

# Positive POST



Greenwich University

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## Pakistan's standing in the global rankings

### Overview

Pakistan observed a slight improvement in the overall international rankings in 2021 covering socio-economic and political outcomes of the country. Several elements complemented the prospects including successful democratic transition, efficient counter-terrorism measures leading to enhanced peace and security, and foreign direct investment inflows under CPEC, among others. Albeit, decoupling economic growth from human development suggests that the country needs to enhance its scores in health, education and standard of living by ensuring political will, equitable financing and efficient governance to ensure parallel growth for marginalized segments as well. Civil and political liberties must grow hand in hand to ensure a conducive environment for democratic dialogue and accountability which ultimately supports its nation building process.

### DEMOCRACY INDEX

Pakistan was placed at the 104th spot among 167 states on the global Democracy Index 2021, compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).

Index from 0 (authoritarian regime) to 10 (full democracy)

Compiled based on indicators covering: Electoral process and pluralism, Civil liberties, Functioning of government, Political participation, and Political culture.

### HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX

Pakistan ranked 161 out of 192 countries in the Human Development Index scoring 2022 0.562 out of 1.000 in 2018 compared to 0.560 out of 1.000 in 2017.

Index from 0 (low development) to 1 (very high development)

Compiled based on indicators covering: life expectancy, education, and per capita income

### PRESS FREEDOM INDEX

Pakistan's press freedom rank dropped to 145 out of 180 countries in the Press Freedom Index, An annual ranking of countries published by Reporters Without Borders (RWB), an international non-governmental organization dedicated to safeguard the right to freedom of information.

Compiled based on indicators covering: pluralism, media independence, environment and self-censorship, legislative framework, transparency, and infrastructure.

### TERRORISM INDEX

Terrorism Index in Pakistan decreased to 7.83 in 2021 from 7.92 in 2020.

Index from 0 (lowest impact) to 10 (highest impact)

Compiled based on indicators covering : Total number of terrorist incidents in a given year, total number of fatalities caused by terrorism in a given year, total number of injuries caused by terrorism in a given year and the approximate level of total property damage from terrorist incidents in a given year.

### ECONOMIC FREEDOM INDEX

In 2021, index of economic freedom for Pakistan was 51.7 score.

Though Pakistan index of economic freedom fluctuated substantially in recent years, it tended to decrease through 2002 - 2021 period ending at 51.7 score in 2021.

Compiled based on indicators covering: Market openness, Regulatory efficiency, Government size and the rule of law.

## September in History

**30 September 1940:** *Pakistan becomes a member of the UN by a unanimous vote of the Security Council.*

**21 September 1954:** *Constituent Assembly unanimously passes the resolution in favour of Urdu and Bengali as national languages.*

**September 9 1960:** *Pakistan achieved its first Gold Medal in 1960 Olympics, defeating India in hockey by 1-0 at Rome.*

**6 September 1965:** *Second war between Pakistan and India over Kashmir.*

**September 25 1968:** *Pakistan Television Dhaka Station is inaugurated.*

**September 16 1978:** *General Zia-ul-Haq is sworn in as President.*

**September 5 1986:** *Hijacked Pan Am Flight 73 is freed after commando action in Karachi.*

**16 September 2001:** *US Secretary of State Powell told that Pakistan's President Musharraf had agreed to support the U.S. anti-terrorist campaign.*

**6 September 2008:** *Asif Zardari wins presidential election with 481 votes.*

**4 September 2018:** *The Pakistani presidential election were held.*

**September 9 2018:** *Asif Zardari takes oath as President of Pakistan.*

Positive Post is a strategic effort to project achievement and contributions of Pakistan. While showcasing Greenwich University's cultural diplomacy initiatives, it also encapsulates a compilation of different developments complementing Pakistan's socio-cultural, economic and Political outcomes.

## Senate panel sees excessive billing as ‘national crisis’

Amid continued unrest over inflated power bills across the country, the Senate Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat on Friday termed the issue a national crisis.

Taking serious notice of the hike in electricity prices, the committee noted that a number of suicide cases linked to excessive billing have been reported from different areas.

Committee Chairman Rana Maqbool Ahmad, who belongs to PML-N, stated that a proposal has been forwarded to the power sector regulator to withdraw all taxes on electricity bills, at least for the underprivileged class.

The committee decided to receive a briefing from National Electric Power Regulatory Authority Chairman Waseem Mukhtar on the pricing mechanism.

Proposes tax waiver for less privileged, emphasises proactive measures and transparency in dealing with IPPs

“We have to adopt a proactive approach, and the committee should know details about owners of the independent power producers,” Senator



Ahmad said.

Committee member Kamil Ali Agha expressed the view that since this was a national dilemma, and people of Pakistan were suffering due to a serious economic crisis, relief should be given to the masses at this stage.

The committee was briefed by officials of the power division that a total of 164 fatalities occurred in various power distribution companies (Discos) due to accidents in the fiscal year 2022-23, along with 106 non-fatal injuries.

The committee sought further details on the recent cases of casualties and injuries caused by electrocution and substandard domestic electrical wiring in various Discos, and measures adopted to avoid fatal incidents.

The panel lamented that scores of cases were pending in the tribunal, and compensations have not been paid to the affectees.

It expressed reservations about the delay in proposing amendments to the Pakistan Penal Code 1860, regarding enhancement of punishment for violations related to gas theft and other illegal acts.

Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority Chairman Masroor Khan informed the committee that the interior ministry was not cooperating on the matter.

The committee directed the interior ministry to avoid deliberate delay over the issue.

The meeting was attended by Senator Agha, Senator Saifullah Sarwar Khan Nyazee, Senator Khalida Ateeb, Senator Mushtaq Ahmad Khan, Senator Engineer Rukhsana Zuberi, Senator Danesh Kumar, Senator Gurdeep Singh, Senator Naseebullah Bazai, Senator Mohammad Akram, Senator Saadia Abbasi and Senator Syed Waqar Mehdi.

*Courtesy: Dawn*

## ‘Out-of-the-box’ steps to appease bill-weary public

Just over a week after he convened an ‘emergency moot’ to find ways to give immediate relief to the public angry over rising electricity bills, interim Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar has now promised “out-of-the-box solutions” to provide respite to inflation-hit power consumers.

After making lofty commitments, the government had to flip-flop on its promises for relief after it failed to convince the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to dole out subsidies for electricity consumers. This is evident from the fact that despite week-long protests and shutdown strikes, the caretaker government has refused to budge on the issue, citing agreements with the IMF.

Sources said the power and finance divisions were reportedly in talks with IMF representatives, focusing on evaluating the potential impact of relief measures on circular debt, cash flow, and independent power producers (IPPs). Though there was no official word on these talks, sources said the government in its relief proposal put the estimated impact at around Rs6.5 billion, but the IMF insisted it should be somewhere around Rs15 billion.

In the proposal, the IMF was informed by the Pakistan government that relief provisions would have an impact of less than Rs6.5 billion. The

IMF, however, put the impact at about Rs15 billion and dismissed the plan, seeking a new roadmap for fiscal adjustments to cover the loss.

In an interaction with the foreign press corps on Monday, the interim PM said ‘realistic’ options to provide relief to the consumers were still being explored.

“The government would make informed decisions to satisfy the masses on the issue of electricity bills without deviating from the country’s commitments with the international financial institutions,” he added.

PM Kakar said that without redesigning the government structure, the interim setup was mainly focused on rearranging the fiscal and monetary policies to build an edifice for economic revival.

Calling the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) a strategy for economic revival, he said it focused on agriculture, mines and minerals, defence production, and information technology. However, he also spelt out the economic reform agenda of his government, saying that the imminent steps included the privatisation of two or more power distribution companies.

He said reforms were needed in taxation and



power sectors, and his government would leave behind a foundation for mid-level reforms. He said the interim government was pursuing a policy of doing the doable and providing a strategic direction to economic planning.

Prime Minister Kakar said regardless of any political association, the people of Balochistan welcomed every project under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which had entered its second phase.

Referring to the massive reserves worth \$6 trillion of copper and gold in Balochistan, the prime minister said the Reko Diq project was about to start. He called for all the stakeholders to formulate a model to explore the mineral-rich area. The prime minister expressed the hope that foreign investment projects worth \$25 billion each from Saudi Arabia and the Middle East would be realised in a time span of two to five years.

*Courtesy: Dawn*

## ECP to keep tabs on poll campaigns, expenses

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) said it would closely watch election campaigns and electoral expenses and effectively implement the code of conduct for the coming polls, to be finalised in consultation with political parties.

It said all arrangements in this regard were complete and that services of the army, police and other law enforcement agencies would be acquired to ensure that elections are conducted peacefully.

The watchdog said this during consultative meetings with the Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) and the PML-Q to discuss the roadmap for polls, likely to take place by mid-February.

The meetings were chaired by Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja. The ECP secretary and other senior officers also took part in discussions.

The TLP's delegation comprised party leaders Chaudhry Rizwan, Mohammad Qasim, Ziaur Rahman and Chaudhry Azhar, whereas the PML-Q was represented by Mohammad Tariq Hussain, Farukh Khan, Ghulam Mustafa, Rizwan Sadiq and Hafiz Aqeel Jalil.

The PML-Q delegation endorsed the ECP's decision on the fresh delimitation of constituencies before elections. Party leaders emphasised that a new delimitation was neces-



sary after the official notification of the final census results to ensure fairness.

The TLP leaders referred to Islamabad's local government (LG) elections and said the government increased the number of union councils from 50 to 101 and later to 125. They described it as a move directed at avoiding elections and believed that such an authority of introducing last-minute amendments to the local government law should not rest with the respective governments.

They suggested that union councils should be empowered for better governance at the grassroots level. They emphasised the need for deleting the names of the deceased from the voter lists and noted that returning officers must not be drawn from the judiciary, as they couldn't manage to focus on election matters.

The TLP leaders complained about "inadequate" media coverage of the party and proposed improvement in

the election monitoring to ensure transparency.

They also stressed that as per the Constitution, general elections should be conducted within 90 days of the National Assembly's dissolution. And even if fresh delimitation was required, additional staff should be deputed to complete the task in the minimum possible time, they said, and called for peace and stability in the country before the elections.

Both parties expressed confidence in the Election Commission's capabilities and commitment to transparent elections. The chief election commissioner reiterated the ECP's commitment to transparent delimitation and free and fair elections.

Mr Raja, the chief election commissioner, pointed out that under Article 140-A of the Constitution, the Election Commission was bound to conduct polls as per the local government laws.

He agreed that the governments in-

tervened in local government polls using different tactics. "They change the LG law when all arrangements to hold polls are made by the ECP," he pointed out, adding that the same happened in the case of local government polls in Islamabad.

He said the Election Commission ensured the removal of deceased and duplicate voters from electoral rolls by obtaining data from Nadra and union councils, making the voter lists accurate. He said it was an ongoing process.

Mr Raja said the ECP would consult political parties on the election code and its draft would be sent to political parties before the consultation to place them in a position to give proper feedback.

He said legislation was required on some proposals floated by the TLP and assured the party that the commission would play its role in this regard.

Meanwhile, former Senate chairman and PPP leader Mian Raza Rabbani observed it was inappropriate for diplomats to individually meet the chief election commissioner, as the ECP has entered the election mode after the National Assembly's dissolution.

He said it was also incorrect for diplomats in Islamabad to continuously make statements on the timing and transparency of elections.

*Courtesy: Dawn*

## Ali Zafar announced to make the anthem of the ICC World Cup's suggestion to give ideas to the fans

make the World Cup anthem after cricket fans reacted to the Cricket World Cup 2023 anthem released by the ICC.

Bollywood superstar Ranveer Singh has performed in the special song Dil Jashan Bole released on ICC's social media accounts. Cricket fans and social media users criticized the official World Cup anthem as disappointing, while Pakistani fans requested singer Ali Zafar to make the ICC anthem.

'This is the love of the hour.' The

action of reporters of TV channels who reached home caused Younis Khan to flare up, the video went viral

At the request of fans, now Ali Zafar has released a special video message on social media in which he has announced to make the anthem of the ICC World Cup.

The singer announced the good news to his fans and said that I have an idea under which I can prepare an anthem together with all of you.



The father mixed poison in the food of the children and his wife with trembling hands and took his own life, what was the reason?

Ali Zar said that those who are interested in music, whether it is com-

posing a song, writing lyrics, singing or giving ideas, support me. The singer also asked that you write your ideas, your lyrics and lyrics and tag me on social media and share them.

*Courtesy: Daily Pakistan*

## GB clerics promise peace efforts will be backed

Amid a peaceful rally held in Skardu demanding the arrest of a cleric and the government's announcement that the situation has turned normal, Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister Haji Gulbar Khan met with the delegations of Anjuman-i-Imamiya Gilgit and Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat on Sunday as part of efforts to maintain law and order in the region.

Though daily life in the picturesque region went on as usual, a sense of fear could be seen among people. Roads stayed open but they became unusable when people took to the streets.

Caretaker Federal Information Minister Murtaza Solangi said GB was "experiencing peace and stability", adding that the law and order situation was calm.

In a post on the social media platform X (formerly Twitter), he quoted a statement released by the GB home department which had dismissed reports regarding the deployment of Pakistan Army as baseless.

According to a press release, the delegations of Anjuman-i-Imamiya Gilgit and Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat Gilgit during their meeting with

CM Gulbar Khan appreciated the government's efforts to establish peace and order in the region.

They expressed their determination to play an organised role for the promotion of religious tolerance and brotherhood.

4G mobile internet facility remained suspended across GB for the second consecutive day on Sunday.

A protest demonstration was held in Skardu against the derogatory statements allegedly passed by Maulana Qazi Nisar Ahmed recently.

Mr Solangi in his post on X also said that all roads, trade centres, business activities and educational institutions in GB were open as usual.

The minister said that the services of the Pakistan Army and civil armed forces had been requisitioned "only to maintain law and order" on the eve of the chehlum of Imam Husain.

"Moreover, special measures have been taken for the security of the procession routes and imambargahs as per past practice," he added.

The information minister said the



GB home department had stated that Section 144 had been imposed across the region to maintain law and order, protect lives and property of people and avoid any untoward incident.

Meanwhile, the chief secretary's office in a statement said that amid misleading social media narratives, "let's set the record straight! Gilgit-Baltistan is experiencing peace and stability. Schools, colleges, markets, and roads are open, preserving a sense of normalcy".

Reports of unrest are baseless. No shots were fired, no damage to public and private property was reported. Protests are a natural political democratic response to local issues, managed peacefully in Gilgit-Baltistan. It remains a heaven of peace and harmony, it said.

Mr Solangi also shared some videos and pictures from Skardu, saying locals and foreign tourists were enjoying their stay in Skardu.

At a large rally held at Yadgar Chowk in Skardu, protesters demanded the arrest of Maulana Qazi Nisar Ahmed for allegedly hurting the feelings of a community by his insensitive remarks.

A wheel-jam and shutter-down strike was observed in Skardu against Maulana Qazi Nisar's alleged remarks.

Students of various institutions faced difficulties when roads are blocked by protests.

Besides, security of passengers at the Karakoram Highway was enhanced due to possible worsening of the situation.

*Courtesy: Dawn*

## UN organizes eight of 12 dialogues about sustainable development in Quetta

The United Nations and the district administration on Thursday organised the eighth of a series of 12 dialogues on sustainable development in Quetta aiming to bridge gap between people and government. In total, more than 1,000 local leaders living in 12 major cities across six provinces and territories are discussing the development challenges which they face, and how they impede economic and social progress in their districts. The dialogues are being held in the different languages spoken across Pakistan, said a press released issued here.

"These dialogues bring the United Nations closer to the people and the local governments that we serve, said Julien Harneis, UN Resident Coordinator in Pakistan. "We are actively listening to their con-

cerns and their ideas. They will work together, and with us, on accelerating progress to bridge inequalities and reduce poverty. We will share their suggestions with the federal Government as we focus on returning to sustainable development." In Quetta, the discussions focused on four topics chosen by the participants ahead of the event: governance, digital transformation, youth employment and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). Nearly 100 local leaders women and men, including youth participated together with senior officials from Quetta, the United Nations Resident Coordinator, and other UN staff. The 12 dialogues engage local leaders around development issues such as access to basic social services; gender equality and women's empowerment; climate change; sustainable, inclusive



economic growth and decent work; and basic social services. All are key to Pakistan's progress towards the achievement of the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Seven SDG dialogues have already taken place in Bahawalpur, Multan and Rawalpindi, Punjab; Hyderabad and Sukkur, Sindh; and in Mardan and Mansehra, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The dialogues will help inform discussions ahead of the global SDG Summit which the UN is organizing to accelerate progress towards the SDGs, halfway of the 2030 deadline. The

Government of Pakistan will participate in the event in New York on 18 and 19 September 2023. The SDGs, also known as Global Goals, are 17 objectives designed to help bring about peace and prosperity for people all over the world. They are an urgent call for action by all countries to work together towards ending poverty while improving health and education, reducing inequality, spurring economic growth and tackling climate change.

*Courtesy: app.com.pk/national*

## Consumers have no option but to pay bills: PM

As the nation grapples with bloated power bills and backbreaking inflation, interim Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar told people to pay their utility bills since there was no way around it, adding that negotiations with global lenders on the issue were underway.

Speaking to journalists at the Prime Minister's House, Mr Kakar blamed successive governments over the past 30 years for the economic mess and announced that a plan was being devised to reform agriculture, minerals, information technology, and textile sectors. He claimed there were minerals worth \$5 trillion in Balochistan.

He also made a new promise to power consumers, saying the government would announce a relief package regarding future consumption of electricity. "We will announce a relief package for electricity consumers in two days, but I cannot share its details because people will start criticising us if we cannot fulfil our promise for any reason," the premier said.

The statement ended a week-long uncertainty which was fuelled by his own remarks as well as his ministers' who had promised 'immediate' relief.

A day earlier, interim Finance Minister Shamshad Akhtar ruled out any relief and blamed IMF agreements for this.

It may be noted that a large number of people had missed the deadline for electricity bills, waiting for some relief measure, due to the promises of relief made by the government.

Speaking about the agreement with IMF, the interim PM said the government would fulfil Pakistan's agreements with multi-financial institutions "at any cost" and would not allow any deviation in this regard.

### Power sector issues

PM Kakar recalled that in the 90s, load-shedding came forth as a challenging problem and governments entered into contracts with independent power producers (IPPs) to increase power production.



"But we did not realise the repercussions of those contracts which included paying a surcharge," he said, pointing out that there were problems in transmission systems and the bill recovery process. The prime minister noted that while power bills were being burnt in one part of a city, electricity of around 200mw to 400mw was being pilfered.

"When our population was growing, we did not realise that our power structure remained dependent on fossil fuels and imported fuel. Whatever we were doing was on foreign reserves [in dollars] and that is impacting our other governance aspects."

### Who uses free electricity?

PM Kakar said an investigation was underway on reports of free units being used by some sections, asserting that things being said on social media couldn't be considered "gospel truth". "If someone tells me here that [electricity] units of judges, generals, and Wapda employees are free, should I accept that? We have to officially inquire about the factual position. It is mixed."

He said the military informed him that they do not consume a single free unit while same was the case with the air force and the navy. "They pay from their own budget, which is their allocated budgetary position," PM Kakar said.

Even in the judiciary, he continued, the consumption of free units was not the same as what was being portrayed on social media. The premier said only Wapda employees were entitled to free units, especially officers from grades 17 to 22. He said the government has made a plan under which the facility of free electricity will be given to Wapda

employees having grade 16 and below while officials serving in grade 17 and above will not have this privilege. "we are mulling over policy options and will come up with a policy within 48 hours," he added.

It may be noted that in February, JI Senator Mushtaq Ahmad, on a point of order, revealed in the upper house that a retired judge gets around 2,000 free electricity units and 300 litres of fuel among other perks and privileges.

Speaking about general elections, the caretaker PM said the government will only assist the Election Commission of Pakistan in holding the next general elections and all powers to fix date of the elections rested with the ECP. He said if the Supreme Court gave any directives regarding elections, the government would act accordingly.

Talking about the increasing wave of terrorism in the country, the caretaker PM said after the United States troops left Afghanistan, militants have become stronger. "They have grabbed military equipment of the US forces and now using them against Pakistani security forces. But we have firm determination that they have to surrender otherwise will fight till the last militant on our soil," he added.

'Right to electricity' Meanwhile, the New York-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) said that IMF should help Pakistan "uphold the right to electricity".

In a statement, HRW's senior counsel for its Asia division, Saroop Ijaz, noted that successive Pakistani governments "have failed to reform the country's energy sector, which has contributed to the crisis".

*Courtesy: Dawn*

## Fawad Hasan inducted into interim cabinet

The caretaker federal cabinet continued to expand as Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar inducted former bureaucrat Fawad Hasan Fawad, a confidant of PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif, into the interim cabinet, taking the total number of its members to 26.

The appointment was made by President Dr Arif Alvi on the advice of the caretaker premier under Article 224 (1a) of the Constitution, according to an official press release.



Earlier, Dr Kausar Abdullah Malik was appointed as the caretaker federal minister. President Alvi administered the oath of office to Dr Malik.

At present the federal cabinet comprises 26 members, including 18 ministers, three advisers and five special assistants to the prime minister.

Media reports had earlier suggested that PM Kakar had decided to form a small cabinet and personally review the profiles of all possible candidates.

When contacted, Information Minister Murtaza Solangi insisted that the caretaker cabinet was still "not very big".

"Is this cabinet continuing to expand unconstitutionally/illegally? How big do you think the caretaker government should be legally/constitutionally? We have 17 ministers and with Fawad Hasan Fawad, it will be 18 now," he said.

Mr Fawad has served as principal secretary to former prime minister Nawaz Sharif. He had faced NAB investigation for several years in an alleged white-collar crime case.

*Courtesy: Dawn*

## Pakistan needs energy reforms to break free of debt: US official

Pakistan needs to undertake energy reforms and opt for renewable energy sources, said a senior US official, stressing that reforms suggested by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) would help Islamabad break the “vicious circle of debt and international financing”.

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Elizabeth Horst, who heads the Bureau of South and Central Affairs at the State Department, emphasised the need to implement reforms to meet future challenges.

Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar is expected to discuss the economic crisis with US and IMF officials when he meets them in New York later this month. His delegation also includes the finance minister.

“These are tough economic times in Pakistan, in the United States, and around the world,” said Ms Horst when asked how Washington could help Islamabad avoid an economic collapse. “We are working every day to help Pakistan make progress on economic reforms that will make it more competitive and better prepared to meet future challenges,” she added.

Elizabeth Horst says Washington helping Islamabad on economic front

The US official then underlined

recent US efforts to help ease the pressure of economic distress, including assistance for the victims of last year’s devastating floods, which includes more than \$215 million for emergency shelter, disaster relief, and food.

“At the same time, we are building for the future helping Pakistan move from recovery to resilience. Through the US-Pakistan Green Alliance, we are making strategic investments in energy, water, and agriculture that strengthen climate resilience, drive forward energy transformation, and foster inclusive economic growth,” she said.

‘Need for investment’  
Underlining the need to encourage foreign investments in Pakistan, she said, “We want to see Pakistan succeed in an increasingly competitive market for US trade and investment. It is no secret that there are huge upsides for both countries when US companies invest in Pakistan.”

US investments in Pakistan create high-paying, 21st-century jobs, offer training and skill development for workers, and help ensure respect for international labour standards, she said.

Without mentioning investments by other nations, such as China, which Washington claims has increased Pakistan’s debt burden, the official said, “US companies bring investment, not loans, and they give



back to local communities through corporate social responsibility initiatives. That’s why it’s so important that Pakistan makes progress on economic reforms – to instil the confidence and certainty needed for companies to invest.”

When reminded that consumers in Pakistan were refusing to pay their electricity bills because they could not and because of an agreement with the IMF the government cannot lower the bills, she said with global economic conditions driving up commodity prices, many countries were grappling with high inflation and its “very real impacts on people’s lives and livelihoods.”  
Energy reforms

But she defended the IMF-backed programmes. “One of the things people frequently overlook is that the IMF is working to help Pakistan make needed reforms to break free from a vicious cycle of debt and international financing,” she said. “Reform in the energy sector has been needed for a long time. And there

are actually programmes in place to help mitigate the burden on the poorest.”

Acknowledging that “it is a universal truth that no one likes paying more bills”, she warned: “Without energy sector reform, Pakistan’s entire economy will continue to struggle” and “we, and Pakistan’s other friends, are here to support Pakistan’s efforts in that regard.”

Such reforms, however, “will take strong leadership and patience, but without making these changes on issues like taxation and investment, for example, Pakistan will not be able to stand on its two feet,” the US official said.

The IMF programme, she said, was only a part of the reforms that Pakistan needs to take. “A prosperous, economically stable Pakistan marked by inclusive growth that provides opportunity to future generations is in the Pakistan people’s interest, and in our interest as well,” Ms Horst explained.

*Courtesy: Dawn*

## India vs Pakistan: Asia Cup 2023 Super 4 cricket match – as it happened

This blog is now closed. Thanks for joining us. These were the updates from the Asia Cup one-day international cricket match between India and Pakistan on September 11, 2023.

India beat Pakistan by 228 runs in an Asia Cup Super 4 match at R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Pakistan was all out after scoring 128 runs.

India had set Pakistan a target of 357 to win.

Kuldeep Yadav picked up five wickets as Pakistan suffered a batting collapse.



Virat Kohli finished 122 not out, while KL Rahul was 111 not out as

India made 356-2 in their 50 overs. An extra day was a last-minute ad-

dition to the contest – the only game to get the advantage other than the final – after a group meeting between the two teams a week ago was washed out due to rain at Pallekele International Cricket Stadium in Pallekele, Sri Lanka.

After several rain-enforced delays and hours of waiting, that was the end of Pakistan vs India in the Super Fours of this year’s Asia Cup.

Thanks as ever for joining us, and we hope you return for our coverage on Tuesday.

*Courtesy: www.aljazeera.com/*

## Breaking traditions: CJP Isa shuns VIP protocol, state vehicle

In an unprecedented display of humility and a break from established traditions, the newly-sworn in Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP), Justice Qazi Faez Isa, opted for a modest approach.

CJP Isa declined the customary privileges and honours that come with his high office, showcasing a departure from the norm, Express News reported.

Justice Isa eschewed the customary state vehicle and protocol that typically accompany the office. Instead, he arrived at the Supreme Court building today in his personal 1800cc car, breaking from the practices of his predecessors. Furthermore, he opted for standard security measures, consistent with those provided to other esteemed judges of the apex court, foregoing the VIP state protocol.

Outside his office chamber, CJP Isa chose to be identified simply as 'Justice Qazi Faez Isa,' without incorporating the title of Chief Justice, marking a unique departure from established tradition.



Upon his arrival at the Supreme Court building, Chief Justice Isa received a warm reception from a considerable gathering of Supreme Court staff, who greeted him and presented him with a bouquet.

During a brief address to the assembled staff, Justice Isa emphasised the role of the Supreme Court in resolving people's problems and called upon the clerical staff to treat those who seek justice with the same hospitality and care one would offer guests in their homes.

"People do not come to the Supreme Court happily, but they

come here in an attempt to resolve their problems. Keep the doors of justice open and provide assistance to those who come seeking it," stated CJP Isa.

He also expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the staff and requested their cooperation in ensuring the fair dispensation of justice.

"Thank you. I require your full cooperation. I will discuss this with you in greater detail," Chief Justice Isa conveyed before proceeding to his chamber.

Immediately after taking oath on

Sunday, Justice Isa moved swiftly to begin the judicial business in the new era, forming the full court on the high-profile Supreme Court Practice and Procedure Act case, and bringing in the country's first ever female registrar.

Following the swearing-in of Chief Justice Isa, the apex court issued roster for the full court. It said all the 15 judges of the apex court, led by the Chief Justice himself, would hear the Practice and Procedure Act case today.

Chief Justice Isa also ordered important appointments in the Supreme Court, inducting Jazeela Aslam as the registrar, Dr Muhammad Mushtaq Ahmed as the secretary to the chief justice and Abdul Sadiq as the staff officer of the chief justice.

At his oath taking ceremony, Justice Isa was flanked by his wife Sarina Isa as the notification for his appointment was read out. His term in office as the CJP will span 13 months, ending on October 25, 2024.

*Courtesy: The Express Tribune*

## Fuel prices may finally come down after two months

The prices of high-speed diesel (HSD) and petrol are estimated to be reduced by about Rs15-19 per litre for the Oct 1-15 period, in what could be the first decrease in two months, mainly because of the rupee's appreciation.

The prices of the two essential fuels were last cut in mid-July when petrol was reduced by Rs9 per litre to Rs253 and diesel by Rs7 per litre to Rs253.50.

Sources told Dawn that based on the existing tax rates and other overheads, the petrol price could come down by Rs15-19 per litre in the upcoming review because of about a 2pc reduction in its international price from \$101 to \$99 per barrel and around Rs10.5 rise in the rupee's value against the US dollar.

The calculation is based on the actual impact in the first 12 days of

September and estimates for the last two days. Petrol is mainly used in private transport, small vehicles, rickshaws and motorcycles and directly affects the budget of the middle- and lower-middle classes.

Petrol, diesel rates may fall by up to Rs12 and Rs19 per litre, respectively

Similarly, the HSD's price could also go down by Rs9-12 per litre if the government decides to maintain the petroleum levy at Rs50 per litre. However, if the finance ministry increases the levy by Rs5 per litre to meet the budgetary target, the diesel price would be cut by Rs5-8 per litre.

Unlike petrol, the HSD's price in the international market rose by about \$1 per barrel to \$122 in recent weeks.

Most of the transport sector runs



on this kind of diesel. Its price is considered highly inflationary, as it is mostly used in heavy transport vehicles, buses, trains and agricultural engines like trucks, tractors, tube wells and threshers. The fuel particularly adds to the prices of vegetables and other eatables.

This will be the first opportunity for the caretaker government to reduce petroleum prices. Between Aug 15 and Sept 15, petrol and high-speed diesel prices jumped by Rs58.43 and Rs55.83 per litre, respectively. Both products are currently selling

for Rs331-333 per litre at the retail stage.

At present, the GST is zero on all petroleum products, but the government is charging Rs60 per litre petroleum development levy on petrol and Rs50 per litre each on HSD and high-octane blending component and 95 RON (Research Octane Number) petrol. The government is also charging about Rs22-23 per litre customs duty on petrol and HSD.

*Courtesy: Dawn*

## Legendary singer Shazia Manzoor awarded with Queen Elizabeth honour

Legendary Pakistani singer Shazia Manzoor has been awarded with Queen Elizabeth honour recently, it has been revealed. The Chan Mere Makhna famed crooner is currently on tour in Canada, enthraling the audience with her performances.

Canadian parliamentarian Shafqat Ali took to Instagram and shared pictures with the Pakistani star, revealing that she has been honoured with Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Pin.

"It was such an honour to host Shazia Manzoor, a recognized and renowned Pakistani singer, and to recognize her for her contribution to art and culture and her commitment to bringing South Asian



communities together through her song," Ali captioned a post with a carousel of pictures from the ceremony.

"It was such a blessing to meet the acclaimed Pride of Performance of Pakistan and to award her with

Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Pin. Thank you for visiting and we hope to see you again soon," he commented. Manzoor later reshared the post on her own official account with a heart emoji.

However, Her Majesty the Queen's

Platinum Jubilee Pin isn't the only honour the Batiyaan Bujhai Rakhdi singer has been conferred with. Earlier this year, it was announced that Manzoor will also be awarded Pride of Performance by the state of Pakistan next year for her contributions to the industry. The ceremony will be held next year on March 23.

In a momentous announcement that underscores the nation's commitment to recognizing exceptional talent, the President of Pakistan revealed a distinguished list of 694 individuals, both from within the country and abroad, who are set to receive civil awards for their remarkable contributions spanning a myriad of domains.

*Courtesy: The Express Tribune*

### Five Pakistani women to compete in 'Miss Universe' Pageant

Karachi's beauty queen Erica Robin was crowned the winner of the first-ever 'Miss Universe Pakistan' contest in a ceremony held at the Brennia Kottefaru resort in Raa Atoll, Maldives.

Robin, 24, has been working as a fashion model in Pakistan.

Earlier, five contestants had been chosen as finalists from among 200 applicants.

The four finalists Erica Robin was competing against were 24-year-old Hira Inam, 28-year-old Jessica Wilson, 19-year-old Malika Alvi and 26-year-old Sabrina Wasim. In the run-up to the contest, the five finalists had also done a photo shoot titled 'The Power in Modesty'.

"I am honoured and humbled to be the first ever Miss Universe

Pakistan and I want to highlight the beauty of Pakistan," Robin said upon winning the Miss Universe Pakistan title.

She also said that Pakistan has a beautiful culture that the media is not talking about and the people of this country are very generous, kind and hospitable.

"On top of that, I would like to invite everyone to visit my country and try the most sumptuous Pakistani cuisines and explore our enchanting nature, our snow-capped mountains, our greeneries and our progressive landscapes," she said in her message.

During a camera appearance before the contest, Erica Robin had also thanked pageant fans for "believing in me and motivating me to come out of my comfort zone. This is not what I expected and I



just want to motivate other women as well who [are] talented and who need a little push to come out of the box and do what they can."

The Miss Universe Pakistan contest is a franchise owned by the Dubai-based Yugen Group which also owns the franchise rights to Miss Universe Bahrain and Miss Universe Egypt. The Miss Universe Pakistan contest has, however, been mired in controversy with social media outrage over

Pakistan being represented in this year's Miss Universe contest and the government denying it had given approval for such contest and representation.

The Miss Universe beauty pageant is one of the longest-running beauty contests, and is now in its 72nd year. This year's pageant will be held in November in El Salvador.

*Courtesy: <https://www.geo.tv/>*

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