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Imran will have to be answerable for all his sins very soon

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Big reshuffle of bureaucrats in Punjab likely

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and CM Punjab Hamza Shehbaz late Sunday decided to make changes in the bureaucracy at a large scale across the province.

According to sources, the decision was taken during a meeting between PM Shehbaz Sharif and Punjab CM Hamza Shehbaz.

It was considered that Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners in Faisalabad, Multan, Sialkot, Gujrat and other districts will be transferred.

It has been decided not to replace IG Punjab and Commissioner Lahore immediately, said sources.

Meanwhile, the secre-

taries of non-functioning departments will be replaced. The weekly report of each department will be taken by the Chief Minister himself. Hamza Shehbaz directed the provincial secretaries to improve their performance.

Ahsan, Hamza discuss political situation

Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal called on Punjab Chief Minister Muhammad Hamza Shehbaz in Lahore on Monday and discussed issues of mutual interest and general political situation in the country.

On this occasion, Ahsan Iqbal extended felicitations to Hamza Shehbaz on assuming charge of the Pun-



LAHORE: Finance Minister Miftah Ismail and President Habib Bank Muhammad Aurangzeb meet with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

■ PM imposes ban on export of sugar to stabilise prices

Shahbaz for simple banking system to facilitate consumers

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif on Monday stressed simplifying the process of the banking system and making it easier in order to facilitate consumers. The prime minister stated this in a meeting with Finance Minister Miftah Ismail, which was also attended by President Habib Bank Muhammad Aurangzeb, Chief Secretary Punjab, and other senior officials.

PM Sharif directed to formulate a comprehensive strategy to effectively resolve the economic problems of the people. He also ordered special arrangements to ensure the supply of food items to the general public at cheaper rates.

Another report adds: Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif has imposed a ban on the export of sugar and has also ordered strict action against those involved in smuggling sugar out of the country, on Monday.

According to details, the PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif said that it is our duty to fulfil the nation's needs first and also do that by keeping the prices of sugar stable. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif further ordered that the concerned departments should take strict actions against the hoarders, illegal profiteers, and those involved in making artificial scarcity to rise prices of commodities.

PM for formulation of strategy to address economic woes
PM Shehbaz Sharif called on Monday

for the formulation of a comprehensive strategy to effectively deal with economic problems being faced by the people.

In a meeting with Federal Minister for Finance Miftah Ismail and HBL President Muhammad Aurangzeb, he said special arrangements should be made to ensure supply of food items to the people at affordable rates, according to a statement from Prime Minister's Office.

The PM also demanded simplification of the banking system for the economic well-being of the common man.

Earlier today, the PM imposed a total ban on export of sugar, hoping to stabilise its price by making a higher amount of the commodity available in the domestic market. "Given the domestic demand, I have ordered a complete ban on the export of sugar," he tweeted.

PM decides to make amendments in NAB rules

The government of Pakistan on Monday has decided to reform the system to protect the bureaucracy and make changes including NAB rules.

Sources said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has approved the formation of a high power committee and the committee will be headed by former senior bureaucrat Nasir Mahmood Khosa.

The committee will also include former chief secretaries, former federal secretaries, former IGs and others.

Sources privy to these developments said that the other members of the committee will be appointed by the committee head Nasir Mahmood Khosa himself and the high power committee will have full authority to review the performance of any department and make recommendations. The NAB will make suggestions for necessary changes in laws and ordinances, including laws while the committee will also formulate a plan to bring about reforms and make suggestions on other measures including the performance of senior bureaucrats in the federation of Punjab, Sources added.

PM urges to take notice of Imran Khan's speech

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday pointed out that Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan had the worst talk about Pakistan's institution in his speech yesterday. He further urged to take notice of it, or else the situation will get out of hand, he said.

Speaking during the National Assembly session, the Prime Minister said that there has been a reduction in load shedding after May. Talking about the previous government he expressed that PTI government did not arrange for oil and gas on time. Gas was not imported when it was 3 dollars per unit in the world market. Oil mafia overshadows government, he said. The PM criticized the previous government saying that by not

PSX plummets 3.4pc in trading at selling pressure

From Our Staff Correspondent

KARACHI: Uncertainty over inflows from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), rising domestic political noise, and a bearish run in regional stock markets combined to take a toll on investor-sentiment as the benchmark KSE-100 Index plummeted 3.4% during intra-day trading on Monday.

Stocks across the board witnessed selling pressure with the benchmark index hitting a low of 43,315, a fall of 1,525 points or 3.4%, in intra-day trading. Index-heavy cement, banks, autos as well as oil stocks took a hit. At around 2:20pm, the KSE-100 Index was trading a little over 43,300, with investors opting to stay on the sidelines.

Last week, the stock market witnessed only one trading session on Friday as the market remained closed from Monday to Thursday on account of Eid-ul-Fitr. However, during this single session, the stock market remained in the grip of a bearish trend. Across the board selling on investor concerns over PKR instability, rumours of policy rate hike in the upcoming monetary policy and political unrest in the country have kept the market under pressure.

"Negative sentiment continues to persist as oil prices increased in the international market, whereas the government remains hesitant in revising the domestic rates, which has increased the price differential claim (PDC) on government subsidies," Ab-

dullah Umer, analyst at Ismail Iqbal Securities Limited, told media.

"In addition, rising political noise after former prime minister Imran Khan announced a long march towards Islamabad after May 20 is playing on the minds of investors," he said.

Umer added that the rupee has remained under pressure as well after the US Fed Reserve raised its interest rate.

Last week, the Federal Reserve raised short-term interest rates by 0.50%, the biggest jump since 2000 as part of an effort to tame down inflationary pressure.

Meanwhile, delays in the IMF programme, and a lack of good news from Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit to Saudi Arabia have also sent jitters down the market, added Umer.

Sana asks Alvi, Cheema to avoid any 'adverse step'

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah on Monday asked Punjab Governor Omer Sarfraz Cheema to resign respectfully and warned him as well as President Arif Alvi against taking any "adverse step". "A governor of a few hours should go home willingly and not cause disrespect for himself," the minister said in a statement, media reported.

He warned the governor as well as the president to not do anything to be scorned by the history and the people. Sanaullah also reminded President Alvi that he is bound to accept the advice put forth by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. "To not do so would be unconstitutional," he said, adding, "They should follow the Constitution and the directives of the Supreme Court and avoid a step that violates them."

According to the interior minister, the top court has ruled that President Alvi doesn't have any 'inherent' or 'residual' powers.

He observed that in a parliamentary democracy, the role of president is symbolic and he does not have veto powers.

Kh Asif vows to save institutions at all costs

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Monday has expressed the resolve to defend the state institutions at all costs and nobody will be allowed to malign them.

Speaking on the floor of the House, he said former Prime Minister Imran Khan is using inappropriate language against the armed forces and other constitutional institutions, which is condemnable. He said the armed forces of Pakistan are the guarantors of country's security, while Imran Khan is trying to create differences among the state institutions. He said Imran Khan has become a security risk. The Defence Minister said Imran Khan has nothing good on his credit to convince the people to support him. He said the former Prime Minister is making a futile effort to save his politics by using religious and anti-American cards. —APP

Pak reports first Omicron case

ISLAMABAD: The National Institute of Health (NIH) has detected the first case of Omicron sub-variant BA.2.12.1 in Pakistan.

This new sub-variant is causing increasing number of cases in different countries. He said that the best preventive measure "besides mask-wearing at crowded places, is COVID-19 vaccination." He added, "We strongly recommend getting vaccinated and all those due for booster must get the shots immediately." According to health experts, Omicron is a variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus that was first discovered in Botswana on Nov 11, 2021 and designated a variant of concern by the WHO on Nov 26. They said that Omicron has multiple different lineages including the original Omicron BA.1 (B.1.1.529) and also BA.2 and BA.3. —APP

Gold prices up by Rs.200

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold witnessed an increase of Rs.200 and was sold at Rs133,000 on Monday against its sale at Rs132,800 in the local market.

The price of 10 gram 24 karat gold also increased by Rs.171 and was sold at Rs.114,026 compared to its sale at Rs.113,855 whereas that of 22 karat gold also went up to Rs.104,524 against Rs.104,367, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained unchanged at Rs.1500 and Rs.1286 respectively.

The price of gold in international market decreased by \$24 and was traded at \$1860 compared to its sale at \$1884, the association reported. —APP

Pak, India to ask Indonesia over palm oil ban

MEDAN: Indonesia is coming under growing international pressure over its ban on palm oil exports amid soaring food prices worldwide.

The ban by the world's largest palm oil exporter has put pressure on edible oil prices at a time when supplies are already under strain due to poor harvests, the Ukraine war, and labour shortages caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, Al Jazeera reported on Monday.

President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo has justified the ban, announced on April 22, as a short-term measure after domestic prices of cooking oil, of which palm oil is a key ingredient, soared more than 50 per-

cent. While Indonesia's trade partners have yet to officially protest the ban, signs of discontent are emerging in countries, including India and Pakistan.

Analysts say it is likely that governments are making vocal representations to Jakarta behind the scenes. "So far, no country has officially complained, including from the major importers of Indonesian palm oil such as China, India, and Pakistan," Ega Kurmia Yazid, an economic analyst at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Jakarta, told Al Jazeera. "However, signs of an increase in food prices are starting to appear in these countries."



LAHORE: Prime Minister Shhbaz Sharif shakes hands with Jamil Athar Qazi, Chief Editor Daily The Business, Daily Jurat and Daily Tjarat and Senior Vice-President, APNS during a meeting.

NA condemns Imran Khan for maligning state institutions

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly on Monday strongly condemned PTI Chairman Imran Khan for maligning state institutions while addressing a public meeting in Abbottabad the other day.

The House unanimously resolved that no one would be allowed to malign state institutions for political gains. Soon after the speech of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf observed that any such attack on the state and security institutions launched with the purpose to weaken them was against the national interests. "Whosoever utters such words, he/she negates the national interest. Our Constitution does

allow anyone to launch such attacks on the armed forces or the judiciary."

Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif said the words uttered by the Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf chairman at the public meetings against the armed forces were extremely regrettable. Terming Imran Khan in the present scenario "Mir Jaffar and Mir Sadiq", he said the PTI chairman was in the pain as all the state institutions were working within their constitution ambit.

Recently, Khawaja Asif said, political parties in the National Assembly brought an in-house change through a constitutional way, passing a no-confidence motion against

Imran. He said there should be a national consensus to defend the state institutions so that no one could dare to malign them. "Abuse of national institutions will not be tolerated," he added. The defence minister declared Imran a security risk for the country. Former ministers and close aides of the former prime minister committed massive corruption, he added.

He said the Parliament was the mother of democracy and it was a constitutional obligation of the whole nation to defend the country's institutions. Khawaja Asif said the past regime of PTI had ruined the national economy that caused unprecedented price hike of edible items. —APP