



**Imran Khan urges CJP to take notice of Murad Saeed's letter**

Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan has urged Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial to take notice of party leader Murad Saeed's letter to President Dr Arif Alvi regarding 'life threats', ARY News reported. Taking to Twitter, the former premier appealed CJP Umar Ata Bandial to take notice of the letter's content written to President Dr Arif Alvi.



**Imran must learn to do politics sans 'crutches': Sherry**

Federal Minister for Climate Change, Senator Sherry Rehman on Monday said Imran Khan wanted to sit outside the parliament and come to power with the help of institutions as he had been accustomed to the 'crutches' but he would now have to learn and do politics without others' support. In a series of tweets on her official Twitter account, she lambasted the Pakistan PTI chief for his appeals to the new Army Chief to intervene in politics.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

**Consistent support for the resolution of IOJK**

ISLAMABAD: Secretary General of Organization of Islamic Cooperation, H.E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday.



Photo: PID

**PM lauds OIC's principled stance on Kashmir dispute**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday lauded the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) for its principled position and consistent support for the resolution of Jammu and Kashmir dispute.

Talking to OIC Secretary General Hissein Brahim Taha, he mentioned the support of OIC in accordance with the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

The OIC secretary general is on his first visit to Pakistan after assuming office in November

2021. The prime minister highlighted the grim human rights and humanitarian situation in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK).

Welcoming the secretary general's historic visit to Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Line of Control (LOC), PM Shehbaz underscored that his visit would send a strong message of support from the OIC to the Kashmiri people in their just struggle for the right of self-determination.

The prime minister also

renewed unwavering support of the people and the Government of Pakistan to the Palestinian people and Palestinian cause. He reiterated that any solution of the Palestine issue must be based on the pre-1967 border with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

Recognizing that the OIC has stepped-up its engagement with Afghanistan since the Extraordinary Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) in Islamabad in December 2021, he encouraged the secretary general to accelerate efforts for address-

ing and alleviating the humanitarian challenges faced by the people of Afghanistan.

Shehbaz Sharif reiterated the need to counter the rising anti-Muslim hatred and attempts to denigrate the sanctity of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him).

He expressed concern over intensifying of Islamophobia campaign, particularly in the region, where anti-Muslim and anti-Islam agenda was being pursued as an instrument of state policy.

The OIC secretary general

reiterated the OIC's full support for the resolution of Jammu and Kashmir dispute, in accordance with the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

He also offered his condolences over the loss of lives and livelihoods caused by the recent climate-induced floods in Pakistan.

The secretary general assured the prime minister of the OIC Secretariat's full support and cooperation during Pakistan's remaining term as the Chair of the OIC's Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM). APP

**Imran doesn't want economic stability, rather chaos & anarchy: Marriyum**

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Monday said Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan did not want the economy to stabilise and for that he desired riots, chaos and anarchy in the country.

Reacting to Imran Khan's video statement, she said the situation was the worst, but it was not for the country rather for Imran Khan whose "crutches have been broken." He was worried that the institutions were not becoming part of his dirty politics. "The umpires whom he called animals" were neutral, the minister added.

Marriyum said the "incompetent and inefficient" person, who had stolen the Toshakhana gifts, was out of his habit dragging the national institu-



Photo: PID

tions into his "unholy politics".

She pleaded that it was the responsibility of the Election Commission of Pakistan and the judiciary to hold the "foreign agent" accountable for his wrongdoings, including the Toshakhana theft.

The minister said the traders, the business community, and the farmers were fully aware that the country was caught in the vortex of economic collapse caused by the Imran Khan regime.

"The PTI leader is an insane person who thinks that the whole of Pakistan is crazy," she added.

**ADB approves flood assistance package for Pakistan**

ISLAMABAD: A \$554 million financing package, including new and reallocated funds, has been approved to support recovery and reconstruction efforts in Pakistan following this year's devastating floods, and to strengthen the country's disaster and climate resilience.

The financing, which includes a \$475 million loan and a \$3 million technical assistance grant from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and a \$5 million grant from the Government of Japan, will support the restoration of irrigation, drainage, flood risk management, on-farm water management, and transport infrastructure in the flood-affected provinces of Balochistan, Khyber Pakh-

tunkhwa, and Sindh, according to a statement issued by the Bank on Monday.

ADB's Emergency Flood Assistance Project will also incorporate climate and disaster resilience measures into the design of the infrastructure.

ADB has repurposed an additional \$71 million from existing loans to support the government's flood-response efforts.

"This year's floods, which affected 33 million people and brought enormous damage to infrastructure and agriculture, are a devastating reminder of Pakistan's acute vulnerability to climate change," said ADB Director General for Central and West Asia Yevgeniy Zhukov.

**President Alvi highlights significance of continuation of policies for economic growth**

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday termed the continuation of policies essential for sustainable economic growth, promotion of industrialization and attracting foreign investment.

He underlined that digitalization of economy and business processes were vital for enhancing tax collection, promoting tax culture and transparency in the economy.

The president expressed these views while addressing the 2nd Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) Taxpayer Recognition Awards, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

He said that hurdles in the process of filing taxes by the business community required removal, besides provision of facilitation to the business community and resolution of their grievances and issues.

The president regretted that the low tax-to-GDP ratio had been a perennial issue in Pakistan, ever since its establishment, adding that tax culture in the country could be promoted by simplifying and easing the tax regime, reducing hurdles in the taxation system.

He also called for encouraging businessmen to pay more taxes, judiciously and honestly spending the collected tax, reducing corruption and pilferage, and ensuring merit and transparency.

Group Leader RCCI, Sohail Altaf, President RCCI, Saqib Rafiq, Federal Tax Ombudsman



(FTO), Dr Asif Mahmood Jah, representatives of FBR, and members of the business community attended the ceremony

The president said that Pakistan's economy had been under stress due to multiple internal and external factors, adding that all stakeholders must act responsibly and display a unity of purpose to come out of the present situation.

The president also urged the need to focus on the skill development of youth and establishing partnerships between academia and industry, besides providing education to over 20 million out-of-school children.

He said that it was the collective responsibility of the state and society to care for the most vulnerable sections of its population and regret-

ted that Pakistan's education sector had declined, which required efforts to improve the educational standards throughout the country, besides enhancing the enrollment of students in Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs).

The president also called upon the members of the business community to enhance the participation of women in businesses and industry, besides providing them safe and friendly environment at the workplace.

He also impressed upon the need to establish baseline KPIs regarding the inclusion of women and persons with disabilities (PWDs) in the private sector, instead of merely paying lip service to the cause of women and PWDs inclusion in the mainstream of society.

**Ahsan Iqbal urges universities to start entrepreneurship courses to boost economy**

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal Monday asked the universities to take rapid action to start new courses in entrepreneurship and exports for students which would help boost economy of the country.

He was speaking at the two-day 19th International Conference on 'Frontiers of Information Technology' (FIT-2022) organized by COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI) here.

Speaking on the occasion, the federal minister highlighted the importance of Information Technology in today's era, especially for the economic growth of Pakistan.

Ahsan Iqbal also shared the seven-point framework for universities, academic excellence, research and innovation, social community service, technology enablement, corporate governance, industry-academia linkage and quality of products. Sharing his observations,



Executive Director COMSATS, Ambassador Dr. Mohammed Nafees Zakaria speaking at the opening ceremony lauded the efforts of FIT organizers for providing an esteemed platform to researchers, scientists, and industry practitioners from across the world to present their cutting-edge research as well as sharing latest industry insights.

He mentioned that COMSATS lays its emphasis on building indigenous capacity and competence in emerging sciences and technologies. Moreover, efforts are being made by the Commission to bring the dividends of technological advancements in the

areas of education, health, and energy to a large cross-section of the population, particularly of the Member States.

Co-Founder and CEO Knowledge Streams (Private) Ltd. Pakistan, Dr. S. Sohail H. Naqvi delivered a keynote address to the participating technical experts, students and dignitaries.

In his address titled "Bridging the Academia-Industry Divide", Dr. Naqvi highlighted the importance of Bridging the Academia-Industry Divide and presented several initiatives which have led to novel solutions in present-day Pakistan.

# Chairman of the Kazakhstan Parliament calls on the Prime Minister of Pakistan

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD :A 9-member parliamentary delegation of Kazakhstan led by Chairman of the Lower House (Mazhilis) of the Parliament, H.E. Mr. Yerlan Koshanov called on the Prime Minister of Pakistan at Islamabad today.

Welcoming the delegation, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, highlighted the special nature of Pakistan-Kazakhstan relations which are deeply rooted in history, religion and culture. He underscored that Pakistan is keen to further deepen cooperation with the Central Asian states, particularly Kazakhstan. Recalling his meeting with the Kazakhstan President H.E. Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev on the sidelines of the CICA summit in Astana and SCO Summit in Samarkand, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said both sides had fruitful discussions for boosting ties.

He underscored the need to establish and strengthen bilateral cooperation in the energy, transport, and transit trade and logistics sectors. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said he was looking forward to the Pakistan visit of the Kazakhstan President. He informed that Pakistan would soon be hosting a summit of the leaders of Central Asian states that would focus on connectivity through road and rail links to boost regional trade and investment.

Mr. Yerlan Koshanov, updated the Prime Minister about the meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group which was held during the ongoing visit of the Kazakhstan parliamentary delegation. He underlined the need for exchange of parliamentary delegations that would further promote people-to-people exchanges between the two brotherly countries. Chairman Mr. Yerlan Koshanov informed that Kazakhstan can benefit from the huge Pakistani market and showed keen interest in bilateral trade and cooperation in



connectivity, pharmaceuticals industry and surgical and sports goods.

He informed that current bilateral trade is only \$ 95 million which is not commensurate with the huge trade potential between the two countries. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said

the bilateral trade could be easily doubled within a short span of time. On behalf of the people and Government of Kazakhstan, the Chairman of the Mazhilis of the Parliament of Kazakhstan expressed deep condolence and sincere sympathies for the

victims of recent catastrophic floods in Pakistan, National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf, Minister of State for Petroleum Dr. Musadik Malik, and Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Coordination Syed Tariq Fatemi also attended the meeting.

# Imran Khan urges CJP to take notice of Murad Saeed's letter

## Special Correspondent

LAHORE: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan has urged Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial to take notice of party leader Murad Saeed's letter to President Dr Arif Alvi regarding 'life threats', ARY News reported.

Taking to Twitter, the former premier appealed CJP Umar Ata Bandial to take notice of the letter's content written to President Dr Arif Alvi.

"Already Senator [Azam] Swati continues to suffer the worst form of human rights abuses sadly without any intervention from our honourable Judiciary," he wrote.

Imran Khan added, "After what happened to Arshad Sharif despite his writing to the President about the life threats he was facing, I would urge the CJP to take notice of this before it is too late."

Earlier in the day, Murad



Saeed urged President Dr Arif Alvi to necessary action against the 'threats to his life'.

According to details, the former federal minister - in his letter - claimed that he was being stalked by unidentified persons and his life is in danger, urging President Dr Arif Alvi to take notice and necessary action in this regard.

"Even nowadays, whenever he (Murad) travels in his car, he is followed by unknown and suspicious vehicles left and right. His movement is monitored outside his house, he frequently spots suspicious men, motorcycles and vehicles parked outside his house," the letter added.

"Mr President Alvi, you are the head of state and supreme

commander of the armed forces, I hope that the negligence of state institutions and departments regarding Arshad Sharif's letter will not be repeated," he concluded.

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# Murad Saeed urges President Alvi to take notice of 'life threats'

## Special Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Former federal minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Murad Saeed has urged President Dr Arif Alvi to necessary action against the 'threats to his life', ARY News reported on Monday.

According to details, the former federal minister - in his letter - claimed that he was being stalked by unidentified persons and his life is in danger, urging President Dr Arif Alvi to take notice and necessary action in this regard.

Murad Saeed noted that senior journalist Arshad Sharif, who was martyred in Kenya through "cold, preplanned, calculated and premeditated murder", wrote a letter to President and requested the government to take action for his security.

"Regrettably, his (Arshad Sharif) grievances and concerns were not addressed rather miserably disre-



garded by everyone. No one took him and his worries seriously and as a consequence, Pakistan lost a patriotic, nationalist and loyal citizen," the letter stated.

The PTI leader, citing the example of Arshad Sharif, raised concerns and hoped that this time such concerns will

not be 'overlooked and ignored'. Murad Saeed noted that he has been booked in bogus cases under various charges all over Pakistan.

The former minister added that he was booked in fake cases due to the fact that he raised his voice against injustices. "Does raising voice; against exist-

ence of vote market in Sindh House, for upholding rule of law, for advancing constitutionalism, for maintenance of peace and make me a 'rebel'?" he asked.

He further pointed out that on August, 18 2022 armed persons on a motorcycle came to his house. The letter stated that the former minister immediately called his friends for help who were nearby. Upon arrival of his friends, the armed men escaped.

"Even nowadays, whenever he (Murad) travels in his car, he is followed by unknown and suspicious vehicles left and right. His movement is monitored outside his house, he frequently spots suspicious men, motorcycles and vehicles parked outside his house," the letter added.

"Mr President Alvi, you are the head of state and supreme commander of the armed forces, I hope that the negligence of state institutions and departments regarding Arshad Sharif's letter will not be repeated," he concluded.

# Assembly passes Petroleum (Amendment) Bill 2022

## News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly (NA) on Monday unanimously approved the passage of The Petroleum (Amendment) Bill 2022 to stop illegal sale of petroleum products.

Moved by Parliamentary Secretary for Petroleum, Chaudhry Hamid Hameed, the House passed after taking clause by clause. With an amendment the illegal imports, transports, stores, sales produce, refine or blends any petroleum has been made punishable besides extending fine up to Rs 5 million.

According to statement of objects and reasons, the amendment has substituted the word "Federal Government with appropriate authority as per the cabinet decision in light of the definition of "Federal Government by Supreme Court decision vide PLD, 2016.

Revised the fee structure as per the directions of Lahore High Court dated 07-07-2017.

A new sub-section has been added to create provision for punishment

for those responsible for accidents in which loss of human life or serious injury to persons occur.

Inserted the word "Sale" in certain Sections of the Act as per the comparative list to stop illegal sale of Petroleum Products.

Petroleum Products have been classified as per the international standards. The definition of "Sale", "OMC" and "Dealer" are added to avoid confusion. The term "Gallon" and "Fahrenheit" in certain sections have been replaced with the terms "Liter" and "Centigrade" respectively as per the international standards.

Inserted the list of authorized testing officers with respect to their expertise. A new sub-section has been added to create provision for punishment of those responsible for accidents in which loss of human life or serious injury to persons occur.

The concept of "Magistrate" has been substituted with "Judicial Magistrate" and "Deputy Commissioner in Section 25 and 27 of the Act, respectively to fulfil the core purpose of these sections and to avoid confusion.

# CM Mahmood Khan Says KP ran out of funds



## News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister (CM) Mahmood Khan on Monday said KP has run out of funds due to the non-release of its dues from the federal government, ARY News reported.

Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, CM KP claimed the federal government is trying to squeeze the provincial government. Our dues towards centre have not been cleared yet and as a result, the province doesn't have money for salary payments

Warning the federal government, CM Mahmood Khan said in case of non-release of dues, the people of KP will protest in Islamabad.

He alleged that the incumbent government has scrapped all the

steps taken by the PTI government and added that the cut in the budget of the erstwhile FATA is alarming.

The KP CM said the centre should take the province into confidence if the economic situation of the country is not good.

Earlier, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa minister Shaukat Yousafzai claimed that the federal government is hatching a conspiracy to impose governor's rule in Punjab and KP provinces.

KP Minister for Labour and Culture Shaukat Yousafzai claimed in a Twitter message that the centre is hatching a conspiracy to impose governor's rule in Punjab and KP provinces. He added that the federal government is afraid of the peaceful protests of PTI.

# Every religion uplifts sanctity of human rights: Murtaza Javed



HAVELIAN: Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed on Monday said that every religion uplifts the sanctity of human rights.

Addressing a ceremony regarding human rights, he said the main component of the last sermon of Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) was human rights which erased the difference between a master and a slave. Protection

of the fundamental rights of the citizens is the prime responsibility of the government of which the incumbent government was fully aware.

The minister said our constitution guarantees the protection of the fundamental rights of the citizens and a Standing Committee on Human Rights had been established to monitor the protection of these rights.

Murtaza Abbasi said the silence of international human rights organizations on the ongoing human rights violations in Palestine and Occupied Kashmir is incomprehensible, atrocities and brutality on the people of Occupied Kashmir are a humiliation of humanity.

He said that the massacre of thousands of innocent children and rape of women in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) is very sad, and human rights organizations need to take immediate steps to end these violations. APP

# Govt rejects summary of ending autonomous status of NAB

## News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal government on Monday rejected the summary to end the autonomous status of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), ARY News reported.

As per details, the Federal Ministry of Law and Justice wrote a letter to NAB and rejected the summary to end the autonomous status

Accountability watchdog. The Ministry of Law also rejected the suggestion to end the independence of the NAB chairman.

The NAB had demanded the federal government that their employment should be declared as Civil Service Occupational Group.

In response to their summary, the Ministry of Law stated in a written letter that employment in NAB cannot be declared civil servant.

# Refrendum should be managed in Kashmir like Sordan under UN umbrella: PM AJK

Abdul Majeed Tahir

ISLAMABAD: Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan has said that the Muslim Ummah should unite and raise their voice for Kashmiris. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has helped the Kashmiri people at every stage and supported their right to self-determination, for which they are grateful. OIC reiterated support to Kashmiris, this has boosted the morale of Kashmiris who are fighting in the freedom movement. India has violated human rights in Occupied Kashmir.

Without a peaceful solution to the problem of Kashmir and according to the wishes of the Kashmiris, the establishment of peace in the region will remain a dream. Islamic countries should play their important role in stopping large-scale atrocities in Occupied Kashmir and giving the Kashmiri people the right to self-determination.

Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan expressed these views while talking to OIC Secretary General Hussain Taha Ibrahim who met him along with a delegation at Jammu Kashmir House Islamabad. AJK Minister of Finance and Inland Revenue Abdul Majid Khan, Ambassador Yusuf Al-Zou-



bi, Saudi Ar B. Ambassador Askar Muzinov, Ambassador Ahmad Sarir, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to OIC, Maldives, Ambassador Rizwan Saeed Sheikh, Mansoor Diop, Senegal, Waqas Latif, Mohammad Atif, Aliu Hama Hamani, Principal Secretary Ehsan Khalid Kayani, Secretary Kashmir cause and other officials were also present on the occasion.

The Prime Minister while paying great tribute to the martyrs of Kashmir Freedom Movement told the Secretary General of OIC that till now millions of Kashmiris offered their lives for freedom from Indian clutches. He said that the innocent Kashmiris are facing eight lakh Indian army which is breaking mountains of atrocities on them, Islamic countries should be the voice of Kashmiris and give them the right of self-determination. He appealed to OIC use your influence.

He said that every pressure should be increased on the United Nations from the OIC platform to implement its resolutions to solve this long-standing

problem. He said that our Prophet (PBUH) Peace be upon him has said that the Muslim Ummah is like a body. The raw flesh is visible, so Muslim countries should openly support us. He said that Western countries have made laws to protect wildlife, but where are their think tanks for Kashmiris? He said that if a referendum is held in Sudan. Maybe there should be a referendum in Kashmir where the Kashmiris should be asked their will. Hussain Ibrahim Taha, Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) said that a peaceful solution to the Kashmir problem is the first priority of the OIC and ours.

It is obligatory that they want to reach a final conclusion in cooperation with the friendly countries. They want to open the channel of discussion between all stakeholders on the Kashmir issue so that this issue can be resolved through diplomacy. They will convey the voice of Kashmiris to the Islamic world. And the international community will also be taken

on board in this regard, Kashmir is a part of the OIC, it is our responsibility to find a peaceful solution to the Kashmir issue according to the wishes of the Kashmiris. He said that I also visited an OC. Did he also meet the victims of the Indian army's aggression there to review the situation and resolve the issue? He said that there is a need to tell the world more about human rights violations in Occupied Kashmir.

He said that highlighting the issue of Kashmir as a representative of Islamic countries. And it is our responsibility to solve it. Together with friendly countries, we will find a solution to this problem so that peace and order can be established in the region. In which the atrocities of the Indian army were mentioned. Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan also gave gifts of Kashmiri shawls and Kashmiri handicrafts to OIC Secretary General Hussain Ibrahim Taha and his delegation. OIC Secretary General thanked Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan for his hospitality.

## SECP register 2,380 new companies in November

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) registered 2,380 new companies in November, 2022, indicating an increase of 10% as compared to corresponding period last year. Total capitalization (paid-up-capital) of the newly incorporated companies is PKR1.9 billion. The total number of registered companies now stands at 182,598.

Among the newly incorporated companies, about 59 percent were registered as private limited companies, 39 percent as single member companies and 2 percent were public unlisted companies, not for profit associations, trade organizations and limited liability partnership (LLP). About 99.9 percent of companies were registered online. In November, the SECP also registered three investment companies / micro finance companies with paid-up capital of Rs.255 million.

In November, the real estate development & construction sector took the lead with incorporation of 407 companies followed by the information technology with 347 and trading with 300 companies subsequently. , services with 258, food & beverages with 87, education with 82, tourism with 81, corporate agricultural farming with 76, e-commerce with 70, marketing & advertisement with 63, engineering with 62, textile with 57, pharmaceutical with 50, healthcare with 43, mining & quarrying with 38, chemical with 37, fuel & energy with 35, transport with 31, power generation with 30, communications with 27, cosmetics and toiletries and lodging with 18 each, broadcasting & telecasting with 14, auto & allied and paper & board with 13 each, cables and electrical goods with 12, arts and culture with 9, and 102 companies in other sectors.

Foreign investment has been reported in 85 new companies from Afghanistan, Austria, Australia, Canada, China, Germany, Hongkong, Jordan, Korea South, Mauritius, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey, UAE, UK and the US.

As a result of SECP's eServices integration with FBR and various provincial departments, 2,211 companies were registered with FBR for generation of NTN, 57 companies with EOBI, 32 companies with PESSI/SESSI and 43 companies with excise and taxation department.

## It is commendable for the Labor team to facilitate local people to apply for NICOB cards



Arif Chaudhary

OLDHAM :NADRA surgery was organized in the building of Green Gate Islamic College Oldham by the local Labor Party team former Council Leader Urooj Shah-Ghazala Rana and Councilor Aqeel Salamat. Oldham Council Leader Arooj Shah said that the Labor team organized a NADRA surgery for the local population so that the Pakistani Kashmiri community can get the card at their doorstep.

We are also grateful to Consul General Tariq Wazir, because it was possible to organize the surgery today-Labor Party member and social personality Ghazala Rana said that today's Nadra surgery is an effort of the Labor team.

On this occasion, Councilor Aqeel Salamat, after thanking the Consul General and the Nadra team, said that we organize Nadra surgery every two months so that the people of the community can be provided local facilities-Syed Imran, Manager of Nadra Surgery. Haider said that many people have benefited from NADRA surgery today including Most of them were women and children and NADRA will extend such surgeries to more areas so that more people can benefit locally.

## Cabinet's sub-committee on ECL notified

ISLAMABAD:A notification has been issued on Monday regarding the re-constitution of Cabinet sub-committee on Exit Control List (ECL).

According to the notification, Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazir Tarar had been appointed as convener of the sub-committee while others members included Minister for Economic Affairs & Political Affairs Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar, Minister for Communications Asad Mehmood and Minister for Information & Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb. APP

## Subsidised flours bags

FAISALABAD: People stand in a long queue to buy flour bags at subsidised price at Narula Road in the city.



Photo: Online

## Kalma Chowk Remodeling Project Site completing soon : Imran Amin

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Imran Amin CEO of Punjab Central Business District Development Authority (PCBDDA), also known as Central Business District (CBD Punjab), has directed the official contractor National Logistic Cell (NLC) of Kalma Chowk Remodeling project to work 24 hours on the project. The project developed at a cost of Rs 4.2 billion has completed 1000 retaining piles out of 2000 total retaining piles within a period of one month.

According to the CBD Punjab spokesperson the authority is utilizing all the resources to the maximum to complete the project ahead of the schedule as per directed by the CEO, for the convenience of the public. The shifting process is in progress to move electrical and telecommunication instruments at Ali Zaib Road. A comprehensive traffic plan will be communicated to the public in collaboration with the City Traffic Police Lahore before the Kalma Chowk underpass is completely closed. We are fully aware that

there is traffic pressure in the vicinity and alternate routes are given to overcome it.

During his visit to the project site CTO Lahore, Dr. AsadMalhi said, that due to the construction work, there is an influx of traffic on Kalma Chowk and its adjacent roads, especially during peak hours, but there is no complete traffic jam reported. Alternative routes have been provided for daily commuters. CBD Punjab has initiated this project to solve the problem of traffic congestion permanently. We apologize to the public for the temporary

inconvenience. CBD Punjab management and City Traffic Police, Lahore have requested the citizens to use alternative routes while traveling in Kalma Chowk and its adjoining areas so that they can avoid inconvenience.

Imran Amin, the CEO, of CBD Punjab, has specially thanked and showed his profound gratitude for the continuous support of Chief Minister Punjab Chaudhry Pervez Elahi, Commissioner Lahore Mr. Amir Jan and all the stakeholders for their continuous support.

## TriFit Pakistan Opens its Doors in Karachi

Bureau Report

KARACHI: TriFit, Pakistan's first international level chain of health and fitness clubs, opened its doors in Karachi earlier this month. Standing for Tribe, Results, Innovation, and Fitness (TriFit), the company opened its first location with a massive 34,000+ sqft space, at the famous Seaview in DHA Phase VI, Karachi.

The first location at Seaview in Karachi was formally inaugurated by Khalid al Haqbani, founder of one of the top 15 fitness chains in the world. H.E. Liam O'Flanagan-Acting Counsel General US, H.E. Mohammad Al Jizani-Acting Counsel General Saudi Arabia and Javed Kureishi-PCB board member were also present at the mega event hosted at the club. Several diplomats, dignitaries, sporting personalities and icons, business leaders and other famous personalities attended the star-studded event. After the grand event, all the guests were given a hands-on experience of the TriFit



fitness club.

The craze for fitness and physical wellbeing has been growing rapidly especially in Pakistan. TriFit is a brand that is focused on integrating modern technology and fitness innovation, and zeal for community building amongst like-minded individuals to provide a comprehensive solution for the fitness enthusiasts across the city, and then Pakistan. The club is

equipped with hundreds of pieces of state of the art fitness equipment from top global fitness brands, hundreds of lockers, internationally-certified local and foreign trainers, Signature studios offering over 300 classes per week, Les Mills fitness content, fitness apps with hundreds of on demand classes, segregated fitness clubs for men and women, Recovery Zone with massage chairs, and a host of other amenities.

Ahmar Azam, founder and CEO of TriFit, who previously led as the CEO of a multi-billion dollar top 15 global fitness chain, stated: "TriFit aims to provide a comfortable environment where both fitness enthusiasts and less active segment of our society are eager to improve their fitness levels at their own pace. And be part of our Tribe. With a mission to inspire society towards an active lifestyle, we are enablers to bring out the best in our members, whether it is for a general improvement in their health and well-being to live a more fulfilled life, or to work harder to look and feel a class apart."

TriFit aims to revolutionize the traditional gym experience with an experience never seen before in Pakistan. The organization plans to expand further in other localities of Karachi followed by Lahore, Islamabad and other cities. TriFit plans to open 50+ fitness clubs across Pakistan with the next 3 locations opening in Karachi, within the next 12 months.

## DPO Swat meets to journalists group



News Desk

SWAT :District Police Officer Swat Shafiqullah Gandapur Said that a friendly policing system has been implemented in the Swat Valley. In Swat, there is tranquillity, Peace has been deployed there offering the tourists every safety conceivable. Swat has achieved peace due to the sacrifices made by police, journalists, and citizens. Announcement of a two-week coordinated operation in Swat against drug dealers and criminals.

He communicated his opinions with a group of journalists, led by Shahzad Alam, president of the Malakand Division Union of Journalists, along with Rashid Iqbal, a former chairman of the Swat Press Club, Essa Khan Khail, Haroon Siraj, Murad Ali Khan, Parvez Alam Papa, Hakeem Usman Ali, Waheedullah Swati, Tauseeq Gulshan, Aimal Khan, Kamran Kam, and others. While SP Special Branch Peer Zar Badshah participated.

Senior journalists gave the new DPO a number of recommenda-

tions regarding Swat on this occasion. As the winter season has begun in Swat, Shafiqullah Khan noted that the beautiful Valley has for the first time implemented a friendly policing system that is 24 hours vigil for tourists, and Upper and tourism zones have deployed tourist police who are constantly available to assist tourists. He claimed that many tourists are visiting Swat and that every precaution should be taken to keep them safe. He added that they are welcome since Swat offers warm hospitality and local foods. He stated that the entry and exit points are carefully watched to ensure that Swat's peace and order are not compromised.

At this moment, he warned that Swat is not a place for criminals and drug dealers and that no exceptions will be made for them. He also announced a fortnight-long campaign against them and a public appeal at the time for people to be aware of their surroundings and to report any suspicious activity or people to the police without hesitation.

Islamabad  
15° - 23° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 5:34 am  
Zohr ..... 12:01 pm  
Asr ..... 3:22 pm  
Maghrib ..... 5:00 pm  
Isha ..... 6:29 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

Islamabad ..... 9222596  
Rawalpindi ..... 9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

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

**DEPARTMENTS**

CDA ..... 9221334-43  
CDA ..... 9208301-04  
Met Office ..... 9250360-6  
RDA ..... 5555864  
TMA ..... 5770886  
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  
Wasa Water Tank  
Rawalpindi ..... 0331-5022125

**3rd Pakistan Mountains Pride Awards**

**Devcom honours sixteen professionals with 3rd PAMPA**

**Tooba Khan**

ISLAMABAD: As many as 16 were awarded 3rd Pakistan Mountains Pride Awards on Monday, the grand finale of 12th Pakistan Mountain Festival, a flagship event by Devcom-Pakistan. The 12-day long advocacy festival was organized in collaboration with NRSP, PPAF, PNCA, National Heritage and Culture Division, Fatima Jinnah University, Rawalpindi Women University, SZABIST Islamabad Campus, Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB) Comsats University CS Adventure Club, and GBC Council to commemorate International Mountain Day that falls on December 11.

The guests of honour included Country Head of Italian Cooperation Development in Pakistan Emanuela Benini, chairman Rural Support Programmes Network Shoaib Sultan Khan, Pakistan's renowned mountaineer Nazir Sabir, EvK2CNR Senior Scientific Advisor Ashiq Ahmed Khan, Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) Group Head Institutional Development, Innovation and Integration Irshad Khan Abbasi, Pakistan's global-

ly celebrated mountaineer Sarbaz Khan, Director General PNCA Ayub Jamali.

Sifat Gul, Garamchashma (Chital), Sakina Bi Ibrahim from Shigar (Baltistan), Gul Begam from Ghizer, Nusrat Yousuf from Rawalakot, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) won the Shoaib Sultan Khan Mountain Community Development Awards.

Marium Majeed Dar belongs to Forward Kahuta (AJK) and Rashida Khanam from Chitral was given the Agostino Da Polenza Mountain Conservation Award. Pakistan celebrated women mountaineers Sameena Baig and Naila Kiani got Nazir Sabir Mountaineering Award.

Ustad Mir Afzal, sitar player, was conferred upon the Ustad Jan Ali Mountain Music Award.

Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund launched 'PPAF SMEs Award' under the banner of Pakistan Mountain Awards. This year's award winners included Nazia Hussain (Chitral), Nasreen Moosa (Skardu), Karim Salman (Hunza), and Samiullah (Swat).

Gilgit-Baltistan Music Group and maestro sitar player from Swat Mir Afzal creat-



ed a fusion of mountain music, performing together. PNCA National Performing Arts Group (NPAG) presented Kalash dance and Sndhi jhoomar. A young vocalist from Rawalpindi Women University Laiba Khan sang Paha ki qasm chally aao. A seasoned filmmaker Khalid Mahmood showed his documentary about the Pakistani climbers who summited K2 during 1977-2022.

Talking about the objectives of the

Pakistan Mountain Festival and Pakistan Mountains Pride Awards, Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed said: "Pakistan Mountains Pride Awards (PAMPA) were launched in 2019 to recognize the services par excellence of the individuals who have rendered their services to mountain conservation and uplift the communities over the decades, mountaineering, sustainable mountain tourism and for the promotion of mountain

music. Before PAMPA, there was no system of recognition and encouragement to the marvelous people of mountains. The PAMPA was launched to fill the void, initially with five categories. PPAF has added four SMEs awards from this year that makes a total of sixteen awards."

Speaking on the occasion, Nazir Sabir said: Some Pakistani women are showing courage in mountaineering, more shall join the flock. Sameena Baig, first and Naila Kiani both are internationally acclaimed mountaineers. Naila Kiani has become the first Pakistani woman to scale three peaks of over 8000 meters, as she climbed Gasherbrum 1 peak in August 2022 morning. Gasherbrum is the 11th highest mountain peak in the world.

Shoaib Sultan Khan said our rural support programmes have significantly contributed to the socioeconomic development of communities all over Pakistan especially in mountain areas. They do a wonderful job, and recognition of their services is much appreciated. It would encourage mountain communities, mountaineers and conservationists to do more in a much befitting manner.

**Dangers**

ISLAMABAD: Students sitting on a bus rooftop on their way after attending school which may cause any incident any time and needs the attention of concerned authorities in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

*PAMPA was launched to fill the void, initially with five categories*

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Speaking on the occasion, Nazir Sabir said: Some Pakistani women are showing courage in mountaineering, more shall join the flock. Sameena Baig, first and Naila Kiani both are internationally acclaimed mountaineers.

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**India bans Pakistani OTT platform Vidly.Tv for their original web series Sevak: The Confessions**

**News Desk**

PAKISTAN:- Using Emergency powers under IT Rules 2021, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, India has issued directions for the immediate blocking of the original web series Sevak: The Confessions (HTTPS://Sevak.Vidly.tv) and Pakistani OTT platform Vidly.tv.

Vidly.tv launched ground breaking content in the form of an original, Sevak The Confessions, web series which can be streamed at https://sevak.vidly.tv. It is an original action thriller web series based on true stories set between 1984 and 2022 in India.

The Indian governments knee jerk reaction to the nail-biting suspense story comes in lieu of it being a bold and

true depiction of the Hindutva movement in India and faith-based atrocities taking place in the country. The statement that the series makes is an important one on many levels, especially in raising awareness and voices on the terrorism and crimes against humanity taking place by extremist elements in India. It showcases how the power-hungry saffron clad fascists are misleading people towards hate crimes against minorities.

The Government of India has taken strong objection to the series for highlighting the extremist elements in India. The series is based on the life of Deep Singh Sidhu along with events inspired by the stories of Gauri Lankesh, Hemant Karkare, Graham Staines, Junaid

Khan, and Surekha Bohtmange and based on the events of the Babri mosque demolition, 2002 Gujarat pogrom among others.

This historical action thriller is based on the true story of an assassin. Mannu, who leads Vidya on a path to reveal the dark secrets of Jeet's death. Vidya unwillingly enters the labyrinth of Mannu's tales encountering many ghosts of his past. The stories shared by Mannu, unravel the horrors of hate crime, atrocities and genocide. As the truth is revealed, both of them find themselves in danger for their lives.

Mannu is navigating life with a story hidden deep in his heart and as they encounter Vijay Karkare, Preet Kaur, Arun, Vinayak and Sadhu, the series thrills us with intrigue

and mystery entwined with true events that blur the lines between fiction and the truth, making the series all the more gripping.

Several Indian publications and channels have reported on the ban on the Vidly.tv OTT platform because of the original web series, Sevak The Confessions, and have raised unfounded concerns.

It is sad and shocking that a country like India that proclaims to be a champion of freedom of speech and expression is banning the Vidly.tv OTT Platform because of a web series that is sharing the truth behind events and movements. It seems that the current BJP government is seriously concerned about its citizens finding out the truth.

**EZ Wage launches SMS based salary**



News Desk

LAHORE: On a mission to financially empower the blue-collared masses of the region, Singapore based EZ Wage announced the latest addition to its current offering. The financially marginalized now have a chance to gain access to their earned wages without the need of purchasing and using costly smartphones. This announcement comes at a time when inflation has sky rocketed prices and access to basic technology like smartphones is deemed as a luxury for many.

The Short Code feature will allow for users to withdraw their earned wages via SMS based transactions and will do away with the requirement of downloading and using the state of the art EZ Wage App. Users will use their mobile phones to withdraw the required amount from their EZ Wage accounts allowing the end user greater options while accessing their EZ Wage account from the comfort of basic and inexpensive mobile phones.

Users need to follow a few steps after sending an SMS to EZ Wage's number 95651 for this facility. If their employers have registered their company with EZ Wage, users will simply enter their unique CNIC, followed by selecting the amount they wish to withdraw and completing the transaction by entering their MPIN to confirm. The entire process is expected to take a matter of minutes and has been kept simple on purpose by the EZ Wage Team for enabling even the financially illiterate users to use it effortlessly.

EZ Wage's Founder and CEO Fatima Batool commented, "Financial independence is a right that shouldn't be confined only to a select few in the top tier. My team is working tirelessly to invoke financial literacy, one feature at a time, with the ultimate goal of making financial tools accessible to the masses in the region. SMS based transactions are a step in this direction and will do away with the need for costly smartphones so a greater chunk of the impoverished class can also withdraw their hard-earned money at their will whenever they want, as many times as they need during the paid month."

**Interactive session held with mountaineers**

**Quratulain Nasir**

ISLAMABAD: Alpine Club of Pakistan (ACP) organized interactive Session with the mountaineers who arrived at Islamabad to participate in the activities being organized in connection with the International Mountain Day. Earlier, the mountaineers participated in the Eco Hike held at Margallah Hills at Trail 5 and Sustainable Mountain Sports Tourism Conference in a local held at Islamabad.

The mountaineers Mr. Sarbaz Khan, M. Murad, Rehmatullah Qureshi, Abdul Joshi, Mr. Doulat Shah, Wajid Nagri, shared their experiences of mountaineering. Most of them highlighted their experiences in climbing. They held that the climbing on mountains not only satiate their thirst of adventure but they also enjoy thrill, excitement and daring feat. The technical, dangerous and steep terrains of mountains and the risk involved on each step brings them close to nature. They can speak with the nature. The fatigue, harsh weather, vertical climbing and uncertainty burn their energy but it is their passion and determination which drives them to overcome every challenge and summit the Peak.

Some of them complained about the lack of resources for the promotion of mountaineering. A few of them stressed the need to mobilize resources from corporate sector for which Alpine Club should extend its support. All the mountaineers appreciated the role of Pakistan Army for promotion of mountain sports tourism, recognition and reward of the mountaineers.

The mountaineers visited the sports facilities being developed by AIMS Education System for school children. They also appreciated the building of facility of Bouldering Climbing Wall at the premises. Mr. Abul Wahid, Secretary, Private Schools Association briefed about the project and assured their best co-operation to promote sport climbing among the students, besides other sports.

At the occasion, Mr. Abu Zafar Sadiq, President, Karrar Haideri, Secretary, Ayaz Ahmed Shigrai, VP, Alpine Club of Pakistan, Gulzar Saeed, Khurshid Alam, Sajjad Panhwar and other mountain lovers were also present at this occasion. The Mountaineers thanked Alpine Club of Pakistan for extended hospitality and support. After the event, the participants were served with the dinner. The participants also enjoyed songs by M. Murad Mountaineer who himself wrote to pay tribute to the eight-thousanders (peaks above 8000-M).

**Secretary General OIC Visits COMSTECH**

ISLAMABAD: The Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, H. E. Mr. Hissein Brahim Taha, visited COMSTECH along with his ten-member delegation on Monday. Senior officials of Ministry of Foreign Affairs accompanied the OIC delegation.

The Coordinator General COMSTECH, H. E. Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, along with his team extended a very warm reception to the Secretary General and his team. Prof. Choudhary briefed the Secretary General about COMSTECH establishment, vision and mission, past achievements, current programs and future plans. He also conducted an orientation visit of the delegation to the COMSTECH facility and briefed on the state of



the art training facilities available at COMSTECH for the capacity building of OIC states.

During the presentation of the COMSTECH report by the Coordinator General, the Secretary

General of OIC discussed different COMSTECH programs and their impact on the development of the science and technology collaboration among the OIC member states. He also shared insightful thoughts and recommendations for the inclusion in COMSTECH future plans.

Mr. Taha appreciated the current COMSTECH programs: COMSTECH Consortium of Excellence, Palestine program, Yemen program, Africa program in health, fellowships program, COMSTECH-IFS research grants program, COMSTECH-ICGEB cooperation program, COMSTECH-TWAS Science in exile program, Research fellowships for OIC LDCs program, and capacity building webinars, workshops, conferences and exhibitions.

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# Risks and scenarios of the Turkish elections

**Burhanettin Duran**

The budget talks at Parliament have been so intense that they overshadowed the rivalry between the government and the opposition's vision documents. Speaking at Parliament, the Republican People's Party (CHP) Chairperson Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu escalated tensions, leading to a fist fight among parliamentarians.

The budget talks are always intense, yet this year's deliberations have been particularly tense because it's an election year. Accordingly, the opposition has been making very serious accusations. Kılıçdaroğlu, too, has resorted to a two-pronged approach, talking about "making amends" yet fueling polarization. Most recently, he accused Türkiye of having become a "narco-state" to set a new bar for his aggressive political discourse.

In truth, politicians must take into account some risks ahead of next year's elections.

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan recently issued a warning, identifying four threats or risks that Türkiye could encounter: The economy, asylum seekers, diplomacy and counterterrorism. On Thursday, Sabah's Okan Müderrisoğlu aptly highlighted the fifth: Attempts to conduct psychological operations and systematic disinformation campaigns.

At a time when even the United

States suffers from election meddling, it is necessary to keep in mind that foreign governments and intelligence services, which are unhappy with Türkiye's "autonomous" foreign policy, could take certain steps. In this sense, it is the national and democratic responsibility of all politicians to set the right tone and focus on the vision of each presidential candidate by taking into consideration the above-mentioned risks.

Certainly, the People's Alliance and the opposition want to win the presidency in the first round and control the majority of parliamentary seats. However, no one can be certain that the election, which will be fiercely contested, will be over in the first round.

Since we do not know the opposition candidate(s), the available polls can only provide some insight into the potential result. Yet the picture will become clearer once the actual candidates start campaigning.

Let us recall that many pollsters released numbers, which favored the opposition, ahead of the 2018 presidential election. The result, however, was radically different. Moreover, Türkiye has not yet reached the home stretch since the opposition bloc, the "table for six," keeps postponing its decision on a joint presidential candidate.

Since Erdoğan is running for sure, some observers believe, the opposition delays the announcement to stop him from running a customized campaign. At the same time, that delay limits the time



that the opposition's potential candidate will have to introduce themselves to the electorate. We will have to wait and see the result before deciding which method is more effective.

**Unprecedented result**

After five years under the presidential system of government, Türkiye faces the possibility of an unprecedented result in the 2023 elections. It is unclear how Turkish voters will act if the presidential race has to be settled in the second round, whereas the parliamentary seats will have been allocated on the same day as the first round.

I predict that Erdoğan will win next year's election in the first round. However, one could always think about the possibilities.

In case of a two-round election, there will be three potential outcomes: (1) The

People's Alliance could have the parliamentary majority. (2) The "table for six" could have the parliamentary majority. (3) They will both fail to win the parliamentary majority, making the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) more relevant.

Under all three circumstances, the Turkish people will presumably opt for Erdoğan as a strong leader that can govern Türkiye in a turbulent world. In the first scenario, it would make no sense to move forward without Erdoğan. The second and third cases, in turn, would highlight Erdoğan's balancing and stabilizing role.

*Burhanettin Duran is General Coordinator of SETA Foundation and a professor at Ibn Haldun University. He is also a member of Turkish Presidency Security and Foreign Policies Council.*

## Morocco's World Cup fairy tale a ray of hope for underdeveloped

It usually goes like this: A football tournament begins, underdogs are eliminated in a couple of rounds (usually in the group stage) and heavy hitters such as France, Germany, Brazil and other countries with traditionally powerful national squads dominate the rest of the competition.

But guess what, Brazil and Germany, two national teams whose badges carry five and four stars respectively – representing that many World Cup victories – have been eliminated in the FIFA 2022 Qatar World Cup. Brazil lost to Croatia and Germany could not even make it past the group stage due to a goal-difference tiebreaker.

Now we're at the semifinals and the remaining four teams are France, Argentina, Croatia and Morocco.

If you are interested in football, the first three teams' qualification in the semifinals might not come as much of a surprise. But Morocco? Now that's a shocker. A shocker that has been hailed as some sort of "victory of the masses" worldwide – because we are at one of those "football is never only football" moments where we vividly experience the unexpected. Just like when Türkiye advanced all the way to the semifinals in Euro 2008 with consecutive last-minute victories, which led to the European press uttering those words: "A match cannot be considered over unless Turks get on the bus."

Will a similar expression be used for Moroccans as well? This question will only depend on the magic of football, the surprises the very sport is highly prone to and the North African contenders' determination. Nonetheless, even the fact that they have proven to be at least the fourth-best team in the world has been hailed as the long-awaited triumph of underdogs worldwide. And they actually have a shot at winning the World Cup when you think about how the apparently outclassed team defeated many heavy hitters to throw their hats into the semifinals.

They are not just the underdogs in football or even sports. The underdogs around the globe, who are living in underdeveloped countries and those that had to grow up with the inferiority complex deeply embedded in their psyches.

Let's be honest here: It is glaringly obvious that the most developed states in the West are at least several centuries ahead of the "third world countries" in terms of humanitarian development, health systems, democratic governance and many other important aspects of life. The course of the time was in favor of the Westerners and they got the upper hand through brutal imperialism, the slave trade, the occupation of native lands and other inhumane practices. They have left many methods of their previous barbarianism behind but to tell the truth, the fact that the Western world is envied today is the product of what they did back in the day. As time progressed, the civilizational and developmental difference between the developed West and the rest has only gotten bigger, leading to a very painful scar in the subconscious of "third world peoples." As a result, a feeling that being bested by the West is inevitable, be it in sports, science, literature or any other intellectual realm.

That feeling has been utterly shattered now that Morocco has made it in the shade. They have advanced all the way to the semifinals and they are only two victories from bringing the World Cup to a geography that has never seen it firsthand before – if you ignore the proximity of Spain to Morocco, of course.



## Impact of media violence on society: Cause or outcome?

**Murat Selvi**

When we talk about the relationship between media and society, the first striking fact we encounter is how violence portrayed in media can have a particular effect on people. All studies in this field since the beginning of the 20th century reveal that violent content impacts individuals and societies.

The frequent presence of violence in newspapers, television, cinema, and the more widely used virtual environments today is a problem that arises out of the need to reach a wider audience and secure financial interests.

Violence sells itself. It is interesting, it arouses curiosity and because of that, TV series, movies, news, video games and social media platforms have become a place where it can be found easily. Therefore, it is an essential debate whether the intense level of violence in mass media desensitizes individuals and increases the frequency of violence in real life.

The existence of violence in the media has been the subject of discussions for many years and has also been the subject of many scientific studies. The simplest explanation is that violence has an important place in media because it facilitates sales. In other words, it ensures that the media content is preferred and consumed by wider audiences.

Some theorists argue that all types of violence are a set of learned behaviors. They draw attention to the fact that violence frequently featured in the media can lead individuals to engage in violent behavior.

Based on this view, we might say that we are facing a very serious problem. Especially nowadays, media content produced anywhere in the world can be transmitted over great distances within seconds. It is common knowledge that violent items are quickly produced, shared and easily accessible. Due to factors such as recording, sharing and rewatching the content, people may be exposed to the same element of violence repeatedly. Digitalization, which is a tremendous opportunity for humanity to transfer information, turns into a process that increases the frequency of violence in the media to an unlimited level at this point.

On the other hand, some theorists state that a person will not exhibit violent behavior just because he or she encounters violent elements in the media. While accepting that violence is a learned behavior, they say violence learned from the media will be abandoned in a short time. Some experiments also support this view. According to the results of some experimental research on children and young people, it has been observed that children who watch cartoons containing violent elements use violence while playing with their toys, but they stop this behavior in a short time.

As a result of violence in media, people may start believing that violence in the world is much more prevalent than it actually is. This highlights the importance of the language used in the news media. Although some practices such as many legal regulations, ethical principles, publishing rules and responsibilities have been determined to protect the individual and society from the harmful effects of media violence, it has not been possible to eliminate the presence of violence in media content altogether. However, although there are measures,

such as warning symbols, to prevent the harmful effects of violent productions, at least for children, it does not seem possible to limit access to media material in today's digital age.

The most critical barrier to the worldwide sale of media content is cultural differences and violence is the main content that can be sold almost unaffected by these differences. Therefore, incorporating violence into different content, from video games to TV series and movies, from newspapers to new media elements, is a frequently applied method. By overcoming the obstacles created by cultural differences, violence, which is rapidly sold around the world, can find its place in all media.

Technological developments have enabled societies to access information with extraordinary ease but it has also brought the downside of the constant exposure to information with it. Unfortunately, a significant part of the media material contains elements of violence. Moreover, news content is one of the most important carriers of violence. In fact, even news of violence against women can increase the incidence of violence against women. It is known that presenting news of violence in a detailed and dramatized manner is instructive for people who are prone to violence.

It should not be forgotten that the language of the news media is an important factor in preventing violence to the public. Using language that normalizes violence will inevitably desensitize society to violence and this depersonalization has a significant impact on the failure to prevent violence.

*Writer is MA student at Swansea University*

## Arab world the winner in memorable World Cup

**Chris Doyle**

As the FIFA World Cup reaches its climactic end, one cannot help but reflect on what an extraordinary political event it has been. Those who argue that sport and politics should be decoupled will have found it hard watching politics as an ever-present from the day Qatar was awarded the event back in 2010 and at every single match since the tournament began on Nov. 20.

But perhaps one of the most fascinating and hopefully impactful thrills at the World Cup has been the rare opportunity to remind the world that, for all its troubles, fissures and rivalries, the peoples of the Arab world do have much in common and that football has highlighted that reality every day in Qatar.

Some might question these signs of togetherness among fellow Arabs. Yet there were copious examples where it shone. Three achievements stood out.

Firstly, for Morocco to beat Spain and then Portugal in the knockout rounds was exceptional, especially following their defeat of Belgium, the second-ranked side in the world, in the group stage. There was more than an element of delight in seeing a former colony defeating, in Spain, its one-time colonial master. Morocco will get the chance to overcome its other colonial power, France, in the semifinals on Wednesday. In fact, star player Achraf Hakimi was born in the poor suburbs of Madrid. Morocco were the only team in the quarter-finals not from Europe or South America. Few in the region were not cheering them on. A sense of collective pride emerged as a result of the North African country's success in becoming the first Arab and African state to reach the semifinals.

Israeli hasbaristas were also caught out. Having belittled and mocked those who claimed otherwise, they discovered that, despite the normalization deals, Arabs are not willing to gloss over Israel's crimes and oppression. Time and time again, Israeli journalists, while trying

to pretend everything was all lovely and wonderful with their newfound Arab friends, found that "free Palestine" was pushed back in their faces. Many locals snubbed their requests for interviews.

Palestinian armbands and keffiyehs were being worn at nearly every match by huge numbers of fans. The sheer arrogance of believing that a state could oppress millions of people and that all would be peace and happiness was exposed as the nonsense it is. The Moroccan players had no hesitation in raising the Palestinian flag after their wins over Spain and Portugal.

Many Arabs also expressed admiration for the courage of the Iranian team after the players refused to sing their national anthem ahead of their opening match against England. This points to the widespread sympathy many Arabs feel toward Iranians, notably currently the women, who are struggling for their freedoms.

The Western media has been quick to point out all that was wrong with this World Cup. It is about time it also highlighted what has gone right. For all the criticisms of Qatar in the run-up to the cup over issues such as workers' rights, one of the key elements of its bid has been fulfilled. Football in the region has been the winner. The atmosphere has been considerably warmer than many expected, with largely good-natured relations among fans of all countries. It seems that rival fans have not needed to be segregated, showing the festival-like atmosphere. Fan violence does not seem to have featured. The largest numbers of fans, of course, came from the Arab world, with Saudi Arabia providing the largest number from a single country.

Many outside the region were dismissive of the claims that football mattered in the Middle East. One leading commentator contemptuously told me, while on the BBC, that Qatar did not have a footballing heritage. Yet the region should never have been ignored. A World Cup in the Arab world has brought some cheer to a region that has been hit hard by wars and other crises, and whose peoples have not had much to celebrate in recent years.

*Chris Doyle is director of the Council for Arab-British Understanding, in London.*

What is happening in Iran?

# Distorting facts and authenticating lies

Spokesman Report

During the few last months, some materials are published by different news agencies including Western Persian-language media, and they are published in the mainstream or social media, which raise unfair and unrealistic allegations against the Islamic Republic of Iran. Here effort is made to scrutinize into some different aspects of these allegations, facts about the internal events in Iran and the real reasons behind attributing such allegations to Iran. Western countries, by supporting and equipping hostile groups and enemies of the I.R. Iran, arming and providing facilities, ammunitions, intelligence feeding and financial supports for them, try to induce disorder and mutiny in Iran. Thus their media produce fake, false and unreal content in the TV channels and newspapers.

The antagonistic content published in the media, financed and supported by them, engage various issues, including nuclear energy, human rights, military, security etc. This is while these groups and the media act comprehensively against a country that is a member state of the international community and therefore threaten the peace and security as well as the sovereignty and national security of a country that is a member state of the United Nations. These groups and media have continuously encouraged unrest and disorder in Iran and have gone as far as teaching civilians how to make incendiary weapons such as Molotov cocktails, hand grenades etc. They even tell their pawns through their news line in the cable TVs to seize and disarm Iran's military and security institutions and even ask people to infringe

the state buildings or ask the states to suspend or withdraw diplomatic relations with Iran.

Despite the politicized, fallacious and unreliable allegations by these media, the true reality is something else practically. During the last decades, the people of Iran have endured the cruellest international sanctions and the secondary sanctions imposed by America just because they want to enjoy their inalienable right for peaceful atomic energy. Despite complying with its international obligations; Iran has faced the maximum pressure campaign imposed by the previous American president. Shortly after, Major General Qasem Soleimani, Iran's senior military commanders and the hero of the fight against terrorism and extremism was assassinated during an official mission to a foreign country.

Then, the pandemics of Corona Virus plagued and swept the region and the world. In this situation, more than 150,000 Iranian citizens died as a result of the lack of vaccine export to Iran at the proper time due to the sanctions and the obstacles posed by west. However, a little later, Iran managed to produce the first Corona

Vaccine in the Islamic world and could not only overcome the mortality rate, but to export vaccine and the other medical equipment to the other countries by relying on the domestic science.

After the Corona pandemics and at a time when the world was heading to recover itself from the shocks caused by this ominous virus, and to revive their economy and social resources, the lamentable death of an Iranian woman caused some agitation and created some controversy against Iran. In this atmosphere, some of the western countries along with their supporters media, contrary to all the principles



and rules of the international law, have called for turmoil against a

United Nations state member, and asked protesters to resort to the aggressive measures, destroy urban infrastructures and public and private properties, and in a word to turn to hooliganism in order to achieve their goals. At the same time, tens of Iranian law enforcement forces were killed due to the assault and battery exerted by the rioters or by cold weapons or direct gunfire in the streets.

According to the law, this people were performing their legal duties to establish order.

Smuggling of weapons and ammunition from outside the borders into Iran, destruction of the public property, disruption of the democratic order and public order, arson, vandalism, threat, intimidation, assault and battery, assassination, terror and lynching are only parts of the destructive and illegal actions done by this so-called freedom fighters and defenders of the women's rights. Most of the weapons used by

them are foreign and unknown in Iran, thus exported from outside the country.

Just like enemy soldiers, their task is to disrupt order and security. During the investigations, some detained rioters have admitted connection with the intelligence services of the foreign countries. In one of the cases, the ISIS terrorist group attacked a religious site and martyred dozens of women, men and children praying in

Shahcheragh Shrine of Shiraz. Still, the propaganda machinery against Iran acted so brazenly that even when the ISIS officially accepted the responsibility of the terrorist attack in its media, the hostile groups and their media distorted the reality to insinuate its audience that it is carried out by the forces affiliated with the government.

Westerners and their biased media have launched their propaganda machinery to promote violence, aggression and terrorism in Iran. Therefore, by settling in the countries that claim democracy and respect for the rights of nations, openly and blatantly act

against the territorial integrity, sovereignty, national unity, stability and the national security of a member state of the

United Nation. This is while the international community, international organizations and even some supporting states, stay silent before this inequity and breach of the international law. Even some countries, including the USA and its allies, openly support them and finance them. The thirst for power in these hostile, rioter groups is so such that they do not hesitate to take any brutal, violent and deadly action to build a case against Iran in order to divert public opinion and influence the feelings of the masses.

Announcing grandiloquent and deceptive slogans such as seeking freedom and defending women's rights is not only a lie, but also a cover for creating disorder and damage to the democratic structures, spreading hatred, creating ethnic conflict and sectarian war in Iran. With a brief look at the functional and organizational history of each of the active groups in the recent riots, the veracity of this claims and the falsity of their allegations will be determined. The documents and evidence of the contemporary history in the last few decades evidently testifies their brutality, selfishness, divisiveness and the morbid desire for the power.

For example, in the past, and during the Iran-Iraq war, in alignment with the Iraqi Ba'ath regime and using borrowed weapons, the hypocrite group of MOK attacked the border cities of Iran and massacred thousands of women, children and unarmed civilians. Presently once again, this group activates its death squads against the people of Iran in two phases including field operations in the Iranian cities, and then the psychological warfare operations in the

cyberspace through spreading lies, slander and libel and fabricating criminal cases against government and publishing unrealistic contents in their media in order to reverse the facts about Iran.

During the last decades, hostility, terror and killing of the civilians have been the common pain of the two great nations of Iran and Pakistan. The two countries have suffered from this blights and families have lost their loved ones as well. Therefore, the honourable people of Pakistan understand this pain as the two countries have sacrificed many precious martyrs for the cause of security, stability and peace.

To conclude, it is worth mentioning that the two friendly, brotherly and neighbouring countries of Iran and Pakistan have always supported each other in the hard times throughout the history and are proud of their cultural, linguistic, ethnic and religious links and commonalities. It should be remembered, and of course, a brief look at the region confirms it, that the security, stability, sustainable development, integrity and constancy of the geopolitical and geostrategic position of the region and its party states, comprise a comprehensive and monolithic entity.

Therefore, the security and stability in one area can contribute to the security and stability of the other areas in the region. Strengthening the geo-economy of the region, boosting the economic and commercial prosperity, connecting the border crossings gates, expanding the transportation corridors, guaranteeing safe and current flow of energy and finally maintaining the security of the infrastructures in the region, all and all, require security, stability and continuity of the geographical borders, territorial integrity of the countries of the region, internal security and political stability throughout the region.

## International Housing Expo 2022, Pakistan

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: UN Habitat in collaboration with Ministry of Housing and Works organized two sessions at the International Housing Expo 2022, Pakistan. The objective was to review the impact of the unprecedented floods of 2022 in Pakistan, identify challenges and actions for achieving climate resilient housing and sustainable post disaster rehabilitation and recovery. The deliberations were focused on the need to move towards zero carbon housing and adaptation

of green building technologies and practices for a sustainable built environment and need for recovery planning and framework. Move towards zero carbon housing in consideration to climate change dimension in development and ensure climate resilience. In the inaugural session, Ms. Sherry Rehman, Minister for Climate Change advocated for resilient housing to reduce climate vulnerability.

The sessions commenced with opening remarks from Mr. Iftikhar Ali Shellwani, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Works and Mr. Shahzad

Nawaz Cheema, Joint Secretary Ministry of Housing. Mr. Iftikhar Ali Shellwani explained that it is the responsibility of the government to provide affordable housing to the people, but it needed the help of the private sector to achieve that goal. He added that the event held on the basis of the public-private partnership was the right step in that direction. Mr. Shahzad Hassan stressed on the need for immediate actions both on the ground and at policy level to mitigate the disastrous effects of Climate Change.

Experts including Dr. Shoaib Ahmad, Distinguished Professor PIMSAT; Mr. Raja Rehan Arshad, Former Lead World Bank on Disaster Risk Reduction; Ms. Nusrat Nasab CEO AKAH; Mr. Jawed Ali Khan, HPM, UN Habitat; Ms. Mio Sato, Chief of Mission, IOM, Ms. Maggie Stephenson, Recover Advisor, UNOPS; Mr. Shahid Saeed, CEO, Indus Earth Trust; Mr. Fazal Noor, Associate Professor, SSUET; Mr. Mehboob Ilahi, Former Director General, MOCC participated as panelists in two sessions.

## Occupation Forces Kill Teenage Girl in Jenin



RAMALLAH :A Palestinian girl was killed Sunday night after occupation forces stormed the eastern neighborhood of Jenin in the occupied West Bank.

Director of the Martyr Dr. Khalil Suleiman Hospital said that the girl, Jana Zakarnah, 16, was martyred after she was injured during the occupation's storming of the eastern neighborhood of the city.

She was wounded by the occupation bullets while she was on her house roof and found dead after the withdrawal of the occupation forces from the area, according to Palestine news agency.

The Israeli occupation forces stormed the eastern neighborhood of Jenin, wounding at least 20 Palestinians and arresting three others, while damaging a number of vehicles and a store, amid clashes that erupted in Al-Bayader area. (QNA)

## China reports 8,838 new COVID cases for Dec 11

SHANGHAI: China reported 8,838 new COVID-19 infections for December 11, of which 2,240 were symptomatic and 6,598 were asymptomatic, the National Health Commission said on Monday.

That is compared with 10,815 new cases a day earlier - 2,338 symptomatic and 8,477 asymptomatic infections, which China counts separately. Excluding imported infections, China reported 8,626 new local cases, of which 2,171 were symptomatic and 6,455 were asymptomatic, down from 10,597 a day earlier.

There were no deaths, same as the previous day, keeping fatalities at 5,235.

As of December 11, mainland China had confirmed 365,312 cases with symptoms.

China's capital Beijing reported 528 symptomatic and 609 asymptomatic cases, compared with 784 symptomatic and 877 asymptomatic cases the previous day, local government data showed.

## Kashmir issue

H.E AMB.Yousef Aldobely Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs along with his delegation will call on Advisor to the Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira at Azad Jammu and Kashmir Council Secretariat.



## FAO holds validation workshops in Islamabad

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) recently organized two validation workshop in Islamabad.

First workshop was held on "Agriculture Innovation System (AIS): Assessment Findings and Recommendations" in collaboration with the Ministry of National Food Security and Research (MNFSR) The objective of organizing this workshop was to gather feedback on the detailed assessment results and discuss way forward and finalize road map for the next phase i.e. capacity building.

Assessment of AIS is part of global three-year EU-funded project aimed at strengthening the functional capacities of National Agriculture Innovation Systems with focus

on climate-relevant, productive, and sustainable transformation of agriculture and food systems. Detailed assessment of AIS was conducted during September-October 2022 by three-member assessment team comprising of a national consultant and members from Agriculture Extension & Adaptive Research Department, Punjab. Seven innovation case studies of different public sector organizations from federal and provinces were studied in four analytical dimensions i.e., functional, structural, capacity and enabling environment.

All the participants acknowledged the results of assessment and agreed with the recommendations for next phase of capacity building. They also emphasized on the need to prepare action plan for each innovation case

study. Project Advisory Committee member recommended to include service and product innovation case studies in specific interventions and also include governance department as well in training component of capacity building.

Participants also emphasized on the importance of strengthening the agriculture innovation system with the involvement of private stakeholder as it would reap long lasting benefits. Mr. Selvaraju Ramasamy Head, FAO's Research and Extension Unit (OINR), joined the event virtually and appraised stakeholder on Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) and the Global TAP AIS Project.

The event was attended by 25 participants in person and through virtual participation. They included; key officials from Pakistan Agriculture

Research Council (PARC), National Agriculture Research Center (NARC), Provincial Extension and Research departments and FAO Office of Innovation (OIN).

The other workshop was held to showcase the investment potential of various commodities to a broad range of stakeholders including; the Government of Pakistan, financial institutions, resource partners and leading private sector companies.

The Hand-in-Hand Initiative (HiHi) of FAO is an evidence-based, country-led and country-owned initiative. The Hand-in-Hand Initiative represents a bold step to eradicate poverty (SDG 1) and end hunger and all forms of malnutrition (SDG2) by accelerating agricultural transformation and sustainable rural development.

The Initiative prioritizes countries where national capacities and international support are most limited or where operational challenges, including natural or man-made crises, are greatest. FAO facilitates in bridging prevailing issues both in terms of strengthening capacities and match making. In 2018, the Government of Pakistan analyzed, selected 33 priority commodities in line with Vision 2025 to identify potential opportunities with detailed feasibility and cost-benefit analysis for each of the commodity. The report on Cluster Development Based Agriculture Transformation also included proposed interventions, strategies and policies to transform the agriculture sector from supply-driven to demand-oriented and to be competitive in the international markets.

In order to support Government initiative, FAO Pakistan further short-listed 20 agricultural commodities in consultation with private and public sector stakeholders and updated feasibility studies. As a next step, validation workshop was organized to showcase the investment potential for each of the commodities to a broad range of stakeholders including the Government of Pakistan, financial institutions, resource partners and leading private sector companies.

The participants of validation workshop appreciated the FAO initiative for investment mobilization to accelerate the agriculture sector growth and shared their feedback to further strengthen this initiative. The participants also endorsed FAO upcoming investment symposium which is being planned in February 2023.

## Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
41,540.55	41,698.28
Day's High	Day's Low:
41,784.48	41,511.20
Index Value	Change
2,392,243,552	-157.73
Percentage	Time
-0.38%	12 Dec, 2022 5:00 pm
Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,444.75	-31.88
Percentage	Time
-0.42%	12 Dec, 4:00 pm GMT
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
33,685.64	+209.18
Percentage	Time
+0.62%	12 Dec, 11:01 am GMT-5
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
27,842.33	-58.68
Percentage	Time
-0.21%	12 Dec, 3:15 pm GMT+9

## Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	152.32	153.57
Bahrain Dinar	596.76	601.26
Canadian Dollar	164.31	165.66
China Yuan	32.25	32.5
Danish Krone	31.78	32.13
Euro	252	254.5
Hong Kong Dollar	28.82	29.17
Indian Rupee	2.72	2.8
Japanese Yen	2	2.04
Kuwaiti Dinar	729.69	734.69
Malaysian Ringgit	50.95	51.4
New Zealand \$	143.84	145.04
Norwegians Krone	22.43	22.73
Omani Riyal	582.74	587.24
Qatari Riyal	61.64	62.14
Saudi Riyal	63.5	64.15
Singapore Dollar	165.56	166.86
Swedish Korona	21.69	21.99
Swiss Franc	240.01	241.76
Thai Bhat	6.47	6.57
U.A.E Dirham	65.5	66.1
UK Pound Sterling	292	294.5
US Dollar	231.5	234

# APICTA Awards 2022 highlighted Pakistan's Promising Future

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD : The 21st Asia Pacific ICT Alliance (APICTA) Award concluded on high notes highlighting the potential of Pakistan's IT industry, talent, startup eco-system, and its scope of exports to the new markets.

The five-day event ended up successfully after a series of activities including the presentation of products, judging sessions, business matchmaking, startup sessions, and cultural shows.

Overall, the winners have been conferred awards in 25 categories each including a winner and two merit awards.

On the occasion, Minister of IT and Telecommunications Syed Amin Ul Haque was excited to see the success of the event, he said, "Pakistan has been privileged to host APICTA Awards for the first time in history which has been possible due to the unwavering commitment of the ministry and untiring efforts of the local IT companies under the umbrella of Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA). We ensured that the start of the event happens from the Prime Minister's house to give it the



right mileage and coverage for a strong impact." He further elaborated on how hosting over 160 delegates was an ambitious task, and how

all stakeholders including the ministry and its associated departments; Tech Destination Pakistan, Ignite, APICTA and P@SHA, accom-

plished a tremendous job to record history in the country.

Chairman APICTA, Stan Singh said, "Most of the foreign delegates visited Pakistan for the first time and they have now become ambassadors of Pakistan for promoting its soft image in their economies." He added that the spirit of APICTA is to promote collaboration, partnership, business activities, and knowledge exchange among economies, to ultimately uplift the standard of the IT industry in the region.

Out of 25 categories, Pakistan was declared the winner in seven categories, Hong Kong and Thailand each won six winner awards; Brunei was declared the winner in 2 categories; China, Australia, and Sri Lanka won, one winner award each. Besides the winner (Gold), two merit awards were given in each category.

For the finale, Hong Kong announced its winning the bid to be the host for APICTA 2023. Advisory Judge APICTA 2022, Senior Advisor PricewaterhouseCoopers & Secretary General (Honorary) Hong Kong Computer Society, Stephen Lau took the stage to formally announce and introduce Hong Kong economy as the next host.

# Forex crisis is becoming serious, eroding confidence

## Tariq Khatta

ISLAMABAD : Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Monday said the ongoing foreign exchange crisis in Pakistan is becoming more serious.

Domestic and foreign investors are worried and their confidence is decreasing because their LCs are not being opened and the goods at the port are not being cleared due to non-availability of foreign exchange and they are losing millions of rupees daily, he said.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that due to this crisis, hundreds of containers are piled up at ports while importers are facing demurrage and detention charges.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that the IMF's ninth review has also been delayed adding to the uncertainty.

In this situation, Pakistan should try to arrange loans from IMF, Saudi Arabia, and China as soon as possible to save the country from further losses.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that our total annual income is sixty billion dollars while imports are 80 billion dollars and therefore



it is impossible to run the country without borrowing.

He said that to achieve self-sufficiency we have to increase income and reduce imports for which economic policies have to be restructured for public welfare.

Productivity and exports in Pakistan are alarmingly low and we have no option but to increase them, he added.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the country's problems, population, and loans are continuously increasing but the economy is falling instead of developing as improving the economy in the current system is a pipedream.

Our economic system is totally depend-

ent on imports, so whenever the growth rate is more than four percent, the import bill becomes unaffordable, resulting in difficulty in payments.

If friendly countries do not provide loans, the country may become bankrupt and if loans are provided, it will last for a few months, after which new loans will have to be taken.

To improve this situation we have to make fundamental changes in our failed economic model, and shift to solar and wind energy immediately to reduce the import bill of petroleum products.

Instead of distributing 17 billion dollars or four thousand billion rupees to foreign farmers every year, we have to improve our country's agriculture so that the country is self-sufficient in agriculture and the agricultural import bill can be eliminated.

The welfare of the people instead of the elite must be a priority and policies should be made so that investors are interested in productive sectors instead of non-productive sectors, which will increase production and exports and provide employment to the people.

The cost of production of the manufacturing sector has to be made competitive in the global market so that they are able to increase exports instead of concentrating on the local market.

# FPCCI & BoI to launch Invest Pakistan initiative under PM Office



## News Desk

KARACHI : Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI, has said that Board of Investment (BoI) and FPCCI have agreed to form a Joint Consultative Working Group to help constitute an independent body called Invest Pakistan under the leadership of Prime Minister through Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh apprised that Invest Pakistan will ensure the policy advocacy initiatives with the support and full-backing

of private-sector to promote and facilitate FDI in Pakistan. We have decided to lend a helping hand to make this initiative a success story in the broader national interest, he added.

FPCCI Chief added that he has liked the initiative as its concept note entails giving up to 80 percent representation to private-sector on Invest Pakistan board and 51 percent equity or shareholding to private-sector. However, the exact modalities and ToRs will be worked out when the meetings of the working group take place, he added.

# PRG Pakistan opens 7th office in Pakistan to offer 1200 more jobs

## Spokesman Report

LAHORE: While continuing with its mission to create maximum employment opportunities for the people of Pakistan, Physician Revenue Group (PRG) Pakistan has launched its seventh office to accommodate 1500 more employees and facilitate medical services across the United States.

The opening ceremony was held at the newly inaugurated office in a state-of-the-art five-story building in Lahore. The office is estimated to accommodate around 1200 employees. Several government officials, PRG employees, and management attended the



grand opening celebration. PRG Pakistan is one of the largest medical billing companies in Pakistan, serving thousands of medical providers in the USA for the last two decades. The company has 1500+ employees in seven

offices in various cities of the country. While speaking on the occasion, the CEO of PRG Pakistan, Mansoor Ahmed said, "PRG Pakistan is committed to providing a platform for job seekers in Pakistan

find meaningful employment opportunities with growth potential. We are realizing Pakistan's true potential and helping the government to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We enable employees to grow consistently by giving them ample time and educational tools to learn and keep evolving their careers at PRG Pakistan. We facilitate our employees to showcase their talent according to their expertise and provide them with vehicles. Our ultimate goal is to keep employees happy, encourage their professional growth, and acknowledge every single person's contributions to our organization."



Spotify Team (From left to right): Baba, Khan, Soda I Media Manager (Pakistan, Sri Lanka & Bangladesh), Claudius Boiler- Managing Director for Middle East, North Africa and South Asia (excl.India), Talha Hashim - Marketing Manager, for Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, MI, Rasel-Editorial Coordinator (Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh), M D Ekmuzzman - Artist & Label Partnership (Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh (Rutaba Vaqub- Senior Manager, Editorial (Pakistan, Sri Lanka & Bangladesh) and Khan FM - Artist & Label Partnership Manager (Pakistan, Sri Lanka & Bangladesh)

# Japan, Pak Economic, Cultural Association formed to strengthen business, cultural ties

## Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Japan, Pakistan Economic & Cultural Association (JPECA) has been established to facilitate the business and cultural activities between Japan and Pakistan, also having the objective of bringing both countries' business leaders, social organizations, chambers of commerce, and industrial associations on a united platform.

The two countries' new joint association, in a ceremony held here today, announced its office-bearers, appointing Takeo Kawamura and Mirza Asif Baig as Co-Chairman while Ijaz A. Khokhar and Jawwad A. Chaudhary were nominated as Vice-Chairman and Senior Coordinator respectively.

JPECA Co-Chairman Mirza Asif Baig, while addressing the ceremony, observed that our key endeavor and thrust is on easing barriers for Paki-

stani businesses in Japan, as we seek a flourishing and prosperous Pakistan with sustained economic growth ensured through effective and continued policies.

Mirza Asif Baig said that the JPECA's mission is to provide the best platform for two countries' public-private sector dialogue on the role and needs of business in achieving inclusive, resilient and sustainable development. The Association has already held its launching ceremony in Japan, where it attracted participants from business, government, academia and civil society from Japan as well as Pakistan.

Mirza Asif Baig briefed the audience about this Association, which is registered and incorporated in Japan, aiming to strengthen the social and economic values between Japan and Pakistan. He said that JPECA would collaborate to develop a framework of cooperation and undertake actions

aimed at strengthening bilateral trade and cultural activities between Pakistan and Japan.

JPECA Vice Chairman Ijaz A. Khokhar, who is also the PRGMEA former chairman, addressing the ceremony, said that JPECA has recently signed a MoU with PRGMEA to open new avenues for Pakistan value-added apparel industry for liaison with Japan buyers and other leading brands.

Ijaz A. Khokhar said that the JPECA has been formed with a view to cover a wide range of activities for collaboration between Japan and Pakistan such as exchange of information on trade and culture, co-hosting seminars, exhibitions and business delegations, and advocating for enabling business environment and creating soft image among each other countries.

JPECA Vice Chairman said the promotion of mutual trade and

investment between two countries was needed to ensure the synergy between the two countries is strengthened. He said that the new organization would be emerged as the leading voice of the private sector through a sustained public policy advocacy, stakeholder engagement, trade and cultural promotion activities both locally and internationally.

Ijaz Khokhar said that this Association would address major issues being faced by the industry of Pakistan and bring those issues to limelight, including compliance, gender training and exchange of delegation.

"JPECA will pursue the goal of promoting cooperation between Pakistan and Japan cultural societies to realize common development of both countries," he added.

Our aim is to find how we get SMEs introduced in Japanese market, by promoting Pakistan's soft image there, he said and added

that at the first stage we are planning to take a high powered delegation to visit Japan to interact with the business community of Japan where we would visit Different Chambers.

"We will also invite Japanese counterparts to Pakistan so that we could show them manufacturing of different products in our factories. We will also expand the JPECA activities to the other parts of country. JPECA also plans to start a membership campaign of different product manufacturers produced in Pakistan while its Japan side will provide us the list of items being imported in Japan from different countries which will give an idea to Pakistani manufacturers to focus these items for exports to Japan. Our ultimate goal is to get extraordinary concession which Japan is already offering to our regional competitors like India and Bangladesh.

## Jazz collaborates with Ericsson to impart digital skills among entrepreneurs to boost local innovation



## News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Jazz, Pakistan's leading digital operator, has partnered with Ericsson (NASDAQ: ERIC) to boost digital skills for their entrepreneurial community in Pakistan through the Ericsson Educate program with an aim to accelerate local innovation.

This year long partnership comes under Jazz xlr8, Pakistan's premier accelerator program for startups, and aims to solidify Ericsson and Jazz's mission to enhance the nation's digital skills and increase access to education in the country.

Promoting the portal locally through Jazz's own youth-oriented programs, Jazz will also work towards upskilling local talents and increasing the readiness of youths for jobs in the telecom and ICT sectors.

The Ericsson Educate platform will strengthen the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills of selected youth through a well-curated online course on 21st-century technologies that include 5G networks, Internet of Things (IoT), automation, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and Machine Learning (ML). Upon successful completion of the course, participants will receive Ericsson-accredited digital badges of recognition, boosting their portfolios in the job market.

Commenting on this momentous development, Aamer Ejaz, Jazz's Chief Digital Officer said, "We are thrilled to partner with Ericsson to elevate digital skills in youth and entrepreneurs across Pakistan. Being inclusive, scalable, and easy to use, Ericsson Educate will help us provide participants access to quality educational content on some of the most transformative digital technologies revolutionizing the nation today."

# Sidra becomes 2nd successive winner of ICC Women's Player of the Month award

APP By Sohail Ali

LAHORE: Pakistan's Sidra Ameen became the second successive winner of the ICC Women's Player of the Month award from the country, thanks to her brilliance in the recently concluded ODI home series win over Ireland.

The opening batter Sidra got the honour for posting mammoth scores against Irish side.

England captain Jos Buttler claims the ICC Men's Player of the Month award after being at his remarkable best with the bat in his side's charge to T20 World Cup triumph in Australia last month as the International Cricket Council (ICC) on Monday announced the winners of the ICC men and women Player of the Month for November 2022.

Buttler and Ameen secured the awards following a global vote conducted among media representatives, ICC Hall of Famers, former international players, and fans registered at icc-cricket.com.

Sidra got the award due to her dominant performances against Ireland in November's ODI series, becoming the second successive winner of the prize from Pakistan after Nida Dar won back in October.

Sidra claimed her inaugural ICC Women's Player of the Month award



after beating two other prolific batters in the global vote – Thailand's Natthakan Chantham and Ireland's Gaby Lewis, who both piled on the runs in their respective matches during the month.

Amassing 277 runs through the series and only being dismissed once, Sidra started the month with her highest score in ODIs, a remarkable 176 not out, as the hosts claimed a convincing 128-run victory in the first match.

Ireland's bowlers were left equally powerless to stop Ameen in the second ODI, as she posted another unbeaten score of 91 from 93 balls, this time to chase down the target in a nine-wick-

et victory.

Despite finally losing her wicket in the third ODI, Sidra walked away with the Player of the Series award to cap off a memorable series, and a successful run of performances in 2022.

On winning the ICC Women's Player of the Month award for November, Sidra commented: "I feel great to have won this award."

It is also special following my teammate Nida Dar who won the award for October. This shows our team has displayed some great performances in the past few months in international cricket.

"I would like to dedicate this award

to my parents and to everyone who has always supported me and prayed for my success. My performance with the bat against Ireland which helped the side claim the sweep over Ireland in the ODI series at home will always remain close to my heart.

"Individually, this year has been great for me, I have scored three ODIs centuries and all coming this year. And to top it off, ending the year by winning the ICC Women's Player of the Month for November is just amazing."

ICC Hall of Famer and member of the voting panel Lisa Sthalekar commenting on Sidra's performance said: "When you get an opportunity to score a hundred it is a special moment, but for Sidra to go on and make it a big one, 176 and then to back it up with 91 in the very next match, this shows not only that she has the skills, but she has the temperament."

England's triumphant skipper Buttler once again underlined his reputation as one of the most fearsome batters in world cricket last month. November started with a Player of the Match performance in the dramatic 20-run victory over New Zealand in Brisbane.

Making his 100th T20I appearance, the opener smashed 73 from 47 balls to provide some much-needed momentum to England's campaign.

## Berger Paints organized its 15th Cricket Championship

News Desk

LAHORE: Berger Paints organized its 15th Cricket Championship on December 10, 2022 at Captain Fasih Babar Amin Shaheed Sports Complex, 135 Street 3, Sector A DHA Phase 6, Lahore.

It was full day event and all the Departments participated in the event and showed great interest.

After the series of matches, final was played between weatheroat Glow 365 and wood Pro teams. Wood Pro team won the tournament after an exciting & thrilling match.

Managing Director Dr. Mehmood Ahmad, Chief Operating Officer,

Zafar Qidwai, Director Sales & Marketing Irfan Said and others were also present on the occasion.

## Pakistan completes its first MTB Commissaries from UCI

News Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan completes its first MTB Commissaries from UCI Mr. Adnan Ahsan Khan President of Punjab Cycling Association has returned from Kathmandu Nepal after completing UCI MTB commissaire course. Khan was recommended by the Pakistan Cycling Federation for this competitive course and thus became the first Pakistani to achieve the said qualification.

Mtb has a huge scope in the cycling world while Pakistan is blessed with unlimited scenic trails for different classifications. On this occasion, President PCF Syed Azhar Ali Shah said that Adnan Ahsan Khan's expertise should be utilized to bring sports tourism to Pakistan, which will help the economy and cycling sports in the region.

General Secretary Pakistan Cycling Federation Moazzam Khan Klair congratulating Adnan Ahsan Khan, he said that after completing this course, there are commissaire of three levels of cycling, road, track and MTB in Pakistan, which is an important milestone in the history of Pakistan cycling and he has made all the cycling community proud after the completion of the above said course.

## England captain terms series win a special achievement

MULTAN: Captain of England cricket team Ben Stokes said that winning a test series against Pakistan at their home ground was a special achievement after defeating the hosts by 26 runs after a thrilling contest.

Holding a press conference after the second test match at Multan Cricket Stadium, Ben Stokes said that it was not easy to beat Pakistan at their home ground. He said that the team was already prepared for this historic victory.

He said that Imam-ul-Haq's dismissal just before the end of third-day game was the turning point and added that Mark Wood's two out in the first spell in the morning brought England back in the match. He said that Pakistan made a plan to attack spinners which was the reason we used attack bowling on the fourth day.

Stokes maintained that Abrar Ahmed's boundaries put pressure on the team and said that he would be the superstar of Pakistan in the coming days.

To a question about the controversial decision of Saud Shakeel's catch, he said that the third umpire gave the decision in our favour and it is the part of the game as sometimes you get a decision in favour and sometimes against. He said that it was a wonderful experience to play in Pakistan and lauded the crowd for supporting the England team even after winning the thrilling contest with close 26 runs.

He said that trying to replace 100-year-old test style with new styles where every player was being given the opportunity to play with their independent style.

He said that Multan's condition was quite different from Rawalpindi's as the pitch of Multan was supporting batting and bowling. He said that the England team struggled hard to win the series and added that Pakistan also played well in the match. APP



Pakistan slips to No.6 in WTC standings after England series defeat

# 8th Benazir Bhutto Shaheed National Tennis Championships 2022

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Defending champions Balochistan recorded their first win in the Pakistan Cup 2022-23 when they defeated Sindh by five runs on DLS in the second round match here at the State Bank Stadium in Karachi on Monday.

In other Pakistan Cup matches, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on the back of an unbeaten 98 from Kamran Ghulam overcame Southern Punjab by six wickets, while Central Punjab on the back of half-centuries by Ahmed Shehzad, Mohammad Faizan, Qasim Akram and Tayyab Tahir earned a 73-run win over Northern.

**Balochistan v Sindh, State Bank Stadium**

After being asked to bat first by Balochistan's Yasir Shah, Sindh were dismissed on the final ball of their innings for 288. The match, which was live-streamed on PCB's YouTube channel, saw southpaws Danish Aziz and Saim Ayub scoring half-centuries for their side. Opening batter Saim top-scored with a 75-ball 79, hitting eight fours and one six.

Danish coming to bat at number six returned undefeated on 74 off 84 balls, which included five fours and two sixes. Mir Hamza (39, 44b, 2x4, 2x6) and Sharjeel Khan (35, 28b, 6x4) were the other contributors with the bat.

For Balochistan, Amad Butt

and Kashif Bhatti bagged three wickets each, while Khurram Shahzad and Yasir took two wickets apiece.

In return, an unbeaten century by left-handed Ali Waqas helped his side cross the line with five wickets in hand. Balochistan won the match on DLS by four runs as light faded after 46 overs of their run-chase. Player of the match Ali scored 121 off 122 balls, smashing 10 fours and three sixes. He knitted a 129-run partnership for the fifth wicket with Bismillah Khan (54, 60b, 5x4) and then added an unbroken 76 runs for the sixth wicket with Amad (39 not out, 32b, 1x4, 3x6).

Sindh's Hamza took two wickets for 39.

**Central Punjab v Northern, NBP Sports Complex**

At the NBP Sports Complex, the decision to put Central Punjab into bat by Northern's Umar Amin backfired as the former scored 359 run for seven in their 50 overs. Opening batter Tayyab Tahir struck seven fours and five towering sixes during his 91-ball 96. He was equally supported by his opening partner Mohammad Faizan – who scored 50 off 54, hitting six boundaries and the pair stitched a 117-run partnership for the first wicket.

Ahmed Shehzad coming to bat at number three scored 54 off 60, studded with five fours and one six. Qasim Akram scored 67 off 50 balls at the strike rate of 134, blasting seven fours and one six.



For Northern, pacers Aamir Jamal and Usman Khan Shinwari bagged two wickets each.

In reply, Northern managed to score 286 for nine in 50 overs with Haider Ali top-scoring for his side with a 62-ball 55. Mehran Mumtaz (46, 45b, 2x4, 2x6) and Mubasir Khan (44, 54b, 4x4, 1x6) were other notable performers

with the bat.

Leg-spinner Usama Mir took most wickets for Central Punjab, taking three for 89 from his 10 overs.

**Southern Punjab v Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, UBL Sports Complex**

Four wickets by Ihsanullah and an unbeaten 98 from Kamran Ghulam led Khyber Pakhtunkh-

wa to their first win in the Pakistan Cup, beating Southern Punjab by six wickets.

Chasing 183 to win, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa achieved the target inside 39 overs with Kamran top-scoring with a 102-ball 98, studded with five fours and as many sixes.

Southern Punjab's Usman

Qadir, who bagged five wickets in the previous game, took two wickets for 52 in 9.5 overs.

Earlier, after being put into bat Southern Punjab were dismissed for 182 in the 45th over. Arafat Minhas top-scored for his side with a 41-ball 32, which included two fours and one six.

Right-arm fast bowler Ihsanul-

lah took four for 42 from 9.3 overs. Khalid Usman and Mohammad Imran bagged two wickets each.

**Scores in brief:**

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa beat Southern Punjab by six wickets

Southern Punjab 182 all out, 44.3 overs (Arafat Minhas 32; Ihsanullah 4-42, Khalid Usman 2-31, Mohammad Imran 2-46)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 184-4, 38.5 overs (Kamran Ghulam 98 not out; Usman Qadir 2-52)

Player of the match – Ihsanullah (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa)

Central Punjab beat Northern by 73 runs

Central Punjab 359-7, 50 overs (Tayyab Tahir 96, Qasim Akram 67, Ahmed Shehzad 54, Mohammad Faizan 50; Usman Khan Shinwari 2-43, Aamir Jamal 2-75)

Northern 286-9, 50 overs (Haider Ali 55, Mehran Mumtaz 46, Mubasir Khan 44; Usama Mir 3-89)

Player of the match – Tayyab Tahir (Central Punjab)

Balochistan beat Sindh by four runs on DLS

Sindh 288 all out, 50 overs (Saim Ayub 79, Danish Aziz 74 not out, Mir Hamza 39; Kashif Bhatti 3-37, Amad Butt 3-59, Yasir Shah 2-32, Khurram Shahzad 2-65)

Balochistan 254-5, 46 overs (Ali Waqas 121 not out, Bismillah Khan 54; Mir Hamza 2-39)

Player of the match – Ali Waqas (Balochistan)