



# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ  
ابو سلمہ نے بیان کیا کہ مجھے ابو اسید رضی اللہ عنہ نے خبر دی اور انہوں نے نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کو یہ فرماتے تاکہ انصار میں سے بہتر انصار کے گھر آؤں میں سب سے بہتر بنو محمد بنو عبد اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم اور بنو ساعدہ کے گھر آئے ہیں۔  
(صحیح بخاری، حدیث نمبر 3790)

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## Begum Alvi stresses promoting tolerance in society

Begum Samina Alvi, wife of President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday stressed the need for eliminating extremist behaviour from the society by promoting tolerance and acceptance towards each other. She termed dialogue and negotiations necessary to promote tolerance and said the solution to such societal challenges rested in following the teachings of Allah Almighty and the Seerat of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him).



## AJK president seeks OIC's pro-active role to resolve Kashmir issue

MUZAFFARABAD/NEW YORK: President Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry has said that the international community should play its much needed role to help-resolve the lingering Kashmir dispute that happens to be the main cause and consequence of bloodshed and human rights violations in the region.  
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## Germany extends grant assistance €7.5m to Pakistan

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Germany has extended grant assistance worth seven point five million Euros to Pakistan through Social Health Protection Phase-three project.

The Financial Agreement was signed between Secretary, Economic Affairs Division Dr. Kazim Niaz and Country Director, German Development Bank, Sebastian Jacobi in Islamabad on Wednesday.

According to agreement the grant assistance worth 1.785 million Euros will be given to Gilgit Baltistan while 5.72 million Euros for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

## Love & Respect

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif offering prayer in Riaz ul Jannah, Masjid Al-Nabwi SAW. Madinah, on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

# Saudi crown prince orders release of Pakistanis jailed for sloganeering

PM Shehbaz Sharif thanked Saudi crown prince for showing mercy

Spokesman Report

RIYADH: The Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz on Wednesday ordered the release of Pakistani citizens jailed in Saudi Arabia for sloganeering at Masjid-e-Nabwi in April this year.

The decision was taken by the crown prince following a request by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who concluded his visit to Saudi Arabia where he attended an investment summit, offered Umrah and paid respects at Roza-e-Rasool (Peace

## Imran using Arshad's killing for political scoring: PM

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that Imran Khan was playing a "dangerous game" by using senior journalist Arshad Sharif's killing for petty politics and casting aspersions on the state institutions. "Imran Niazi is playing a dangerous game. He is using tragic killing of Arshad Sharif for petty politics and going to the extent of casting aspersions on state institutions," the prime minister wrote on Twitter, prior to concluding his visit to Saudi Arabia where he attended an investment summit, offered Umrah and paid respects at Roza-e-Rasool (Peace Be Upon Him).

Be Upon Him).

He also met Saudi Crown Prince and discussed the bilateral as well as the

regional situation.

The prime minister had requested the crown prince to pardon the convicted Pakistani

stanis out of compassion.

"May Allah Almighty reward you for this," the prime minister said and thanked the crown prince for the gesture.

Earlier this year, a court in Madinah sentenced three Pakistanis — Khawaja Luqman, Muhammad Afzal, and Ghulam Muhammad — to eight years in prison. Meanwhile, another three Pakistani citizens — Anas, Arshad, and Muhammad Saleem — were sentenced to six years in jail for creating chaos and violating the sanctity of the holy mosque.

## Pharma industry agrees to reduce paracetamol prices: Dar

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday said that the pharma industry agreed to provide paracetamol products at reduced prices.

He said this during a meeting with heads of pharmaceutical companies involved in the production of paracetamol products, a Finance Ministry press release said. The meeting was also attended by the SAPM on Finance Tariq Bajwa.

The meeting reviewed the maximum retail price

and shortage of paracetamol products in the country and discussed modalities for smooth supply and availability of paracetamol products in the markets at affordable rate.

It was informed that rising import prices of pharmaceutical raw materials and increasing production costs are increasing the shortage of essential medicines in the market.

The pharmaceutical heads demanded a high increase in the prices of paracetamol products to

overcome the shortage.

In order to resolve the issue of shortage of paracetamol products and to support local manufacturers, the chair discussed in details with the stakeholders and following reduced prices of paracetamol products have been agreed upon by the Pharma industry against their demanded prices.

The production of Paracetamol products has been started by the Pharmaceutical manufacturers. Agencies

## PM to visit China on Nov 1

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will pay a two-day official visit to China on November 1 at the invitation of Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China.

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will also accompany the prime minister, the Foreign Office said Wednesday.

This will be PM Shehbaz Sharif's first visit to China since assuming office in April 2022 and follows his meeting with President Xi

Jinping in Uzbekistan on September 16, 2022.

The prime minister will be among the first leaders to visit China following the historic 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China.

The Foreign Office said, "The prime minister's visit represents the continuity of frequent leadership level exchanges between Pakistan and China."

During his stay, the prime minister will meet President Xi Jinping and hold delegation-level talks with Premier Li Keqiang.

## New Pandora Box

# Arshad Sharif shot at from close range: Vawda

Faisal Vawda dismisses version of Kenyan police, says Arshad was killed by someone from "within his car"

ISLAMABAD: PTI leader Faisal Vawda on Wednesday claimed that as against the version of the Kenyan police, journalist Arshad Sharif was shot at from a close range, therefore, his murder was "premeditated."

Holding a press conference at the National Press Club in the federal capital, Vawda, who claimed that he was a close friend of the slain journalist, said that irrespective of how a probe into his murder is launched, evidence related to his killing — including his mobile phone, laptop, and documents — will "never be found as they have been erased."

He dismissed the version of the Kenyan police — that had maintained that Arshad was killed in a case of "mistaken identity" after the

local law enforcement fired about 20 bullets at his car — and said that only two bullets were fired at him.

"In my opinion, two bullets were fired at him, one to the head and the other to the chest by a person either sitting in the car or present at a very close range," he stated.

Vawda explained that bullets cannot be fired from a long distance when it directly hits the head and chest, adding "if it would have been from far away, then 8-10 bullets would have been fired."

"The story that has been narrated regarding the mistaken identity case should have been plotted well because no matter which country is in question, the police would never open fire if they had (as they claim)



doubts of a child being present in the car," he added, stating that in this case, only Arshad died as a part of this "cold, planned, brutal murder that was conspired."

He lamented about the procedure of justice in Pakistan as well as Kenya — where he said conditions were worse than that of Pakistan —

and claimed that Arshad was "chosen to be killed in Kenya by those who want to break the country."

The PTI leader said that the journalist's murder is now a matter of Pakistan's dignity and honour, so "I will speak the truth without fearing the consequences because his martyrdom was a pre-conspired murder, not a mere accident."

He also said that "conspirators" blackmailed and threatened Arshad to leave Pakistan, so he went to Dubai.

"Later, it was claimed that either the establishment or some unknown institutions pressurised him and asked him to leave Dubai, but this information is false. I will give you details of it later." Agencies

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For Information & Contact: Fahad Barlas (COO) Cell: 0311 888 8878 - 051-2892004

## Improving weather forecasting

Minister for Aviation Mr Khwaja Saad Rafique chairing a meeting regarding installation of more advance automatic weather stations in the country at PMD Headquarter, Islamabad on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

*Saad for early installation of 300 automatic weather stations*

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister of Railways and Aviation Khwaja Saad Rafique Wednesday directed the concerned to expedite installation of 300 automatic weather stations in the country to ensure better forecasting.

Chairing a meeting in Meteorological Department, the minister said the country's weather forecasting system can be improved by using modern technology. The minister was briefed about the newly started projects being launched with the support of the World Bank.

He further directed to install artificial rainfall system in the areas having no canal water with the help of China. Saad Rafiq also directed to create a business model for the financial self-reliance of the meteorological department. The meeting was attended by the Secretary, Senior Joint Secretary and Director General of Meteorological Department.

Pak-China friendship

## Chinese envoy, Ahsan discuss CPEC related projects

*Pakistan seeks China's help to become regional manufacturing hub*

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD/BEIJING: Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Nong Rong on Wednesday called on Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal and discussed several China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects to be taken up during the upcoming visit of Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif to China.

The minister emphasized the importance of several CPEC projects and reiterated that the government is committed to uplift the CPEC projects, said a press release.

"The upcoming visit of Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif will be significant especially, at a time when President of China, Xi Jinping has been elected for a third term as China's leader," said the minister, while reiterating that the incumbent government has revived the CPEC.

Ahsan Iqbal also emphasized the importance of the ML-1 project, Karachi Circular Railways and several other projects in different sectors like Energy, Information Technology, Agriculture, Cultural,

and others.

CPEC projects will have a significant impact on Pakistan's economy and we are committed to completing the project timely, said the minister, while assuring the Chinese envoy that the incumbent is committed to completing the CPEC projects without any delay and added that self-reliance in the energy sector will stabilize the economy.

He said that Balochistan's prosperity is connected with the development of Gwadar and the incumbent government will complete all projects under CPEC in Gwadar.

The Chinese Ambassador appreciated the efforts of the government especially, the minister for planning and development, and assured his complete cooperation.

Meanwhile, trade and industrial cooperation between China and Pakistan under the umbrella of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is intended to make Pakistan a manufacturing and economic hub for the entire region, Commercial Counselor, Pakistan Embassy in China, Ghulam Qadir has said.

"Pakistan is ready to become a food

basket for China, while Pakistan's agricultural products to China are gaining popularity," he said while addressing audience at "China-Pakistan Trade and Industrial Cooperation Forum," jointly hosted by Embassy of Pakistan, United Bank Limited (UBL), Beijing Innovation Alliance (BJIA) and Economic and Commercial Counselors Alliance in China.

Pakistan, he said, had all the ingredients needed to become a regional hub and added, Pakistan hoped to improve its investment and increase its trade and economic ties, by making 'made-in-Pakistan' products. We are also working on different e-commerce platforms and we are bringing our enterprises to connect with Chinese e-commerce platform, he added.

Emphasizing importance of the forum, Ghulam Qadir commented that such kinds of events would help the Pakistani enterprises interact with Chinese companies.

"Meanwhile, we can improve our yields by using Chinese technologies and methods. We can also export the finalized products to China and the world", he mentioned.

BRACE Program

## ADB releases \$1.5b to SBP

Our Correspondent

KARACHI: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Wednesday released \$1.5 billion to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) under Building Resilience Under Active Countercyclical Expenditures (BRACE) Program.

The BRACE program aims to support the government's efforts to deal with the adverse impacts of devastating floods, supply chain disruptions, rising energy, fuel prices and inflation on the poor and vulnerable.

It would expand the number of families receiving cash transfers through Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) from 7.9 million to 9 million, increase the number of children enrolled in primary and secondary schools, and enhance geographic coverage of health services and nutritional supplies for pregnant and lactating mothers and children under 2 years old.

The program is completely aligned with the Government's strategy to provide targeted and temporary countercyclical relief measures. The facility aims to support deployment of planned countercyclical development expenditure and will promote sound macroeconomic management. The program is also in line with the

framework of ongoing International Monetary Fund (IMF) program to implement necessary structural reforms to improve the country's macroeconomic prospects.

It will also enhance support for business entities to safeguard employment and would help increasing food security measures as well. Furthermore, it will also strengthen social safety net and fiscal measures for the government's crisis response. The BRACE program amounting to US\$ 1.5 billion was approved by the ADB Board on Friday, 21st October 2022.

This program was initially conceived and approved by the ADB's Board in May 2022 under a new Countercyclical Support Facility (CSF) to provide targeted support to its developing member countries (DMCs) facing emergency situations. The signing ceremony of the BRACE Program was held on 24th October 2022 at Prime Minister House, which was witnessed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Ishaq Dar along with Director General ADB Central and West Asia Department.

## Vawda's presser was to damage Long March: Zaidi

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Sindh President Ali Zaidi has said that Faisal Vawda tried to damage PTI's upcoming long march with his press conference.

The PTI lawmaker took to Twitter to express his opinion on PTI leader Faisal Vawda's press conference. The telecast of the press conference over Government-owned Pakistan Television (PTV) is really interesting, he added.

Ali Zaidi added that it is clear that the 'imported government' has launched him. PTI Chief Imran Khan has directed all workers to stay peaceful.

What is the significance of Faisal Vawda's press conference? he questioned.

Addressing an important press conference in Islamabad, Faisal Vawda said that Arshad Sharif's murder was "pre-planned" and its conspiracy was hatched in Pakistan. He claimed that he was in contact with the journalist since the day Sharif left the country.



He dismissed the version of the Kenyan police — that had maintained that around 20 bullets were fired at his car — and said that only two bullets were fired at him.

"According to me, he was shot at from close range or inside the car. He received 2 bullets, in the head and chest, not 20 bullets," the PTI leader added. Faisal Vawda also claimed that the establishment had been in contact with Arshad Sharif. "He was ready to come back to Pakistan. He had no issue," he said, adding: "We'll see who is benefiting the most from Arshad's demise."

## Malik Ahmad warns of martial law if country's situation worsens

LAHORE: Prime Minister's Assistant Malik Ahmad Khan on Wednesday warned that if the situation in the country deteriorates, then martial law will be imposed, saying that the martial law is not the solution to any problems.

Talking exclusively on Dunya News' program "Nuqta e Nazar", Malik Ahmad Khan said that the situation is very unusual as around 100 PTI lawmakers have resigned. Saying that he believes in talks with the political parties, Malik Ahmad claimed that the objective of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is not to hold elections, but something else.

Citing the statement of PML-N supremo and former premier Nawaz



Sharif, Malik Ahmad stated that he [Nawaz] said that the PTI wants to appoint an army chief of its choice. It is the authority of the government to appoint the COAS, added Malik.

The SAPM said that he had a conversation with PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry yesterday, adding that what will be more degradation than this if the politicians will not hold talks with each other.

Questioning the PTI leadership, Malik Ahmad went on to say what objectives the party [PTI] wants to achieve by staging a long march. The Special Assistant further said that if the situation worsens, then the result will be martial law, but martial law is not the solution to any problem. The current leadership of the military institutions also believes that the solution to the country's problems lies in the continuation of democracy, he added. APP

For struggle to self-determination

## Kaira assures continuous support to Kashmiris

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira on Wednesday said Kashmir issue was linked with the sentiments of the people of Pakistan and no government dared to compromise on it and assured them full support in their right to self-determination struggle.

Addressing a press conference on the eve of black day, to be observed on Thursday, along with Chairman Kashmir Committee Syed Basit Bukhari and Hurriyat leaders Ghulam Muhammad Safi, Faiz Naqashbandi and Mehmood



Ahmad Saghar, he termed the Indian subjugation of Kashmiris a gross violation of Human Rights and stressed for awakening the consciousness of the international community.

He said October 27 was the blackest day in world history when India on this day in 1947 landed its 80,000

army personnel in Kashmir and illegally occupied the valley against the will of the people. Now in the presence of one million Indian Army, the worst atrocities against the innocent Kashmiris were continuing but could not demoralize their courage, he added.

## At UN, Pakistan urges implementation of Indo-Pak Indus Water Treaty

Spokesman Report

NEW YORK: A top Pakistani diplomat Tuesday called for respecting and implementing "in letter and spirit" the 1960 Indus Water Treaty between India and Pakistan, a lower riparian state, at a preparatory meeting for the UN Water Conference 2023.

"Besides climate change," Ambassador Munir Akram said, "Pakistan's water-vulnerability is also flow from its status as a lower-riparian state."

"Many of our catchment areas and their ecosystems traverse boundaries," he told a large number of delegates attending the meeting.

"Changes on the other side of the border have a direct impact on us," the Pakistani envoy said, referring to India.

"It is essential that water sharing agreements — such as the Indus Water Treaty — should be respected and implemented in letter and spirit," he added.

Pakistan is among the top 10 water scarce countries in the world, and has also been among

the top ten climate vulnerable countries.

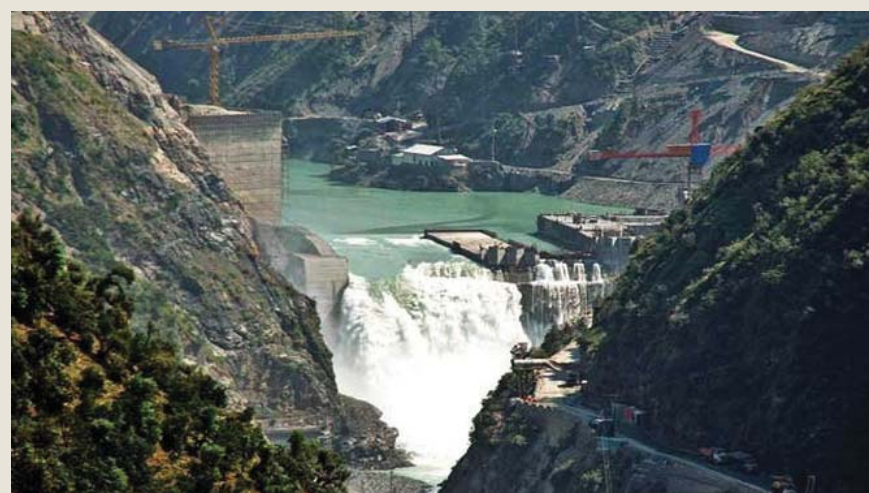
Recurrent spells of extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, glacial lake outbursts, cyclones, and heat waves have taken a heavy toll on both life and property and adversely affected Pakistan's economic growth, Ambassador Akram said.

"The recent floods in Pakistan, owing to the extreme heat wave that melted away many of our glaciers followed by "monsoon on steroids", resulted in widespread devastation of vital infrastructure loss of thousands of lives, and internal displacement of millions of people."

Owing to the recent floods, he said, many of Pakistani farmers have already missed the planting season for the winter wheat crop, adding that this may create serious food shortages.

Pakistan, he said, agrees with the themes of the 2023 water conference which are consistent with its national priorities.

"We agree that effective water management requires enhancing standards and regulatory limits to govern discharge into water bodies,



ensuring ecological standards in water quality, and maintaining the run-off in our rivers in order to maintain ecosystem services."

In this regard, the Pakistani envoy urged upholding of environmental principles like

precaution, polluter pays, and no-harm in maintaining our fresh water resources including trans-boundary rivers.

"We must ensure trans-boundary water cooperation to ensure the right and obligations

of lower and upper riparian states," he said.

Ambassador Akram also underscored the need for investments in water-related sustainable and resilient infrastructures in order to achieve the targets and objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are aimed at zero-hunger and eradication of poverty.

Some 1,200 scientists, representatives of the private sector and civil society are meeting at UN Headquarters in New York to discuss potentially game-changing ideas related to water and sustainability.

The results emerging from roundtables on governance, capacity development, data and information, innovation and financing, will be shared with national representatives.

Noting that the world stands at a watershed moment, the President of the General Assembly, Csaba Korosi, whose Office organized the consultations, told participants that it is time to "transform from reactive water management to proactive, science-based solutions to the water crisis."

# AJK president seeks OIC's proactive role to resolve Kashmir issue

*Barrister Sultan says Kashmiri people in Occupied Kashmir were currently going through a serious and alarming situation*

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

MUZAFFARABAD/NEW YORK: President Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry has said that the international community should play its much needed role to help-resolve the lingering Kashmir dispute that happens to be the main cause and consequence of bloodshed and human rights violations in the region.

He said this while addressing a special meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) at the United Nations here in New York on Wednesday. The OIC Secretary General Hussain Ibrahim Taha, Pakistani Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Nigeria and other Islamic countries also participated in the meeting.



Speaking on the occasion, the president said that the OIC has always supported the Kashmiris' just cause and condemned the human rights violations being committed by the Indian forces in Kashmir. "Even today, when I come to the meeting of the OIC-Kashmir Contact Group here at the United Nations, I am burdened by the expectations of one and a half million Kashmiri people who want that the member countries of the forum (OIC) should move beyond the political rhetoric, come forward in a big way and open-

ly express their support for Kashmiris' legitimate right, the right of self-determination", Barrister Chaudhary said.

He said that the Kashmiri people in Occupied Kashmir were currently going through a serious and alarming situation. In the aftermath of August 5, 2019, the president said that India has started large-scale changes in Occupied Kashmir and at the same time has increased the violation of human rights.

Under the given circumstances, the president said that there was a dire need that the international community, especially the OIC should openly support the Kashmiri people and use its influence to stop the ongoing atrocities in Occupied Kashmir.

Highlighting the India's nefarious designs aimed at changing the region's demography, Barrister Chaudhary said

that India has issued fake domiciles to more than 42 million non-state Hindus to change the population ratio in Occupied Kashmir.

Referring to delimitation of constituencies, he said that the BJP government was changing the entire electoral landscape of the region in order to install a Hindu Chief Minister in the state. Similarly, he said, Hurriyat leaders have been arrested and left to rot behind the bars.

He also raised the unjust sentencing of prominent Kashmiri leader Yasin Malik and termed it as a judicial onslaught to suppress legitimate Kashmiri voices.

Regarding the massive troops' concentration in the region, he said that the occupied Kashmir happens to be the world's largest militarized zone where the soldier to civilian ratio is 1:8 (one soldier for eight civilians).

# National Drug Use Survey Pakistan 2022-24, launched

*This year World Drug Report 2022 revealed estimated 284mln people worldwide had used drugs in 2020*

**Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Narcotics Control, Government of Pakistan, U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime jointly launched the National Drug Use Survey Pakistan 2022-24 in Islamabad.

In 2012 and 2013, UNODC in collaboration with the Ministry of Narcotics Control, the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), and other national stakeholders conducted a national survey on drug use to estimate the extent and patterns of drug use in Pakistan. The overall results of the survey revealed that approximately 6 percent of the population – 9 percent of the adult male population and 2.9 percent of the adult female population – equivalent to 6.7 million people – had used a substance other than alcohol and



tobacco in the preceding year.

This year the World Drug Report 2022 revealed an estimated 284 million people worldwide had used drugs in 2020. Cannabis remains by far the world's most used drug, and the report also notes an increase in use of amphetamines. Globally, the report estimates that 11.2 million people worldwide injected drugs during the period of the study. Around half of this number were living with hepatitis C, 1.4 million were living with HIV, and 1.2 million were living with both.

Since the previous survey, there have

been changing trends of drug use in the region, especially anecdotal information of a rapid increase in the use of synthetic drugs such as methamphetamine. To have scientific data on the current situation of drug use in Pakistan, the national drug use survey 2022-24 will be conducted to provide reliable evidence of the extent to which the population is using drugs and suffering from drug use disorders. This survey will be comprised of a household survey and high-risk drug use study that will have national coverage, including the major districts in each province.

## Skill development

# State-of-the-Art Centre of Excellence inaugurated in Balochistan

*The CoE aims to foster excellence in developing training programs for youth, train practitioners in TVET sector*

**Spokesman Report**

QUETTA: A state-of-the-art Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Modern Technologies Hub, Balochistan inaugurated on Wednesday to strengthen skills development for youth and teachers of the Province.

The CoE aims to foster excellence in developing training programmes for youth and train practitioners in Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector with an ultimate goal to build a competent workforce with better job opportunities. The CoE will be pivotal in implementing a cascading model of teachers' training and imparting skills training for trainees through modern lab facilities, career counsel-



ling and job placement services—all under one roof.

The Centre is the result of an upgradation of the existing TVET centre in Modern Technologies Hub which has been supported by a TVET Sector Support Programme and funded by the European Union (EU), the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the

Norwegian government. It is implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH in close collaboration with the National Vocational & Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC), Technical Education and Vocational Training Authorities (TEVTAs) and a number of public and private sector organizations at national and

provincial levels.

The programme is supporting the establishment of five Centres of Excellence across Pakistan. Out of these, two are already completed in Peshawar and Islamabad, while the other two at Lahore and Kotri are nearing completion.

The CoE Hub Balochistan was presented to the Government of Balochistan in the presence of Mr. Nawabzada Gohram Khan Bugti, Advisor to Balochistan Chief Minister on Labor and Manpower, Secretary Labor and Manpower Mr. Tariq Qamar were present on the occasion were various development partners and a number of other representatives from public and private sector.

# IVS of Art and Architecture offers CRS to IB students

**Our Correspondent**

KARACHI: In a first of its kind partnership for Pakistan, the students of International Baccalaureate's (IB) Career-related Programme (CP) can now avail Career-related Studies (CRS) from the renowned Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture (IVS).

For now, IVS will be offering four diploma courses as a part of CRS for the Career-related Programme (CP): Art of Filmmaking, Interior Design and Decor, Creative Advertising and Sketching, and Drawing and Painting, all offered under the IVS Continuing Education Programme. CP students looking to enrol in any of these courses can do so from January 2023 onwards. "The learning philosophy of IVS and International Baccalaureate are geared towards experiential and cooperative learning. This partnership opens new vistas for post-secondary education in Pakistan", said Dr. Faiza Mushtaq, Dean and Executive Director of IVS.

The CP is an innovative blend of academic study and career skills that incorporates the vision and educational principles of the IB into a unique programme specifically developed for students who wish to engage in career related learning. The CP's three-part framework comprises the study of at least two Diploma Programme (DP) courses alongside the distinctive CP core and a career-related study. CP students engage with a rigorous study programme that genuinely interests them, while gaining transferable and lifelong skills in applied knowledge, critical thinking, communication, and cross-cultural engagement.

Uzma Shujat, Regional Manager for Pakistan, Iran and the Nordic Region for the International Baccalaureate, said: "The CP is the best of both worlds – it combines a quality academic foundation with real hands-on career experience. Having the renowned Indus Valley School onboard to offer CRS to our students is an exciting development as it allows them to gain theoretical and real-world approaches to learning."

The career-related study is designed to prepare students for higher education, an internship or apprenticeship, or a position in a designated field of interest. It provides the opportunity for students to learn about theories and concepts through application and practice while developing broad-based skills in authentic and meaningful contexts.

# Awareness seminar on breast cancer held at Iqra University North Campus



**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Breast cancer develops in women when abnormal changes in the breast appear that regulate the growth of cells that develop in the breast. These views were expressed by Dr. Zubaida Qazi, Founder & President of PINK Pakistan Trust, to the Iqra University North Campus. In the session, she delivered that uncontrolled cancer cells often invade healthy breast tissue and spread to other parts of the breast, which helps the cancer cells to spread to many parts of the breast through primary pathways.

Symptoms of breast cancer include redness of the entire breast, the formation of a lump in the breast, swelling in some parts of the breast, discharge of blood from the breast, the formation of a lump under the arm, peeling of the skin of the breast, shape, and size. Sudden changes and others are also included. They said that ductal carcinoma starts in the milk duct and lobular carcinoma starts as lobular and then grows to prevent breast cancer diagnosis by mammogram, ultrasound, and biopsy tests. Apart from this, the unusual change in oneself can be checked at home by self-examination in front of a mirror.

Dr. Zubaida Qazi said that there is no way to prevent breast cancer, but some measures can significantly reduce the risk of breast cancer, including eating fresh fruits, vegetables, and other healthy foods, exercising, and avoiding radiation. She said that breast cancer can be treated with overall health, radiation therapy, surgery, and chemotherapy. Preventive measures can reduce the duration of breast cancer. Dr. Saleema Tejani, Dr. Hassan Waseem, Dr. Tuba Mehfoz, and others were present on this occasion. Dr. Sobia performed administrative duties.

# Khawaja Farid Chair activated in IUB



**Our Correspondent**

BAHAWALPUR: Khawaja Ghulam Farid Chair Management Committee, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur organized National Conference on Sultan-ul-Ashqeen, Qiblat-ul-Arifin to convey the religious, spiritual, peace and social messages of the great Sufi poet Hazrat Khawaja Ghulam Farid (R.A.) to the new generation on the theme of "Oneness of Being" at Baghdad ul Jadedee Campus.

Speaking in the seminar, Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob, Vice Chancellor of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur said that in the last two years, national conferences, seminars, meetings and Kaafi nights are being organized under the auspices of IUB Khawaja Farid Chair. He said that he had the privilege of activating the Khawaja Farid Chair in the Islamia University of Bahawalpur and now the Khawaja Farid Chair Management Committee is highlighting the messages of the great Sufi poet at the national and international forums. The work of promoting Farid's thought and philosophy and enlightening the young generation is flourishing.

On this occasion, the Vice Chancellor announced to name the Main Auditorium of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur as Khawaja Ghulam Farid Auditorium. He said that it is an honor for him that he got the opportunity to head the historic Islamia University of Bahawalpur, the second largest, ideal and prosperous state of the Indian subcontinent. Similarly, he got the honor of being the founder Vice-Chancellor of Khawaja Ghulam Farid Engineering and Technology University Rahim Yar Khan, attributed to the great Sufi poet of the world, Hazrat Khawaja Ghulam Farid. Sajjada Nashin Durbar-e-Farid Khawaja Moinuddin Mehboob Korejia in his address said that we are believers in one God, one Messenger and one Quran. He said that the Islamia University of Bahawalpur's efforts to spread the teachings of Sophia are highly commendable and can be emulated by other universities.

# PPL AGM approves 5% cash dividend

**Our Correspondent**

KARACHI: The 71st Annual General Meeting of Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) was held online on Wednesday. Members approved financial statements for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2022, together with the auditor's report. A final cash dividend of 5 percent on both ordinary and convertible preference shares was approved.

Opening the forum, Chairman, Board of Directors, PPL Shahab Rizvi welcomed the new MD & CEO PPL Imran Abbasy. He commended the management and staff for their persistent efforts in delivering on key objectives despite a challenging business environment. He also thanked all stakeholders for their support and trust in the company.

During his address, Abbasy shared the company's exemplary performance that led to achieving several milestones

during the year besides ensuring uninterrupted energy supplies for the nation. Following the huge feat of acquiring the country's first-ever offshore Block 5 in Abu Dhabi by a PPL-led consortium, accelerated exploration and appraisal efforts are underway to drill the first well for 2023. Another significant achievement is signing of a non-binding framework agreement for reconstitution of Reko Diq project between Governments of Pakistan and Balochistan and Barrick Gold Corporation, PPL, OGDCL and GHPL. Reko Diq is one of the world's largest undeveloped copper and gold mines.

"This year PPL secured the highest-ever profit-before-tax of Rs. 98.13 billion while managing a 2 percent increase in profit-after tax from the previous year despite imposition of super tax", he noted.

On the production front, PPL's average production remained 808 MMscfd

gas equivalent during the year despite consistently lower offtake from Kandhkot Gas Field by GENCO-II and natural decline in mature fields. "To ramp up production, we have put four discoveries online, including Bashar X-1 in operated Hala Block and three in partner-operated Latif Block, adding approximately 57 MMscfd gas (gross) to the national supplies", Mr. Abbasy shared. Moreover, production resumed from Dhok Sultan X-1 through the recently commissioned oil handling facility and Kabir X-1, Gambat South with a cumulative output of nearly 2,000 bbls/d oil and 5 MMscfd gas. Besides, eight development wells were drilled – two in operated and six in partner-operated assets.

As for the company's exploration efforts, PPL drilled four exploratory wells, one in operated and 3 in partner-operated blocks and made two discoveries – Jugan-1 and Mohar-1 – in partner-operated Latif Block. Addition-

ally, the company won four new blocks through participation in Pakistan Bid Round 2022.

The company has made considerable headway in the mining sector with the Barite, Lead and Zinc project, expected to kick-off soon, following the grant of a large-scale mining lease with recoverable reserves of 69 million tonnes along with an estimated project life of 32 years.

PPL continues to reach target deserving communities in operated and urban areas through need-based, development projects with the current annual input of Rs. 2 billion. During the recent devastating floods, PPL came forward to support flood-hit communities throughout the country with a donation of Rs 70 million, including relief goods. For its part, Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy has once again adjudged PPL as the largest corporate giver for volume of donations for the 16th consecutive year.

# MCB continues its growth momentum in Q3

*The bank registers increase of 35% in Profit Before Tax*

**Staff Reporter**

LAHORE: The Board of Directors of MCB Bank Limited (MCB) in its meeting under the Chairmanship of Mian Mohammad Mansha, on Wednesday, reviewed the performance of the Bank and approved the interim financial statements for the nine months period ended September 30, 2022. The Board of Directors has declared a 3rd interim cash dividend of Rs. 5.0 per share i.e. 50%, in addition to 90% already paid, bringing the total cash dividend for the nine months period ended September 30, 2022 to 140%.

With strong build up in core earnings, MCB's Profit Before Tax (PBT) for the nine months period ended September 30, 2022 increased to Rs. 51.6 billion against PBT of Rs. 38.3 billion of corresponding period last year. On the back of strong overall performance, the Bank reported highest ever quarterly profit before tax of Rs. 19.05 billion in Q3 2022. Retrospective application of tax amendments along with higher tax rates for current period enacted through Finance Act, 2022 resulted into 62% average tax rate for the nine months ended September 30, 2022 as compared to average tax rate of 41% for the corresponding period

last year. Profit After Tax (PAT) registered a decline of 12% from Rs. 22.6 billion to Rs. 19.9 billion; translating into Earning Per Share (EPS) of Rs. 16.75 compared to an EPS of Rs. 19.03 in corresponding period last year.

On the back of strong volumetric growth in current account and favourable yield curve movements, net interest income for nine months period ended September 2022 increased by 29% over corresponding period last year. Average current deposits of the Bank registered a growth of Rs. 91.6 billion (+17%) YoY.

Non-markup income registered a growth of 41% and reported a base of Rs. 20.25 billion against Rs. 14.38 billion in the corresponding period last year. The contribution from foreign exchange line, debit cards, trade business and home remittances remained strong during the period.

Despite exceptionally high inflation, impact of currency devaluation and continued investments in human resources, branch network and technological upgradation, operating expenses of the Bank were recorded at Rs. 30.52 billion, growing by a modest 16% year on year, while the cost to income ratio significantly improved to 37.3% from 42.5% reported in corresponding period last year.

**ISLAMABAD**  
23° - 38° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr	4:58 am
Zohr	11:52 am
Asr	3:43 pm
Maghrib	5:22 pm
Isha	6:45 pm

**EMERGENCY**

Rescue (Police)	15
Bomb Disposal	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad	1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance	1122 & 4451122
Motorway Police	9266044
Motorway Police	9270601-20

**Women Police Stations**

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

Edhi Ambulance	115
PIA Flight Info	114
PIA Cargo	9280979
Railway Inquiry	117
Railway Exchange	9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi	5555489
CAA	9281092

**HOSPITALS**

CMH	561111
MH	561116
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital	9270907-11
DHQ	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7
PIMS	9261170-79
Polyclinic	9218300-09
Shifa International	4603666

**DEPARTMENTS**

CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886
Cantment Board	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224
Rawal Town	5773343

**COMPLAINTS**

Water Tanker Service	E-7, F-10 & F-11 9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8, 9203883	
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8 9266316	
Wapda Islamabad	9217579-80
Sui Gas Complaint	119, 9272249
Wasa Water Tank	
Rawalpindi	0331-5022125

**For healthy society**

# Awareness, destigmatization of mental health vital: Alvi

*There were estimated 24mln people in Pakistan who were in need of psychiatric assistance: Dr Arif Alvi*

**Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday said that a well-integrated and effective awareness campaign about mental health and reducing the stigma against mental illnesses were essential for building a healthy society.

The president, chairing a meeting on mental health at Aiwan-e-Sadr, said also emphasized the efforts to strengthen the existing infrastructure and create awareness using online mental health portals, virtual programs, artificial intelligence, mental health chatbots, helplines, mobilizing relevant government and other stakeholders, and forging public-private partnerships.

Dr Irfan Mustafa, Chief Executive Officer of Tasken Health Initiative, a non-profit organization working for the promotion of well-being and prevention of mental illness in Pakistan, attended the meeting.

The president said there were more than 200 classified forms of mental illness, including behavioural or emotional disorders, depression, bipolar disorder, dementia, and schizophrenia etc, which if diagnosed and managed at an early stage, could be cured in a cost-effective manner or incurring no cost at all.

This, he said, would reduce the burden on the system of curative care which was expensive, unavailable to most of the population and lacking in



trained and qualified human resources. The president noted with concern that mental disorders accounted for more than 4% of the total disease burden with a higher prevalence of mental health burden among women.

He added that there were an estimated 24 million people in Pakistan who were in need of psychiatric assistance but unfortunately Pakistan only had 0.19 psychiatrists per 100,000 people. This is one of the lowest numbers in the Eastern Mediterranean region and the world and was alarming and expeditious actions were needed to reverse the situation, he added.

President Alvi emphasized that mental healthcare needed to be incorporated as a core service in the Primary healthcare system by educating and training the required human resources in the primary healthcare sector. He added that the existing programs should be up-scaled through public-private partnerships, bringing necessary legislative reforms and developing collabora-

tive networking between the stakeholders in the public and private sectors.

The president said that there was a need to launch a national mental health care plan which may include public awareness campaigns, a national mental health helpline, integration of mental health in basic health units, training of primary healthcare workers, and upscaling of existing programs through public-private partnerships. He further said that collaborative efforts among all stakeholders were needed to enlarge the reach of mental health facilities, including the provision of counseling and early diagnostic tools to the people, especially to the unprivileged population in under-served areas.

President Alvi called for the partnership of mental health stakeholders with the leaders of print and electronic media as well as digital and social media to create awareness on a Fastrack basis. "Mental health is key for building a healthy society to ensure the progress and development of the coun-

try and the prosperity of the people", he added.

The president said that dissemination of mental health-related information to the general public through Ulema and Pesh Imams and mosques would help in breaking the taboos attached to mental health and changing people's attitudes and behaviours towards mental health and well-being.

He also called for launching social media campaigns, community-based video screening, and engaging schools, colleges and universities in the mental health awareness campaign. The president said that due to the concerted efforts and leadership provided by First Lady Samina Alvi, they had succeeded in creating a fully integrated breast cancer awareness ecosystem, therefore the lesson learned from the breast cancer awareness campaign, polio campaign and COVID-19 strategy could also be used to strengthen and fortify the campaign for creating awareness about mental health.

**Health Corner**

*Extreme weather events have significant negative impact on skin disease*

ISLAMABAD: The skin is a large, complex organ, and it serves as the body's primary interface with the environment, playing key roles in sensory, thermoregulatory, barrier, and immunological functioning. As floods, wildfires, and extreme heat events increase in frequency and severity, they pose a significant threat to global dermatological health, as many skin diseases are climate sensitive. Investigators draw on an extensive review of published research to highlight the key dermatological manifestations initiated or exacerbated by these climatic events and also highlight the disproportionate impacts on marginalized and vulnerable populations. Their findings appear in The Journal of Climate Change and Health, published by Elsevier.

"We wanted to provide dermatologists and other practitioners with a comprehensive overview of extreme weather-related skin disease as a foundation for patient education, implementation of early treatment interventions, and improved disease outcomes," explained lead author Eva Rawlings Parker, MD, Department of Dermatology and the Center for Biomedical Ethics and Society, Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Nashville, TN, USA. "We were astounded by the sheer breadth of impacts that extreme weather events have on skin disease and how profoundly climate change exacerbates inequality."

In their review, Dr. Parker and her colleagues cite nearly 200 articles documenting the myriad impacts of extreme weather events on skin. Maralee Alexander, MD, Editor-in-Chief of The Journal of Climate Change and Health, noted, "This information is especially timely in light of traumatic events such as Hurricane Ian, which has led to increased infections due to flood and standing water exposures."

Flooding, one of the most common natural disasters, is linked to traumatic wounds and bacterial and fungal infections of the skin. Contact dermatitis is another common consequence of flooding since flood water is often contaminated with pesticides, sewage, fertilizers, and chemicals. Exposure to wildfire smoke can trigger atopic dermatitis (eczema) in adults with no prior diagnosis, and it can trigger or exacerbate acne.

Because the skin plays a critical role in the regulation of body temperature, the effects of extended heat waves can be severe. The inability to properly cool during high heat events can lead to heat stroke and death, for example. Many chronic inflammatory dermatoses are exacerbated by heat as well. Infectious diseases can be seasonal, with heat and humidity increasing the risk of common cutaneous infections caused by bacterial, fungal, and viral pathogens. Less obvious, extreme heat events influence behavior. When temperatures are high, people may spend more time outdoors, increasing exposure to air pollution, UV radiation, and insects.

Dr. Parker and her colleagues observed that extreme weather events disproportionately affect marginalized and vulnerable populations and widen existing health disparities. Children, pregnant women, the elderly, people with mental health illness, racial/ethnic minorities, low-income individuals, and migrants are especially vulnerable to climate-related effects.

Black and Hispanic populations and lower income populations are more likely to live in areas at higher risk for flooding. These populations also have a greater incidence of skin disease and less access to care. Extreme heat is a frontline occupational hazard for manual laborers and migrant workers. Extreme weather events contribute to large-scale migration. Skin diseases are among the most commonly reported health concerns observed in migrants. Of particular concern is the spread of communicable and infectious diseases and vector-borne viruses. People experiencing homelessness are plagued by higher rates of highly morbid, climate-sensitive skin diseases.

"This year has been marked by historic and deadly heat waves in North America, Europe, and Asia; devastating flooding in the United States, Pakistan, and Australia; drought and famine in Somalia and Madagascar; and wildfires in the Western US, Russia, Argentina, and throughout Europe. Extreme weather events are ravaging the planet, disrupting critical infrastructure, severely impacting health and accentuating health disparities," said Dr. Parker. "Clinicians, policymakers, environmental advocates and researchers across the globe should be acutely aware of the current and future disruptions that climate change and extreme weather events pose to human health." Courtesy: Science Daily

## Solidarity with Kashmiris

ISLAMABAD: A motorcyclist on the way in front of a banner hang on green belt outside Parliament House ahead of Black Day on 27th October, in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## Resolution of Kashmir issue imperative for regional peace

*NA Speaker, Deputy Speaker say blood of unarmed Kashmiris would not go in vain*

**Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf and Deputy Speaker Zahid Akram Durran have said that the people of Occupied Kashmir have made eternal sacrifices for the sake of independence. They said that the blood of unarmed Kashmiris would not go in vain and the day was not far when the people of Kashmir would see the dawn of freedom in occupied Kashmir through their struggle for their right to self-determination.

They said that Kashmir issue is an unfinished agenda of partition of the subcontinent without which lasting peace in South Asia is impossible. They expressed these views in their separate messages on the occasion of Black Day which is observed on the 27th October every year.

On this occasion, the Speaker said that this day reminds us of a great tragedy in the history of Kashmir, when Indian army illegally landed their forces in Kashmir and occupied the region. For seven decades, the innocent Kashmiris are fighting for their independence.

The Speaker further said that thousands of children have been martyred in Occupied Kashmir for the last 75 years and thousands of incidents of desecration and rape of women have taken place. He said that the hands of the so-called democratic government of India were stained with the blood of thousands of Kashmiri martyrs. He urged the international community to take stern notice of the atrocities perpetrated by India in Kashmir and play its role in ending the ongoing human rights violations in occupied Kashmir.

Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf said that the resolution of



Kashmir issue was essential for the establishment of lasting peace in the region.

He called on the United Nations to play its role in finding a peaceful solution to the Kashmir issue in accordance with Security Council resolutions.

Reiterating Pakistan's principled stand for the struggle of the Kashmiri people for independence, the Speaker said that Pakistan would continue to provide moral, political and diplomatic support to the Kashmiri people in their struggle for self-determination at every forum. He said that the present Parliament has passed several resolutions to resolve the Kashmir issue in accordance with UN Security Council

resolutions and to stop the atrocities committed by Indian forces in the Occupied Territories. He said that the forcible occupation of Kashmir by India was against the moral values of a civilized society and the basic right of the people to self-determination.

On this occasion, Deputy Speaker Zahid Akram Durran said that this day reminds us of the biggest tragedy in history when Indian forces illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir. He said that the blood of innocent Kashmiris shall never go in vain, and He expressed confidence that the Kashmiri people would soon see the dawn of independence and have a chance to breathe freely.

The Deputy Speaker said that the Government and people of Pakistan have always stood by their Kashmiri brothers and sisters and would continue their moral, political and diplomatic support.

## SDPI, Edge sign MoU to make urban dwellings resilient, sustainable

**Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) and real estate sector Edge Group signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to make new urban dwellings resilient by applying standards set in the SDG 11 (making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable) and SDG13 (climate action).

Pakistan is signatory to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to meet Agenda 2030 agenda and global sustainability issues. Pakistan's real estate sector is growing continuously and the demand for housing in a country of 220 million will not be lower. Unorganized and unplanned growth in housing poses challenges for both the populace and the environment. This unplanned and unsustainable urban growth and development

of housing societies mar public services and natural resources causing pressures on the government.

To address the core issue of 'sustainable tomorrow', a new genre of futuristic organizations is established under the umbrella of Edge Group (EG). Sustainable tomorrow is the key question which EG is trying to address with technical support from the experts on SDGs, Sustainability, Climate Change and Resilience available with the leading think tank of the country, the SDPI. This MoU will promote cooperation between think tanks and private sector.

Under this MoU, Edge will continue to have close consultative coordination with SDPI's experts for their future endeavors to ensure their compliance under the SDGs targets; another aim of this MoU is to create a result-oriented dialogue among the policy makers and stakeholders. Given the

need for clear actions to achieve the SDGs in housing/real estate sector, this is a step in the right direction by the private sector representatives where the key question of what is the real contribution of the corporate entities to sustainable development remains unanswered. Edge is committed to keep on pursuing on this highly significant matter via creating awareness, consistent follow ups and interactive sessions with the stakeholders in the future.

"The Edge Group is committed in realizing the SDGs targets as a responsible national and global private sector player like other corporate sector companies globally playing their role in achieving the SDGs targets mandated by the UN which has mobilized and motivated the private sector to come forward to play their due role. The EG feels that its cooperation with SDPI

will go a long way in fulfilling our commitment to sustainability and resilience," said Mr Zeeshan Hashmi, CEO of the Edge Group on the eve of the signing of the MoU.

"The SDPI works with governments, private sector, and civil society to influence the policy agenda in favour of sustainable and resilient development. The SDGs 11 and 13 indicate that now from onwards we have to move to make cities inclusive, clean, green, and smart to reduce carbon footprint to serve the cause of climate change mitigation and adaptation. The MoU with Edge is a step forward in this direction; and it is a welcome step that they have pro-actively reached SDPI to seek technical support on integrating SDGs target into their development projects," said Dr Shafiqat Munir Ahmad, Director/Head Sustainability and Resilience Programme SDPI.

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almas Ayoub Sabir**  
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 Bureau Chief Karachi: **Saleem Zaman Khan.**  
 (mszk786@gmail.com)  
 Bureau Chief Lahore: **Syed Afraz Ali Nazish**  
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)  
 Islamabad Office: Rose Plaza, I-8 Markaz.  
 Karachi office: Flat No.C.3.A.One Comfort, Block No 11.  
 Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Main Rashid Minhas Road.  
 Lahore Office: 7-E,Samanberg, Johar Town.  
 Email: **spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com**  
 Whatsapp: **0346-5008408**

# EU's reputation is riding high, but challenges lie ahead

**Kerry Boyd Anderson**

**P**olling suggests that the EU is enjoying high favorability ratings among Europeans and around the world. The Russian invasion of Ukraine and the UK's post-Brexit struggles have highlighted the union's value. However, it faces significant headwinds.

The Pew Research Center recently published results from a poll conducted in the spring that looked at public views of the EU. Among 10 EU countries, 72 percent of Europeans expressed favorable views. The union ranked highest among Poles, with 89 percent of respondents in Poland saying that they view the EU favorably. Greeks were the most divided, with only 50 percent expressing positive views. In six of the 10 countries, positive views of the EU were at an "all-time high," according to Pew, and several countries showed significantly higher ratings since last year.

Other surveys and analysis also suggest that Europeans are feeling particularly good about the EU this year. For example, the Standard Eurobarometer survey, conducted in the summer, found increased trust in the EU and noted that the "approval rate of the euro has reached its highest level ever."

Perhaps the primary reason driving support for the EU this year is Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Europeans responded with anger toward Moscow and admira-

tion for Ukraine's determination to defend itself. Russian President Vladimir Putin clearly expected Europe to respond in a divided and weak fashion; instead, a unified Europe rallied behind Ukraine. A survey by the European Council on Foreign Relations from May found that 73 percent of Europeans blamed Russia for the war, and most expressed a desire to assist Ukraine by providing economic aid, sending weapons and accepting refugees. More recent polling from individual European countries, conducted in October, suggests that majorities in several states continue to support sanctions on Russia and are willing to accept some economic pain as a consequence.

The EU's reputation also benefited from the economic and political fallout of Brexit. British supporters of leaving the EU argued that Brexit would improve economic competition, reduce regulation, and strengthen British independence and pride. Instead, since leaving the union in 2020, the country has experienced political crises, increased trade difficulties, a fiscal crisis, heightened risks of unrest in Northern Ireland, and increased potential for Scottish independence. Brexit is not fully responsible for all of these problems, but it has contributed to them and certainly did not solve anything.

The recent resignation of Liz Truss as prime minister after only 45 days, in the wake of a currency crash and economic crisis prompted by her planned budget, highlighted the reality that leaving the EU did not make life better for Britons.

On the contrary, multiple polls over the summer and fall showed increasing regret among the British public over Brexit.

A July poll found that 52 percent of Britons thought that leaving the EU was the wrong decision, while another survey from June showed that 45 percent believed that Brexit "made their daily life worse" — a significant increase over the previous year. A more recent UK poll from October found that 59 percent of the public now believe that Brexit damaged the country's economy. The unfulfilled promises of Brexit have undermined the arguments against the EU made by some right-wing European parties that initially hoped to exit the EU or at least to reduce its role.

While the EU is experiencing high levels of popularity, the institution faces major challenges. Europeans are keen to support Ukraine and willing to pay higher energy prices to reduce their own dependence on Russia, but they are less united behind a long-term vision for ending the war. While some polling suggests that Europeans have little interest in calling for compromise with Russia, other surveys find that many Europeans are worried about the economic impacts and risks of nuclear conflict, and want the war to end quickly; they may be likely to support some compromises with Russia. If Europe faces extreme energy shortages and high prices this winter, support for Ukraine might fade. So far, most Europeans see Russia as the main obstacle to peace, but their support for Ukraine

might diminish if Kyiv appears intractable and they are struggling to pay their energy bills.

While Europeans currently express strong support for Ukraine and clearly blame Russia for the war, long-standing ideological divides still exist among European populations and pose future challenges to the EU. Europeans who share a right-wing ideological perspective are much less likely than those on the left to feel favorably toward the union. For now, the war in Ukraine and Brexit have taken some of the wind out of the sails of right-wing parties that seek to undermine the EU or promote their own countries' departures from the union, but they remain an important factor in European politics.

European leaders have an opportunity to build on current goodwill toward the EU and push forward policies that could cement a sense of the institution's importance and value for European citizens — as well as its role on the world stage. Maintaining unity behind EU policy toward Russia and Ukraine is the most immediate opportunity and challenge.

*Kerry Boyd Anderson is a writer and political risk consultant with more than 18 years of experience as a professional analyst of international security issues and Middle East political and business risk. Her previous positions include deputy director for advisory with Oxford Analytica.*  
 Courtesy: Arab News

## Kashmir Dispute needs world attention

**K**ashmiris on both sides of the Line of Control and world over observing Black Day on October 27 to convey a strong message to the world that they reject illegal occupation of Jammu and Kashmir by India. On October 27, 1947, the sufferings of Kashmiri people started with the landing of Indian occupation troops in Jammu and Kashmir, which had been further increased after Modi's fascist government abolished the special status of IIOJK after revoking Articles 370 and 35-A of Indian constitution on August 5, 2019.

October 27 is observed as Kashmir Black Day each year to mark protest and resentment by Kashmiris around the world including Pakistan to condemn forced occupation of the Held Valley.

The unlawful and illegal forced occupation of IIOJK by India was a clear violation of Pak-Indo partition plan, UN Charter and United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSC) besides International laws. Despite 75 years forced occupation, he said India had completely failed to suppress the legitimate freedom movement of Kashmiris in the Held Valley. "The indigenous freedom movement in IIOJK has entered into decisive stage after unilateral and illegal actions taken by the fascist Modi government on August 5, 2019." These illegal acts had exposed real face of the so-called secular state and proved that there was no room for minorities in India where Muslims and Kashmiris were being subjected to serious human rights abuses, extra judicial killings and state-terrorism.

Kashmiris have been suffering under the Indian occupation for the last over 75 years. It is an illegal occupation and Kashmiris want to show to the world, including the EU, that it cannot continue as the UN has passed resolutions to grant Kashmiris their inalienable right to self-determination. EU also recognizes this right and Kashmiris will continue resisting the illegal Indian occupation. India declares Kashmir its integral part which is not a fact. There is a contradiction on the stance of EU regarding Ukraine, Russia conflict vis a vis the IIOJK. Indian occupation authorities are doing the same thing as Russia is doing in Ukraine. It is a sad fact that trade plays a bigger role than raising voice against injustices in a country. However, mood is changing in European public as well as decision makers and they are strongly criticizing the Indian human rights violations in occupied territory.

India could neither change the disputed status of IIOJK as enshrined in UNSC resolutions, nor could it force Pakistan and Kashmiris to accept illegal outcomes, adding time is nearer when Kashmiris would get freedom from Indian yoke. Global community should give up its criminal silence on the Indian brutalities in IIOJK and take practical steps to force New Delhi to give the Kashmiris their right to self-determination as per the UN Security Council resolutions. The road to peace in subcontinent was passing through Kashmir and lasting peace and stability in the region could not be established unless resolution of this core issue as per wishes of Kashmiris.



## New urban centers rise from pandemic ashes

**Joseph Dana**

**T**he COVID-19 pandemic radically changed our relationship with cities. This should not be news to anyone, but the changes will have long-lasting effects on the global economy and, perhaps more importantly, the production of culture.

In the West, cities are critical hubs of commerce and intellectual activity. From office space to corner restaurants, cities require a constant stream of workers to function at their full potential. Remote work and the rise of digital nomads changed this equation, and now many Western cities are struggling to find their raison d'être in the post-pandemic landscape.

We expect too much of new buildings, the famed American urbanist Jane Jacobs said, and too little of ourselves. In the wake of the pandemic, her observation is poignant. There is no easy infrastructural solution to this crisis of urban identity and the decline of Western cities. Creating new buildings will not bring workers and intellectuals back in the West. This is all the more pressing given the incredible forecasts for urban growth in other parts of the world. According to the World Bank, seven out of 10 people in the world will live in a city by 2050, and most will be located in emerging markets such as Africa and Southeast Asia.

While companies are working tirelessly to attract employees back to the office, many workers around the world appear to be happy to even exchange pay cuts for more flexibility with remote work. At the same time, digital nomads have carved out a nice corner of the labor market that enables them to live around the world while maintaining full employment

on gig contracts. If you can earn an American salary while living in Mexico or Indonesia, why would you ever return to the US? How this will transform labor markets over the next decade is anyone's guess, but it is clear it will have a major effect.

The rise of digital nomads and decline of the city is not solely the fault of COVID-19. At the start of the pandemic, the US-based policy and media outlet Politico noted that "for the first time since the earliest cities emerged in the Fertile Crescent some 6,000 years ago, concentrated urban centers no longer have a monopoly on the economic and cultural connections that make civilizations tick forward." What is missing in this assessment is which cities have lost their monopoly. The slow decay of cities is apparent in the West, but not so in emerging markets. From Lagos to Dubai, new centers of economic and cultural capital are rapidly taking shape.

The planners and municipal authorities of these news beacons of urban activity understand full well the historic transformation that is underway. That is why cities such as Tallinn, Dubai, Singapore and Reykjavik have made concrete efforts to attract digital nomads through favorable visas and employment schemes. A savvy digital nomad can register a virtual business in Dubai, and bounce between the UAE and various megacities in Africa with relative ease.

As the lights dim in the West, they shine brighter in the East. There are several fascinating dynamics at work from the cultural perspective. For one thing, all this new activity is taking place in young cities. Many emerging market cities have established prominence only in the past few decades. If one looks at Abu Dhabi, the transformation has taken place quickly. What was once a sleepy fish-

ing village is now home to powerful cultural institutions such as the Louvre. There are ample state-supported cultural foundations. New cultural districts have been created with unusual speed, which raises the question of how artists and intellectuals will engage with them.

Jane Jacobs, in her masterwork "The Death and Life of Great American Cities," argued that cities need to grow organically through wise urban planning that considered the role of the individual. With the right infrastructure in place, culture would grow like healthy seeds planted in fertile soil. While incredible amounts of money have been invested in cities such as Abu Dhabi, it is unclear how exactly cultural production will flourish, especially given the divergence in perspectives between local cultural attitudes and those of the West. In other words, will previously New York-based artists be able to fully express themselves in Abu Dhabi or Lagos?

It is time to stop bemoaning the decline of cities and what it means for cultural production. Some cities are struggling for myriad reasons, including the COVID-19 pandemic, but new ones are on the rise. These new urban centers from the Gulf to South America will leave their stamp on the next wave of culture, which will be defined by the unprecedented interconnection between people thanks to the internet and travel. Instead of thinking about what was, it is time to start planning what will be.

*Joseph Dana is the former senior editor of ExponentialView, a weekly newsletter about technology and its impact on society. He was also the editor-in-chief of emerge85, a lab exploring change in emerging markets and its global impact.*  
 Courtesy: Arab News

## Be Aware: Safe Spaces for Children Online

**Muhammad Farooq**

**P**eople are usually aware of the benefits of internet but very few know of its dark side. Online risk is a global phenomenon, however, from Pakistan's perspective we face additional challenges e.g. uploading/posting blasphemous and sectarian content. These are sensitive subject matters and require particular consideration to avoid the propagation of hate. Keeping in view the gravity of the matter, it is imperative to sensitize our social media users (i.e. youngsters, parents, teachers, and other key stakeholders) about the issues and timely adoption of proper measures to save our generation from further harm. In order to achieve the desired results, a collective effort is required to be made by all stakeholders.

Youngsters are vulnerable in the online world and parents/guardians supervising them are not fully aware of online risks, community guidelines of Social Media platforms, and punishments mentioned in local laws (i.e. PECA, PPC, etc.). Parents and teachers need to be watchful of their kids/students' online activities especially if they are exhibiting aggressive behavior, usually resulting from seeing inappropriate content or playing online fighting/War games. Kids/students at this stage require proper counseling by their parents/teachers from time to time along with the adoption of proven measures such as: avoiding giving them handheld devices and allowing them to use PCs placed in a common area visible to all, and replacing online gaming facilities with physical activities. Most importantly, parents must spare time for their children, be friendly and educate them about online risks and allow them to discuss their issues without judgment otherwise, they may confide in strangers/online predators. Educational institutions should also step up and raise awareness by organizing seminars/webinars, workshops, etc.



In addition, using parental control software and built-in safety features of SM applications is effective in filtering inappropriate content/apps, limiting screen time, observing online activities, etc. (List of the parental control software is available at the PTA website: [www.pta.gov.pk](http://www.pta.gov.pk)). For Social Media users' guidance, PTA has also placed a list containing links/URLs of Community Standards of major SM platforms having information/guidelines about their important policies to be followed while posting content over SM platforms or sharing with others.

Moreover, the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) was approved in 2016, which empowers the PTA to control the circulation of unlawful content over the internet/social media and FIA to investigate cybercrime-related issues. The public can report unlawful content to PTA for blocking through Complaint Management System (CMS): <https://complaint.pta.gov.pk/RegisterComplaint.aspx> or PTA CMS mobile app and cybercrime-related issues to FIA Cybercrime Wing (CCW) for initiating legal action against offender.

It is important to mention that all popular SM companies and their systems are hosted outside Pakistan on encrypted HTTPS sites. PTA after analyzing received complaints takes up the matter with the concerned SM platform for removal/blocking of the reported content. For quick resolution of the matter, SM platforms always prefer direct communication with the complainant since it is easier to seek further information (if required) directly from the complainant.

# British new PM vows to 'fix mistakes', restore economic stability

*Sunak says Liz Truss was not wrong to want to improve growth, which was a "noble aim," but "mistakes were made"*

LONDON: Britain's new Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Tuesday pledged to "fix the mistakes" made by the Truss government and restore the country's economic stability, while warning there will be "difficult decisions to come."

"Right now, our country is facing a profound economic crisis," Sunak said in his first address to the nation outside 10 Downing Street. He officially became the prime minister after King Charles III met him at Buckingham Palace earlier in the day and invited him to form a government.

Sunak said Liz Truss was not wrong to want to improve growth, which was a "noble aim," but "mistakes were made."

Truss's attempt of using debt-funded tax cuts to spur economic growth plunged the British pound to a 37-year low against the U.S. dollar, while pushing up the cost of government borrowing and mortgage rates.

Sunak said he had been elected prime minister to "fix" those mistakes.



"I will place economic stability and confidence at the heart of this government's agenda," he said. "This will mean

difficult decisions to come," he added.

The 42-year-old prime minister also said he will deliver on the party's manifesto, including a stronger National Health Service (NHS), better schools, safer streets, leveling up and building an economy that embraces the opportunities of Brexit.

"(It) was a very somber address," Wyn Grant, emeritus professor of politics at the University of Warwick, told Xinhua.

"That was an appropriate tone to strike because he does need to prepare the nation for what are going to be some very difficult decisions involving increases in taxes and cuts in public services," Grant said.

Sunak inherits an economy on the brink of recession, with energy shortages, a cost-of-living crisis and runaway inflation that defy any easy fix.

Britain's inflation rose by 10.1 percent in September as food costs keep rising. The squeeze on public spending has aggravated problems in key public

services such as the NHS. British households have also been warned that they will face electricity blackouts this winter due to gas shortages.

"The big challenge is to ensure in these very difficult economic times that you can maintain a good level of public services and deal with the challenge that the National Health Service in particular is facing, but also other public services. And that is a very tough task for anyone," Grant said.

On Tuesday afternoon, Sunak appointed his new cabinet. Chancellor of the Exchequer Jeremy Hunt and Foreign Secretary James Cleverly retained their posts.

Suella Braverman was reappointed as home secretary, less than a week after her resignation from the Truss government. Dominic Raab, who was justice secretary and deputy prime minister in Boris Johnson's government, got both roles back. Ben Wallace was reinstated as defense secretary. Xinhua

## Barrister Sultan to lead anti-India protest in Washington.

Spokesman Report

WASHINGTON: President Azad Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhary will lead black-day rally in front of the Indian Embassy in Washington today to register a protest against India's illegal occupation of Kashmir. The protest demonstration would be attended by overseas Pakistani and Kashmiri communities living in America. It is worth to mention here that the President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry had led similar protests on the occasion of Black Day in London, New York, Brussels and Dublin, Ireland to sensitize the world community about the early resolutions of Kashmir dispute and the devastating impacts of the India's prolonged military occupation on Kashmir.

## Italy's new cabinet wins confidence vote in lower house

ROME: The new Italian cabinet led by Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni won the confidence of the lower house of parliament on Tuesday, with 235 votes in favor, 154 against and five abstentions.

The cabinet must now pass the second confidence test in the senate on Wednesday in order to become fully operative.

Ahead of the vote, Meloni outlined the key points of her government's program, vowing to lead the country as best she can through what she described as some of the toughest times in decades. She also pledged to follow European Union (EU) rules.

Meloni, leader of the Brothers of Italy, is the first woman ever to serve as prime minister in the country.

She won 26 percent of the vote in snap elections held on Sept. 25. Brothers of Italy ran along with two allies — Forza Italia and the League — both of which gained over 8 percent of the vote.

Therefore, Meloni was asked by President Sergio Mattarella to lead the government on Oct. 22.

In her first speech to lawmakers ahead of the confidence vote, Meloni stressed that Italy would keep moving within the boundaries of Western alliances.

"Italy is fully part of the West and of its alliance system, a founding member of the European Union, the eurozone and the (North) Atlantic alliance," she said.

She also explained that she was aware of the curiosity surrounding her government's posture towards the EU institutions.

"I would rather talk about our posture 'within' EU institutions ... because that is where Italy will make its voice heard, not to hold integration back but to help steer it to greater effectiveness," she said.

On the domestic front, Meloni said the government's priorities include a constitutional reform to introduce a presidential system, a wider "flat-tax" system, and increasing support for households and for women in the job market. Agencies

## Midterm elections outlook darkens for Biden's White House



WASHINGTON: The White House has lowered its earlier optimism about the midterm elections and is now worried that Democrats could lose control of both chambers of Congress, administration officials say.

Recent polls have shown Democrats who once had comfortable leads in some Senate races on a knife's edge, and Senate elections that were considered toss-ups between the two parties now leaning Republican as high inflation persists.

The House of Representatives, which Biden and some allies and advisers predicted Democrats could hold earlier this year, is decisively swinging for Republicans, polling analysts including FiveThirtyEight say.

Losing control of one or both houses of Congress will profoundly shape the next two years of Joe Biden's presidency, with Republicans expected to block legislation on family leave, abortion, policing and other Biden priorities while pushing new laws to curb immigration and spending, using the debt ceiling as leverage.

Republicans are also expected to launch investigations into Democratic spending and the business dealings and private life of the president's son Hunter. Some lawmakers say they hope to impeach Biden, his cabinet members or Vice President Kamala Harris.

One person familiar with the thinking inside the White House said Democratic chances of keeping control of the Senate were seen as 50-50.

Biden predicted in May that his fellow Democrats would make gains in both the House and Senate, but he acknowledged last week that the race has tightened. "It's been back and forth with them ahead, us ahead, them ahead," Biden said, adding the polls were "all over the place," and that he thought they would swing towards Democrats one more time before Nov. 8's elections.

The White House, while realistic, has stuck publicly to that message of hope. Reuters

# Only political solution can bring peace to Syria: UN envoy

NEW YORK: Geir Pedersen, the UN's special envoy for Syria, said that only a political solution could bring peace to the country.

"This political solution is the only path to sustainable peace," Pedersen told the UN Security Council, speaking from the Swiss city of Geneva via video link.

The envoy appealed for the council to support his efforts to move the parties closer to a negotiated political solution to end the 11-year conflict in Syria.

Pedersen reported on his recent "busy period of diplomatic engagement" with key Syrian and international stakeholders, including in connection with the stalled Constitutional Committee meetings in Geneva.

"Sadly, we are a long way from this goal at present, and there are challenging diplomatic and ground realities that make advancing towards a comprehensive solution difficult. But the status quo should not be acceptable and there are ways forward," he said.

So far, the political process has not delivered for the Syrian people, and conflict remains "very active" across the country, said Pedersen.

Listing examples, he said the terrorist group ISIL remains a serious threat. One of the largest weapons caches since its fall was recently discovered in the northeast, underscoring the insurgents' continued capacity to carry out attacks.

There were also reports of pro-government airstrikes



in northwest Syria, where none had been reported in a long time.

Meanwhile, in the northeast, drone strikes, mutual shelling and confrontations have been reported between the Syrian Democratic Forces on the one hand, and Türkiye and armed opposition groups on the other.

The envoy said he is pushing for all stakeholders "to engage on step-for-step confidence building measures" towards advancing Resolution 2254, which was adopted by the Security Council in 2015 and outlines a roadmap for a peace process in Syria.

"The key Syrian and international stakeholders need to rebuild their confidence that cooperation on Syria is possible, that the other side is willing and able to deliver, and that Syria can be firewalled from other conflicts.

That confidence can only be built by concrete actions," he stressed.

So far, some countries have identified "concrete areas for potential steps," but talks need to go further, he said.

The envoy also continues his work to unblock obstacles surrounding the reconvening of the Syrian Constitutional Committee, which comprises representatives from the government, the opposition and civil society.

The Security Council also heard how communities in Syria are struggling to survive amidst a spiraling security, public health and economic crisis.

Reena Ghelani, a director in the UN's humanitarian affairs office, OCHA, provided an update on the cholera outbreak in Syria.

More than 20,000 suspected cases of the water-

borne disease have been confirmed so far, and at least 80 people have died. "This is a tragedy, but it should not come as a surprise," she said.

The outbreak is further compounded by factors such as poor rainfall in many locations, severe drought-like conditions, and damaged water infrastructure.

The UN and partners have been sounding the alarm on the water crisis in northern Syria for at least the past year, said Ghelani, adding that the crisis is likely to get even worse with an increased probability for below-normal precipitation and above-normal temperatures.

The UN has a three-month plan to respond to the outbreak, and calls for 34.4 million U.S. dollars to assist 162,000 with health services, and 5 million with water, sanitation and hygiene assistance. Xinhua

## Child sex abuse case

### Philippines may seek to extradite former US diplomat

MANILA: Philippine justice officials said on Tuesday the government may still attempt to extradite a former US diplomat charged with sexual abuse of minors in the Southeast Asian country, a day after he pleaded guilty in an American court.

Dean Edward Cheves, 63, pleaded guilty on Monday to two counts of "engaging in illicit sexual conduct in a foreign place" between 2020 and 2021, the US Department of Justice said in a statement.

He faces a maximum penalty of up to 30 years in prison on each count and is scheduled to be sentenced on Jan. 20, 2023.

The former first secretary at the US Embassy in Manila has been wanted in the Philippines, which sought his extradition after the Pasay City Regional Trial Court ordered his arrest in August last year, following charges of child abuse and child pornography brought against him by a victim's mother.

In response to a question from Arab News on whether the Department of Justice is still interested in having him extradited to the Philippines, Justice Secretary Jesus Crispin Remulla said "yes."

Cheves has been charged with violating the Philippine Child Abuse Law and the Anti-Child Pornography Act.

Menardo Guevarra, solicitor general of the Philippines and former DOJ secretary who had overseen the Cheves case, said the government should pursue his extradition as he "is accountable not only under US laws but more so under the laws of the Philippines where he committed these horrible crimes." Arab News

# Official visit of President of the Republic of Uzbekistan to Turkmenistan

Spokesman Report

ASHGABAT: On October 20, in the evening, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev arrived in Turkmenistan on an official visit. On October 21 in the morning, the motorcade of the leader of the friendly state, accompanied by an honorary escort of motorcyclists, proceeded to the Oguzhan Presidential Palace Complex, where the official welcoming ceremony of the distinguished guest took place.

After the official photographing ceremony against the background of the State flags of the two countries, the head of Turkmenistan invited his Uzbek counterpart to go to the Rowaç Hall, where top-level talks were held in the one-to-one format.

Warmly welcoming the distinguished guest and members of the Uzbek delegation, President Serdar Berdimuhamedov thanked President Shavkat Mirziyoyev for accepting the invitation to visit our country and noted that this visit is considered an important landmark event in the development of interstate relations.

Expressing deep gratitude to President Serdar Berdimuhamedov for the invitation to visit Turkmenistan, hospitality and warm welcome, the leader of the neighboring country Shavkat

Mirziyoyev noted that after his election as President of Uzbekistan, the first foreign visit was made to Turkmenistan.

As emphasized, today the interstate dialogue, based on the historical traditions of good neighborliness, respect and trust in each other, understanding of common long-term goals and interests, has reached a qualitatively new level.

Particular emphasis was placed on bilateral cooperation in the trade and economic sphere, energy, transport and logistics, water, agriculture and other areas. As noted, in recent years a breakthrough has been achieved in all areas of practical cooperation. Based on the Roadmap, the agreements reached are being successfully implemented.

Further, in the Soltan Sanjar Hall, the negotiations continued in an expanded format, with the participation of members of the official delegations of the two countries.

The parties discussed topical issues of the regional and global agenda of mutual interest. Particular attention was paid to the topic of deepening cooperation in Central Asia.

The Presidents also confirmed the need to intensify cooperation in the field of science and education, culture and tourism. In 2023, it is planned to hold cross

Days of Culture and Cinema, youth festivals.

At the end of the talks, a ceremony of signing bilateral documents took place, during which a solid package of documents was signed.

To the applause of those present, Presidents Serdar Berdimuhamedov and Shavkat Mirziyoyev put their signatures under the Declaration on deepening the strategic partnership between Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan.

At the end of the document signing ceremony, the heads of the two states addressed the media representatives.

Announcing the results of the high-level meeting, the President of Turkmenistan expressed gratitude to President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, members of the delegation of the Republic of Uzbekistan for constructive negotiations that took place in an atmosphere of openness, mutual trust and understanding.

Expressing deep satisfaction with the talks, which resulted in the signing of a solid package of bilateral documents, President Serdar Berdimuhamedov placed special emphasis on the great personal merit of the President of Uzbekistan in strengthening interstate dialogue, his constant attention to matters of cooperation with Turkmenistan.

On the same day, the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev met with the Chairman of the Halk Maslakhaty of the Milli Gengesh of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov.

Chairman of the Halk Maslakhaty of the Milli Gengesh Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov and President Shavkat Mirziyoyev expressed confidence that the Turkmen-Uzbek cooperation, based on centuries-old ties of friendship and good neighborliness, would continue to grow stronger and successfully develop for the common good.

At the end of the meeting, the Hero-Arkadag presented the Uzbek leader with a Turkmen Alabai, who was called Alabai, and presented a Certificate of his pedigree.

In the afternoon, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, as part of his official visit, visited the Halk hakydasy Memorial Complex. Here, the distinguished guest laid flowers at the Baký öhrat monument, which immortalized the memory of national heroes—the valiant defenders of the Motherland.

Having familiarized himself with the exposition of the Watan Mukaddesligi Museum located on the territory of the Memorial Complex, the Uzbek leader left a memorable entry in the Book of



Honored Guests.

Then the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev visited the Magtymguly Turkmen State University, where a solemn ceremony was held to confer the academic title of Honorary Professor of this university on the leader of a friendly country.

Speaking to the audience, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, expressing gratitude for the honor rendered—conferring the academic title of Honorary Professor of one of the leading Turkmen universities, noted that he regards this as another symbol of the strengthening ties of friendship, good neighborliness and fruitful cooperation between the peoples of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

On the same day, with the participation of Presidents Serdar

Berdimuhamedov and Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the opening ceremony of the Tashkent recreation park built in Ashgabat was held.

The head of Turkmenistan met the distinguished guest at the main entrance to the new park, which has become another visible symbol of the indestructible Turkmen-Uzbek friendship.

In the course of familiarization with the park, the Presidents of Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan went to the Chai-khana (Teahouse), decorated in the Uzbek style, and get acquainted with the conditions created for visitors.

Leaving the Teahouse, the heads of the two countries went to the area in front of the main stage of the park, where a large screen was installed. Through a direct teleconference organized via digital communication, Pres-

idents Serdar Berdimuhamedov and Shavkat Mirziyoyev took part in the solemn ceremony of laying the foundation of the Turkmen-Uzbek border trade zone—the Trade Center, which took place on the territory of the Dashoguz velayat.

In the evening, President Serdar Berdimuhamedov gave an official dinner in honor of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. The reception was accompanied by performances of cultural figures and artists.

Then, Presidents Serdar Berdimuhamedov and Shavkat Mirziyoyev proceeded to the Ashgabat International Airport, where they warmly said goodbye to each other, expressing full satisfaction with the results of the negotiations and reaffirming the commitment of the two countries and peoples to the relations of friendship, brotherhood, good neighborliness and full-scale cooperation.

The official visit of the President of Uzbekistan to Turkmenistan and its fruitful results will give a powerful impetus to the further development of cooperation, and the bilateral documents signed during the Turkmen-Uzbek summit at the highest level will strengthen multifaceted, traditionally friendly and good neighborly relations between two countries and its people.

**Bull & Bears**  
PSX 100-Share  
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
41,540.03	42,190.03
Day's High	Day's Low:
42,190.03	41,490.13
Index Value	Change
6,063,300,133	-650.00
Percentage	Time
-1.54%	26 Oct, 2022 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,035.21	+21.73
Percentage	Time
+0.32%	26 Oct, 3:59 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
32,037.69	+200.95
Percentage	Time
+0.63%	26 Oct, 10:59 am GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
27,431.84	+181.56
Percentage	Time
+0.67%	26 Oct, 3:15 pm GMT+9

**Open Market Forex Rates**

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	140.44	141.69
Bahrain Dinar	584.02	588.52
Canadian Dollar	161.28	162.63
China Yuan	30.16	30.41
Euro	221	223.5
Hong Kong Dollar	29.41	29.76
Kuwaiti Dinar	708.46	713.46
Malaysian Ringgit	46.38	46.83
New Zealand \$	126.55	127.75
Omani Riyal	570.08	574.58
Qatari Riyal	60.33	60.83
Saudi Riyal	58.75	59.3
Singapore Dollar	155.04	156.34
Swiss Franc	220.49	222.24
U.A.E Dirham	62	62.6
UK Pound Sterling	254.75	257
US Dollar	221.5	223.7

# Industries Minister assures support to ICCI for new industrial estate in region

*New industrial estate would boost production activities and benefit the local economy, says Syed Murtaza Mahmud*

**Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: Syed Murtaza Mahmud, Federal Minister for Industries and Production Division assured that he would provide all possible assistance and support for the establishment of a new industrial estate in the region as it would boost production activities and benefit the local economy. He said that soon a meeting of all stakeholders including the Ministry of Commerce, Board of Investment and CDA would be convened to get their input on this important project. He said that ICCI should identify 2-3 sites for industrial zone to analyse and assess their potential for the project.

He said this while talking to a delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry that called on him led by Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President.

Syed Murtaza Mahmud said that ICCI's demand for representation in various attached departments of the Ministry of Industries would also be given due consideration to enhance the role of the private sector in them. He said that a



separate meeting with the pharmaceutical sector would be held to promote its exports. He assured that the government would facilitate the private sector by removing hurdles and bottlenecks being faced by it.

Speaking at the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry briefed the Federal Minister for Industries about the importance of a new industrial zone in the region as it would

attract more investment, boost industrialization, improve exports, create employment and strengthen the local economy.

He said that ICCI needed around 10,000 acre of land for this project to promote export-oriented industries, which can be available on the CPEC route in the vicinity of Islamabad and stressed that the government should help in acquisition of land to materialize this project. He said that ICCI should be given representation in the Boards of SMEIDA, Engineering Development Board, National Productivity Organization, and other relevant departments of the Ministry of Industries to serve the cause of the private sector more effectively.

Azhar ul Islam Zafar Vice President ICCI, Zikria A Zia President Islamabad Industrial Association, Zafar Bakhtawari, Mian Akram Farid, Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi, Nasir Qureshi, Shaban Khalid, Maqsood Tabish, Dr. M. Usman, Rizwan Chheena, Ameer Hamza and others also spoke at the occasion and highlighted various issues of the business community that needed the attention of the Federal Industries Minister for redress.

# FPCCI officials, Kyrgyz envoy express keen interest to increase trade

**Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador Kyrgyz Republic to Pakistan Mr. Ulanbek Totuiaev, called on Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President, the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry at Capital House Islamabad.

Amin Ullah Baig, Vice President FPCCI / Incharge Capital Office & Mr. Umar Masood ur Rehman Vice President FPCCI were also present on the occasion. During the meeting underscored the need for closer cooperation in trade, investments, and energy and people-to-people contacts. They accorded particular focus to further strengthening of exchanges Business Delegation, holding of business forms to increase the bilateral trade between both the countries and other affairs.



The Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan further said that the volume of trade between the two brotherly countries is very low, major exports of Pakistan to Kyrgyzstan are fruits, vegetables, juices, surgical instruments, textile products, pharmaceuticals, furniture, sports goods and leather etc. Similarly, Kyrgyzstan's export items are meat, dairy products, raw

cow and sheep hides, mechanical and electrical equipment, aluminium, oil products, jet fuel etc.

Both countries are producing several products, which could be of great value in each other's market and compete with products of other countries in terms of affordability and quality. He further said that he was of the view that his

country can act as a connectivity hub for Pakistan's exports that can reach the Central Asian and European markets by road. He also stressed that there is a great potential for tourism and investments in the Kyrgyz Republic as both nations have EU GSP+ and leveraging the free trade zones. Our nations can boost their economic activity, especially with their exports to the European markets he said. We have to take advantage of our geographical contiguity and QITA can play a significant role in this regard.

Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President of FPCCI said that the geo-strategic position of Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan also highlights their geo-economic importance, which could play a significant role in promoting trade connectivity amongst different regions and potential markets of the world.

# PTCL Group set to launch 3rd cohort of 'Justuju'

*To upskill persons with disabilities*



**Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's largest telecommunication and ICT services provider, PTCL Group signed an agreement with the Network of Organizations Working for People with Disabilities Pakistan (NOWPDP) and Deaftaw to launch the third cohort of its flagship skill training program, Justuju for professional development of persons with disabilities (PWDs). For the 3rd cohort, the program duration has been extended from six weeks to six months with

two months of soft skills training and four months of on-the-job training to allow extended mentorship and learning for professional success.

Justuju internship program is one of the most sought-after internship programs, designed to bridge the gaps in the society through social and economic inclusion of persons with disabilities. Talented individuals are prepared for career through robust training and hands-on experience under expert mentorship at PTCL and Ufone offices.

# Destabilization will increase poverty and inflation

*Early elections will bankrupt country, says Mian Zahid Hussain*

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Wednesday said the country is going through a very critical economic period and in these circumstances, a long march will bankrupt the country.

PTI should postpone this decision to hold a long march in the larger interest of the country, otherwise, everyone will have to regret it, he said.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that expecting an unstable government to bring economic stability to the country is like asking for too much.



Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said political destabilization will lead to a sharp increase in poverty and inflation and the people will suffer more.

How come a short-term government can bring long-term economic benefits to the country, he said, adding that early elections will prove to be poison for the economy.

Mian Zahid Hussain said

that the repeated downgrades of Pakistan by international credit rating agencies have made it difficult for the country to take loans from the commercial market as they have become more expensive.

The government needs \$32 billion in the current fiscal year to pay off foreign debt and deal with the current account deficit, but many creditors are unwilling to lend due to the ratings downgrade.

He said that it is possible for the government to raise capital by selling the failed government enterprises that are losing six hundred billion rupees annually, but due to political instability, the country is not in a position to sell any assets or mortgage anything.

The foreign exchange

reserves are also negligible. Apparently, the foreign exchange reserves are at seven and a half billion dollars, but among them, 2.3 billion dollars are loans from China, 3 billion dollars are from Saudi Arabia, 1.2 billion dollars from the IMF and the rest of the commercial banks, which if removed, the foreign exchange reserves will be zero, he observed.

The investment atmosphere in the country is weak, the foreign direct investment has decreased by 47%, the investment in Pakistan Investment Bonds and Treasury Bills has slipped to zero, while the visit of the Finance Minister to America has not benefited Pakistan and now hopes are attached to Saudi Arab and China.

# Zong, its employees donate Rs10m to flood affectees of Sindh

**Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: Zong 4G, Pakistan's leading mobile telecommunication network, has donated PKR10 million to the Government of Sindh for flood affectees. The donation was presented at an event held on 20th of October 2022 to support flood-affected victims during this time of crisis, to demonstrate the network's excellence during testing times, and to honor the resilient bond between Pakistan and China.

Pakistan has been devastated by one of the worst humanitarian disasters in recent history. This has resulted in unprecedented national damage. As one of the country's largest telecommunication networks, Zong believes it is its responsibility



to assist Pakistan in regaining its footing. The employees of the company stepped up and donated their one-day salary. While Zong 4G donated 1.5 Rupees. for every rupee contributed by the employees.

To accomplish this, Zong has collectively donated 10 million rupees to the Sindh government, which will be used to rehabilitate the prov-

ince's flood victims. This cheque was presented Mr. Muhammad Ismail Rahoo, Provincial Minister of Environment, Climate Change, Coastal Development, Universities and Board Departments, who thanked Zong and its employees on behalf of the people of Sindh for this generous contribution.

Chairman and CEO of

Zong 4G, the Minister of Information Technology and Telecommunication, and the Chinese Ambassador all addressed the participants. In addition to the cheque presentation, Zong highlighted its sustainability efforts and shared the following year's technical plan, which highlighted the company's ongoing best efforts in ensuring best services for its customers.

Commenting on Zong's support for flood-affected victims, Zong 4G Chairman and CEO Mr. Wang Hua said, "ZONG has always been at the forefront of helping our fellow Pakistanis in their time of need. I am proud of all of our employees who have stepped forward in these difficult times to support our communities and extend all help possible."

# Faletti's Lahore, The Vintage Hotel of Pakistan

**Munaza Kazmi**

LAHORE: The city known for its imperial history, flawless architecture, and majestic past. Apart from the celebrated Mughal architecture, there comes a variety of British and Italian masterpieces.

Faletti's Hotel Lahore is one of the leading, build on Italian architectural designs, artistic hallways, lush green garden and centuries old trees, enjoying a history of more than hundred years, and located on 24 Egerton Road, Lahore, nearby Mall Road, a decent distance from Lahore airport and motorway terminals. Moreover, the best choice if you're planning to explore the city, since its located in the center of Lahore, in close proximity of Old City, Data Darbar, Wagah Border and other places of attraction.

Faletti's Hotel is woven into the fabric of Lahore City, in a way that it has long reigned as city's most iconic and instantly recognizable hotel. A matchless address for business, a splendid setting for society weddings, scene-stealing backdrop for showbiz, and a beloved retreat for family holidays.

Moreover, the hotel has a great value of historical importance, since it is the oldest hotel of Pakistan, established in 1880, before partition, until the 1970s, the most prestigious, playing host to politicians, celebrities and heads of state.

**History**

Initially, the hotel was established by an Italian named Andrea Faletti, who was interested in making a decent accommodation for travelers and businessmen. However, reasoning his lavish and extravagance living, Faletti entered into debt, and eventually sold out some of hotel's shares to Oberoi, who ran the hotel till 1965, however leading the political scenarios the fate put the hotel into the hands of PTDC, however its name stayed the same.

Next, the government owned the hotel till June 2004 during which time it functioned more as office facilities with an occasional event being held on and off on the premises, and under the privatization commission opened bids on the hotel a number of times. Finally, privatization took place on July 1, 2004, of which result the hotel handed over two years later to a UAE-based company, on the condition that the name of the hotel would not be changed and that its ethos would be preserved. Till December 2012, for massive renovation work the doors of the hotel remain shut. However, a soft opening of the newly restored hotel took place on 1st January 2012, while the hotel became fully operational from June 2013. It is indeed praiseworthy that in a country where its tangible heritage is plundered with impunity and where even the residence of the Quaid has not been preserved for posterity, Faletti's owners have all been mindful of



preserving the hotel's history and not just its name.

**Rooms & Suites**

**Executive Room:** The Executive rooms at Faletti's reflect impeccable standards, furnished in a timeless blend and inspired by the Regency Era. Designed luxuriously with comfort, fulfilling the requirements of both, the business as well the leisure traveler. The comfortable king-sized beds covered in snow white linens offers restful sleep, with round the clock service is on-call to assist the guests.

**Royal Suite:** Details inspired from elegant Regency period, rich furnishing and complimentary amenities welcomes the guest into this Two Bedroom suite. Offering separate living and dining areas, these suites depict amalgamation of modern interior with delicate preservation of vintage.

**Justice Cornelius Suite:** This suite was named after Justice Alvin Robert Cornelius, who graced the hotel with his presence for over 40 years till his demise. This luxurious suite has been refurbished whilst embracing luxury on a grand scale; with solid teak wood floors polished to perfection, an exquisite lounge area, bedroom with a king-sized bed and a private dressing area with walk-in closet space. Moreover, one of the distinctive features about this suite is, it's one of a kind wallpapers modeled library, adjacent to the large desk where Justice Cornelius wrote countless judgments.

**Junior Suite:** The suite features a comfortable open sitting area and a king-sized bed. The décor delicately blends elegant details with state of the art. The bathrooms feature marble paneling and a rejuvenating glass shower.

**Deluxe Suite:** Here you will find separate Bed and Lounge areas, perfect for having that private business session or entertaining guests. The décor combines relaxed airiness with lush furnishing.

**Ava Gardner Suite:** This Two-bedroom suite is Faletti's largest and most luxurious. The famous actress stayed in the suite while her movie, "Bhowani Junction" was being filmed in Pakistan. This enormous suite displays a perfect combination of 19th Century and contemporary sophistication. The Ava Gardner Suite embodies ineffable luxury and being considered the perfect residence befit-

ting royalty. Offering two bedrooms, a living area, walk-in closet, dresser, and a separate Dining area. Moreover, the guests can take pleasure from the flowery views of the garden right in front.

**Quaid-e-Azam Suite:** Perhaps it's the most prestigious residence of the hotel since, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Father of our Nation resided on 14th July 1929 whilst defending the case before the Lahore High Court. The suit has been refurbished and conserved, keeping in view the classic layout of the period; honoring the memory of Quaid by preserving the room exactly as he would have preferred. The suit offers teak wood flooring, a study area and a private living area.

**Café De Brando**

Café De Brando at Faletti's Hotel is a peaceful haven of serenity, where you will find the atmosphere is chic and delicious food.

Nearby the entrance you would enthralled to find out the celebrated personalities who in past time might have seated where today you are, let's say The King of Romance Dilip Kumar, Raj Kapoor and many more.

Apart from restaurant the hotel has two vintage banquet halls, preserved in exactly the same manner and two new additions.

Concluding, there are very few hotels in Pakistan preserving our heritage. Faletti's is leading of them.

## T20 World Cup

## Zimbabwe's Raza says Pakistan has one of 'best attacks'

Says Pakistan has always been a very strong bowling side

PERTH: Zimbabwean cricketer Sikandar Raza is confident of a good show by his side in the ICC T20 World Cup match against Pakistan on Thursday.

In an interview with a private tv channel, the 36-year-old Sialkot-born Zimbabwean player termed Pakistan a very good side, adding that his team was ready for the challenge.

"I am really looking forward to this game. We've had some very good games in the past against Pakistan. Now that we are on the board as well with the point, hopefully, a win tomorrow can take us forward in the tournament," he said ahead of the game against Pakistan.

However, he was wary of the challenge Pakistan would pose them.

"In my opinion, Pakistan has probably one of the best attacks. I think it is certainly one of the best attacks in the tournament. England's got a very good attack as well as Australia and India. But I do think Pakistan has got the right mixture when it comes to seamers," said the Zimbabwean batter.

"Pakistan has always been a very strong bowling side. And, having said that, with



Rizwan and Babar at the top as well and the way they have performed over the years, if I'm not mistaken, these two have the world record of the most amount of runs scored as a partnership."

Zimbabwe's Sikandar Raza (right) runs around Scotland's Mark Watt during the

ICC men's T20 World Cup 2022 cricket match between Scotland and Zimbabwe at Bellerive Oval in Hobart on October 21, 2022. — AFP

Zimbabwe's Sikandar Raza (right) runs around Scotland's Mark Watt during the ICC men's T20 World Cup 2022 cricket

match between Scotland and Zimbabwe at Bellerive Oval in Hobart on October 21, 2022. — AFP

"So, I think Pakistan got the right mixture of cricketers when it comes to bowlers and batters to chase down or to defend any sort of total. So, it's quite an important and exciting match and we are really looking forward to it together," he said.

Sikandar had scored 82 vs Ireland and 40 against Scotland in the first round of the tournament to help his team qualify for the super 12 stages.

When asked about his form and his aims for the match, the batting all-rounder said that he doesn't like to make big claims.

"I'm never a big guy to answer that," he said when asked if he was confident about continuing his form.

"What will be, will be. I've done the work in the nets and leave the rest to Allah's hands. I've done all I could to give myself a chance to do well. If I do well. Alhamdulillah if I don't do well still Alhamdulillah it's something that's out of my hand. What is in my hand is to work hard and I've done that," he said. Agencies

## Inter District Football Tournament Concludes in GB

## Our Correspondent

SKARDU: District Football Association Skardu and AAA Associates jointly organized an Inter District Football Tournament 2022 at Skardu in which 11 teams from different districts of Gilgit-Baltistan participated. The opening match was played between District Diamir and District Hunza.

Speaker Gilgit Baltistan Assembly Syed Amjad Hussain Zaidi presided the inaugural ceremony. The teams played in Two pools to compete against each other. The finale was played between District Skardu and District Diamir. District Skardu won the finals in an exhilarating match by shooting 3 goals in penalty shootout against District Gilgit. Governor Gilgit Baltistan & former Chief Minister Mr. Syed Mehdi Shah was the chief guest of the tournament. He congratulated the



winning team and applauded AAA Associates efforts in organizing sporting events which provided an incredible entertaining activity for the community. The event drew a large number of spectators which enjoyed the tournament thoroughly.

Chairman AAA Associates Mr. Sheikh Fawad Bashir appreciated the AAA Associates Management in Skardu for holding a football tournament. He said, "AAA Associates has a long history of help-

ing sports in Pakistan at grassroots level. Whether it be through infrastructure development and improvement, organizing tournaments or sponsoring athletes, AAA Associates is dedicated to nurture and promote Pakistani talent.

Gilgit Baltistan is a beautiful place, with dedicated and hardworking people. For us, organizing a Football Tournament in Skardu is a privilege, as it provides not only the opportunity to entertain the local but also

helped us to enable them achieve their dreams in Pakistan and abroad."

Managing Director AAA Associates Lt. Col. Shahzad Ali Kiani (r) also expressed his sentiments by saying, "At AAA Associates, we encourage sports regardless of socioeconomic status or cultural standing. Sport has a remarkable unifying ability in terms of breaking down cultural, social, ethical, and religious boundaries, and it aids in the establishment of a cross-cultural community.

Sport will always be a place where Pakistan is from humble origins can create a name for themselves and fulfil their dreams with a little help. I must also applaud AAA Associates Skardu Management for organising such a large-scale tournament. We are considering about organising further events in the future since we believe it brings communities together."

## Secretary Sports Punjab, DG SBP distribute prizes among position holders

## Our Correspondent

LAHORE: Lahore division and Bahawalpur women hockey teams cruised into the final of 73rd Punjab Games Women Hockey event after winning their respective semifinals here at Mini Hockey Stadium, on Wednesday.

Lahore division thrashed Rawalpindi by 5-0 in the first semifinal while Bahawalpur women hockey team outplayed Faisalabad by 3-0 margin. The 3rd/4th position match will be played between Rawalpindi and Faisalabad at the same venue.

The historic 73rd edition of Punjab Games are being organised under the banner of Sports board Punjab and with the collaboration of Punjab Olympic Association (PbOA).

In a football event at Punjab Stadium, Multan and Sahiwal divisions reached the finals on Wednesday.

Multan beat Sargodha 3-0 in the first semi-final whereas Sahiwal defeated Lahore Division 7-6 on plenty of kicks in the second semi-final clash after a closely fought encounter.

In the volleyball event at NPSG Gymnasium Hall, Faisalabad and Sahiwal divisions reached the final. Faisalabad beat Gujranwala 4-1 in the first semi-final while in the second semi-final, Sahiwal defeated Lahore Divisions 3-0.

Lahore swimmers dominated the Punjab games swimming competitions taking top positions in seven disciplines contested at Punjab International Swimming Complex on Wednesday.

In the baseball event PU New Campus ground, Sahiwal defeated Lahore by 16-6 to win the bronze medal.

A large number of sports enthusiasts witnessed some nail-biting competitions of 73rd Punjab Games on the third day at various sports venues of Nishtar Park Sports Complex on Wednesday.

Director General Sports Punjab M Tariq Qureshi on Wednesday informed that the contingent of Danish school is also participating in Punjab Games sports competitions with full dedication.

Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Ehsan Bhutta and Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi were the guests of honour at Punjab Games sports events. Director Admin Syed Umair Hassan, Director Sports Nadeem Qaiser, Chief consultant SBP Hafeez Bhatti, SBP PRO Abdul Rauf Roofi and other officials were also present on this occasion.

## 3 Pakistani players move in World Youth Scrabble C'ship finals

ISLAMABAD: Three Pakistani players have moved to the finals of the World Youth Scrabble Championship being managed by Pakistan from Karachi virtually.

Pakistan was the only country to have three players in the finals while two players each from Sri Lanka and India made it to the finals. Australia, Thailand and Malaysia have one player each in the finals, said a press release.

However, the biggest shock of the championship was defending champion Syed Imaad Ali of Pakistan failed to make it to the finals.

The group stages of the World Youth Scrabble Championship came to an end. The championship featured 86 players from 15 countries across five continents.

After completion of 36 rounds, top ten players moved to the final to be played on October 29 and 30. Sri Lanka dominated the group stage as the first and second positions were held by Sri Lankan players.

Adheesha Dissanayake finished the group stage with 28 wins and a spread of 2667 while Sandali Withanage was second with 25 wins and a tie.

Pakistan's Hasham Hadi finished 3rd with 26 wins and a spread of 1886 and debutante Affan Salman was 4th with 25 wins and a spread of 2210. Affan's elder brother Ali Salman also made it to the finals.

The ten finalists include Hasham Hadi Khan, Affan Salman, Ali Salman (Pakistan); Adheesha Dissanayake, Sandali Withanage (Sri Lanka); Madhav Kamath, Pramit Rao (India); Ronnie Bennet (Australia); Chaiyotha Manachaisi (Thailand) and Eirfan Razman (Malaysia).

On Saturday all ten finalists would play a round robin league and then on Sunday there will be a five-game on King of the Hill format to decide the World Youth Champion. APP

## T20 World Cup

## Zimbabwe skipper set to take on Pakistan ahead of game

PERTH: Zimbabwe captain Craig Ervine is wary of the challenges his side would face in the T20 World Cup game against Pakistan on Thursday in Perth, Australia.

Speaking ahead of the match at the Perth Stadium, the Zimbabwean captain said that Pakistan is a very good bowling side and Zimbabwe will have to work hard to get a decent score on board.

"I'm pretty sure that Pakistan will be coming hard at us tomorrow. They've got some quality bowlers with the new ball. So, that will be a big challenge for us," Ervine said.

"Looking at quite a few games that have been played, that first five to six overs with the new ball are challenging for every team. I think it's a key area for us to try getting through with the bat tomorrow and capitalise on a lot of doubles with bigger boundaries in those middle overs," the Zimbabwean captain added.

Responding to a question regarding the pitch at the Perth Stadium, Ervine highlighted that the wicket will be a bit quicker than it was in Hobart.

"We'll obviously have to try assessing those conditions and work out how best to get a decent score on the board," the skipper said.

"I don't think that you can sit back and let quality bowlers like that bowl at you; Otherwise, it's only going to be a matter of time before they get you out. I think it will be a case of trying to rotate and making sure that you're putting them under as much pressure as they're putting you under," he said while referring to Pakistani bowler Haris Rauf. Agencies

## PGA Tour v LIV Series feud 'no good for anyone'



LONDON: World number one Rory McIlroy said the feud between the PGA Tour and LIV Golf Series is "out of control" and that it could leave the game "fractured" for a long time.

The Saudi-backed LIV series has lured away some of the PGA Tour's top members with huge sums of money, while those who joined the rebel circuit have been suspended by

the US-based circuit.

LIV has filed a lawsuit accusing the PGA Tour of antitrust violations, while the PGA Tour has filed a counterclaim. "This 'us versus them' thing has gotten way out of control already," McIlroy, one of LIV Golf's fiercest critics, told the Guardian.

"If the two entities keep doubling down in both directions, it is only going to become irreparable. We are going to have a fractured sport for a long time. That is no good for anyone."

Several of McIlroy's former Ryder Cup teammates, including Ian Poulter, Lee Westwood and Sergio Garcia, have joined the controversial circuit and it is unclear whether they will be allowed to feature in next year's event.

Henrik Stenson has been stripped of Team Europe's captaincy after joining the Saudi-backed series. "I think it is the first time in my life that I have felt betrayal, in a way," he said. "You build bonds with these people through Ryder Cups and other things. Them knowing that what they are about to do is going to jeopardise them from being a part of that ever again?"

"I would like to think the Ryder Cup means as much to them as it does to me. Maybe it does. But knowing what the consequences could be, I just could never make that decision." McIlroy said players should have tried to resolve their issues with the established tours rather than switching to LIV. "I feel like the place where they have been able to build their legacy and build their brand, they have just left behind..." he added. Reuters

## Ireland shock England as NZ suffer T20 World Cup washout

MELBOURNE: Ireland and rain had a major impact on the T20 World Cup Wednesday as England suffered a shock defeat and New Zealand were denied the chance to take advantage when their match with Afghanistan was washed out.

Captain Andy Balbirnie led the way for Ireland with 62 from 47 balls at the Melbourne cricket Ground (MCG) to give England a 158-run target.

But England's much-vaunted batting lineup struggled to get going in the face of some disciplined

Ireland swing bowling and were reduced to 29-3 off the first five overs.

A late Moeen Ali boundary flurry (24 off 12 balls) took England to 105-5 off 14.3 overs when the rain ended play.

England were five runs behind on the DLS scoring method, handing Ireland a famous victory.

"It's amazing, kind of emotional," said man-of-the-match Balbirnie.

"Our message was to just create chances and we know how this England team like to play, if we take every chance

then we would be in with a shot.

"This will do a lot to grow the game back home.

"The rain stayed around for the rest of the night and, after several aborted attempts to start the second match of the MCG double-header, New Zealand and Afghanistan had to make do with a point each without a ball being bowled.

It leaves New Zealand top of a wide open Group 1 with three points after two rounds of matches.

Sri Lanka, England, Ireland and Australia are

locked together on two points with Afghanistan bottom on one.

It was Ireland's second massive upset of the tournament after they beat the West Indies in the first round to send the two-time champions home.

England, who enjoyed an opening five-wicket win over Afghanistan, are among the title favourites and were heavily-fancied to beat the Irish.

Captain Jos Buttler had no excuses and said England needed to feel the pain of defeat after their dismal performance. APP

## 'Positive signs' over Australia entry, says Djokovic

Serbian star hopes to get an answer 'in the next few weeks' over his participation at Australian Open

SYDNEY: Nine-times champion Novak Djokovic says there are "positive signs" that his three-year ban on entering Australia will be waived so he can play at the next Australian Open in January.

The 35-year-old Serbian was deported from Australia in the lead-up to the Grand Slam tournament this year on the grounds that his opposition to Covid-19 vaccination threatened the stability of country.

The former world number one said he was hoping to hear soon whether his bid to have his three-year visa ban set aside by the government had been successful. "When it comes to Australia, there are some positive signs, but



unofficially," he told Serbia's Sportal in an interview.

"We are communicating through my lawyers in Australia. In fact, they are communicating with the authorities in charge of my case.

"I hope to have an answer in the next few weeks—whatever that answer might

be, but of course I am hoping for a positive one—so that I have enough time to prepare for the start of the season, if that start is going to happen in Australia."

Australia's Home Affairs ministry has repeatedly reiterated its policy of not commenting on individual cases. Djokovic remains unvaccinated but Australia scrapped a rule that required international travellers to declare their Covid vaccination status in July.

Opposition lawmaker and former Home Affairs Minister Karen Andrews said earlier this month that to waive Djokovic's ban would be a "slap in the face" for Australians who did get vaccinated.

## Ronaldo back in Man Utd training

Portuguese forward could be involved in club's Europa League match against Sheriff Tiraspol on Thursday

MANCHESTER: Cristiano Ronaldo returned to first-team training with Manchester United for the first time on Tuesday since his refusal to come on as a substitute against Tottenham last week.

The Portuguese was left out of United's squad for Saturday's 1-1 draw at Chelsea and did individual training with fitness coaches on Friday.

But Ronaldo's return to the group hints he could be involved for Thursday's visit of Sheriff Tiraspol in the Europa League.

Erik ten Hag and Ronaldo have reportedly been in dialogue since the former



Ajax boss took the decision to omit the five-time Ballon d'Or winner.

Ronaldo had also earned a rebuke from Ten Hag in pre-season for leaving Old Trafford after being substituted at half-time of a friendly against Rayo Vallecano.

measure which I don't like it because I prefer the squad with Cristiano on board.

"It's not about (showing who is in charge). It's about the club. I have to take decisions in the interests of the club and the team especially. That's my job."

Ronaldo blamed his refusal to come on in what was widely considered United's best performance under Ten Hag as Spurs were swept aside 2-0 as a "heat of the moment" decision.

"This is Manchester United, and united we must stand," Ronaldo posted on Instagram. "Soon we'll be together again."

"There has to be consequences for behaviour or when it's bad behaviour and it's the second time, then you can't let it go because otherwise it is going to be miserable for the future," said Ten Hag last week.

"Then you have to take this