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Baligh for timely completion of development projects

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President highlights tapping youth bulge's potential



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For strengthening Pak-Saudi ties Saudi Crown Prince confers King Abdulaziz medal on COAS

ISLAMABAD: Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa was conferred with the King Abdulaziz Medal for making "significant contributions in defence cooperation" between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, the Inter-Services Public Relations said in a statement on Sunday. The army chief visited Saudi Arabia on an official tour, ISPR said. During the visit, Gen Bajwa called on Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who is also the kingdom's first deputy prime minister and defence minister and General Fayyadh Bin Hamed Al-Ruwaili, Chief of General Staff (CGS) of the Saudi Armed Forces at Jeddah, on Sunday. During the meetings, matters of mutual interest, bilateral defence and security cooperation and regional peace and stability were discussed. The army chief said that Pakistan "values its historical and brotherly relations with the kingdom and acknowledges its unique place in the Islamic world". Both sides agreed upon enhancing defence cooperation in the fields of joint training, air defence, counter-terrorism and communication and information domain. "They also agreed to further enhance cordial relations and deep spirit of brotherhood into enduring strategic partnership, being vital players in the region with significant responsibility towards unity of Muslim Ummah," ISPR said. —Agencies



MAKKAH: Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman decorates COAS Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa with King Abdulaziz Medal of Excellent Class.

PM directs for steps to protect people's lives, properties

■ Lauds performance of law enforcement agencies regarding fulfillment of FATF's action plan

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday, while expressing concern over a rise in street crimes in Punjab province, directed the provincial government to take measures for protection of lives and properties of the people.

The prime minister, chairing a meeting on the law and order in the province, said the public opinion could only be turned in favor of the police and law enforcing agencies only when they show performance. During the meeting, he was briefed on the law and order situation in the province, terror threats as well as the measures being taken to curb the scourge. The meeting also reviewed implementation of the steps to eliminate the sources of terror financing and relevant laws.

The prime minister appreciated the performance of the law enforcement agencies regarding the fulfillment of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)'s action plan. He said the whole nation was united against terrorism and stood side by side with the country's armed

PM greets COAS Gen Bajwa for receiving top Saudi honour

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has congratulated Chief of the Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa after the Pakistani Army Chief was decorated with the highest medal by the government of brotherly Saudi Arabia.

In a couple of tweets uploaded on Sunday, Shehbaz Sharif declared that Pakistan considers the security of Saudi Arabia as its own. "We are completely resolved to further cementing our multifaceted bilateral relationship including excellent defence cooperation," he added.

Extending his heartiest congratulations to Army Chief General Bajwa, Shehbaz Sharif said "It is a great honour for the people and the armed forces of Pakistan. Heartiest congratulations to Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa on conferment of King Abdulaziz Medal for his contributions to strengthening defence ties between our two brotherly countries." —DNA

forces. "Our struggle will go on till the elimination of terrorism. The government will never compromise Pakistan's security and defence," he remarked.

He said the role of the provinces in implementation of the National Action Plan would be revived which had subsided over last four years. The ignorance of the province's role in the National Action Plan during last four years also led to the rise in terrorism, the prime

minister viewed. He said that it was inevitable to ensure law and order in the country for revival of the national economy and country's development.

PM abolishes OTP system use for purchases at USC
Keeping in view the plight of the public, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has abolished the One Time Password

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RDA inflows rise to \$4.356b in May

ISLAMABAD: Inflow of remittances under Roshan Digital Account (RDA) rose to US \$4.356 billion by the end of May 2022 as compared to US \$4.167 billion till end of April, according to a latest data released by the State Bank of Pakistan.

The data showed that the inflows of remittances during the month of May were recorded at \$189 million as compared to \$245 million in April and \$290 million in March, 2021.

Roshan Digital Account (RDA) was launched by State Bank of Pakistan in collaboration with commercial banks operating in the country. These accounts provide innovative banking solutions to millions of Non-Resident Pakistanis (NRPs), including Non-Resident Pakistan Origin Card (POC)

holders, seeking to undertake banking, payment and investment activities in Pakistan.

As per data, expatriate Pakistanis from 175 countries had deposited the funds to 416,837 accounts opened through RDA.

The number of accounts has also been increased from 403,750 in April to 416,837 in May 2022, which means some 13,087 new accounts were opened in May. The scheme that started in September 2020 received lukewarm response from the overseas Pakistanis who deposited only \$7 million in the opening month, however with the passage of time the interest kept on increasing as the inflow reached to \$40 million in October 2020 and \$110 million in the subsequent month. —APP

IMF likely to indicate approval of accord today

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) will likely send the draft of Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies (MEFP) to Pakistani authorities today (Monday), a key step to indicate that the two parties have reached an agreement.

The government wants to conclude an agreement with the monetary watchdog for the revival of the \$6 billion program before the approval of Federal Budget 2022-23. It needs to get the budget approved by June 28. Official sources claimed that Pakistani will receive MEFP from the Fund today (Monday). Meanwhile, the Finance Ministry said in a statement Sunday that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) will hand over the economic and financial

policy for the renewed deal providing an economic relief package to Pakistan.

"The Pak-IMF deal providing Pakistan with the \$1 billion loans will be sealed by tomorrow as IMF plans to hand over Pakistan the economic and financial policy," the statement said.

Finance Minister Mifta Ismail said in the NA session that although the country is rife with negative sentiments expressed by many financial quarters it looks very likely that the restoration of the IMF programme is in the offing. Keeping in view the erratic policies followed by successive governments in respect of managing the economy almost all international financial institutions have become wary while dealing with Pakistan. —DNA

Govt striving to revive economy, says Rana Sana

FAISALABAD: Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah Khan said on Sunday that the government was trying its level best to revive the economy and, for the purpose, difficult decisions had to be taken by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to fulfill the commitments made by the previous government with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Addressing a workers' convention at the dera of Mehar Hamid Rasheed on Millat Road, he said, "We respect all state institutions. But the previous incompetent government failed to deliver during the last three years." Their focus was only to crush the opposition and in this connection, former prime minister Imran Khan himself reiterated loudly in the public meetings that he would not spare anybody belonging to the opposition.

He said that Imran Khan crossed all limits of victimisation and even during

his visit to America, he gave very irresponsible remarks. "When he (Imran) failed to trap me in false and bogus cases, he instituted a case of narcotics against me," Rana Sana added.

He said that due to ill-conceived policies and failure of Imran Khan, the country had reached the verge of default. "Imran Khan failed to focus on the real and core issues of the country and he signed an agreement with the IMF. Now we have to take difficult decision because of that agreement," he said.

"If we do not implement those agreements, the country might default and the poor and middle classes would be its major victims," he added.

The minister said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and allied parties did not want to increase the price of petrol. "In this connection, during negotiation with the IMF, we offered it to generate revenue from other sources, but the Fund re-

jected the proposal and said that as the previous government had given a written commitment, the state of Pakistan was bound to fulfill it," he added.

About recent load-shedding, he said that it was the outcome of failure of previous government in purchasing gas in time. He said that during the tenure of the PTI government, the top district administrative seats including deputy commissioner (DC) and assistant commissioner (AC) were won through bribe and, in this way, the PTI ruined the state institutions. The PTI had also created a situation which forced the opposition to move a no-confidence motion against ex-PM Imran Khan to save the country from total collapse.

About recent call by Imran Khan about a public meeting at Parade Ground, he said that the court had allocated the area for peaceful protest and the government would not restrain anybody from staging

Tarin, Umar lash out at govt for its regressive economic measures

ISLAMABAD: While lashing out at government for imposing and hiking taxes, former foreign minister Shaukat Tarin advised it to follow the previous taxation regime introduced by the PTI government by pursuing five programmes of broadening, using Point of Sale, supply chain automation, track and trace and single window in order to generate additional revenue.

Tarin in his tweet uploaded on Sunday wrote: "Why are you not pursuing our five programs of broadening, using POS, supply chain automation, track and trace and single window to increase taxes. We added Rs1.4trn revenue this year and would have added Rs1.9trn in '23 without crippling new taxes."

On the other hand, former development minister Asad Umar wrote in his tweet that the country made a rapid progress in the IT exports during last two years of PTI stint. But, he lamented, the regressive measures in the new budget were threatening this growth. Umar tweeted: "One of the most exciting things in last couple of years was rapid increase in IT exports. This industry can revolutionize Pak economy. We had made plans for massive investment in training people in tech skills. Regressive measures in the new budget are threatening this growth. —DNA

PIA resumes Lahore-Kuala Lumpur flight operation

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) on Sunday resumed Lahore-Kuala Lumpur flight operation after providing the same facility in Islamabad as the coronavirus restrictions eased.

"After Islamabad, the PIA has now resumed flights from Lahore to Malaysia. The first flight left Lahore for Kuala Lumpur this morning," PIA spokesman Abdullah Hafeez Khan said in a news release here. On the occasion, a simple cake-cut ceremony was held at the Lahore Airport and bouquets were presented to the passengers.

The PIA, the spokesman said, was already operating two weekly flights from Islamabad to Kuala Lumpur. He said the national flag carrier was gradually increasing the number of its domestic and international flights on special instructions of Minister for Aviation Khawaja Saad Rafique. Meanwhile, the Aviation Minister said the PIA was increasing the number of flights to different tourist destinations aimed at facilitating passengers during summer vacations. —APP

Winder dam to irrigate 10k acre land in Balochistan

ISLAMABAD: Winder Dam having storage capacity of about 54,000 acre feet of water storage capacity would irrigate over 10,000 acres land, said an official of the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) while talking to APP.

He said Winder Dam project would be completed in 4 years with the cost of Rs.13 billion in Lasbela district of Baluchistan.

Completion of the dam would increase ground level water and reduce shortage of the water in the area. Agriculture and livestock would be benefited in the area after completion of the dam.

He said with the positive efforts of the present Federal and provincial government's project was approved on March 16, 2020 which was previously pending since 2009 due to lack of funds.

He said water supply to the lands from the dam through canal could also be ensured. Replying to a question, he said that Rs1.1 billion would be saved in the construction of the project keeping in view the austerity measures of the central government. —APP



LAHORE: A view of closed shops at a market in Provincial Capital on Sunday as following the imposition of time restrictions in a bid to conserve energy and reduce power load-shedding. —Online

Call to remove federal budget anomalies

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry's United Business Group (UBG) Sunday demanded immediate removal of all anomalies in the federal budget to provide solace to already hard hit business community in the wake of rising global inflation grappling the region.

Talking to a delegation of business community led by Shahryar Shahid of Nainu's chain of pizza, chairman Shahzad Ali Malik Sitara-Imtiazi said on Sunday entire business community is worried about the glaring anomalies in the budget regarding customs duties, regulatory duties, income tax and sales tax etc. He said

UBG has already proposed that at stage of deregistering from sales tax regime, the condition of prior audit should be withdrawn to facilitate exit after three years provided a company, individual or association of persons (AOP) was filling a null return for the past five years due to discontinuation of their business. He demanded that there are no disparities in the rates of sales tax on raw materials at the import stage between commercial and industrial importers. He maintained that under section 8(b) of the sales tax act 1990, input tax adjustments in excess of 90pc of the output tax is not allowed. This condition should be withdrawn as the same has been already

extended to companies operating in various sectors.

Furthermore, withholding tax on the import of raw materials should be same for industrial and commercial importers, he added. Shahzad Ali Malik said "A turnover tax of 1.25 pc for traders, distributors, and dealers is unbearable as profit margins are hardly 2pc in markets sales and the turnover tax will continue to discourage SMEs from being registered in sales tax." He pointed out that 4.5pc withholding tax on local sales but normally trade margins were between 2-3pc and there was no way a business could absorb a 4.5pc withholding tax and continue to operate without vibration. —APP