

IHC suspends order directing ECP to decide PTI funding case in 30 days

ISLAMABAD: The IHC on Monday suspended verdict of single bench directing ECP to decide foreign funding case against PTI in 30 days. Chief Justice IHC Athar Minallah and Justice Babar Sattar heard the PTI's intra-court appeal. The bench suspended the order and issued notices to 17 political parties and ECP and sought their reply on May 17. It merits mention that PTI had filed an intra-court appeal against the decision of the single-bench of IHC directing the ECP to decide foreign funding case. —Online

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Karachi missing girls' marriage document traced

KARACHI: Missing girls Dua and Nimrah who were abducted from Karachi now traced from Lahore. According to details, the nikahnama (marriage registration document) of Dua surfaced on social media showed that she is married with a person named Zaheer in Lahore while Nimrah married in DG Khan. The missing Dua from Karachi has been traced from Lahore 10 days later and Karachi police have also been informed in this regard, while the girl is likely to be handed over to her parents soon. —APP

JS Bank, NdcTech join hands for modern banking

Jahangir Hayat

LAHORE: JS Bank, a leading commercial bank of Pakistan has modernised its core banking platform with renowned IT company NdcTech as the implementation partner.

This deployment is a central part of the Bank's strategy to rebuild its technology and support its future growth objectives.

Enhancing the customer experience has always been a top priority for JS Bank and Temenos open platform for composable banking enables the Bank to offer a rich integrated experience for its customers. The Bank collaborated with NdcTech to help modernise its banking operations and upgrade the technology stack to achieve scale. The Bank is now able to use an integrated architecture to support its retail, corporate, and treasury needs and create a more flexible environment to sustain forthcoming expansions.

NdcTech has the capability of conducting large transformations using industry best practices, skilled expertise on Temenos products, and in-depth knowledge of accelerated methodologies and tools. This was a complex project to execute, with a change at all layers of the core banking technology stack which required extensive cycles of testing and dress rehearsals prior to a successful cutover for Go Live.

Tauseef Ahmed, Director Project Delivery and Customer Care, NdcTech said: "JS Bank chose NdcTech for this transformation based on our ability to comprehend and adapt to the local market and environment and our rich expertise in transforming banks. A common value that JS Bank and NdcTech share is our focus on customer-centricity, and always going beyond capabilities to deliver a premium customer experience. We are pleased to announce the successful Go-live of JS Bank, enabling them to deliver on the full promise of digital.

Four injured as Bolan Mail collides with goods train

QUETTA: Four passengers suffered minor injuries in a train accident occurred in Kachi district on Monday.

District administration said that Bolan Mail was on way from Karachi when it collided with a Goods train near Peeru Kunri Post of Kachi District. Resultantly, three boggies of Bolan Mail have derailed from railway track leaving four passengers minor injured.

Soon after the incident, local administration reached the site and provided medical aid to the injured. People of nearby area have also started relief operations. —APP

Ranjha warns PTI leaders of legal action

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) MNA Mohsin Shah Nawaz Ranjha Monday warned the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders of legal action for committing contempt of court and leveling baseless allegations against lawmakers and national institutions.

Addressing a press conference here, he said PTI Chairman Imran and former National Assembly deputy speaker Qasim Suri should apologize to the nation and elected lawmakers for telling lies about a foreign conspiracy as a thorough probe into the matter found their claims in that regard baseless. —APP

Alvi asks FBR to bring sugar dealers into tax-net

ISLAMABAD: President Arif Alvi has directed the FBR to bring into the tax-net the unregistered sugar dealers.

He passed these directions while upholding a decision of the Federal Tax Ombudsman. The President observed that despite making huge monetary transactions and the availability of their data with FBR, these unregistered buyers of sugar largely remain outside the tax net and are evading the prime national responsibility of paying taxes. He said that serious negligence and inefficiency on part of the field formations of FBR in the discharge of its duties was tantamount to maladministration. —On-



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Industries and Production Makhdoom Syed Murtaza Mahmud chairs the meeting of Fertiliser Review Committee today

Exports to regional states increase by 23.50pc in 3 quarters

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's exports to the seven regional countries witnessed an increase of 23.50 percent in first three quarters of fiscal year (2021-22), as compared to the corresponding quarters of last year.

The country's exports to seven regional countries including Afghanistan, China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Nepal and the Maldives account for \$3440.687 million, which is 14.51 percent of Pakistan's overall exports of \$23699.090 million during July-March (2021-22). State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported. China tops the list of countries in terms of Pakistan's exports to its neighbouring, leaving behind other countries such as Bangladesh and Afghanistan. Pakistan carried out its border trade with the farther neighbour Sri Lanka, India, Nepal and the Maldives.

Pakistan's exports to China posted growth of 51.27 percent to \$2126.778 million in nine months of this year from \$1405.890 million during last year while exports to Bangladesh also increased by 47.94 percent to \$648.936 million from \$438.626 million. The country's export to Afghanistan however dropped by 50.50 percent to \$369.382 million this year from \$746.347 million whereas exports to India also dipped by 54.21 percent to \$1.006 million from \$2.197 million.

Similarly, exports to Sri Lanka rose by 53.76 percent to \$284.717 million from \$185.165 million in the previous year whereas exports to Nepal also increased by 35.86 percent to \$4.792 million from

\$3.527 million, in addition exports to Maldives increased by 24.32 percent to \$5.076 million from \$4.083 million, it added.

On the other hand, the imports from seven regional countries were recorded at \$13392.465 million during the period under review as compared to \$9465.576 million during last year, showing increase of 41.48 percent. The imports from China during July-March 2021-22 were recorded at \$12987.0330 million against the \$9070.683 million during July-March 2020-21, showing an increase of 43.17 percent during the period.

Among other countries, imports from India worth \$139.334 million against the imports of \$139.626 million, decrease of 0.20 percent while imports from Afghanistan increased by 3.48 percent from \$127.455 million to \$131.897 million. Meanwhile, imports from Sri Lanka witnessed 3.38 percent decrease from \$65.144 million to \$62.936 million whereas Pakistan Imports from Bangladesh recorded at \$72.617 million from \$61.741 million during last year. The imports from Nepal into the country witnessed increase of 24.25 percent from \$0.878 million to \$1.091 million, it said.

German Ed Tech Co Mersys enters Pakistani market

With the vision of providing quality education for everyone, everywhere, Mersys enters the Pakistani market with a partnership with ExD.

With this partnership, ExD will provide

Mersys' state of the art education management platform, Campus, to schools, colleges and universities and vocational training institutes across the country.

As the population of Pakistan grows every year, so do the challenges of access to education. With over 60 percent of Pakistan's population still in rural areas, systems like Campus aim to bridge the gap between the quality of education offered in urban and rural areas.

Mersys helps bridge this digital divide. Campus is designed to facilitate online, classroom and hybrid education models, with communication, transparency and privacy at its core. The software allows teachers to plan classes, deliver lectures, give and receive assignments and use data banks to automate repetitive tasks.

It also allows school administrators to manage admissions, student and teacher affairs and to get insights into students' performance. However, it is the focus on students and parents that sets Campus software apart. Mersys Founder and COO Arman Kozhabayev says, "We are thrilled to partner with ExD to contribute towards the digitization of Pakistan's education sector". Mersys' new Pakistani partners, Excellence Delivered will be managing local customer service. With a decade long experience of implementing and supporting customers in the education sector, ExD plans to bring this affordable and state of the art system to digitalize the education sector. —DNA

ICCI urges govt not to withdraw amnesty scheme

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) has shown great concerns over the government intentions to consider withdrawing the tax amnesty scheme for industrial sector under the IMF pressure and termed it a disappointing move as it would hurt the industrial growth in the country and shake the confidence of investor who wanted to invest in Pakistan under this scheme.

He urged that the government should reconsider its intention and not to withdraw the tax amnesty scheme for the industrial sector as it would have a negative impact on the economic growth of the country.

Muhammad Shakeel Munir said that ICCI has been constantly stressing upon the government to announce a package for industrial sector on the pattern of construction package and the business community was quite satisfied when an

incentives-laden tax amnesty scheme for industrial sector was announced in the first week of March 2022, which encouraged industrial promotion, revival of sick industrial units and foreign investment in industrial sector.

He said that this amnesty scheme was warmly welcomed by the entrepreneurs and investors as it had created new opportunities for industrial promotion and more investment in the industrial sector. However, there are indications that on the demand of the IMF, the government was considering withdrawing the amnesty scheme, which would create more disappointment in the business community and the potential investors.

ICCI President said that Pakistan badly needed industrialization to create jobs for youth, encourage local and foreign investment and improve exports. The amnesty scheme was a good move to achieve these

goals. However, it was unfortunate that before the start of implementation on the tax amnesty scheme, there were reports that it would be withdrawn. He emphasized that the government should accelerate the pace of work on the establishment of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) under CPEC and implement the industrial amnesty scheme as it would boost industrialization in the country and contribute to strengthening the economy.

Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh, Senior Vice President and Muhammad Faheem Khan, Vice President ICCI said that Pakistan was facing a rising trade deficit as our imports much more than our exports.

They said that one good option to overcome the trade deficit was to promote industrialization and exports. They said that the tax amnesty scheme for the industrial sector was important to realize these goals and stressed that the government should not consider withdrawing it in the larger

Ombudsman shows concern at delay in pension

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Ombudsman has showed grave concern over delays in pension and insurance claims of poor people by the Pakistan Post Office Department and PLIC.

He called a meeting of Federal Secretary Communications, Director General, Pakistan Post Office Department (PPOD) and MD Postal Life Insurance Company (PLIC) to his office to discuss the plight of poor employees and clients in the disbursement of their dues.

He directed that a time bound and responsive mechanism be developed to improve the situation. He stressed that the management should be sensitive to the grievances of the large number of citizens who approach the Wafaqi Mohtasib for redressal of their complaints. The Wafaqi Mohtasib warned that the responsible officials will be punished, under the law, for their neglect, inattention and apathy in dealing with the public. —APP

FO deplors Indian 'Public Notice'

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office has strongly deplored the so-called "Public Notice" issued by the University Grants Commission of India and the All India Council for Technical Education, advising students not to seek higher education in Pakistan and warning them of being denied employment in case they choose to do so.

In a statement on Monday, Foreign Office Spokesperson Asim Ifthikhar said the tone of "Public Notice" is not only threatening towards the students, it also reeks of tyrannical authoritarianism. It is regrettable that driven by its incurable obsession with Pakistan, India is unabashedly coercing the students in order to deter them from pursuing quality education of their choice. The spokesperson said this has further exposed the BJP-RSS combine's deep-seated ideological animus and chronic hostility towards Pakistan. —Online

Businessmen demand economic emergency: Irfan

KARACHI: Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI, has said that the economic and business environment has reached a point where the business community finds the demand of imposing an economic emergency justifiable to put an end to the economic uncertainty.

He added that businesses cannot operate profitably under such harsh and unfavorable conditions. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh emphasized that the policy rate must be aggressively brought down to seven percent from its current level of 12.25pc to make access to finance affordable for the private sector to keep the economic activities afloat. He also noted that the step will bring down the short-term debt servicing of the govt by Rs. 300b; and, provide breathing space to the govt for the better fiscal management. —APP

Minister for facilitating people

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Agha Hassan Baloch Monday gave directives to enhance the effective role of the ministry in facilitating people particularly in underprivileged areas.

He was chairing a briefing on the progress of Public Sector Development Program (PSDP) projects under the ministry and gave directions. Federal Secretary for Ministry of Science and Technology, Humaira Ahmed and heads of all attached departments briefed the minister regarding the ongoing projects and their progress. The minister was pleased to know that the ministry was working on a variety of initiatives that would boost the country's socio-economic status.

He appreciated the work of all departments and also gave directions for equitable progress in all provinces. He directed that a state of the art forensic lab must be established in Balochistan to facilitate the local people as well as those of nearby regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh.

He expressed that people in distress should not be made to wait for weeks to get their samples tested from the major forensic lab in Lahore. —APP

Minister to address issues of urea manufacturers payments

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Industries and Production Makhdoom Syed Murtaza Mahmud on Monday assured that government would address the issues pertaining to payments of fertilizer manufacturing industry.

The Minister urged the industry to rationalize the prices immediately to support the farmers pivotal boosting agriculture productivity of the country, said a press release issued here. Federal Minister for Industries and Production Makhdoom Syed Murtaza Mahmud chaired the meeting of fertilizer review committee here.

The participants of meeting included representative of fertilizers manufacturing industry and officials from Finance Division, Petroleum Division, Ministry of Food Security and Research as well as officials of

Provincial agriculture departments. The meeting discussed the domestic production and demand of fertilizers for Kharif season.

The chair was briefed that projected domestic production of urea would be 3.2 MMT from April-September 2022 whereas probability of urea off take would remain 3.4 MMT in the same period. The forum was also told that there would be two percent increase in agro-economic demand for fertilizers in this year. It was noted that the urea sales went up by 17 percent in last year.

The forum noted that a significant part of urea's demand would be met domestically, however, summary for urea import of 2 lac ton would be placed to fill the gap before demand peaks in June during the kharif sowing season. In order to curb the

hoarding and profiteering, leading to smuggling of urea across the border due to high price differential, the body decided to take up strict measures in cooperation with the law enforcement agencies, FBR and Ministry of Interior to thwart across border trafficking of urea.

Speaking to meeting, the Minister said that the government had geared up to ensure smooth, adequate and timely supply of key soil nutrients to farmers during Kharif season and the decisions would be taken accordingly. He said that government would make all-out efforts to provide urea to farmers at affordable prices timely. The forum also discussed the recent price hike of urea from Rs. 1768/bag to 1933/bag on average, while Engro had increased the prices upto. —APP



RAWALPINDI: People wait in a queue outside a utility store to purchase household items at the Committee Chowk.