

Sindh House attack: Two PTI MNAs arrested after IHC rejects bail pleas

ISLAMABAD: Police have arrested two Members of National Assembly belonging to PTI after IHC rejected their bail pleas in the Sindh House attack case. Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri heard the petition filed by the two lawmakers. Earlier in the month, the court granted pre-arrest bails to the accused till April 26. It merits mention that the Sindh House was attacked by PTI workers after reports of dissident lawmakers planning to vote against PM Imran in no-confidence motion. —FOSC

The Business

Lahore, Wednesday, April 27, 2022 Ramazan 25, 1443

FIA exonerates ex-DG Bashir Memon of all charges

LAHORE: The Sessions Court on Tuesday found former Director General FIA Bashir Memon not involved in three cases against him, including money laundering allegations. During the hearing, the court asked FIA about the progress made in the investigation so far. On which the agency said that the investigation has been completed and its former DG Bashir Memon is not wanted as he was not involved in any of the cases. Earlier in 2021, He had opened a new Pandora's Box with a string of serious allegations against ex-PM. —BOSR

Businessmen hope govt will bring economic stability

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has expressed hope that the newly elected coalition government will bring out the country from the prevailing financial crises.

Chamber President Nadeem Rauf, while talking to this agency, said that he was confident that Shahbaz Sharif(SS), being a proficient businessman, was well aware of the problems of the business community.

Nadeem urged the govt to include the proposals of the business community in the upcoming fiscal year budget 2022-2023 and take immediate steps to control the inflation.

He said that govt initiatives to engage the IMF and the PM visit to Saudia Arabia would bring the fruit of happiness for the country's people. Nadeem said that govt should devise a long term policy to control the trade deficit and reduce the tax and duty rates to boost the exports. He hoped that the govt would decrease the prices of petrol, diesel and food items while Pakistan needed a quick revival of business and industrial activities to improve the economy's health. —APP

Buzdar mulls over formation of cabinet

LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Usman Buzdar has started consultations with legal experts over and aides for formation of a cabinet. The legal experts have advised the caretaker Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar that no steps can be taken without approval of the cabinet, sources said.

Legal experts have advised for announcing a caretaker cabinet to run the government matters smoothly. It is pertinent to mention here that after approval of his resignation on April 1, Usman Buzdar is working as caretaker chief minister of Punjab. The caretaker CM is mulling over formation of a caretaker cabinet to run administrative matters of the province, sources added. Punjab province is undergoing in a crisis situation in the wake of Hamza Shahbaz's election as chief minister of the province in the Provincial Assembly session, which was marred by violence.

Chief Justice LHC hearing implementation petition with regard to the court's order for oath taking of Punjab's Chief Minister-elect Hamza Shahbaz today. —DNA

Food imports up by 15.46pc in nine months

ISLAMABAD: The food group imports into the country during first three quarters of current financial year increased by 15.46 percent as against the imports of the corresponding period of last year. During the period from July-March 2021-22, different food commodities valuing \$7.067 billion imported as against the imports of \$6.121 billion of corresponding period of last year.

The major commodities which observed increase in their respective imports during the period under review including soyabean 113.73pc, palm oil 46.74pc, sugar 49.74pc, tea 11.95pc, spices 11.71pc and pulses 6.53pc. Meanwhile, the imports of milk cream and milk for infants during the period under review decreased by 16.78pc, wheat unmilled 19.12pc, dry fruits and nuts decreased by 22.54pc. In last 9 months of current financial year, \$2.443b spent on the import of palm oil as against the import of \$1.860b of same period last year. —APP

Court disposes of Ahsan Iqbal's plea

ISLAMABAD: An Accountability Court (AC) on Tuesday disposed of the petition of Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal seeking permission to travel Saudi Arabia to perform Umrah.

The petitioner requested the court to grant him permission to withdraw his case which was allowed by the accountability court judge Syed Asghar Ali. Petitioner's lawyer informed the court that his client's name was placed on exit control list (ECL) on recommendation of National Accountability Bureau (NAB) instead on the directives of this court. The court disposed of the case after the petitioner requested to withdraw it in Naroval case. —APP



ISLAMABAD: A view of the shipping containers placed at D-Chowk by the local administration during the protest of the Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf workers outside the Election Commission.

More than 1800cc vehicles be strongly discouraged for the sake of economy

LCCI wants Sunday as petrol-free day

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) on Tuesday urged the government to immediately announce oil/fuel reduction measures for the nation to slow down oil usage by the masses.

In a letter to Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) President Mian Nauman Kabir said that an oil, fuel and energy crisis is inching towards the country and the government would have to take measures on an emergency basis.

Mian Nauman Kabir said that the government should declare Saturday and Sunday as complete holidays while one hour should be increased in other days. He said "Sunday should be considered a complete petrol-free day except for medical reasons" and people should go for grocery and other necessary shopping on Sunday to the nearby shops by foot or bicycle.

He said that till the time international oil prices come down, the usage of more than 1800cc vehicles should be strongly discouraged for the sake of economy.

The Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) President said that these measures should be taken without wasting a single moment otherwise no sector

would be left untouched by a severe crisis.

While calling for daylight usage, Mian Nauman Kabir said that it would help bring down the skyrocketing utility cost. He added that by using daylight through installing effective skylights and panels, a business can cut its usage of traditional artificial lighting by as much as 80 percent, resulting in a substantially lower monthly utility bill. He said that according to various studies, daylight can be significantly healthier for workplace human resources.

The Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) President said that conservation of energy and less reliance on energy produced from imported raw materials is the need of the hour. He said that Pakistan is one of those countries that are heavily dependent on hydrocarbon fuel for energy production. He said that this results in severe CO2 emissions that lead to climate change. He added that although renewable energy resources such as wind and solar are available in abundance, they have not been fully utilized and so energy crises in Pakistan increase every year.

"Energy plays an important role in shaping a country's economy", Mian Nauman Kabir said, adding that in identifying different sources of energy, environmental impact, fuel source, and social impact are very much under considera-

tion. He said that huge investments have been made in research and development of renewable energy worldwide, not only to counter environmental degradation but to create energy-secure countries but the situation in Pakistan is not encouraging.

The Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) President said that energy conservation is the practice of using less fuel and energy costs and reducing environmental impact. He said that this can use less oil, fuel, electricity, gas or any other form of energy that the people get from utility and pay for.

While energy conservation is the practice of trying to use less energy for cost and environmental reasons, energy efficiency means using specific products designed to use less energy.

These two concepts are inherently similar but involve different methods. Examples of energy conservation include using smart appliances and energy-saving bulbs in your home. He added that to reduce energy consumption and increase energy savings, masses would have to adjust day-to-day behaviors. Mian Nauman Kabir hoped that the government would understand the gravity of the situation and would immediately announce Oil/Fuel reduction measures for the masses to slow down oil usage by the people.

Working tirelessly to provide relief to people, says Ahsan

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal has reiterated the resolve to put the country back on the track of progress and development.

Talking to the media persons on Tuesday, the minister said the government is working tirelessly to provide relief to the people. He said that the Rawalpindi-Islamabad Metro bus extension project that remained stalled for the last four years was completed within a few days and this is a proof of competency of the current government.

About Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's planned protest in front of Election Commission, Ahsan Iqbal said this is aimed at impeding the due process by pressurising and blackmailing the institutions. He, however, said the ECP will decide the cases including the foreign funding case as per law and without succumbing to any pressure.

ICCI demands single-digit GST in upcoming budget

The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce

& Industry (ICCI) has said that the 17 percent General Sales Tax (GST) in Pakistan is quite high as compared to many other countries, which was a major cause of high inflation and high cost of doing business.

ICCI President Muhammad Shakeel Munir addressing an iftar dinner called upon the government to introduce a single digit GST in Pakistan in the upcoming budget that would bring down the production cost, provide good relief to the common man in prices and facilitate the better growth of business activities, said a press statement issued on Tuesday.

Munir said that the sales tax rate was 5 percent in UAE, Oman & Taiwan, 7 percent in Singapore, 8 percent in Iran & Sri Lanka as compared to 17 percent in Pakistan, which should be brought down to less than 10 percent in order to facilitate the growth of trade and industrial activities and reduce inflation for the general public.

He said that high tax rates in Pakistan were a major hurdle in promoting tax cul-

ture and bringing more people into the tax net as high tax rates always encouraged tax evasion. He stressed that the govt should focus on rationalization of taxes to make them affordable for taxpayers that would be helpful in promoting tax compliance and enhancing tax revenue of the country.

Artificial intelligence use for socioeconomic development stressed

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a dual-use technology, which can be used not only for socioeconomic development but also for military purposes.

Director General Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry remarked this while addressing a web-talk on 'Artificial Intelligence for Socio Economic Development in Pakistan,' organised by the ACDC on Tuesday. Earlier in his introductory remarks, Malik Qasim Mustafa, Director ACDC, said that AI is widely accepted as the major driving force of the fourth Industrial Revolution. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us how digital technologies and AI-

Red Zone sealed as PTI announces sit-in outside ECP

ISLAMABAD: Police in the federal capital on Tuesday beefed up security and sealed the red zone. The move comes after the opposition Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) announced to stage a sit-in outside the offices of the Election Commission of Pakistan as a protest.

The Islamabad Capital Territory Police (ICT Police) on Tuesday said that the district administration had imposed Section 144 in the Red Zone and all roads leading to the Election Commission building and Radio Pakistan in the Red Zone have been sealed.

A spokesperson for the police said that peaceful protests were a democratic right of all citizens, which is respected by the police, but no protestors will be allowed to enter the Red Zone. Instead, they urged demonstrators to stage their protests at the press club or F-9 Park. Moreover, security has been put on high alert and more than a thousand personnel from the ICT police, Rangers, Frontier Constabulary and Punjab Constabulary have been deployed. Contingents of the anti-riot force of the police, along with water cannons have been deployed to disperse protesters. —DNA

Centre announces four days Eid holidays

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif has announced four holidays for Eid celebrations, media on Tuesday.

According to details, the Eid vacation will be from May 2 to 5. The government has also announced to pay the salaries of public sector employees before Eid-ul-Fitr and a notification has been issued in this regard.

The holy month lasts 29 or 30 days based on the moon sighting and Eid-ul-Fitr celebrations follow the end of the Ramazan and the dawn-to-dusk fasting for millions of Muslims.

Maryam to lead PML-N rallies in Punjab

LAHORE: In response to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) public mobilisation campaign, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) too decided to hold rallies in major cities of Punjab immediately after Eid-ul-Fitr.

Well-informed sources said that PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz will lead the rallies which will be held one after another in major Punjab cities. In the first phase, the PML-N rallies will be held in Okara, Sahiwal, Faisalabad, Jhelum, Gujranwala, Sheikhupura and other cities of Punjab. The rallies will also be held in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh in second phase, sources say. The PML-N leadership has also directed Punjab President Rana Sanaullah to prepare a schedule of meetings, it added.

Meanwhile, PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz had said she would visit Lahore's constituencies from Tuesday to meet workers on the direction of Nawaz Sharif and Shehbaz Sharif. It is pertinent to mention here that party's first rally scheduled to be held over the weekend in Sialkot has been postponed till the next month due to the holy month of Ramazan. —DNA

Moody's revises global energy industry outlook

NEW YORK: Moody's Investors Service has revised its outlook for the global energy industry to positive from stable as higher commodity prices are expected to boost the earnings of oil and gas companies.

Earnings of energy companies active in exploration and production, refining and marketing, as well as oilfield services will rise due to higher oil prices, the rating agency said in its latest report. Moody's also maintained a stable outlook for the global midstream industry (storage, processing and transport of petroleum products) on modest growth prospects following low levels of capital spending.

"Restrained supply will keep prices high over the next 12-18 months, but without significant fundamental enhancement in operat-

PTI stages protests against the ECP across country

ISLAMABAD: On the call of its chief Imran Khan, Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf workers held protests against the Election Commission of Pakistan in several cities including Islamabad accusing it of displaying bias against the party in all matters.

Former interior minister Sheikh Rashid and former science and technology minister Shibli Faraz, Andaleeb Abbas and Nafesa Khat-tak also participated in the protest outside the office of Pakistan Election Commission, Islamabad.

The charged workers who thronged the ECP office raised vociferous slogans against the commission and the incumbent government with Sh Rashid drumming about holding early vote in a menacing tone warning bloodshed

if their vote call was not heeded.

The PTI workers raised slogans: 'Imported Government Na Manzoor' (imported government is not acceptable); 'Sarkari Umrah aur Janibdar Election Commission Na Manzoor' (Umrah at public expense and biased election commission are not acceptable). The capital city police stopped the rally from entering the ECP office and the PTI workers started retreating from NADRA office as a large police contingent was deployed all along the roads leading to the ECP office.

The Capital City administration took strict security measures around the PM and ECP offices as water gun tankers were placed there to deal with any untoward situation.

In several cities including Lahore, Peshawar, Multan, Dera

Ghazi Khan, Rahim Yar Khan and Faisalabad, the PTI workers staged demonstrations against the biased attitude of the ECP demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Sikander Sultan Raja.

Strict security measures were also taken in Lahore. For the security of District Election Commission Office, Lahore, the MAO College Road was closed for all kinds of traffic. Police cordoned off an area measuring 200 meter around the ECP office. The entire area was sealed by placing barriers and barbed wire. A large contingent of police was deputed at the entry and exit points of the barriers. The police force from concerned police stations and officials of riot police were deputed at these points.

The traffic was diverted to Riwayat



NEW YORK: Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN speaks during the 55th session of the Commission on Population and Development.