



The incumbent govt was making its best possible efforts to create a balance between available resources and existing expenditures aimed at avoiding the debt quagmire

Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal

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## Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb expresses deep appreciation for KSA's consistent economic support to Pakistan

Nawaf Bin Said Al-Malki reiterates Kingdom's unwavering commitment to contributing to Pakistan's economic growth

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to a homegrown economic agenda centered on comprehensive institutional reforms across key sectors of the economy. Muhammad Aurangzeb made these remarks during a meeting with Nawaf Bin Said Al-Malki, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, who called on him on Wednesday at the Finance Division. He emphasized that structural reforms are pivotal for ensuring sustainable economic growth and stability, forming a cornerstone of the government's policy agenda.

Senator Aurangzeb expressed deep appreciation for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's consistent economic support to Pakistan, while highlighting the renewed interest shown by Saudi investors in pursuing joint ventures and business collaborations with Pakistan's private sector.

The Minister also recalled his productive meetings with Mohammad Al-Jadaan, Finance Minister of Saudi Arabia, and Sultan Abdulrahman Al-Marshad, CEO of the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD), during his visit to Washington in April this year. He further noted the significant outcomes of the high-level business delegation's visit from Saudi Arabia to Pakistan in May, aimed at exploring investment opportunities, expanding bilateral cooperation, and scaling up partnerships across diverse sectors. During the discussion, Senator Aurangzeb outlined Pakistan's positive economic trajectory, citing key indicators such as currency stabilization, reduced inflation, a surge in remittances, prudent management of the current account deficit, and foreign exchange reserves sufficient to cover two months of imports.

Nawaf Bin Said Al-Malki commended the Government of Pakistan's efforts in implementing structural and institutional reforms and reiterated the Kingdom's unwavering commitment to contributing to Pakistan's economic growth.

The Ambassador also acknowledged the immense potential for investment and business opportunities between the two countries. He indicated that a Saudi business delegation is expected to visit Pakistan in the coming months to further explore areas for joint ventures and collaborative investments. SABAH



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb chaired the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) at the Finance Division.

## Govt to provide maximum facilities to sportsmen for participation in int'l events: PM Shehbaz

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has assured that the government will extend all-out facilities to sportsmen for participation in international contests enabling them to bring laurels to Pakistan.

Talking to the office bearers of the Pakistan Mixed Martial Arts Federation and athletes who called on him at the PM House on Wednesday, the prime minister appreciated the Pakistani athletes for winning 12 medals in the International Mixed Martial Arts Federation Championship held here.

The delegation comprised President of Pakistan Mixed Martial Arts Federation Umar Ahmed, champions Eman Khan and Bano Butt, Brave Combat Federation winners Rizwan Ali, Zia Mashwani and Ismail Khan. Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attallah Tarar, Minister of State for Information Technology Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Chairman of PM Youth Program Rana Mashood Ahmed Khan, Coordinator to PM Romina Khurshid Alam, Badar Shehbaz and relevant senior officers were also present.

PM Shehbaz Sharif said, "Pakistan's biggest asset is its talented youth. I wish the Pakistani players to keep bringing laurels to Pakistan globally in the international contests. You are a great asset to Pakistan. Your talent gives immense satisfaction for Pakistan's bright



future." He assured that the government would extend all-out cooperation to mixed martial arts as the promotion of sports was among its priorities. Recalling his contributions to the sports while being Punjab chief minister, he mentioned the establishment of the Pakistan Sports Endowment Fund and ensuring transparency in the selection process of the sportsmen. Shehbaz Sharif said that being the prime minister, it was his responsibility to extend maximum support to the players to make them participate in international competitions. He also appreciated the Mixed Martial Arts Federation for holding the international event in Pakistan. The members of the delegation apprised the prime minister of the recently held interna-

tional contests held by the Federation in collaboration with PM Youth Program.

As the delegation put forward their proposals for the promotion of mixed martial arts in the country, Prime Minister Shehbaz instructed the authorities concerned to present an action plan on the suggestion.

During the meeting, the athletes also expressed their appreciation for the Federation and PM Youth Program for their facilitation and the prime minister for hosting them at the PM House.

Later, MMA Federation President Umar Ahmed, in his remarks, said that the Asian MMA Championship 2024 was participated by around 300 athletes from across 18 countries. Pakistan has bagged 12 medals including two gold medals won by Eman Khan and Bano Butt in their respective categories.

## Govt committed to make PTV a profitable media organization: Attallah Tarar

Stresses the need to change the mindset of not giving inheritance rights to women

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attallah Tarar Advocate said efforts are being made to revamp Pakistan Television to make it a vibrant media organization.

Responding to a question during Question Hour in the National Assembly on Wednesday, Attallah Tarar said anchors from the private sector are being hired to ensure sufficient space for the opposition. He said the government is committed to make PTV a profitable media organization.

He said the policy of minimum wages of 37,000 rupees has been implemented and a case has been moved to the Board of Directors of PTV for formal approval for the enforcement of minimum wages.

Replying to another question regarding the fire incident in Weekly Bazar H-9, the Minister for Information and Broadcasting said the fire erupted on 10th July this year, burning 625 stalls. He said due to that incident the financial loss reached up to around 280 million rupees as per stall holders.

Attallah Tarar further said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, in light of an inquiry report into the incident, directed the authorities concerned to develop a fire safety plan.

He said the Prime Minister has further instructed to conduct a comprehensive fire safety audit of all Mercantile Bazaars in the federal capital on the first week of every month as per Islamabad Fire Prevention and Life Safety Regulations 2010 and international best practices.

Answering a question regarding daily-wages staff working under Chaklala Cantonment Board, Rawalpindi, Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif said daily wages staff are contingent paid workers and they are engaged on purely daily wages basis and there are no sanction vacant posts against such daily wages. Hence, it is not possible to regularize their services.

To a question, Minister of State for Information Technology Shaza Fatima Khawaja said the Capital Development Authority has launched three projects worth over 873 million rupees to elevate the infrastructure of services in rural areas of Islamabad to urban standards.

She said these projects include Rehabilitation and improvement of Gokina and Mandiala road, Phulgrain Sakreela and Member road as well as Nainabadi and Huzafa Town road.

Responding to a Calling Attention Notice, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attallah Tarar has stressed the need to change the mindset of not giving inheritance rights to women.

He said the government has done legislation to facilitate women in getting inheritance rights. Attallah Tarar said the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is ready to launch an awareness campaign to highlighting the importance of giving inheritance rights to women as per the spirit of Islam.

## Dar calls unity among all political parties for strengthening democracy

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar on Wednesday called for unity among all the political parties for the strengthening of democracy and the Constitution, warning that ongoing political conflicts could undermine the respect of the parliament.

Speaking in the National Assembly on point of order, Ishaq Dar highlighted that political engagement is essential, but red lines should not be crossed. Welcoming Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhatto Zardari's proposal, he said the government fully endorsed the proposal to form high-powered committee of the Parliament so that a policy can be evolved to take the country forward with collective wisdom. Ishaq Dar recalled that discussions for the Charter of Democracy (CoD) began in February 2002 between the PPP and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz. Despite a history of bitterness between the two parties, Ishaq Dar said that they signed the CoD in May 2006 to restore the constitution and strengthen democracy. Deputy Prime Minister said the charter was subsequently endorsed by all major political parties, including Imran Khan's party at the time.

Ishaq Dar stressed that continuous internal con-

licts among parties could tarnish the dignity of the parliament, adding that just because production orders were not issued during the previous government does not mean they cannot be issued now. He supported the idea of the committee in question and urged for an open examination of how Pakistan's economy, which was the 24th largest in the world in 2017, fell to the 47th position by 2022. Ishaq Dar also called for an analysis of the substantial expenditure on counter-terrorism and the resurgence of terrorism, questioning the reasons behind this trend. He emphasized that production orders are a privilege of the Speaker and suggested that the Speaker should form committees with genuine members of reference to determine solutions for national issues.

He assured that the government would fully support such efforts. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Gohar Ali Khan said his party has no intention to quit any assembly and will continue playing its role for the cause of democracy. Mutahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan leader Mustafa Kamal commended Speaker Ayaz Sadiq's efforts for upholding the sanctity of the Parliament. APP

## Secret to Pakistan's progress lies in following Quaid-e-Azam's teaching: Naqvi

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi paid tribute to Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's political foresight and dynamic leadership in his special message on the 76th death anniversary of Father of the Nation. He said that Quaid-e-Azam's tireless struggle, unwavering determination, high morale, and honesty distinguished his personality. He emphasized that without Quaid-e-Azam's courageous leadership, the dream of an independent homeland would never have come to reality.

Mohsin Naqvi stated that we cannot repay the debt of Quaid-e-Azam's favor that we are breathing in an independent homeland today. He highlighted that in Quaid's Pakistan, everyone, including minorities, have equal rights. Mohsin Naqvi stressed that the need to follow Quaid-e-Azam's principles is greater than ever before. He said that in Quaid's Pakistan, no one has superiority on the basis of language, class, or group. He stated that unfortunately, we have lagged behind in the world because of not following the Quaid's golden principles. He underscored that these principles are beacon of light for us. He also said that the secret to Pakistan's progress lies in following Quaid-e-Azam's teaching. Mohsin Naqvi further said that the Pakistani nation can never forget the continuous struggle of Quaid-e-Azam. SABAH

## Royal Saudi Naval Forces delegation calls on Pakistan Navy CCTF-150 in Bahrain

ISLAMABAD: The Royal Saudi Naval Forces (RSNF) delegation, led by the newly appointed RSNF Maritime Component Commander, Commodore Othman Oqab Al Zahrani, met with Commodore Asim Sohail Malik, the current Commander of Combined Task Force 150 (CTF 150), in Manama, Bahrain.

The discussions focused on CTF 150's ongoing operations aimed at disrupting illicit activities in the Arabian Sea and ensuring maritime security in the region, a Pakistan Navy news release said. During the meeting, both commanders shared their perspectives on regional maritime security challenges and explored potential avenues for collaboration between CTF 150 and the upcoming RSNF Maritime Component Command to maintain security and stability in the region. They also reaffirmed the excellent relationship between the two navies, emphasizing their shared commitment to fostering regional peace. A comprehensive briefing on CTF 150 operations was given on the occasion, the RSNF delegation engaged with the entire Pakistan Navy team currently leading CTF 150 and exchanged views on viable options to counter contemporary maritime security challenges. Commander of CTF 150, Commodore Asim Sohail Malik assured that his



team would continue to strengthen the efforts of this multinational task force to provide robust security in this vital maritime region.

He highlighted the Pakistan Navy's commitment to working with coalition navies to ensure peace and stability within the area of responsibility.

Pakistan Navy has the distinction of commanding CTF 150 twelve times previously. This 13th command is a manifestation of the trust and respect placed in the Pakistan Navy. The visit underscored the strong ties between the two navies and their collective dedication to countering maritime threats through joint and collaborative efforts. PR

## Food always been a significant part of Thailand's culture, Thai Chargé d'Affaires

Islamabad Marriott Hotel Launches Thai Food Festival, 19th September, 2024

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: The Chargé d'Affaires Ms. Kamolwan Sripisil of the Royal Thai Embassy also shared her thoughts on the festival, highlighting the importance of cultural exchange through food. "Food has always been a significant part of Thailand's culture, and we are pleased to share our culinary heritage with the people of Islamabad. The Thai Food Festival at the Islamabad Marriott Hotel offers a wonderful opportunity for locals and expatriates alike to experience the vibrant and diverse flavors of Thailand, while also enjoying traditional Thai performances. We are grateful for the hospi-



tality of the Islamabad Marriott Hotel in making this festival a reality."

In addition to the delectable Thai cuisine prepared by the hotel's expert Thai chefs, guests will be treated to live performances by a special Thai cultural troupe, flown in directly from Thailand to enrich the festival's atmosphere. The menu will feature an array of traditional Thai dishes, from spicy salads to creamy curries, offering a true taste of Thailand. The Islamabad Marriott Hotel is excited to announce the much-anticipated Thai Food Festival, 19th September, 2024. This festival promises to deliver an authentic Thai culinary experience and cultural showcase that is sure to captivate guests. Speaking at the press conference, the

Hotel Manager of the Islamabad Marriott Hotel Mr Hassan Khan expressed his enthusiasm for hosting the festival, stating: "We are thrilled to bring the rich flavors of Thailand to Islamabad through this vibrant festival. Our goal is to provide our guests with an immersive cultural experience, allowing them to savor authentic Thai cuisine while enjoying performances that showcase the beauty of Thai culture. We are honored to have the collaboration of the Royal Thai Embassy and look forward to welcoming everyone to this exciting event." Guests are encouraged to join this unique culinary journey and experience Thailand's rich food heritage and cultural performances, right here in Islamabad.



Editor-in-Chief: Amna Munawwar Awan  
 Editor: Muhammad Hasam  
 Office # 408, 4th Floor, Evacuee Trust,  
 Agha Khan Road, F-5/1 Islamabad  
 Phone: + 92 51 8354964

## Unseen victims, unheard voices

ALI ASHIQ SINDHU

As Pakistan struggles with economic hardships and political instability, a serious and frequently overlooked crisis – human trafficking – continues to worsen. This insidious crime preys on society's most vulnerable individuals, taking advantage of their despair and trapping them in cycles of abuse and exploitation. Women, children, and underprivileged communities are especially vulnerable, experiencing a reality that is both terrible and profoundly embedded in the country's socioeconomic structure. In Pakistan, human trafficking takes several forms, including forced labour, sexual exploitation, and child trafficking. The socioeconomic situation, characterized by widespread poverty, unemployment, and enduring gender inequities, creates a climate in which traffickers can operate with alarming ease. Families in rural areas, where poverty is most prevalent, may resort to trading their children into forced labour in order to settle debts or acquire basic supplies. According to an International Labour Organization (ILO) assessment, Pakistan has an estimated 12.5 million child labourers, many of whom work in hazardous industries such as brick-making and textile weaving. Trafficking takes many forms in cities such as Karachi and Lahore, but it is no less terrible. Women and girls are frequently coerced into sexual exploitation through job or marriage. According to the Global Slavery Index 2018, around 3.1 million individuals in Pakistan are victims of modern slavery, with a substantial number of women and children subjected to forced labour and sexual exploitation. Despite the severity of the issue, Pakistan's law-enforcement and judicial systems encounter considerable obstacles in combating human trafficking. The Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act of 2018 was an important step forward, criminalizing both sex and labour trafficking. However, implementation remains weak, hampered by corruption, insufficient training, and limited resources.

### In Pakistan, human trafficking takes several forms, including forced labour, sexual exploitation, and child trafficking

The US Department of State's Trafficking in Persons Report designated Pakistan as a Tier 2 Watch List country in 2021, suggesting that, while the government is making considerable efforts to achieve the basic standards for eliminating trafficking, it is not entirely compliant. Corruption within law-enforcement organizations is a major impediment to effectively combat trafficking. In many cases, traffickers can operate freely, aided by corrupt authorities who either turn a blind eye or encourage these crimes. According to Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index, Pakistan is placed 140th out of 180 countries in 2021, showing the widespread corruption that hampers attempts to combat human trafficking. The socio-cultural backdrop in Pakistan contributes to the problem, especially for female victims. In a society where honour and reputation are highly valued, victims of trafficking, particularly women and girls, are frequently stigmatized and socially excluded. This stigma silences them, making it harder for them to seek aid or assimilate back into society. The dread of dishonour keeps many from fleeing their traffickers. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups play an important role in Pakistan's battle against human trafficking. These organizations provide critical support services like as housing, legal aid, and rehabilitation to survivors. However, their efforts are frequently hampered by insufficient resources and a lack of government assistance. A coordinated national response combining government, public society, and the commercial sector is required to effectively combat human trafficking. Human trafficking prevention strategies must include education and awareness. Empowering vulnerable groups with education about the hazards of trafficking and their rights is critical for preventing exploitation. Schools, community groups, and media sources must work together to communicate this information extensively, so that potential victims are aware and vigilant. Pakistan's 2022 accession to the UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol is a step in the right direction internationally. It is still crucial to put this pledge into practice, though, by creating a nationwide hotline for victims of human trafficking, enhancing law-enforcement officer training, and raising public awareness. These actions are essential to destroying the systems that support modern-day slavery and defending the rights and dignity of every citizen. Pakistan has to confront the serious and immediate issue of human trafficking. The nation cannot afford to ignore this widespread problem as it negotiates political and economic difficulties. By fortifying legislative structures, augmenting law enforcement proficiencies, and bolstering non-governmental organizations' endeavours, Pakistan might initiate substantial strides in combating human trafficking. Ensuring that justice is administered and the most vulnerable are protected is not simply a legal requirement but also a moral one.

The writer is a freelance contributor.



Atta-ur-Rahman

## The brave new world of AI

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is no longer a concept confined to science fiction; it is a powerful force reshaping the world as we know it. From accelerating scientific discoveries to altering the fabric of our economies, AI is profoundly impacting every aspect of our lives.

AI's impact on scientific research is nothing short of revolutionary. In 2020, DeepMind's AlphaFold cracked one of biology's grand challenges by accurately predicting the 3D structures of proteins. This breakthrough has the potential to accelerate drug discovery, offering new hope for curing diseases that have long eluded scientists. Similarly, AI-powered robots like those from LabGenius are automating routine tasks in laboratories, such as pipetting and mixing solutions, allowing scientists to focus on more complex problems. This automation not only speeds up research but also reduces human error, making scientific experiments more reliable. In astronomy, AI has transformed how we explore the universe. For instance, AI analysed data from the Kepler Space Telescope, leading to the discovery of exoplanets like Kepler-90i – something that would have taken human astronomers years to accomplish. This capability extends to other fields as well, such as climate science, where AI-driven simulations provide more accurate weather forecasts. Google's collaboration with the UK Met Office, for example, has resulted in AI models that predict rainfall with unprecedented precision, aiding in flood prevention and agricultural planning. Healthcare, too, is being revolutionized by AI. IBM's Watson for Oncology uses AI to analyse patient data and recommend personalized cancer treatment plans by comparing

individual cases with vast medical literature. This has led to more effective treatments, improving the quality of life for countless patients. Moreover, AI-based diagnostic tools like those developed by Google's DeepMind can detect diseases like eye conditions with an accuracy that rivals the best human specialists, enabling earlier and more precise interventions. AI's influence also extends to robotics and automation. In agriculture, AI-driven robots like those from John Deere are transforming farming by identifying and precisely targeting weeds with herbicides, drastically reducing chemical use while boosting crop yields. In climate science, AI is playing a crucial role in developing more efficient renewable energy sources. For example, the startup Heliogen uses AI to concentrate sunlight with extreme precision, creating heat that can replace fossil fuels in industrial processes. In the realm of quantum computing, AI is breaking new ground. Google's Sycamore quantum processor, combined with AI algorithms, has achieved 'quantum supremacy', solving problems that would take classical computers thousands of years to complete. This opens new frontiers in fields like cryptography and materials science, where complex problems can now be tackled more effectively. AI's impact extends far beyond science and technology – it is also reshaping economies and societies. AI-driven automation in industries like manufacturing has led to significant productivity gains. Tesla's Gigafactories, for instance, use AI to optimize battery production, dramatically lowering costs and accelerating the adoption of electric vehicles. However, this automation also raises concerns about job displacement. While AI is replacing some jobs, particularly in manufacturing and customer service, it is also creating new opportunities in fields like AI development, data science, and AI ethics. Education is another area where AI is making a profound difference. Online platforms like Coursera and Duolingo use AI to personalize

learning experiences, adapting course material in real-time based on a student's performance. This ensures that students receive a tailored education, making learning more effective and accessible to millions worldwide. In finance, AI algorithms are transforming how markets operate. For example, JPMorgan's AI program, LOXM, executes trades in a fraction of the time it would take a human trader, maximizing profitability and efficiency. The concept of smart cities is becoming a reality thanks to AI. In Singapore, AI is used to optimize traffic flow, reducing congestion and pollution while improving the overall quality of life. AI-driven systems manage traffic lights and public transportation schedules, making urban mobility more efficient. Security is another critical area where AI is making a significant impact. AI-powered cybersecurity tools like Darktrace use machine learning to detect and respond to cyber threats in real-time, often neutralizing attacks before they can cause significant harm. While Artificial Intelligence (AI) holds immense promise, it also presents significant dangers that must be addressed to ensure a safe and equitable future. One of the most immediate concerns is the displacement of jobs by AI-driven automation. As machines take over tasks in sectors like manufacturing, customer service, and data entry, many workers face the risk of unemployment. Privacy is another major concern with AI. The technology's ability to process vast amounts of data raises serious privacy issues. AI-driven surveillance systems can monitor individuals' movements and behaviours, potentially leading to a society where personal privacy is severely compromised. The development of AI-powered autonomous weapons represents a particularly alarming threat. These systems, which can make life-and-death decisions without human intervention, pose serious risks to global security. Imagine a scenario where autonomous drones or robots are used in warfare, making decisions about whom to target. Such technology could lead to unintended

conflicts or accidents, escalating tensions between nations and creating a more dangerous world. Another area of concern is the development of Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) – AI systems that surpass human intelligence. These pose existential risks to humanity. While AGI is still theoretical, its potential raises profound concerns. If machines become more intelligent than humans, how can we ensure they act in our best interests? The fear is that AGI could act in ways that are harmful to humanity, either through unintended consequences or deliberate actions. To mitigate these dangers, we must take proactive steps to ensure AI is developed and used responsibly. One of the most important measures is to establish strong regulatory frameworks that govern AI. Governments and international organizations must ensure that AI systems are transparent, accountable, and aligned with ethical standards. For example, the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) sets strict guidelines on how personal data can be collected and used, protecting individual privacy in the process. In Pakistan several AI centres are being established on my initiative, including one at the Pakistan Austrian Fachhochschule (University of Applied Science and Engineering) in Haripur, Hazara and another within the International Centre for Chemical and Biological Sciences at the University of Karachi. The feasibility of a mega project involving establishing a network of such centres across Pakistan at a total cost of about Rs40 billion, submitted by the National Task Force on Technology Driven Knowledge Economy that is headed by me, has been completed by the Federal Ministry of IT/Telecommunications. These initiatives are aimed at transforming Pakistan to a strong knowledge economy.

The writer is a former federal minister, Unesco science laureate and founding chairperson of the Higher Education Commission (HEC). He can be reached at: [ibne\\_sina@hotmail.com](mailto:ibne_sina@hotmail.com)

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## Today in History

### History of Pakistan



He also issued a Legal Framework Order (LFO) that broke up the single unit of West Pakistan and reconstituted the original four provinces of Pakistan—i.e., Punjab, Sind, North-West Frontier Province, and Balochistan. The 1970 election therefore was not only meant to restore parliamentary government to the country, it was also intended to reestablish the provincial political systems. The major dilemma in the LFO, however, was that in breaking up the one-unit system, the distribution of seats in

the National Assembly would be apportioned among the provinces on the basis of population. This meant that East Pakistan, with its larger population, would be allotted more seats than all the provinces of West Pakistan combined. Pakistan's first national election therefore proved to be no panacea. After campaigning on autonomy for East Pakistan, Mujibur Rahman's Awami League won almost every seat in the National Assembly that had been allotted to the east wing

under the LFO. Sheikh Mujib, as he was popularly known, now was the paramount leader in East Pakistan, and, because his party had won a majority of the 300 contested seats in the National Assembly, Mujib was entitled to form the national government. However, Bhutto—whose PPP had won a commanding majority in West Pakistan—and the military establishment refused a government where the country's future might be unilaterally decided by the East. Arguing that Mujib did not have a

single seat in the western provinces and that he, Bhutto, was the only serious representative from the west wing, Bhutto insisted on using another formula to organize the civilian government. Yahya Khan was called to mediate between Mujib and Bhutto, and in the meantime their respective parties addressed the dilemma and sought still another avenue that might produce a compromise solution.

To be continued....

## Showbiz

### Beyoncé spills secret to balance work and family as a mother

Beyoncé shares three children with husband JAY-Z

Beyoncé has recently spilled the secret to balance work and family. Speaking to GQ magazine, the singer, who shares three children with husband JAY-Z, said, "One thing I've worked extremely hard on is making sure my kids can have as much normalcy and privacy as possible, ensuring my personal life isn't turned into a brand." "It's very easy for celebrities to turn our lives into performance art," remarked the 43-year-old. Beyoncé mentioned, "I have made an extreme effort to stay true to my boundaries and protect myself and my family." "No amount of money is worth my peace," stated the mom-of-three.



The songstress wanted to build her work schedule around her family. "I try to only tour when my kids are out of school. I always dreamt of a life where I could see the world with my family and expose them to different languages, architecture and lifestyles," she explained. Beyoncé pointed out, "Raising three kids isn't easy. The older they get, the more they become their own individuals with unique needs, hobbies and social lives." "My twins are God-sent. Parenting constantly teaches you about yourself. It takes a lot of prayer and patience. I love it. It's grounding and fulfilling," added the singer-songwriter.

### PTA issues clarification on VPNs blockage in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) on Tuesday reiterated that virtual private networks (VPNs) are not being blocked in Pakistan. "Recent news circulating in media about PTA to block VPNs, it is clarified that VPNs are not being blocked in Pakistan," the telecommunication authority said in a statement. A VPN forms a digital connection between a user's computer and a remote server owned by a VPN provider, creating a point-to-point tunnel that encrypts the user's personal data, masks their IP address, and lets them sidestep website blocks and firewalls on the internet, ensuring that their online experiences are private, protected, and more secure. In Pakistan, users have been increasingly using VPNs for site accessibility especially after the block of Elon Musk owned social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter, and internet disruptions. The users also install VPNs for fast connections on websites and applications as well as for

speedy downloads. Notably, users across the country have been facing internet disruptions for the past several weeks with the authorities blaming the disruption on the "faulty" submarine cable and expecting the issue to be resolved by early October this year. The internet disruptions faced strong criticism from netizens and information technology (IT) sector, attributing the prevailing internet slowdown and limited connectivity to the purported testing of an internet firewall to rein in social media, which is equipped with filters to block unwanted content from reaching a wider audience. It is also important to know that the government has previously blamed a surge in VPN use for the slowdown. As of now, the authority is encouraging all IT companies, software houses, freelancers and banks etc to register their internet protocols (IPs) for using VPNs, so that in case of any disruption, the internet services to these entities are not affected, the PTA added.

## Health

### Healthcare workers in DRC 'urgently' await arrival of mpox vaccines

Medical staff in the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) South Kivu province are pleading for the swift arrival of mpox vaccines, as they grapple with a surge in infections, particularly among infants. Despite the delivery of 200,000 vaccines to the capital, Kinshasa, last week, they have yet to be distributed to affected areas like South Kivu, and it could take weeks due to logistical challenges. Mpox, formerly known as monkeypox, has claimed over 635 lives in DRC this year. At a treatment center in South Kivu, healthcare workers report an overwhelming number of patients arriving daily, with shortages in essential medical supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE). Emmanuel Fikiri, a nurse at the clinic, expressed concerns about contracting the virus and passing it to his children, urging the government to prioritise

Despite delivery of 200,000 vaccines to the capital they have yet to be distributed to affected areas like South Kivu

vaccinations for frontline workers. Transporting vaccines to rural areas, such as Kamituga and Lwiro, is complicated by poor infrastructure and the need for precise cold storage conditions. Officials are considering using helicopters, which would increase costs in a country already burdened by economic struggles. The outbreak has put immense strain on hospitals, with overcrowded facilities and patients sharing beds or sleeping on the floor. Dr. Pacifique

Karanzo, a physician at Lwiro community hospital, lamented the lack of resources, including clean water and sufficient PPE, as they work to care for nearly 200 patients—mostly children—compared to the usual 80. The ongoing conflict between the DRC's military and armed groups, including M23 rebels, is further complicating vaccination efforts. However, local officials, like South Kivu Governor Jean-Jacques Purusi Sadiki, are optimistic that rebel groups won't obstruct vaccine distribution, as the disease impacts both government-controlled and rebel-held areas. Authorities plan to begin vaccinating children and individuals in close contact with infected patients in October. While the governor remains confident in controlling the outbreak, healthcare workers continue to face immense challenges without immediate access to vaccines and adequate supplies.









## Pak-EU reaffirm commitment to jointly combat religious intolerance, extremism

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and European Union have reiterated to jointly combat the religious intolerance and fostering a peaceful future.

This was vowed during meeting of Special Envoy EU for the Promotion of Religion and Belief Frans van Daele with Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Chaudhry Salik Hussain here on Wednesday. The meeting was aimed to discuss the growing global concerns over religious intolerance, terrorism, sectarianism, and the promotion of peace and interfaith harmony.

Speaking on the occasion, Chaudhry Salik Hussain highlighted Pakistan's dedication to protecting the rights of minorities, stating that a comprehensive policy on interfaith harmony had been formulated and submitted to the Federal Cabinet for approval.

He emphasized that Pakistan was resolute in promoting religious tolerance.

"Over 700 scholars representing various religions and sects have endorsed the Paigham-e-Pakistan document," the minister said, adding that "no individual is permitted to take the law into their hands in the name of religion".

Both the dignitaries reaffirmed their mutual commitment to strengthen cooperation between Pakistan and the European Union for promoting interfaith harmony and combating religious intolerance and extremism.

Frans van Daele was accompanied by EU Ambassador in Pakistan Dr Riina Kionka. INP

## Women must receive their rightful inheritance: Dr. Musadik Malik



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum, Dr. Musadik Malik, on Wednesday emphasized the importance of ensuring that women receive their rightful share of the inheritance.

Speaking in the National Assembly, Malik highlighted the importance of treating women with the same respect as men and ensuring they are granted their due inheritance rights.

He praised the pivotal role women play in the progress, prosperity, and development of the country, adding that women should be afforded equal opportunities in all spheres of life, including their legal inheritance rights.

"The women of this country are playing a key role in its development, and they deserve their full legal rights, just like men," the minister said.

He said that the state has a responsibility to create opportunities for the younger generation, adding that he personally ensures that his daughter will receive her full share of the inheritance.



KARACHI: Government officials pray inside the mausoleum of the founder of the nation Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah to mark his death anniversary in Karachi.

## President, PM urge nation to embrace Quaid's 'vision' for stronger Pakistan

Top officials of Sindh visit Mazar-e-Quaid to mark Muhammad Ali Jinnah's 76th death anniversary

### VOM Report

President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stressed the significance of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's "guiding principles" and "vision" for the prosperity of Pakistan as the nation marked the 76th death anniversary of the country's founder on Wednesday.

In his message to the nation, President Zardari urged the nation to follow Jinnah's principles of "unity, faith and discipline" emphasising their significance as a beacon for the country's development.

Meanwhile, PM Shehbaz called on the nation to renew the commitment for building a Pakistan having peace, justice, and equal opportunities for all citizens as per Jinnah's vision.

In observance of Jinnah's death anniversary on Wednesday, top officials of Sindh, including Chief Minister Sindh Murad Ali Shah, Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon, Interior Minister Ziaul Hasan among others paid a visit to Mazar-e-Quaid (Quaid-e-Azam's mausoleum) in Karachi.

They were accompanied by Chief Secretary Sindh Asif Haider Shah, Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori and other provincial ministers.

The top officials paid their respects and the chief minister and governor of Sindh also laid a floral wreath at Jinnah's tomb.

In his message to mark Jinnah's death

anniversary, which is annually observed on September 11, the president said: "I am sure that by acting upon his (Quaid-e-Azam) teachings and advice, we can make Pakistan strong and prosperous."

Paying tribute to Jinnah, Zardari highlighted that the Pakistani nation was indebted to Quaid-e-Azam for his efforts and contribution to the creation of a separate homeland for the Muslims of the sub-continent where they could live with dignity and exercise their political, cultural, and religious rights. Calling him a visionary leader, who united the Muslims of India under one banner, the president said: "Quaid-e-Azam's vision for Pakistan was fundamentally democratic as he firmly believed in a state where all citizens, irrespective of religion, would be equal before the law. "Muhammad Ali Jinnah's struggle not only laid the foundation of Pakistan's democratic system but continues to influence our aspirations for parliamentary democracy and communal harmony."

He said that Jinnah had envisioned a Pakistan based on Islamic principles of democracy and socio-economic justice. "It was due to his sheer will, hard work and successful advocacy of the cause of Muslims that the partition of India became a reality. On this day, we not only honour his efforts but also recommit ourselves to the values and ideals that he championed," the president added. Meanwhile, PM Shehbaz, in his message, said that the Quaid stood out as one of the most visionary politicians and eminent

statesmen in history.

He adeptly led the Freedom Movement for the Muslims of the sub-continent, establishing the world's first Islamic ideological state.

"The Freedom Movement serves as a testament to his political acumen and visionary leadership, reflecting his dedication to the principles of democracy and the rule of law," he added. The prime minister said the Quaid's unwavering commitment to the principles of democracy, social justice, and equality laid the foundation for a nation where every citizen could aspire to thrive despite diverse cultures. "Jinnah's emphasis on unity and faith resonates deeply within the fabric of our society, reminding us that the strength of Pakistan lies in its diversity and inclusiveness."

He further said: "While we honour his legacy, we reaffirm commitment to realising the Quaid's vision for Pakistan and addressing contemporary challenges with the determined spirit of a great nation."

"In remembering the Quaid-e-Azam, we are also reminded of our duty to the future generations. It is our responsibility to instill in them the values of integrity, hard work, and patriotism that Jinnah embodied."

"Today, let us renew our pledge to work tirelessly towards the realisation of a Pakistan that exemplifies the ideals of our Founding Father — a nation where peace prevails, justice is served, and every citizen has the opportunity to flourish," the PM concluded.

## Asif proposes revision of Charter of Democracy

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Defence, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, on Wednesday suggested that the Charter of Democracy (CoD) could be revised and expanded into a broader document.

Speaking on the floor of the National Assembly, he said that the historic CoD, signed by political leaders Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, was intended to protect parliamentary democracy in Pakistan.

He acknowledged that the CoD faced numerous challenges over the years but noted that both political parties refrained from reverting to the divisive politics of the 1990s. He said that during the sit-in, all parties present in the parliament displayed unity. He praised the Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians (PPP) for adhering to the spirit of the CoD during those tumultuous times. Referring to political arrests, he said that prominent leaders, including Shehbaz Sharif, Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Asif Ali Zardari, Faryal Talpur, and others, had been arrested on false charges. "Despite these setbacks, he said that the supremacy of the parliament was never undermined. He criticized a speech made during a Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) rally, which he claimed challenged the federal and constitutional framework of the country. He also condemned remarks made by Ali Amin Gandapur regarding the Chief Minister of Punjab, Maryam Nawaz.

Khawaja Asif said that the release of PTI leadership should be carried out in accordance with the law and through proper judicial channels. While supporting the opposition's right to protest, he stressed that certain boundaries should not be crossed. He urged the Speaker of the National Assembly to play a constitutional role in maintaining parliamentary supremacy. He called for the focus of parliamentary discussions to be on protecting the interests of the common man, rather than on internal party politics. Highlighting the government's achievements on economic fronts, he expressed confidence that public trust in the government had been restored. He said that difference of opinion are a hallmark of democracy, but that should not be allowed to devolve into personal enmity.

## Govt setting up 'Economic Zones' to boost business activity: Tanveer

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain on Wednesday said that incumbent government was establishing 'economic zones' in different parts to boost business activity in the country. "We are working to promote industrial sectors and for this, all necessary steps are being taken to achieve the objectives," he said while talking to a private television channel. In reply to a question, he said International Monetary Fund didn't raise any condition regarding economic zones.

Commenting on constitutional amendment, he said, "we should have a required number of voters in the Houses to bring amendment." "We hope that leader of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Maulana Fazal ur Rehman would support the government to bring legislation and amendment," he added. To a question about role of PTI in the current situation, he said Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI), should avoid wasting time of the public through politics of agitation. APP

## Climate-vulnerable HKH countries' collaboration must to protect lives, livelihoods of two billion people: Romina



Change Impacts. The event was organised by the international development and civil society organisations organization in collaboration with federal organisations working on climate change, food security and water conservation.

While addressing participating policymakers, researchers, educationists, development sector experts, environmentalists, students and media at the event, Romina Khurshid Alam remarked that while the global temperatures continued to rise untamed, climate change was having severe and far-reaching consequences in the Hindu Kush Karakoram Himalaya (HKH) region, which spans across Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, China, Nepal, and Bhutan, where consequently glaciers, river water flows, energy supplies and agriculture were being adversely affected, placing the livelihoods of over 240 million people in the mountainous areas, and around 1.65 billion people downstream, at increasing risk. There is a pressing need for the HKH regional countries to work together to manage shared water resources and address regional climate challenges by fostering cross-border cooperation on climate change mitigation and adaptation, as rivers and glaciers in the HKH region transcend national boundaries, PM's climate aide emphasised. APP

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam on Wednesday said that rapid glacial melting and resultant floods in Hindukush Karakoram Himalaya (HKH) region has put lives and livelihoods of nearly two billion people at risk and, pose serious threats to the socio-economic sustainability of the regional countries. However, tackling effectively these climate change-caused common environmental, social and economic risks through resilience building measures is possible only through close and innovative collaboration among the regional countries in developing, adopting and sharing workable solutions, the PM's aide said here while addressing the inaugural session of the Policy Action Dialogue on Tackling Climate

## Ambassador Amna Baloch assumes charge as 33rd Foreign Secretary of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador Amna Baloch has become the 33rd Foreign Secretary of Pakistan.



She assumed the charge of her office after the incumbent Foreign Secretary M u h a m m a d Syrus Sajjad Qazi attained superannuation.

According to the statement issued by Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, being a veteran diplomat, Ambassador Baloch has held several important assignments both in Islamabad and in Pakistan's Mission's abroad. She served as Pakistan's Consul General to Chengdu, China (2014-2017); High Commissioner to Malaysia (2019-2023); Ambassador to the European Union, Belgium and Luxembourg (2023-2024). SABAH

## Ambassador Dr. Jemal inaugurates Consulate of Ethiopia in Karachi

KARACHI: Dr. Jemal Beker Abdula, Special Envoy and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ethiopia to Pakistan, has inaugurated the Honorary Consulate of Ethiopia in Karachi which will further strengthen the already flourishing bilateral ties between the two countries. Talking to the media, the Ambassador congratulated H. E. Ibrahim Tawab, Honorary Consul of Ethiopia in Karachi, on his appointment and opening of the Consulate.

Karachi is a business hub as well as the cultural center of Pakistan, the Ambassador said, adding the Consulate opening would not only give a major boost to the bilateral trade, but also bolster people-to-people contacts between the two countries.

He said the Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in Pakistan has been playing a pivotal role in Look Africa and Engage Africa Policy, contributing massively to connect Pakistan with Africa. The Government of the



FDR Ethiopia first established its Mission in Islamabad in 2022, brought the Ethiopian Airlines in 2023 and this year opened the Honorary Consulate in Karachi, he added.

On the occasion, H.E. Ibrahim Tawab highlighted the extraordinary business, trade and investment opportunities in Ethiopia. He lauded the vision of H. E. Dr. Jemal Beker for promoting trade ties of Pakistan and Africa. — VOM Report

## Govt. creating balance between resources, expenditures, says Ahsan Iqbal

### VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday said the incumbent government was making its best possible efforts to create a balance between available resources and existing expenditures aimed at avoiding the debt quagmire. "Without creating this balance, it will be impossible to come out of it, if stuck," the minister said in a televised address during a meeting he chaired on projects executed under the Public Sector Development Program (PSDP). He said if the development budget relied on borrowed money, it was the responsibility of everyone to ensure its transparent utilization, without allowing any leakage or misuse. Ahsan Iqbal directed all Principal Accounting Officers to exercise zero-tolerance against any leakage or mis-



use of the resources allocated for development projects. "Funds must be utilized for their intended purpose," he stressed. Regarding the incorporation of development projects in the next PSDP, the Planning minister instructed the relevant authorities to review the development portfolio and prioritize

'advanced stage' projects that have completed 70 percent of their work. Additionally, he specified that 'high impact' national priority projects should be given second priority, and all 'low priority projects' should be capped unless the necessary resources become available. He said had the policies introduced by the

PML-N government in its previous tenures continued, the country's development budget would now be around Rs3,000 billion, compared to the existing PSDP size of around Rs1100 billion against Rs29,00 billion demands of the ministries. He criticized that almost 40 percent of the federal government's total PSDP allocations were diverted to street-level projects of provinces during 2018-22, compared to only 14 percent during 2013-18.

He pointed out that due to mismanagement and inefficiency, the previous government allowed undue emphasis on street/local level projects, consuming 40 percent of the share and leaving the country with only 60 percent of resources to execute projects of national importance and debt payments. He said the country was in dire need of judicious utilization of available resources to put it on a sustainable path of development and prosperity.

ISLAMABAD: In the aftermath of the alleged arrests of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) lawmakers from within the Parliament House premises, the government and the opposition on Wednesday unanimously adopted a resolution agreeing to constitute a 16-member special committee for resolving issues related to the house.

The resolution, tabled by Federal Information Minister Attullah Tarar Advocate, called for the constitution of a parliamentary committee comprising members of the National Assembly (MNAs) from both treasury and opposition benches to discuss, analyse and propose recommendations regarding issues related to parliament and its smooth functioning. The development came as Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq presided over the lower house's session against the backdrop of heightened political tensions following the arrest of several PTI lawmakers for allegedly violating the newly enacted Peaceful Assembly and Public Order Bill, 2024 about the party's public rally held in Islamabad on Sunday. Earlier in the day, the speaker had also suspended the House's Sergeant at Arms and four other security officials for the security lapse which saw lawmakers being allegedly arrested by the Islamabad police and masked men from within the NA's premises. Speaking during the NA session on Wednesday, Speaker Ayaz Sadiq recalled PTI founder Imran Khan's premiership and lamented the denial of production orders by the then-speaker Asad Qaiser.

The PTI government didn't issue production orders for our members during its tenure, Ayaz Sadiq said.

However, he maintained that "two wrongs don't make a right" and remarked: "I do not agree what your [PTI] government's actions. Not issuing production orders was not the right thing to do then [and] it is not the right thing to do now."

"I will do what is appropriate, what is required and what is necessary for [upholding] the parliament's respect," he added.

The speaker further said that he would try to get to the bottom of what happened.

A committee shall be constituted today so that the work commences from the same day, Ayaz Sadiq remarked while inviting PTI Chairman Barister Gohar Ali Khan to meet him after the assembly's session is adjourned.

PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari while addressing the NA session urged the treasury and the opposition benches to play their due role for the supremacy of the Constitution and the Parliament to strengthen democracy and resolve people's problems.

Bilawal Bhutto said the elected representatives of the people and office bearers of provincial and federal governments will have to forge working relationship regardless of their political differences. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said abusive language used by the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa does not serve people's interests rather a political point scoring. SABAH