



Pakistan to get crude oil, petrol, diesel from Russia on discounted price

Minister of State for Petroleum Dr. Musadik Malik on Monday termed his recent visit to Russia 'very successful' as the host country, in principle, had decided to provide crude oil, refined petrol and diesel to Pakistan at a discounted rate. (Report on Page 8)

Regional countries should work together to achieve common goals: Ahsan Iqbal

Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, the Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, has called upon the regional countries to make joint efforts in achieving common goals of poverty alleviation, literacy, sustainable socio-economic development, and mitigation of climate disaster impacts. He was speaking at the inaugural plenary of 25th Sustainable Development Conference (SDC). (Report on Page 3)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Pak-Polish International Scientific Conference

KARACHI: President Dr. Arif Alvi addressing inauguration ceremony of 1st Pak-Polish International Scientific Conference at Governor House on Monday.



Photo: PID

FO hopes attack on Pak Head Mission, Kabul to be thoroughly probed

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office on Monday said that they remained in active contact with the Afghan authorities on the matter of a terrorist attack on Pakistan's Head of Mission in Kabul and expressed the confidence that it would be fully investigated and the perpetrators and their abettors would be brought

to account.

Responding to media queries regarding remarks reportedly made by Taliban Spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid, Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, in a press release, said that it was an ongoing investigation and they were closely following it.

"Pakistan remains resolute in our commitment to

fight the scourge of terrorism," she further added.

According to media reports, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid, on his Twitter handle, claimed that Taliban authorities had arrested a foreign operative of the Islamic State terrorist group for allegedly carrying out last week's assassination attempt on Pakistan's top diplomat in Kabul.

Peshawar to Torkham railway track restoration needs Rs.1982 million

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Railway on Monday apprised the Senate Standing Committee on Railways that Rs.1982 million was needed to restore 59km railway track from Peshawar to Torkham and the ministry did not have enough resources to restore it.

The Committee which met here with Deputy Chairman Senate Mirza Muhammad Afridi in the Chair.

Senator Mushtaq Ahmad was of opinion that, this railway track was not only important from trade perspective but also had a historical importance.

He further added that the railway track was made in 1926 and remained operational till 2007 but after the flood devastation of 2007, the

track was damaged and was not made operational till date.

Secretary for Ministry of Railways, Zafar Ranjha said the ministry was in negotiation with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government for the financing of the project and the KP government was willing to finance the project, he added.

He said some portion of track also falls in airport vicinity which also created a hurdle in restoration work.

The Chair decided to refer the matter to Senate Standing Committee on Defence for further deliberation way forward.

The senate committee also suggested the Ministry of Railways to take input from Ministry of Tourism on

Peshawar and Torkham project regarding its potentiality from tourism perspective.

Secretary for Ministry of Railways also informed the senate body about Afghan Transit project which will link Pakistan to Uzbekistan, and costs around US\$8.2 billion.

The committee directed the ministry to provide complete briefing on the said project in the next meeting. The committee deferred the deliberations on the matter till the next meeting.

The meeting was attended by Senator Dost Muhammad, Senator Shahadat Awan, Senator Mushtaq Ahmad, Zafar Ranjha Secretary for ministry of railways and other concerned officers were also in attendance. APP

Cheap power generation crucial as energy import bill swells to \$27 bln: PM

Correspondent

MANGLA: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said Pakistan was in dire need of generating cheap electricity as the energy import bill exorbitantly touched \$27 billion.

He was addressing the inaugural ceremony of the refurbishment project of Units 5 and 6 of the Mangla Dam Hydroelectric Power Plant, carried out with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

PM Shehbaz Sharif said Pakistan, which was already facing immense challenges of economic stability, could not bear the heavy costs of energy import bills and thus needed to utilize alternative sources of electricity production.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif addressing the inaugural ceremony of the refurbishment of unit 5 and 6 of Mangla Dam

He regretted that in 75



years, both democratic and military rulers were responsible for not building sufficient dams to meet the energy needs.

"Had the water reservoirs built on time, the country's energy import bill would not have swelled to \$27 billion," he said, pointing out that "powerful lobbies and cartels" did not let materialize the construction of dams and launch of solar power projects.

Also, in the wake of recent flash floods in the country, he said, dams were crucial to

mitigate the effects of climate change.

The prime minister termed the assistance of USAID for the refurbishment of the units of Mangla dam as a "wonderful example of cooperation" between Pakistan and the United States.

He lauded the valuable grant of \$150 million by USAID along with the financial support by the Development Agency of France amounting to 90 million euros besides another pledge of 65 million euros.

Also, WAPDA (Water and Power Development Authority) contributed \$178 million (Rs 20 billion rupees) from its own resources, he said.

He expressed satisfaction over the interest of the U.S. to carry out an extension programme of the country's largest Tarbela dam.

Shahbaz Sharif said the 75-years-old friendship and bilateral relationship between Pakistan and the U.S. had further strengthened at the levels of trade and investment.

United States Ambassador Donald Blome said the Mangla dam was a great symbol of U.S.-Pakistan cooperation and added that the U.S. was also assisting WAPDA in increasing the power generation capacity of the Tarbela and Gomal Zam dams.

US Ambassador Donald Blome presents a souvenir to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif at the inauguration ceremony of unit 5 and 6 of Mangla Dam after

their refurbishment

He said maintenance and upgrades of dams were of critical importance in the wake of climate change and expressed hope that the green alliance between the two countries would prove beneficial for the energy and agriculture sectors of Pakistan.

The General Electric Hydro France Project Director said despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the suspended projects of refurbishment were carried out effectively.

He mentioned that six more units of Mangla dam would also be refurbished in the future.

Chairman Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) Lt Gen (ret) Sajjad Ghani said the refurbishment of the units of Mangla dam was in line with the keen interest of the federal government to provide clean, green and cheap energy to the people of the country.

CDWP approves six youth programs worth Rs 47 bn

ISLAMABAD: The Central Development Working Party (CDWP) on Monday approved six projects worth Rs 47 billion for the youth of the country.

The meeting of the CDWP was held here, under the Chairmanship of Federal Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal.

"Our approach is grounded in the provision of mentorship and upskilling opportunities to youth which we believe are critical for their employment prospects," said the Minister for Planning, Professor Ahsan Iqbal while chairing the meeting.

The forum approved the Prime Minister's



Youth Laptop Scheme (Phase-III) at the cost of Rs 0.146162.

Under the program, the youth will be given laptops while continuing the old project initiative by the Pakistan Muslim League PML-N government in its previous tenure.

Investment in youth has been realized in many emerging economies as a long-term investment for

a prosperous future of the nation which is based on the demographic dividend.

Pakistan has also realized its strengths of having a large number of young people who are to be transformed into a skilled and educated workforce to have its share proportionate to the global economy.

During the meeting, the Minister directed the

relevant stakeholder to reorganize the technical committee to ensure the good quality of the laptops keeping in view the requirements of the students.

The investment in youth education to have an educated and skilled workforce available to support the country's economy, or even beyond, to provide a skilled workforce to countries that are scarce of young and energetic skilled workforce.

Similarly, the forum also approved a project of Overseas Scholarships for MS/M.Phil leading to PhD in selected fields (Phase-III), at the cost of Rs 22.214b in order to provide opportunities to the students.

Parliamentarians asked to submit statements of assets by end of December

ISLAMABAD: Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has asked all members of parliament and provincial assemblies once again to submit their statements of assets and liabilities including those of their spouses and dependents by December 31.

According to ECP, all parliamentarians have to submit their yearly statements of assets and liabilities including similar details of their spouses and dependent children as the preceding June 30 on Form B for the financial year 2021-2022.

The Commission, on the first day of January each year will publish the names of members, who fail to submit the requisite statement of assets and liabilities within the period specified under sub-section (1).

The Commission will on January 16 by order suspend the membership of a member of an Assembly or Senate, who fails to submit the statement.

سوئی ناردرن گیس
Sui Northern Gas
Helpline: 1199

کمپریسر لگے گا
تو کنکشن کٹے گا

کمپریسر استعمال
کرنے والے صارفین کا
گیس کنکشن
بغیر کسی نوٹس کے
فوراً منقطع
کردیا جائے گا

کمپریسر کی اطلاع
1199 پر دیں

PID/L1643-D

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Under Secretary General of the UN/Executive Secretary of ESCAP Ms. Arminda Salsiah Alisjahbana called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar at Finance Division on Monday.



Photo: PID

Pakistan to get crude oil, petrol, diesel from Russia on discounted price: Musadiq

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Petroleum Dr. Musadik Malik on Monday termed his recent visit to Russia 'very successful' as the host country, in principle, had decided to provide crude oil, refined petrol and diesel to Pakistan at a discounted rate.

"In addition, negotiations with private sector companies of Russia have been initiated for procurement of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), while talks for long term contracts with public sector companies of Russia have also been initiated to get LNG from their new plants," he said addressing a news conference.

During the visit, he said fruitful discussions were also held on gas pipeline projects including establishing of Pakistan Stream Gas Pipeline, commonly known North-South (Lahore-Karachi) Gas Pipeline, and another a 'big gas pipeline' to get the commodity from Russian hydrocarbon deposits.

Musadik Malik said an inter-governmental delega-



tion of Russia, led by its Energy Minister, would visit Pakistan by January-mid [next month] to make progress on oil and gas sale-purchase agreements between the two countries.

Commenting on the current gas supply situation in the country, the minister said the local gas production was witnessing around 8-10 per cent decline annu-

ally and despite all these odds, the government had arranged extra gas for months of November, December and January as compared to the same months of the last year.

He said an effective monitoring system of gas supply to domestic consumers was in place, under which the Petroleum Division kept a vigil eye on the demand and supply of the commodity.

Musadik Malik said the gas companies had been directed to ensure gas supply, especially during 'breakfast, lunch and dinner' preparation timings i.e. 6-9 a.m., 12-2 p.m. and 6-9 p.m. "The incumbent government is providing extra gas as compared to the last year, and monitoring the supply situation regularly," he added.

However, he said there was a problem of poor infrastructure which created a gas pressure issue for the remote areas, which was being rectified on priority basis. To bridge the demand and supply gap, the minister said the gas companies were providing more than 20,000 tons Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) per month in the areas where gas-pressure issue and shortage prevailed.

He disclosed that Iran had announced to give Pakistan LPG worth two million pounds as 'assistance,' for which all formalities have been completed. He said the additional LPG would help ensure better gas supply

to domestic consumers in December.

The minister was of the view that the government believed in providing sufficient energy to the industrial sector as it would help move the economic wheel at a fast pace, thus generating employment opportunities for youth and increasing the country's exports.

Accordingly, he said the government was utilizing all available options and contacting different countries including Central Asian States to meet its energy requirements.

He highlighted the importance of exploiting the country's indigenous oil and gas potential, saying that two new policies related to tight gas and revival of old hydrocarbon wells, were being worked out.

Musadik Malik said the country needed 8-10 per cent addition in energy efficiency, if it wanted to improve Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at the rate of 5-6 per cent annually. PID

Asad Umar served contempt of court notice

RAWALPINDI: The Lahore High Court (LHC) Rawalpindi bench has served a contempt of court notice to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Secretary-General Asad Umar, ARY News reported on Monday.

The contempt of court notice was served to Asad Umar by Justice Jawad Hassan of the LHC Rawalpindi bench. The high court stated in the notice that petitions were being heard regarding PTI's protest demonstrations.

The notice was served on the basis of Asad Umar's speeches to target the courts in November 26 rally.

The additional registrar of the LHC Rawalpindi bench apprised the judiciary regarding the contemptuous speech of Umar which was aired on TV channels across the country. Umar's speech was an attempt to attack the honourable judges, it added.



The court has the power to penalise an individual who is involved in targeting the courts.

It is pertinent to mention here that the Supreme Court (SC) had penalised senior politician Nehal Hashmi for scandalising the courts in 2017.

The LHC Rawalpindi bench summoned the PTI secretary-general to submit his reply in the contempt case on December 7. ARY News

FIA to acquire facial recognition tech to stop criminals from fleeing abroad

KARACHI: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has decided to acquire modern facial recognition technology to stop wanted criminals from fleeing abroad, ARY News reported on Monday.

Sources told ARY News that the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) immigration will install facial recognition cameras at Jinnah International Airport - Karachi.

The facial recognition cameras will assist the authorities to stop wanted criminals from fleeing abroad. Sources added that modern technology will also help immigration officers

to arrest the suspects who are not named in the exit control list (ECL) or stop list.

The FIA immigration officers expedited efforts to functionalise the facial recognition system.

Sources said that an automatic system will raise alarm bells if an accused walks in front of the modern cameras.

Moreover, a special team will be deployed by the intelligence agency to use modern cameras. Modern technology will also help the police and other investigation institutions to arrest the accused. ARY NEWS

FPCCI assure to facilitate PCA in all matters including export

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Coating Association (PCA) headed by Mr. Siraj Uddin, Chairman, PCA, visited The Federation Pakistan Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI), at the Federation House.

The Acting President, FPCCI, Mr. Suleman Chawla, welcomed and thanked the Association for their visit to the Federation Chamber. On behalf of FPCCI, he assured PCA delegation to facilitate them in all matters and export of coating industry products. He stated, lot of opportunities exist and emerging in CIS states, namely Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, also Afghanistan being our neighbours, PCA should target these markets to promote coating business mainly focusing on exports. Through their good contacts with the counterparts and Pakistani consulates there, FPCCI can facilitate PCA in promoting coating industry, Mr. Chawla stated.

He offered, PCA to obtain research data information also on CIS states from the R&D Office in FPCCI on request. Mr. Chawla informed, the PCA team that FPCCI recently had sent a delegation to one of the CIS States, where PCA Members could

also be included in the same delegation, if they had approached FPCCI earlier. Talking on immediate opportunities for PCA, he apprised that URAN Chamber of Commerce plan to visit FPCCI shortly and an Export Exhibition is coming up soon in Indonesia, expect PCA to avail these events.

Mr. Chawla, suggested PCA, for aggressive marketing through professional presentation including research data and numbers to Secretary, Commerce, Mr. Sawleh Farooqui in Ministry of Commerce and TDAP for promoting coating industry. Also PCA need to participate in all events and activities being organized by Trade Organizations, including FPCCI, he said. Mian Nasser Hyatt Maggo, Former President, FPCCI, asked PCA to provide details of coating industry's export oriented products.

Addressing the house, Mr. Siraj Uddin, Chairman, PCA, thanked FPCCI for extending a warm welcome to the Association. Believing on PCA slogan "Main Nahi Hum" he said let us all work together including FPCCI for the development of trade and business. He requested FPCCI for their guidance to PCA in promoting and developing the coating industry.

Two PML-Q MPs announce support for imran khan

BAHAWALPUR: Two MPs of Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) have announced their support for Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan under leadership of Punjab Chief Minister Pervaiz Elahi, parting ways from federal minister Tariq Bashir Cheema, ARY News reported on Monday.

According to details, two PML-Q MPs - Dr Muhammad Afzal and Chaudhry Ehsan-ul-Haq - have parted

ways with Tariq Bashir Cheema and announced their support for Imran Khan under the leadership of Punjab CM Pervaiz Elahi.

In a statement, Chaudhry Ehsan-ul-Haq said that they have parted ways from Tariq Bashir Cheema as the latter now works for Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). "We will support Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) under the leadership of Pervaiz Elahi," he added.

Earlier, Punjab Chief Minister (CM) Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi vowed to dissolve Punjab Assembly on former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan's call.

The Punjab CM made these remarks during a meeting with Punjab Assembly Speaker Sibtan Khan. The meeting was also attended by Pakistan Muslim League (Q) leader Moonis Elahi.

During the meeting,

matters pertaining to political situations and Punjab Assembly rules and regulations came under discussion. The participants of the meeting also discussed technical aspects of constitutional situation ahead of Imran Khan's call.

On December 2, Imran Khan revealed that CM Pervaiz Elahi had signed the summary to dissolve the Punjab Assembly and handed it over to him.

Imran Khan also gave a

conditional dialogue offer to the PDM government and said that "PDM must give us an official general election date, otherwise we have the power to dissolve the assemblies."

The former PM said that the PML-Q is entirely behind us in the fight to dissolve the assemblies. "Chief Minister Pervaiz Elahi has also assured me that when I say the Assembly will be dissolved," he added. ARY NEWS

PDM will prevent dissolution of assemblies by all means: Atta Tarar

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister Attaullah Tarar said on Monday all options were under consideration to prevent the dissolution of Punjab Assembly, the Chief Minister may also be asked to show the required numbers.

Talking to a private news channel SAPM said if the early elections were mandated in Punjab, Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) would fiercely contest the elections, he determined.

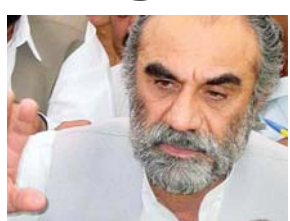
Grand programme on Raisani's JUI-F joining on Dec 7

ISLAMABAD: A grand programme would be held at former Chief Minister Balochistan Nawab Muhammad Aslam Khan Raisani's residence on December 7, for joining the Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F).

On this occasion, JUI-F Chief Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman would deliver a special address, informed JUI-F Secretary General Senator Abdul Ghafoor Haideri.

According to the details, Senator Haideri held a meeting with Nawab Raisani who is also the chief of Sarwan Tribe, and discussed the current political situation of the country.

He also reviewed the security



measures and expressed satisfaction with the arrangements of this political gathering.

Welcoming Raisani in the JUI-F, he said it would be a valuable addition in the party.

Meanwhile, JUI-F Spokesman Muhammad Aslam Ghauri told APP that today, Senator Dilawar Khan's son Adnan Khan and brother Azam Khan joined the JUI-F.

He further informed that a worker convention of JUI-F was going to be held in Ayub Stadium Quetta on December 8.

He said the central leadership of JUI-F including Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman, Minister for Housing and Works Maulana Abdul Wasay, Minister for Communication Maulana Asad Mehmood, Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Mufti Abdul Shakoore and Senator Abdul Ghafoor Haideri would address in this mega political gathering.

Aslam Ghauri disclosed that a number of towering political figures including former Home Minister Balochistan Nawab

Zafarullah Khan Zehri, former provincial minister and District Nazim Nushki Haji Ghulam Dastagir Badeni, former minister for Transport Balochistan Sakhi Mir Amanullah Notezai, independent candidate from PB-20 Pishin Agha Asmatullah, former Candidate for National Assembly from Pishin Malik Abdul Qayyum Kakar, and tribal elders Nawab Nauroz Khan Zehri and Sardar Zafarullah Khan Gachki would join the JUI-F.

He expressed the hope that JUI-F would get a huge mandate in the upcoming general elections from every nook and cranny of the country. PPA

Oil price fall benefit should be passed on to masses

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Former Vice President of FPCCI Atif Ikram Sheikh on Monday expressed concern over decreasing foreign exchange reserves.

The export, remittance, and investment situation is also worrying calling for urgent measures to stabilize the economy to prevent further weakening of the rupee, he said.

Talking to businessmen, he said that full focus on reducing the current account deficit alone cannot improve the situation.

Atif Ikram Shaikh, who has also been the former chairman of PVMA, said that exports and remittances are decreasing due to the gas crisis, inflation, and recession in western countries.



The reason for the decrease in domestic and foreign investment is political instability which is a great source of distress among businessmen.

He said that to the decrease in foreign exchange reserves, the rupee continues to weaken, so the govern-

ment will have to try to increase exports and decrease imports.

Due to the ravages of floods, the government will have to import wheat, cotton, and other food items on a large scale, which will widen the current account deficit, he said.

He observed that the textile industry earned nineteen billion dollars in foreign exchange last year and this year it needs cotton or its income will fall.

He said that oil prices in the international market are gradually declining; however, the sitting government should pass on the benefit to the consumers. Oil price was \$94 per barrel in the first week of November and now it has reduced to \$74 per barrel.

Consumers are being taxed by

Rs36 billion of Petroleum Development Levy, inflation (CPI) rose to 23.6 percent with the core inflation at 14.5-18.5 percent, and the inflation is likely to go up further, as the government has decided to increase gas prices and impose more taxes, as the government is running short on revenues.

The government's debt payments will increase as the SBP has increased the discount rate by 100 basis points and the IMF is also demanding additional taxes of Rs.800 billion, he mentioned.

He urged the government to provide relief to the people and immediately restart incentive schemes.

He noted that exports may further hurt as exporters' LC for raw materials and intermediate goods are not being opened due to a shortage of reserves.

CBD Punjab paced up development projects

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Central Business District Development Authority (PCBDDA), also known as Central Business District (CBD Punjab), is working on full throttle at CBD Punjab Boulevard and Kalma Chowk Underpass Remodelling Project. Authority has completed 560+ piles up to date.

Executive Director Technical PCBDDA, Mr. Riaz Hussain has said that "we are working at a pace of almost 50 piles per day our team is committed to the timely completion of the project. We have also expedited the construction work of the parking plaza concrete pouring of retention walls are completed and by the end of December we will reach the ground surface level." He has also requested the general public to plan their commute according to the traffic advisory issued by the authority & CTO Office while traveling in the vicinity of Kalma Chowk to avoid any inconvenience. City Traffic Police (CTP) Lahore and PCBDDA are simultaneously working to ensure hassle-free traffic flow.

City Traffic Officer, Lahore Dr. Asad Malhi has visited the site multiple times to ensure hassle-free traffic flow. During his recent visit, he said "This project will eradicate many problems related to traffic flow. I completely understand there are temporary problems due to construction and we are in continuous discussions with PCBDDA, for their solution. CTP has deployed an excessive number of traffic wardens at Kalma Chowk".

PCBDDA and CTP Lahore, have also issued an updated traffic advisory according to that the opposite road of Ali Zaib Road will be closed for 15-20 days for traffic coming from Firdaus Market to Center point. Authority and CTP Lahore have highlighted three alternative routes. Traffic coming from Barkat Market and going to Liberty Market will take a left turn from Kalma Chowk or will use the U-turn of Muslim Town Morr, to reach Liberty Market through Gaddafi Stadium. Similarly, traffic coming from Model Town for Liberty Market will also go straight to Muslim Town Morr, take a U-Turn and reach Liberty Market through Gaddafi stadium, commuters coming from Firdaus Market going towards Liberty Market or Main Boulevard, Gulberg, can go via Hussain Chowk.

New IMF programme needed to avoid default

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Former President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt on Monday said the government's economic performance is not satisfactory as it continues to prefer politics to economy.

The popular policies can push the country to further economic mess and the threat of default is snowballing as the economy is passing through one of the toughest periods in the country's history, he said.

Shahid Rasheed Butt said that a large external financing gap, a challenging global situation, devastating floods, and political instability have increased the risk for the country.

The uncontrollable current account deficit is coming down after currency devaluation and other tightening measures, the biggest worry is external repayments amid declining foreign exchange reserves, he added.

Shahid Rasheed Butt said that Pakistan's external debt repayment obligations are \$73 billion in three years and when it is compared to prevailing foreign exchange reserves of \$7-8 billion all we get is worries.

External debt and liabilities have doubled in seven years from \$65 billion or 24 percent of GDP to \$130 billion or 40 percent of GDP due to irresponsible borrowing.

Presently Pakistan's total debt and liabilities have increased from Rs19.9 trillion to Rs60 trillion as of June 2022 which is 90 percent of GDP, he informed.

Pakistan must exploit friendly relations with China and seek IMF-led debt restructuring of at least \$30 billion or the situation will go out of control, he warned.

The government should try to enter into a new IMF programme to avert a default, he said.

Under the new IMF programme along with debt restructuring, the country will likely witness strict monetary, exchange rate, and fiscal policies but we have no other option, he said.

The country's economic growth will remain slow, the rupee will remain under pressure, and the interest rate will remain at higher levels despite due to IMF's involvement.

If the debt is not restructured immediately, Pakistan's debt crisis could worsen further, which could hamper Pakistan's ability to pay back on time, he warned.

Protest

LAHORE: Lady Health workers shouting slogans during protest in favour of their demands outside press club in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Real Estate Sector has huge potential for women

Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: Real Estate Sector has huge potential for women to become an agent or even tap other allied lines as developer, interior decorators etc, it's a woman who better turns a house into home, said Mrs. Rubina Amjad, President Faisalabad Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FWCCI). She was addressing to the participants of 'Boss Ladies Expo 2022' organized by FWCCI at Auditorium of Faisalabad Chamber.

She said that the Expo has first ever been organized in the region or rather say that FWCCI is the pioneer in the country women chambers to tap this potential sector for women in real estate business.

She said that since decades, real estate remained a man's world. Break-

ing into the industry was difficult as non-traditional sector for women in Pakistan. She said that Real estate sector worth US Dollar 300 to 400 billion contributes around 5.4-5.9% in national GDP.

She said that thousands of young girls are graduating in various disciplines every year from our Universities. It is also a promising opportunity for them as career advancement for new business start ups.

Addressing the participants, Mian Muhammad Idrees, former President Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry and Chief Guest appreciated the efforts of President FWCCI to organize a unique and successful event. He said that it is quite a new area for women where they can be encouraged, convinced, get knowledge, initiate and utilize

their potential in this unique area. He said that women should be knowledgeable about such skills to work in life in a respectable way. The event was also addressed by Dr. Khurram Tariq, President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and distributed Certificates to the Expo participants.

Speaking on the occasion, Engr. Babar Ikram, Project Head, Wapda City highlighted various aspects of Real Estate project development. He narrated how Wapda City project was conceived and started in 1995. He said that one should learn first on the various aspects of real estate development project, quality and sustainability and also keep community development aspect. He offered to provide any guidance and support to women for developing such projects by them.

Five terrorists killed, soldier martyred in North Waziristan IBO

Raja Furqan Ahmed

RAWALPINDI: Security forces killed five terrorists in an Intelligence Based Operation (IBO) in Jhallar Algad, North Waziristan District, the military's media affairs wing said on Monday.

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said that during the operation, intense fire exchange took place between security forces and terrorists. "Troops effectively engaged the terrorists' location, and killed five terrorists got killed, recovering heavy ammunition," the ISPR said. It said that the terrorists had remained actively involved in anti-state activities against security forces.

SME Competitiveness Strategy for Balochistan underway

News Desk

QUETTA: Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Pakistan account for 35% in value addition, contribute 30% to the national GDP, and 25% to the exports. While their importance to the economy is undisputed, in terms of social development, SMEs also account for 78% of the non-agricultural employment in the country. That SMEs contribute significantly to the province's economic and social progress. With a view to further strengthen the role of SMEs in the development of the province, the Government of Balochistan is elaborating a provincial level SME Competitiveness Strategy to advance support services for SMEs in all three - agriculture, manufacturing, and services - sectors.



at the SME Working Group meeting, where the Chief Secretary Balochistan, Mr. Abdul Aziz Uqaili, appreciated the Industries and Commerce Department and the European Union-funded and International Trade Centre implemented GRASP project for making progress in

developing the SME Competitiveness Strategy for Balochistan, and said that Government of Balochistan is keen, progressive and forthcoming to adopt and implement the strategy. He said formalization of economy, access to finance and technology are the key challenges confront-

ing the private sector generally and the SMEs particularly of the province.

Secretary Industries and Commerce, Mr. Abid Saleem Qureshi, said that the department was developing SME strategy as envisioned in SME policy of the federal government and hoped that once approved and implemented the strategy would contribute to help develop SMEs and the private sector in the province.

Mr. Jahanzeb Khan, Provincial Lead ITC GRASP Balochistan stated that adopting the cluster approach would help in efficiently allocating the already scarce resources for the targeted sectors.

The representative of QCCI Mr. Ahad Agha stated that access to finance is a key challenge and banking sector should have a prominent role in resolving this issue.

Having a realistic and

implementable SME Competitiveness Strategy will provide Balochistan with an actionable roadmap to boost SME's performance for economic and social prosperity. It will contribute to building a conducive business environment for SMEs that can increase the trade performance of the province and make it more attractive for investment.

Technical support for the elaboration of the strategy is supported by the "Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress (GRASP)" project, funded by the European Union, and implemented by the International Trade Centre. The project is working to uplift the business environment around SMEs and assisting the government in updating and formulating relevant policies in Pakistan.

Rs 474b investment made in K-Electric since its privatization; Senate body was told

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Power on Monday was apprised that an investment of Rs 474 billion was made in K-Electric since its privatization in 2005.

The Committee which met with Saifullah Abro in the Chair was further told that the K-Electric has Rs 475 billion outstanding against federal and provincial departments.

CEO K-Electric Monis Alvi informed the Senate body that K-Electric was privatized in 2005 since the government sold 72.3 percent shares and declared it a private company. Now, the government owned 24.6 percent shares and there were total 13 directors out of which three were from the government side and 10 were private, he said.

The Committee recommended detailed in-camera briefing by CEO, K-Electric on the status of renewal of agreement between Govt. of Pakistan and K-Electric including its privatization process, performance and working, status update on distribution and generation and the pending issues between the government of Pakistan in the next meeting.

The Committee also discussed about the details of electricity provided to Balochistan including agricultural tubewells along with its recovery and revenue, subsidy received by the Governments of Pakistan and Balochistan from start till date.

The Committee recommended that a team of 2-3 members would visit Balochistan and verify that how many meters were installed on 1434 agricultural tubewells for which electricity was provided by K-Electric.

The Committee while discussing the Point of Public Importance regard-

ing provision of jobs to the candidates who qualified the recruitment test of PESCO, raised by Senator Mushtaq Ahmad Khan, was informed that the Ministry of Power Division had directed all the DISCOs that the recruitment process, frozen against the posts of Assistant Director/ Junior Engr. and Revenue Officers (BPS-17), may be continued subject to the condition that fresh interviews be conducted for all candidates interviewed previously.

The Committee was apprised that accordingly, the interviews were conducted.

The Committee was informed that since the recruitment process became doubtful, the Ministry decided that the process should be outsourced to the National Testing Service (NTS) only to the extent of the written test to further expedite the process.

However the Committee was not satisfied with the answers of the officials and kept the matter pending.

The Committee also recommended the process of recruitment and joining of the SDOs/AMs must also remain pending till clarity of the Committee on the matter. The Committee also sought the agreement, details of listed and short listed candidates and the transparency report.

While discussing the consideration of Public Petition No. PP-4964 regarding "Regularization of the Employees recruited in FESCO as LS-I & SSO-I through advertisement in 2015-2016", referred by the Chairman Senate,

the Committee was apprised that the ministry of Power Division has directed that no employee working on contingent/ daily wages/ contractual basis etc in any DISCO may be regularized. APP

Islamabad
15° - 23° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	5:29 am
Zohr	11:58 am
Asr	3:21 pm
Maghrib	4:59 pm
Isha	6:28 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance	115
PIA Flight Info	114
PIA Cargo	9280979
Railway Inquiry	117
Railway Exchange	9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi	555489
CAA	9281092

HOSPITALS

CMH	561111
MH	561116
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital	9270907-11
DHO	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	5558664
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

AIOU announces schedule for assignments



City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has announced the assignment schedule for Matric and F.A programs offered in autumn semester 2022. 5th December is the submission deadline for the first complete course assignment, December 31, for the second assignment, January 25, 2023, for third and, February 25, is the last submission date for the fourth assignment.

The submission deadline for 1st and 2nd half course assignments of matric and F.A programs is December 31, 2022, and February 25, 2023, respectively.

Students can get names, addresses, and other information of their respective tutors on CMS portal at <http://enrollment.aiou.edu.pk> or from any nearest regional campus. Students will be responsible for late assignment submission, and assignments reaching after the due dates will not be accepted.

Regional countries should work together to achieve common goals: Ahsan Iqbal

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, the Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, has called upon the regional countries to make joint efforts in achieving common goals of poverty alleviation, literacy, sustainable socio-economic development, and mitigation of climate disaster impacts.

He was speaking at the inaugural plenary of 25th Sustainable Development Conference (SDC) organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) and jointly held alongside UNESCAP's 6th South and Southwest Asia High-level Political Forum and Policy Dialogue on SDGs.

Although, he said, the member countries of South and West Asia region are making concerted efforts to achieve the agenda of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), i.e. climate change, conflicts, food security, poverty and inequality, which are the major challenges in the way of human development gains. The Minister urged the IFIs to establish a special fund to provide interest free loans with grace period of up to 30 years for the developing countries to cope with the climate disasters.

Ambassador Shafiq Kakakhel,

the Chairperson of SDPI Board of Governors, said this year's annual conference is unique in a sense that SDPI, the government, and UNESCAP joined hands to co-host this event.

Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri, Executive Director, SDPI said the objective of the forum is to foster and in-depth and shared understanding among the member states and stakeholders on strategies and opportunities at state, and sub-regional level to accelerate the implementation of 2030 agenda.

Mikiko Tanaka, Director and Head of UNESCAP Subregional Office for South and South-West Asia, Thailand said that regional countries are confronting with difficult times, therefore, they need to strengthen partnerships for regional development.

She affirmed that UNESCAP will continue to support member countries in achieving SDGs or 2030 agenda.

Knut Ostby, the UNDP Country Director, Fathimath Niuma, the Deputy Minister for the Ministry of Planning, Housing, and Infrastructure, Maldives, Shehan Semasinghe, the Minister of State for Finance, Sri Lanka, Mr Esala Ruwan Weerakoon, Secretary-General, SAARC, Ms Armi-da Salsiah Alisjahbana, the UN

Under-Secretary-General, and UNESCAP Executive Secretary, Syed Zafar Ali Shah, Secretary for the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, also spoke on the occasion.

Earlier, at a morning plenary, 'Geopolitical Conflicts: Implications for Pakistan's Geoeconomic', Dr Moeed W. Yusuf, the former National Security Advisor, has said that geographically Pakistan cannot escape from the great power contestation, as unipolarity is morphing into a new world order.

Haroon Sharif, the former Chairman of Board of Investment, shedding light on four major challenges said that globalization is shifting towards regionalism and proximity advantage can cut the cost of trade—an opportunity Pakistan should not miss.

Gen. (ret'd) Zubair Mahmood Hayat, the former Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, has said that geo-strategic contest of power at global level and regionally RSS-driven and BJP-led Bharat and associated Akhund Bharat ideology have serious geo-strategic ramifications for Pakistan. He said that it's not pure geo-economics, but intertwined geo-strategy and geo-politics at play.



Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri, the Executive Director of Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), said COVID-19 has decreased global GDP by US\$10 trillion and continues to affect global trade and energy market. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine has challenged the agriculture market; G7 countries and EU have conflicts over hard choice between heating or eating, which has crowded global energy market.

Speaking at the evening plenary titled, 'Strengthening climate diplomacy in South Asia: Together for implementation', Ambassador Dr Riina Kionka, Head of EU Delegation, in her keynote address said Pakistan after a tremendous unified effort managed to get the longstanding loss and damage

issue at the agenda of the global environmental moot of the 27th Conference of the Parties (COP-27) and also managed to get the fund agreed by the parties during the G-77 plus China forum meeting.

"Pakistan considers it as a shared win where Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar remarked that it is not alone the global south's victory rather the global north also came closer to get the objective met."

impacts of climate change in face of floods, drought, forest fires and India also faced floods and heatwaves followed by Bangladesh also faced floods and droughts.

The EU envoy added that India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and others in the region would have to work on climate mitigation and adaptation, adding, "EU stands ready to support Pakistan in meaningful climate regional initiative."

Speaking at a session on "Can national trade policies help mitigate climate challenge?" experts said that Pakistan needs a diversified and inclusive trade based on reduction in its carbon footprint to ensure climate-friendly growth and development.

Anjum Assad Amin, the Chairperson of National Tariff Commission, Asad Hayyuddin, the former secretary, Economic Affairs Division, Dr. Fahad Saeed, Climate Scientist at Climate Analytics, Germany and Sardar Mohazzam Hussain stressed the need for strengthening national economy through inclusive trade, competitiveness, and long-term dynamic policies and said the policy approach in terms of trade and climate was top to bottom, which should be opposite for a grass roots level intervention for promising outcomes.

Christmas Tree

ISLAMABAD: A female keenly viewing the Christmas tree installed in connection with upcoming celebrations of Christmas at a local hotel.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Extravaganza 2022 to kick off on Tuesday

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Extravaganza 2022 organized by International Islamic University will start from Tuesday. In this event, a book fair, flower exhibition and food gala have been organized on the inaugural day in which the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Nawaf Saeed Al Maliki, Minister of Information and Broadcasting Maryam Aurangzeb, diplomats of many countries, top leadership of the university and eminent personalities will participate. This event will continue till December 9, in which students will showcase their talents in literary competitions, media hunt, Qirat, arts exhibitions, Al marjaan Aladbi, speeches and declamations, funfair and IT based activities. A Muhsaira shall also be held at the new campus.

Islamabad Citizen Club should be restored immediately: Waqar Bakhtawari

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Waqar Zafar Bakhtawari, prominent entrepreneur of Islamabad and president of Chakwal Chamber of Commerce and Industry, has demanded the Chairman CDA to immediately restore the Islamabad Citizen Club built inside F-9 Park. Citizens should be provided the facility to use it. He further said that the building and all its infrastructure and equipments built over many years are slowly decaying. With the establishment of Islamabad Citizen Club, the residents of F-8, F-7 F-9 and G9 will be able to have club facilities in their nearest Jinnah Park. He said that the Islamabad Citizen Club was built with the taxes of the citizens of Islamabad and it should be used for the purposes for which it was built.

Pakistan to export over 10,000 workers to South Korea through EPS

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Overseas for Pakistanis and Human Resource Development and the Ministry of Employment and Labour (MOEL) of the Republic of Korea has signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the Sending and Receiving of Workers under the Employment Permit System (EPS) in 2006.

The MoU is renewed after every two years. So far, Overseas Employment Corporation (an attach department of the MOPHRD) has dispatched more than 10,000 workers to the Republic of Korea under EPS, said a press release here Monday. The signing ceremony of the renewal of EPS was held on 5th December, 2022 in the Ministry for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Islamabad.

Federal Minister Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development Mr. Sajid Hussain Turi signed the MoU on behalf of the Government of Pakistan. Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, H.E Suh Sangpyo, presented the signed copy of the MoU from the Minister for Labour and Employment, H.E Lee Jung Sik, on behalf of the Republic of Korea. APP

Pakistan Academy of Sciences plans to formulate strategies to control the pandemic

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: To highlight strategies to combat pandemics, a three-day ANSO-PAS-MAAP Conference on

Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness was jointly organized by the Pakistan Academy of Sciences (PAS), Alliance of International Science Organization (ANSO), and Monbukagakusho-MEXT Alumni Association of Pakistan (MAAP) at the Academy on 05 Dec. 2022 at the Auditorium of the Academy. During this three-day event, 33 experts from Pakistan and foreign countries (China, Italy, New Zealand, and USA) will focus on surveillance and preparedness against global Pandemics and epidemics while 50 posters will be presented

on various themes of pandemics and epidemics.

Over 400 academicians, scientists, researchers and postgraduate students from around the world are participating in the deliberations of the conference through physical and/or virtual (online) presence. Recommendations of the conference will be shared with national and international bodies and research institutions dealing with the development of vaccines for the control of potential epidemic and pandemic-related issues worldwide.

The event was inaugurated by Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman Higher Education Commission. In his address, he appreciated the efforts of PAS, ANSO and MAAP for jointly organizing



this useful event for the health and safety of mankind from epidemics and pandemics. He motivated the young scientists and postgraduate students for their role in diagnosis, control,

therapeutic and vaccine strategies for different viruses. He mentioned that HEC has been preempting to have the concept of smart universities to have higher education online. Prof.

Dr. CAO Jinghua, Executive Director, ANSO also addressed the gathering online on behalf of Prof. Dr. Chun Li Bai, President of ANSO. He appreciated the efforts of the Pakistan Academy of Sciences and COVID-related management in the Country for spreading awareness about the adverse impacts of epidemics and pandemics.

Earlier, Prof. Dr. Tasawar Hayat, Secretary General, Pakistan Academy of Sciences welcomed the Chief Guest, distinguished scientists, speakers and participants. He shed light on the role of the Academy in facilitating Pakistani academicians, scientists and researchers for innovative R&D in various scientific disciplines for implications in the domain of health,

energy, technology, etc. Prof. Dr. Zabta Khan Shinwari, President MAAP, Distinguished

National Professor, Prof Emeritus, QAU, Islamabad, presented the keynote address and thanked PAS, ANSO and HEC for collaborating in the organization of this event and highlighted the improvement in pandemic control-related strategies, risk management and policies against future possible outbreaks. He had a draft strategy to combat future pandemics.

In his inaugural address, Prof. Dr. Khalid M. Khan congratulated the collaborating institutions and organizing team for their efforts in organizing the event. He talked about the spread and impacts of some devastating pandemics in past

(hong kong flu, swine flu and COVID-19 outbreaks, etc.) on mankind. Prof. Dr. Muhammad Ali (QAU), organizer of the event and Principal Investigator of the ANSO Project on Molecular detection and Characterization of Bat-borne Viruses from Pakistan talked about zoonotic viruses that are responsible for pandemics and epidemics, which affect almost every field of life throughout the world. He specifically targeted viruses associated with Bats and that Bats are the main reservoir of viruses. He presented his Valuable project and the inevitable struggle for identification and studying these bats and their microbiome all over Pakistan. The event was concluded with a vote of thanks from the organizers

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

‘Sindhi Topi Ain Ajrak Wara Jian’

Tariq Khattak

You might have your ears moved by a famous Sindhi song ‘Sindhi Topi ain Ajrak Wara Jian’ by Ahmad Mughal in the gatherings of Pakistan People’s Party (PPP). But have you ever wondered what it is all about? Yes, you are right. It’s about Sindhi’s culture. Squeezed in Sindhi cap and widely popular Ajrak – added later – the Sindhi culture is as vibrant as its symbols. Let’s explore the history of the day and the symbols.

Sindh Culture Day – celebrated on the first Sunday of December – is the day of paying tribute and respect to the rich and vibrant history of the Indus civilization starting from Mohenjo Darro, also known as the mother of civilizations. Along with the felicitations pouring in from leaders and civil society members across the world, people could be seendancing to traditional songs while wearing Ajrak and Sindhi cap. This year, the theme of the day is ‘Ekta’ meaning unity.

The celebrations started as the Sindhi Topi Day in 2009 in response to a famous and equal-

ly controversial TV anchor Dr. Shahid Masood’s critical remarks about the then President Asif Ali Zardari who had worn Sindhi cap on one of his official foreign tours. The Sindhi language media outlets reacted strongly to the remarks and started projecting Sindhi’s culture as a symbol of pride and unity. Ali Kazi, the head of a Sindhi news channel KTN pitched the idea of celebrating the cultural day and all Sindhis weighed in for the celebrations. Since then, the audience of the day has not looked back with famous leaders including Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau sending heartfelt greeting on the occasion.

According to an independent curator of ethnographic headwear, Stacey W Miller, “hats and headdresses are a unique and powerful lens through which one can view the human experience.”

Ranging from the material used in making of a hat to its use over the time, cap could convey a lot of information on people’s craftsmanship, climate conditions of the time it was first made in, identity of the society back then and gradual changes it has endured over the course of time, and religious and cultural inclinations associated with it.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth century AD, covering head was considered a symbol of soberness, and respected. Those who did not want to put the “weight” of covering – as modern generation perceives it

On the eve of cultural day, Ajrak as a gift is a hammock for infants, headgear for girls, bridal accessory, a turban and a shawl, a bed cover, and a tablecloth.

On the journey the cap has undergone till modern times.

In the silky era, the import of silk from Kashmir fascinated the cap makers to use silk as the cloth and ornament the cap with pearls, plastics, and glasses. It – unlike today’s cap – had a half moon cut at its forehead and is outdated now. Silk was mostly used by the rich then.

During the Collyrium era, the material for ornamentation saw a shift from plastics to collyrium – a fluffy material that now a days could be seen covering the mic to reduce noise. It was used to create aesthetic lines and flowering designs on the caps. The tops of the caps were decorated in different shapes including half, circular, rectangular, four-cornered, oblique, moon, sun, and stars. It lost its space because upon washing, the greyish color and shining went away.

The phase of golden threads witnessed the use of a hard cloth between two or three folds of the cap it originally contained to provide a solid covering to the head. In this era, the opening of the cap saw the incision of an orchid shape and it prevails to date. Now a days, most Sindhis could be seen wearing or gifting the same design cap to others.

Ajrak – a famous and multi-purpose Sindhi shawl – is another symbol of the Sindhi culture. It derives its name from Persian word Ajar and ak means brick and small respectively, hence conveying the sense of unity and its journey from other cultures. On the eve of cultural day, Ajrak as a gift is a must. It is used as a hammock for infants, headgear for girls, bridal accessory, a turban and a shawl, a bed cover, and a tablecloth.

The early designs of Ajrak dawn on us the adeptness of early people in making clothes. Woodblock printing – a type of printing that uses woodblocks to print texts or patterns on cloths or pages – is used to inscribe the designs it carries on it. Most of the Ajrak makers use the same technique to date. The entire production involves the use of vegetable or mineral dyes to inscribe the patterns. Indigo is the main dye.

Sindhi culture day is incomplete without Ajrak and Sindhi cap. They are the symbol of pride and respect for indigenous people. The bright colors and symmetry of Ajrak and cap reflect the precision that goes into enabling them represent the Sindhi culture all across the world.

‘India No.1 country in the world likely to witness genocide’

With the multiple video footages of Muslims being publicly flogged by Hindu fanatics surfacing on the internet, analysts believe that India was fast heading toward the much-feared stage of genocide.

Recently an upsurge in lynching and mistreating of Muslim youngsters has been observed in India, especially during the religious festival of Garba. In multiple incidents, the right-wing Hindu extremist mob maltreated Muslims around the said religious festival.

On October 3 and 4, three incidents were reported where state machinery supported Hindu extremists in their anti-Muslim agenda.

“India has all of the preparatory stages for more genocidal massacres,” according to Dr Gregory Stanton, the founder of Genocide Watch.

Dr. Stanton had predicted a genocide in Rwanda years before it took place in 1994. Now he has warned of an impending genocide of Muslims in India, comparing the situation of the country under the Narendra Modi government to events in Myanmar and Rwanda.

In the State of Gujarat, nine Muslim men were publicly flogged by Hindu extremists while the crowd chanted nationalist slogans and the state machinery including police reportedly supervised and supported the torture. The incident happened when a mob of Hindus teased and chanted anti-Islam slogans in the Muslim community area.

In a separate incident in Jharkand, 22 years old Ejaz Ansari was beaten to death by RSS mob with axes and batons.

In Mandsaur city of Madhya Pradesh, 19 Muslim youth were arrested on fake charges of disturbing the Garba festival. The houses of three youths were also bulldozed by the administration.

The International Human Rights Foundation took notice of the incident and asked the Government of India to take notice of the incident.

“Yet another video of a prominent Hindu supremacist singer calling on Hindus to buy weapons and to prepare themselves for a war to turn India into a Hindu nation. The world can no more ignore what’s happening in India. Muslims are at the cusp of genocide,” the Indian American Muslim Council wrote on Twitter.

The analysts believe that India was becoming a Hindu Rashtra where Muslims will be forced to live as second-class citizens and will be persecuted and murdered.

In Narendra Modi’s India, the Hindutva hateful ideology is being propagated and supported by Indian media and state machinery. The Muslims are being demeaned and accused of bogus charges with their houses being demolished.

The saner elements in India have urged international human rights organizations to take notice of the human rights abuses and rising Islamophobia in India.

Ironically, the Indian police and justice system remains complicit with the right-wing Hindu nationalist in their agenda of marginalizing and lynching Muslims.

The backing of the Indian state machinery of the human rights violators is evident from the fact that 11 Hindu men convicted of gang rape of Bilkis Bano were released by the court. They were given a heroic welcome and garlanded after their release.



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

India’s Muslim heritage under threat as Hindu zealots eye Taj Mahal’s claim after Babri mosque

Spokesman Research

Pursuing the agenda of Babri mosque’s demolition 30 years ago, the Hindu zealots continue to make false claims about the historic sites, most recently the magnificent Taj Mahal, for its alleged origins to an early Hindu ruler.

A recent writ petition filed by a leader of Narendra Modi’s ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) sought a fact-finding committee to “study the real history” of the Taj Mahal with an aim to declare the UNESCO heritage site Taj Mahal as originally a Hindu temple.

Rajneesh Singh, head of the BJP’s media relations in Ayodhya, north India, in his petition, said there was no “scientific evidence” to prove that the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan built the Taj Mahal.

Though the attempt was foiled by the Indian court, the BJP leaders over the years have been repeating and amplifying unhistorical claims that the Taj is in fact a Hindu temple, which was built much before the reign of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan.

The Hindutva driven RSS is peddling the narrative all across India against historical monuments built by Muslim rulers.

Under the BJP rule, the right-wing Hindus of RSS is pursuing a campaign that involves changing the names of cities and claiming over 36,000 mosques across India through claims that they were built over a temple. The list of cities includes

Aligarh, Deoband, Farrukhabad, Badaun, Sultanpur, Ferozabad and Shahjahanpur. The UP government has already changed the name of Faizabad to Ayodhya and Allahabad to Prayagraj.

Yogi Adityanath, a close aid of Modi and the Chief Minister of UP is leading the effort to eradicate Muslim identity by renaming the names of districts and localities with Muslim background.

In 2017, Vinay Katiyar, who was then a BJP Rajya Sabha member, claimed that the monument was in fact a Shiva temple named ‘Tejo Mahalaya’, which was “originally” built by a Hindu ruler.

The recent Taj Mahal episode has refreshed the sad demolition of Babri mosque on December 6, 1992 as a black chapter in the annals of history.

The demolition led by L.K Advani, President Ram Janambhumi Movement, was part of an effort to revive BJP and RSS who claimed that it was built on the exact spot in Ayodhya where Hindu god, Lord Ram, was born.

Shriraj Nair national spokesperson for the Hindu nationalist group Vishva Hindu Parishad (sub group of RSS) said that, “I felt very proud when the mosque was demolished. From that time onward, the word ‘Hindutva’ – or the feeling of being Hindu – came into everybody’s mind. It was a big success.”

During the second term of Modi, all accused for the Babri Masjid demolition were acquitted by a special CBI court. Despite the fact that demolition was

recorded in newspapers and on video, the court said evidence was not acceptable.

However, the Babri mosque is not the only one taken over under the Hindutva ideology.

About the 17th century Gyanvapi Mosque built by Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb in Vanarsi, the right wing Hindu claim that it was built over Vishweshwar temple.

Tensions sparked in 2021 when five women filed a petition and demanded access to pray inside the mosque. The single petition has now grown to 15 separate petitions, with many calling for the mosque to be torn down and a temple built in its place.

Keeping the precedence set in Babri Masjid in mind, it is highly likely that the courts under the Modi led government will give verdict in favor of the Hindus.

The Shahi Eidgah Masjid built by Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb in 1669 at Mathura, is also being claimed to have been built on Keshav Dev temple that was destroyed by the ruler during the Jat rebellion.

Right-wing Hindu groups have created a controversy over Jamia Masjid Shamsi by claiming that it was built by demolishing the temple of Neel Kanth Mahadeva.

Unfortunately, the global community has turned a blind eye towards the blatant human rights violations committed by Hindutva driven BJP government towards Muslims and other minorities in India, thus requiring a strong introspection at national and international levels.

KP takes steps for food security, cutting reliance on other provinces

Sajid Irfan

Food security is the most challenging issue in Pakistan after the recent heavy monsoon floods which washed away millions of acres of agricultural land-countrywide. To overcome food security in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province, the provincial government has taken some pragmatic steps.

A spokesperson for the KP food department told WealthPK that the flood has adversely affected almost every farmer causing food shortages in the country. The provincial government has taken pragmatic measures to ensure food security to help reduce dependency on the other provinces. The floods destroyed almost 60% of crops, vegetables and fruits. The land of all the four provinces is very fertile and produces fruits, vegetables and crops of the finest quality.

He further said the KP government was the first to have introduced small, medium and long-term policies to overcome the problem of food security.

Kisan cards have been introduced to help the farmers by providing them with subsidies on agricultural products.

The food department spokesperson said Chashma Right Bank Lift Canal (CRBC) project was also in the pipeline, which, on completion, would bring hundreds of thousands of acres of barren land under cultivation in the southern districts.

The initiatives for agriculture and livestock in settled districts include the reclamation of 4,185 acres for agricultural purposes. They also include the lining of 39,095 meters of waterways, training 2,500 farmers in advanced technologies, and establishing 228 fish farms for trout and carp.

He said some clean drinking water projects were

also in the pipeline, including 1463 water schemes in the last four years. As many as 646 water supply schemes have been solarized, while 831 schemes have been completed in the sanitation sector during the past four years in the settled districts alone.

“The flood has damaged almost 14,397 acres of land in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), depriving it of a number of major crops, such as fruit orchards, rice, potato crops, and oil seeds. The loss of maize crops has been estimated at about Rs368.09 million in KP. Out of a total of 15,930 acres, 938 acres have

The initiatives for agriculture and livestock in settled districts include the reclamation of 4,185 acres for agricultural purposes. They also include the lining of 39,095 meters of waterways, training 2,500 farmers in advanced technologies.

been damaged by the flood causing a financial loss of Rs145.28 million,” he added.

He said the agriculture sector was a vital component of Pakistan’s economy, as it provided raw materials to the industries and helped in poverty alleviation.

The agriculture sector’s growth is contingent on favourable weather conditions, he added. The official said monsoon rains had long been wreaking havoc on Pakistan in terms of human casualties and destruction of already fragile infrastructures but climate change had further increased their frequency, ferocity and unpredictability in recent years.

Family Gala Celebration at the Indonesian Embassy

Ambassador Adam appreciated the efforts and teamwork of the organizers

Tooba Khan

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in collaboration with Hunerkada, Community Development Center (CDC) and an magazine organized a "Friends of Embassies Family Gala" at the Indonesian Embassy.

The event was attended by the families of diplomatic corps, government officials, journalists, and business communities.

Family Gala featured a diverse programs that included musical performances, fun games and stall of handicrafts from women entrepreneurs of Pakistan.

Ambassador Adam M. Tugjo appreciated the efforts and teamwork of the organizers for making the event so festive. "It was exclusively dedicated to the families and friends of embassies and also to observe Animal Rights Day", added the envoy.

The Chief guest of the event, Chairperson of The National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC), Ms. Afshan Tehseen praised the warm gesture by the Indonesian Embassy for organizing the cultural gathering to strengthen the fraternal bonds among two Muslim brotherly countries. She stated in her remarks, "Through such event we hope to instill in people the importance of caring for human in the same way we care for animal".

The event also displayed the envoy's truck arts painted official car. The car



is decorated with famous cultural landmarks of Indonesia and Pakistan.

Ladies of the Indonesian Embassy mesmerized the audience with "Angklung" performance on Dil-Dil Pakistan. Angklung is an Indonesian musical instrument consisting of two to four bamboo tubes suspended in a

bamboo frame, bound with rattan cords. Since each Angklung only generates one note or chord several players must work together in order to play melodies. Angklung captures the spirit of cooperation and togetherness of diverse Indonesian society.

Brilliant musical performances by the

Hunerkada team demonstrated their expertise on Tabla and flute. A female singer also sang "Hello hello Sayang Ku", which means "Hello dear one" in Indonesian from the well-known Pakistani film "Bandish".

CDC's efforts to promote animal welfare in the event was highly appre-



ciated by the visitors.

Many exclusive handicraft stalls, famous delicacies of Indonesian and Pakistani cuisines were also presented which includes Meat ball soup, chicken sate with fried rice, biryani, haleem, nihari, creative designs of decorated

baking items, fashion and clothing, variety of handmade, henna stall and pet accessories. The event "Family Gala" brought families together and entertained people of all ages.

Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

China Honors Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary with China Friendship Award

Special Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General COMSTEC/ Director ICCBS honored by the government of China with the Chinese Government's Friendship Award. The award was presented by His Excellency Mr. Nong Rong, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China in Pakistan in a special ceremony held at the Chinese Embassy in Islamabad.

Chinese Government's Friendship Award is the People's Republic of China's highest award for "foreign experts who have made outstanding contributions to the country's economic and social progress". The winners of this award have been selected by the State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs (SAFEA) under the State Council. The award is conferred as



part of the celebrations for the National Day of the People's Republic of China on October 1 and it consists upon a medal and an award certificate.

Prof. Choudhary has played a key China-Pakistan cooperation in the field of science and

technology, including establishment of Sino-Pakistan centers in various fields. This includes the national institute of virology at the PCMD, in collaboration of Wuhan Institute of Virology China.

Prof. Dr. Muhammad

Iqbal Choudhary is a world renowned medicinal chemist. He has published 1,175 research papers in the fields of organic and bioorganic chemistry in international journals, 76 books and 40 chapters in books published by major US and European press. He has secured 40 US patents so far.

Prof. Choudhary's work has been cited by the researchers from around the world over 30,000 times and his h-index is 80. By now 94 national and international scholars have completed their PhD degrees under his supervision.

Prof. Choudhary is D.Sc., Ph.D., and C. Chem. He has been awarded by different governments of Pakistan with Hilal-e-Imtiaz, Sitara-e-Imtiaz, and Tamgha-e-Imtiaz.

He has been elected fellow by world renowned science academies named Academy of Sciences for the Developing

World, Islamic World academy of Sciences, Pakistan Academy of Sciences, Royal Society of Chemistry, and Chemical Society of Pakistan.

Prof. Choudhary has been honored by the President of Iran with Khwarizmi International Award, President of Azerbaijan, with ECO Award in Education and the Prime Minister of Pakistan with COMSTEC Award in Chemistry. He is Mustafa (PBUH) Prize Laureate. He has been given the prestigious title of "Distinguished National Professor" by the Higher Education Commission in 2004 and Meritorious Professor by the University of Karachi in 2013.

Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary is currently serving as Coordinator General, COMSTEC and Director, International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences, University of Karachi.

Muslim League Qayyum's protest in London against the US-India alliance



Spokesman Report

LONDON: To raise a strong voice at the global level against the threats posed to the peace and stability of South Asia by the ambitions of American and Indian hegemony, Pakistan Muslim League Qayyum held an effective protest demonstration in London's Hyde Park. Which was led by Special Chief Coordinator Overseas, Jahangir Khan of Pakistan Muslim League Qayyum. A large number of Muslim League Qayyum workers, Overseas Pakistanis, and Friends of Kashmir participated in the demonstration.

Speakers and demonstrators raised their voices in protest and said that the United States' decision to make India a regional police force and the increasing joint military exercises with it is a conspiracy to seriously affect the security and balanced environment of South Asia. For peace and security, the dynamic global activist circles should take immediate notice of the situation, foil such conspiracies, and move forward to find a peaceful solution to the Kashmir issue, the only major cause of instability in South Asia.

The participants of this demonstration, led by Special Chief Coordinator Overseas Jahangir Khan of Pakistan Muslim League Qayyum UK, carried placards and banners in their hands. On which slogans of protest against the joint military exercises of the United States and India and the statement given by American President Joe Biden against Pakistan's nuclear power were written. Jahangir Khan also read the message of Syed Faqir Hussain Bukhari, president of Muslim League Qayyum, to the protesters. He said that the facts of the relations being extended by the United States with India in recent years have made it clear and proven that those with a colonialist and hegemonic mindset do not want to promote peace, stability, and security in any region of the world, but rather to promote their own interests. They are engaged in conspiracies against countries like Pakistan and China, who are trying for regional peace and stability, the most controversial statement made by Biden against Pakistan's defense force is actually a reflection of the American mentality, which is an open secret and strongly condemnable.

He said that in the past months and in the coming days, the joint military exercises conducted or planned to be conducted by the United States of America with India are in the border areas adjacent to Pakistan and the regions of Kashmir and Ladakh. These facts make it clear that the United States is not only trying to make India the ruler of the region, but it also wants to push the historical dispute of Jammu and Kashmir back from the global background.

The speakers said that the traditional mentality against Pakistan and China is driven by the ambitions of this US-India alliance and India's traditional anti-Pakistan policy is also of primary importance. The speakers demanded that international peace forces and activist circles should move forward to counter such US-Indian conspiracies. And India should be forced to give up the mentality of regional instability.

UAE - Afghan Relations

ABU DHABI: President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan received Afghanistan's Acting Minister of Defence, Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob, today, at Qasr Al Shati Palace. The meeting addressed cooperation relations and issues of interest.



General Asim statement is a ray of hope for Kashmiris: Altaf Bhat

Special Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Chairman JKSM Altaf Ahmed Bhat lauds Pakistan's new Army Chief Gen Asim Munir's statement regarding Kashmir and terms it as ray of hope for the besieged and oppressed Kashmiris.

Chairman of Jammu & Kashmir Salvation Movement (JKSM) while appreciating the statement of new COAS of Pakistan Army General Asim Munir's visit to LoC and stance on Kashmir issue has said that Pakistan Army has always supported Kashmir issue.

Indian nefarious and hegemonic designs have cost hundreds of thousands of innocent lives, while jeopardized peace, security and stability of whole South Asia. Chairman JKSM added.

Iqra University signed MoU with the University of Al Azhar Indonesia

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: The Indonesian Consulate General in Karachi has initiated and facilitated the establishment of Iqra University's collaboration with 7 universities in Indonesia namely Al Azhar Indonesia University, Universitas Negeri Jakarta (UNJ), UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, Telkom University, UNDI-KNAS University Bali, and the University of Udayana Bali since

last November. As a form of realization of this plan, the leaders of Iqra University and the team visited the 3 largest cities in Indonesia namely Jakarta, Bandung, and Bali to sign the MoU directly on 2-8 December 2022.

On the first day of the visit (3/12), Prof. Dr. Wasim Qazi, President / Vice Chancellor of Iqra University signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Dr. Ir. Ade Jamal, Vice Rector IV for Information

and Corporation of UAI was witnessed directly by Prof. Dr. Zakir Rashidi and other IU delegations as well as UAI vice-chancellors and faculty leaders. Virtually present UAI Chancellor Prof. Dr. Ir. Asep Saifuddin, M.Sc, and the Indonesian Consul General, Dr. June Kuncoro Hadiningrat.

Consul General Dr. June Kuncoro Hadiningrat in his remarks expressed his high appreciation for this collaboration, he emphasized the importance of collaboration between the two largest Muslim countries in the world, especially starting with the collaboration of the young generation of the two countries with full support from universities. The Indonesian Consul General is committed to continuing to assist in the realization of cooperation between UAI and IU.

The Vice-chancellor of IU and the Chancellor of UAI have both agreed on a form of collaboration and its realization will begin



early next year. In 2023, the two universities agreed that to jointly

commemorate the 23rd anniversary, they will hold joint activities such as conferences, seminars, and student exchanges through scholarship schemes and teacher exchanges. In addition, they expressed their appreciation and gratitude to the Indonesian Consulate General in Karachi for the initiative and support in uniting these two universities. Indonesia and Pakistan have quality educational institutions recognized by world rankings.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
41,612.67	42,150.10	
Day's High	Day's Low:	
42,248.53	41,514.81	
Index Value	Change	
4,021,611,167	-537.43	
Percentage	Time	
-1.28%	5 Dec, 2022 5:00 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
7,567.54	+11.31	
Percentage	Time	
+0.15%	5 Dec, 4:35 pm GMT	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
34,128.69	-301.19	
Percentage	Time	
-0.87%	5 Dec, 11:39 am GMT-5	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
27,820.40	+42.50	
Percentage	Time	
+0.15%	5 Dec, 3:15 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	152.24	153.49
Bahrain Dinar	595.37	599.87
Canadian Dollar	166.23	167.58
China Yuan	31.85	32.1
Danish Krone	31.73	32.08
Euro	250	252.5
Hong Kong Dollar	28.74	29.09
Indian Rupee	2.74	2.82
Japanese Yen	1.9	1.94
Kuwaiti Dinar	730.16	735.16
Malaysian Ringgit	49.99	50.44
New Zealand \$	139.22	140.42
Norwegians Krone	22.65	22.95
Omani Riyal	581.45	585.95
Qatari Riyal	61.5	62
Saudi Riyal	63.2	63.8
Singapore Dollar	165.62	166.92
Swedish Korona	21.46	21.76
Swiss Franc	239.14	240.89
Thai Bhat	6.26	6.36
U.A.E Dirham	65.3	65.8
UK Pound Sterling	293	295.8
US Dollar	229.5	231.5

MoUs signing for consolidating business registrations into an e-services portal of the SECP

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Under the Pakistan Regulatory Modernization Initiative (PRMI), the Board of Investment (BOI) Monday facilitated the signing of memorandums of understanding (MoUs) for consolidating and integrating sector-level business registrations into an e-services portal of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP).

The International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, supports these registrations as part of its advisory, PRMI, which the BOI leads. Separate MoUs were signed between SECP, Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC), Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB), and Special Technology Zones Authority (STZA) at the Marriott Hotel.

The business registration integration aims to unify the registration processes at SECP's e-services portal, earlier done in silos and with semi-automated systems. However, businesses can now avail one-window registration with all these department sand online registration fee payment. It would curtail processing time, ensure information integrity, eliminate



redundant processes, and promote information-sharing among government departments to avoid repetitive due diligence procedures.

Mr. Muhammad Jahanzeb Khan, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Government Effectiveness, applauded BOI's efforts, appreciated the synergies for integration of business registrations among the federal departments, and encouraged all stakeholders, especially SECP, to streamline and integrate the business registrations with all the government

departments.

Mr. Khan pointed out that over-regulation is hurting the business community, for which regulatory reform is the need of the hour. Globally, the economies have benefited from the regulatory reforms, which have directly impacted the socio-economic development in these economies, he said.

Mr. Asad Rehman Gillani, Secretary Board of Investment, stressed the need to ensure a conducive environment for businesses to

thrive. He appraised the forum that PRMI is a second-generation reforms initiative designed to build on the progress achieved under the Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) program.

Mr. Gillani said it is the first time in Pakistan's history that a concerted approach is being undertaken to eliminate, critically analyze, simplify, reengineer, improve and eventually digitalize business registrations, licenses, certificates, other permits, and regulatory requirements. PRMI envisions establishing Pakistan Business Portal, one-stop shop (OSS) for all business-related interactions with government departments and regulators.

Mr. Zeeshan Sheikh, the Country Manager for Pakistan and Afghanistan at IFC, said that, "IFC has been a longstanding partner of the government on business enabling reforms at the federal and provincial levels—we remain committed to supporting the authorities in this work, and today's announcements regarding unification of business registrations at SECP's e-services portal for key sectors including IT and renewable energy, will be an important step in improving the process of registering new businesses, making it more transparent and streamlined."

Friesland Campina brings Dutch farmers to Pakistan under Farmer2Farmer initiative

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: To aid knowledge transfer and best practice sharing in line with its Dairy Development Program (DDP), Friesland Campina Pakistan invited certified dairy farmers from the Netherlands to train and advise Pakistani farmers on best dairy farming practices.

Under the Farmer2Farmer initiative, 2 Dutch farmers, Petrus Adrianus and Gerhard Herman, visited FCEPL factory and partner farms in Sahiwal to engage with local dairy farmers on dairy farming practices like animal health and welfare, feeding and watering, calf-rearing, milking hygiene, cow fertility, housing and barn design.

Explaining the main goal of the Farmer2Farmer program, Muhammad Sohail



Sarwar Chaudhary, Director Agri-Business, FCEPL, said, "This visit enhanced the farmers' knowledge with reference to global expertise through the lens of local scenario. Our aim is to boost dairy production both qualitatively and quantitatively to uplift the socio-economic position of our farmers and make rural communities more viable."

One of the objectives of the Dairy Development Program and Farmer2Farmer initiative is to build capabilities of the local farmers as per global benchmarks and transform the dairy industry of Pakistan. Earlier this year, FC Pakistan announced the Pakistan Netherlands Dairy Development Center (PNDDC) in partnership with UVAS, to improve and enhance the dairy value chain in Pakistan.

CEO Honda Atlas inaugurates aftersale center in Gujranwala



LAHORE: CEO, Honda Atlas Cars Pakistan Limited, Mr. Takafumi Koike has assured to provide world-class services in all cities of Pakistan. While addressing the inaugural ceremony of GT Honda Gujranwala the other day he said that the quality aftersale maintenance is the dire need of Pakistan to have the safe and guaranteed drive on the local roads. He said that the on-floor technicians of the service stations have also been equipped with the latest training to handle the latest technology introduced in Pakistan.

The inaugural ceremony was attended by Mr. Iqbal Ahmed, senior general manager HACPL, Mr. Muhammad Naeem – senior manager sales, Mr. Farman Saleem – senior manager aftersales, Ms. Bushra Waseem – manager aftersales and Mr. Hamza Farooq – senior assistant manager aftersales. Mr. Takafumi Koike-Scan authenticated that GT Honda Gujranwala is equipped with equipped with latest High-Tec equipment, which are quite trust worthy and fully functional as per standards of Honda Atlas. However, he advised that the management should maintain the culture of quality and customer satisfaction throughout the organization as an ongoing phenomenon in all times to come.

It is notable that the GT Honda located Chan Da Qila at Main G.T Road, is the authorized service and genuine parts dealer in the great City of Wrestlers. The management of the newly set up facility has offered 25% discount to the first incoming visitors till 9th of December in all of its services including mechanical, body and paint labor.

Aggressive policy needed to increase exports, remittances: Mian Zahid Hussain

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Monday lauded the government for early payment of one billion dollars of Sukuk bonds.

The central bank has paid one billion dollars against bonds two days ahead of schedule and with this, the rumors of Pakistan's bankruptcy have been proven wrong.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the position of Finance Minister Ishaq Dar has also been proven correct, while the anxiety of international investors has also decreased, but investors will be fully satisfied when there is political stability in the country.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that after the end of the long march, there is a possibility of improvement in the political situation.

If the economy is prioritized instead of politics while taking important decisions, the financial condition of the country will



improve, he added.

The business leader said that Pakistan's reputation in the global market has improved due to early payment, and the value of Pakistani bonds has improved, but the concerns of investors have not gone away.

Saudi Arabia has also extended the deadline for the return of three billion dollars kept in Pakistan the day Pakistan paid one billion dollars. The Saudi decision has strengthened the confidence in the Pakistani economy.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the

comparison between Pakistan and Sri Lanka in terms of bonds is not correct because Pakistani bonds are hardly seven to eight percent of the debt and the remaining is commercial, multilateral, and bilateral. On the other hand, Sri Lanka's half of the debt consisted of international bonds.

He further said that fifteen months ago, Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves were twenty billion dollars, now they are seven and a half billion dollars, which can barely bear the burden of five to six weeks of imports.

Presently, the textile sector has come under pressure, while the remittances through legal channels are also decreasing due to the increasing difference in the dollar rate in the interbank and open market.

In these circumstances, the government should make an aggressive export and remittance policy to increase the foreign exchange reserves so that the necessary imports can continue, otherwise, a crisis situation will arise in various sectors of the country, many businesses will go bankrupt and hundreds of thousands of people will lose their jobs.

IWCCI lauds APCEA support for flood relief

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: All-Pakistan Chinese Enterprises Association (APCEA) has donated 400 tents to flood-hit sites across Pakistan. In this connection, a ceremony was held at the Chinese Embassy which was attended by businessmen, social activists, and diplomats.

During the occasion, Vice Chairman APCEA, Mr. Sun Youcheng remarked Pakistan-China friendship has always stood the test of time, in the face of all disasters.

He also shared the APCEA contribution of Rs15.5 million to the Prime Minister's Flood Relief Fund 2022 in August and since then it had launched various rounds of donations.

He also expressed his gratitude to IWCCI and JWP for their valuable assistance in this regard.

President IWCCI, Ms. Rizwana Asif expressed her heartiest gratitude to the government of China and the business community for their consistent support in



these testing times. She especially thanked APCEA for its generous donation of 200 tents.

Chief Coordinator Jamhoori Wattan Party Balochistan and Chairman Municipal Committee Dera Bugti, Mr. Mir Chakkar Bugti thanked APCEA for its donation of 200 tents that have provided shelter to 200 families which are facing the impact of the flood.

These families have no roof over their

heads and are struggling even more so due to winters. Earlier today, JWP held a ceremony in Dera Bugti, Balochistan, acknowledging APCEA's donation and celebrating the Pakistan-China friendship with the local communities.

Minister Counsellor, Mr. Xie Guoxiang lauded APCEA as the representative of the Chinese Business community in Pakistan and its efforts in leading social and economic contributions.

U Microfinance Bank and PQFTL sign BancaTakaful Agreement

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Pak-Qatar Family Takaful Limited and U Microfinance Bank (U Bank), Pakistan's fastest-growing microfinance bank, have strategically signed a landmark BancaTakaful agreement. Under this collaboration, family Takaful products will be offered through U Bank's distribution network, which is amongst the largest microfinance banking branch network in Pakistan.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) of this partnership was signed by Ms. Mariam Pervaiz, Chief Commercial Officer & Chief of Staff – U Microfinance Bank and Mr. Azeem I. Pirani – CEO, Pak-Qatar Family Takaful Limited, while the signing ceremony was presided over by Mr. Kabeer Naqvi, President & CEO – U Microfinance Bank, in the presence of senior management officials from both the collaborating organizations.

At the occasion, Mr.

Azeem Pirani said, "We are pleased to partner with one of the leading microfinance banks in Pakistan having one of the largest distribution networks. We are confident that this partnership will help us to take forward our long-term vision of providing financial protection through Takaful to everyone and it is always encouraging to work with like-minded partners link U Bank who share the same goals and approach towards offering need based, and appropriately priced, financial solutions to the citizens of Pakistan."

Mr. Kabeer Naqvi, President & CEO – U Microfinance Bank, stated, "We are glad that the fruit of U Bank's financial inclusion and expansion efforts, along with our partnership with Pak-Qatar Family Takaful Ltd. can be translated into enhanced accessibility of Islamic financial services services to the banking customers through U Bank's network. This mutually beneficial collaboration

Country to face severe wheat and flour crisis



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Monday said that due to the endless differences between the central and provincial governments, the country may face a severe wheat crisis.

For the first time in the country's history central and provincial officials are holding meetings after taking critical decisions which is amazing, it said.

Keeping the price of wheat uniform across the country has now become difficult as the government lacks resources and provinces are taking decisions without consulting other important stakeholders, said Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President PREW.

He said that Sindh has increased wheat procurement prices by 45 percent unilaterally which was a record in the history of Pakistan.

Soon, Punjab increased its price by 26 percent and now the same province is planning to revise the price upward leaving the center puzzled, he added.

Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that wheat is being imported at different prices while the private sector, hoarders, and profiteers are also using the opportunity to reap maximum benefits.

Currently, the three main stakeholders of wheat, which include Punjab, Sindh, and the central government, are not agreeing on the price of wheat and are busy giving priority to their political interests which is unfortunate.

The food security situation is not improving but rather deteriorating, hoarders are taking full advantage of this situation, while the people are paying the price of politically-motivated decisions.

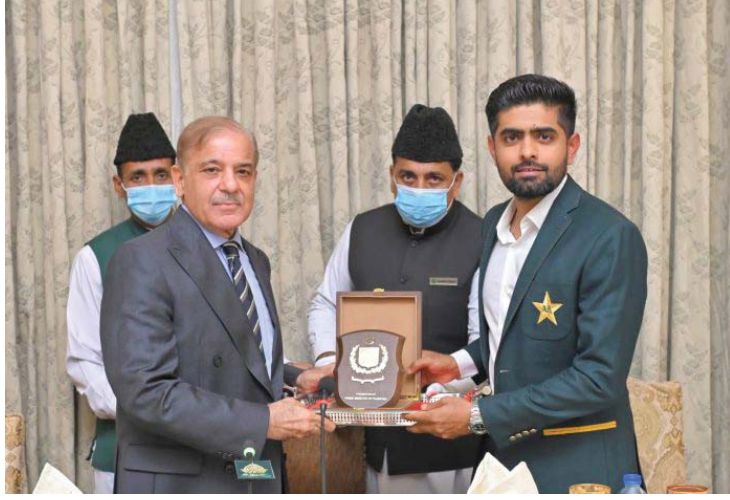
England cricket tour to go a long way to strengthen Pak-UK ties: PM

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday calling cricket a "common area of passion" between Pakistan and the UK, said the ongoing England cricket team's tour to Pakistan would go a long way in building bridges between the two countries.

"Pakistan enjoys wonderful relations with Britain and cricket is one of the factors... And this is one common area of passion between Pakistan and Britain and that is cricket. I think your visit would go a long way in building bridges," the prime minister said addressing a reception he hosted in the honour of England and Pakistan Cricket teams at Prime Minister's House here.

He said that the Britains always supported the people in the cause of democracy and for their wellbeing by bringing investments through DFID in the education and health sectors.



The prime minister congratulated the England team for the win against Pakistan in the first of three test matches but was also confident to say that

the Green Shirts would make a comeback in the next match. He said the visit of England's team after 17 years was a great moment as they had visited in 2005



when Pakistan was facing an unbearable level of extremism and terror attacks.

He said having sacrificed thousands of lives of soldiers, personnel of the security

and law enforcement agencies, and ordinary Pakistanis, the country was finally able to "clean bowl" the terrorists.

The prime minister appreciated

England's support to Pakistan cricket and appreciated the team for showing "wonderful cricket."

The prime minister also apprised the young cricketers of the past glory of Pakistan in cricket and mentioned Azhar Mahmood, late Hanif Muhammad, known as "little master" and Asif Mahmood who had earned great fame in the world of cricket.

He said the Green Shirts had exhibited quality cricket in the recent past and hoped that they would continue to enhance their level to regain their place in the cricketing world.

The prime minister, who also gave away souvenirs to the captains of both teams, appreciated England Captain for his generosity of donating his match fee to the flood victims of Pakistan. This is perfectly in line with the British golden tradition of philanthropy, he said and conveyed his regards to Ben Stokes who could not attend the reception.

Anderson, Robinson help England seal historic win against Pakistan

RAWALPINDI: England pacers James Anderson and Ollie Robinson exhibited their class in reverse-swing bowling claiming four wickets each to help their side pull off a historic 74-run win over Pakistan at Pindi Cricket Stadium, Rawalpindi on Monday.

Captain Ben Stokes and Jack Leach took a wicket each for 69 and 56 runs, respectively.

Imam ul Haq (43) and Saud Shakeel (24) began Pakistan's innings from an overnight score of 80-2.

Imam, who had hit a ton in the first innings, remained unfortunate on the final day as he was out for 48 just 2 runs behind in scoring a half-century.

He was dismissed by Anderson in the first 20 minutes of the game, when the opener attempted to nudge the ball, giving it straight into Ollie Pope's gloves.

Pakistan reached 100 runs in the 35th over while 150 in the 49th over on the final day.

Saud Shakeel (63) and Mohammad Rizwan (42) were standing tall as Pakistan reached 169 for 3 at lunch.

But as the play resumed, Anderson bowled beautifully and took his second wicket of the day by dismissing Rizwan when he was just 4 runs away (46 off 92 balls) to score a half-century.

Rizwan, who was edged to the keeper, provided an 87-run partnership to the fourth wicket alongside Shakeel.

However, Rizwan achieved yet another milestone during the first Test as he got passed 5,000 runs in international cricket, becoming the 28th Pakistani player to achieve the landmark.

Azhar who was retired hurt on Sunday came to bat again as he was fit to play.

Shakeel who was playing top-notch cricket on 76 runs ended up hitting in the air (Ollie Robinson over) and was taken by Ben Stokes at short cover. His innings



of 76 off 159 included 12 4s.

Meanwhile, Pakistan gained 200 runs in 61.4 overs (375 balls) and were 217 for 5 at drinks, needing 126 runs to victory.

Pakistan reached 250 runs in 75 overs. Salman who was pinned lbw by Jack Leach in the 76th over went on for the review and was saved. Pakistan were 257 for 5 in 77.0 overs at tea.

Pakistan lost the sixth wicket when Salman (30 Off 64 balls) tried to hit an inswinger.

A review was taken by England which showed he was pinned lbw by Robinson in the 81st over. Salman and Azhar provided a 61-runs partnership to the sixth wicket.

Azhar also didn't stick around much and was gone in the 83rd over again.

Azhar who tried to flick Robinson was taken at leg slip by Joe Root thus going for thus going for 40 runs.

Pakistan's wickets kept on coming as Zahid Mahmood (1) and Haris Rauf (0) were downed by James Anderson in the 88th over.

Though Naseem Shah and Moham-

mad Ali stopped the wicket for almost 9 overs but Leach was determined to win it for England as he pinned Naseem lbw, taking his team to a historic 74 runs victory against the hosts.

Pakistan skipper said he was disappointed to see his side losing when it was very much in the game right from the start.

"The way we build partnerships (was encouraging) and till lunch we were very confident. But (unfortunately) our back-to-back wickets fell, but you have to give credit to England like the way they fought," he said in a presser after the end of the match.

Anderson, Robinson help England seal historic win against Pakistan

Pakistan captain Babar Azam addressing a press conference at the end of the first Test match played between Pak England on Monday December 05, 2022.

According to Babar, Pakistan fielded the best playing XI in the game.

"Every team has a different way of playing and one match can't change it.

Yes you have to play according to the

situation and plan, but we tried to do the best," he said.

To a question, he said the problem with the Pakistan team was that they remain unable to finish the game.

"We commit mistakes when we are close to the match."

At Pindi stadium, he said they did not get the pitch they were looking for because of the weather or preparations therefore plans could not be executed.

"When we lost Agha and Azhar it seemed that we were getting behind the match. Naseem and Ali dragged the game but we (batters) should have taken the responsibility."

Babar said absence of Shaheen Shah Afridi was felt but Naseem and Ali also bowled well as Haris was injured.

"We are looking closely at the injuries of our fast bowlers...will see how to plan for the future. But Haris's injury is severe and don't know whether he will be there but we will try to win the second Test and win the series," he said.

About the crowd, he said Rawalpindi crowd turned up in masses all five days of the game and supported both teams which was a very good response by them.

English captain Ben Stokes said Test cricket generally looked exciting when with a declaration both results were possible and one of those was not that of a draw.

Anderson, Robinson help England seal historic win against Pakistan

England Test captain Ben Stokes' press conference at Pindi Cricket Stadium.

"The way our batters went out there and played with freedom and the enjoyment allowed us to be where we were on day five" he said.

"When we went out to bowl, and picking up two early wickets was massive, and (afterward) a lot of things went our way," he added.

Haniya Minhas brings bronze for Pakistan from Eddie Herr International Championship



Sports Reporter

PAKISTAN: Pakistan's 12-year-old tennis prodigy - Haniya Minhas has won bronze in the international tennis tournament, held in US. Haniya's training and sports activities have been supported by the 'Bilquis & Abdul Razak Dawood' (BARD) Foundation, since she was only 9 years of age.

Haniya progressed through this prestigious tournament, by winning the 1st round. Her outstanding performance in the Quarter-Final match was 6-0, 6-4. Then she put up with an impressive competition against her opponent and ended up winning bronze at Eddie Herr International Junior Championship. Over 2000 players participated at Eddie Herr Junior Championship where Haniya Minhas secured remarkable place for Pakistan among 90 countries. Haniya joined IMG for training on 22 August 2022 that was followed by a continuous series of remarkable successes at Little Mo International Championship in New York, USA, USTA National under 14 Tennis Championship in Florida, L5 Under 16 National Tennis Championship in the United States, Under 14 National Tennis Championships in Coral Springs, Florida and USTA Under 16 Girls National Championship Final in Florida, USA.

Expressing her delight on being the best player in the prestigious tournament in the USA, Haniya stated that: "My current tour of the USA has been an exhilarating experience, as I have been able to train more professionally and out-perform all my worthy competitors, in my first tournament. My special gratitude goes to my country Pakistan that I represent from whole of my heart and BARD Foundation as they have supported my sporting endeavors for so many years."

Mehreen Dawood - Pakistan's leading philanthropist and founder of the BARD Foundation, paid a tribute to Haniya's success, saying that: "Haniya is another international athlete emerging from Pakistan. I congratulate her for making such great achievement at a very young age.

Pakistan Football Connect' programme

Sports Reporter

ISLAMABAD: In eight divisions of Baluchistan, 31 active districts registered their 874 clubs while 6 districts have zero applications. From 10 divisions of Punjab, 867 clubs of 35 active districts were registered, and 6 districts have zero applications. In seven divisions of KPK, 659 clubs got registered from 28 active districts, and 8 districts are yet to submit an application.

Moreover, Sindh's 645 clubs got registered under seven divisions while the active districts in Sindh are 29 and 2 with zero applications. From three divisions, 101 clubs were able to register

themselves in AJK in which six districts are active and four with zero applications. In Gilgit-Baltistan, 97 clubs registered from 3 divisions, eight districts are active while seven districts are with zero applications. A total of 84 clubs have been registered in Islamabad.

Overall, 170 districts out of 138 have 39 active divisions and 32 are ones that have yet to submit any application, while the number of clubs is 3327. It should be remembered that the decision of the clubs having the right to vote for the elections under the normalization committee designated by FIFA will be decided by the Pakistan Football Connect programme. A special office



is functioning in Karachi to complete the registration process.

Islamabad United Partners with Iqra University for PSL 8

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad United, the most successful franchise in HBL PSL history and the winner of the first and third editions of the tournament, is happy to announce that Iqra University will be the official

Youth Sports Partner for the franchise for PSL 8.

Iqra University, which has the vision to promote youth sports in Pakistan and to boost the country's image as a sports and peace-loving country, will be joining hands with Islamabad United for PSL 8. The signing ceremony took place on Monday December 5th 2022, at the Iqra University Islamabad Campus (Chak Shahzad). The two organizations had previously partnered for the PSL 6 in 2021.



Iqra University Co-Founder and Chancellor Ms. Erum Lakhani, Vice-President Dr. Muhammad Islam, Executive Director Online Programmes Mr. Usman Butt, Executive Director/Special Assistant to Chancellor/Youth Mentor Mr. Muhammad Junaid, Direc-

tor Industrial Linkages Barrister Rizwan Bari and Director Campus Mr. Abdul Waheed. From Islamabad United the captain of the franchise Mr. Shadab Khan and the Assistant Coach Saeed Ajmal were joined by CEO Mr. Ahsan Latif for the occasion. The



Islamabad United captain and staff were greeted by all the senior faculty members and presented with souvenirs.

Islamabad United appreciated the efforts of Iqra University in promoting higher education and providing students with the state-

of-the-art facilities. Both organizations further resolved to continue providing avenues for the youth under the ambit of this unique sports and youth partnership.

Many sports enthusiasts including Iqra University students, dignitaries and guests participated in

the event and took selfies with the two Islamabad United stars and took their autographs. The event finished with a dynamic question and answer session with Shadab Khan and Saeed Ajmal.

Islamabad United is the most successful team of the Pakistan Super League (PSL); winner of the first and third seasons of the HBL PSL. The franchise believes in bringing change to Pakistani sports with the introduction of international standards of practice and a commitment to continuous progress.

AAN - Leonine Sports is the proud owner of Islamabad United, the FIRST CHAMPIONS and the most successful team in the Pakistan Super League. AAN-Leonine Sports is focused on enabling sports and creating franchises with a mission to provide: 1) A truly global experi-

ence on sports entertainment; 2) A fan base which is loyal, aware and supportive of the sport and the franchise; 3) An aspirational beacon for up and coming players to strive for excellence in cricket for Pakistan in particular and for the world at large; 4) An eco-system for the promotion of sports through close partnerships with the respective sports boards; 5) A truly professionally-run organization with exceptional standards of corporate governance and international best practices; 6) Promotion of Pakistan through sports and involvement of internationally known figures into Pakistan; 7) A responsible member on CSR.

The company focuses on the above mission statement by implementing a strategy built around the principle of 4Es - Excellence, Empowerment, Education and Environment.

Spokesman Photos by Ghulam Farid