



LAHORE P3

Water shortage to be overcome in Murree

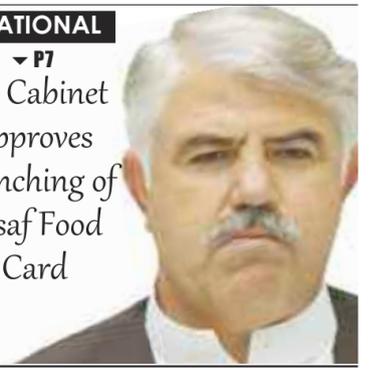
# The Business

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KP Cabinet approves launching of Insaaf Food Card



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## ADB installs solar system in Punjab schools

**ISLAMABAD:** With support from the Asian Development Bank's "Access to Clean Energy Investment Programme", solar power systems have been installed in thousands of schools in Punjab to provide reliable electricity.

These schools are off-grid or used to experience frequent power outages. Now that they have reliable electricity, classrooms have proper lighting, ventilation, and access to drinking water, vastly improving the learning environment for students especially amid the sweltering summer heat in the southern part of the province. Installed with ADB's support, they provide reliable electricity to schools that used to experience blackouts, creating a much better learning environment especially amid

the sweltering heat of summers in southern Punjab.

According to a video message released by the ADB on Monday, over 10,700 public schools now enjoy uninterrupted electricity at a much lower cost, benefiting 1.27 million students and saving up to Rs 509 million each year.

Furthermore, solar panels are also being installed in 4,200 more schools while over 2,000 basic health units are also being fitted with solar panels to ensure the continuous delivery of healthcare services. Mehak, a student at government elementary school in Nandla, Multan, said "When I joined this school, there was no electricity. We had a hard time getting drinking water and we had to attend class in extremely hot weather. —APP

## PSX gains 58 points in range bound session

**KARACHI:** PSX made minor gains in a range-bound session on Tuesday after touching its lowest level since December 2020 a day earlier, with the benchmark KSE-100 Index gaining 58.74 points (+0.14 percent) to close at 42,726.06 points.

The market opened on a positive note and remained in the green territory for most part of the session. The continuous depreciation of the rupee against the US dollar kept the investors at bay and they preferred to go for profit-taking whenever the market surged. According to Topline Securities, the market witnessed a range-bound activity on the backdrop of media reports regarding Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's address to the nation.

Investors opted to stay on the side line ahead of the aforesaid address as it was expected that the PM might announce some tough decisions while taking the nation into confidence to curtail deterioration on the macro front, it added. Moreover, the pending decision of the coalition govt whether to carry on with the current setup or call general elections also kept investors cautious.

Pakistan's tentative talks with the IMF in Doha on Wednesday to revive the stalled multibillion-dollar loan programme gave some support to the market. They said the country is desperately in need for the revival of the programme to avoid increasing the risk of defaulting on international

## Pak, Saudia reiterate desire to cement ties

**ISLAMABAD:** Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have expressed the desire to further strengthen long-standing fraternal ties, which are based on common religion, shared values and culture.

This was discussed at a meeting between President Dr Arif Alvi and Ambassador of Saudi Arabia in Pakistan Nawaf bin Saeed Ahmad Al-Malki, here at the Awwan-e-Sadr. President Alvi said Pakistan accorded utmost importance to its ties with Saudi Arabia which had always supported Pakistan in difficult times.

He said both countries enjoyed significant convergence on a number of regional and global issues.

The president urged the need to further develop a strategic and broad-based

partnership with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in different areas of mutual interest. It was emphasised to further enhance commercial bonds and encourage businessmen and chambers of commerce of both countries to interact regularly to boost bilateral trade relations.

President Alvi also highlighted that over two million Pakistani diaspora in Saudi Arabia was playing a significant role in the progress and development of both brotherly countries.

He also asked the ambassador to convey his warm regards to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and His Royal Highness and shared that the people of Pakistan pray for his good health and long life. —APP

## Verdict pronounced in a 3-2 ratio. Justice Mando Khel and Justice Mazhar Alam disagree in reference under Article 63-A

# Dissidents lawmakers vote cannot be counted, says SC

From Our Staff Correspondent

**ISLAMABAD:** The Supreme Court of Pakistan, while announcing verdict in the presidential reference seeking interpretation of Article 63(A), said that the vote of dissident party members will not be counted.

A five-member larger bench of the apex court headed by CJP Bandial, and comprising Justice Ijaz-ul-Ahsan, Justice Mazhar Alam Miankhal, Justice Muneeb Akhtar and Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhel had reserved the judgment.

Pronouncing the verdict, the top court remarked that the article concerned cannot be interpreted alone. The decision was pronounced by the Supreme Court in a 3-2 ratio. Justice Mando Khel and Justice Mazhar Alam of the five-member bench disagreed. Chief Justice Omar Ata Bandial, Justice Ejaz-ul-Haq and Justice Muneeb Akhtar said that the vote cast by the defecting member should not be counted while Justice Mazhar Alam Mian Khel and Justice Mandokhel disagreed.

It may be recalled that Justice Ijaz-ul-Ahsan, Justice Mazhar Alam Mian Khel, Justice Muneeb Akhtar and Justice Jamal Mandokhel were part of the larger bench. Chief Justice of Pakistan Omar Ata Bandial has said that a detailed decision will be issued later. The apex court further stated that the parliament should legislate to decide on the issue of disqualification of dissident lawmakers.

The top court verdict said that deviation is tantamount to weakening the political party and Article 63A protects political parties in the political arena. The court said that the purpose of Article 63A is to prevent defections in the party and Parliament should legislate in this regard, it is time to legislate on dissident members. Former PTI-led government had approached the SC for clarity on Article 63(A) as several PTI lawmakers were likely to vote on the no-trust motion against then prime minister Imran Khan, in a violation of the party policy.

In the reference, the government sought the apex court's opinion on inter-

pretations of Article 63(A) and which one should be adopted and implemented.

1. Whether defecting members cannot be prevented from vote under Article 63(A) for violating party policy?
2. Will the vote of defecting members can be counted or not?
3. Whether those who go against the party policy will be disqualified for lifetime or not?
4. What is the period of disqualification under Article 63(A)

**Hamza's oath-taking; LHC puts off PTI appeals indefinitely**

The Lahore High Court on Tuesday admitted the PTI pleas challenging Hamza Shehbaz's oath-taking to the office of chief minister of Punjab.

The full bench of the Lahore High Court reminded the concerned parties that the court had nothing to do with who was the advocate general directing them to decide their issues outside the court.

The court adjourned the hearing of the appeals without giving any date. A five-judge bench of the LHC headed by Justice Sadaqat Ali Khan heard the PTI appeals which challenged three orders of

the court regarding Hamza's oath-taking.

PTI lawyer Imtiaz Siddiqui told the court that the Supreme Court was being approached over the matter of ruckus in the Punjab Assembly and election of chief minister. On the further inquiry of the bench, the PTI lawyer said that as far as the matter of oath-taking of Hamza was concerned, the matter was before the full bench of the LHC. On behalf of Hamza, lawyer Mansoor Awan appeared before the bench.

Former Punjab Assembly secretary told the bench that his reply was discarded because it was against Hamza Shehbaz. The new additional advocate general Jawad Yaqoob said that the Punjab government had authorized him to oversee all the administrative affairs through a notification. On this, Justice Sadaqat Ali Khan remarked it was not court's problem who was the advocate general. Justice Shehram Sarwar Ch asked them to keep the court away from their political issues. Justice Sadaqat asked the petitioner what relief he wanted from the court. During hearing,



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of SINOVAC holds talks with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

## No compromise on security of Chinese nationals: PM

From Our Staff Correspondent

**ISLAMABAD:** Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday has said that there will be no compromise on the security of the Chinese nationals in Pakistan.

PM Shehbaz chaired a meeting on security of Chinese citizens which was attended by Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah, Ahsan Iqbal and others.

The meeting decided to tighten the security for Chinese nationals working on CPEC projects. He ordered the Ministry of Interior and security agencies to ensure foolproof security of the Chinese citizens. On the other hand, the delegation of Sinovac company called on PM Shehbaz Sharif and briefed the premier on the provision of Sinovac vaccine during the inoculation campaign. The company has shown interest in the assessment, prevention and cure of diseases in the country. PM Shehbaz thanked the company for their interest in invest-

ment in the country and assured to assist the company by all means.

PM directed the Health Ministry to immediately form a task force to work on the project so it can be started as soon as possible. The PM added that it is the first priority of the government to welcome foreign investment. He further said that Pakistan values China's assistance during the period of Covid-19.

**PM welcomes Chinese Co Sinovac's interest for joint venture**

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday welcomed the China-based biopharmaceutical company Sinovac over its keen interest for a joint venture to diagnose, prevent and treat diseases by investing in Pakistan.

In a meeting with a delegation of Sinovac, the prime minister said the government would extend all possible cooperation in this regard. The meeting was attended by General Manager Sinovac Qiang Gao, Director International Business Kevin Zhang, Federal Minister for Health Abdul Qadir Patel, Exec-

utive Director National Institute of Health Major General Professor Amir Ikram and relevant senior officials.

The prime minister was briefed on the vaccine provided by Sinovac to Pakistan during the COVID-19 vaccination campaign. The PM directed the Federal Minister of Health to immediately form a task force in this regard so that Sinovac could start work on the project soon.

PM Sharif said to increase the foreign direct investment in the country was one of the top priorities of the government. He said Pakistan valued the assistance extended by China during the pandemic.

**Imran culprit behind economic catastrophe, inflation: Marriyum**

Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Tuesday that former prime minister Imran Khan was the 'culprit, behind economic catastrophe, inflation and unemployment of the people'.

In a tweet, she said that Imran Khan could not escape accountability for four years woes inflicted upon the peo-

## Dollar again rises to Rs196

From Our Staff Correspondent

**KARACHI:** The US Dollar continued its upward trajectory and rose to Rs196 in inter-bank during intraday trade after gaining Rs1.82 against PKR. The local currency is being weighed by depleting foreign exchange reserves and uncertainty over the resumption of the IMF programme. The greenback was being quoted around Rs196 when compared to the previous close of 194.18.

## Fazl in favour of Nawaz to return

From Our Staff Correspondent

**ISLAMABAD:** Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman said on Tuesday that he was in favour of the fact that former prime minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supreme Nawaz Sharif should return to Pakistan and stay in the country and do politics.

In an interview with the BBC, the JUI-F chief said that it was decided to go to the polls after reforms in some institutions and it cannot be said how long it will take to carry out electoral reforms. "The government has more than 1 year and it cannot go beyond this," he said. He said that at present the biggest problem of the country is to fix the ruined economy, adding that Imran Khan has destroyed all the institutions in the last three-and-a-half years and now the only question before us is whether we can get the country back on the right track and how much time it will take. Imran Khan has left a ruined economy, he said.

## IMF, Pakistan talks today

From Our Staff Correspondent

**ISLAMABAD:** Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are scheduled to begin review talks in Doha from today (Wednesday).

According to details, the talks will go on for a week to discuss the release of the remaining \$1 billion tranche under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF). In this regard, the key concerns will be the increase in revenue collections and the removal of subsidies on petrol and electricity.



OMAN: Commanding officer Pakistan Navy Ship Shamsheer visit to Sultan Qaboos Naval Academy.

## Cabinet opposes holding snap election without reforms

**ISLAMABAD:** The Federal cabinet has opposed holding snap election without reforms leaving the final decision on allies of the coalition government. The federal cabinet met under the Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif in the PM House Tuesday to deliberate over diverse agenda items.

The cabinet while expressing deep grief over the death of UAE president Shaikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan expressed condolence with royal family of UAE. The cabinet congratulated UAE new president Shaikh Muhammad Bin Zayed hoping that the existing bilateral ties between the two countries will gain further strength. The cabinet while condemning the

terror related incidents in Karachi expressed grave concern saying all possible steps will be taken to improve law and order situation in Karachi.

The Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah was directed to evolve comprehensive strategy along with Sindh government in this regard.

The PM told the cabinet that he had contacted Sindh CM by telephone on the recent incident of terrorism and assured him the federation will extend full cooperation to the Sindh govt for elimination of terrorism. According to sources the cabinet members said it has become inevitable for the betterment of the country that tough decisions be taken and relief be provided to the masses as the poor segments of

society has been affected adversely in economic crisis. The rich should come forward to provide relief to the poor and play their role.

The cabinet members said we should take undesirable decisions if we have to take in the prevailing economic crisis. The reforms agenda should be taken forward. As per sources the SBP recommendation was rejected wherein they were to print commemorative currency notes at the cost of 6.64 million dollar on the eve of 75th anniversary of independence of Pakistan. The members said the country is passing through worst economic crisis and in the prevailing situation there is no need to print commemorative currency