

Gold prices remain unchanged

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold remained unchanged at Rs 132,000 on Thursday in the local market. The price of 10 gram 24 karat gold and 22 karat gold also witnessed no change in prices and was sold at Rs 113,169 and Rs 103,738 respectively, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained unchanged at Rs 1510 and Rs 1294.58 respectively. The price of gold in international market decreased by \$7 and was traded at \$1,888 compared to its sale at \$1,895, the association reported. —FOSC

The Business

Lahore, Saturday, April 30, 2022 Ramazan 28, 1443

Blast kills more than 50 worshippers at Kabul mosque

KABUL: A powerful explosion killed more than 50 worshippers after Friday prayers at a Kabul mosque, its leader said, amid a series of attacks on civilian targets in Afghanistan during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. The blast hit the Khalifa Sahib Mosque in the west of the capital in the early afternoon, said Besmullah Habib, deputy spokesperson for the interior ministry, who said the official confirmed death toll was 10. This was just as worshippers at the mosque gathered after Friday prayers for a congregation known as Zikr. —APP

Al-Quds Day observed across Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: International Day of Al-Quds was observed across Pakistan on Friday with mass rallies held to condemn Zionists' atrocities against innocent people of Palestine.

On the occasion of International Al Quds day, peoples have warmly expressed their solidarity with the oppressed peoples of Palestine, Kashmir and Yemen. The mass rallies held in Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar, Quetta, Gilgit-Baltistan and Kashmir attended by the people from different walks of life and raised their voice against Zionist atrocities.

In the rallies the protesters also strongly condemned recent spate of killings of Palestinians by the Zionist Regime. The late Imam Khomeini initiated the International Quds Day as an integral part of the holy fasting month of Ramazan so that Muslims would never forget their responsibility and duty towards Palestine and all oppressed people in the world. The day is held each year on the last Friday of Ramazan. The Central and Provincial MWM leaders addressing on the occasion said that Bait-ul-Muqaddas is common heritage of the Muslims which has been under illegal occupation of the Zionist forces. They also condemned Zionists' brutality against Palestinians and praised Hizbullah's struggle against the Zionist forces. —Online

Imran to write letter to Alvi for probe into letter

ISLAMABAD: Chairman PTI Imran Khan has decided to write a letter to President Arif Alvi for investigation into threatening letter. Imran Khan will also send a letter to Chief Justice of Pakistan as well.

Imran Khan has said the two state dignitaries will be asked about the proceedings initiated so far in the light of diplomatic cable and its contents sent by Pakistan ambassador to US. The threat given to our ambassador in formal meeting is humiliating and incompatible with diplomatic norms. There is no room in the civilized world for such arrogant attitude. The protection of independence and sovereignty of nation is obligation far above defence of the government.

He held the local traitors received the price in the form of government for allowing the nation to be enchained by the imperialistic power. People of Pakistan are too much grieved and annoyed over meddling in the affairs of Pakistan in the guise of foreign conspiracy. It is impossible to withhold announcing the date for real freedom March for long time in the wake of immense reaction from the people. Masses want these traitors to be held accountable. —Online

PIA inducts Airbus 320 in its fleet

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has inducted another Airbus-320, a narrow body 170-seater aircraft, in its fleet that would help the national flag carrier in expanding flight operations and extending improved facilities to passengers.

According to the spokesperson of the national airline, the leased Airbus has 170 seats. This aircraft was built 4 years ago, adding that four aircraft were selected and the first aircraft has reached Pakistan. He said the three remaining aircraft would also be arriving Pakistan in few months. The spokesperson said that better travel facilities will be provided to passengers with the induction.

He expressed confidence that with the induction of new planes in the PIA's fleet would help improve scheduled operations of the national flag carrier besides ensuring better air-travel facilities to passengers.

Four injured in Bajaur blast

From Our Staff Correspondent

PESHAWAR: Four people were injured in a blast in Mamund tehsil, Bajaur tribal district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) on Friday.

The police and security forces cordoned off the area. According to DSP Gulzar Khan, the injured have been shifted to the District Headquarters (DHQ) Hospital Khar. The condition of two of the injured is told to be critical.



NEW YORK: Yannick Glemarec, Executive Director of Green Climate Fund calls on Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN.

When it comes to Constitution, oppressed class

Courts will open at 3am: CJ Minallah

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court (IHC) Chief Justice Athar Minallah on Friday said that if the matter is related to the Constitution or the oppressed class, the courts will open at 3am. His remarks came during the hearing of a petition against the harassment of anchorperson Arshad Sharif. Sharif's lawyer Faisal Chaudhry appeared on behalf of the petitioner.

At the outset of the hearing, IHC Chief Justice Athar Minallah asked while addressing Sharif and his lawyer Faisal Chaudhry if they had watched Kashif Abbasi's programme.

He said that remarks were made without the confirmation of facts. "Kashif Abbasi had asked why the courts were opened at midnight. A narrative had been built that the courts were opened at night upon someone's directives," Justice Minallah remarked, questioning if there were any political reasons behind it.

"Such a narrative was built to weaken people's confidence in courts," he said.

The CJ further asked: "Wouldn't history be different if the courts had opened on July 4, 1977, and October 12, 1999? Do you think your news channel understands the Constitution better than the courts? The courts had been opened to protect basic rights. Do you want the courts should not open when there is an urgent

matter? These narratives would lead people nowhere." Justice Minallah further said that a court opening after working hours was not unprecedented as the courts have to assume some responsibility.

"You should be happy that the violation of the Constitution was not allowed. We sent the message that no action against the Constitution would be allowed," he said.

The court asked the private channel's reporter how many programmes did they air on missing persons or Baloch students?

Justice Athar Minallah said that institutions are being destroyed because of political statements but added that it was not the first time. During the hearing, FIA officials informed the court that they have not taken any action or launched an inquiry against Arshad Sharif. The FIA officials also denied the allegations of harassment and said that the agency has issued a written clarification in this regard.

Journalist Afzal Butt, however, said that they respect the courts. "If it weren't for the courts, the press wouldn't be free," he said, assuring the court to discuss the matter with TV anchors. Justice Minallah remarked that the court reporters are responsible and professional. "Their performance is laudable." Meanwhile, IHC Journalists Association president Saqib Bashir said that the IHC has been hearing the petitions outside the court hours and the journalists have reported it.

Another report adds: Chief Justice (CJ) Islamabad High Court (IHC) Athar Minallah has remarked why so much concern is expressed over opening of courts at night as narrative has been made courts were opened. He further remarked is there any political reason behind this narrative. The court does not fear from anyone except Almighty Allah. What is the difference between political narratives against Supreme Court (SC) and attack on it.

The CJ gave these remarks while hearing the case against harassment of the journalist and anchor person Arshid Sharif here Friday. Arshid Sharif appeared before the court. PFUJ former president Afzal Butt also reached the court along with Arshid Sharif. Faisal Chaudhry counsel for Arshid Sharif told the court Arshid Sharif is present here. He returned to home due to court's interference. The CJ IHC remarked court is here for everyone. Have you watched Kashif Abbasi program. Too much was said without verification of facts.

He said why the court opened at night. The courts will open at 3 o'clock at night if the matter relates to constitution or some marginalized section of society. What order was issued by SC which affected anyone. A narrative was made that the courts opened. The courts will open and they will not allow anyone to defy the Constitution. Faisal Ch said only those can tell about it

EAC formed without trade & industry, says Irfan Iqbal

KARACHI: Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI, has expressed his shock over the formation of Economic Advisory Council under the leadership of Prime Minister Mian Shehbaz Sharif without consulting the business, industry and trade community of Pakistan. We have also not given a representation in the council; and, it is counter-productive — to say the least, he added.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh maintained that FPCCI is the apex chamber of the country and its representation would provide the timely assistance to the Prime Minister and his economic team in the matters of budget-making; taxation and tariffs; governance and administrative reforms; rapid industrialization; textiles and allied industries; promotion of information and communication technologies; EPZs & SEZs; export growth and import substitution; rupee-dollar parity and SMEs.

FPCCI President noted with concern that current account deficit (CAD) will be close to \$20 billion, which is well above five percent of GDP; inflation has crossed

12 percent and heading towards 15 percent by the year end; trade deficit has crossed \$35 billion in the nine months of July – March; KIBOR is 14.10 percent after 13 years and six-month treasury bills at 14.99 percent after 22 years. Interestingly, this is happening in spite of record proceeds from exports, remittances and taxes, he added.

ICCI for taking urgent steps to control power crisis

Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) has expressed great concerns over the rising power crisis in the country as the power shortage has reportedly shot up to 6000 to 7000 MW and called upon the government to take urgent measures to overcome the worsening energy shortage as it would badly affect the economic activities besides making life of the common man more miserable in this sweltering heat. He said this while addressing a meeting of ICCI Executive Committee meeting.

Muhammad Shakeel Munir said that the menace of loadshedding has swept across

the country leaving the businesses and the homes in the dark at a time when the temperatures were on the rise. He said that the urban areas were reportedly experiencing 6 to 10 hours loadshedding and rural areas 8 to 16 hours loadshedding, which showed that the energy crisis has worsened in the country. He said that the Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif has assured to end the loadshedding soon, which was encouraging, but the situation demanded war footing measures to tackle this serious crisis.

ICCI President said that energy was the key requirement for trade and industrial activities while the uninterrupted and affordable power supply was essential for accelerated economic growth of the country. He said that the electricity was an important economic indicator as its availability or shortage encouraged or discouraged the local and foreign investors. He said that the main reason of gap between demand and supply was the country's dependence on fossil fuel for power generation. —Online

Govt servants rally in support of Army at Parliament

ISLAMABAD: Demonstrations were held in different parts of the country, including Islamabad, in support of Pakistan Army on Friday. Government employees held a demonstration outside the Parliament House in Islamabad to show their support for the army.

Carrying banners in their hands, inscribed with pro-army slogans, the participants began their march from the gate number 1 of the Parliament House, shouting slogans of 'Pak Army Zindabad' (Long Live Pak Army).

In Multan, members of the civil society and Dard Sukh Foundation held a demonstration outside the press club, and strongly condemned the social media campaign against the army. Speakers, on the occasion, said that some anti-Pakistan elements were uploading inflammatory posts and comments on social media to malign the institution. —DNA

Pak earns \$508m by exporting transport services

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan earned \$508.015 million by providing different transport services in various countries during the first eight months of financial year (2021-22).

This shows growth of 26.71pc as compared to \$400.940 million earned through provision of services during the corresponding period of fiscal year (2020-21), PBS reported.

During the period under review, the exports of sea transport services witnessed an increase of 51.18 percent, by going up from \$56.130 million last year to \$84.860 million during the period under review. Among the sea transport services, the exports of freight services increased by 99.46 percent from \$22.390 million last year to \$44.660 million whereas the exports of other sea transport services also grew by 19.15 percent from \$33.740 million to \$40.200 million current year, the PBS data revealed.

The exports of air transport rose by 25.45 percent by going up from \$325.030 million last year to \$407.735 million during July-February (2021-22). —APP

Vitol offers LNG at \$23.13/mmbtu for May 17 cargo

ISLAMABAD: Vitol on Friday offered Pakistan LNG Limited (PLL) a spot cargo sought for a May 17-18 delivery window at \$23.13/mmbtu, bid documents showed, as Pakistan continued to seek fuel to meet rising local power demands as summer approaches.

Last week PLL picked up four of seven spot cargoes sought for May and June through tenders, but it did not finalise a cargo for the May 17-18 window, which returned a lowest offer of \$31.77/mmbtu from Vitol, an industry source said. PLL released a fresh tender this week for the May 17-18 window, attracting three offers: Total Energies at \$25.2/mmbtu, PetroChina International at \$25.23/mmbtu and Vitol Bahrain at \$23.1297/mmbtu, bid documents on PLL's website showed.

PLL is a public sector entity with a mandate from the government to procure LNG from international markets and manage the supply chain from procurement onwards. —APP

Newspapers holidays

From Our Staff Correspondent

KARACHI: Nazafreen Saigol Lakhani, Secretary General of the All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) has announced that its member publications will observe two closed holidays on account of Eid-ul-Fitr as per following:

In case the Eid falls on Monday, May 02, 2022, there will be no morning newspapers on Tuesday, May 03, 2022 and Wednesday, May 04, 2022 whereas the evening newspapers not appearing on Monday, May 02, 2022 and Tuesday, May 03, 2022 may bring out their editions on Wednesday, May 04, 2022 if they so desire. However, if Eid falls on Tuesday, May 03, 2022, there will be no morning newspapers on Wednesday, May 04, 2022 and Thursday, May 05, 2022 whereas the evening newspapers not appearing on Tuesday, May 03, 2022 and Wednesday, May 04,

150 held for slogans against Shehbaz govt at Masjid-e-Nabvi

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the taste of their own medicine. "If I want to humiliate the political rivals, the same can happen to Sheikh Rashid," he said, adding: "But, I have advised all the party workers to abstain from doing any such action."

While throwing light on the alleged corruption of former first lady Bushra Bibi's friend Farah Khan, the interior minister said that one of her transactions was of Rs840 million. "The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has brought forward the case of Farah Khan," he stated.

"You will know [your worth] when you go to your constituencies," Rana Sana said and added that the entire nation stood by the judiciary and the chief election commissioner. PPP leader Qamar Zaman Kaira also criticised PTI chairman Imran Khan and ques-

tioned from him, "How much divide in society do you want?" He termed the previous day's incident very painful, adding: "We are showing restraint."

Maryam, Aseefa denounce PTI activists shameful attack Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Vice-President Maryam Nawaz said on Friday what could be more unfortunate than the fact that some people shouted abuses at Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb inside Masjid-e-Nabvi (PBUH), showing least regard for the sanctity of the holy month of Ramazan, and the second most holy place for the Muslims on earth.

In a series of tweets, Maryam Nawaz said who could be more unlucky than those people who, instead of begging forgiveness from The Almighty Allah in the holy month, waste all their good deeds instead. In

yet another tweet, Maryam said that yesterday's hooliganism at the holy mosque had unmasked Pakistan Tehrik-i-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan and his party workers who used Islam for political purposes. "And that was the punishment they rightly deserved," she commented.

She said making fun of the constitution, law and courts with such boldness cannot be the work of a normal human being. "The ghosts of Bani Gala should be dealt strictly if they do not listen, adding that this is a province of 120 million people, not a joke," Maryam Nawaz wrote.

In yet another tweet, she said the disrespect shown towards Masjid-e-Nabawi under the supervision of PTI had left all faithful shocked. "I have received scores of messages from my angry followers since yesterday who have asked me as to why the government does not take action

against these people. And my answer was that it would be misconstrued as political victimization. And what had happened at the holy mosque was not a political issue.

PM likely to meet Turkish President Erdoğan: Sources Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is likely to meet Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, sources privy to the matter said Friday.

According to the sources, Turkish President Erdoğan conveyed a message to PM Shehbaz to meet him. "I would like to meet you," read the message sent by the president, the sources said. Currently, the premier is on a three-day visit to Saudi Arabia at the invitation of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz. Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, Finance Minister Miftah Ismail, Information Minister

Marriyum Aurangzeb, Shahzain Bugti, Mohsin Dawar, Khalid Maqbool Siddiqi, Chaudhry Salik, and four members of PM Shehbaz Sharif's personal staff are accompanying the prime minister on his visit.

The prime minister held a brief meeting with Madinah's governor, where both the leaders exchanged views on bilateral relations. Taking to Twitter before leaving for Saudi Arabia, PM Shehbaz had said that his visit will "renew and reaffirm" ties between the two countries. He added that he will hold wide-ranging discussions with the Saudi leadership.

Giving a briefing on the visit, Foreign Office spokesperson Asim Iftikhar, in a statement, had said that the prime minister will be in the kingdom from April 28-30. During the visit, the prime minister will have bilateral interaction with the Saudi leadership, with a particular

focus on advancing economic, trade and investment ties, and creating greater opportunities for the Pakistani workforce in Saudi Arabia, the spokesperson said.

Johnson greets Shehbaz Sharif on his election

British PM Boris Johnson has congratulated PM Shehbaz Sharif on his election. In his letter, Boris Johnson noted that the United Kingdom and Pakistan enjoyed deep ties supported by strong people-to-people links. He also recalled their meeting in 2016 during his visit to Pakistan and the discussions held on a number of shared interests including girls education, health, economic and trade relations. The British PM looked forward to continue working together including in addressing global challenges. He conveyed best wishes to PM Shehbaz and the people of Pakistan, and hoped to meet