



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
ابو ہریرہ رضی اللہ عنہ بیان کرتے ہیں کہ
رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا ایک
عمر کے بعد دوسرا عمر دونوں کے درمیان
کے گناہوں کا تقاضا ہے اور حج ہر دو کی جزا
جنت کے سوا اور کچھ نہیں ہے۔
(بخاری، حدیث نمبر 1773)

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RAWALPINDI

UK PM Sunak makes surprise trip to Kyiv, boosts air defenses

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said during unannounced visit to Kyiv, "Your homes, your hospitals, your power stations are being destroyed." Sunak said in announcing the new air-defense package. "You and your people are paying a heavy price in blood."
(Report on Page 5)



'Green Alliance' to revolutionize agri-sector, cements Pak-US bonds

"The recent momentum in Pak-US relations has opened up vistas of opportunities in furthering Pak-US cooperation in critical areas including agriculture sector," said Pak Ambassador to the United States Masood Khan. "Pak-US 'Green Alliance' can potentially serve to revolutionize agriculture sector of Pakistan with the help of US expertise and would also significantly help in cementing the goodwill created between the two countries."

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Negligence

KARACHI: A view of name plate of M.A. Jinnah Road in front of K.M.C head office throwing ink from unknown persons needs the attention for concerned authorities in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

COAS pays farewell visit to various setups of Army Medical Corps



Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa visited various setups of Army Medical Corps on Saturday.

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Surgeon General Pakistan Army Lieutenant General Nigar Johar accompanied COAS during the visit.

The COAS visited Combined Military Hospital Rawalpindi and was briefed by Commandant CMH Major General Muhammad Mohsin Qureshi regarding state of the art newly up graded healthcare facilities.

The COAS was briefed that medical care has been planned as per international best practices and patient care is the focus of hospital administration. Special counters have been established for facilitating civilian/non entitled patients as well. Efforts are being made to provide patient friendly environment and provide allied facilities for patients attendants.

The Army Chief was also shown newly established control room to impart training to doctors through live surgery process in Academic Centre, designed and established to facilitate medical students for better understanding of surgical procedures.

The COAS appreciated the efforts of Army Medical Corps which is providing quality

health care and state of the art rehabilitation services to members of the armed forces, their families and civilian patients.

Amongst other facilities, Shuhada Families and veterans Medical facilitation Centre provides disruption free basic healthcare facilities including blood sampling, medicines and checkup to families of martyrs and senior veterans up to the age of 75 years. The up graded Pharmacy is now entertaining 3000 patients daily. He also laid the foundation stone of new training block of Armed Forces Post Graduate Institute.

Later COAS visited newly constructed Soldiers guestrooms, newly established Army Help Centre and upgraded facilities of Armed Forces Institute of Cardiology.

General Qamar Javed Bajwa appreciated the doctors and healthcare professionals of AMC for their selfless devotion to duty and monumental work. Lauding the immense improvements being incorporated in healthcare infrastructure COAS said that quality healthcare for soldiers and their families is a cardinal feature of Army's welfare regime and critical for morale of troops.

Earlier on arrival at CMH, COAS was received by Commander Rawalpindi Corps Lieutenant General Sahir Shamshad Mirza.

Pakistan never defaults on its international payments. Dar

ISLAMABAD: Minister of Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar Saturday ruled out any prospects of Pakistan being on verge of default over its international payments and reiterated that it would never come close to it as it was committed to making all its payments on time without any delay.

In a video message, he strongly rejected the baseless and irresponsible statements and rumors about the country's economy, saying that the government had arranged all international payments for the next one year.

The Finance Minister said that for the past few days, baseless and irresponsible rumors had been circulating about the country's economy just for the political



objectives.

When these rumors were spread through social media and various sources, it not only affected Pakistan's economy and economic interests, but also impacted the affairs and transactions with their bilateral and multilateral partners,

he opined.

The Finance Minister said that rumors were being spread that Pakistan would not be able to pay \$1 billion sovereign bond (sukuk) in December. "This is baseless and contrary to facts, Pakistan has never defaulted on its inter-

national payments and will never come close to it," he maintained. Rumors are also being spread about Pakistan's credit default swap, he said, adding that they had their own ambitions and formula with regard to credit default swap, this was a baseless thing and the speculations in this regard should be stopped.

The Finance Minister said that rumors were making rounds about the petroleum products which were also fake. Pakistan has reserves of petroleum products according to the country's need and demand and there is no need for worry, he added.

Apart from disturbing the public, such rumors also created concern in the financial and international institutions and they sent

questions, which not only harmed the efforts for economic interests but also wasted time, he further said.

Ishaq Dar said that there were still rumors about the current account deficit. The current accounts are being closely monitored, professionally managed and well managed, he told and added that the current account deficit was \$316 million in September, which was expected to be \$400 million in October. "That is, by the end of the financial year, the current account deficit is likely to be 5 to 6 billion dollars, while the target of this deficit for the current financial year is 12 billion dollars. The current account deficit is expected to remain below target," he added. APP

Referring to Imran Khan's statements regarding the appointment of new army chief, Atta Tarar said that Imran Khan tried to make an issue out of it; he tried his best to make this appointment controversial, but failed.

Referring to Imran ousted from office, he said, Khan was unable to digest the end of his power after abandoning his allies. Imran was disappointed when his political management has failed, he added.

Sofia Mirza takes to LHC against ex-husband Umer Farooq

LAHORE: The reported buyer of the luxury watch from Tosha Khana, Umer Farooq Zahoor's ex-wife Sofia Mirza has taken to the Lahore High Court (LHC) against harassment by Zahoor, ARY News reported.

According to details, Umer Farooq Zahoor's ex-wife has filed an application in the LHC against him. Inspector General Punjab, Capital City Police officer (CCPO) Lahore, and Director General (DG) Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) have been named as parties by Sofia Mirza.

In the application, Sofia Mirza said that Umer Farooq has filed a case in the Secretariat station using his influence. There are six applications filed against Umer over custody of their daughters, she said in the application. ARY

Discussion on early elections is off the table: Atta Tarar

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) Attallah Tarar on Saturday said the unconstitutional demand of early elections was not being discussed at any level, and it's off the table.

Talking to a private news channel, SAPM said that there was a working relationship with the President, which was necessary for the functioning of the state, the rest of the backdoor talks were mere gossips.

Referring new army chief



appointment, he said the appointment was not a political matter, nor should it be a matter of politics. It will be purely on merit remaining in the bonds of Constitution and

rules of business, he asserted.

Criticizing Imran Khan's statements regarding the appointment of new army chief, Atta Tarar said that Imran Khan tried to make an issue out of it; he tried his best to make this appointment controversial, but failed.

Referring to Imran ousted from office, he said, Khan was unable to digest the end of his power after abandoning his allies. Imran was disappointed when his political management has failed, he added.

Pakistan communicates with Russia to procure cheap oil, gas

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Saturday communicated with Russia to procure cheap oil and gas.

Sources privy to the matter said that in this regard, the foreign ministry and petroleum ministry started to communicate - via letters - with Russia. The author-

ities have expressed their interest to the Russian administration in buying cheap oil and gas, but have put up the condition of not imposing any sort of restrictions on Pakistan, according to the sources.

The sources further said, a Pakistani delegation is ready to visit

Russia - if invited - and to hold talks about purchasing cheap oil and gas - merely by considering national interests. Pakistan has also pledged not to violate any global treaties in this regard - purchasing oil and gas. Dunya News

Money laundering

Court adjourns hearing against PM Shehbaz Sharif



ISLAMABAD: The Special Court (Central) Lahore adjourned the hearing against 14 accused employees in Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his family's money laundering case. As per details, the court adjourned the hearing without any hearing due to the absence of the judge till January 7. Muhammad Usman and 13 other employees accused of facilitating Sharif family in alleged money laundering have filed an acquittal plea in the special court (central). It is pertinent to note that Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) President and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his son Hamza Shehbaz have been already acquitted in money laundering case.

President condoles over death of Mufti Rafi Usmani

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Saturday, in a telephone conversation with Mufti Taqi Usmani, expressed condolence over the death of Mufti Rafi Usmani.

The president prayed for the high ranks of the departed soul and for the bereaved family to bear the loss with fortitude.

He also paid tribute to the religious and scholarly contributions of late Mufti Rafi

Usmani, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release.

Mufti Rafi Usmani, a renowned Islamic cleric, scholar and patron of Darul Uloom, passed away on Friday in Karachi after a prolonged illness. He was 86.

He was also the elder brother of Wafaqul Madaris Al Arabia Pakistan, President, Mufti Taqi Usmani.

Bilawal grieved over demise of Mufti Usmani

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Chairman of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has expressed his grief and sorrow over the death of Mufti Mohammed Rafi Usmani, here on Saturday.

He said that the country had lost a moderate religious leader.

The PPP chairman said that the deceased efforts for inter-faith harmony and tolerance could not be forgotten.

He also prayed for his higher place in Jannah.

PTI long march

Fawad says Khan to issue call for Rawalpindi

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Fawad Chaudhry said that PTI Chairman and former Prime Minister Imran Khan will issue the call for Rawalpindi long march today (Saturday).

In a tweet on Saturday, the PTI leader shared that

the second phase of the long march will enter Rawalpindi after moving through Rawat.

He added that PTI leaders Shah Mahmood Qureshi and Asad Ullah led this extraordinary movement and the two caravans will join at Rawat.

"Be prepared as the last phase is about to begin," he urged the public.

Inauguration of new office

ISLAMABAD: First Lady Begum Samina Alvi viewing displays of various women-created products, including shirts, jackets, shawls and homewares, at the new office of Indus Heritage Trust – a non-profit organisation engaged in preserving and promoting the country's heritage of arts and crafts on Saturday.



Photo: Online

First lady inaugurates facility to promote artisans' works, empower women

ISLAMABAD: First Lady Samina Alvi on Saturday inaugurated a facility here aimed at preserving and promoting Pakistan's rich cultural heritage and supporting the women artisans from various parts of the country.

The first lady inaugurated the new office of Indus Heritage Trust – a non-profit organisation engaged in preserving and promoting the country's heritage of arts and crafts while empowering the communities.

The facility marked the display of various women-created products including shirts, jackets, shawls, jewellery and



bags besides home wares including embroidered cushions, mats and tea cozies.

First lady inaugurates facility

to promote artisans' works, empower women. The first lady took a round of the new office and appreciated the skills of

the artisans which she believed would also help financially empower the women, particularly those living in the backward communities.

Supporting a network of around 5,000 women in Sindh, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the IHT is working to enhance and strengthen the skills of artisans to help them create high-quality handcrafted products and to create a sustainable future for rural communities.

The first lady also cut a cake to mark the occasion and wished the organisation to achieve more milestones by enhancing its

outreach to more women.

Women from different walks of life including business and diplomatic corps attended the event and took a keen interest in the handcrafted products.

Talking to APP, the IHT Chairperson Siddiqa Saeed Malik said the Trust was serving to empower and skill train the women and lauded the first lady's devotion to support the cause.

She said whether it was the 2022 floods or those of 2010, or any other calamities, the IHT supported the distressed women by guiding them to business opportunities. PID

BISP completes 97% cash relief disbursement among flood affectees: Kundi



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Faisal Karim Kundi has said that over ninety-seven percent of the flood-affected population has so far been provided with financial assistance.

Addressing a press conference here on Saturday, he said that an amount of Rs 25,000 per family is being provided to the flood-affected families in a transparent way, and out of 2,759,601 families 2,687,926 have received financial assistance. He reaffirmed the government's strong commitment to fully rehabilitate the

flood-affected people

He said Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) is planning to launch a dynamic survey from 15 December to register more deserving families affected recently by devastating floods.

He said an MOU in this regard has been signed with National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA). He said beneficiaries of BISP are 8.2 million which would rise to around nine million after this survey.

He said world leaders have acknowledged the positive role of Pakistan during Sharm El-Sheikh Climate Change Conference.

Muqam condemns police baton charge against health technicians



PESHAWAR: Adviser to the Prime Minister and provincial President Pakistan Muslim League-N, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Engr Amir Muqam here Saturday strongly condemned the police baton charge and torture under the patronage of the provincial government against health technicians, who were peacefully protesting for their rights.

In a statement here, the PML-N leader said that provincial government has all the financial resources for running of the helicopter like rickshaw and billions of rupees for spreading lies through social media

but it has no funds in exchequer for salaries of its employees.

He demanded immediate release of all the detained and arrested health technicians and restoration of services of over 1,000 health technicians besides quick release of their year long stopped salaries.

Muqam alleged that PTI Government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa after destroying the economy has started harassment of employees upon protesting for their genuine demands, adding statements of the PTI leaders and practical work were two separate things.

COAS's appointment, a prerogative of PM: FM

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister and Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Saturday said that under relevant procedure and laws, the appointment of the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) was a prerogative of the incumbent prime minister whereas Imran Khan was trying to make the whole process controversial, which would not be allowed.

Addressing a news conference here, the foreign minister said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chief wanted to link his politics with the appointment process of the new army chief.

Imran Khan thought about himself only and did not care for the entire country suffering from the consequences of his petty politics, Bilawal regretted.

"Why did you choose Rawal-

pindi? Khan sahib let this decision (appointment of COAS) happen," he said and suggested to PTI's chief to postpone his long march for the time being.

The foreign minister said the previous PTI's government had damaged country's foreign policy, economy and democratic set up and now Imran Khan only wanted to create political instability which would be strongly resisted.

He said that during International Monetary Fund agreement, Imran Khan had attacked Islamabad, which was foiled. Now all the democratic forces in the country were united and the PTI chief would not be allowed playing such like past tactics, he added.

Pakistan and its people could no longer bear any crises, he maintained.



The foreign minister said peaceful demonstration was a democratic right, but no unconstitutional or undemocratic tactics could be allowed and reiterated that Pakistan Peoples Party would play its democratic role as it had manifested in the past by resisting all the undemocratic moves.

"Khan sahib wants to stop institutions playing their democratic role. He wants to make undemocratic moves, but we will not allow him," he added.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that the parliamentary parties had played a very democratic role to oust the government of Imran Khan through a vote of no confidence.

The foreign minister said that Imran Khan had always

carried out his politics on the shoulders of undemocratic forces.

He said the future of a politician like Imran Khan was linked with making institutions controversial.

If Imran Khan wanted a real freedom, then why did he wait for this week for his political objectives? the foreign minister questioned.

Bilawal said the appointment of the new army chief was an administrative decision and its completion would end the politics of Imran Khan.

Bilawal said the entire world was facing economic disaster due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Imran Khan's decisions had damaged Pakistan's ties with the countries in the Middle East, Europe and the US, he added. APP

Highlighting Afghanistan's humanitarian crisis, Pakistan calls for reviving Afghan economy

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan has called for steps to end the deepening humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, saying that the country's economy should be revived as a matter of priority.

"Our priority, first and foremost, is an end to the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan," Ambassador Munir Akram told the United Nations Security Council "Arria-Fomula" meeting, while asserting that peace and stability in that neighbouring country was of "vital concern" to Pakistan.

Russia convened the meeting on "Preventing economic collapse and exploring prospects for recovery and development in Afghanistan" under the format of Arria formula, which is named after a former Venezuelan UN ambassador, Diego Arriva. It is a very informal consultation process which affords the 15-member Council the opportunity to hear persons in a confidential, informal setting.

In his remarks, the Pakistani envoy urged the international community to fulfill the UN Secretary-General's appeal for \$4.2 billion in humanitar-

ian assistance to Afghanistan.

"We need to revive the Afghan economy – its banking system – and for that purpose the Afghan assets which are held abroad need to be injected back into the Afghan financial system," Ambassador Akram said, suggesting a "pragmatic approach" in dealing with Afghanistan.

The United States froze the \$7 billion of Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB) assets held in the US after the Taliban regained power in August 2021. The US has not recognized the Taliban as Afghanistan's government, but it has held talks with the Taliban over unfreezing the assets.

"We know all the legal arguments about holding these resources back and why and wherefore," the Pakistani envoy said. "But you need a roadmap to see how to rebuild the Afghan economy," he said, noting that the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) was giving careful thought as to how to accomplish the task of injecting the Afghan assets held abroad into the country's system without violating the norms and principles.



If the humanitarian crisis does not end, apart from the massive suffering of the 95% of the Afghan people, Ambassador Akram said there would be another flow of refugees that Pakistan or any of Afghanistan's other neighbors would be able to accommodate. On its part, Pakistan has hosted over 3 million Afghan refugees for 40 plus years.

"So we need to deal with the humanitarian situation; we need to revive the

Afghan economy," he said, as he thanked those assisting Afghanistan in response to the Secretary-General's humanitarian programme.

Apart from stability, peace and the economic revival, Ambassador Akram also said that Pakistan was concerned with terrorism emanating from Afghanistan. "We are still suffering attacks from across the border from the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which receives

sponsorship from other sources," he said, noting that Al Qaeda was a shadow of its past.

"The real threat comes from Da'esh and from TTP," he said, adding that Pakistan's efforts to deal with them have been difficult. "Even as a closest neighbour of Afghanistan, with shared culture and history, we still have difficulty in dealing with them because there are other factors at play and we know what they are."

As for the rights of women and inclusivity, Pakistan totally subscribes to the aspirations and desires of the international community. "But," he said, "one also has to see the reality of Afghan society, of what is Afghanistan."

The Pakistani envoy then posed questions: "In twenty years when the foreign forces were there and democracy was sought to be fostered, how democratic were those elections? How many women and girls in Afghanistan were able to enjoy the rights that we saw on the television screens in Kabul, in Mazar-e-Sharif?"

The rural areas of Afghanistan had

not changed, he said, adding that women were still in the same plight that they've had for centuries. "Yes, we must promote their rights. We must defend their rights. We must stop the backward policies that the Taliban have implemented," the ambassador said. "But also, let us not see it as black and white. It is much more nuanced, the situation and we have to work with the Afghan society and the OIC countries are working."

What was needed was persuasion, engagement and dialogue with the Taliban in an effort to change their policies because their ideological polity was rooted in culture, and he called for adopting a "realistic approach."

"It must be an approach of engagement, rather than isolation and coercion, because we have seen that 20 years of coercion did not work," Ambassador Akram said, adding that isolation would not work either.

"We need engagement and I hope that the international community will come around to the fact that engagement is what is necessary." APP

KSBL celebrates its 6th commencement ceremony

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The Graduation Ceremony of the MBA, Executive MBA and MS Business Analytics programs of the Karachi School of Business and Leadership (KSBL) was held recently. KSBL celebrated its Commencement Ceremony in the backdrop of 10 Year Celebration for the institution.

Mr. Hussain Dawood, Founder & Chairman, KSBL; members of the Board of Governors of KSBL, members of the Board of Trustees, graduates and their parents, and members of the faculty celebrated the momentous occasion.

Mr. Hussain Dawood congratulated the attendees on this defining moment of celebration.

He further encouraged the graduates to keep learning and remain



humble in their future endeavours. Recognizing the accomplish-

ments of students and encouraging them to give back to the society, the keynote speaker Dr. Abdul Bari Khan, Founder and CEO of Indus Hospital & Health Network shared his lifelong journey of philanthropy and humanitarianism.

Mr. Mubashar Hameed, Rector & CEO, KSBL congratulated all the graduates and said "I share the pride on the accomplishments of our graduating students, your excitement at being a part of this celebration, and your joy at the prospects that lie ahead.

Your alma mater is always looking forward to support your ambitions of taking the next step.

You are the future of Pakistan, and we are confident that we have prepared you to be shining examples of true leadership."

The mosque has great importance and greatness in Islam: Chairman FESCO



FAISALABAD The Chairman FESCO Board of Directors Malik Tahseen Awan inaugurates and construction of Mosque at FESCO colony.

Mian Rashid Asghar.

FAISALABAD: The mosque has great importance and greatness in Islam; mosque is a place where Muslim pays their religious obligations said, Chairman Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) Board of Directors (BODs) Malik Tahsin Awan, he was addressing the grand ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the mosque at FESCO Headquarters Colony here today. Former MNA Haji Akram Ansari, Board Director Iftikhar Ahmad Ansari, General Manager Operation Nazam Muhammad Dub, Chief Engineer Operation Muhammad Nawaz, Staff Officer Abid Rasheed and others were also present on the occasion.

Chairman BOD FESCO said that the mosque teaches equality that all people in the world are equal. He further said that no effort will be spared for the welfare of FESCO staff. The space for worshippers in the first mosque was reduced due to which the construction of the new mosque has been started, the construction of this mosque will provide better facilities to the employees and they will be able to perform their prayers and worship in a better way, he added. He further said that the mosque teaches purity, cleanliness, punctuality and orderliness of life. Chairman Board Malik Tahsin Awan directed the civil works directorate to construct the mosque as soon as possible and said that the best materials should be used in the construction of the mosque and special attention should be paid to its beauty.

More than 30,000 poultry farms would be closed down

Mian Rashid Asghar.

FAISALABAD: More than 30,000 poultry farms would be closed down within the next couple of weeks if 1, 30, 000 ton imported soybean seed was not released on an emergent basis, said Dr. Khurram Tariq President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI). Talking to a delegation of poultry farmers, he said that soybean is an important ingredient of poultry feed and animal meal. "The feed mills have imported soybean worth Rs. 22 billion which is laying under open sky at Karachi port", he said and added that the concerned authorities are not releasing this consignment which may create acute shortage of poultry meat and eggs in the country. He said that this action may also have a negative impact on the investment of over Rs. 12 billion in this sector. He said that foreign investors were also interested in this field but this action may discourage them which would also have a trickle down effect on other segments of the economy. Dr. Khurram Tariq said that 1.5 million people are directly linked with this sector which would lose their job if this consignment was not released urgently.



Pakistan-made Rooh Afza neither sells or advertises to the Indian market

Bureau Staff

KARACHI: Hamdard Pakistan in an official statement released on Friday has categorically stated that Hamdard Pakistan neither sells nor advertises Pakistan-made Rooh Afza to the Indian market as HP does not have statutory rights on the trademark of Rooh Afza in India. The statement was released in response to the decision of India to remove Pakistan-made Rooh Afza from the list of an international e-commerce outlet operating in India, followed by the spread of fake news and misleading propaganda on social media that this verdict has somehow hurt the business interests of Hamdard Pakistan in the region.

Sindhi culture

HYDERABAD: Students wear traditional colorful dresses present culture during National Conference "Books written in Sindhi Language for Children" at Sindhi Language Authority in the city.



Photo: Online

12th Fire Safety & Security Convention on November 23

News Desk

KARACHI: National Forum for Environment & Health (NFEH) in collaboration with the Fire Protection Industry of Pakistan (FPIP) is organizing the 12th Fire Safety & Security Convention on November 23, 2022.

Governor Sindh M. Kamran Tessori & Sindh Minister for Local Government Syed Nasir Hussain Shah have been invited as chief guest on the occasion.

Engr. Nadeem Ashraf, project head of the event while briefing newsmen about the objectives of the convention said that the convention is aimed at promotion of fire safety and security awareness among all the industries, corporate sector, builders, owners of commercial building, NGOs, fire safety

and security professionals.

More than 50 companies will be given awards on the occasion through a stringent evaluation criterion devised purely on a professional basis. The objective of Fire safety awards is to recognize companies for their best efforts, investment, training, awareness and use of modern technology to control fire accidents and save human lives in such incidents, he added.

Ashraf informed newsmen that the relevant experts and professionals from industries who will address the convention include Dr. Imran Taj, President - Fire Protection Industry of Pakistan (FPIP), Muhammad Naem Qureshi, President National Forum for Environment & Health (NFEH) and Chairman Organizing Committee, Mr. Khalid Latif, HSE Trainer and

Consultant, Topic: Behavior Base Safety, Mr. Rashid Mehboob, EHS Manager, Quaid e Azam Thermal Power, Ms. Zulekha Soorma, HSE Lead Auditor, Mr. Naveed Anjum, International Advance Member NFPA (USA), Mr. Saeed Jadoon, Fire Expert, Mr. Faraz ur Rehman, President, Korangi Association of Trade and Industry (KATI), Mr. Riaz Uddin, President, SITE Association of Industry, Mr. Mohsin Shaikhani, Patron, Association of Builders and Developers Pakistan (ABAD), Mr. Mobeen Ahmed, Ex Fire Chief, Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC), Mr. Naem Yusuf, Disaster Management Expert, Engr. Nadeem Ashraf, Project Head AFSSC and Vice President, National Forum for Environment and Health, Activists and others.

HEC Recognizes Pakistan's First Entrepreneurial Extreme Commerce College

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Prioritizing entrepreneurship as one of the most important faculties to secure the future of Pakistani youth, the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) has recognized the country's first Entrepreneurial Higher Education Institute, Extreme Commerce College.

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) through its notification No. 14(131)/A&A/Acc/HEC-2022 has officially recognised the Extreme Commerce College (ECC) and its qualifications. Through this, the students of ECC will benefit from nationally recognised international qualifications. This recognition enhances opportunities and gateways available to students.

With the aim of bridging gaps in academic knowledge and a successful professional career, Extreme Commerce College was established with the aim to provide a nurturing environment for the Pakistani students and youthful workforce to develop an entrepreneurial and innovative mindset, thus encouraging them to realize their full potential. The college inculcates educating oneself while earning and getting empowered. This is achieved by harnessing skilled based learning and qualifications. Being the pioneer entrepreneurial higher educational institute (HEI) in the country, ECC offers complementary incubation plus e-commerce structured training to all students throughout their stay at college. The college also offers practical and experiential learning opportunities to the students, where industry practitioners and entrepreneurs are available to share their knowledge of the digital ecosystem. The visionary leadership at Extreme Commerce was able to spot the tremendous national potential that lies in the human capital and has been working tirelessly towards their vision of making Pakistan the global hub for back-office and technical services for the global e-commerce markets.

Sevak - The Confessions, all-set to shake audiences from 26/11 Eight Stories, One Crime

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: OTT (Over The Top) platform Vidlytv releases the trailer for 'Sevak: The Confessions', an original action thriller web series based on true stories, which is all-set to enthrall its audiences from November 26.

Vidlytv hails this series as a story of intrigue and nail-biting suspense that is inspired by true events. The recently released trailer of this series already has shaken its audiences with a big bang. The star cast of this series include Mohsin Abbas, Hajira Yamin, Nazarul Hassan, Nayyar Ejaz, Adnan Jaffar and many others. The series is brought to life by the amazing duo of the legendary writer Saji Gul



and the renowned director Anjum Shahzad. The phone rings and gunshots pick up. From the opening scene this eloquently stylized espionage thriller draws on a strong plot and uber talent of the cast to deliver an elevated historical action series, never seen before.

It builds on the philosophy that when a hero is born his "rakshas" (demon) is born

on the same day. The trailer hints on stories about family loyalties, deceit, terror, and crime. There is hatred, there is anger, there is action, there is romance. The series explores and reveals the true antagonists behind the events of a revolution that leaves the audience with an urge to know the full story.

Three tracks and eight stories intertwined with scintillating murder, mystery and

espionage, Sevak is based on a keenly woven tale of terror and deceit, which intends to thrill its viewers with action and suspense in a time travel set within the backdrop of true events between 1984 and 2022.

This historical action thriller revolves around a true story of an assassin that follows the journey of Vidya, a journalist, in a quest to find out the truth behind the film star Jeet Singh's death. She is aided by Mannu, a key informant.

In the midst of all the action, thrill, suspense, mystery and espionage, this series showcases a melodious and romantic love affair of the two protagonists that is nonetheless parallel to a roller-coaster ride.

Public peace movement announced to present Plan B after Nov 23 to maintain peace



Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: Addressing a press conference at District Press Club Wana, leaders of all political parties from Lower Waziristan, senior leader Noor Zaman Wazir from ANP, Imran Mukhlis from PPP, Shah Zada Wazir from PTM, JI district president Nadeem Wazir, Ashfaq Wazir from Pakhtunkhwa Map, social activist Iqbal Lala, Ajmal Advocate and other said,

Today the delegation of Wana Olasi Pason/ Public peace movement held a long consultation with the scholars regarding peace and order in which every aspect regarding peace and order was discussed.

However, there will be another sit-in with the Ullama on November

23, after which "Oalsi Pason" / Public peace movement will present Plan B.

Addressing the press conference, they said that Waziristan "Oalsi Pason" has postponed Plan B till 23rd.

During this time, Wana "Olsi Pachon" will continue to consult with scholars/Ullamas and people of every school of thought regarding peace and law and order situation.

Plan B will be announced on 23rd. Wana "Olsi Pason" strongly demands from the government and civil administration that maintaining law and order is the responsibility of state institutions and civil administration.

Therefore, the state institutions and civil administration should fulfill their constitutional and legal responsibility in maintaining peace and order.

Islamabad
15° - 23° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	5:16 am
Zohr	11:53 am
Asr	3:25 pm
Maghrib	5:03 pm
Isha	6:29 pm

EMERGENCY

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

ENQUIRY

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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
Cantonment 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

CM Elahi heaps praise on COAS Bajwa for his religious services

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi on Saturday heaped praise on Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa for rendering religious services.

Addressing the participants of an event, CM Pervaiz Elahi said COAS Qamar Javed Bajwa has rendered – the biggest – religious services by playing a significant role in lifting the ban on Tableeghi Jamaat in Saudi Arabia. “After the ban was imposed on Tableeghi Jamaat, I requested COAS Qamar Javed Bajwa to talk with Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman, after Qamar Javed Bajwa requested Muhammad Bin Salman – over the matter – on which Muhammad Bin Salman agreed. Commending former premier



Imran Khan and his party for rendering religious services, CM Elahi said that the decision of providing Nazra Quran education to the students, helped Imran and the PTI – a great deal. Highlighting the importance of Tableeghi Jamaat, CM Elahi

said that Tableeghi Jamaat is a ‘real face’ of the Islamic world, but sadly with due to some people, the positive image of Muslims – was misrepresented. Saying that he adores the word ‘Raiwind’, CM Elahi stated, “In my first tenure, I constructed a mosque – with a

capacity of 30,000”. CM Elahi also vowed to achieve the target – of completing the development projects in Raiwind – by March, as Elahi asked the concerned departments to active ‘from onwards’ in this regard. The Punjab CM also announced to establish the center of the Rescue 1122 for the safety of the masses – living in the area of Raiwind.

Expressing his thoughts on the participants of Tableeghi Jamaat, CM Elahi said, “They are our guests and we will leave no stone unturned to take care of them. We have decided to upgrade and expand the infrastructure for the convenience of the participants of Tableeghi Jamaat in Raiwind”. (Dunya News)

Draw of Gilgit Manawar Housing Project



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: A meeting was held for the draw of Gilgit Manawar Housing Project in Pakistan Housing Authority under the Ministry of Housing and Works. This meeting was chaired by Federal Minister for Housing and Works Maulana Abdul Wasay. Meeting was also attended by Federal Secretary of Ministry of Housing and Works.

Chief Executive Officer Muhammad Shahid Hussain and other officers of PHA were also present in the meeting. The Draws process was done in a computerized System. The said housing project will be built in Gilgit Manawar on an area of 130 kanals in which 704 flats will be built. These flats will be allotted to Government of Gilgit Baltistan. Employees, Federal Government employees and general public under the Project. The project will be completed in five years.

Lightstone publishers Launched latest book

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: A Launch of the latest book published by Lightstone Publishers was held in Karachi at the residence of Mr Farooq Hasan on 19 November 2022.

Ameena Saiyid OBE, S.I. MD, Lightstone Publishers introduced the Author, Anja Caspary, who participated in the event virtually from Germany, and the Translator, CLAUDIA ARNOLD, who was present at the event.

From My Wounded Heart with Love is an open and honest personal narrative on love, amputated breasts, cancer and the loss of a loved one. In her autobiographical book, Anja Caspary writes on how life can continue when faced with losing her husband to illness just when she had beaten cancer after battling with its challenges and torments and how love transcends death. To quote her,

“I experienced with my own body that it is possible to get on with life in the worst of circumstances. Those who give up cheat themselves. Beautiful moments remain.”

Claudia Arnold has translated the book in its every nuance in beautiful prose befitting the inspiring story and conveying succinctly the mood and feelings of the author.

The book has been endorsed by Dr Azra Raza, Oncologist and Professor of Medicine at Columbia University, New York, Naila Mahmood, visual artist, photographer, writer and educator, and Nadeem F Paracha, author.

The guests present were welcomed by the host, Mr Farooq Hasan. The speakers were introduced by Ameena Saiyid. Anja Caspary spoke online from Germany followed by Reading from and Discussion on the book by Naila Mahmood, Rasha Tarek and Nadia Ghani.

Claudia Arnold and Ravi Mahmood read from the book and it was signed by Claudia Arnold.

A large number of guests were present.

Harmony only way to counter political instability: Shahid Khaqan Abbasi

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on Saturday said that as a nation “we have much bigger issues to address”, urging all the stakeholders including political leaders to think only for the country.

Talking to a private news channel, Shahid Khaqan said the country requires harmony, also believing that the country could not move ahead due to instability.

How would any government focus on real issues when people were on the streets and political leaders were threatening to attack the federation, he questioned.

State institution like NAB, when used for political victimization, was the root cause of political turmoil and instability, he claimed.

Referring to the army chief’s appointment, he said the prime minister had the prerogative to appoint the new COAS.

Criticizing PTI’s economic policies in its tenure, Khaqan Abbasi said, “Khan’s former government has brought the country to the verge of bankruptcy”.

“How ridiculous by Imran Khan to criticize the economic situation after the mess they [PTI] created in four-year tenure,” he added.

“Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) had paid the political cost in bringing economic stability, besides losing political capital,” he conceded.

Mariyum grieved over death of famous comedian Tariq Teddy

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb on Saturday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the death of well-known comedian Tariq Teddy.



Tariq Teddy played brilliant roles in stage plays and Punjabi films, bringing smiles on the faces of audience with his humour and artistry, she said in a statement.

The minister said that Tariq Teddy had left this world leaving his fans sad. She said his absence would be felt for a long time in the field of drama and films.

She prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear this loss with fortitude.

May Allah grant the deceased a place in mercy and give patience to all the bereaved, Ameen.



ISLAMABAD: G7 Markaz Traders Election Shaheen Tajir Itehad Group won unopposed today for next 3 years, Ch Abaidullah Chairman congrats all traders and panel.

Loading sugarcane

ISLAMABAD: An old laborer busy in loading sugar-canes into loading vehicle at Fruit and Vegetable Market in Sector I-II in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

IG Islamabad requests deployment of federal agencies on roads leading to the airport

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal capital’s Inspector General of Police (IGP) on Saturday submitted a report in Islamabad High Court (IHC) on protest and long march by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and recommended seeking financial guarantees from PTI.

In the detailed report submitted to the high court, IG Islamabad said that PTI violated the agreement during previous march and the inflammatory statements of Ali Amin Gandapur and other PTI leaders are also part of the report.

The report further states that a PTI leader threatened the Interior Minister while Sheikh Rashid and Faisal Vawda have said that the long march could become bloody



and even Chairman PTI himself admitted that some of his people are armed.

The capital police chief further said that the Supreme Court has made it clear that

the right to assembly cannot be used to send a legal government packing.

It has been requested by IG Islamabad that federal agencies should be deployed on the

roads leading to the airport.

The report further states that if the PTI gives the required guarantee, there will be no need to even block the roads with containers.

ECP completes preparations for general elections: sources

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has completed its preparations for the next general elections, AYR News reported on Saturday, citing sources.

According to details, the electoral watchdog completed its preparations for the next general elections and acquired non-sensitive material and papers for ballot papers.

Sources told ARY News that printing of material was being carried out while delimitations of constituencies have been completed. The ECP has also updated the electoral lists and prepared the data of polling staff, sources claimed.



Sources also claimed that data regarding polling stations has also been prepared, adding that preparation of election staff training has also completed. “Lists of returning officers (ROs) and Deputy ROs have also been prepared,” they added.

However, the appointments of ROs and DROs will be

announced before the elections. The ECP has also prepared Plan A and Plan B for the polls. The ECP has summoned an general meeting related to general elections on November 22.

All provincial election commissioners and wings have been summoned to the meeting. The participants of the meeting

would be apprised of the preparations. Informed sources in the electoral watchdog said that the body was fully prepared for the polls.

Earlier in the day, it was reported that the Election commission of Pakistan decided to accelerate preparations for the next general elections.

According to details, the election commission has asked the provincial government to submit lists of officers from grade 17 and above.

The ECP sent letters to the chief secretaries of four provinces and sought a list of officers who have good credentials and deserves to be nominated as returning officers for the next general elections.

World Children’s day to be celebrated today

ISLAMABAD: World Children’s Day will be marked on November 20 (Sunday) across the globe including Pakistan to promote international togetherness and awareness among children worldwide.

UNICEF, the United Nations Children’s Fund, promotes and coordinates this special day, which also works towards improving children’s welfare.

The day promotes the welfare of and understanding between children.

The theme for this year’s International Children’s Day is, “Inclusion, for every child”. This theme means that every child belonging to any society, community or nationality is entitled to equal rights. It also emphasizes on the eradication of discrimination among children of various civilizations.

Many schools and other educational institutions make a special effort to inform children of their rights according to the Declaration of the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Teachers stimulate their pupils to think about the differences between themselves and others and explain the idea of “rights”.APP

Margalla Hills Trail 3 Closed After Confirmation of Leopard Sightings

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority on Saturday closed hiking trail 3 of the Margalla hills Islamabad has been closed after sightings of leopards in the area, ARY News reported.

According to the details, the CDA has closed the hiking trail 3 after reports of leopard sightings in the Syedpur area of the capital.

Spokesperson Wildlife Protection Board said the sightings of the leopards in the area have been confirmed and the trail has been closed for public safety.

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Belt and Road promotes global development

Zhai Kun

The report submitted to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China on Oct 16 said that as a collaborative endeavor, the Belt and Road Initiative has been welcomed by the international community both as a public good and a cooperation platform, and that China will promote the high-quality development of the initiative.

As such, the initiative is expected to be further promoted as part of China's opening-up policy and play an ever greater role on the global stage.

As a rising world power, China is more willing and capable of providing public goods for global development, and the Belt and Road Initiative, as a medium of providing those public goods, will play a more important role in five areas.

First, the Belt and Road Initiative aims to promote connectivity across the world, and many countries consider connectivity and infrastructure development as vital drivers of economic recovery in the post-pandemic era. So the initiative will espe-

cially focus on connectivity.

Second, cooperation and exchanges under the Belt and Road Initiative framework have given rise to new technologies, new forms of businesses and new models of trade. And Belt and Road projects will create both opportunities and challenges which have to be cashed in on and overcome through new rules and mechanisms, because the existing global multilateral mechanisms cannot provide full support for the Belt and Road projects.

Third, a large number of seminars, exhibitions, expos and summits on the Belt and Road Initiative will be held globally, helping boost economic development and financial cooperation.

Fourth, the integration of the Belt and Road Initiative and various industries will give rise to new forms of business.

And fifth, the Belt and Road Initiative will propose new plans and projects to drive global economic recovery in the post-pandemic era.

The initiative, which aims to promote global economic cooperation and improve connectivity, follows the principle of realizing shared growth through collaboration, cooperation and

mutual consent, contributing to global governance and helping build a community with a shared future.

In order to expand the cooperation area of the Belt and Road Initiative, China will continue to promote policy

It also integrates China's "dual circulation" development paradigm and the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in a bid to promote regional and global development.

coordination, infrastructure connectivity, open trade, financial integration and people-to-people exchanges. The initiative will also prioritize small, high-standard projects to quickly enhance the sense of gain of the people in Belt and Road partners.

Besides, the initiative will

help develop a new global cooperation model, making greater contributions to global governance and economic globalization.

China has been working with partner economies to promote regional economic development, so that the initiative's commitment to enhancing policy, improving infrastructure, promoting trade, boosting financial cooperation and increasing people-to-people connectivity among countries benefits new models of global economic development and governance.

The Belt and Road Initiative reflects China's people-oriented policy, which is in line with the common interests of the world.

The initiative has institutional guarantee because it has become an important component of China's national development policy, and has helped the country play a bigger role in promoting globalization.

The initiative also follows the spirit of openness and inclusiveness. It is an initiative for peaceful development and economic cooperation rather than a tool to gain geopolitical advantage or build any military alliance. It is a platform promoting open, inclusive and common develop-

ment, not an exclusionary bloc or a "China club". It neither differentiates between countries due to their political systems or the ideology they follow nor believes in zero-sum games. And countries are welcome to join it only if they want to.

The Belt and Road Initiative is a complete development policy because it considers both domestic and international situations, promotes policy coordination, facilitates connectivity and trade, boosts financial integration and deepens people-to-people bonds. It also integrates China's "dual circulation" development paradigm and the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in a bid to promote regional and global development.

The initiative calls for not only infrastructure development but also resource integration around the world. And it takes into account both domestic and international situations, helps safeguard security, and steadfastly forges ahead on the back of cooperation.

The author is a professor of the School of International Studies and deputy director of the Institute of Area Studies at Peking University.

Malaysia votes in general election

Malaysians were voting on Saturday in a general election that may fail to end the recent phase of political instability in the Southeast Asian nation as polls have predicted no clear winner.

Longtime opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim's coalition is forecast to take the most parliamentary seats but fail to seize the majority needed to form a government as he faces off against blocs led by Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob and former premier Muhyiddin Yassin.

Without a clear winner, political uncertainty could persist as Malaysia faces slowing economic growth and rising inflation.

It has had three prime ministers in as many years, including Mahathir Mohamed, who ruled Malaysia for more than two decades during two stints in power, and aged 97 has roused himself for one last fight though he is not considered a leading contender.

If Anwar should clinch the top job, it would cap a remarkable journey for a politician who in 25 years has gone from heir apparent to the premiership to a political prisoner convicted of sodomy to the country's leading opposition figure.

But rival coalitions could cobble together a coalition even if Anwar gets the most votes, and the race is fluid as opinion polls show a significant number of undecided voters.

"Right now, I think things are looking good and we are cautiously confident," Anwar told reporters after casting his vote in the state of Penang.

Ismail said his coalition was targeting a simple majority but would be open to working with others if it failed to do so. His incumbent administration includes Muhyiddin's alliance, though they are contesting the election separately.

Malaysia's 21.1 million eligible voters, including 6 million new ones, will choose 222 lawmakers for the lower house of parliament.

The top issues are the economic outlook and rising inflation, along with corruption as several leaders from the incumbent Barisan Nasional coalition face graft accusations. Malaysians are also frustrated with the political instability that they think has taken politicians' focus off economic development.

"I hope there's a change in the government," Ismat Abdul Rauf, a 64-year-old retiree, told Reuters. "There are many issues that need to be addressed - the economy, the wealth of the country, the people who did wrongdoing who are not being prosecuted."

Anwar's bloc is multiethnic, while the other two prioritise the interests of the ethnic-Malay Muslim majority. Muhyiddin's bloc includes an Islamist party that has touted sharia law.

Opinion polls showed Anwar leading the race. His more than two decades as an opposition figure have included nine years in jail for sodomy and corruption, charges he says were politically motivated.

Independent pollster Merdeka Center forecasted on Friday that Anwar's reformist Pakatan Harapan coalition was on course to take 82 seats, Muhyiddin's Perikatan Nasional alliance at 43 seats, but 45 too close to call.

Ismail's Barisan Nasional coalition, which called the early election hoping to win a stronger mandate, will win 15 seats, Merdeka said, though other surveys have predicted it could take up to 51 seats.



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmi. (Courtesy of Asharq Al-Awsat)

Will early elections resolve the stalemate in Pakistan?

Ahmed Bilal Mehboob

The pivot around which Imran Khan's entire protest movement revolves is the demand for an early general election in Pakistan. General election is the term used for election to the entire National Assembly and the four provincial assemblies which would lead to the election of Prime Minister by the national assembly and the four Chief Ministers by their respective provincial assemblies. The 5-year term of the five assemblies doesn't expire until August next year after which the general election, according to the country's constitution, has to take place within 60 days. This translates into general election taking place eleven months from now—in October next year.

Like in most parliamentary governments, only the Prime Minister has the authority to dissolve the National Assembly at any time during the life of the legislature. A similar constitutional power is enjoyed by the provincial Chief Ministers to dissolve their respective provincial assemblies. In such a case, the Election Commission is supposed to hold elections within 90 days of dissolution of an assembly.

Although Pakistan has been holding national and provincial assemblies elections on or around the same date in the past 10 general elections, there is no constitutional compulsion that the election to national and all provincial assemblies should take place on or around the same date although staggered election to national and provincial legislatures will create serious practical issues and increase the cost of the election.

The bottom line, however, is that it is only the Prime Minister and the Chief minister who have the discretionary powers to dissolve their respective assembly and go for early election. Imran Khan, therefore, can demand early election and create pressure for this purpose but there is no constitutional obligation for the PM to concede to this demand.

Even if the Prime Minister and most of his coalition partners become willing to hold early election, two of the allied parties - PPP and MQM - and PPP's provincial government of Sindh may throw in the spanner because fresh population census which is a hugely emotive issue for Sindh and which was agreed to by the Council of Common Interests (CCI) under the chairmanship of then PM Imran Khan, has not yet been held and it has been recently announced by the federal government that the results of the new census will not be available before the end of April 2023. The Election Commission will require another four months to demarcate the assembly constituencies afresh after the census results become available. Practically, this scenario will result in elections around September or October 2023.

Another question is whether the PPP will be ready to sacrifice 11 months of its mandated rule in Sindh province by dissolving the Sindh Assembly for an early election. It is also not clear whether Imran Khan will be ready to dissolve the provincial assemblies of Punjab and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa to hold their fresh election along with the National Assembly election.

Even if all these hurdles are overcome and an early general election is held, it is highly unlikely that the current stalemate will be resolved. Imran Khan and his party has

repeatedly levelled extremely serious charges against the 5-member Election Commission (EC) in general and the Chief Election Commissioner in particular, despite the fact that PTI has won critical by-elections for Punjab provincial assembly and the national assembly organized by the same EC in the recent past. In case PTI is unable to secure a clear majority in the next election, it is highly likely that it would refuse to accept the election result and return to square one to start a fresh round of agitation. If PTI scores a clear majority, PMLN and its allies may also take to the streets, though its agitation has traditionally not been as lethal as PTI's.

Where does this lead to? Unless PTI and the coalition government sit down without pre-conditions and negotiate an agreement on the date and related details such as the make-up of the caretaker governments, the stalemate can't be resolved. Apparently, the two parties may be more willing to talk after the new Chief of Army Staff is appointed later this month because one major reason for the current muscle-flexing by PTI is to influence the important appointment. If PTI is unable to mobilize an extraordinarily large crowd in Islamabad which paralyzes the capital and makes the federal government capitulate - an unlikely scenario because PTI was unable to achieve this very objective in 2014 when, unlike today, it apparently enjoyed the support of the establishment - it may then decide to return to the National Assembly and negotiate. If the two parties don't agree to talk and the agitation turns ugly, the doomsday scenario of a military take-over can't be ruled out.

Ahmed Bilal Mehboob is the president of Pakistan-based think tank, PILDAT. Courtesy China Daily

Tackling climate challenges

Spokesman Research

Instead of uniting the world in solidarity for a livable planet, the two-week COP 27 United Nations climate conference in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, has shown that the mechanism of international cooperation on climate change is at risk of backsliding.

At COP 26 held in Glasgow, Scotland, late last year, there was still overall optimism on integrating economic and environmental goals, despite the differences among countries. However, at COP 27, the mood has clearly changed, with what should have been a coordinated response to the common challenge being downgraded.

Over the past year, the clock has been wound back by many countries, particularly the United States, as they have embraced fossil fuels more tightly, causing last year's climate agreement to fall apart.

No new pledges have been made at the latest conference. Worse, even the goal of limiting the temperature rise to 1.5 C from the pre-industrial age level by 2100, a key objective of the Paris Agreement, has been opposed by some countries.

If the responses to climate change are always subject to economic, energy and geopolitical crises, any meaningful action to limit global warming will be purely theoretical.

It is shameful that the US, the largest emitter among the developed economies and the second-largest in the world, has chosen to politicize the climate issue at the conference by passing the buck for the lack of progress to Russia, Europe and China.

The Democratic Party's better-than-expected performance in the midterm elections prompted US President Joe Biden to turn the COP 27 into an opportunity to boast about his achievements



in tackling climate change. However, his administration's actions do not match his boasts. The increase in fossil energy capacity in the US has been even greater under his administration than under his predecessor.

At COP 26, developed countries agreed to increase spending and provide \$40 billion a year to developing countries starting in 2025 to help them cope with the effects of climate change.

However, the developed countries will need to pay at least five times more in the future as the impacts of climate change continue to intensify, according to the UN's Adaptation Gap Report 2022 released on Nov 1.

But as the Russia-Ukraine conflict has worsened the global energy situation and the after-effects of COVID-19 continue to hit global supply chains, even Europe, which has traditionally supported a carbon-neutral agenda, is hesitating to back the proposal that rich countries should subsidize the poor ones that was agreed upon in principle in Glasgow last year.

The US is the biggest historical carbon polluter, so the Biden administration should take the lead to honor that commitment. Doing so would at least take COP 27 a step forward toward the developed countries establishing a "loss and damage" financing fund to help the developing countries address the climate challenge.

'Green Alliance' to revolutionize agri-sector, cements Pak-US bonds: Masood Khan

WASHINGTON DC: "The recent momentum in Pak-US relations has opened up vistas of opportunities in furthering Pak-US cooperation in critical areas including agriculture sector," said Pak Ambassador to the United States. "Pak-US 'Green Alliance' can potentially serve to revolutionize agriculture sector of Pakistan with the help of US expertise and would also significantly help in cementing the goodwill created between the two countries by Green Revolution in past," he continued.



The Ambassador made these remarks while addressing a webinar on 'Pak-US Cooperation in Agriculture Sector' which was hosted by Dr. Iqbal Ahmad Khan, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Agriculture Faisalabad, and attended by leading area experts from public and private sectors, research institutes, agriculture departments, entrepreneurs and representatives of farmers community of Pakistan. The webinar was organized to identify potential areas of cooperation between Pakistan and the United States and interventions needed to optimize agricultural yields through introduction of weather resistant and climate resilient seeds, helping Pakistani farmers reducing costs and maximizing output and most importantly to stave off any situation involving food security.

The participants included among others Syed Babar Ali, Senator Nauman Wazir Khattak, Senator Sehar Kamran, Secretary Agriculture Department Punjab, renowned agriculturist Rabia Sultan, Mr. Afaq Tiwana, Mr. Shoukat Ali, Country Lead Monsanto Mr. Saad Khan and others. Addressing the participants, Masood Khan said that the US government, universities, research institutes and the private sector was willing to join hands with Pakistan in addressing issues related to agriculture sector. He underscored the need for capitalizing this unique opportunity to create a win-win partnership between the two countries.

Masood Khan said that the goal of revolutionizing agriculture sector needed innovative approach, a concrete strategy with delineated goals, sustained efforts and a robust cooperation among all stakeholders including government departments, universities and the private sector. He said that farmers community and civil society were important stakeholders while chalking out future roadmap vis-à-vis addressing challenges in agriculture sector and promoting greater Pak-US cooperation. "The interest being shown by the US side and the existing frameworks including Trade & Investment Framework Agreement between Pakistan and the United States provides us with a solid foundation to enter into a robust partnership, once again, in agriculture sector," Pak Ambassador said. Masood Khan thanked Dr. Iqbal Ahmad Khan, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Agriculture Faisalabad, for bringing all stakeholders on a platform to work together for deliberating and suggesting ways and means to enhance Pak-US cooperation in this critical area.

Dr. Iqbal Ahmad Khan apprised the participants that University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) enjoyed strong ties with Washington State University (WSU). He informed the participants that in order to overcome effects of climate change on wheat crop, Washington State University (WSU) shared heat tolerant wheat germoplasm which were being introduced and tested. He said that the two universities were working closely in the areas of identification and implementation of cutting edge technologies, exchange of climate resilient wheat germoplasm, manpower training and capacity building. He further informed the participants that UAF has been working on the introduction of soybean as a new multipurpose crop in Pakistan in collaboration with US Department of Agriculture, Soybean Innovation Lab (SIL), University of Illinois and North Dakota State University.

Meena Bazar at Pakistani Community Welfare School in Abu Dhabi



ABU DHABI: Meena Bazar in the Pakistani Community Welfare School Mussaffah, Abu Dhabi, UAE today was a great success with participation of community members, students, parents and members of the Board of Governors.

Special cultural tableau was made depicting rich cultural heritage of the United Arab Emirates and Pakistan including that of Balochistan, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan.

Afghan Minister for Public Health Doctor Qalandar Ibad visit to AICC



ISLAMABAD: Doctor Qalandar Ibad, Afghan Minister for Public Health along with Afghan Charge d' affairs Sardar Shakib and other officials visited Afghanistan Inter Ministerial Coordination Cell (AICC) at FATA House Islamabad today where they met Ambassador Mohammad Sadiq, Special Representative for Afghanistan, Doctor Mohammad Shoab Shafi, President College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan and other Govt officials. The delegations from both sides discussed cooperation being extended by Pakistan in the health care for brotherly Afghan people.

Pakistan apprised the Afghan delegation on financial support being provided for functioning of the three Pakistan-built hospitals in Afghanistan including installation of equipment and provision of medicines. Pakistan also briefed the delegation on efforts in hand for running of the aforesaid hospitals, establishment of medical campuses and training of Afghan Doctors/ Staff.

A ceremony on exchange of notes regarding training offer of Afghan Doctors by Ministry of Health through College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan was also held. Pakistan will train 20 Afghan Doctors on annual basis for five years in different hospitals in Pakistan through a laid down procedure. Doctor Qalandar Ibad thanked the Govt of Pakistan for sincere humanitarian efforts and gearing up the Afghan health care system to avert a human catastrophe at this time of need. Ambassador Mohammad Sadiq assured full support to Afghan delegation and desired to work together towards shared objectives of peace and cordial relations for betterment of the people.

Pakistan establishes diplomatic relations with Dominican Republic



NEW YORK: In a dignified ceremony, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan represented by Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN and the Dominican Republic, represented by Ambassador Jose Blanco, Permanent Representative of Dominican Republic to the UN signed a Joint Communiqué at the Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN in New York today to formally establish diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Welcoming the landmark achievement, the two Permanent Representatives expressed confidence that the establishment of diplomatic relations will open new avenues of cooperation between the two countries in various fields and areas of mutual interest, including political, economic, trade, culture and tourism cooperation and people to people exchanges.

They also noted with satisfaction the existing cordial relations and close cooperation between the two countries at the UN and on other multilateral forums. Both sides resolved to further solidify these ties by diversifying the existing areas of collaboration. The establishment of diplomatic relations will also facilitate the two countries in their joint efforts towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals and UN's agenda to promote global development and prosperity; including under the ambit of the Group of 77 and China. Dominican Republic is the second largest and one of the most diverse countries in the Caribbean. It became independent in 1844 and is a founding member of the UN.

Pakistan culture day celebrated in Beijing with colorful style



BEIJING: The annual International Culture Day of the Pakistan Embassy College (PECB) was celebrated here on Saturday with colorful Pakistani styles, according to China Economic Net (CEN). The event was dedicated to the celebrations of the 75-year of independence of Pakistan. A part of the proceeds collected during the event would also be donated to the flood victims of Pakistan. Ambassadors and senior diplomats, officials, media representatives and students along with their families participated in this cultural gala.

Around 27 countries had set up their national stalls to exhibit their cultural handicrafts, products and traditional cuisine. Cultural performances of various countries were also presented which were enjoyed by the guests. In his address at the event, the Ambassador of Pakistan to China, Moin ul Haque appreciated the school management and the students for the successful organization of the event which had become PECB's signature and popular event for the diplomatic and international community in China.

He noted that PECB was the first and the oldest international school in Beijing dedicated to imparting high-quality education to children of the expatriate community. He said that students are the future leaders of our nations and encouraged them to continue their studies with diligence, determination, and honesty. INP

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Mahathir loses seat in first election defeat in 53 years

News Desk

KUALALUMPUR: Malaysia's veteran leader Mahathir Mohamad suffered his first election defeat in 53 years on Saturday in a blow that could mark the end of a seven-decade political career. Mahathir, 97, who served as Malaysia's prime minister for more than two decades in two stints, failed to retain his parliamentary seat in the Langkawi island constituency, coming in fourth in a five-cornered fight.

The seat was won by Mohd Suhaimi Abdullah, a candidate from the Perikatan alliance, which is led by another former prime minister, Muhyiddin Yassin. It was Mahathir's first election loss since 1969.

Mahathir leads a coalition that has vowed to take down the incumbent Barisan Nasional government over corruption allegations.

But his alliance is not considered a key contender, with Barisan facing two other major coalitions – Muhyiddin's bloc and another led by Mahathir's long-time rival Anwar Ibrahim.

UK PM Sunak makes surprise trip to Kyiv, boosts air defenses

KYIV, UKRAINE: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak promised 125 anti-aircraft guns and other air-defense technology as he made an unannounced visit Saturday — his first — to Ukraine's snow-blanketed war-time capital for talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.



The air-defense package, which Britain valued at 50 million pounds (\$60 million), comes as Russia has been pounding Ukraine's power grid and other key infrastructure from the air, causing widespread blackouts for millions of Ukrainians amid frigid weather.

The package includes radar and other technology to counter that Iran-supplied exploding drones that Russia has used against Ukrainian targets. It comes on top of a delivery of more than 1,000 anti-air missiles that Britain announced earlier this month. The U.K. has been one of the staunchest Western backers of Ukraine's resistance to Russia's invasion. Speaking alongside Zelenskyy, Sunak noted that the U.K. has given 2.3 billion pounds (\$2.7 billion) in military aid and pledged: "We will do the same again next year."

"Your homes, your hospitals, your power stations are being destroyed," Sunak said in announcing the new air-defense package. "You and your people are paying a heavy price in blood."

Speaking through a translator, Zelenskyy said Russian strikes have damaged around half of Ukraine's energy infrastructure. As snowflakes fell, Zelenskyy greeted Sunak at a presidential palace for their talks. He called the two countries "the strongest of allies." Walking in the snow, they also inspected captured Russian tanks and other destroyed and rusting military hardware used by the invasion forces that are displayed in a Kyiv square. "With friends like you by our side, we are confident in our victory. Both of our nations know what it means to stand up for freedom," the Ukrainian leader said on Twitter. AP

UN rights experts urge greater global action to end child sexual exploitation, abuse

UNITED NATIONS: UN experts have called for intensified efforts to combat the persisting prevalence of violence, exploitation, abuse, trafficking, torture, and harmful practices against children, and stressed the importance of healing and justice for victims and survivors.

Their appeal comes in a joint statement to mark the first commemoration of the World Day for the Prevention of and Healing from Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Violence, noting that millions of boys and girls worldwide continue to fall prey to these crimes.

"Today is a reminder for States and the international community to increase public awareness of this phenomenon," they wrote.

"This is an opportunity to eliminate all forms of child sexual exploitation, abuse, and violence, both online and offline, to enhance the protection of children and to bring perpetrators of exploitation and abuse to justice."

The experts said the current global context continues to exacerbate the situations that expose children to exploitation, abuse and violence.

Some of the major challenges today that they cited included conflicts, climate change, and the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, but also inadequate measures to address root causes such as rising inequalities, deepening poverty, and structural discrimination.

"Child victims and survivors of

such crimes can face long-lasting negative impacts on their physical, mental, and sexual health and development. Such trauma on children may even amount to torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment," they said.

The rights experts were particularly concerned that individuals, institutions, and agencies that are meant to care for children and protect them, sometimes perpetuate the violence they suffer.

For this reason, they called for governments "to substantiate the best interests of the child as well as take measures to promote physical, psychological recovery and social reintegration of child victims and survivors, in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child, while

addressing weaknesses in protection systems".

Furthermore, they said the rights of child victims and survivors are often left out of the process of redressing harm and reparation, exposing them to "secondary victimization".

They emphasized that States must therefore ensure that the views of children are heard and that their perspective is taken into consideration during the course of reparation.

The experts added that genuine remedy for child victims and survivors would mean ensuring the delivery of various forms of reparation, including restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction, and guarantees of non-recurrence.



"Towards this end, States, international and regional entities, community actors including faith-based leaders, civil society organisations, and the private sector, must integrate a child-centered, trauma-informed and gender-sensitive lens while delivering reparation for child victims and survivors," they said.

"Greater awareness of child sexual abuse, child trafficking, exploitation, and violence should be a part of public health policies and programmes, including through educational institutions," they added.

The experts are: Mama Fatima

Singhateh, Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children; Fabian Salvioli, Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence; Tomoya Obokata, Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences; Ms. Tlaleng Mofokeng, Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; Reem Alsalem, Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences; Siobhán Mullally, Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children; Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls.

USC reduces ghee, cooking oil prices

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Utility Store Corporation (USC) of Pakistan has reduced the prices of branded ghee and cooking oil prices with immediate effect for the relief of general public.

According to the spokesman of USC, the spectacular reduction in ghee and cooking oil prices on all utility stores across the country.

The price of Habib ghee is reduced by Rs 34 rupees per kg while the Habib Cooking oil per liter has been reduced by 36 rupees, the price of eva ghee is reduced by 39 rupees per kilogram and price of soya supreme ghee is reduced to Rs 25 per kg while the soya supreme cooking oil by Rs7 per litre, said a statement.

It is pertinent to mention here that the Federal government has also extended the special subsidy on ghee, sugar, wheat flour, under the Prime Minister Relief package on all stores.

The Utility Store Corporation has recently issued SMS service 5566 for acquisition of transparent and modern style of subsidized items, which is being provided to consumers in more better way.

Oil prices slide as supply fears recede

LONDON: Oil fell by more than \$3 a barrel on Friday and was on track for a second weekly decline, pressured by concern about weakening demand in China and further increases to US interest rates.

As part of the rout, the market structure of both oil benchmarks shifted in ways that reflect dwindling supply concerns. Crude had come close to record highs this year as Russia's invasion of Ukraine added to those concerns.

China, which sources say is looking to slow crude imports from some exporters, has seen a rise in COVID-19 cases while hopes for less aggressive US rate hikes have been dented by remarks from some Federal Reserve officials this week.

"As things stand, bullish price drivers are in short supply," said Stephen Brennock of oil broker PVM. "Yet with the EU embargo on Russian crude less than three weeks away, oil prices could still end the year with a bang."

Brent crude was down \$3.17, or 3.5%, at \$86.61 a barrel by 1445 GMT, having touched its lowest since Sept. 28 at \$85.80. U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude was down \$3.67, or 4.5%, at \$77.97.

Both benchmarks are heading for a second weekly loss, with Brent on track for a more than 9% decline.

In a sign of easing concern about supply, the nearby WTI contract moved to a discount to the second month, a structure known as contango, for the first time since 2021, Refinitiv Eikon data showed.

Brent was still in the opposite structure, backwardation, though the premium of nearby Brent over barrels loading in six months fell as low as \$3 a barrel, the lowest since April.

Recession concerns have dominated this week, even with the European Union's ban on Russian crude looming on December 5 and a tightening of supply by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and its allies, together known as OPEC+.

"On the demand side, there are concerns about an economic slowdown," said Avatrade's Naem Aslam. "The path of least resistance seems skewed to the downside."

The Fed is expected to raise rates by a smaller 50 basis points (bps) at its December 13-14 policy meeting after four consecutive 75 bps hikes, a Reuters poll showed.

OPEC+, which began a new round of supply cuts in November, holds a policy meeting on December 4. (Web Desk)

Rupee remains under pressure as traders reassess delay in IMF's review

KARACHI: The uncertainty over surrounding the date of the ninth review of Pakistan's economy by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) under its loan programme has resulted in the rupee sliding for the sixth consecutive session.

The local unit closed the week at 223.17 against the US dollar in the interbank market after losing 0.22% compared to Thursday's closing value of 222.67 as high default risks and low foreign exchange reserves sapped the sentiment.

A holdup in the ninth review of the IMF loan programme remained a cause of concern for investors.

Though a date has not yet been set, the IMF staff mission is anticipated in Islamabad by end of the current month, as the fund requires Pakistan to take mandatory actions.

The government has urged the IMF to grant it some exceptions because of flood losses, but the fund is pushing Pakistan to maintain the agreed tax-to-GDP ratio of at least 11%.

According to AHL, a number-crunching brokerage house, the country's credit-default swaps (CDS) spiked to 75.5% on Wednesday from 56.2. (Web Desk)

Pakistani traders keen to buy tea, coffee from Ethiopia

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistani traders have expressed keen interest in buying tea and coffee from Ethiopia at affordable rates.

"There is a huge demand of tea and coffee in Pakistan, but connectivity, quality control mechanisms and institutional linkages between the two countries are the need of the hour," said the members of a joint delegation of the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and Pakistan Tea Association in a meeting with Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Jemal Beker Abdula.

The ambassador said work on establishing connectivity and institutional linkages between the two countries for social, economic, and political cooperation was underway intensively. The quality control was rigorous in Ethiopia and rest assured that there would be no compromise on export quality of tea and coffee from Ethiopia.

He said confidence-building measures would also be taken for Pakistani traders so that the bilateral trade between the two countries could go to the next level. The envoy said Ethiopia has surplus tea and coffee which could be exported to Pakistan at affordable rates.

"Currently, Ethiopian tea is coming from other channels, but we are working on different agreements in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce of Pakistan to enable Pakistan



and Ethiopia to boost their trade in diverse areas", he remarked.

He said his government was opening up Ethiopia by taking legal, institutional and economic reforms that ensure security, ease of doing business and support environment for FDI.

"The Ethiopian Airlines will start its operations in Karachi by the beginning of next year," the ambassador announced in the meeting.

He said he had already announced visit of an inclusive business delegation of Pakistan to Ethiopia so they could understand business dynamics there and establish business-to-business ties.

"There will be no loss for Pakistan businessmen on visiting Ethiopia as this Ethiopia is a land of origin and going back to your ancestral land will give them at least a spiritual satisfaction, and reconnection." H.E. Jemal Beker underscored that the main focus of Ethiopia's embassy is economic diplomacy, investment, trade, tourism promotion, technological transfer and establishment of the institutional linkages between the two countries.

Both governments have so far working on many agreements which will be instrumental in increasing political cooperation, economic

engagement and people-to-people contacts through tourism promotion.

The bilateral trade between the two countries is minimal and amounts to 78 million US dollars, however, my target is to take it to 300 million US dollars by the end of 2023, said the ambassador.

We have identified the products which will be exported to my country from Pakistan. Pakistani business community can contribute to the Pakistan's economic development by exporting rice, pharmaceutical products, medical equipment, sports items and construction material to my country.

Moreover, the Government of Pakistan can import agricultural products such as coffee, tea, pulses, oilseeds, and vegetables from Ethiopia at affordable prices which will eventually help it mitigate the growing demand of the edible.

Above all, Ethiopia is closely working with the government of Pakistan on climate change issues which has recently brought one third of the country underwater and caused massive loss of life and economy.

He said the current government had developed green economy by establishing agro-processing Centers and utilizing technology to enhance agriculture productivity in his country.

To this end, the Pakistan Tea Association have expressed their interests to take part in business trade delegation to be held in Ethiopia between 16-20 January 2023 to explore the availed opportunities in various sectors.

Security measure

RAWALPINDI: A view of petrol pump along the route of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf long march are being sealed as a security measure at Rawat area in the city.



Photo: Online

Oil slides 2%, posts second weekly decline as supply fears recede

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Oil dropped by about 2% on Friday, logging a second weekly decline, due to concern about weakened demand in China and further increases to U.S. interest rates.

Brent crude settled at \$87.62 a barrel, falling \$2.16, or 2.4%. U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude settled at \$80.08 a barrel, losing \$1.56, or 1.9%.

Both benchmarks posted weekly losses, with Brent down about 9% and WTI roughly 10%.

The market structure of both oil benchmarks shifted in ways that reflect dwindling supply concerns.

Crude came close to record highs earlier this year as Russia's invasion of Ukraine added to those worries. In addition, the front-month futures contract soared to a gigantic premium over later-dated contracts, a signal that people were worried about the immediate availability of oil and were willing to pay handsomely to secure supply.

Those supply concerns are waning. The current WTI contract is now trading at a discount to the second month, a structure known as contango, for the first time since 2021, Refinitiv Eikon data showed.

This condition will also benefit those looking to put more oil in inventories for later, especially with stocks still at low levels.

"The deeper the contango, the more likely the market will put those barrels in storage," said Bob Yahwer, director of energy futures at Mizuho in New York.

Brent was still in the opposite structure, backwardation, though the premium of nearby Brent over barrels loading in six months fell as low as \$3 a barrel, the lowest since April.

China, which sources say is looking to slow crude imports from some sources, has seen a rise in COVID-19 cases while hopes for less aggressive U.S. rate hikes have been dented by remarks from some Federal Reserve officials.

"The situation in China with COVID continues to haunt this market," said John Kilduff, partner at Again Capital LLC in

New York. "So much optimism gets priced in to the market as soon as they try to say that they're going to reopen, but then the reality on the ground is just completely opposite of that hopeful analysis."

As the European Union's ban on Russian crude looms on Dec. 5, the prospect of more barrels from Russia pressuring the spot crude oil market also weighed on futures prices.

Recession concerns have dominated this week even with a tightening of supply by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and its allies, together known as OPEC+.

"On the demand side, there are concerns about an economic slowdown," said Avatrade's Naem Aslam. "The path of least resistance seems skewed to the downside."

The Fed is expected to raise rates by a smaller 50 basis points (bps) at its Dec. 13-14 policy meeting after four consecutive hikes of 75 bps, a Reuters poll showed.

OPEC+, which began a new round of supply cuts in November, holds a policy meeting on Dec. 4.

Country is not benefiting from trade officers

Commerce Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Saturday said the government is spending billions of rupees on the trade officers posted in other countries but to no avail.

The main purpose of trade officers is to increase exports which cannot be realized and the country is not getting any benefit, it said.

Trade officers receive hefty salaries and benefits but do not perform their duties honestly therefore their burden on the national exchequer should be reduced, said Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President of PEW.

He said that if these people were doing their work, the country's exports would not have been in this state.

Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that according to IMF data, Pakistan's exports were equal to fifteen percent of GDP during 2000, which has now fallen to eleven percent of GDP.

From 1990 to 2020 there has been a 40% decline in Pakistan's share in global trade but these officers have never been questioned about the decline in exports, nor is there any system of accountability for them, he observed.

He said that the exports are going down but the majority of the trade officers posted abroad are still busy reaping the benefits.



What is the justification for deputing these officers abroad and spending two billion rupees annually on their salaries and perks when the exports are not increasing but decreasing, he questioned?

Dr Mughal said that after the coronavirus pandemic, the trend of online meetings and social media for business-related matters has increased a lot and in such a situation, the services of these officers have become unnecessary, so these unnecessary posts should be abolished and the surplus capital should be used for some constructive purpose.

There is no accountability mechanism for trade officers and there is a need to seek clarification from the Ministry of Commerce in this regard, he demanded.

He said that when the internet was not common, trade officers were needed but now there is no such compulsion therefore tough decision should be taken to send them packing.

Easy on your pocket-Redmi A1+

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Xiaomi today announced the launch of their new budget efficient device, the all-new Redmi A1+. The new Redmi entry-level smartphone has a paystlyish design and is equipped with versatile features, aiming to provide an excellent experience at a massively affordable price..

With a 6.52" HD+ large display at 1600x720 resolution, the Redmi A1+ offers an immersive experience when watching videos or when gaming. For extended viewing, the device offers a dark theme and Night Light Mode, which help prevent strain on the eyes.

The Redmi A1+ is equipped with an 8MP main camera paired with an auxiliary lens to enable portrait shots and a 5MP front camera. Both rear and front cameras are loaded with versatile modes including portrait, short video, and time-lapse, offering users diverse shooting options. The smartphone is also packed with a large 5,000mAh battery and 10W charging, effortlessly lasting

through daily use. In terms of performance, the Redmi A1+ is powered by MediaTek Helio A22, which ensures enough performance to run apps and supports high-resolution display, and power efficiency. Additionally, it also supports expandable storage up to 1TB, which frees up space on-device for additional data storage.*

Redmi A1+ has an impressive hardware price-to-performance ratio, it also has a notable design. Inheriting family design from Redmi Note Series, Redmi A1+ is in Black, Light Green, and Light Blue, all with a stylish flat-frame design. Accentuated by a clean, minimalist curved back, its leather-like texture resists fingerprint smudges and marks. In addition, Redmi A1+ comes equipped with an advanced and responsive rear fingerprint sensor for quick unlocking.

Sugar mills mafia blackmailing the Govt

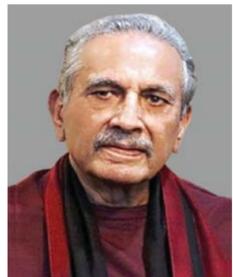
Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Former President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt on Saturday said sugar mills have decided to delay crushing season if it is not allowed to export one million tonnes of sugar.

Subjecting crushing to export permission is a bid to blackmail the government which should not be allowed, he said.

Shahid Rasheed Butt said that delaying crushing is tantamount to the worst exploitation of millions of farmers bankrupted by the recent flood.

Delay in crushing will cause huge loss to sugarcane farmers which should not be allowed, he added.



The business leader said that the government should take strict action against the influential sugar mill owners that do not start crushing as it will put a financial burden on farmers. The sugar mills mafia is forcing farmers to commit suicide for their profit which is cruelty.

Sugar mills claim that they currently have up to thirteen lakh tonnes of sugar, but the government wants to confirm the claim before taking any decision in this regard so that there is no sugar crisis in the country. If the government allows the sugar mill owners to export one million tonnes of sugar, it will have to pay heavy subsidies as usual, and there will be a shortage of sugar in the country, which will further increase its price.

Export of sugar will provide an opportunity for the profiteers to skin the public which is already facing unprecedented inflation, he observed.

Shahid Rashid Butt said that the Punjab government has fixed the purchase price of sugar

at 300 rupees per 40 kg, which is 75 rupees more than last year which is a joke to the farmers.

During the former regime, a sugar commission was asked to probe the sugar sector which pointed out the corporate frauds committed by some sugar mills through associated companies.

Issues of fake export of sugar to Afghanistan and money laundering came forward during investigations of the inquiry commission and were referred to the FIA.

The Sugar Commission had also found sugar millers involved in various offenses under provincial laws such as payment to cane growers below the support price and illegal deductions on account of the weight of the cane.

Northern, Sindh and Central Punjab in hunt for Quaid-e-Azam Trophy final spots

LAHORE: The tenth and final round of the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy 2022-23 season begins at three venues across the country tomorrow (Sunday).

Number two in the points table Sindh will take on Balochistan at the LCCA Ground, Lahore, fifth placed Southern Punjab play third placed Central Punjab in the Punjab derby at the Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore and top-ranked Northern face bottom placed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa at the Shoaib Akhtar Cricket Stadium, Rawalpindi.

The Sindh-Balochistan match is of vital importance for Sindh who are harbouring hopes of playing their first final of the prestigious domestic trophy since the tournament was revamped as a six-team competition in the 2019-20 season. In the ninth round, Sindh drew their high scoring home tie against Northern at the National Bank Cricket Arena (National Stadium, Karachi).

Sindh at present have Central Punjab breathing down their neck, the two have a mere five point gap – Sindh are at 118 and Central Punjab have a 113 points tally at the conclusion of the ninth round. The Saud Shakeel-led Sindh cannot afford to slip-up in their last match. Both Sindh and Central Punjab would be playing their matches a mere 100-metre or less apart – LCCA Ground and Gaddafi Stadium to add another twist to the intriguing 10th round tale.

Sindh need to look for an outright win or ensure that they don't lag behind Central Punjab in terms of the bonus points in case they draw the match, a loss can seal their fate in case of a win or a draw for Central Punjab with bonus



points grabbed.

The Mohammad Saad-led Central Punjab played a rain-affected draw against Balochistan at the LCCA Ground in the previous round. They would have to make a big effort to push for a win against Southern Punjab to improve their chances of a final's berth. The two sides had drawn the first match of the Punjab derby in October at the Multan Cricket Stadium.

Southern Punjab who are at the fifth spot would be hoping to salvage something out of what has been a disappointing season for them with a victory, they are yet to win a match in the season having drawn six games besides two defeats. Southern Punjab had their ninth round fixture against Khyber Pakhtunkhwa washed out in Abbottabad.

Northern have all but confirmed their place in the final following their draw against Sindh and only a big defeat and victories for Sindh and Central Punjab in the tenth round can halt their progress to the tournament decider.

Northern currently have a 132 points tally with three wins and six draws from the first nine rounds. Defending champions Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would be hoping to upset the table-toppers to finish on a high following their worst season to date in the revamped format. They languish at the bottom with a mere 53 points (three draws, four defeats, two abandoned matches).

Top performers: Openers Abdullah Shafique – Central Punjab and Mohammad Huraire – Northern, are the only two batters to have reached the 800-run

mark so far. Abdullah tops the list of tournament run-getters with 867 runs at 72.25 (three centuries and four fifties).

Huraire who scored 173 and 58 not out against Sindh in the ninth round has now tallied 800 runs at 72.73 (three centuries, two fifties). Southern Punjab's seasoned performer Usman Salahuddin is at number three with 733 runs at 61.08 (three centuries, three fifties).

Sindh's Abrar Ahmed continues to mystify batters with his leg-spin in the ongoing season. Abrar is on the top of the bowling list with 43 wickets in six matches – five five-fers – at an average of 21.95.

Northern's off-spinner Mubasir Khan is number two on the list with 26 wickets in nine games at 30.15 – one five-fer.

Central Punjab pacer Mohammad Ali is at number three with 24 wickets at 25.54 – two five-fers.

Cricket Associations Championship 2022-23.

Southern Punjab will take on Central Punjab at the UBL Sports Complex, Sindh will play Balochistan at the NBP Sports Complex and Northern will compete against Khyber Pakhtunkhwa at KCCA Stadium in the fixtures beginning tomorrow – the tenth and final round.

In the ninth round matches Northern and Southern Punjab defeated Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa respectively.

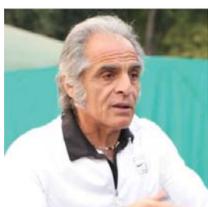
Central Punjab have accumulated 170 points and have already bagged the championship. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are second placed with 124 points while Southern Punjab are at the third spot with 120 points.

Shehryar Malik Memorial Pakistan Open Tennis Championship 6th championship commences today

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The 6th Shehryar Malik Memorial Pakistan Open Tennis Championship 2022 will get underway today (Sunday) here at the Sports Board Punjab Tennis Academy Nishtar Park Sports Complex.

According to PLTA Secretary General Rashid Malik, who is also Tournament Director, the week-long championship is being organized under the auspices of Punjab Lawn Tennis Association (PLTA). "Over 350 players have registered for Shehryar Malik Memorial Pakistan Open Tennis Championship 2022. All the Davis Cup and Fed Cup players along with top junior players are participating in this highest prize-money event. All outstation players are being provided with free hospitality," he added.



Malik said as many as 21 events will be contested in this prestigious championship that include men's singles & doubles, ladies singles & doubles, juniors boys U-18 singles & doubles, girls U-18 singles, boys U-16 singles, boys U-14 singles & doubles, boys/girls U-12 singles & doubles, boys/girls U-10 singles, boys/girls U-8, boys/girls U-6, seniors 35 plus doubles, seniors 45 plus doubles, seniors 50 plus singles, seniors 65 plus doubles.

The PLTA Secretary

added that the Sports Board Punjab Tennis Academy is giving a very festive look due to the presence of over 350 players and their parents. The main draw matches will start from Monday (Nov 21) at 10:00 am, whereas the top ranked players of the country will also be seen in action.

The opening ceremony of the prestigious will take place on Monday (Nov 21) at 3:00 pm. All the final finals will be played on Nov 26 at 2:30 at Sports Board Punjab Tennis Academy Nishtar Park Lahore, he added.

Malik thanked CM Punjab Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi, Punjab Sports Minister Malik Taimoor Masood, SBP Vice Chairman Nadeem Abbas Bara, Secretary Youth Sports and Affairs Ehsan Bhutta, Director Sports Punjab Tariq Qureshi and other SBP officers for their all-out cooperation for the

promotion of sports especially of tennis in Punjab. It is due to their untiring efforts and support that tennis is gaining popularity across the province and country and Punjab players have been excelling at Asian tennis level.

Malik also thanked title and co-sponsors of the prestigious championship saying it is due to their full support and cooperation that tennis has been flourishing here and the tennis players earning good name and fame for them and the country at international level. "I am especially thankful to Metro Cash & Carry, Sheikho Steel, TS Builders and others for their support to conduct such a big and high-prize money event here at state-of-the-art tennis courts, which can host international tennis events in a befitting manner," he elaborated.

Shaheen Afridi & Shoaib Malik join Babar Azam & Shadab Khan to debut inside the world's biggest game

ISLAMABAD: Free Fire has announced Pakistani cricket icons Shaheen Afridi and Shoaib Malik are set to join the stage with Babar Azam and Shadab Khan as the official brand ambassadors for Free Fire in Pakistan. Free Fire is the world's leading mobile battle royale game with over 1 Billion downloads and has been at the forefront of the esports revolution in Pakistan.

This is Pakistan's first-ever collaboration with cricket players, who will introduce their own style through cricket bundles inside the world's most popular battle royale game. Users will have a chance to claim and play with



bundles of their cricketing heroes in their favourite game.

Each cricketer worked on their bundle designs and came up with vibrant & unique designs which are bound to attract. This is great news for cricket fans as they will be able to see

their favorite cricketers collaborating with the leading mobile game as they introduce their cricket bundles for the first-time ever.

Shaheen Shah Afridi commented on the occasion, "I'm glad to join my team mate and captain as Free Fire's brand ambassador. This is an incredibly popular game that has helped establish professional esports in Pakistan. I am thrilled to have my bundle feature in their game and will hold on to this memory."

Free Fire is dedicated to providing players with a variety of fresh and interesting content and unique experiences to keep them engaged.

Why made-in-Pakistan footballs always win FIFA World Cup

KARACHI: Pakistan's team might not be participating in the upcoming FIFA World Cup in Qatar but footballs made in the Asian country are set to shine at the mega event.

The 2022 FIFA World Cup will be played from November 20 to December 18 at eight venues in Qatar, with 32 teams playing a total of 65 matches.

Here is everything you need to know about the FIFA World Cup 2022 footballs.

Why is FIFA World Cup 2022 football named 'Al Rihla'?

According to the official FIFA website, Al Rihla means "the journey" in Arabic, with the colour combination inspired by Qatar's culture, architecture, iconic boats and flag.

"Adidas is bringing its sporting expertise to the game's premier event yet again by providing a match ball with sleek aesthetics that also delivers accuracy and flight stability. It is designed to support peak game speeds and, furthermore, is manufactured with strictly water-based inks and glues for additional sustainability," it added.

Where were the footballs made?

The FIFA World Cup footballs are manufactured in Pakistan by Adidas through

Forward Sports, a Sialkot-based company.

Sialkot is famous for producing top-quality sports goods and has been manufacturing footballs for the World Cups for a long time.

"This brand, which will be used in Qatar World Cup, is too much responsibility and is faster. The 25% elements, which have been used in this brand, are sustainable and this brand is made of recycled material," Forward Sports Managing Director Hassan Masood told The News, earlier this year.

"Its weight ranges from 425 to 445 grams while its size is from 68.8cm to 69.3cm," he added.

The football is designed to support peak game speeds, as it travels faster in flight than any ball in the tournament's history.

"This is a stunning, sustainable and high-quality Official Match Ball from Adidas that will be enjoyed by stars performing at the top of their game on the world's biggest stage in Qatar, as well as grassroots players everywhere," said Jean-François Pathy, FIFA's Director of Marketing. Al Rihla, which was designed after rigorous testing, provides great accuracy and reliability in the field of play, partly due to its new panel shape and surface textures. (Web Desk)

FIFA chief blasts 'hypocrisy' of Western nations on eve of World Cup



ISLAMABAD: FIFA president Gianni Infantino blasted the hypocrisy of Western critics of Qatar's human rights record on Saturday, making a passionate defence of the World Cup in the Gulf state on the eve of the kick-off.

The build-up to the tournament has been dominated by concerns over Qatar's treatment of migrant workers, women and the LGBTQ community, to the visible annoyance of organisers. Qatar officials say their country has been the target of "racism" and "double standards" and they point to the reforms on working conditions and safety that have been hailed as groundbreaking in the region.

Football itself again took a back seat on Saturday, with the focus firmly on off-field politics just 24 hours before hosts Qatar were due open the tournament against Ecuador. Infantino, speaking at his opening press conference of the tournament in Doha, had harsh words for critics of Qatar. "This moral lesson giving – one-sided – is just hypocrisy," said the Swiss. "I don't want to give you any lessons of life, but what is going on here is profoundly, profoundly unjust."

He added: "For what we Europeans have been doing for the last 3,000 years we should apologise for the next 3,000 years before starting giving moral lessons to people." Infantino also expressed his support for marginalised communities. "Today I feel Qatari, today I feel Arab, today I feel African, today I feel gay, today I feel disabled, today I feel a migrant worker," he said. Another issue that has dominated the build-up to the tournament is the sale of beer in the Islamic state, which severely restricts alcohol consumption. Organisers on Friday performed a dramatic U-turn, banning beer sales around stadiums just 48 hours before kickoff.

World governing body FIFA gave no reason for the surprise decision but media reports said there had been an intervention by Qatar's ruling family. Dozens of Budweiser beer tents had already been set up at grounds ahead of the first game.

Wasim Akram named brand ambassador of Lanka Premier League

COLOMBO: Former Pakistan captain and legendary fast bowler



er Wasim Akram has been appointed as a brand ambassador of the third edition of Sri Lanka's "Lanka Premier League" (LPL), scheduled to take place from December 6 to 23.

Wasim, also known as the 'Sultan of Swing' has been named for the job along with Sri Lankan iconic cricketer Sanath Jayasuriya.

"It gives us an ideal platform to find and nurture the best cricketing talent and we saw that during the Asia Cup, earlier this year. LPL is helping Sri Lanka to build its T20I arsenal," expressed the Pakistani legend after being appointed ambassador, according to a release by the LPL.

"This tournament is unearthing some good cricket players in Sri Lanka and we saw the proof of it when the team won the Asia Cup this year. I have seen the last two editions of this tournament and the quality of cricket was top-notch. I am sure that players will also maintain it in the forthcoming edition of LPL," he added. ARY

Australia set to rotate Pat Cummins' ODI captaincy stand-ins

Australia will look to expand their ODI captaincy pool over the next 12 months, with the likelihood that a variety of different players will stand in for Pat Cummins when needed after Josh Hazlewood took the role in Sydney.

Hazlewood, who had never captained in a professional game but was previously an ODI vice-captain, stepped in against England when Cummins rested, having led his first game in the format in Adelaide two days ago. He is now set to be the front-runner if the same situation arises again—Cummins is likely to return for the final match in Melbourne on Tuesday—but given he may also need to be rested as a multi-format bowler, others could come into the frame.

"At this stage, probably yes," Hazlewood said if this move now made him first-choice behind Cummins. "It's hard to say, I'm a fast bowler, and I'll probably be missing games here and there as well. "We've obviously got [Steven] Smith, who was vice-captain tonight, and down the chain, there's another couple in the leadership group. So there's plenty of options there and I felt even out in the middle there were a number of senior players I could talk to and get their opinions." (Web Desk)

Minister distributes Rs 23.6m cheques among 29 sports associations

LAHORE: Taking another revolutionary measure for the growth of sports culture in the Punjab province, Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Taimoor Masood distributed cheques of Rs 23.6 million grant money among 29 provincial sports associations here at the National Hockey Stadium on Saturday.

Vice-Chairman Sports Board Punjab (SBP) Malik Nadeem Abbas Bara, Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Ehsan Bhutta, Commissioner Lahore/President Punjab Olympic Association Amir Jan, Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi, Director Admin Syed Umair Hassan, CEO Lahore Qalandars Atif Rana, former Test

cricketer Aqib Javed, Deputy Director Tariq Wattoo, Assistant Director Zahoor Ahmed, Secretary Punjab Olympic Association Idris Haider Khawaja and presidents and secretaries of all provincial sports associations were also present on this occasion.

The SBP vice-chairman also distributed grant money cheques among some provincial sports associations. Addressing the ceremony, the Punjab sport minister said that it is a historic day because on this day Sports Board Punjab is releasing grant-in-aid money to all provincial sports associations for the promotion of sports culture. "We have fulfilled our

promise and now it is the obligation of provincial sports associations to deliver and hold a maximum number of sports events and trace fresh talent in their respective games," he added.

He said that the grant money will be given to provincial sports associations every year. Representatives of all provincial sports associations thanked Punjab Minister for Sports Secretary Sports Punjab and DG, SBP for fulfilling their key demand.

Malik Taimoor Masood further said that there is no doubt that provincial sports associations have a key role in the promotion of sports among the young generation. "The annual grant-in-aid to provincial sports associations was a



regular feature in the past but it was suspended due to some reasons but now the long-standing demand of provincial sports associations has been fulfilled for which my whole team deserved huge appreciation."

He further said that Sports Board Punjab will continue to extend every possible support to

provincial sports associations for the organization of their sports events. "Recently, we organized the 73rd Punjab Games quite successfully. We also found several talented athletes from the Punjab Games. We are also setting up a network of top-class sports academies of different games. The establishment of a cricket academy adjacent to Punjab Stadium is a latest example in this regard," he elaborated.

Commissioner Lahore/President Punjab Olympic Association Amir Jan on this occasion thanked Punjab Minister for Sports and Y, Secretary Sports Punjab and DG, SBP for fulfilling demand of provincial sports associations. "Definitely, this great measure will help a lot

in holding several sports competitions and tracing fresh talent from grassroots level," he added.

A huge grant of Rs 30 lakh was given to Punjab Olympic Association. As many as 10 provincial sports associations such as Punjab Athletics Association, Punjab Hockey Association, Punjab Modern Pentathlon Association, Punjab Kabaddi Association, Punjab Table Tennis Association, Punjab Wrestling Association, Punjab Badminton Association, Punjab Cycling Association, Punjab Squash Association and Punjab Golf Association were given Rs 10 lakh grant each.

Eight provincial sports associations namely Punjab Baseball Association, Punjab Basket-

ball Association, Punjab Lawn Tennis Association, Punjab Rugby Association, Punjab Touch Ball Association, Punjab Weightlifting Association, Punjab Rifle Shooting Association and Punjab Swimming Association were given Rs 7 lakh grant apiece.

Whereas 10 provincial sports associations namely Punjab Paralympic Association, Punjab Archery Association, Punjab Gymnastic Association, Punjab Handball Association, Punjab Judo Association, Punjab Karate Association, Punjab Netball Association, Punjab Roller Sports Association, Punjab Taekwondo Association and Punjab Wushu Association were given Rs 5 lakh grant each. APP