

PAK LAW PUBLICATION

NEWS

UPDATES

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Top Stories

Aitzaz flays Nisar, sows the seeds of rift in Prime Minister's camp

September 06, 2014

ZAHEER ABBASI & NAVEED BUTT

Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) said on Friday that the government would not be able to overcome the PTI-PAT challenge in the absence of opposition's support. Speaking to the joint sitting of the Parliament convened to discuss the political situation in the country, opposition leader in the Senate Chaudhry Aitzaz stated that he could take the entire opposition out of the Parliament making it impossible for the government to counter the Dharna challenge and ward off threats to the very existence of parliament.

Aitzaz also reminded the ruling party that how Nawaz Sharif personally appeared in the Supreme Court in the Memogate case against the then President Asif Ali Zardari. "We have provided support to the government to end the prevailing crisis even in the face of strong criticism from our party workers".

He said that the statements and speeches of PTI chief Imran Khan were touching people's hearts. According to him, Imran will not be considered by masses as a loser even if he returned without achieving his pronounced objectives. People would remember him as a brave man of a vanquished army; he said adding that on the other hand Prime Minister and his team would be considered otherwise, implying that they would be known as victors of an army that suffered a major defeat. He said the gloomy faces of ministers and their body language depicted a troubled state of mind. Aitzaz asked the Prime Minister why he was continuing to protect those who had already let him down.

"I have spoken with great continuity against sit-ins with historical references; I do not want Prime Minister to fall this way in spite of serious reservation about his style of governance and arrogance," Aitzaz said and turned towards ministers' benches. He asked them: "grow up from the level student union debating societies and show some seriousness."

About LPG quota controversy, he said his wife had been doing this business and Chaudhry Nisar must be aware of the fact that LPG quota was deregulated in 2000 and it would have been cancelled by the then dictator Musharraf, if LPG quota was awarded by the government. "LPG quota is a private business," he said. He protested that he was being described as a representative of land mafia but they don't remember that as a lawyer his clients also included former Chief Justice of Pakistan Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry and Nawaz Sharif.

"I have requested the Prime Minister the other day to find out whether his people sitting in the house were stoking fire". He said that he had been in politics for the last fifty year and his family had made a lot of sacrifices in the Pakistan Movement. "I have resisted all the four dictators and did not call off lawyers' long March for restoration of former Chief Justice on the request of

Kiyani," he said and added that he called off protest after the speech of the then Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani and consultations with senior lawyers Ali Ahmad Kurd and Munir Malik.

Leader of Opposition in the National Assembly Syed Khursheed Ahmed Shah demanded of the Prime Minister to ask Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan to tender an apology on the floor of the House. He said: "the Prime Minister has to decide that at least he [Chaudhry Nisar] must apologise on the floor of the house, which is a minimum punishment. We are not demanding of the Prime Minister to expel him [Nisar] from his Cabinet in this situation. But we want that this person should apologise for his statement."

Khursheed Ahmed Shah said: "honourable Prime Minister, he [Nisar] does not belong to your party. The person also misbehaved when Maulana Fazlur Rehman and Mehmood Khan Achakzai were sitting in the chamber of Prime Minister on Thursday and he later spitted venom in front of journalists when he could not contain himself."

He said that a Parliamentary Committee comprising the opposition and government members should be constituted to investigate the matter. "Why we blame others for acting like puppets when people within PML-N are doing the same. It is being said a future prime Minister is sitting in the Parliament while other is waiting outside the Parliament," he added.

The Opposition Leader said, "it is not new Mr Prime Minister that traitors are in your ranks. Efforts are being made to divide the House and sabotage the efforts of this joint-sitting of Parliament. They do not want the success of the Prime Minister. Some people are sitting in the government and desperately waiting for their turn. "

He said that the opposition did not want to weaken the government. He said the prime minister must be wondering why the opposition did not boycott parliament's session even after such provocation. He then referred to "too many snakes in the grass". "Our willingness to stand by the government should not be taken as our weakness the Honourable PM," he said.

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Prime Minister says he had supported PPP government against Qadri

September 06, 2014

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has termed a clash between Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan and Leader of Opposition in Senate Aitzaz Ahsan unfortunate and requested the opposition to ignore it. Speaking in a joint sitting of Parliament on Friday, he said that as soon as the incident came to his knowledge, he instantly contacted Leader of the Opposition in National Assembly and Aitzaz Ahsan to express his apologies.

He said if he was out of power he too would have responded to the present situation by lending full support to the incumbent government to fight off the challenge to parliament and constitution. He said he would like to remind the House that he had galvanised parliamentary support against Tahirul Qadri when the latter launched a long march in 2013 to dislodge the PPP

government in 2013.

He said that all political parties should support each other in such circumstances by setting aside all their mutual differences. "We should have to unite for democracy and rule of law and I am proud of being a member of this parliament wherein all the opposition parties have set aside their political differences to support the greater cause of upholding rule of law and constitutionalism," he maintained.

He said that he was asked by the opposition parties not to resign from the office, adding that power was no longer a bed of roses to him in view of massive problems in the country. He added that the government was in talks with the two parties sitting outside the Parliament to resolve the prevailing political impasse but their demands were not people-specific. He said that two heads of state had already cancelled their visits and there were doubts about Chinese President's visit to Pakistan. He further stated that \$34 billion investment agreements were planned to be signed during the Chinese president's visit to Pakistan. This is the agenda of Pakistan development which may be in jeopardy due to protests and sit-ins, according to him.

The Prime Minister said, "I again apologise to opposition leader Khursheed Shah and Aitzaz Ahsan for the last night's incident and once this greater purpose is achieved, the government and opposition will resolve their minor differences amicably."

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Zardari for engaging 'establishment'

September 06, 2014

Former President and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari has underscored the need for engaging the 'establishment' to steer the country out of prevailing crisis. "We will have to talk with all small and big political parties and even engage the establishment to resolve the crisis. We have to take them and establishment on board. Mind you, we do not consider that the establishment is not part of our talks. We need to engage them also and always keep them on right side. We have talked to all the democratic forces to take the country forward," former President told a selected group of journalists at Zardari House on Friday.

He said that his party was not favouring the PML-N government or Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif but it stood for democracy. About a possible "way out" from the prevailing political crisis, PPP co-chairman said that there was a need to have more and more understanding between the political forces. About any likely change in his party's stance, Zardari reaffirmed that PPP would stand by democracy and he could only assure Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif that his party was with him for the greater cause of democracy. "I can't give any advice to him," Zardari plainly said when asked whether he would like to give any suggestion to an embattled PM.

Asif Ali Zardari didn't rule out an international conspiracy behind the current turmoil. He, however, did not elaborate his point in response to a question. Zardari stated; "I am here in capital to save democracy". Answering another question, Zardari also rejected a widely-held perception that he was playing a "double game" and said, "this impression must be dispelled; when I will fight, it will be open and if I will make any compromise it will also be open."

He again urged for a dialogue to resolve the existing political crisis. Zardari pointed out that a jirga of opposition parties met with the protesting parties; however, he added he was unaware about its progress. Speaking about a tense situation in parliament where PPP's stalwart Aitzaz Ahsan hit out at Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan for levelling allegations against him, Zardari said that Aitzaz was quite justified in his response to allegations against him.

However, he said he wouldn't like any deterioration in the present cordial environment in the parliament. Answering a question, he said, "I was put behind bars for five years during Musharraf's era but I allowed him to leave the country. I am always in favour of moving forward. I visited China nine times. We have commercial relationship with China. We also have inked agreements on currency swap and Gwadar with China and Nawaz Sharif should also move forward."

PPP co-chairman expressed a deep sense of anguish over the cancellation of Chinese President's visit to Pakistan. According to him, Pakistan cannot afford cancellation of Chinese President's visit. He recalled that he visited China nine times and his 10th visit of China took place only recently "in accordance with the China policy that I laid down."

Zardari also rejected the perception that PPP being an opposition party had conceded ground to another major opposition party PTI and said that PPP was not allowed to contest elections freely that's why everyone was acting like a "Dhula [bridegroom]". About criticism by PPP Punjab chapter for being soft on an anti-PPP PML-N government, Zardari said that no one in PPP had rendered more sacrifices than him. According to him, he will satisfy them when the time will come.

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US says it still supports Nawaz

September 06, 2014

The United States has said it opposes efforts to impose extra-constitutional change to the democratic system in Pakistan. In a briefing, Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson of the US State Department said that Nawaz Sharif is the elected Prime Minister of Pakistan and the US opposes any effort to impose extra-constitutional change to the democratic system.

She said US is carefully monitoring the demonstrations in Islamabad and it encourages all the parties to work together to resolve their differences through dialogue. Marie Harf further said US Ambassador to Pakistan remains in touch with Pakistani officials. In response to a question Marie Harf said, "Yes we still support Nawaz Sharif because he is the elected leader."

She said the United States still believes Pakistan's last elections were free and fair, as it did in 2013 when the polls were held. In 2013, President Barack Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry issued a statement soon after the results were announced, congratulating the people of Pakistan for holding such successful elections. "I also want to make clear that our embassy is fully open there in Islamabad," she added.

Sit-ins cause Rs 500 billion loss: minister

September 06, 2014

TAHIR AMIN

Minister for Railways Khawaja Saad Rafiq has said that sit-ins of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan Awami Tehreek (PAT) have caused a loss of Rs 500 billion to the country. Talking to media persons outside Parliament House on Friday, he said sit-ins had badly damaged the image of the country, as the Chinese President was in jeopardy. He appealed to PTI and PAT to end their sit-ins for the sake of national development.

The minister said the government on its part was making all-out efforts towards ensuring that the Chinese President's visit must not be postponed. He said the Chinese president was to sign agreements worth billions of dollars. According to him, "if the Chinese president visits India and not Pakistan it will not be something to be proud of." Rafiq said that Imran and Qadri would be required to give an answer to the nation.

He said energy was the main issue of the country and nobody was ready to come to Pakistan due to terrorism. Recognising credibility of the prime minister, the Chinese government agreed on the government's economic reform agenda and showed willingness to invest in the country. He further said that Chinese agreed to invest in coal power projects and other projects to help overcome end the power crisis.

The government was going to sign MoUs on the main line from Peshawar to Karachi and power plants to end loadshedding; however, all these planned activities had been postponed. Rafiq said that the PML-N government assured foolproof security to the Chinese president during his visit. He also said that the government was unable to focus on IDPs due to the protest demonstrations being staged in the federal capital. Commenting on allegations levelled by Chaudhry Nisar on Aitzaz Ahsan, he said that both leaders were respectable for him and the issue should not have been taken up in the Parliament. "Anything that create tension must be avoided, as our job is to extinguish fire," he said.

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OICCI survey paints gloomy picture

September 06, 2014

Business community has suffered a major setback due to present political impasse as almost half of the scheduled business meetings with overseas shareholders and regional management in Pakistan have been cancelled or postponed. This shocking report was revealed in a brief survey compiled by Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) in the first week of September.

According to the crux of the survey, the ongoing crisis has badly dented investor confidence, hurting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) prospects. Coming at the back of Karachi airport attack in June this year, the situation in Islamabad and Lahore has negatively impacted ongoing business activities and the future investment plans of the investors.

Based on the feedback from OICCI members, this survey indicates a negative response from over 50 percent of OICCI members about their scheduled business meetings with overseas shareholders and regional management in Pakistan. It was further revealed that about a third of the respondents expect a fresh review of their planned new investment over the next three years. About half of the respondents expressed the opinion that such incidents adversely affect their ability to retain critical talent in Pakistan. In terms of its immediate impact on the ongoing business operations and product distribution, 40 per cent of the respondents expect a decline in sales and profitability with a resultant reduction in tax payments.

A majority of the respondents (62 per cent) foresees serious damage to the 2014-15 fiscal targets of the government while a small minority is suggesting that this may also cause a negative impact on the recently launched Vision 2025 targets. Asad S Jafar, President OICCI, said: "OICCI believes in Pakistan and that brief surveys like this are not exhaustive but are meant to reflect an immediate assessment of the foreign investors of the current events in Pakistan." He further said that the current uncertainty in the business environment would soon be stabilised and the authorities, both at the federal and provincial levels, would continue to address key issues - security, law and order, energy supply gap, etc.

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Political strife is credit negative: Moody's

September 06, 2014

Ratings agency Moody's Investors Service Friday analysed latest political strife as credit negative impacting structural reforms and disrupting the IMF programme talks. On Tuesday, after two weeks of escalating and sometimes violent demonstrations demanding the resignation of Pakistan's (Caa1 stable) Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, the parliament expressed its backing and support for him.

On Wednesday, lawmakers from Imran Khan's Tehreek-e-Insaf party - one of the two main groups leading the protests - also announced that they would be returning to talks with the government. Despite these indications that the situation is calming, the latest political strife is credit negative. It threatens progress on structural reforms since a weakened government will be less able to implement meaningful policies to address pressing domestic challenges. Political upheaval within the administration could also disrupt Pakistan's relations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), with which it has an ongoing programme. Disbursements from this programme and linked multilateral funding are crucial to maintaining the country's external liquidity position, a key factor driving its creditworthiness.

Pakistan has been broadly on track to achieve reforms prescribed under its Extended Fund Facility (EFF) with the IMF, successfully completing three reviews and meeting 10 of 21 benchmarks. A recent statement by the IMF recognised improvements in Pakistan's economic

performance.

Successful completion of the fourth review and approval by the IMF's management board would allow the release of \$545 million this month, taking cumulative disbursements under the 36-month, \$6.7 billion programme to \$2.8 billion. Pending reforms include bolstering revenues by trimming tax concessions, privatising public sector enterprises, which may prove politically difficult, and addressing energy shortages. A stabilising external liquidity position was a key driver behind our decision in July to revise the sovereign's rating outlook to stable from negative in July. Funding from the Government of Saudi Arabia (Aa3 stable), the World Bank (Aaa stable) and the Asian Development Bank (Aaa stable), and a successful Eurobond issuance have helped buoy Pakistan's financial account, resulting in foreign reserves of \$9.6 billion in early July, before they edged lower to \$8.6 billion as of 22 August.

Political willingness to push ahead with difficult reforms will be crucial to maintain external support from the IMF and others, which would bolster the sovereign's credit profile. The fragile nature of Pakistan's democracy and its history of military coups make the reform process particularly susceptible to derailment by domestic politics. Stronger fiscal performance and external liquidity are correlated with periods of political stability. Both fiscal balances and the foreign reserve position began improving in 2013, when the Sharif government came to power, in contrast to a widening fiscal deficit through the tenure of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), led by Asif Ali Zardari. Foreign reserves swung sharply during the previous two governments.-PR

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Government responds cautiously to PTI proposals

September 06, 2014

FAZAL SHER, ZULFIQAR AHMAD & WAQAR LILLAH

As anti-government protesters are not ready to call off their strike unless Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif resigns, the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Friday also reiterated its stance that not only will the premier quit he will also dissolve the assemblies if vote rigging allegations proved. In a clause-by-clause reply to an 8-page proposal of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), available with *Business Recorder*, the PML-N made it clear that the resignation of prime minister is simply out of question.

However, some of the PTI proposals in relation to a probe into vote rigging allegations through a judicial commission have been accepted. "The PML-N has already proposed formation of a judicial commission to probe into alleged rigging in 2013 general elections. The PML-N proposes to constitute the commission through an Act of Parliament, after consensus with other political parties in both houses and not by an ordinance," it added.

The government has agreed to PTI proposal that the commission be either formed through a legislation or by the Supreme Court chief justice, adding it would have no objection if the chief justice decides to head the commission personally. The PML-N has stressed that the proceedings

of the commission should not be 'summary in nature', adding the rigging issue should be thoroughly probed into and evidence of witnesses must be properly recorded and examined.

"As regards admissibility of evidence, etc, provisions of the Qanun-e-Shahadat Order, 1984 shall be applicable. To avoid controversy, it is proposed that the JC may be empowered to decide its own procedure," it added. The government has agreed, in principle, to the proposals regarding a balanced composition of joint investigation team (JIT). "The PML-N agrees that non-controversial, non-partisan professionals shall be appointed as heads of NADRA, FIA and secretary ECP after consultations with all concerned," it added.

About a 30-day timeframe for the commission to submit its report, the PML-N said the terms of reference (ToR) should be determined by the commission, and the Judicial Commission (JC) can extend its timeframe if needed. The government has rejected PTI proposal to investigate rigging in 30 constituencies, saying "a sample of 30 out of 272 National Assembly constituencies ie 11% cannot be extrapolated to determine the final outcome of the 2013 general elections".

"The JC's functions/powers should not empower it to act as a super election tribunal in violation of the letter and spirit of Article 225...its function should be confined to determination of the ToR," it maintained. It further stated that the JC's conclusions and findings regarding the ToR have to be based on the evidence on record, adding no conclusion or finding can be drawn on prima facie satisfaction or on the basis of any evidence.

The PML-N has also taken exception to term 'rigging', saying it has not been defined in Representation of People Act (RoPA), 1976. "The term is generally taken to mean extensive corrupt and illegal practices as per sections 78 and 83 of RoPA, 1976...'rigging' cannot be redefined retrospectively, as PTI is attempting to do through its proposal" with a view to proving its allegations, it added.

About the use of non-utilisation or defective manufacture of magnetic ink, the PML-N said that even if it is established, resulting in the inability of NADRA to verify thumb impressions, it cannot ipso facto lead to presumption that these have resulted in corrupt or illegal practices in the elections. The government said that the consequences of a final report from the JC containing an affirmative determination of ToR shall be: "(i) Dissolution of National Assembly in terms of Article 58(1); (ii) Appointment of a care-taker cabinet in accordance with constitution, in consultation with all concerned, including PTI".

About the removal of ECP members, the PML stated that the ECP members can only be removed in a manner prescribed in Article 209, adding the appointment of new members can only be made after relevant constitutional provisions are amended pursuant to recommendations of a parliamentary committee on electoral reforms. About urgent finalisation under legislation of a electoral reforms, it said that the parliamentary committee on electoral reforms has been given a period of three months to complete its work by resolutions passed by both houses of parliament. "As it was notified on July 25, 2014, 40 days have already elapsed and the committee may be requested to expedite its work," it added.

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CJP rules out repeat of November 3, 2007 situation

September 06, 2014

KHUDAYAR MOHLA

Adjourning the hearing of pleas filed against anti-government marchers in Islamabad, the Supreme Court on Friday asked Barrister Aitzaz Ahsan to submit a comprehensive reply by September 10. A five-member larger bench of Chief Justice Nasirul Mulk resumed the hearing of the matter, observing political concerns should be resolved politically.

Representing Pakistan People's Party, Awami National Party, Jamaat-i-Islami and Balochistan National Party in the case, Aitzaz Ahsan likened the current situation to that of November 3, 2007. However, the Chief Justice plainly said that the court had issued directives in the instant matter by restraining concerned quarters to distance themselves from unconstitutional steps. He further said that there would be no repeat of November 3, 2007.

Appearing before the bench, Awami Muslim League chief Sheikh Rasheed requested the court to show judicial restraint, pleading that an important issue relating to the ongoing political unrest was scheduled to be placed before the apex court next week. Sheikh further apprised the bench about the on-going dialogue between the government and Pakistan Awami Tehreek (PAT)/Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). According to him, 80 percent of the issues have been resolved and the remaining may be settled anytime soon.

During the course of proceedings, the court expressed its surprise over absence of counsel for PTI and PAT. Justice Mian Saqib Nisar remarked that it was a matter of concern that both the leading counsel, Ali Zafar and Hamid Khan, had not been appearing before the bench as they were not seen in the 'last three hearings'. Justice Mian Saqib Nisar observed: "it is the fundamental right of every citizen to register his protest to meet his demands". He asked: "but is this also the right of a protester to paralyse the Constitution Avenue?"

Justice Jawwad S Khawaja remarked that the court would decide whether or not the ongoing protests were constitutional. He further elaborated that 11 petitions had been filed against sit-ins. According to him, some quarters except petitioners are of the opinion that the current protests are constitutional. Justice Khawaja observed that if it was presumed that the present sit-ins were constitutional then it would set a precedent and would be binding for everybody. "Then to whom the court will bar from protesting in any city of the country," Justice Khawaja asked. Later, the hearing was adjourned till September 10.

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Xi cancels Pakistan trip, but India visit still on

September 06, 2014

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said Friday that Chinese leader Xi Jinping called off what would have been his first presidential visit to his country's longtime ally because of ongoing political protests in Islamabad. Xi is slated to travel to Pakistan's archrival India this month. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif tweeted Friday that the visit was postponed and blamed the anti-government protesters who have been demanding his resignation. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang side-stepped a question about the postponement, saying the visit hadn't been formally announced.

"The two sides have maintained close high-level contact. The two sides are in close contact over high-level visits," Qin told reporters at a daily briefing. It would've been Xi's first to Pakistan since taking office last year. The timing of the trip wasn't certain since it had not been formally announced. He is scheduled to visit India in late September amid warming relations between the Asian giants. India and China have largely shelved a border dispute that led to a 1962 war. Meanwhile, Adviser to Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz has confirmed that two governments have mutually agreed to postpone the visit for time being owing to the protests in Islamabad. Xi is the third head of state who has cancelled his visit to Pakistan in recent weeks.

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Imran disputes government's claim

September 06, 2014

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan has rejected the government claim about an expected investment of \$35 billion from China during the planned visit of Chinese president to Pakistan, saying "it was not an investment; it was rather a loan."

The anti-government sit-in led by Imran Khan that entered 23rd day on Friday. With party flag around his neck, he told his diehard supporters that 'talks, dialogue and whatever he will not leave the pitch without the resignation of the Mughal-e-Azam [Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif]. Let the negotiating committees do their work but your Kaptan will live in this container jail unless he forces Sharif to walk out of the PM house?

As usual Imran attacked pro-Nawaz Sharif politicians such as Mehmood Khan Achakzai and Aftab Ahmed Sherpao for using harsh language against his sit-in in an ongoing joint session of parliament. He dispelled the impression that the PTI has staged a sit-in on the directives of the armed forces. Imran said that both Maulana Fazlur Rehman and Achakzai went a step forward with their demand of a crackdown on unarmed protesters despite all the brutal use of force by police earlier.

He termed federal minister for planning, development and reforms Ahsan Iqbal as 'Aristotle of PML-N'. Imran flayed the government for allegedly maligning its own army from the platform of parliament. "It should be clear that army is not interfering in the political matters at all...we would have called off our sit-in if we had come here at army's dictation," he maintained.

He said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provincial government and Imran Khan Foundation were providing services to IDPs of North Waziristan, adding the "chief minister goes to work in the day and comes back in the evening to take part in the sit-in." He announced that the PTI sit-in would go back to D-Chowk, a place where the PTI previously staged its sit-in, adding he had been forced to choose the D-Chowk due to a lack of space near the Cabinet Division gate.

TAHIRUL QADRI The supporters of Pakistan Awami Tehreek (PAT) vacated - on Supreme Court's directives - the lawns of parliament which they had occupied during a clash with police last week. Earlier, addressing his supporters Dr Tahirul Qadri lamented that peaceful people were declared undemocratic, traitors and invaders by the "corrupt" MPs during a joint sitting of the parliament.

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Heavy rains: Altaf urges protesters to put off sit-ins

September 06, 2014

The Founder and leader of MQM Altaf Hussain has appealed to the participants of the 'Azadi' and the 'Revolution' marches to put off their protest demonstrations and get involved in relief activities. "Victims of torrential rains and floods are looking towards their fellow countrymen to rescue them from flooded areas where they are trapped," said Altaf Hussain in a statement issued on Friday. He also appealed to the government to divert its attention towards the rehabilitation of the flood victims and protection of their lives.

Altaf said that people should note that officers and men of the armed forces are helping the flood victims in every possible way and rendering great sacrifices. He said sometimes a person has to take tough decisions for the sake of survival and security of the country. Such decisions are taken in the collective interest of the country.

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Talks with Qatargas: law secretary excluded from price body

September 06, 2014

MUSHTAQ GHUMMAN

The government has excluded Secretary Law and Justice from Price Committee tasked to negotiate the price with Qatargas for the import of LNG, well informed sources in Petroleum Ministry told *Business Recorder*. Sui Southern Gas Company Limited (SSGCL) and Engro Elengy Terminal (Pvt) Limited (EPTL) executed an LNG Services Agreement (LSA) on April 30, 2014 for the provision of LNG receiving storage and re-gasification services under a tolling fee arrangement.

EETPL also executed an Implementation Agreement (IA) with Port Qasim Authority on June 23, 2014 to develop and operate an LNG terminal at Port Qasim. The sources said, for import of LNG molecules, Pakistan State Oil Company Limited (PSOCL) and Qatargas Operating Company Limited (QOCL) have been nominated by the two respective governments to negotiate draft Heads of Agreement (HQA).

The Ministry had constituted a team comprising PSO, SNGPL, SSGCL and ISGCL to negotiate the technical and operational aspects of HQA. Initial discussions have been held with the Qatargas. However, the LNG price would be negotiated after finalising operational and commercial terms. In parallel, a bidding process for import of LNG has also been initiated and an EoI advertised on May 30, 2014 in the national and international press.

The sources further stated that being a capital intensive project of national importance, which may also require sovereign guarantees, the Ministry proposed that a price negotiation committee be constituted to negotiate the LNG price and other important aspects with Qatargas. The composition of the committee would be as follows: (i) Secretary Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources(MoP&NR) (Chairman);(ii) Chairman Board of Investment (BoI) (member);(iii) Secretary Finance or his nominee (member);(iv) Secretary Law (or his nominee member) ;(v) Secretary Water and Power or her nominee(member) ;(vi) Managing Director PSO(member) ;(vii) Managing Director, SNGPL(member) ;(viii) Managing Director, SSGCL(member); and (ix) Managing Director, ISGCL(member/ Secretary).

Secretary Law and Justice, sources said, expressed his reservations on the nomination of the Secretary Law or his nominee as member of the committee as agreements, their terms and conditions and other aspects would be submitted to the Law Division for vetting. It was agreed that nomination of the Secretary Law or his nominee be excluded from the composition of the committee.

The ECC, in its meeting on August 15, 2014, approved the proposal with a modification that the name of Secretary Law and Justice or his nominee may be excluded from the committee and the nominees of Chairman BoI/Secretary Finance and Water and Power would not be below the rank of an Additional Secretary. The name of Secretary Law was excluded because Law Division has

to vet various agreements/contracts subsequently and input would be available at a later stage. And legal teams of consultants and gas companies would be available to assist the committee.

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Nawaz sends mangoes to Modi

September 06, 2014

Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has sent mangoes to his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi in a bid to temper the bitterness in ties between the two countries, the Times of India newspaper reported on Friday. Relations between the two countries have soured before foreign secretary-level talks between the two countries. The talks were subsequently called off by New Delhi. The mangoes were delivered to Modi through "official channels" on Wednesday evening to undo damage to bilateral ties, the report said.

Earlier, Nawaz Sharif gifted a saree to Narendra Modi's mother. The mango diplomacy, according to diplomatic sources, is also meant to act as a feeler from Islamabad that Pakistan is looking forward to a Sharif-Modi meeting later this month in New York on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly, according to the newspaper report. Apart from Modi, Sharif has also sent mangoes to President Pranab Mukherjee, Vice President Hamid Ansari and External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj.

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Defence Day today

September 06, 2014

MUHAMMAD SALEEM

Defence Day of Pakistan is being observed on Saturday (today) with zeal and fervour to pay homage and tributes to the "Shuhada and Ghazis" who rendered sacrifices in defence of the motherland. On this day, the nation will renew its pledge and commitment for the defence of the country. The day will be started with Quran Khawani in all main mosques for the souls of martyrs. Special prayers will also be offered for the solidarity, prosperity and integrity of the country.

It may be noted that on September 6, 1965 Pakistan's valiant armed forces and the entire nation stood united to foil the nefarious designs of the enemy. Fateha will be offered at the graves and monuments of recipients of Nishan-e-Haider, the highest military award. The messages from respective Service Chiefs will be delivered to the troops.

Change of guard ceremonies will be held at the mausoleums of the Quaid-e-Azam in Karachi and Allama Iqbal in Lahore. A smartly turned out contingent of PAF will take over the duty of guards at the mausoleum of Quaid-e-Azam in Karachi. In Lahore, Punjab Rangers will assume the duty of guards at the Mazar-e-Iqbal. A ceremony will also be held at the Lahore Ranger

Headquarters in which senior officers will lay wreaths on the monument of the martyrs.

In Islamabad, the Nazriya Pakistan Council (Trust) will hold a Round Table Conference under the title "1965 to operation Zarb-e-Azb". It will be addressed among others by Admiral Abdul Aziz Mirza (Retd), Lieutenant General Talat Masud (Retd), Air Vice Marshal Shahzad Chaudhry (Retd), Major General Muhammad Tahir (Retd), Mian Muhammad Javed and Rev. Father Rahmat Michael Hakim, Khatoon-i-Fatima Church, Islamabad. Chairman, Nazriya Pakistan Council Zahid Malik will chair the conference. The father and brother of Captain Mujahid Bashir (Shaheed) who embraced martyrdom during the ongoing operation Zarb-e-Azb will also attend the conference.

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Punjab rain death toll soars past 150

September 06, 2014

MUHAMMAD SALEEM & ABDUL RASHEED AZAD

Torrential rains in North-East Punjab and Azad Kashmir continued Friday, pushing up the death toll to over 150 while scores injured as authorities ordered the evacuation of low-lying areas around a major river. In Punjab alone, deaths from rain-related incidents reached 60. As per rescue sources, most of the deaths were caused by roof collapse. Hundreds of acres of agri land inundated in Punjab as a number of villages were cut off due to flash floods.

In Sheikhpura and Sialkot, nullahs were broken while Pak Army was called in to rescue rain victims. Authorities in Sialkot and Narowal areas issued flood warnings in various areas of Punjab and evacuated local people from various villages. In Muzaffarabad, Bagh, Rawalakot, Mirpur, Bhimber and Sudhnoti districts of Azad Kashmir at least 30 people have been killed, 9 injured and dozens of homes were swept away by the torrential rains. Two people killed in Bagh, 7 in Tehsil Haveli of District Bagh with 3 Injured. Two deaths reported in Rawalakot, 12 in Sudhnoti, three in Kotli with three injured, one in Mirpur with two injured, three killed in Bhimber and one injured.

The government has warned the people living on the banks of River Chenab and Jhelum of Very High to Exceptionally High Flood along with their associated nullahs during the next 24 - 48 hours and medium to high floods level may be attained in River Ravi at Jassar.

Water level in Nullah Lai, which passes through different localities of the twin cities, touched the maximum point due to heavy rain. At Katariyan, water level was recorded at 18 feet while it was 11 feet at Gawalmandi. The spillways of Rawal Dam were opened today as water in the reservoir reached maximum capacity due to the ongoing heavy downpour. The released water flowed towards adjacent areas of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, causing large scale damage. At least 10 houses were completely destroyed. The Pakistan Army assisted in rescuing at least 70 people from the flooded areas.

Rescue teams were dispatched to the affected areas on the orders of Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Abdul Sattar. Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast more rains

during next 12 hours in Punjab, Azad Kashmir and parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, adding that rains may continue till Sunday. The high flooding in rivers may inundate vast swatches of land in Punjab if rains continued for two days, the PMD official said.

National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has started rescue and relief operations. The Federal Flood Commission (FFC) has said that presently River Chenab is in very high flood at Marala and high flood in Khanki-Qadirabad. The River Jhelum is in medium flood at Rasul Barrage. As per report of FFC, other main rivers including Indus, Ravi and Sutlej are flowing normal.

In Rawalpindi, three men died when the wall of a house collapsed. A child drowned near Fauji Colony while a resident died from mudslides near Rawalpindi High Court. Deaths in Sialkot took place in Pasrur area where three members of a family died when the roof of their house caved in. Moreover, a woman died, while nine, including eight children, were injured when roof of a mud-built house collapsed in Lahore's Shahdara area. Five people were killed in Faisalabad, six in Gujranwala, five in Sialkot, four in Kasur, three in Khanewal, two in Okara and one in Sheikhpura when roofs of their houses collapsed. The deaths in Kasur were caused by electrocution.

Moreover, schools will remain closed on Saturday in Lahore and other affected districts of the province, the Punjab Education Department said. Power and telephone links have been snapped in many areas and supplies of clean drinking water badly hit. Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif has constituted two committees comprising provincial ministers to review the situation following rains in the province.

Shahbaz directed the authorities to establish medical camps in all rain-affected areas. He said medicines should be made available at these camps. He also directed the authorities to make proper arrangements for possible evacuation of people from the rain-affected areas. A spokesman of Rescue-1122 said that the badly affected areas included Lahore, Sialkot, Gujranwala, Kasur, Okara and Faisalabad. Shahbaz visited different areas in Gujranwala Friday and reviewed the dewatering work.

He issued instructions to administration to clear the low-lying areas so as to mitigate the sufferings of people and ensure a smooth flow of traffic in the city. Meanwhile, Pakistan Meteorological Department Chief Meteorologist Muhammad Riaz said intensity of rains will decrease from Saturday morning.

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Highest state of readiness acts as best deterrence: CoAS

September 06, 2014

Chief of Army Staff (CoAS) General Raheel Sharif has said that highest state of operational readiness of the Army has always acted as the best deterrence against enemies of Pakistan. "Our ever readiness also to respond to any internal threat and disaster as a first responder, has been our

hallmark", said the Army chief during his visit to Corps Headquarters Multan Friday.

Earlier, CoAS was given detailed briefing on Operational, training and administrative matters of the corps. CoAS witnessed conduct of field training of an armoured formation in the ambit of Corps Operation, comprising elements of Armour Artillery, Infantry, Air Defence and Light Commando Battalion. CoAS lauded the standard of training of the participating troops and underlined the need for use of modern technology to enhance the training standards with better economy of resources. CoAS also visited other training facilities at Multan garrison.

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PAF receives modified F-16s from Turkey

September 06, 2014

Successful accomplishment of Mid-Life Upgrade and Falcon STAR configuration for PAF F-16s culminated with a graceful closing ceremony that took place at Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI) Ankara, Turkey. Air Marshal Sohail Aman, Deputy Chief of the Air Staff (Operations), as chief guest of the ceremony, represented senior leadership of Pakistan Air Force.

Air Marshal Sohail Aman, while addressing the ceremony, read the message by Air Chief Marshal, Tahir Rafique Butt, Chief of the Air Staff, PAF, in which the PAF Air Chief said, "In this era of rapid technological advancement, PAF is entrusted with great responsibility of providing defence of the aerial frontiers, as well as supporting the Sister Services. Thus, our quest for excellence continues by optimum utilisation of the sophisticated assets on our inventory, procuring the state-of-the-art equipment and upgradation of the existing ones."

He said: "In this connection, the successful completion of the Mid-life Upgrade and Falcon STAR Configuration of the PAF F-16s in Turkey is yet another milestone achieved." "Indeed, Turkey has always been a trusted friend of Pakistan, and our Air Force-to-Air Force relations have proved its worth as an ally and partner in various joint ventures," he added.

No doubt, the Mid-life upgrade programme was a gigantic task, which was undertaken with great expertise and professional excellence, he added. Certainly, the co-operation of Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI) counts a lot in accomplishment of this worthwhile assignment. With the success of this project, PAF once again assures the entire nation with great pride that it will continue its endeavours to maintain its status as a 21st Century modern Air force. "To protect the aerial frontiers of the beloved motherland, PAF will always remain an Air Force, as envisaged by Father of the Nation: 'Second to none'."

The ceremony reflected classic aviation partnership between PAF, United States Air Force, Lockheed Martin Aero - F16s OEM and most importantly TAI that endured Pakistan-Turkey venture in which our F16 aircraft were configured with new capabilities involving structural and avionics retrofit. This modification brings about performance competencies, which, of course, is the basic criterion for modern war-fighting machines of the contemporary times. After implementing these modifications, platforms stand responsive to national defence which makes the Mid-Life Upgrade programme a huge undertaking for both countries.

Timely rollout of last batch of modified aircraft subsequently illustrates priority and sincerity that TAI as a huge industrial base has afforded to PAF. The timely production of aircraft in a professional manner indicates basis of trust and confidence, between Pakistan and Turkey, as two brotherly nations. Upgradation of these F16 aircraft would act as a force multiplier in prompt fulfilment of PAF's strategic operational goals.

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Punjabi Taliban shifts focus to Afghanistan

September 06, 2014

An influential militant faction of the Pakistani Taliban on Friday said it would abandon insurgent activity inside the country and redirect its energies towards Afghanistan. The announcement by the Punjabi Taliban indicates further fragmentation in the umbrella Tehreek-e-Taliban (TTP), which suffered a setback Thursday when a new bloc declared its split from the group's official leadership.

"We will confine our practical jihadist role to Afghanistan in view of deteriorating situation in the region and internal situation of Pakistani jihadist movement," Punjabi Taliban chief Ismatullah Muawiya said in a pamphlet faxed to the media, without clarifying further.

The faction is active in Punjab. Muawiya said the faction will operate in Afghanistan under the guidance of Mulla Omar, the spiritual leader of Afghan Taliban, while its activities in Pakistan will be confined to preaching Islam. "The announcement is a major setback for the TTP as it shows fragmentation is continuing and the organisation is fracturing," defence and security analyst Talat Masood told AFP. "The groups within TTP have not accepted Maulana Fazlullah, which has caused a serious split in the organisation."

Maulana Fazlullah was elected head of the TTP last November following the killing of Hakimullah Mehsud in a US drone strike. A new bloc, named the TTP Jamat-ul-Ahrar (freedom fighters group), announced its split from the group Thursday and named Omar Khalid Khorasani as its commander.

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Pakistani Taliban faction welcomes new al Qaeda branch

September 06, 2014

A new breakaway faction of the Pakistani Taliban on Friday welcomed al Qaeda chief Ayman al-Zawahiri's announcement of the launch of a South Asian branch of the terror network. Zawahiri announced the new "al Qaeda in the subcontinent" operation in a video message, saying it would take the fight to Myanmar, Bangladesh and India, which has a large but traditionally

moderate Muslim population. Indian authorities said they were taking the move seriously and put several states on high alert on Thursday.

Ehsanullah Ehsan, spokesman for the new Pakistani Taliban bloc, named Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) Jamat-ul-Ahrar, hailed Zawahiri's call. "We welcome the new announcement of the subcontinent branch of al Qaeda. We believe that the branch will work hard for the achievement of the rights of Muslims in the subcontinent," Ehsan said in a message posted on Twitter and Facebook. Ehsan said rights of Muslims in the region could only be achieved through Islamic shariah law and the establishment of a caliphate.

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Flash floods: NJHEP structure remains safe

September 06, 2014

The structure of 969 MW Neelum Jhelum Hydroelectric Project (NJHEP) in Azad Kashmir remained secure as a consequence of the ongoing flash floods despite the fact that 1,650 cubic meter per second (cums) water overflowed the dam. Chief Executive Officer (CEO), NJHEP, Lieutenant General Muhammad Zubair (retired) told *Business Recorder* that 1,650 cumms water overflowed the dam structure. In routine water flow is around 475-500 cumms.

He added that the machinery and equipment being used in the project is safe as the management had already shifted it to a secure place. "We had been informed a few hours before the arrival of flood waters and we shifted the machinery and other equipment to a safe location," he added.

In reply to a question, he said, work on C-I has been stopped due to concern that flood waters may enter any tunnel. He said A-3- a 150 meter temporary road near Nullah Jandar has been swept away which will be restructured within a week's time. Replying to a question, he said, work on power house is in progress as the water that entered the premises is not hindering the work.

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Australia, India sign civil nuclear deal

September 06, 2014

Conservative leaders Tony Abbott and Narendra Modi sealed a long-awaited nuclear energy deal on Friday, paving the way for Australia to sell uranium to India, crippled by power shortages and blackouts. The two prime ministers hailed the deal as "a concrete symbol" of strengthening trade and strategic ties following their talks in the Indian capital.

The agreement signing came at the end of Abbott's two-day trip to India to meet fellow right-wing leader Modi, who rode to power in May on pledges to revive and reform India's ailing economy - including by tackling its vast power problems. Modi called the deal a "historic

milestone" in the two countries' relationship that would help provide clean energy to India's 1.25-billion people.

Abbott said he "trusted" nuclear-armed India would use the uranium solely for peaceful purposes, following proliferation concerns. "Australia trusts India to do the right thing in this area," Abbott said after the signing. India and Australia kick-started negotiations on uranium sales in 2012 after Canberra lifted a long-time ban on exporting the valuable ore to New Delhi to meet its ambitious nuclear energy programme.

India, which is heavily dependent on coal, is struggling to produce enough power to meet rising energy demand as its economy and large middle-class expand. Nearly 400 million Indians still have no access to electricity, according to the World Bank, and power outages are common.

India wants to ramp up the number of nuclear plants from the 20 operating at six sites. The country derives less than two percent of its total power capacity from nuclear sources. Although two-way trade last year was only \$15 billion, the new deal, along with a massive coal mine approved in Australia for one of India's biggest conglomerates, was a sign of future co-operation and potential, Abbott said.

"We (Australia) have been an utterly dependable source of energy security, resource security and food security," Abbott told Indian business leaders earlier Friday. "I hope that we can become an utterly reliable source of energy, resource and food security for India too," he added.

Australia, the world's third-biggest uranium producer, had previously ruled out uranium exports to India because New Delhi has not signed the global non-proliferation treaty. Abbott reiterated Friday that his government has now received the necessary commitments from New Delhi that it would only use the ore for its civilian nuclear programme.

He said India and Australia both abided by the fundamental "ethical principle" to "play by the rules". "This is why we can work together so easily and why we're ready to trust each other on issues like uranium safeguards." Australia's decision to overturn its ban followed a landmark US agreement in 2008 to support India's civilian nuclear programme. Under the agreement, India won exemption from the Nuclear Suppliers Group, which governs nuclear trade, allowing it to buy reactors and fuel from overseas, after decades of being treated as a pariah for building nuclear weapons. Asked on Thursday about India's management of its nuclear power industry and safety standards, Abbott said it was "not our job to tell India how to conduct its internal affairs".

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US says plane from Afghanistan landed in Iran over 'bureaucratic issue'

September 06, 2014

A charter aircraft flying from the US airbase at Bagram in Afghanistan to Dubai was re-routed to Bandar Abbas, Iran, on Friday due to "a bureaucratic issue," a US State Department official said.

"A Fly Dubai charter plane flying from Bagram Air Field to Dubai was re-routed to Bandar Abbas, Iran because of a bureaucratic issue today," the official said.

"Contrary to press reports, this plane was not forced down by the Iranian military," the official added. "The issue appears to have been resolved and hopefully the plane will be able to take off soon." Earlier, the Washington Post reported that Iranian fighter jets had forced a plane carrying about 100 Americans, and possibly two Canadians, to land in Iran. It said the plane was chartered by the Pentagon from Fly Dubai in the United Arab Emirates.

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Equities retreat

September 06, 2014

The Karachi share market Friday ended lower as investors preferred to book profits and the benchmark KSE-100 index fell by 90 points to close at 29,514 points compared to 29,604 points Thursday. Commenting on the market situation, Ahsan Mehanti, an analyst at Arif Habib, said on the last trading day stocks closed lower amid profit-taking after reports of Moody's analysing latest political strife as credit negative impacting structural reforms and disrupting the IMF programme talks.

He said Chinese President's visit cancellation, political deadlock in the ongoing demands for PM resignation, loss on political crisis and reluctance of foreign investors played a catalytic role in the bearish activity at KSE despite record earnings in oil and cement sectors announced during the week and favourable CPI data for August 2014. During the intraday trading, the benchmark KSE-100 index also touched 29,659 points highest and 29,468 points lowest level. Following a negative trend, volume at the ready counter declined to 152 million shares compared to 223 million a day earlier.

Market capitalisation also posted Rs 17 billion decline reaching Rs 6.942 trillion Friday against Rs 6.959 trillion Thursday. Trading took place in 368 companies, of which 157 closed in green zone, 189 in red, while 22 cos remained unchanged. "Investors preferred to book profits after a heated debate in the Parliament between government and opposition parties, with the result the KSE-100 index lost 90 points on Friday," said Samar Iqbal, an analyst at Topline Securities. Volumes declined by 47 percent while value also decreased by 50 percent to \$80 million or Rs 8 billion, she maintained.

Institutional activity was seen in EFERT as it once again remained the most active scrip, while KOHC closed at lower limit after announcing less than expected cash dividend. June earnings remained at par with consensus, she maintained. Among top 10 volume leaders, four companies recorded a positive trend. Pak Elektron Ltd emerged the volume leader with 13.6 million shares, losing Rs 0.23 to close at Rs 33.44. TRG Pak Ltd stood second, up Re 0.54 to Rs 11.58 on 12.3 million shares. Engro Fertiliser Ltd ranked third with 12.25 million shares to close at Rs 53.79, down Rs 1.10.

Some 9.3 million share of Faysal Bank were traded gaining Re 0.65 to Rs 16.57. With a trading volume of 7.6 million shares, Jah Sidd Co increased by Re 0.24 to close at Rs 10.61. Maple Leaf

Cement decreased by Re 0.35 to Rs 28.96 on 7.2 million shares. Avanceon Ltd closed at Rs 27.96, up Re 0.49 on 4.9 million shares. K-Electric lost Re 0.04 to Rs 8.26 on 4.8 million shares. D.G.Khan Cement decreased by Re 0.45 to close at Rs 78.93 on 3.5 million shares. Fauji Cement closed negative, down Re 0.14 to Rs 19.57 on 3.2 million shares.

Wyeth Pak Ltd and Bata Pak were the top gainers with Rs 190.40 and Rs 85.00 to close at Rs 3,998.48 and Rs 3,350.00, respectively. Colgate Palm and Sanofi-Acentis were the top losers with Rs 68.74 and Rs 20.08 to close at Rs 1,585.01 and Rs 625.00 respectively. Analyst at JS said the KSE-100 index depicted a mixed sentiment on last trading day of the week and shed 0.3 percent. Volumes stood lower Friday as investors remained cautious as weekend approaches. Top pick for the day was PAEL with 13.7 million shares traded, said Arhum Ghous. The market is expected to pick momentum in the next few trading sessions as political situation is gradually phasing out. Investors will keenly look at foreign portfolio flows as any large inflow will induce more buying from local participants, analyst said.

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BRIndex30 lower 136.32 points

September 06, 2014

On Friday, BRIndex30 opened at 16,397.68 points. It touched an intraday high of 16,488.18 points and an intraday low of 16,245.15 points and closed at 16,261.36 points, which was -136.32 points or -0.83 percent lower than previous close. Total volume was 103,316,000, which was 68.02 percent of KSE All share volume and 108.63 percent of KSE 100 volume. The KSE All Share volume was 151,894,000 and KSE 100 volume was 95,105,980.

BR Commercial Banks Index closed at 6,886.57 points with a net negative change of -27.31 points or a percentage change of -0.4 and a total turnover of 25,155,900 shares. BR Cement Index closed at 3,187.02 points with a net negative change of -39.94 points or a percentage change of -1.24 and a total turnover of 19,344,900 shares. BR Oil and Gas Index closed at 4,151.89 points with a net negative change of -7.35 points or a percentage change of -0.18 and a total turnover of 8,946,100 shares.

BR Tech & Comm Index closed at 910.34 points with a net negative change of -0.09 points or a percentage change of -0.01 and a total turnover of 22,049,100 shares. BR Power Generation and Distribution Index closed at 4,726.46 points with a net negative change of -25.75 points or a percentage change of -0.54 and a total turnover of 7,382,500 shares.

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Business and Economy: *Pakistan*

Swiss Consul General meets TDAP chief

September 06, 2014

Swiss Consul General Emul Wyss hold a meeting with S. M. Muneer, Chief Executive TDAP on Friday. Dr M. Yousuf Khan, D.G. (Europe) and M. Iqbal Thaheem, D.G. (Asia) were also present in the meeting. During the meeting, Swiss Consul General advised TDAP to participate in international fairs of Switzerland to ensure access in the European market and this will help to get maximum benefits from GSP+ status awarded to Pakistan.

S. M. Muneer vowed that Trade Development Authority will play its due role to establish trade relations between business communities of both the countries. -PR

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Rs 28.33 billion released under PSDP during 53 days: Rs 16.6 million released for security of Parliament House

September 06, 2014

WASIM IQBAL

The federal government has released Rs 28.33 billion till August 22 under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) against the total annual allocation of Rs 525 billion, including Rs 102 billion foreign aid for various development projects for the current fiscal year 2014-15, reveals Planning, Development and Reform Division website.

The latest figure of PSDP releases updated by the Planning Commission shows that so far Rs 28.33 billion has been released, including Rs 16.6 million on account of security arrangement of the Parliament House in Islamabad. The government has disbursed 5.3 percent of total PSDP in the first 53 days of the current fiscal year.

According to latest data released by the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms, a total of Rs 22.3 billion with zero foreign aid was released for projects of various federal ministries against total allocation of Rs 255 billion, including Rs 28 billion foreign aid, for the financial year 2014-15.

According to data, no amount was released to Wapda (water sector) out of its total budgeted allocation of Rs 43.4 billion, including foreign aid component of Rs 3.8 billion. The Commission noted that the release of Rs 9 billion for various projects of Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission while budgeted allocation was Rs 51.4 billion earmarked under PSDP for current fiscal year

2014-15.

A sum of Rs 7.4 billion was released to Pakistan Railways out of total budgeted allocation of Rs 39.5 billion, inclusive of Rs 400 million foreign aid, for the current fiscal year. A total of Rs 3.9 billion was released for the Higher Education Commission out of its total budgeted allocation of Rs 20 billion whereas out of the budgeted allocation of Rs 230 million earmarked for Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority only Rs 20 million has been released so far.

Out of the total budgeted funds of Rs 27 billion allocated for the National Health Service Regulations and Co-ordination Division for the current year, Rs 148 million has been released. A total of Rs 17 million was released for the Planning, Development and Reform Division out of its total allocation of Rs 32.8 billion whereas Rs 14 million was released for Science and Technological Research Division out of its total allocations of Rs 903 million for the year.

An amount of Rs 807 million was released for the Cabinet Division and Rs 72 million for Commerce Division, Rs 18 million for Communication Division (other than NHA), Rs 206 million for Finance Division, Rs 581 million for Interior Division and Rs 13 million for Narcotics Control Division in the current fiscal year.

The federal government released Rs 500 million for the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) out of its total allocation of Rs 5 billion for the current fiscal year. The government also released Rs 2 billion for various development projects of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), no amount for Gilgit-Baltistan was released, and Rs 3.4 billion was released for FATA against the total allocation of Rs 19.1 billion.

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ToT workshop on 'Entrepreneurship Development' held

September 06, 2014

Technology Up-gradation and Skill Development Company (Tusdec) organised a one-day Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop on "Entrepreneurship Development" in pursuant to the project "Supporting TVET Sector in Pakistan". The workshop was orchestrated for the instructors of TVET institutes functional in Haripur, Mansehra, Battagram and Haveliyan. A pool of 15 instructors has been graduated as master trainers for the capacity building of project trainees screened by Tusdec.

Faisal Mehmood, TVET Advisor at TUSDEC edified the participants on various facets of "Entrepreneurship" succeeded by the development of business plans to pragmatically articulate the expected gains from entrepreneurship for the socio-economic uplift of the society.

Entrepreneurship and economic development are interrelated in a domino effect and to actualise the socio-economic development goal of sustained livelihood for All, TUSDEC will extend full support to the students in their entrepreneurial ventures, said a spokesperson of the Company here on Friday.

Under the EU sponsored KP/FATA project of supporting TVET sector in Pakistan through involving private sector, TUSDEC consociated with 30 TVET institutes who have conducted market driven training courses in 20 districts of KP and FATA region during the pilot phase.

In cognisant to the objective of the project, TUSDEC aims at increment of the number of training programmes in the next phase to train a pool of 12,000 men and women of the rock-strewn province in different demand-driven trades. The graduates of three to six months training programmes will be assisted in their paid employment and entrepreneurial ventures to improve their livelihood chancels for a brighter and better future.

The spokesperson shared that the ToT sessions at Peshawar and now at Abbottabad on Entrepreneurship Development endeavoured to realise the career aspirations of the trainees and anticipates that the adopted project methodology will positively yield towards the downright achievement of project objectives within the stipulated timeframe of four years.

The session was solicitously organized and highly acknowledged by the Guest of Honour Amina Sardar, MPA and a member of the standing committee of Technical Education, KP. She presented the certificates to the participants at the conclusion of the workshop and appreciated TUSDEC's effort in promoting TVET sector in KP and FATA. Participants affirmatively declared that the pedagogy is comprehensively formulated and objectively delivered accentuating their subject knowledge for the promotion of entrepreneurship. This is the second workshop of the series and further workshops are contrived for the instructors hailing from Swat, Malakand, Dir, Buneer and Chitral.

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OICCI survey paints gloomy picture

September 06, 2014

Business community has suffered a major setback due to present political impasse as almost half of the scheduled business meetings with overseas shareholders and regional management in Pakistan have been cancelled or postponed. This shocking report was revealed in a brief survey compiled by Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) in the first week of September.

According to the crux of the survey, the ongoing crisis has badly dented investor confidence, hurting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) prospects. Coming at the back of Karachi airport attack in June this year, the situation in Islamabad and Lahore has negatively impacted ongoing business activities and the future investment plans of the investors.

Based on the feedback from OICCI members, this survey indicates a negative response from over 50 percent of OICCI members about their scheduled business meetings with overseas shareholders and regional management in Pakistan. It was further revealed that about a third of the respondents expect a fresh review of their planned new investment over the next three years. About half of the respondents expressed the opinion that such incidents adversely affect their ability to retain critical talent in Pakistan. In terms of its immediate impact on the ongoing

business operations and product distribution, 40 per cent of the respondents expect a decline in sales and profitability with a resultant reduction in tax payments.

A majority of the respondents (62 per cent) foresees serious damage to the 2014-15 fiscal targets of the government while a small minority is suggesting that this may also cause a negative impact on the recently launched Vision 2025 targets. Asad S Jafar, President OICCI, said: "OICCI believes in Pakistan and that brief surveys like this are not exhaustive but are meant to reflect an immediate assessment of the foreign investors of the current events in Pakistan." He further said that the current uncertainty in the business environment would soon be stabilised and the authorities, both at the federal and provincial levels, would continue to address key issues - security, law and order, energy supply gap, etc.

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LCCI polls: bodies representing industry announce support to PIAF-Founders Alliance

September 06, 2014

A large number of industrial associations announced to support PIAF-Founders Alliance for upcoming LCCI elections scheduled for September 22 and 23. The announcement was made during a meeting chaired by Chairman PIAF Malik Tahir Javed.

Chairman Lahore Township Industries Association Chaudhry Zaheer Ahmad Bhutta, Vice Chairman Atta Bari, Patron-in-Chief of Ferozepur Road Industrial Association Adnan Butt, Mubashar Naxeer Butt, Arshad Baig, Chairman Kahna Kacha Industrial Association Mahmood Akhter, Syed Mehmood Ghaznavi of Kattar Bund Road Industrial Association, Representatives of Sundar Industrial Association, President of Sundar Industrial Estate Plot Owners Association Amjad Ali Jawa and representatives of various other Industrial Association were present on the occasion. They said that business community is fully satisfied with the performance of PIAF-Founders Alliance and will vote to the Alliance candidates in the LCCI forthcoming polls.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairman PIAF Malik Tahir Javed said PIAF-Founders Alliance has proved itself true representative of business community and taken various initiatives for the cause of business community. He said that alliance would continue to serve the business community in the larger interest of economy and would urge government to form business friendly policies.

Chairman PIAF said the entire business community understands well that the Alliance always tried its best to get the problems of the business-doing people solved by taking them up with the concerned Ministries and Departments. He said in future the liaison between the business community and the policy makers would be further strengthened to ensure result-oriented policies.

Malik Tahir Javed said that both the public and private sectors belong to same camp so they must make all efforts jointly and in consultation with each other for the economic well-being of the country instead of working separately. He said that PIAF-Founders Alliance will write new

stories of success in the LCCI forthcoming election as the all industrial areas and markets have announced their full support for the Alliance. He said PIAF-Founders Alliance always fulfilled its commitment with the business community and will not leave any stone unturned for the solutions of issues being faced by the business community including energy crisis, deteriorating law-and-order situation and high input cost, etc.

PIAF Chairman said PIAF-Founders Alliance is a combination of vast experience rich people, economic experts and young entrepreneurs. He said that the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry has become the premier chamber of the country due to continuity in leadership and its most effective policies. He said that leadership of Alliance has introduced system performance monitoring for the LCCI office-bearers. He said that half of the Executive Committee members are being retired this year. He thanked the Lahore business community for once again announcing support to the Alliance candidates.

Meanwhile, Lahore Township will host a grand lunch in honour of Alliance leaders and Corporate Class candidates including Mian Nauman Kabir, Abdul Basit, Nadir Kamal Osman, Shahzad Ahmad Shahzad Waheed, Dr Quratul Ain and Kamal Mahmood Amjad Mian.

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KPCCI elections 2014-15: Businessman Forum candidates elected unopposed

September 06, 2014

The candidates of Businessman Forum on four vacant seats of associate group seats and a reserved seat of women for the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KPCCI) elections for 2014-15, elected unopposed. In this regard, the formed election commission has been notified the name of those candidates elected unopposed on five seats, during its meeting, chaired by Sufi Bashir Ahmad Durrani.

During the meeting the election commission members, Ziaul Haq Sarhadi, and Mohammad Ishaq also present. The meeting said that seven candidates, including Haji Rashid Iqbal Siddiqui, Ishtiaq Mohammad, Mohammad Altaf Baig, Syed Anwar Shah, Sher Ali, Saifullah and Wahid Arif Awan have been withdrawn their nomination papers for four vacant positions of associate group. After which, the election commission has declared the Fawad Ishaq, Abdul Hakim Shinwari, Saad Khan and Sadiq Amin as executive body member of the chamber.

Similarly, on reserved seat for women, no other candidate was submitted nomination papers against the Shabnam Munir; therefore, she has been declared as member of executive body of KPCCI. The chamber executive body four vacant positions of corporate group, three candidates have been already withdrawn their nomination papers, after which Shehryar Lodhi, Shuja Mohammad, Syed Mohammad Tariq, Ishtiaq Mohammad and S Minhajuddin Shah would contest the elections. The elections will be held for corporate group on September 20, next week.

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Political crisis hurting economy: businesspeople

September 06, 2014

Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) Chief Executive S M Muneer has expressed serious concerns on the postponement of Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Pakistan. Speaking at a reception in honour of the members of ECO countries, he said that the country could not afford politics of protests and sit-ins. "The sit-ins in Islamabad are not only damaging the country's image but also hurting its economy," he added.

He said that the postponement of the Chinese President's visit had put on hold an agreement worth \$32 billion. He observed that the country was already facing energy crisis and it needed huge investment to boost power generation to meet industrial and domestic needs.

Muneer said that the latest development had upset all peace loving Pakistanis, who had high hopes from the visit of the high-level delegation led by the Chinese President. He said that the ongoing political crisis had given rise to worries and apprehensions among the businesspeople. "The situation might result in jeopardising Pakistan's exports and the neighbouring countries could take advantage of it," he added.

He said that the political crisis was causing serious damages to the national economy and it had become necessary for all the stakeholders to shun their differences and resolve the issue at the earliest. He strongly emphasised that the economic and foreign relations should not be affected by political tussle. Muneer further said that the volume of trade between ECO countries was only 7 percent, whereas the region was full of natural resources.

Speaking on the occasion, Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FPCCI) President Zakaria Usman said that the postponement of the Chinese President's visit was a setback to economic development and retardation of ongoing projects in various fields. He further said that the country could take benefits of land routes from Chitral to Tajikistan, which was just two hours journey.

Korangi Association of Trade and Industry (KATI) President Syed Farukh Mazhar also expressed concern on the postponement of the Chinese President's visit and requested that the decision might be reviewed to set good example of Pak-China friendship. All Karachi Industrial Alliance (AKIA) President Mian Zahid Hussain said that the President and Prime Minister should use diplomatic channels to address security concerns of the Chinese delegation. He said that the leader of political parties should play their positive role in reviving the confidence of the investors.

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Getz Pharma receives quality recognition from WHO

September 06, 2014

Getz Pharma Pakistan has received world-class recognition by the World Health Organisation (WHO) for its quality control laboratory having maintained superior quality standards and practices thus becoming one in 33 countries world-wide and first and only in Pakistan to have received 'WHO Pre-Qualification'.

The company celebrated the 'Chemistry of (its) Success' with leading physicians and professors from all over the city, in an event held at the Getz Pharma head office. This is a matter of great national pride as Getz Pharma's Laboratory has literally put the country on the map of the world. Speaking at a ceremony, Syed Sultan Ghani, Director Quality Management and Regulatory Affairs Getz Pharma said, "This recognition is a testament to the strict quality standards maintained by Getz Pharma in its laboratory as well as in other functions. Our unbridled ambition and hard work has borne fruit."

The organisation has also received the Export Award for eighth consecutive years, ranking first amongst all pharmaceutical exporters and contributing approximately 40 percent towards total pharmaceutical exports. Also, the company's largest selling brand, Risek, an anti-ulcerant, has secured second position amongst all pharmaceutical brands in the country.-PR

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'First-ever' International Pharma Convention on September 16

September 06, 2014

First-ever International Pharma Convention 2014 will be held on September 16, at Karachi Expo Centre. This International Convention will address on the leading pharmaceutical and compliance issues in the world with a specific perspective to Asia.

Pharma Convention is focusing on the key issues of designing products specifically for people in the lower part of the pyramid, spotting and serving completely new needs, scaling out, not up ie, involving a wider range of people in production and distribution, using mass-market techniques to deliver complex services, making old tools do new tricks using mobile technologies to improve compliance. Going forward, companies are making impressive gains in the growth.

Chief guest Dr Miftah Ismail, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister/Chairman, Board of Investment will address to this convention. Nasir Javed Chowdhry, Chairman PPMA; Haroon Qasim, Managing Director, PharmEvo; Ayub Siddiqui, Sanofi-aventis Pakistan; Salman Burney, GlaxoSmithKline; Zahid Saeed, Indus Pharma; Kaiser Waheed, Medisure; Shahab Rizvi,

Novartis Pharma; Saeed Allawala, Atco Laboratories; Kashif Sajjad Sheikh, CCL Pharmaceuticals; Rafael Beaus, Managing Director, Telstar Spain; Jamal Mokaddam, Business Development Director, Romaco Group; Dr Ishrat Hussain, Dean & Director, IBA; Dr Tahir S Shamsi, Medical Director, NIBD will give presentations at the convention.

Globally, the scientific foundation on which the Pharma industry rests has improved vastly over the years. Technologies for collecting and synthesising biological data are improving and becoming much cheaper and more efficient. However, in the short term, the industry continues to face challenges like patent cliff, rising drug discovery cost, harsher regulations and price controls, coupled with spiralling healthcare cost.-PR

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Cement despatches touch 1.95 million tons mark in August 2014

September 06, 2014

ZAHID BAIG

Cement despatches to domestic markets during the month of August 2014 were 1.95 million tons compared with 1.57 million tons during same month last year showing an increase of 23.65 percent. Exports during August 2014 were 828,000 tons against 677,000 tons during August 2013 showing rise of 22.25 percent.

Total despatches during August 2014 were 2.778 million tons compared to 2.254 million tons during same month last year showing increase of 23.22 percent. Cement sector posted healthy growth in August 2014 both in exports and domestic consumption despite political turmoil in the country.

A spokesman of All Pakistan Cement Manufacturers Association (APCMA) said here on Friday that mills located in both northern and southern parts of the country registered growth. He said domestic despatches in north increased from 1.316 million tons in August 2013 to 1.650 million tons in August 2014. Similarly he added exports from this region increased from 437,917 tons last August to 502,845 tons in August 2014.

He said that domestic consumption of cement in south was 261,938 tons in August 2013 that has increased to 300,271 tons in the corresponding month of this year. He said exports from south grew more robustly from 239,126 tons to 324,861 tons this August. He added that the most impressive feature of growth in August 2014 was the momentum in exports after a very long time.

He added that in the first two months of this fiscal year the local consumption stood at 3.681 million tons which was 7.35 percent higher than last year volume of 3.429 million tons. He further said that domestic consumption was negative in July 2014 but the increase in consumption in August 2014 not only compensated the decline but resulted in higher overall consumption.

He said exports suffered a decline of 32 percent in July 2014 and even after increase of over 22 percent in exports during August 2014 the overall exports in the first two months of this fiscal year declined by 6.72 percent to 1.331 million tons from 1,426 million tons during same period of last fiscal year.

The spokesman pointed out that the issues impacting cement sector have still not been addressed by the government. In federal budget 2013-14, cement was brought within the purview of '3rd Schedule' of Sales Tax Act 1990 that increased the overall tax burden and resulted in increase in the local prices.

Representatives of cement industry had detailed meetings with Chairman FBR explaining the cement dynamics with the request to remove cement from 3rd Schedule. Chairman FBR however categorically refused to remove cement from 3rd Schedule but said that they will surely help out the industry by making two zones - north zone and south zone in the country allowing separate MRPs for each zone. Unfortunately this decision has not been implemented till date and no SRO has been issued in this regard. This is a very serious issue impacting growth of cement industry and resulting in high prices to the end user ultimately increasing the construction cost.

Recent federal budget 2014-15 has further added to the worries of cement industry as government has imposed one percent duty on imported coal. The APCMA spokesman stressed that coal is the only fuel on which import duty has been imposed in the recent budget which is direct injustice to the cement industry as cement industry is the main user of imported coal and consumes almost 95 percent of the 4.5 million tons annual imports.

Due to unavailability of gas, other industries have switched to coal and many others are also converting to coal, so this customs duty is to nullify the positive initiative of the government to use coal as an alternate energy source.

The APCMA spokesperson further pointed out that cement industry has spent millions of dollars in converting its plants from the expensive furnace oil to coal in order to reduce the cost of production. Our product will become uncompetitive in the global markets and as a result, the precious 500 million dollars foreign exchange being earned on cement exports will be at risk.

He further added that the cement sector of the country is already facing grave issues including massive loadshedding, shortage of labour, slowdown of construction activities, less exports etc; therefore, this duty is just to add to the woes of the sector. Budget 2014-15 has also increased the excise duty on cement and the impact is around Rs 2.5 per bag, said the spokesman.

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'People's Bus Service' inaugurated in Karachi

September 06, 2014

Chief Minister Sindh Qaim Ali Shah on Friday inaugurated the 'People's Bus Service', comprised of 36 refurbished CNG buses that would run on Karachi roads from Tower to Quaidabad. The Chief Minister also took a drive in a bus and vowed to bring 36 more buses within a month to lessen miseries of Karachiites.

At a ceremony to bring 36 CNG buses on roads at the CM House, Qaim Ali Shah said people travel on bus rooftops than inside buses and he was aware of miseries faced by people during commuting in the city. "The government understands these miseries and it is planning and implementing bus projects to provide relief to the people," he said. Shah said the federal government planned to invest Rs 525 billion in 11 Sindh government projects which include the Karachi Circular Railway project, bus projects, sewerage and water projects but these funding was refused in the last meeting of Council of Common Interests (CCI).

"This forced us to find investors for the projects and finally during a recent visit to China, their investors had agreed upon investing in transport projects," he said, adding that the KCR project would now be funded by Chinese investors instead of Japanese organisation, JICA. Sindh Transport Minister Mumtaz Jakhri said the chief minister had signed three MoUs in China for provision of public transport services for Karachi and other cities of Sindh. He said the government would launch three more public transport services in Karachi that include Yellow Line, Green Line and Red Line.

It is to mention here that as such no public transport exists in the Sindh province and the people of the province are facing hardship for years and they are at the mercy of private transport businesses which are fleecing commuters. "Bids for yellow line are issued while the CM had promised to grant Rs 3 billion, which were sanctioned for Green Line which will now be funded by the federal government after Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's announcement, so that the projects could be initiated soon," he said.

Speaking on the occasion, Sindh Minister for Local Bodies and Information Sharjeel Inam Memon said that out of 72 buses, 36 were brought on roads which would charge Rs 20 from each passenger and will only accommodate passengers as per their seating capacity. Sharjeel said the PPP had always worked for improving Sindh infrastructure and several bridges and roads were constructed during the PPP era. He said that Sharae Faisal was also built in the era of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

He said three flyover projects were initiated during the current tenure of the PPP government and one of them would be completed within two months while the others would be completed by December 2014. He acknowledged cleaning and water shortage issues in the Karachi city and said that there was a water shortage in the city as having 1,000mg/day demand the city was only receiving 650 mg/day. "K-Electric load shedding at KWSB water pumping stations is also playing a key role in increasing water shortage in Karachi," he said.

He said that a committee comprising PPP, MQM, Jamaat-i-Islami, PML-N, PTI and other political parties was formed while representation from the business community was also included. "The committee will have the power to hire or fire any government employee found guilty of negligence," he said.

He said that the provincial government was taking all measure to avoid floods in Sindh, including urban flooding in Karachi. "Encroachments on natural drains are great hindrance in better disposal of water in the city as 2.0 million people are living on encroachments on several nullahs in the city," he said, adding that they are giving one-month ultimatum to vacate these nullahs otherwise strict action with the backing of media, civil society and political parties would be taken against them.

He said that private parties would be invited for collecting waste in different districts of the city and the same pattern would be followed in other parts of the province. KMC Administrator Rauf Akhtar said the KMC has refurbished these buses with the co-operation of the Sindh government and it would be run by the department on minimal fares and better facilities. He said the KMC had completed 10 projects worth Rs 3.789 billion that include several roads and flyovers in the city while 9 projects were under construction that include flyover at Ayesha Manzil, Liaquatabad and Malir.

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PIA operates 34 pre-Hajj flights so far

September 06, 2014

PIA has so far operated 34 pre-Hajj flights and carried more than 12,000 intending Hajj pilgrims to Saudi Arabia with on time flight departures and arrivals. PIA spokesman said here on Friday. Pakistan International Airlines on the eight day of its pre-Hajj operation, operated 34 Hajj flights carrying over 12,000 intending pilgrims to the holy land.

PIA has carried 2,546 intending pilgrims from Karachi to Saudi Arabia through eight flights, 2,484 from Lahore through six flights, 3,391 from Islamabad through seven flights, 2,080 from Quetta through seven flights and 1,823 intending pilgrims from Peshawar through six flights to Saudi Arabia. On September 06, a total of four flights are scheduled to operate; one each from Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore and Quetta, PIA spokesperson concluded.-PR

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Double payment of money orders: NAB KP arrests former clerk of DIK post office

September 06, 2014

National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Friday arrested Riaz Muhammad Rashid, former money order clerk of GPO DI Khan, on the charges of corruption in the payment of money orders. A complaint was received from Divisional Superintendent Postal Services, DI Khan Division against the accused. During investigation it was established that money orders paid at different sub post offices were again charged in the money orders paid list of DI Khan GPO.

That is double payment against each money order as original was paid to the recipient in the sub post offices while accused used to withdraw an equal amount for himself in the main office. Taking cognisance of the case NAB started investigation in June, 2014 and established that an amount of Rs 4897,920 was misappropriated by the accused in fake money orders payments. The NAB KP therefore arrested the accused and further investigation is under process. The accused was produced before the Accountability Court for obtaining his physical remand. The Accountability Court has granted 12 days physical remand to NAB.

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Global Volunteer Day: DHL Express Pakistan mobilises its employees

September 06, 2014

Last year, more than 100,000 Deutsche Post DHL employees in 127 countries around the world participated in over 1,600 community projects and programmes as part of the Group's annual Global Volunteer Day event. Deutsche Post DHL, the world's leading postal and logistics group has once again called on employees, customers and non-profit organisations to lend a hand in volunteer projects as part of the 2014 Global Volunteer Day celebrations.

"It is encouraging to see so many Deutsche Post DHL employees turning out for this year's event and supporting their local communities through volunteerism," says Christof Ehrhart, Director of Corporate Communications and Responsibility at Deutsche Post DHL.

But as Ehrhart explains, the Global Volunteer Day programme is not limited to just these few days in September. "Last year we made the conscious decision to extend Global Volunteer Day to include activities throughout the entire year. By doing, this we are underscoring the value of volunteerism within the Group and honouring the dedication our employees show to their own volunteer projects." In Pakistan, DHL Express marked the Global Volunteer Day with over 500 employees taking part in various volunteering activities across the country. In Karachi,

employees participated in a Beach Cleaning Activity at Sea View.-PR *Copyright Business Recorder, 2014*

Taxation: *Pakistan*

'Customs House Neighbourhood Project' launched

September 06, 2014

Karachi administration in close co-ordination with Collectorate of Customs (Karachi) and local philanthropists on Friday embarked upon "Customs House Neighbourhood Development Project". Commissioner of Karachi, Shoaib Ahmad Siddiqui sharing details of the project said area around Customs House, right from Karachi Port Trust (KPT) Building to Hindu Mandir would be developed on modern lines and turned into motor free zone, opened only for pedestrians.

Known architects Shahid Abdullah and Danish Zuby are actively designing the project with all support of Collector Customs (Preventive), Tariq Huda and Commissioner Karachi, Shoaib Ahmad Siddiqui. "Idea is to turn the place friendly and presentable where citizens may bring their foreign friends as well as those from other parts of the country," said the commissioner. First phase of the project will be completed against an estimated cost of Rs 70 million for which the local industrialists as well as corporate sector have committed to contribute.

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Audit cases: Board-in-Council may approve procedure on September 10

September 06, 2014

SOHAIL SARFRAZ

The Board-in-Council of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) is likely to approve procedure for carrying out computerised random balloting for selection of audit cases for Tax Year 2013 on September 10 (Wednesday). Sources told *Business Recorder* here on Tuesday that the FBR Member (Taxpayers Audit) is expected to give a presentation on the "Audit Policy 2014 for Tax Year 2013/Tax Period 2013". Besides other agenda items, Board-in-Council headed by FBR Chairman Tariq Bajwa would also discuss other policy issues next week.

The Board wanted to select around 15 percent of the total tax returns for audit filed for the Tax Year/Tax Period 2013. The FBR has finalised the "Audit Policy 2014 for Tax Year 2013/Tax Period 2013." Under the new policy, the cases for audit shall be selected through random computer balloting up to the extent of 15 percent of total returns of taxpayers filed for the Tax Year/Tax Period 2013.

The random computer balloting for selection of cases for audit would be carried out separately

under the Sales Tax Act 1990, Income Tax Ordinance 2001 and Federal Excise Act, 2005 and the whole process to be based on the laid down guidelines. Every taxpayer cannot be audited due to time/resource constraints. Selection of cases for audit is a significant feature of any Audit Policy, as segregation process needs logical grounds in the form of identification of risk areas and determination of the basis for audit through a transparent and fair process, sources added.

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Cotton and Textiles: *Pakistan*

Modest trade on cotton market on continuing rains

September 06, 2014

Modest trading was seen on the cotton market on Friday as rains continued for the fifth day in some parts of country, dealers said. The official spot rate managed to hold overnight level at Rs 5,600, they added. In the session, some 8000 bales of cotton changed hands between Rs 5600 and Rs 5750, they said. In Sindh, prices of seed cotton were unchanged at Rs 2500 and Rs 2600 and in Punjab prices were at Rs 2550 and Rs 2700, they said.

According to the market sources, most of traders were worried about the rains in the cotton belt as if rains prolong, this could be bad for the standing crop. The prediction for cotton production lower-than-expected for the current season and heavy rains may damage the quality of cotton, they said. Cotton analyst, Naseem Usman said that country has imported some good quality of cotton at the reasonable rates to meet it's urgent requirements.

Reuters adds: Cotton futures drifted lower on Thursday in light volume, as pressure from expectations of huge supplies outweighed physical demand. The most-active December cotton contract on ICE Futures US closed down 0.51 cent, or 0.8 percent, at 65.45 cents a lb.

The following deals reported: 1200 bales from Shahdadpur at Rs 5600-5625, 1000 bales from Mirpurkhas at Rs 5600-5625, 1000 bales from Sanghar at Rs 5600-5625, 600 bales from Hyderabad at Rs 5600-5625, 1000 bales from Tando Adam at Rs 5600-5625, 400 bales from Kotri at Rs 5600-5625, 200 bales from Vinder at Rs 5650, 200 bales from Mian Chano at Rs 5750, 200 bales from Arifwala at Rs 5750, 200 bales from Mianwali at Rs 5750, 200 bales from Jhang at Rs 5750, 400 bales from Hasilpur at Rs 5750, 200 bales from Bahawana at Rs 5750, 400 bales from Kabirwala at Rs 5750, 200 bales from Chichawatni at Rs 5750 and 200 bales from Tiba Sultanpur at Rs 5750, they said.

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The KCA Official Spot Rate for Local Dealings in Pak Rupees

FOR BASE GRADE 3 STAPLE LENGTH 1-1/32"

-----MICRONAIRE VALUE BETWEEN 3.8 TO 4.9 NCL

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Rate	Ex-Gin	Upcountry	Spot Rate	Spot Rate	DifferenceFor	Price	Ex-Karachi	Ex. KHI. As
Ex-Karachion 04.09.2014								
37.324 Kgs	5,600	150	5,750	5,750	Nil			

Equivalent								
40 Kgs	6,002	160	6,162	6,162	Nil			

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Immediate measures ordered to cope with situation

September 06, 2014

Punjab Minister for Minority Affairs and Human Rights/Incharge Flood Control Plan Faisalabad Division Sardar Tahir Khalil Sandhu has directed the concerned departments to take immediate measures to cope with the worst situation arising out of the heavy rains and rapid relief activities should be ensured to lessen the people's difficulties due to the rain water.

He said this while presiding over an emergency meeting held at DCO office committee room to review the implementation of flood control plan. The minister said that the Punjab CM has assigned responsibilities concerned departments to monitor relief activities during the heavy rains in the different parts of the Punjab.

He directed the WASA officers and others concerned departments to remain active in the field and to ensure immediate drainage of rain water from the low lying areas. He said that the Crisis Management Centres of WASA should be active and functional around the clock. He emphasised upon utilisation of all possible resources for drainage of rain water.

He appreciated the establishment of District Flood Control Emergency Centre in DCO office for ensuring the co-ordination among the concerned departments for speedily relief operation in case of any untoward incident. Meanwhile, the Minister Khalil Tahir Sandhu also visited Flood Emergency Control Room and was given briefing by DCO Noorul Amin Mengal and MD WASA about the measures taken for flood control.

Later, the minister took a round of different localities of the city and inspected the situation of rain water. He also went to Kaleem Shaheed Colony No 2 and met with the family of deceased Abdul Majeed who died in the incident of roof collapse of power loom factory.

He expressed sympathies with the family and said that the Punjab CM has provided financial assistance of 0.5 million rupees for them. Members of Parliament Sh Ejaz Ahmad, Dr Najma Afzal, Haji Khalid Saeed, Madiha Rana, Haji Ilyas Ansari, DCO Noorul Amin Mengal, MD WASA Syed Zahid Aziz and other concerned officers were also present on the occasion.

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Daily trading report of PMEX

September 06, 2014

On Friday at Pakistan Mercantile Exchange (PMEX) value traded was recorded at PKR 3.704 billion as compared to PKR 3.048 billion registered on Thursday, up by 21.53 percent. The number of lots traded was 15,244 and PMEX Commodity Index closed at 2,981. Major business

was contributed by crude oil amounting to PKR 2.274 billion, followed by gold amounting to PKR 1.352 billion - up 170 percent and silver at PKR 78 million - 211 percent.

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Navigational channel Karachi fish harbour heeds dredging

September 06, 2014

Big fishing boats face berthing and sailing problems as the country's largest fish harbour is fast losing its draft, fishermen said on Friday. They said boats may scuttle while navigating to berth at the Karachi Fish Harbour because the harbour channel draft has scaled down significantly.

"There may be any accident of the boats sinking from hitting the navigational channel seabed anytime," fishermen feared, saying that the Karachi Fish Harbour Authority (KFHA) had continuously been requested to dredge the channel. "Around 0.1 million square meters area of the harbour's channel would be dredged to deepen it by four meters in line with the port dictum," an official of KFHA told *Business Recorder*.

The Karachi Port Trust (KPT) had been approached to help the KFHA to deepen the navigational channel draft to ease fishing boats movement, they said, adding that "the matter is pending since the new government has taken over". The fish harbour was last dredged in 1990 which the then EU Commission had financed, officials said, adding that "last dredging of the fish harbour was done through EU grant by an Italian firm M/s "Lodigiani SPA" in 1990, costing the then currency unit of "ECU" 12 million".

Fishermen and boat owners said that their vessels were unable to navigate easily across the channel because its draft was shallow. "The congested channel also causes entanglement to fishing boats," they complained. "It is now very difficult for vessels to move smoothly inside the congested and low-depth harbour channel," they said, adding that there are fears of boats may collapse during their navigation if draft of the harbour continued to lower.

Movements of fishing vessels also suffer from dockyard activities, they said, suggesting the government to build a new navigational channel to help ease passage of boats leading to fisheries. Fishermen said the congested harbour with lowering draft has caused difficulties for fishing vessels to navigate in the channel. They said that around 600 fishing boats move every day through the harbour channel.

The shallow channel draft of fish harbour is also causing accidents of boats and there are fears loaded vessels may scuttle during passage for want of sufficient water at the channel to keep them afloat. The KFHA has its limited financial resources to maintain harbour's facilities as dredging the channel would require huge cost to take place, officials said.

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Fuel and Energy: *Pakistan*

Decrease in fuel charges adjustment means 'over recovery' by company: Whistle Blower chief points out

September 06, 2014

IQBAL MIRZA

Chairman, Whistle Blower has pointed out that a decrease in Fuel Charges Adjustment means "over recovery" by the Company. In a letter sent to National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra), on September 4, Whistle Blower's Chairman Syed Adil Gilani said that in order to protect the Company and the consumers from 'over' or 'short' recovery of tariff, an amendment was made in the Nepra Act in regard to Monthly Adjustment in the approved tariff on account of Fuel Price Variation, mandating such variations to be notified not later than seven days.

Unfortunately even after the lapse of many months, we are discussing the Monthly Fuel "Charges Adjustment for April 2014 (5 months), May 2014 (4 months) and June 2014 (3 months). Practically this delay is not in the interest of consumers and the economy of the country", he said.

The Authority, he said, is carrying out this exercise of Monthly Fuel Charges Adjustment in a mechanical way, which is most unfortunate. "In my opinion, FCA could be used as a strong and effective tool for monitoring the state and efficiency of generation of electric power in the country."

In almost all hearings of Fuel Charges Adjustment, the Commentators have asked the Authority to carry out a detailed technical and financial audit of the data submitted by the Company. Each time, the Authority confirms that its professionals carry out an audit. However, none of the Audit Reports have ever been up-loaded on Nepra's website for public inspection and verification, Adil Gilani said.

While reiterating the demand for the uploading of the Audit Reports on its website, as a consumer of this utility he requested that Nepra provided him Audit Reports of the audit carried out by its professionals during the last five years. Non provision of such reports will justify the inference that no audit was carried out in the past and Nepra wants to conceal the facts from the consumers, who are paying the tariff and suffering on account of Nepra's inaction in the matter.

After highlighting the issues which directly relate to Fuel Charges Adjustment, Chairman, Whistle Blower pointed to non-functional office of Nepra in Karachi: Although Nepra has opened its office in Karachi, the same is without relevant staff for the last so many months. Nepra's fully functional office is immediately needed in the Southern area. It is also suggested that to give relief to the consumers of K-Electric, Nepra should place its 'Complaint Drop Box' in

each complaint centre of K-Electric and collect the complaints from these Complaint Boxes at least twice a week. This action will provide some relief to the consumers of K-Electric.

Referring to technical and financial audit of K-Electric, Adil Gilani said: K-Electric is the only vertically integrated utility in the country, where all three functions namely Generation, Transmission and Distribution are being carried out by a single entity. Further, it is working in the private sector. Since Generation, Transmission and Distribution are being carried out by one utility, there is need of strong technical as well as financial monitoring by the Regulator prior to deciding the cases of monthly and quarterly adjustments on account of Fuel Charges Adjustment, to prevent any chances of fake data. The technical audit of Generation data is even more important since K-Electric is using dual fuel in its BQPS-I Power Plant. Moreover, it is buying oil from BYCO and there are some complaints regarding the conflict of interest and on account of the absence of arms length transactions between K-Electric and BYCO because of their business relationship other than that of buyer and purchaser of Fuel. Technical audit of the Generation data along with physical verification of all meter including the fuel consumption meters, gas supply meters, energy meters etc are urgently and regularly needed.

Copies of the letter have been forwarded for action under rules to: Secretary to Prime Minister, Islamabad, Chairman, NAB, Islamabad, Minister of Water & Power, Islamabad, Secretary, Water & Power, Islamabad, Registrar Supreme Court Pakistan, Islamabad, and advocate Anwar Kamal, Lahore.

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Talks with Qatargas: law secretary excluded from price body

September 06, 2014

MUSHTAQ GHUMMAN

The government has excluded Secretary Law and Justice from Price Committee tasked to negotiate the price with Qatargas for the import of LNG, well informed sources in Petroleum Ministry told *Business Recorder*. Sui Southern Gas Company Limited (SSGCL) and Engro Elengy Terminal (Pvt) Limited (EPTL) executed an LNG Services Agreement (LSA) on April 30, 2014 for the provision of LNG receiving storage and re-gasification services under a tolling fee arrangement.

EETPL also executed an Implementation Agreement (IA) with Port Qasim Authority on June 23, 2014 to develop and operate an LNG terminal at Port Qasim. The sources said, for import of LNG molecules, Pakistan State Oil Company Limited (PSOCL) and Qatargas Operating Company Limited (QOCL) have been nominated by the two respective governments to negotiate draft Heads of Agreement (HQA).

The Ministry had constituted a team comprising PSO, SNGPL, SSGCL and ISGCL to negotiate the technical and operational aspects of HQA. Initial discussions have been held with the Qatargas. However, the LNG price would be negotiated after finalising operational and

commercial terms. In parallel, a bidding process for import of LNG has also been initiated and an EoI advertised on May 30, 2014 in the national and international press.

The sources further stated that being a capital intensive project of national importance, which may also require sovereign guarantees, the Ministry proposed that a price negotiation committee be constituted to negotiate the LNG price and other important aspects with Qatargas. The composition of the committee would be as follows: (i) Secretary Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources(MoP&NR) (Chairman);(ii) Chairman Board of Investment (BoI) (member);(iii) Secretary Finance or his nominee (member);(iv) Secretary Law (or his nominee member) ;(v) Secretary Water and Power or her nominee(member) ;(vi) Managing Director PSO(member) ;(vii) Managing Director, SNGPL(member) ;(viii) Managing Director, SSGCL(member); and (ix) Managing Director, ISGCL(member/ Secretary).

Secretary Law and Justice, sources said, expressed his reservations on the nomination of the Secretary Law or his nominee as member of the committee as agreements, their terms and conditions and other aspects would be submitted to the Law Division for vetting. It was agreed that nomination of the Secretary Law or his nominee be excluded from the composition of the committee.

The ECC, in its meeting on August 15, 2014, approved the proposal with a modification that the name of Secretary Law and Justice or his nominee may be excluded from the committee and the nominees of Chairman BoI/Secretary Finance and Water and Power would not be below the rank of an Additional Secretary. The name of Secretary Law was excluded because Law Division has to vet various agreements/contracts subsequently and input would be available at a later stage. And legal teams of consultants and gas companies would be available to assist the committee.

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Public hearing to discuss K-E's plea put off

September 06, 2014

National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) on Friday adjourned the public hearing held to discuss the K-Electric's plea of converting two units of its Bin Qasim Power Plant into coal because of public representatives' reservations. Representatives of consumers, lawyers and business community voiced their serious concern over K-Electric's plea of getting its generation licence of two units of Bin Qasim Power Plant converted into coal at a public hearing arranged by Nepra at a local hotel on Friday.

The consumers' representatives also raised legal and technical questions about the K-Electric's plea, requesting Nepra to inform the consumers about the pros and cons of the power utility's move prior to taking any decision in this regard. When they submitted their reservations against the K-Electric's move, Nepra officials adjourned the hearing for an indefinite period without taking any decision. Nepra was represented in the hearing by its officials - Naveed Sheikh, Khawaja Naeem and Syed Safeer Hussain - whereas Ghazyani attended the meeting on behalf of the power utility.

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Fuel and Energy: *World*

Oil falls as weak US jobs data adds to demand worries

September 06, 2014

Crude oil futures fell on Friday and ended the week more than 2 percent lower as disappointing jobs data from the United States cast doubt about the strength of economic growth in the world's biggest oil consuming economy. US jobs figures showed nonfarm payrolls increased by just 142,000 in August, well below forecasts of 225,000 and the smallest rise eight months.

"US economic growth was supposed to counter the slowing in China and Europe and the payrolls report threw a little cold water on that idea," said Gene McGillian, analyst at Tradition Energy in Stamford, Connecticut. Brent crude for October delivery fell \$1.01 to settle at \$100.82 a barrel, having dropped to \$100.35 intraday. The last time Brent was priced under \$100 was in June 2013.

US October crude fell \$1.16 at settle at \$93.29 a barrel. The weekly drop was Brent's third in four weeks and the sixth in the past seven weeks for US crude. Oil prices extended losses after US President Barack Obama voiced scepticism about a cease-fire in Ukraine and said that the agreement must last if sanctions on Russia are to be lifted.

Ukraine and pro-Russian rebels agreed to a cease-fire on Friday, a first step to cool a conflict that has soured relations between Moscow and the West. President Obama said at the same news conference that key Nato allies were ready to join in military action to defeat Islamic State militants in Iraq.

"Sanctions on Russia remaining in place keeps the market concerned about demand and Europe's economy," said Phil Flynn, analyst at Price Futures Group in Chicago. The dollar weakened against a basket of currencies after the US jobs data, but recovered later. Oil prices fell \$1 on Thursday after a European Central Bank interest rate cut led to a spike in the US dollar.

A stronger dollar can depress demand for oil by making it more expensive for holders of other currencies to buy the dollar-denominated commodity. "The main factor driving us down has been the strength of the dollar," said Carsten Fritsch, senior oil and commodities analyst at Commerzbank in Frankfurt.

"Supply is plentiful, but it has been for some time. The change this week has been the rise of the US currency. We would need to see a weaker dollar and signs of improving demand for oil prices to rise much on a sustainable basis." Rising US production, a glut of crude in the Atlantic basin and Asia, together with the potential for rising exports from Opec-members Libya and Iran, have added downward pressure on oil prices.

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Banking & Finance

SBP injects Rs70,900mn into market

Friday, 05 September 2014 21:26

Posted by Shoaib-ur-Rehman Siddiqui

KARACHI: State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Thursday injected Rs 70,900 million into the market for seven days during its open market operation (OMO).

The bids offered were of Rs 75,900 million. The rate of return is 9.96 percent, said SBP statement here on Friday.

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Markets

ISE-10 Index stays bearish

Friday, 05 September 2014 21:21

Posted by Shoaib-ur-Rehman Siddiqui

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Stock Exchange(ISE) on Friday witnessed bullish trend as the ISE-10 index was up by 4645.66 points to close at 4631.62 points.

A total of 293,000 shares were traded, which showed a negative growth of 20,500 shares, when compared with previous day's trading of 272,500 shares.

Out of 142 companies, share prices of 62 companies recorded increase while those of 80 companies decreased and no company remained stable in today's trading.

The share price of Gainer Bhanero Textile increased by Rs 23.75 while that of Sanofi Aventis Pakistan decreased by Rs 20.08 per share.

Lafrage Pakistan Cement,Fauji Fertilizer Bin Qasim, Engro Corporation and Pakistan Petroleum remained the top trading companies with 205,000, 60,000 , 5,000 and 5,000 shares respectively.

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Miscellaneous News

Money lending: ADB set to approve \$30m for Engro LNG project

By Shahbaz Rana

Published: September 6, 2014

ISLAMABAD:

The Asian Development Bank is set to approve \$30 million loan for the construction of Engro Fast track Liquefied Natural Gas regasification project.

The project is aimed at facilitating imports of up to 400 million cubic feet of gas per day (mmcf) gas to bridge the soaring gap between demand and supply.

The loan will be given at London Interbank Offered Rates (Libor), according to the ADB. It will help Engro Elengy Terminal (ETPL), a fully owned subsidiary of Engro Corporation, to significantly meet the total financing requirements of the project, according to the ETPL official.

The project will involve the construction and operation of LNG terminal at Port Qasim including a 24 kilometre (km) branch pipeline to transport re-gasified LNG. About 21km of the pipeline is located within the Port Qasim Authority.

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) of the World Bank is also expected to give about \$30 million loan for the construction of the terminal. Out of the total cost, estimated over \$100 million, ETPL will add \$31 million as its equity, while the remaining 70% will be arranged from international and domestic financial institutions, according to the official.

Both IFC and ADB are expected to convert parts of their project financing into equity that will allow their representatives to sit on the Board of the company.

The terminal – originally planned to be completed in November this year – is aimed at ensuring gas flows by the upcoming winter season. However, the project is now delayed and will be completed in March, due to requisite approvals from government agencies.

The Petroleum and Natural Resources Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi had vowed to minimise gas load shedding in the winter season this year – a promise that is unlikely to be met as the authorities have yet to finalise a deal for its import.

The project involves the use of a floating storage and a regasification unit which will store imported LNG and re-gasify it before transporting the gas through a 24km pipeline to the existing Sui Southern Gas Company network near Port Qasim.

Following a public tendering process in 2013, the ETPL has signed a 15-year LNG service agreement with the SSGC. The ETPL would provide the handling facility with toll charges and later increase imports to 400 mmcf/d from 200 mmcf/d which would be set in the beginning.

The company has already begun work on the project and has completed 15% dredging besides initiating the process to lay down the pipeline. As the international financial institutions are yet to approve the loans, the ETPL has arranged bridge financing to meet all the requirements.

The government has also initiated the process for issuing tenders for the import of gas. With the assistance of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the government has hired legal and commercial consultants aimed at facilitating in awarding the LNG import deal.

It has been simultaneously engaging with Qatar authorities, in addition to initiating process to issue a tender for the private parties. The country is seeking a government-to-government arrangement with Qatar but it has so far remained unable to strike a deal due to a high price demand, according to Ministry of Petroleum officials.

During the previous PPP government, Doha had offered to export LNG at a price equivalent to 14.7% of Brent crude oil rate when it was hovering around \$110 per barrel in the international market. Later, Qatar pushed the price down to \$17.437 per mmbtu, a 0.5% discount over the previous rate of \$18.002 for the 20-year lifetime of the project.

Published in The Express Tribune, September 6th, 2014.

Turned down: SSGC denies increase in gas supply, cites shortages

By Zafar Bhutta

Published: September 6, 2014

ISLAMABAD:

Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) has refused to enhance gas allocation for Pakistan Exploration Limited (PEL), which is sought for blending with highly low-pressure gas from Kandra field to pave the way for its consumption by power plants.

“SSGC has earmarked 5 million cubic feet of gas per day (mmcf/d) for PEL for blending it with low British thermal unit (BTU) gas from Kandra field. However, PEL seeks a higher allocation of 10 mmcf/d,” an official told *The Express Tribune*.

The reason given by SSGC for turning down the request was that the company was already facing shortage of gas and had no additional supplies available.

Kandra field produces extremely low-pressure gas, with estimated heating value of 143 BTU, which cannot be consumed. PEL wants to enhance its pressure level to at least 400 to 500 BTU to clear the way for its use in power plants.

According to PEL, it could produce 30 mmcf/d after mixing the low-pressure gas with high BTU gas. Low BTU gas, having heating value of less than 450 BTU, is ideal for power and fertiliser plants.

Now, sources say, PEL is asking the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources to get the higher gas allocation approved from the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the cabinet.

If approved, PEL will receive 10 mmcf/d of gas at \$4 per million British thermal units (mmbtu) and sell it to power producers at \$8.75 per mmbtu after mixing it with low-pressure gas.

The previous government of Pakistan Peoples Party had announced a low BTU gas policy, which offered maximum price of \$8.75 per mmbtu and set minimum price at \$6.

The policy was designed to tap the unexplored gas deposits in the face of fast declining old reserves. The producers were given incentives in a bid to attract investment in development of gas fields and energy supply to the power sector.

This could have helped provide an additional 200 mmcf/d to the power producers, who depend on expensive furnace oil for electricity production.

At present, there are some fields in the country that have the potential of producing low BTU gas.

Gas production in the country stands at 4.1 billion cubic feet per day (bcfd) and may slump to 1.6 bcfd in 2022 as existing deposits are depleting fast, posing a serious threat to the economy.

In the low BTU policy, the upper cap for heating value was set at 450 BTU per standard cubic feet and more incentives were announced for the heating value below 450.

Under the pricing regime, the heating value of 450 to 600 has been given the price of \$6 per mmbtu. The price will be increased by \$0.01 per mmbtu for every decline in the unit below the heating value of 450. The minimum level has been set at 175.

Under the new BTU Policy 2011, the government will also charge 25% windfall levy, the difference between applicable price for the low BTU gas and its sale to the third party other than the government.

Published in The Express Tribune, September 6th, 2014.

Tauseef Enterprises: A success story

By Imran Rana

Published: September 6, 2014

FAISALABAD:

In the midst of financial difficulties faced by the industrial conglomerates due to multifaceted challenges, Tauseef Enterprises Private Limited is rapidly expanding its businesses on the back of growing export volumes.

From 2008 onwards, many big companies like Chenab, Amtex Textile and Jia Textile either closed their business, or started operating at half their original capacity.

Initially, Tauseef Enterprises was just a small factory. Now it owns 14 units in Pakistan and two in Bangladesh.

In 1981, after completing his intermediate, Chaudry Salamat Ali – the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Tauseef Enterprises – started his business from a small-scale factory where he installed only eight knitted machines with the investment of just Rs200,000. It was his first step towards becoming owner of a conglomerate. He shared his success story with *The Express Tribune*.

“I was doing business in the local market of Faisalabad,” said Ali. “Some of the city’s exporters started buying my products and exporting them to international markets.”

In 1989, the company sent its first consignment – valued at Rs1 million – to Germany. In 1996, the company acquired Data Impex and doubled its production capacity.

In 2004, the company purchased machinery from Hajweri Textile, a closed unit. By 2008, he had acquired the New Light Hosiery Mills as well.

The company manufactures polo shirts, fleece, formal clothing, sportswear, sweatshirts, t-shirts, kids wear and trousers.

“From Rs1 million export in 1989, the company reached total exports of Rs202 million by 2002,” said Ali. “In 2007, the company’s exports crossed the Rs1 billion mark. It was a great achievement for us.”

In the year of 2013-14, where many Faisalabad-based companies registered contraction in exports, Tauseef Enterprises exports grew to Rs2.1 billion. Ali attributed the success to better planning and execution.

The company shifted to alternative sources of energy soon after 2007, when energy crisis started aggravating. To reap benefits of duty-free exports allowed to Bangladesh by the European Union, the company set up two factories in Bangladesh – Labbas Textile Mills and Taqwa Textile Mills.

The company is exporting goods to Germany, United Kingdom, United States of America and Middle Eastern countries.

In 2008, the company also purchased Ahsan Yousaf Textile Mills and ventured in home textile products.

“Pakistan is the best place for doing business,” said the chief. “The country has a lot of potential. European buyers are shifting to Bangladesh but it does not have an adverse effect on Pakistani markets.”

Ali added that Pakistan grows the best variety of raw cotton, has cheap labour and produces the best quality products.

“What the exporters require is reduction in cost of doing business and uninterrupted energy supplies,” he concluded.

Published in The Express Tribune, September 6th, 2014.

Improving portfolio: OGDCL enhances exploration

By APP

Published: September 6, 2014

ISLAMABAD:

Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) drilled 17 new wells including eight exploratory/appraisal wells and nine development wells during the year ended on June 30, 2014.

“OGDCL, with an aim to enhance its exploration portfolio, holds the largest exploration acreage in the country which as of June 30, 2014 stood at 1,127,994 square km,” an official of OGDCL said.

This increase in the exploration acreage is attributable to an acquisition of 29 new exploratory blocks through competitive bidding of petroleum exploration rights by Directorate General of Petroleum Concessions, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources in March 2013 and formally awarded to the Company during the reporting period.

As of June 30, 2014, the company held the largest exploration acreage in the country covering an area of 112,794 sq. km.

This includes 62 owned and operated exploration licences.

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April-June: Micro-savers cross 7m mark

By Our Correspondent

Published: September 6, 2014

KARACHI:

Registering a substantial increase of 25% on a quarter-on-quarter basis, the number of micro-savers in Pakistan crossed the seven million mark at the end of the April-June period.

According to data released on Friday by the Pakistan Microfinance Network, the second quarter of 2014 was dominated by growth in the number of active savers, which soared by 1.4 million in the quarter to reach 7.3 million.

The increase in savings was mainly because of microfinance banks (MFBs), whose number of depositors increased by 52% and the value of deposits went up by 11%. The market share of MFB peer group in terms of active savers increased to 57%, surpassing the share of the rural support programme (RSP) peer group for the first time.

Growth in deposits was primarily driven by Tameer Microfinance Bank (TMFB), which added 1.3 million new depositors and deposits of Rs961 million in the quarter under consideration. This increase can be attributed to the surge in mobile wallet accounts of branchless banking customers.

Additionally, an increase in the current accounts of Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) beneficiaries also resulted in the overall surge in the number of depositors.

With 2.6 million depositors, TMFB surpassed National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) and became the largest provider of micro-savings during the last quarter.

In terms of microcredit outreach, the number of active borrowers grew moderately in the second quarter by 4.8% from 2.9 million to 3.2 million. Like the previous quarters, growth in loan portfolio outstripped growth in the number of borrowers. Gross loan portfolio (GLP) posted growth of 7.2% to close at Rs61.2 billion, as the sector continued to witness an increase in loan sizes.

The average loan size at the end of June was Rs28,277, up by 15.1% from the preceding quarter.

The rural support programme (RSP) peer group was the biggest contributor to microcredit outreach. It added 55,000 new borrowers and a GLP of Rs1.4 billion during the quarter.

Sindh Rural Support Organisation (SRSO) experienced significant growth on all fronts in the second quarter, with the number of active borrowers rising by 52% to 75,000 and the GLP increasing by 65% to Rs1.3 billion. The increase was due to the short-term seasonal loans provided for the harvest of rice and wheat crop.

Overall, the sector's 'portfolio at risk' (PAR >30 days) decreased from 1.6% to 1.2% during the last quarter.

Micro-insurance also exhibited a positive trend in the second quarter of 2014. The number of policyholders increased by 4.7% while the sum insured showed an increase of 7.8%. Among peer groups, RSPs were the largest contributors to micro-insurance because of NRSP and SRSO, which added 27,000 and 25,000 new policyholders, respectively. The share of health policyholders increased 2% to 47% during the last quarter, data shows.

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FPCCI irked as Chinese president's visit delayed

By Our Correspondent

Published: September 6, 2014

KARACHI:

Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) President Zakaria Usman has expressed his concerns on postponement of the Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Pakistan.

He said that it is a setback to economic development and will be a step back for ongoing projects in various fields. Jinping postponed his visit due to the ongoing political crisis between the government and demonstrators.

The Chinese premier's visit was expected to garner investment worth \$34 billion in the energy sector of Pakistan and it was agreed 24 Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) were to be signed.

The Exim Bank of China has already provided \$800 million to Pakistan as financial support for carrying out its development projects, mainly in energy and transport sectors. China is also investing heavily in the construction of the Pak-China economic corridor.

Usman said that as our time tested ally, Chinese assistance in the development of sea port, mining projects, power generation, bio-technology, fishing sector, corporate farming and science and technology is vital.

Pakistan and China have enjoyed amicable economic relations in the past. With China providing Pakistan technical and financial assistance for some of the major projects like Karakoram Highway, Heavy Mechanical Complex, Forge and Foundry Project, Heavy Rebuild Factory, Guddu Thermal power station, and assistance in agriculture sector.

"Domestic politics should not affect our foreign relations; three heads of state, Sri Lanka, the Maldives and China have cancelled their visits to Pakistan due to unrest in the capital," said Usman

He emphasised that economic and foreign relations should not be affected by political confrontations and economic planning and development should be separated from politics.

Usman further highlighted that this matter should be brought to the attention of the national assembly so that such economic setbacks can be prevented in the future.

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OICCI voices concern over political deadlock

By Our Correspondent

Published: September 6, 2014

KARACHI:

The current political standoff in Islamabad has placed a considerable negative impact on foreign investors' confidence, an Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) survey has revealed on Friday.

The brief survey that was conducted in the first week of September 2014 disclosed that the investors' confidence for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into Pakistan has been dented by the ongoing standoff in Islamabad.

OICCI is a reputable association of over 195 multinationals operating in Pakistan, whose surveys indicate the general mood of the foreign companies.

After the Karachi airport attack, the political deadlock in Islamabad has negatively impacted ongoing business activities and the future investment plans, OICCI members said.

Over 50% of the respondents of the survey indicated that the recent events have caused postponement or cancellation of scheduled business meetings in Pakistan with overseas shareholders and regional management.

About a third of the respondents expect a fresh review of their planned new investment for the next three years. Half of the respondents expressed the opinion that such incidents affect their ability to retain critical talent in Pakistan.

In terms of its immediate impact on the ongoing business operations and product distribution, 40% of the respondents expect decline in sales and profitability with reduction in tax payments. Majority of the respondents (62%) foresee serious damage to the 2014-15 fiscal targets of the government, suggesting that this may also impact the recently launched Vision 2025 targets of the government.

“OICCI believes in Pakistan and that brief surveys like this are not exhaustive but are meant to reflect an immediate assessment of the foreign investors of the current events in Pakistan,” OICCI President Asad S. Jafar said commenting on the survey findings.

Jafar added that the authorities, both at the federal and provincial levels, would continue to address the key issues affecting business and investment as they require strong commitment from the authorities to achieve the results of Vision 2025.

Published in The Express Tribune, September 6th, 2014.

Pakistan contesting ECOSOC seat

By APP

Published: September 6, 2014

NEW YORK:

Pakistan has announced its candidature for a seat on the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the economic arm of the United Nations (UN), for the year 2015-2017.

The announcement, ahead of the 69th session of the General Assembly, was made by Pakistan's UN Ambassador Masood Khan.

“If elected, Pakistan's role will not be cosmetic, but substantive,” he declared before his distinguished guests that included New Zealand's former prime minister James Bolger.

Pakistan is contesting an Asian seat, which is so far unchallenged. A two-third majority in the 193-member assembly is required for election.

With its third consecutive term expiring on December 2013, Pakistan is seeking election after a gap of a year. Khan said Pakistan had actively participated in reforming the Council and would continue its efforts to make this body more effective. He sought the support of member states for its candidacy, pledging to promote the purposes and objectives of ECOSOC.

First elected in 1954, Pakistan served as the ECOSOC in 1965-1967, 1969-1971, 1974-1977, 1979-1984, 1986-1988, 1990-1992, 1994-1995, 1998-2003, 2005-2007, 2008-10 and 2010-13.

Of the ECOSOC's 54 members, 18 retire each year. Seats have been distributed on geographical basis with 14 allocated to Africa, 11 to Asia, six to East Europe, 10 Latin America and 13 to Western Europe and other states.

The ECOSOC, a principal UN organ, coordinates economic, social, and related work of the 14 UN specialised agencies, functional commissions and five regional commissions. It serves as the central forum for discussing international economic and social issues.

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Tourism flourishes despite odds: PTDC

By APP

Published: September 6, 2014

ISLAMABAD:

Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) Managing Director Chaudhry Kabir Ahmed Khan said that the company has achieved its target to promote domestic tourism and improve the country's image at national and international level.

“Despite negative projection of our image by international media, we have witnessed more than 30% increase in tourism,” said Khan.

The corporation initiated steps to facilitate tourists and enhance revenue generation of the company to make it more self-sustaining by taking initiatives in security provision.

“Elaborate measures were taken to provide safety to foreign tourists visiting the country, for which PTDC has increased security at popular resorts,” said the MD.

“PTDC has planned to introduce Tourism Friends Club card, through which overseas Pakistani tourists can receive discounts, packages and transport services.”

He added that tourist traffic to more popular attractions has considerably increased in the past two years, with many people visiting new destinations like Gilgit, Hunza, the Fairy Meadows and other distant valleys.

“PTDC will welcome development and establishment of projects in different parts of the country under public-private partnership programme,” added Khan.

“In addition, PTDC land at the Gaddani Beach and in Balochistan can be utilised for launching projects like a beach resort, outdoor and indoor facilities and water sports clubs that can help the economy.”

Meanwhile, Khan informed that PTDC has not been affected by the 18th Amendment, only tourism ministries were handed over to the provinces, while the provincial governments and concerned district management were in a close contact with PTDC to ensure the security of the tourists, he said.

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Intercepted: Bid to smuggle heroin foiled

By Our Correspondent

Published: September 6, 2014

RAWALPINDI:

The anti-narcotics force (ANF) foiled a bid to smuggle heroin abroad and detained a suspect.

During checking, the ANF founds found 1.3 kilograms of heroin concealed in a box of sweets inside an article of luggage.

The suspect, who was identified as Sajad Hussain, a resident of Sargodha, was booked for Dubai. The suspect was shifted to the police station for further interrogation.

Meanwhile, a house was burgled in the same area. Mehmood lodged a case with the police thieved entered his house while his family was out, and made away with three cell phones and other valuables. The police are investigation the case.

Published in The Express Tribune, September 6th, 2014.

Rawalpindi division: Torrential rains claim 13 lives

By Muzaffar Mukhtar / Amjad Satti

Published: September 6, 2014

RAWALPINDI / DINA:

Torrential rains have caused huge losses of life and property across Rawalpindi division. At least 13 deaths were reported in Rawalpindi and Jhelum districts. Another three people are feared to have drowned, but their bodies had not been recovered when this report was filed.

Seven deaths and several injuries have been reported in different areas of Rawalpindi due to heavy rains, mudslides and collapsed housing units. Relief activities have been initiated by the Rawalpindi administration, but flooded roads have left rescue workers with an uphill task.

One man was killed and four others were seriously injured in a mudslide in Soan Camp.

The deceased was identified as Muhammad Bilal, while the injured were identified as Muhammad Azeem, Muhammad Pervaiz, Haji Mehrban and Muhammad Saddam. All five were

from Swat and were temporarily living in a mud house near Soan Bridge. They were shifted to Benazir Bhutto Hospital (BBH) by the rescue workers.

BBH sources confirmed the death of one person and added that one of the injured was buried under heaps of mud and was rescued much later than the others.

Meanwhile, three laborers were killed in Bahria Town when the wall they were building collapsed due to the downpour. They were identified as Khalid 25, Jameel, 40, and Farman, 50. An unidentified man also lost his life in a roof collapse in Gujar Khan.

A 14-year-old boy identified as Sajjid Mehmood, a resident of Fauji Colony, near Pirwadhai, drowned in Nullah Leh. His body had not been recovered till the filing of this report.

In another incident, a man and his wife, residents of Kallar Syedan, drowned after their car went into water near Samot. Their bodies had not been recovered when this report was filed.

Heavy downpours also inundated many roads and low-lying areas of the city. People had to take refuge on the roofs of their houses in some areas including Christian Colony near Soan Bridge, Chontra and Adiala villages. Utility poles in the area were also damaged and electricity remained suspended for almost six hours. Rainwater also damaged a large greenhouse near Soan Bridge.

Military boats and helicopters have been rescuing and evacuating people from flooded areas to higher ground. A total of 368 people including 113 people were rescued from Christian Colony, 42 from Chontra, 24 from Jabar Miana and 188 from Tarlai near Khanna Pul.

Meanwhile, the Airport Police Station was flooded and the offices and lock up were seen submerged in rainwater. The water level in the police station rose to almost six feet and also caused some damage to official records.

According to the meteorological department, 279 mm of rain had been recorded in Rawalpindi till the time report was filed. Weather officials are of the view that more rain is expected over the next hours. A flood emergency has been imposed in the city by the administration and residents of areas near Nullah Leh have been directed by the authorities to be prepared in case of any emergency.

WASA spokesperson Muhammad Umar Farooq told *The Express Tribune* that a special meeting was held in the commissioner's office this morning to evaluate the situation. He said that the special committee formulated by the government would monitor the situation. The water level and flow in Nullah Leh is normal at present, but the situation can change with more rainfall expected in the coming hours, he said. He said there was an emergency situation earlier, after the water level in Nullah Leh rose to 19 feet, but it passed safely.

He said Arian Mohallah, Nadeem Colony, Dhok Syedan, Dhok Chaudhrian, Afandi Colony, Dhok Ilahae Baksh, Sadiqabad and Muslim Town were areas which could be badly affected in case of floods and further downpours due to the absence of proper drainage.

He that said by 3pm on Friday, 278 mm of rain was recorded near Rawalpindi Medical College (RMC), 243mm at Saidpur, 279mm at Chaklala, 195mm at Bokra and 197 at Golra, while the

water level was recorded at 1.91m at Katarian and 1.89m at Gawalmandi Bridge. He added that the areas adjoining Soan Bridge could be under severe threat in case of more rains.

A Rescue 1122 spokesperson said that almost 96 people including 38 men, 34 women and 24 children had been rescued from different areas of Rawalpindi. He confirmed at least five deaths.

DCO Sajid Zafar Dal told *The Express Tribune* that there were reports of damage to 93 houses and two bridges in Kallar Syedan and Kotli Sattian.

He added that nine casualties have been reported so far including three in Bahria Town, two each in Kallar Syedan and Chontra, and one in Gujar Khan. Three injuries have also been reported, he said.

A total of 110 people have been evacuated from Soan in a joint operation by the army, Rescue 1122, civil defense and other civic agencies, he added. The families of the deceased will be given Rs500,000 each in government aid, he said.

Six killed in Dina

Earlier, on Thursday evening, eight people were swept away by a flooded stream near Dina in Jhelum district when an out-of use bridge on GT Road collapsed. Two of them were rescued, while five dead bodies were recovered on Friday. One other remains missing and rescue officials feared he may also have died.

Four NLC employees were standing on the bridge when it collapsed. Two of them were rescued. A motorcyclist along with three children was also swept away. The bodies of the children were recovered on Friday, while the body of the motorcyclist, their uncle, is still missing. Meanwhile, an IESCO lineman who was repairing a utility pole in Dina died due to electrocution on Friday.

Published in The Express Tribune, September 6th, 2014.

Red tape: Korang Bridge still a distant dream

By Obaid Abbasi / Photo: Muhammad Javaid

Published: September 6, 2014

ISLAMABAD: The failure of the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Administration to construct a bridge over the Korang River may have contributed to an incident where a private car fell into the river on Thursday night. All three people in the car were rescued by locals.

The ICT Administration was supposed to construct a bridge over the Korang River, but the project's existence has been limited to paper for the past five years, despite continuing losses of life and property in every monsoon season.

On Thursday, a car coming from Bani Gala fell into the river when the driver tried to cross the flooded road. Local residents were able to rescue all three people in the car, but the vehicle was lost. Continuous rains have essentially cut off the main link between rural Korang and urban Islamabad as the road is taken by almost all traffic going to and fro.

The Korang River is fed by water from streams in Murree and adjacent areas.

“If the administration can carpet Korang Road leading towards [Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman] Imran Khan’s house in Bani Gala, why they don’t construct a bridge, which is in greater public interest,” asked Nafeesa Begum, a resident of Bani Gala.

Other locals demanded that the government immediately start construction of the bridge.

In July 2010, when floods ravaged much of the country, two people lost their life when their car fell into the same river. The same year, around Rs830.252 million in losses were incurred in the suburbs of the capital due to the havoc wrecked by rains. A number of crossing bridges, street and roads were also damaged in different Union Council UCs of the city, and many have still not been repaired. “This is the failure of local administration... it has still not built a bridge,” said Muhammad Afzal, a resident of Bani Gala.

He said that every time it rains, every monsoon season, he feels anxious while travelling on Korang Road because it always gets flooded.

Dangerous riverside roads

After the 2010 floods, the ICT conducted a survey and declared 21 small riverside roads ‘dangerous’ and proposed to make 53 bridges in different union councils at a total cost of Rs1.3 billion. Initially, Rs53.7 million was allocated for the designing and survey purposes. However, after four years, the administration has yet to pursue the project. Repeated attempts were made to contact Islamabad Deputy Commissioner Mujahid Sherdil, but he was not available for comment.

Gas pipeline damaged

Due to heavy rains, the main gas pipeline in the area has been damaged, resulting in a regional supply suspension. A Sui Northern Gas Pipeline Limited official said that main line was damaged in the rain and several areas were affected including Bhara Kahu and Bani Gala. According to the official, the line would be repaired on Friday night and supply restored by Saturday morning.

Rain in Islamabad

Heavy rain continued in Islamabad for the second-consecutive day and will go on for the next 48 hours. According to a met official, 243mm of rain was recorded in Islamabad on Friday.

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Tripping: 31 feeders affected by rains

By Our Correspondent

Published: September 6, 2014

ISLAMABAD:

Many areas of Rawalpindi and Islamabad plunged into darkness on Thursday night after heavy rain and landslide affected 31 feeders of the Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO).

The areas affected included Peshawar More, Westridge, Afshan Colony, Gulzar Colony, Al-Noor Colony, Fazal Town, Dadyal, Chandni Chowk, Dhamial, Gulshan-e-Jinnah and Chaklala. Some localities remained without power for up to 16 hours on Friday. Feeders of sectors F-6 and F-15 were also affected.

Voltage fluctuation also created problems for the people. IESCO sent teams to fix the problems but incessant rain caused difficulties for the technical teams. Water and power secretary ordered the authorities to set up emergency control centres to address public complaints.

IESCO Chief Engineer Fayyaz Hussain Siddiqui said that 24 feeders were affected in Rawalpindi and seven in Islamabad. Siddiqui said rains and landslides has badly affected the infrastructure as a number of electricity polls have been uprooted and transformers damaged.

Siddiqui, however, said that all the feeders were fixed and power supply restored in all areas by Friday evening. He said that electricity was restored by shifting the load to adjacent feeders for the time being.

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One-day weekend: Schools to remain open today

By Our Correspondent

Published: September 6, 2014

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Administration and Development Division (CADD) has announced that the educational institutes in Islamabad will remain open on Saturday. The step has been taken to make up for the loss of academic time due to the ongoing sit-ins. CADD spokesperson said transportation was not being provided to students initially due to security reasons but now schools have been asked to provide transportation to the students.

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CDA plans: 'High-level' meeting on flooded low-level areas

By News Desk

Published: September 6, 2014

A high-level meeting was held at Capital Development Authority (CDA) Headquarters on Friday to review the rescue operation being carried out by the CDA Flood Relief Cell due to ongoing rains.

CDA Chairman Maroof Afzal chaired the meeting, said a press release.

The CDA chief directed the Katchi Abadi Cell to take effective steps to save the residents of different slums established on the banks of seasonal rivers and streams in consultation with the Islamabad Capital Territory Administration, and in case of emergency, arrangements should be made to relocate residents.

The chairman was informed that Emergency and Disaster Management Directorate staff also participated in the relief operation carried out at Khana Pul.

The Environment Wing has set up special teams to drain water from uneven areas and has cleared various streams to ensure that water flow is maintained.

Environment, Enforcement, Municipal Administration, Planning, EM, Maintenance, Sanitation, MPO, City Sewerage Division, Capital Hospital and CDA Cares 1122 staff have been deputed to work round-the-clock in three shifts in case of any emergency situation.

The CDA flood relief cell carried out rescue activities including draining water from the basements of houses and commercial buildings and removal of uprooted trees.

Emergency has also been declared in Capital Hospital and doctors have been directed to remain alert to deal with any untoward incident.

The CDA asked citizens to call on 051-9252384, 051-9253236, 051-9253237, 051-9252833, 16, or the sanitation help line 1334, and Environment Wing Control number 051-2855513, in case of any emergency.

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Double role: Every AIOU student to be enrolled as PRCS volunteer

Published: September 6, 2014

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) and Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) on Friday signed an agreement to develop a volunteer force from AIOU students.

Under the accord, 1.4 million students of the university would be enrolled as volunteers, enabling them to work in a state of natural disaster or human tragedy. The students will be asked to give their consent to work as volunteers at time of their enrolment with the university.

It was also decided that the AIOU will include 'volunteerism' as a subject in the syllabus of graduate programmes.

The agreement was signed by PRCS Secretary General Dr Mahboob Sardar and AIOU Registrar Dr Nowshad Khan at a ceremony held at the varsity's headquarters. AIOU acting Vice-Chancellor Dr Ali Asghar Chishti was also present on the occasion.

PRCS would issue volunteer identity cards to the registered students. The society will also organise training sessions for students and the varsity staff. The two sides decided to establish working relationship for mobilising and training youth volunteers, to be selected among the students and AIOU staff.

The agreement will provide a broad framework for cooperation between the two institutions in enhancing mutual trust and understanding. The PRCS will arrange will train the trainers. These 'master trainers' will then train students and the staff.

It was also proposed that the PRCS establish self-sustainable youth clubs at all departments and campuses of AIOU and provide a complete training package for the capacity building of club members.

According to the MoU, the students and university staff would be given opportunity to participate in trainings, demonstrations, workshops, seminars and camps. AIOU would be given opportunity to represent itself as an institution at national and international forums. PRCS will also provide facilities of medical tests and vaccination to staff of AIOU at subsidised rates.

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A belated move: Environment tribunal gets chairperson, after 18 months

By Shahzad Anwar

Published: September 6, 2014

ISLAMABAD:

Finally the capital's Environment Tribunal (ET) has gotten its chairperson after a lapse of one and a half year, at least for three months.

Irum Niazi, a Special Court judge, has been given additional charge of the tribunal's chairperson for three months.

However, legal and technical members of the tribunal have yet to be appointed.

The tribunal has been non-functional since March 5, 2013 with the transfer of former chairman and end of tenures of two legal and technical members.

This shows lack of interest on the part of the government towards protection and control of environmental pollution in the federal capital.

As per the rules, Islamabad High Court (IHC) appoints chairperson of the ET as well as member legal.

The Environment Protection Agency (EPA) and Climate Change Division nominates environment expert as technical member of the tribunal.

The EPA sources told *The Express Tribune* on Friday that the agency and Climate Change Division had sent three names for the appointment as member technical in June, but the summary was gathering dust in the law ministry.

The sources said that the delay was due to sit-ins taking place at the Constitution Avenue.

Sources in the EPA said that a building had been allotted and a separate office had been established for hearing of environment-related complaints by the tribunal in Sector G-11.

Around 135 lawsuits have been pending since 2013 including a case against Metro Cash and Carry who allegedly did not take EPA approval.

Cases are also pending against around a hundred alleged polluters which are accused of causing pollution in the catchment areas of Rawal Lake.

Quaid-i-Azam University (QAU) is among one of the violators. The university has allegedly been violating EPA rules by discharging untreated water, laboratory effluents and hostel sewage directly poured into the tributaries of Rawal Lake.

There are around nine to 10 re-rolling mills in the industrial area of the federal capital that are accused of polluting environment by discharging toxic emissions from their units. The environment-related cases against these alleged violators could not be pursued for the last two years mainly due to the dormant status of the tribunal.

The environment protection tribunals were formed under Section 20 of the Pakistan Environment Protection Act 1997.

The tribunals have the powers to give directions, act to override other laws and make regulations to mention some.

It particularly deals with violations of Section 11 (National Environment Quality Standards) and 12 (Environment Impact Assessment) of the Environment Protection Act.

These included development activities in all sectors whether industry, residential, commercial, municipal agency, utility service providers, communication and energy etc.

The sources said that non-compliance in these sectors could result in environmental degradation whether they were small or mega development projects.

The sources while giving examples said that some housing societies including Defence Housing Authority (DHA) and a number of multi-storey buildings in the federal capital were constructed in violation of Section 12 of the Act.

EPA Director-General (DG) Dr Muhammad Khurshid said that the regulators issued environment protection orders to the violators for non-compliance of the laws.

He said that since EPA could not impose penalties and punishments, the cases were referred to the tribunals, which then initiated legal proceedings against the violators.

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Anxiety, depression: Sit-ins taking toll on residents' mental health

By Sehrish Wasif

Published: September 6, 2014

ISLAMABAD: The ongoing sit-ins and protests by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and the Pakistan Awami Tehreek (PAT) have taken toll on the capital's residents with a surge of 20 to 30 per cent in cases of anxiety, stress, depression and other mental ailments.

Experts hold TV channels responsible for exacerbating the situation by flashing and airing live coverage of protests and clashes between the protesters and the security personnel.

Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences Psychiatry Department head Prof Rizwan Taj says majority of the patients, who have visited him since August 12, had the feelings of insecurity and uncertainty.

“Majority of them say that they feel insecure to go out of their homes under the current circumstances as most of them fear for being targeted.

Prof Taj says that almost all the roads in the capital have been blocked, which has disturbed the routine life.

When they venture out, all they see are shipping containers and security personnel giving the impression that the city has turned into a war zone, he adds.

“They remain restricted to their homes and are unable to go to offices, relatives, recreation places for almost 20 days now, only watching live coverage of protests and clashes.”

This gives the impression that the situation is deteriorating with each passing day, says Prof Taj.

“Live coverage of clashes and reports of deaths on various TV channels turn out to be a disaster for many people,” he says.

Prof Taj says that many people also have to face huge financial losses due to the closure of their businesses for weeks.

National Engineering and Scientific Commission (Nescom) Hospital Psychiatry Department head Dr Shahid Ali Khan says that the number of patients visiting him has increased from 10 to 60 in the last 15 days and majority of them have suffered from depression and mental illness.

“Almost 80 per cent of the patients talk about the protest rallies, sit-ins and their consequences,” he says adding that the residents living near the Red Zone have suffered the most.

While talking about one of his patients, who lives on Embassy Road in G-6, the doctor says that she was already an anxiety patient but the current political situation has further aggravated her condition.

“Constant speeches by PTI and PAT leaders and ‘playing of songs’ have given her sleepless nights prompting her to double her medicine dose,” says Dr Khan.

A psychiatrist, who is working at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (Pims), says that not only the residents have suffered from depression and anxiety but the medical staff and police personnel have also been facing the brunt.

“The police personnel are not allowed to go on leave while hospitals are on red alerts, and the whole staff is on their toes round-the-clock to deal with any untoward situation,” said the psychiatrist.

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OPEN MARKET FOREX RATES

Updated at: 6/9/2014 7:49 AM (PST)

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	94.5	94.75
Bahrain Dinar	269.5	269.75
Canadian Dollar	93	93.25
China Yuan	16.45	16.6
Danish Krone	17.85	18
Euro	131.25	131.5
Hong Kong Dollar	13.1	13.2
Indian Rupee	1.67	1.69
Japanese Yen	0.972	1
Kuwaiti Dinar	356.75	357
Malaysian Ringgit	31.9	32.15
NewZealand \$	84.85	85.1
Norwegians Krone	16.35	16.5
Omani Riyal	263.75	264
Qatari Riyal	27.75	28
Saudi Riyal	27.05	27.3
Singapore Dollar	80.5	80.75
Swedish Korona	14.4	14.55
Swiss Franc	111	111.25
Thai Bhat	3.17	3.19
U.A.E Dirham	27.65	27.9
UK Pound Sterling	165.5	165.75
US Dollar	101.8	102.05





INTER BANK RATES

Updated at: 6/9/2014 7:49 AM (PST)

Currency	Bank Buying TT Clean	Bank Selling TT & OD
Australian Dollar	94.82	95
Canadian Dollar	93.33	93.52
Danish Krone	17.64	17.67
Euro	131.3	131.56
Hong Kong Dollar	13.1	13.12
Japanese Yen	0.9636	0.9655
Saudi Riyal	27.06	27.12
Singapore Dollar	80.85	81.01
Swedish Korona	14.36	14.39
Swiss Franc	108.88	109.1
U.A.E Dirham	27.63	27.69
UK Pound Sterling	165.58	165.9
US Dollar	101.5	101.7

Bullion Rates (Gold Prices) in Pakistan Rupee (PKR)

As on Sat, Sep 06 2014, 04:45 GMT

Metal	Symbol	PKR for 10 Gm	PKR for 1 Tola	PKR for 1 Ounce	
Gold 24K	XAU	41,642	48,520	129,523	
Palladium	XPD	29,204	34,027	90,836	
Platinum	XPT	46,273	53,916	143,929	
Silver	XAG	630	734	1,960	

Gold Rates in other Major Currencies

Currency	Symbol	10 Gm	1 Tola	1 Ounce	
 Australian Dollar	AUD	435	507	1,353	
 Canadian Dollar	CAD	444	517	1,381	
 Euro	EUR	315	367	980	
 Japanese Yen	JPY	42,865	49,944	133,327	
 U.A.E Dirham	AED	1,498	1,746	4,660	
 UK Pound Sterling	GBP	250	291	777	
 US Dollar	USD	408	475	1,269	

* These rates are taken from International Market so there may be some fluctuation from Local Market.