

## Mustafa Kamal rejects NA-240 by-poll result

KARACHI: PSP Chief Mustafa Kamal on Friday accused that MQM-P was made victorious in the by-election in the NA-240 constituency of Karachi through rigging. Addressing the media in Karachi, he said that the election was 'stolen' from PSP which was the strongest contender among all contestants in the by-poll. He termed the election as 'bogus' mired in terrorism. Kamal claimed that 13,927 voters - around 3,500 more than the victor - voted in favor of PSP, but rigging was done to make MQM-P victorious. —

# The Business

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## By-polls schedule on Aamir Liaquat's seat announced

KARACHI: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday issued the schedule for a by-election on Karachi's National Assembly seat, NA-245, which fell vacant after the death of PTI MNA Aamir Liaquat Hussain. The 50-year-old televangelist passed away on last Thursday. The news of his untimely death sent shock waves across the country. As per the schedule issued by ECP, the by-polls will be held on July 27, while the candidates can submit their nomination papers from June 22 to 24. —From Our Staff Correspondent

## Farah's employee refuses to appear before ACD

LAHORE: Anti-Corruption Department has launched an inquiry against Munir Hussain, employee of Farah Khan, a close friend of former first lady Bushra Bibi.

The anti-corruption department had summoned Munir Hussain but he did not appear and asked for complete documents of the inquiry notice. Munir Hussain submitted the reply through his counsel. The lawyer said that his client will not appear in the court until he receives complete documents of the case.

This comes a day after the National Accountability Bureau launched an inquiry against the companies owned by Farah Khan, Bushra Khan and Ahsan Jamil Gujjar as part of their ongoing investigations into the activities of the former first lady's close associate. —DNA

## Earthquake jolts Punjab, KP and parts of Kashmir

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The Northern Areas of the country, including the federal capital and several cities in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces, were jolted by an earthquake on Friday.

According to the initial reports, different cities of the country which felt the earthquake are Swabi, Charsadda, Swat. While in Kashmir, Rawalakot, Khoi Ratta and Bagh was shook by the tremors. As per the seismic centre, the earthquake had a magnitude of 5 on the Richter scale and its depth was 218 km. While the epicenter of the earthquake was reported in Tajikistan and Afghanistan.

## Armed forces ready to deal with any threat: Sidhu

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmad Baber Sidhu says role of Pakistan Navy in protecting the country's maritime borders and interests is commendable. He said this while addressing the participants of 51st Naval Staff Course at Navy War College Lahore on Friday.

He said self-reliance in defense production is essential in the face of rapid changes in combat technology. The Air Chief said Pakistan's armed forces are always ready to deal with any kind of threat. —Online

## Tourists to embark on rickshaw adventure

MULTAN: A group of foreign tourists has found a unique way of incorporating rickshaws into an adventure as it is set to embark on a mission to cover around 745 kilometre distance from Islamabad to Khunjerab Pass on the three-wheelers.

"Our eight-member outfit include four adventurers from UK and one each from Italy, Australia, Canada and the Netherlands," the team leader Camall Julian Rohann told media here at Media Centre of Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) on Friday. "We'll depart on the expedition on Saturday and will complete it in seven days. We know we'll have to tackle a huge distance. The journey is quite tough but this is what the adventure is all about," he added.

He said the trip was aimed at promoting mountain sports and tourism in Pakistan. He said after the venture, the team would release Vlogs, stories and pictures of the mountain tourism of Pakistan, especially of Gilgit-Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. "The majestic scenes of Gilgit-Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are second to none. The snow-laden peaks and sun-kissed valleys along with winding roads at highly dizzying altitudes make the region a perfect tourist destination. We want the world should know about it," he said.

"Reaching there in the rickshaws is quite challenging. But we've years of experience as we have already been taking part in such voyages in India, Nepal, Thailand and Sri Lanka. We've also practiced here in Pakistan and are confident to complete the mission," he added.

After departing from Islamabad, the adventurers will stay at Balakot where tourist police will welcome them. Their next

erred a detailed presentation and apprised the audience at the D-8 Investment Forum about Pakistan's latest business reforms initiatives to improve ease of doing business.

She said Pakistan has seen incredible improvement in its security situation and introduced notable regulatory reforms which have been recognized globally including the World Trade Organisation, World Economic Forum and the World Bank.

**US condemns blasphemous remarks by two BJP officials**

The United States has condemned remarks by Indian ruling party officials about the Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) that have sparked an uproar in Muslim countries. US State Department spokesman Ned Price told reporters

that US condemns the offensive comments made by two BJP officials.

"We regularly engage with the Indian government at senior levels on human rights concerns including freedom of religion or belief and we encourage India to promote respect for human rights," he said.

Nupur Sharma, a spokeswoman for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party, on May 26 made televised remarks about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) that have triggered demonstrations across the Islamic world. The remarks set off diplomatic protests in wealthy Arab states that usually enjoy close relations with India. In Bangladesh, protesters demanded a formal condemnation from Prime Minister



BERLIN: The participants of the global money laundering and terror financing watchdog Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

# CM asks to prepare kitchen items plan at affordable rates

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shahbaz has directed to present a plan of action within three days for providing kitchen items at affordable rates and made it clear that easing the economic burden was his top priority. The government was cognizant of the common man's difficulties due to inflation and field visits must be regularly conducted to stabilize the availability of vegetables and price stabilisation.

While chairing a meeting about price control which was attended by Sardar Awais Leghari, Bilal Yasin, and Zeeshan Rafiq, political assistants, chief secretary, and administrative secretaries while commissioners and deputy commissioners participated through video link. The deputy commissioners and price control magistrates should ensure the availability of essential items at fixed rates and the DCs should personally monitor the auction processes in the markets. Similarly, the verified data of field visits should be uploaded to the dashboard while ensuring synchronization in field visits and the relevant data details; he added and made it clear that the officers failing to conduct field visits would have to be answerable as he was personally monitoring

every step taken for price control.

Rs.200 billion subsidy was given for subsidized flour and every penny should reach the common man; he said and asserted that no compromise would be made on the quality of subsidized flour. The exit points of Punjab province should be strictly monitored to control the smuggling of wheat and flour, the CM further said.

**CM chairs meeting for introducing institutional reforms**

Hamza Shahbaz chaired a meeting at his office which was also attended by Chairman Delivery Associates Sir Michael Barber and British High Commissioner Dr Christian Turner through video link.

The Punjab government and Sir Michael Barber agreed to resume the partnership. Sir Michael Barber would cooperate with the Punjab government for reforming the education, health and criminal justice systems. For this, a joint team would formulate recommendations to decide on the future roadmap for accelerated development.

Sir Michael Barber appreciated that tremendous work was done in the health and education sectors during the tenure of Shehbaz Sharif as chief minister of Punjab. Every possible assistance would be extended to the Punjab government again,

he added and the British high commissioner also announced to extend every possible support to the Punjab government.

The CM announced to provide quality healthcare and educational facilities in partnership with Sir Michael Barber as the government was desirous of providing quality facilities to the people while partnering with him. The government intends to introduce revolutionary reforms and a comprehensive health and education sector plan would be devised; he said and appreciated the yeoman services rendered by Sir Michael Barber during the previous PMLN tenure.

Sir Michael Barber has introduced wonderful health and education sector reforms during the chief ministership of PM Shehbaz Sharif and his experiences would be fully benefited upon to bring ease to the lives of the common man, he added.

**US Consul General calls on CM, greets on assuming the office**  
United States Consul General Mr. William K. Makaneole called on Chief Minister Punjab Hamza Shahbaz at the CM Office on Friday and felicitated Hamza Shahbaz for assuming the office of Chief Minister Punjab. William K. Makaneole expressed best wishes for Hamza Shahbaz and matters pertaining to mutual interest.

# Govt introducing integrated solid waste management: Awais

Jahangir Hayat

LAHORE: The Punjab government is introducing an integrated solid waste management system to provide a cleaner environment in the province, under which the services of private companies will be sought for cleaning the entire Punjab from villages to cities. This system of management will provide cleaning services to towns and villages not only once a year but throughout the year, the cost of which will be met by the local governments.

Special relief is being provided out of the funds for ongoing expenses. The chief minister's Rs 200 billion facility package under which a bag of flour sold to the people today for Rs 650 is available for Rs 490 is a link in the same chain. In addition, the Rs 142 billion concessional package which will ensure the provision of food items to the poor and needy people at affordable rates is the result of individual efforts of the Punjab Government.

These views were expressed by Provincial Minister Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari while addressing a post-budget press briefing here Friday. The provincial minister said that in the budget 2022-23,

the Punjab government has set a new record by presenting a development budget of Rs. 685 billion in which the budget for education and health has been significantly increased. The health budget has already doubled the amount allocated for health cards. In addition, the scope of health card facilities is being extended to the needy and poor people only, he added. In this year's budget, the Punjab government is paying special attention to road

**Post-budget press briefing**

infrastructure. In this regard, construction and repair of inter-district roads is one of our top priorities. He said that improvement in road infrastructure would facilitate business and reduce public difficulties.

The provincial minister told the participants of the post-budget press conference that the Punjab government was paying special attention to skills development among the youth for the consumption of local labor force in the global markets.

He said that one of the major challenges facing the country at present is food shortage. To meet this challenge, the Punjab government is ensuring an increase in agri-

cultural production. Farmers will be provided facilities according to the capacity of their land to ensure the cultivation of profitable crops. Innovative schemes for providing adequate amount of water to crops are being introduced along with research in the field of irrigation related to agriculture. Responding to a question on setting minimum wage for workers, the provincial minister told the press conference that our government was paying special attention to the rights of workers in accordance with the International Charter of Human Rights. Complaints of underpayment will not be ignored. He told the media that the Punjab government was also ensuring restoration of rights of prisoners in jails.

In the budget 2022-23, special funds have been allocated for the improvement of the condition of prisons and for the rehabilitation and welfare of the prisoners. Addressing a press conference on the occasion, Provincial Minister for Law Malik Ahmed said that three years of the previous govt in Punjab had passed as if there was no government in the province. In the last three years, no one has paid attention to cleanliness or repair of inter-district roads. The worst form of governance in the province is

## UBG demands lowering of interest rate

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry's United Business Group Friday urged the government to lower the interest rate, check dollar flight and cut in petroleum prices to beef up the fragile economy in the wake of swirling global inflation.

Presiding over a high level meeting of the group its chairman Shahzad Ali Malik Sitar-I-Intiaz said an urgent plan is needed on war footing to increase the industrial production in the coming years to give a boost to export. He said once export level increases, IMF and other monetary bodies will become flexible for rupees valuation besides curtailing the widening trade deficit which in turn will make it easier to utilise the remittances for repayment of loans.

He said an increase in the interest rate also raises the cost of capital resulting in the reduction of investment within the economy as well as slow down the growth rate of the economy overall which also curbing inflation. He said interest rate is estimated an important factor affecting the saving and investment.

Shahzad Ali Malik said persistently higher rate will ultimately affect how markets are priced, could slow markets and lead to higher level of unemployment that the economy has grown used to be. —Online

## Islamabad-bound PIA flight escapes accident

ISLAMABAD: A passenger aircraft of Pakistan International Airline (PIA) narrowly escaped an accident after the nose wheel tyre burst during landing at Islamabad Airport.

According to details, PIA's flight PK-246 - carrying more than 200 passengers - made a technical landing at Islamabad airport after its nose wheel tyre burst. The flight was coming from Dammam city to Islamabad.

The captain of the aircraft felt malfunctioned while closing the nose wheel while taking off from Dammam city of Saudi Arabia. The front tyre of the Boeing 777 burst during landing. However, the captain safely landed the plane at the airport. In a statement, PIA spokesperson said that the nose wheel burst due to high-speed temperature. The spokesman added that the incident took place three days ago and a thorough investigation was carried out after the plane landed in Islamabad.

Earlier on June 6, a passenger aircraft of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) narrowly escaped a major accident after its tires burst during landing at Jinnah International Airport, Karachi. The ATR plane - flying from Gwadar to Karachi - was carrying 60 passengers. The captain cautioned the air traffic controller before landing at Karachi airport. However, the pilot demonstrated their professional skills and capabilities by managing to safely land the aircraft on the runway. All passengers and crew members of the plane remained safe. —DNA

## Pakistan, Mexico 5th round of talks held

ISLAMABAD: The 5th Round of Bilateral Political Consultations (BPC) between Pakistan and Mexico was held in virtual mode. Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, the Additional Secretary (Americas), Ministry of Foreign Affairs led the delegation from Pakistan side while the Mexican delegation was headed by Ms. Amparo Anguiano, Director General for Africa, Central Asia and the Middle East at the Mexican Foreign Ministry. Pakistan's Ambassador to Mexico also participated in the meeting.

During the BPC, the entire spectrum of bilateral relations as well as regional and multilateral issues were discussed. The Additional Secretary underscored that Pakistan was committed to further deepen and broaden its ties with Mexico, particularly in the areas of trade, investment, science and technology, and people-to-people exchanges. The Additional Secretary thanked the Mexican government for supporting Pakistan in obtaining the Observer Status in the Pacific Alliance and hoped for enhanced cooperation with Latin America through the Alliance.

AS Tirmizi highlighted that Pakistan was firmly focusing on imperatives of geo-economics and pursuing policies that would promote peace, growth, development, and regional connectivity. The Pakistan side also underscored the importance of deeper diplomatic en-

## Pak invites D-8 countries to explore investment opportu-

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has invited the Developing-8 countries to explore investment opportunities in the country's Special Economic Zones. The invitation was extended by the Minister for Board of Investment and Special Initiative Chaudhry Salik Hussain while interacting with delegates from the D-8 countries on the sidelines of the D-8 Investment Conference in Istanbul.

The Minister said the government is working with a vision to transform Pakistan into a high-end commercial, technology and manufacturing hub. He assured them that the government will fully facilitate businesses and investors in the country. Earlier, Secretary Board of Investment, Fareena Mazhar deliv-

ered a detailed presentation and apprised the audience at the D-8 Investment Forum about Pakistan's latest business reforms initiatives to improve ease of doing business.

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LAHORE: Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu addresses the course members of 51st PN Staff Course during visit at Pakistan Navy War College (PNWC).