Indies will visit for two Tests in Karachi (16-20 January) and Multan (24-28 January). Additionally, Pakistan will host an ODI tri-series featuring New Zealand and South Africa, scheduled in Multan from 8-14 February.



HYDERABAD: MQM Pakistan MNA Waseem Hussain and MPA Sahir Hussain Kaim Khani speaking at a press conference at HPC.

Pakistan abstains as UNGA demands Russia withdrawal from Ukrainian nuclear plant

UNITED NATIONS (INP) Pakistan has abstained in the United Nations General Assembly regarding Russia's actions. Rejecting this neutral stance, Pakistan has abstained from voting on three separate UN General Assembly resolutions denouncing the "Russian invasion of Ukraine." "We owe this to future generations. We must ensure that the horrors of nuclear disasters are not repeated," Ukraine's U.N. Ambassador Sergiy Kyslytsya urged. The UNGA resolution not only demanded that Russia withdraw from the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, but also called for an immediate end to attacks against Ukraine's critical energy infrastructure. These attacks increase the risk of a nuclear accident or incident at all of Ukraine's nuclear facilities.

The resolution again demands that Russia immediately cease its aggression against Ukraine and unconditionally withdraw all of its military forces from the country. The Zaporizhzhia plant, which is the largest nuclear power plant in Europe, was captured by Russia shortly after it launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. While the plant is currently shut down, it still requires external power to keep its nuclear materials cool and prevent a potential meltdown. The 193-member United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution regarding the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in Ukraine. The resolution called for respecting Ukraine's sovereignty and sent humanitarian aid to the country, it has refused to condemn Russia's actions. Deputy Russian U.N. Ambassador Dmitry Polyanskiy told the General Assembly before the vote that the aim of the resolution was "to try to promote the false Western narrative about the source of threats to nuclear facilities in Ukraine." The UNGA resolutions call for the immediate cessation of attacks by Russia against Ukraine's critical energy infrastructure. These attacks increase the risk of a nuclear accident or incident at all of Ukraine's nuclear facilities.

IMF deal to bring 'much-needed' macroeconomic stability: Aurangzeb

ISLAMABAD (INP) Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has expressed optimism about the newly agreed International Monetary Fund (IMF) program, emphasizing its potential to bring much-needed macroeconomic stability to Pakistan. The minister highlighted the critical role of structural reforms in achieving sustainable economic growth. Addressing the media after the conclusion of discussions with the IMF team, Finance Minister Aurangzeb underscored the significance of the comprehensive 37-month Extended Fund Arrangement (EFF), which promises to support Pakistan with \$7 billion. The agreement, which is pending approval by the IMF's Executive Board, aims to capitalize on the macro-

economic stability Pakistan has achieved over the past year. "The IMF program will help bring macroeconomic stability," stated the minister. "Under this program, we need to ensure structural reforms that are essential for sustainable development." Minister Aurangzeb outlined the necessity of instituting wide-ranging reforms in key areas such as public finance, energy, and government institutions. "There is a need to bring sustainability in public finance, energy, and government institutions. Our focus will be on strengthening public finances through fiscal consolidation, broadening the tax base, and ensuring exceptions while pursuing critical development and social spending," he said. He further commented that the government will introduce structural reforms in the coming years. Earlier today, it was announced that a new staff-level loan agreement has been reached between Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) under which the country will receive \$7 billion over 37 months. The final approval of the loan will be given by the IMF Executive Board. In a statement issued by IMF's Mission Chief to Pakistan Nathan Porter, "The Pakistani authorities and the IMF team have reached a staff-level agreement on a comprehensive program endorsed by the federal and provincial governments, that could be supported by a 37-month Extended Fund Arrangement (EFF), in the amount equivalent to SDR 5,320 million (or about US\$7 billion at current exchange rates)." It further said that the agreement was subject to approval by the



QUETTA: Balochistan Interior Minister Mir Ziaullah Langove chairing a meeting about the law and order situation.

President Zardari calls for Eastern nations' collaborative efforts to ensure sustainable development

ISLAMABAD, July 13 (INP) President Asif Ali Zardari on Saturday called for collaborative efforts by the Eastern nations to ensure sustainable development and common prosperity through China's Global Development Initiative (GDI). He highlighted that GDI had great potential to significantly shape the future of the world by promoting shared development and urged the developing countries to play a leading role in the global development process. The President expressed these views while virtually addressing the 2nd High-level Meeting of the Forum on Global Action for Shared Development, organized by the China International Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), in Beijing, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release. The representatives of foreign countries, international organizations, foreign companies and non-governmental organisations attended the event. In his statement, Zardari underscored the importance of viewing global challenges such as progress, development, and health from an Eastern perspective. He pointed out that most of the global population lived in the Eastern hemisphere, particularly in countries like China, Pakistan, and other neighboring nations. The President emphasized that Pakistan was eager to see President Xi Jinping and the People's Republic of China spearheading GDI, leading the East and the entire world into the new millennium. It is worth stating that through the GDI, Pakistan aims to help accelerate the implementation of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and solve the dilemma of global development. China is collaborating with global partners to speed up the implementation of GDI by encouraging its Friend Circle, mobilizing resources, and building capacities for shared prosperity. "China and Pakistan have also signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Strengthening Development Cooperation and Promoting the Implementation of Global Development Initiative, focusing on areas including poverty reduction, medicine, education, infrastructure construction, agriculture, planning consultation, culture and sports, law-enforcement cooperation, and human resource development," he added.

Global Action for Shared Development, organized by the China International Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), in Beijing, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release. The representatives of foreign countries, international organizations, foreign companies and non-governmental organisations attended the event. In his statement, Zardari underscored the importance of viewing global challenges such as progress, development, and health from an Eastern perspective. He pointed out that most of the global population lived in the Eastern hemisphere, particularly in countries like China, Pakistan, and other neighboring nations. The President emphasized that Pakistan was eager to see President Xi Jinping and the People's Republic of China spearheading GDI, leading the East and the entire world into the new millennium. It is worth stating that through the GDI, Pakistan aims to help accelerate the implementation of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and solve the dilemma of global development. China is collaborating with global partners to speed up the implementation of GDI by encouraging its Friend Circle, mobilizing resources, and building capacities for shared prosperity. "China and Pakistan have also signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Strengthening Development Cooperation and Promoting the Implementation of Global Development Initiative, focusing on areas including poverty reduction, medicine, education, infrastructure construction, agriculture, planning consultation, culture and sports, law-enforcement cooperation, and human resource development," he added.

Nepal searches for 63 missing after highway landslide

KHATMANDU (INP) Nepal rescue teams resumed their search early Saturday for at least 63 people missing after monsoon rains triggered a landslide that swept two buses off a highway and into a river. The force of Friday's landslide in central Kathmandu district pushed the vehicles over concrete crash barriers and down a steep embankment, at least 30 metres (100 feet) from the road. Dozens of rescuers spent hours struggling to comb the raging Trishuli river, an effort hampered by muddy waters and fierce currents, before sunset forced them to call off the search. No sign of the vehicles or their occupants has yet been found. "We will search all possible places," Nepal district chief Indra Dev Yadav told media. "We will employ our abilities for search and rescue despite the water levels, current and the water's mudiness." District official Khimnanda Bhusal told reporters on Friday that the buses were carrying at least 66 people between them, but three passengers had been able to escape and were treated at a local hospital. The accident happened before dawn along the Narayanghat-Mugling highway, around 100 kilometres (60 miles) west of Kathmandu. One bus was heading from the capital to Gaur in Rautahat district in southern

Nepal, and the other was en route to Kathmandu from southern Birgunj. A driver was killed in a separate accident on the same road after a busload hit his bus. He died as he was being treated at a hospital. Deadly crashes are common in the Himalayan republic because of poorly constructed roads, badly maintained vehicles and reckless driving. Nearly 2,400 people lost their lives on Nepal's roads in the 12 months to April, according to government figures. Twelve people were killed and 24 injured in an accident in January when a bus heading from Kathmandu to Nepalgunj fell into a river. Road travel becomes deadlier during the annual monsoon season as rains trigger landslides and floods across the mountainous country. Monsoon rains across South Asia from June to September offer respite from the summer heat and are crucial to replenishing water supplies, but also bring widespread death and destruction. The rainfall is hard to forecast and varies considerably, but scientists say climate change is making the monsoon stronger and more erratic. Floods, landslides and lightning strikes have killed 88 people since the monsoon began in June, according to police figures.



QUETTA: Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Quetta Waqar Kakar is presiding over the revenue staff meeting in connection with Muharram.

UNIVERSITY OF LORALAI, LORALAI Office of Treasurer/Directorate of P & P TENDER NOTICE... NOTICE INVITING TENDER... CONSTRUCTION OF BLACK TOP ROAD SHEHZADA KHAN TO 34 867-81 790/909

### Pak-US pledge collaboration on multiple fronts

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Interior Minister, Mohsin Naqvi, met with US Ambassador to Pakistan, Donald Blome, and both sides agreed to strengthen mutual cooperation in counter-terrorism, anti-narcotics, and security.

The US Ambassador visited the Ministry of Interior, where Mr Naqvi welcomed him. Other officials were also present on the occasion. During the meeting, both sides discussed the Pakistan-US relations, security and other matters of mutual interest. They pledged to enhance cooperation in security, counter-terrorism, anti-narcotics, and other areas.

Both sides agreed to organize "Law enforcement dia-

logues" in October.

The Interior minister assured the US Ambassador of the Interior Ministry's full cooperation in enhancing bilateral relations.

Talking about his recent visit to New York, Mr Naqvi said that the issue of cooperation between Islamabad and the New York Police Department was discussed. He said a delegation of Islamabad Police will soon visit New York to improve mutual cooperation. He said officers from Islamabad Police are keen to receive training from the New York Police Department.

The minister said that Pakistan's minorities are enjoying equal rights under the country's constitution. He as-

sured the Ambassador that all possible measures have been implemented to net those involved in the Jaranwala incident.

Regarding cricket affairs, Mr Naqvi (who is also the chairman of Pakistan Cricket Board), lauded the US government for hosting a successful T20 World Cup.

He said efforts are on to arrange a tri-nation series involving Pakistan, US, and Canada. He also mentioned that Pakistan is working for a cricket league in America and Canada.

The US Ambassador expressed his gratitude, saying a large number of cricket-lovers enjoyed the T20 World Cup matches.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi presenting souvenir to United State (US) Ambassador Donald Blome.

### Pakistan, IMF reach agreement on new \$7bn loan program

ISLAMABAD (INP): A new staff-level loan agreement has been reached between Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) under which the country will receive \$7 billion over 37 months. The final approval of the loan will be given by the IMF Executive Board.

In a statement issued by IMF's Mission Chief Pakistan Nathan Porter,

"The Pakistan authorities and the IMF team have reached a staff-level agreement on a comprehensive program endorsed by the federal and provincial governments, that could be supported by a 37-month Extended Fund Arrangement (EFF) in the amount equivalent to SDR 5,320 million (or about US\$7 billion at current exchange rates)."

It further said that the agreement was subject to approval by the International Monetary Fund's Executive Board and timely confirmation of necessary financing assurances from Pakistan's development and bilateral partners.

The objective of the program is to capitalize on the hard-won macroeconomic stability achieved over the past year by intensifying efforts to enhance public finances, curb inflation, rebuild external buffers, and eliminate economic distortions to promote private sector-led growth.

The authorities' policy objectives include:

"Sustainable public finances, through a gradual fiscal consolidation based on reforms to broaden the tax base and remove exemptions, while increasing resources for critical development and social spending. In this regard, the authorities plan to increase tax revenues through measures of 1/2 percent of GDP in FY25 and 3 percent of GDP over the program. In particular, the recently approved FY25 budget targets

an underlying general government primary surplus of 1 percent of GDP (2 percent in headline terms). Revenue collections will be supported by simpler and fairer direct and indirect taxation, including by bringing

net income from the retail, export, and agriculture sectors properly into the tax system. At the same time, the FY25 budget provides additional resources to expand social protection by increasing both the generosity and coverage of BISP, education, and health spending.

"A fairer balance of fiscal effort between the Federal and Provincial governments, which have agreed to rebalance spending activities in line with the 18th constitutional amendment through the signature of a National Fiscal Pact that devolves to provincial governments the higher spending for education, health, social protection, and regional public infrastructure investment,

enabling improved public service provision. At the same time, the provinces will take steps to increase their own tax-collection efforts, including in sales tax on services and agricultural income tax. On the latter, all provinces are committed to fully harmonizing their Agriculture Income Tax regimes through legislative changes with the federal personal and corporate income tax regimes and this will become effective from January 1, 2025.

"Reducing inflation, deepening access to financing, and building strong external buffers are key to development and resilience. Monetary policy will continue to be focused on supporting disinflation, which will help protect real incomes, especially for the most vulnerable.

To buffer against shocks and build reserves, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) will maintain a flexible exchange rate and con-

tinue to improve the functioning of the foreign exchange market and the transparency around FX operations. On financial stability, the authorities plan to take measures to deepen access to financing, while strengthening financial institutions, addressing any under-capitalized banks, and upgrading their crisis management framework.

"Restoring energy sector viability and minimizing fiscal risks through the timely adjustment of energy tariffs, decisive cost-reducing reforms, and refraining from further unnecessary expansion of generation capacity. The authorities remain committed to undertaking targeted subsidy reforms and replace cross-subsidies to households with direct and targeted BISP support.

"Promoting private sector and export dynamism by improving the business environment, creating a level-playing field for all businesses, and removing state distortions. In this regard, the authorities are advancing efforts to improve SOE operations and management as well as privatization (with the highest priority given to the most profitable SOEs) and strengthening transparency and governance around the Pakistan Sovereign Wealth Fund and its operations.

They are also phasing out incentives to Special Economic Zones, phasing out agricultural support prices and associated subsidies, and refraining from new regulatory or tax-based incentives, or any guaranteed return that could distort the investment landscape, including for projects channelled through the Special Investment Facilitation Council.

The authorities have also committed to advance anti-corruption as well as governance and transparency reforms, and gradually liberalize trade policy.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Privatisation, Investment Board and Communications, Abdul Aleem Khan and others in a group photo on the occasion of National Day of France.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addressing officers during his visit to headquarters of the Federal Board of Revenue.

### Seniority list of LHC judges revised after Justice Neelum's elevation as CJ

LAHORE (INP): Justice Aalia Neelum of the Lahore High Court (LHC), who was earlier third on the seniority list of the high court judges, now sits at the top of the list revised after her elevation to the position of the chief justice (CJ).

Presently there are 36 judges in the LHC, while 24 seats are vacant.

Justice Shujaat Ali Khan is second on the list, while Justice Ali Baqar Najafi is still at the third position.

Justice Abid Aziz Sheikh's turn comes next who is on the fourth position followed by Justice Sadaqat Ali Khan who is on the fifth while Justice Shams Mehmood Mirza is on the sixth position.

Justice Syed Shehbaz Ali Rizvi is on the seventh spot, Justice Raisal Zaman Khan is on the eighth and Justice Masood Abid Naqvi is on the ninth spot.

Justice Shahid Kareem, who is on the 10th position, is followed by Justice Mirza

Waqas Rauf, who sits at the 11th position.

Justice Chaudhry Muhammad Iqbal is the 12th most senior judge of the high court, followed by Justice Shehram Sarwar Chaudhry who is at the 13th position.

Justice Muhammad Sajid Mehmood Sethi is on the 14th spot, while Justice Sarfaraz Muhammad Sarfaraz Dogar is the 15th senior judge of the LHC. Similarly, Justice Asjad Javed Gharal is on the 16th position, while Justice Tariq Salim Sheikh's turn comes next who holds the 17th position on the list. Justice Jawad Hassan is the 18th most senior judge as per the list, while Justice Muzammal Akhtar Shabbir and Justice Chaudhry Muhammad Abdul Aziz have been ranked

the 19th and 20th senior judges of the high court, respectively. Justice Anwaarul Haq Panu is on the 21st position followed by Justice Farooq Haider who sits on the 22nd

spot, while Justice Muhammad Waheed Khan is on the 23rd spot.

Justice Risal Hassan Syed is on the 24th spot, Justice Asim Hafeez on the 25th, while Justice Sadiq Mehmood Khurram is on the 26th spot on the list.

Likewise, Justice Shakil Ahmad is the 27th senior judge of the high court, Justice Ahmad Nadeem Arshad is the 28th and Justice Muhammad Nadeem Tariq sits at the 29th position.

Justice Muhammad Amjad Rafiq's position on the list is 30th, Justice Abid Hussain Chhatta's 31st, while Justice Anwaar Hussain's position is 32nd.

The list says Justice Ali Zia Bajwa is the 33rd senior judge of the high court followed by Justice Sultan Fawoer Ahmad who holds the 34th position, Justice Muhammad Raza Qureshi 35th position while Justice Raheel Kamran Sheikh is on the 36th spot in terms of seniority.

### Flour crisis feared in Sindh as countrywide millers' strike enters its third day

KARACHI (INP): There are fears of a flour crisis developing in Sindh, especially in Karachi, as the countrywide strike by flour millers against the imposition of withholding tax in the federal budget entered its third day on Saturday.

On Friday addressing an emergency meeting of Sindh's flour millers in Karachi, Flour Mills Sindh Circle Chairman Chaudhry Amir Abdullah vowed to continue the struggle come what may.

"The very fact that all flour millers' owners from the province are present at today's meeting is a proof of our unity," he said, adding, "We will remain on

strike as long as our demands are not met."

Chaudhry Amir said that despite the passage of two days, the government had not made any contact with the flour millers for negotiations. On the other hand, labourers have been rendered jobless as flour mills are shut across Sindh.

Flour mills' owners had gone on strike on Thursday morning on the call given by the Pakistan Flour Mills Association (PFMA), saying they would not relent until the government withdrew newly imposed taxes.

Earlier, the Association had given a call for the strike on

July 6 for Thursday for an indefinite time period after their talks with the government failed.

They had given five days to the government to withdraw the taxes.

What could be termed a sudden policy shift, the Shehbaz Sharif government on Friday revoked its March order, banning the export of flour made from imported wheat amid a nationwide strike by millers.

At the same time, a ban on wheat imports was imposed, which came too late for the country, particularly for farmers in Punjab who were protesting against unnecessary wheat imports despite a bumper crop.



ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to PM on Climate Change and Environment Coordination, Romina Khurshid Alam chairing PM's committee meeting on establishing a mountaineering school in Gilgit Baltistan.

### Moonis Elahi, six others declared absconders

LAHORE (INP): The special central jail in Lahore has declared Moonis Elahi, son of Chaudhry Pervaz Elahi, and six other accused absconders in the

money-laundering case filed by Federal Investigation Agency (FIA).

The special central jail heard the money laundering case today. FIA submitted the incomplete challan of nine accused including Moonis Elahi in the court.

Chaudhry Moonis Elahi and other six accused have been declared proclaimed offenders in the challan against Moonis Elahi and other nine accused. The proclaimed offenders include Firasat Ali, Imtiaz Ali, Amir Sohail, Wajid Ahmad

and Amir Fiyaz. The accused, Zara Elahi, Ahmad Farhan and Zaigham Abbas have been included in column no 4 for being on bail.

FIA has requested the court to freeze the properties of Moonis Elahi and other nine accused. The court has frozen the properties of seven accused except Moonis Elahi and Zaigham Abbas.

Counsel of Moonis Elahi and Zaigham Abbas requested time for arguments on properties freezing matter from the court.

The court directed counsel to present arguments until August 20. Judge Tanveer Ahmed Sheikh has issued the written verdict of early hearing on challan.

The judgement mentions that Interpol is being engaged for the arrest of Moonis Elahi and Interpol has issued red notices to him. Zara Elahi is accused of kick-backs. As per investigative officer, Zara Elahi couldn't present evidence of her income sources.

As per challan, Zaigham Abbas is a cash boy of Moonis Elahi and accused Zaigham Abbas used to do illegal money transactions in the bank accounts of other accused. It has been alleged that accused Ahmed Farhan used to deposit money in the bank accounts.

It is pertinent to note that FIA registered the money-laundering and corruption case against Moonis Elahi on June 6, 2023.