

Swati's resignation accepted, notification issued

ISLAMABAD: The resignation of Azam Swati as Federal Minister for Science and Technology has been accepted, a month after the PTI leader was caught up in a controversy over removal of Islamabad IG. According to a private TV channel, the Cabinet Division has also issued a notification regarding the acceptance of the resignation. The resignation would be effective from December 6, the day when Swati submitted it. —Online

The Business

Lahore, Friday, January 11, 2019 Jamadi-ul-Awwal 04, 1440

Nawaz's appeal against Al-Azizia verdict to be heard on 21st

ISLAMABAD: The IHC on Thursday has fixed January 21 the date of hearing of an appeal filed by former premier Nawaz seeking bail and suspension of his sentence in the Al-Azizia reference case. A two-member bench of the court will preside over the hearing. Yesterday, the IHC ordered its registrar office to fix the hearing within 10 days when Sharif's legal team pleaded with the court for an early date for the writ petition to be heard. —Online



LAHORE: Chairman National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Justice (retd) Javed Iqbal gives away cheque to a affectee of the Ferozpur City case.

FBR BS-20 officers transferred, given additional charge

By Our Special Correspondent

LAHORE: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) on Thursday transferred, posted and assigned additional charge to two FBR officers of BS-20.

Ejaz Ahmad Bajwa, a BS-20 officer of Inland Revenue Service presently posted as Chief (IJP), Federal Board of Revenue (Hq), Islamabad has been transferred and posted as Chief (Admin), Federal Board of Revenue (HQ), Islamabad with immediate effect.

Khurshid Ahmad Khan Marwat (IRS/BS-20) presently posted as Chief (HRM), Federal Board of Revenue (HQ), Islamabad has been assigned the additional charge of the post of Chief (IJP), Federal Board of Revenue (HQ), Islamabad till the posting of a regular incumbent.

SBP denies news report about 18 undeclared accounts

By Our Special Correspondent

LAHORE: State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has categorically denied a news item published in a leading English language newspaper relating to the bank accounts of PTI to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

SBP neither maintains the database of banks' individual account holders nor possesses any related information/ record thereof. Banks being the custodian of customers' information may directly provide this information to various agencies, on case-to-case basis, as per procedure laid down under the respective laws. Therefore, it is out of question that SBP has reported 18 undeclared bank accounts of PTI out of total 26 to the ECP as reported by an English language newspaper.

In fact, during July 2018 ECP approached SBP for assistance to obtain the bank accounts related information of PTI from 2009 to 2013 as per Commission's mandate enshrined in the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Election Act, 2017. SBP while discharging of its duties advised all banks to provide the required information / data directly to ECP by due date, as per procedure laid down under the law.

Murad demands CCI meeting over gas issue

The Business Report

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Thursday has demanded to call the meeting of the Council of Common Interests (CCI) on the issue of gas shortage in the province.

While addressing the Sindh Assembly, the Chief Minister asserted that he would write to the Federal Government to summon the meeting at the earliest. He maintained that there are three members in CCI from Sindh belonging to three different parties. We expect that these members will favour this cause as their own to have the issue resolved, Sindh CM expressed hope. The Chief Minister while being optimistic said that the Federal Government will give Sindh its rights as per the law and constitution.

He was of the view that problems of provinces cannot be solved without active interest of the Federal Government.

Talking about the power generation issue, the Chief Minister informed the House that power generation from Thar Coal will start from next month.

OP workers remit \$10718.78m in first half of FY19

The Business Report

KARACHI: Overseas Pakistani workers remitted \$10718.78 million in the first half (July to December) of FY19, showing a growth of 10 percent compared with \$9744.75 million received during the same period in the preceding year.

During December 2018, the inflow of workers' remittances amounted to \$1690.18 million, which is 5.07 percent higher than November 2018 and 1.93 percent lower than December 2017.

The country wise details for the month of December 2018 show that inflows from Saudi Arabia, UAE, USA, UK, GCC countries (including Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman) and EU countries amounted to \$414.84 million, \$341.58 million, \$262.83 million, \$247.06 million, \$171.56 million and \$45.62 million respectively compared with the inflow of \$431.97 million, \$396.74 million, \$234.76 million, \$223.30 million, \$188.76 million and \$54.87 million respectively in December 2017.

Pakistan growth

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current account vulnerabilities in the face of intensifying capital outflow pressures which included Pakistan, Iran, Sri Lanka, Turkey and Egypt. It noted price pressures, widening fiscal and current account deficits and in some cases, currency and financial market turmoil caused a move to less accommodative monetary policy in countries, including Pakistan, Romania, India, Mexico and the Philippines. Additionally, the moderation in activity was most obvious among commodity importers with growing capacity constraint, high current account deficits or sizable public debt.

Citing the example of Pakistan, the Philippines and Romania, the WB report stated these markets were experiencing financial market stress or continue to face widening fiscal and current account deficits alongside a slowdown in economic activity. "There were some signs of rising inflation pressure across the region, and both Pakistan and India raised rates in 2018 to counter the effects of currency depreciation, rising energy prices, and domestic capacity constraints," the report highlighted.

PM sends Chairman CDA on long leave

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has send Chairman CDA Latif Afzal on four months leave as he failed to show his performance.

The federal cabinet has decided to handover the charge of Chairman Capital Development Authority to Chief Commissioner Federal Capital Territory, Amir Ahmed Ali during Latif's leave period. In this connection it is very much likely that the notification might be issued today (Friday).

Latif Afzal was appointed on the slot of Chairman CDA four months ago but neither he has shown any performance nor he managed to control the affairs of the civic body. The sources said that he did nothing except unnecessary transfers of the staff. Due to his negligence, almost all the departments of CDA are being getting affected badly. —Online

FBR recommends Profit on Debt Statement

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has recommended statement for banks to submit information of persons receiving profit on debt exceeding Rs500,000 for non-filers and Rs1 million for tax filers and tax deductions thereon during the financial year.

The FBR has issued the "Profit on Debt Statement" for banks through a self-regulatory organisation (SRO) and official notification.

As per details, banking officer would be required to submit "profit on debt statement" to the FBR including name, CNIC, most recent particulars including address, amount of profit on debt during the year, tax deducted and remakes of the bank. —APP

'Those claiming we asked for NRO are liars'

The Business Report

LAHORE: Former prime minister Nawaz Sharif on Thursday said those claiming that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz leaders have asked for a deal regarding various cases are liars.

Nawaz said this while speaking with reporters at Kot Lakhpat Jail, where he is jailed on corruption charges, in response to statements by govt ministers at multiple occasions that opposition members facing corruption probe are trying to look for a deal to escape punishment.

US trade talks 'laid foundation' to resolve concerns, says China

BEIJING: China said Thursday that trade talks in Beijing with a US negotiating team had "laid the foundation" to resolve concerns held by both sides in a bruising trade war.

US officials visited Beijing from Monday to Wednesday for the first sit-down talks since President Donald Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping agreed on December 1 to a three-month truce in the escalating spat.

World markets rose Wednesday on increasing optimism that the two sides would be able to hammer out a deal ahead of a March deadline and avert further import tariff hikes — though Asian stocks were mostly down on Thursday. China and the US

"conducted extensive, in-depth and meticulous exchanges... which enhanced mutual understanding and laid the foundation for resolving issues of mutual concern," the Chinese commerce ministry said in a statement.

"Both parties agreed to continue to maintain close contact."

Washington has been clamouring for an end to the forced transfer — and even theft — of American technology and intellectual property, as well as steep government subsidies for Chinese companies. When asked about progress in those areas on Thursday, China's commerce ministry spokesman Gao Feng said that structural issues were a focus of the talks.

"Negotiations between the two sides in this area made progress," he said. The US Trade Representative office said Wednesday that the talks focused on "ways to achieve fairness, reciprocity, and balance in trade relations", as well as the need for "ongoing verification and effective enforcement" of any agreement.

For Washington, ensuring China makes good on its pledges is key — and Gao acknowledged that was important to China as well on Thursday.

"The Chinese side also believes that the implementation mechanism of any agreement is very important and both parties have an obligation to carry it out," Gao told reporters during a

regular press conference.

"For the next step, both sides will continue to work hard together, and advance the negotiation work according to the original plan." The Trump administration also wants Beijing to buy more American goods to narrow a yawning trade gap — a sticking point for US president — and allow foreign players better access to the Chinese market.

"The talks also focused on China's pledge to purchase a substantial amount of agricultural, energy, manufactured goods, and other products and services from the United States," USTR said in a statement. Gao declined to provide details when asked about purchases on Thursday. —AFP

Modi responsible for Gujarat riots, says Indian General

By Our Staff Correspondent

KARACHI: Lt. Gen. (R) Zameer Uddin Shah, a retired general of the Indian army, who was sent to control the Gujarat riots that occurred in February 2002, has said that the then Gujarat chief minister Narendra Modi (now the PM of India), was responsible for the Gujarat riots. Many hundreds of Muslims are said to have been killed in the riots.

The burning of a train in Godhra on February 27, 2002, carrying Hindu pilgrims returning from Ayodhya, is cited to have instigated the violence.

On February 28, Lt. Gen (Retd) Zameer Shah was ordered by the Indian Chief of Army Staff, General Padmanabhan to take as many troops as he could and put a stop to the riots taking place in Ahmedabad.

Lt. Gen. (R) Zameer Uddin Shah says he arrived at the Ahmedabad airfield at 10 pm on the night of February 28 and waited for vehicles to take his troops into the city. He made repeated requests to the then Gujarat chief minister Narendra Modi, but none arrived. The General has said in the interview that the Indian army lost crucial hours on the day communal violence began in Gujarat.

The text of Lt. Gen. (R) Zameer Uddin Shah's interview, conducted by Arfa Khanum Sherwani of the Indian TV chan-

nel, The Wire in November 2018, has been carried by SouthAsia Magazine as a part of its January 2019 cover story titled 'Modi's Mission.' The interview appears under the headline "While Gujarat Was Burning" on page 25 of the magazine.

Lt. Gen. (R) Shah has asserted in the interview that most of the Home Guard com-

manders were members of right-wing organizations and were totally complicit in the riots. He said the police did not take any action against the rioters and their actions were utterly parochial and one-sided. He said wherever a mob of rioters appeared, the police excused themselves by saying they had work in another area and left everything to the

Indian Army Chief admits 'spying' with quadcopters over LoC

The Business Report

NEW DELHI: Indian Army chief Bipin Rawat blatantly acknowledged to spying over the Line of Control (LoC) with quadcopters.

Addressing a press conference here on Thursday, Rawat accepted the fact that India does send quadcopters over the LoC with the purpose of spying.

"Our two quadcopters were shot down by Pakistan," he asserted. The top military head also affirmed that India is involved in ceasefire violation on the LoC, despite being aware that the civilian population lives in proximity on Pakistan's side of the LoC.

It is pertinent to mention here that Pakistan Army troops have lately shot down two Indian spy quadcopter along the LoC earlier in January, Inter-Service Public Relations (ISPR) reported. "Not even a quadcopter will be allowed to cross LoC, In Shaa Allah," ISPR Director General Major General Asif Ghafoor had said following the incident.

Last year in October, an Indian quadcopter "spying across LoC in Rakhchikri sector" was also shot down by Pakistan army shooters. In November 2016, a similar Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) that intruded into Pakistan was shot down in Rakhchikri sector.

Asghar's heirs oppose FIA's proposal to close case

By Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Late Asghar Khan's legal heirs on Thursday submitted their joint reply to a notice in connection with the implementation of the landmark 2012 verdict in the Asghar Khan case, asking that an inquiry in accordance with the Supreme Court's six-year-old order be continued.

The apex court had issued a notice to the heirs of the late Asghar Khan after the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) last month suggested that the case relating to the implementation of the 2012 verdict be closed.

The 2012 SC verdict was issued on a petition filed in 1996 by Asghar Khan, requesting the top court to look into allegations that the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) had secretly bankrolled many politicians in the

1990 elections by dishing out Rs140 million.

In the latest development, Khan's wife Amina Asghar Khan, his daughters Nasreen Ahmed Khattak and Sheereen Awan, and son Ali opposed the FIA's suggestion and highlighted what they perceived to be halfhearted efforts of the authorities. "The late air marshal, Asghar Khan endeavored to cleanse the democratic process from unlawful interference by any person, military or civilian, no matter highly placed. This endeavor has not yet achieved fruition and a just end. Consequently, the family of late air marshal Asghar Khan seeks to continue his endeavor and opposes the closure of the inquiry sought by the FIA," said the written reply. The family also

sought conclusion of the trial against the military personal involved and the placement of the result of the trial before the people of Pakistan. Citing the FIA's progress in the case, the reply mentioned it was clear that "no attempt has been made by the FIA to approach for evidence the central figure retired Brig Hamid Saeed Akhtar, who had confessed before the court his personal role in carrying out the unlawful operation regarding disbursement of funds" to various politicians and institutions before the general election of 1990.

The joint reply claimed that the Ministry of Defence did not support the FIA in execution of the court orders. "In these circumstances, the request to close the inquiry

and the case is unwarranted," it added.

Additionally, the family members expressed their concerns that "more than six years after the final judgment of the apex court, proceedings against none of the military personnel involved in the matter, including ret'd Gen Aslam Baig and ret'd Gen Asad Durrani who had confessed their wrongdoing against the Constitution and the law, have been concluded".

On Dec 29, 2018, the FIA had suggested that the apex court close the case relating to the implementation of the Asghar Khan verdict for want of concrete evidence.

A report furnished before the court by the FIA stated that the authorities did not have enough evidence to launch a criminal prosecution against the individuals named in the judgment.

