



**FM seeks int'l support on post-flood reconstruction plan**

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in a meeting with UN Deputy Secretary General Amina J. Mohammed in New York has sought international support for Pakistan's long-term post-flood rehabilitation and reconstruction plan and also an effective follow-up on pledges and commitments. The foreign minister thanked the Deputy Secretary General for the continuous support provided by the UN system for expressing solidarity with Pakistan.



**Every one should play role for strengthening economy: Ahsan**

Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal has said every one has to gather on a single platform for strengthening the national economy. Addressing the CEO Summit and Launch of the best selling book at a local hotel on Thursday, he said important steps would have to be taken for revival of the economy, adding that exports should be touched 100 billion dollars from 32 billion.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

**Go ahead**

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar presided over the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet on Thursday.



Photo: PID

**ECC gives go ahead to sugar exports**

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet here on Thursday approved a summary regarding export of sugar during Fiscal Year 2022-23 and allowed its exports up to 100,000 metric tons (MT).

The summary was moved by Ministry of National Food Security and Research before ECC, the meeting of which was presided over by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, said a press statement issued by the finance ministry. The cabinet committee further decided that the ECC would review the situation on fortnightly basis, while the Pakistan Sugar Mills Association (PSMA) committed that the existing price of sugar would not increase in domestic market at least till January 31st, 2023.

The committee also approved Technical Supplementary Grants including Rs. 7 million in favour of Ministry of Climate Change and Rs. 743.57 million in favour of Ministry of Housing and Works for execution of its development schemes. Among others, the meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Commerce, Syed Naveed Qamar; Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Tariq Bashir Cheema; Minister of State for Finance and Revenue, Dr. Ayesha Ghous Pasha; Minister of State for

Petroleum, Musadik Masood Malik; SAPM on Finance, Tariq Bajwa, SAPM on Revenue, Tariq Mehmood Pasha; Coordinator to PM on Commerce & Industry, Rana Ihsan Afzal; Coordinator to PM on Economy, Bilal Azhar Kiyani; Federal Secretaries, senior officers and office bearers of PSMA, the statement added. Agencies

turned out contingent of Pakistan Army presented a guard of honour to the visiting dignitary. Later, Commander CENTCOM called on COAS followed by a delegation-level meeting where matters of mutual interest, regional stability and security situation, defence and security cooperation particularly military-to-military ties were discussed during the meeting. The delegation will also visit Torkham today (Thursday). He will be apprised of counter-terrorism and border management mechanisms in place along Pakistan-Afghanistan Border.

**Imran bent on to 'harm democracy' to regain power: Rana Sana Ullah**

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Interior Rana Sana Ullah on Thursday said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan was "planning to attack the country's parliamentary system of democracy under his foreign agenda to ensure his return to power".

"Imran Khan attacked the federal capital with armed groups in a bid to blackmail the government, but he miserably failed to implement his nefarious political agenda and now he is bent on attacking the parliamentary system of democracy in Pakistan," he said in a news statement. The minister said Imran Khan wanted to achieve his "ulterior motives" and implement his "foreign agenda" by "attacking" the democracy which had no legal and constitutional justification. "If we let the attack on the democracy succeed once, it will be repeated again and again," he added.

**US Centcom chief meets COAS Asim Munir at GHQ**



**Spokesman Report**

RAWALPINDI: US CENTCOM Commander Gen Michael "Erik" Kurilla called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Gen Asim Munir at the General Headquarters (GHQ), military's media wing said on Thursday.

The ISPR, in a statement, said Gen Kurilla acknowledged Pakistan's achievements in the fight against terrorism, flood relief and contributions for regional peace. The visiting dignitary laid a floral wreath at Martyrs' Monument in honour of the Martyrs of Pakistan whereas a smart-

**Pakistan, Tajikistan face similar security challenges being neighbors of Afghanistan: Khawaja Asif**

**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Defence Khawaja Asif on Thursday said being neighbors of Afghanistan, both Pakistan and Tajikistan were facing similar security challenges and threats including terrorism and drug trafficking across the border. Khawaja Asif made these remarks during a meeting with President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon, a news release said here. The minister expressed best wishes for the military

and civil leadership of Tajikistan, and its people. "Pakistan believes in peaceful resolution of all issues and appreciates the efforts of Tajikistan in promoting peace," he added. Pakistan, Tajikistan face similar security challenges being neighbors of Afghanistan: Khawaja Asif. Moreover, it was agreed upon that Pakistan would continue to provide assistance in intelligence capacity building and sharing of technical expertise with Tajik Armed forces. The minister proposed friendly sports competi-



tions between the armed forces and display of mili-

tary band on reciprocal basis on special occasions of the two countries. During the meeting, matters related to bilateral defence cooperation, counter terrorism, defence production and exploration of new avenues to progress and prosperity were discussed. The Tajik President assured his government's commitment and pledged to work with Pakistan to strengthen their bilateral ties. He invited the Minister for Defence to visit Tajikistan soon.

**One killed, 15 injured in shelling from Afghan forces at Chaman**

**Correspondent**

CHAMAN: At least one person was killed while another 15 injured in "unprovoked" firing by Afghan forces on a civilian area near the Chaman border crossing in Balochistan province. According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Afghan Border Forces restored indiscriminate firing in Pakistani territory, killing one person and injuring 15 others, including women. Meanwhile, Levies officials reported that multiple artillery rounds were fired upon the civilian population around the Boghra Road and Custom House areas from the Afghan side. They added that the Pakistani forces have given a befitting response to Afghan shelling. The district authorities have claimed that the clashes broke out over the intervention of Afghan forces during the repair of the fence in the Sheikh Lal Muhammad sector of the border. Earlier, at least six Pakistani civilians embraced martyrdom and 17 others sustained injuries due to unprovoked and indiscriminate firing by Afghan border forces in Balochistan's Chaman district.

**Masses have stopped to listen to Imran false narrative: Marriyum**

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Thursday that the masses had stopped listening to Imran Khan's false narrative of accusing political opponents of corruption. Talking to the media persons here, she called Imran Khan a mentally disturbed person. "Educational institutions are being turned into political arenas by the Punjab government," she said. The minister said that she was glad to see that youth were moving away from the politics of division and corruption of Imran Khan. She said they had realised that the country was economically far better before Imran's coming to power. The minister said the process



of dragging children into dirty politics should be stopped. "Pakistan had 6.2 per cent GDP growth rate, inflation was only 3 per cent, over 14000 megawatt power generation had been done, China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects were in progress and youth were getting employment opportunities, health card facility was provided to the deserving people, youth programme was launched to provide jobs to the new generation, motorways were being built." She said the youth also knew that due to Imran's inefficiency

and incompetence, the country was facing economic crisis. Moreover, she said that Imran accused other of corruption but he himself was involved in corruption and theft of national resources. To a question, she said that Tosha Khana was an open and shut case and it was not only a case of watches, gifts worth billions of rupees were not declared. Taking dig at Imran she said the person who demanded others should be held accountable for forty years, now he should be held accountable for his own four years tenure. She said Imran had all the powers during his tenure, and all record was available, if someone had committed corruption they should have been punished. Imran Khan would have to answer for his corruption and theft, she maintained.

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## Appreciation for Pak Navy

LAHORE: President Dr. Arif Alvi addressing the concluding session of the 5th Maritime Security Workshop 2022 (MARSEW-5), held at Pakistan Navy War College on Thursday.



Photo: PID

# Strong Navy is vital for safety and security of the country: President Alvi

### Spokesman Report

LAHORE: The President said that Pakistan Navy was playing a commendable role to safeguard and protect Pakistan's naval and maritime interests, despite resource constraints in a challenging maritime security paradigm and overall security situation. He also appreciated Pakistan Navy's role in the flood victims during recent global climate induced super floods, providing them medical services and relief supplies. The President expressed these views while addressing the Closing Ceremony of the 5th Maritime Security Workshop 2022 (MARSEW-5) held at Pakistan Navy War College, Lahore.

President Dr Arif Alvi graced the ceremony as Chief Guest.

Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi, was also present on the occasion. The Closing Ceremony was attended by civil and military dignitaries. Speaking at the Closing Ceremony, the President said that regional countries, including Pakistan were facing challenges due to changing regional and global situation, new alliances in the making, and readjustment of priorities and preferences in multiple domains including in the maritime domain which necessitate the country to remain alert and adjust itself in the emerging situation with dignity, honour and preserving its sovereignty in decision making.

The President underlined the need to enhance the pace

of decision-making, taking right and timely decisions and their implementation on timeline basis to remain abreast with rest of the world in all sectors including the global maritime security environment to fully harness the potential of Pakistan's human, natural and maritime resources. The President highlighted that the strong economy was a must for gaining regional and international recognition and maintaining right balance to tread with dignity and respect in the international relations therefore, he added, it was imperative to explore new avenues to raise our productivity in all sectors including developing quality and productive human resource, upscaling our business, trade, investment, industrialization and powering our

work processes with digitalization and infusing of artificial intelligence, investing in quantum computer research and development to sustain reasonable economy outlook and to improve it on perpetual basis. He added Pakistan did not have time on its side. It needs to take tangible steps in all pillars of the state. The Parliament needs to spend time and energy to make laws to bring reforms and to create ease for accelerated development and progress, he said. The government needs to take right decisions at the right time and bureaucracy should accelerate the implement the decisions with well-thought-out KPIs and following a definite timeline which, he said, will help us in overcoming our

financial and economic decisions and lead the country towards progress and prosperity. In first phase, academic discourse on security dynamics in Indian Ocean Region, challenges and opportunities in Pakistan maritime sector, Blue Economy and its contributions toward Pakistan economic prosperity, development of Gwadar Port within CPEC were dilated up. During the second phase, the workshop participants visited Naval Headquarters Islamabad, various Pakistan Navy installations at Karachi, Coastal and Creeks Area for orientation and familiarization. The participants boarded PN Ship for sea trip and witnessed various naval exercises and procedures at sea.

# UN says funds for flood-hit Pakistan to run out in weeks

### Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The United Nations on Thursday said emergency food aid for devastated flood-hit communities in Pakistan would run out in January after a funding appeal received only a third of its target. The country was lashed by unprecedented monsoon rains over the summer that put a third of the country underwater, damaged two million homes and killed more than 1,700 people. "It is a big concern for us to ensure food security in the coming days and weeks for the people affected by rains,"

UN Resident Coordinator for Pakistan Julien Harneis told a press conference in the capital. The UN had appealed for more than \$816 million but said its agencies and other NGOs have only received \$262 million from international donors. "It is deeply worrying as other emergency responses around the world get a far higher percentage of response and we're not getting that financing here," Harneis added. The UN's World Food Programme will run out of funds for Pakistan on January 15, said the director of its mission in the country Chris



Kaye. "We have a major and frankly, I think, very serious crisis ahead of us as we go into 2023 unless we get the required support," he added. The number of people in

need of life-saving food assistance will grow from the four million previously identified to 5.1 million during the winter, said Kaye. Between eight million and nine million have been pushed

below the poverty line by the floods. The monsoon washed away vast tracts of crops, with many already impoverished families losing their livelihoods. While most of the floodwater has receded, some homes remain submerged, leaving families living on elevated roads or in displacement camps. Some people have been pushed into child labour, child marriage, or trafficking, the UN said. Pakistan places highly in the ranking of nations vulnerable to extreme weather caused by climate change but is responsible for less than one percent of global greenhouse gases.

## Govt slashes petrol price by Rs10 per litre

### Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The government on Thursday announced Rs10 per litre decrease in price of petrol. The announcement was made by Minister for Finance Ishaq Dar on Thursday after which the new price of petrol will be Rs214.80. Further, the price of High-Speed Diesel has been cut by Rs7.59 per litre to Rs227.80. Similarly, the price of Light Speed Diesel and Kerosene oil were reduced by Rs10 per litre respectively. The new prices will come into effect from December 16.

# Dissolution of assemblies either on Dec 17 or 23, claims Fawad

### Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Senior Vice President Fawad Chaudhary said on Thursday the date of dissolving assemblies could be announced either on Dec 17 or 23. At a joint press conference alongside Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Mr Fawad said the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) coalition government did not seem 'serious' about holding talks as the fresh elections would help the PTI secure majority over them. He said the government falsely accused the PTI members of drawing salaries from the National Assembly after submitting resignation in the apex court. He said the party had decid-



ed to move the Supreme Court of Pakistan (SCP) against the acquittal of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leaders in corruption cases. The PTI would appeal against the acquittal of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, PML-N president Maryam Nawaz, Hamza Shehbaz and other party leaders in corruption cases under Article 184 of the

Constitution. He said the party demanded that the apex court decide these cases as swiftly as it did in the disqualification case against the former prime minister. Shah Mehmood Qureshi said former speaker Mr Suri had ordered to accept the resignations of the PTI MNAs but to no avail. "I am writing to NA Speaker Raja Pervez

Ashraf to reconsider his decision of accepting selective resignations," he added. The PTI leaders said early elections were the only solution to overcome national woes as more than 700,000 Pakistanis had travelled abroad for employment in the past 10 months. They said the conspiracy to topple the PTI government led the party members [MNAs] to submit resignations to the speaker. He said the general elections incurred a cost of Rs40 billion. The foreign tours of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari had cost up to Rs12bn and Rs40bn on fresh elections to get rid of the [imported] government would be akin to charity, the remarked.

# Pakistani diplomat to return to Afghanistan after security assurance: FO



### News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani diplomat Ubaidur Rehman Nizamani, who escaped unhurt in Kabul attack, would return to Afghanistan after complete security assurance from the interim government of Taliban, said Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch. Mr Nizamani returned to Pakistan after an assassination attempt on him in the Afghan capital earlier this month. A security official was injured in the incident and he is recovering at a hospital in Peshawar. In a weekly media briefing, Ms Baloch said Chargé d'affaires Nizamani was still in Pakistan and would leave once the consultation process was complete. She described the recent visit of State Minister for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar to Kabul "very successful that provided the opportunity to convey Pakistan's concerns". "We hope that the assurances given to us [by the Afghan authorities] will be fulfilled," she said. She said peace in South Asia had become hostage to India's hegemonic designs that included terrorist activities inside Pakistan and the unabated hostilities carried out in the occupied Kashmir. India's hegemonic policies were an "impediment to regional cooperation," she said.

The spokesperson strongly rejected the recent statement of the Indian External Affairs Ministry that raised objection to the visit of Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Husein Ibrahim Taha to Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), calling him a "mouthpiece of Pakistan". The remarks reflect "callousness and disregard" towards inter-state relations and are against the concept of mutual respect, she stressed. Instead of criticism, she said India should pay heed to the state terrorism in India-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) and take steps for the implementation of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions. She said the Jammu and Kashmir dispute was one of the oldest on the United Nations' agenda that remained unresolved due to India's negative approach. The OIC secretary general during his visit to the Line of Control in AJK last week met the victims of cross-border shelling, who shared with him the details of their sufferings. Ms Baloch said OIC Secretary-General's visit to AJK carried special significance as it came three years after India's illegal and unilateral actions in the occupied Kashmir. The secretary general will share his findings in the next Council of Foreign Ministers' meeting.

# Terrorist involved in Rawalpindi Civil Lines suicide attack arrested

### News Desk

RAWALPINDI: The Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) has arrested the 'most-wanted terrorist' who was involved in Rawalpindi's Civil Lines suicide attack in which 36 people lost their lives in 2009, ARY News reported on Thursday. The CTD spokesperson confirmed that the most-wanted terrorist involved in the 2009 Rawalpindi Civil Lines suicide attack was arrested. The raiding team also recovered a huge quantity of explosive material from the possession of the arrested terrorist namely Akmal. Alongside explosive material, four detonators and safety fuses were also recovered from his possession. According to the Counter-Terrorism Department, the alleged terrorist Akmal revealed during interrogation that he was involved in the suicide attack. It was learnt that Akmal's

two accomplices were already jailed after getting sentenced by the military court. A case was lodged against the arrested terrorist and further investigation is underway, the spokesperson added. Yesterday, the Counter-Terrorism Department on Wednesday foiled a terror bid in Sahiwal and arrested a 'terrorist' linked with the proscribed Baloch Liberation Army (BLA). The arrest was made by the CTD during an intelligence-based operation in Sahiwal, Punjab. Explosives have been recovered from the 'terrorist' named Khurram Ali, the CTD spokesperson said. The outlaw associated with BLA was planning to carry out a terror activity in the city but was arrested by the CTD on an intelligence-based operation. A case has been registered against Khurram Ali at the CTD police station in Sahiwal.

# Foreign Ministry says following with grave concern assault on UN Special Rapporteur

### News Desk

RAMALLAH: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates said today it was following with grave concern the coordinated assault on the character of UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Francesca Albanese. Albanese has recently been denied entry into the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, by the Israeli occupation authorities, thus obstructing her from implementing her mandate. "Such inflammatory defamations and attempts at character assassination are further proof that defenders of Israeli occupation and its crimes and those complicit in such crimes by way of normalization, excuses, or cover up, have no logical or fact-based response to Ms. Albanese's sound legal assessment of the situation in Palestine," said the Ministry in a statement. The statement added, "These are old and tried tactics that must not be dignified as credible or factual. Ms. Albanese's expertise and sound legal analysis are beyond reproach because



they are based on objective facts and the law." The Foreign Ministry called on all states, relevant UN officials, legal scholars, and the global human rights community to unequivocally reject this campaign that aims at silencing and defaming pro-justice voices that courageously speak out against Israel's prolific and systemic crimes and grave violations of Palestinian rights and international law obligations. "We also call on states to assume their responsibilities in defending the Special Rapporteur and her invaluable work. Failing to do so will send a grave message to all other outspoken and distinguished legal experts and human rights defenders. These tactics must not prevail. They must not succeed."

# HEC-Microsoft launches the largest Free Skills Initiative

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD:-Higher Education Commission (HEC) and Microsoft renewed the Education Transformation Agreement (ETA) in Pakistan with a unanimous launch announcing 100,000 free Technology certifications for University Students across Pakistan. Microsoft and HEC collaboration reimagines the education landscape, empowers the next generation of students and bridges the gap between knowledge and employability.

Under the umbrella of this academic alliance the goal is to enable the next generation of computer science/IT experts on state of art technologies including but not limited to, Cloud Computing, Artificial Intelligence, Cyber Security, Business Applications, Office Automation / Productivity tools etc. as per the directions from Prime Minister's Office. This partnership will ensure that Microsoft will be

providing several services to all HEIs in leveraging new technologies to make learning inclusive, personalized, and student-centric through knowledge transfer workshops and training on trending Microsoft technologies like Dynamics 365, Microsoft 365 and Microsoft Azure.

The event was attended by several renowned Vice Chancellors, educators, students, academicians, and partners where accomplishments of previous years of partnership were highlighted and the next vision of the digital transformation of education system in Pakistan was shared. Mr. Rana Tanveer, Education Minister graced the event as the Chief Guest whereas the event was opened by Chairman Higher Education Commission, Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed and Jibran Jamshed, Country Lead for Jordan, Lebanon and Pakistan.

Mr. Rana Tanveer expressed his thoughts saying "Such partnerships with companies like Microsoft empow-

er the students to use their creativity in addressing real societal problems using Modern Technology and helps us bring them at par with the rest of the world, the future of our economy does not lie in just plans and politics; it lies in the hands of well-educated and prepared student workforce.

"Microsoft has been very helpful in nurturing creative minds through its Global Competition of Imagine Cup where participants practically implement their ideas into successful start-ups and turn it into companies. "It is a proud moment for HEC that our talent gets the exposure at such Global platforms. Our students do not only get the opportunity to present their ideas at an international level, but they have successfully brought laurels for Pakistan as well" said Chairman HEC Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed.

Jibran Jamshed, Country Education Lead for Jordan, Lebanon and Pakistan "Today technology is the key to

fuel economic development, increase work force competitiveness, transition to a knowledge-based economy and help drive job creation. The single most important use of technology is to improve education and yet in many countries in the world we have not yet seen digital transformation in education. We are proud to partner with HEC who share the same vision and understand how critical it is to pace up with the Digital Transformation of Education happening across the globe.

The event ended with the announcement of the Launch of this year's highly acclaimed Imagine cup Initiative All students under the HEC umbrella were offered to register at <https://imagine-cup.com/Pakistan>. And submit their novel tech ideas to avail the chance to win USD 100,000, a global trophy along with a mentoring session with Microsoft's CEO himself. All in all it was a very motivating event with a lot to offer to students and educators.

## BISP Employees protested for their rights



### Bureau report

KARACHI: The BISP Employees Coordination Action Committee gave a deadline of 16th December to the management of BISP to resolve the genuine issues of the employees. BISP Employees Coordination Action Committee Sindh chapter protested today in front of DG office and from Director General Sindh Office to Press Club for their rights. The employees protested nationwide to get their problems resolved in front of Karachi press club today.

The employees said that these issues have been pending since 13 years, including the permanence of daily wages employees who have been working continuously on daily wages for last 12 years, promotion from Grade 1 to 19 employees who were recruited in 2009. They are forced to work in the same scale till date, no medical and pension policy has been made for the employees of the institution till date. Whatever government comes, it gives nothing but shelter. Benazir Income Support Program started in the name of Bibi Shaheed, is the first program of Pakistan which is working for poor and deserving women and it is the third largest program in the world and it is all due to the tireless work and dedication of the employees.

BISP Employees Coordination Committee Sindh President Khurram Bajwa while talking to the media said that if the problems of the employees are not resolved by calling a board meeting immediately, then from December 19, all BISP offices across the country will be locked. If the issues were not resolved even after the protest, the BISP employees along with their families will protest in front of Bilawal House and Parliament.

## 'Olasi Pasyon' protested the release of abducted Jamshed Wazir and contractor Tariq



### Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: in Lower Waziristan Wana "Olasi Pasyon" (Public movement) protested in Rustam Bazar Wana for the release of Jamshed Wazir and Tariq Wazir. The protestors carried placards, on which their demands were written, shouted slogans against the district administration and the government.

The speakers said that we have announced the struggle for the end of terrorism and complete sustainable peace and said that we will not accept terrorism on our land under any circumstances.

According to the declaration of Wana "Olasi Pasyon" (Public movement) it has been decided that the people of Lower Waziristan sub-division Wana will not accept any kind of terrorism and will cooperate with the police and administration to establish lasting peace, terrorism is unacceptable in any form again in Lower Waziristan sub-division Wana. Otherwise, people will come out on the streets and will not refrain from taking any direct action.

## Dry figs

KARACHI: A vendor is selling dry Figs on his pushcart alongside a road at University road in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

# Pakistan and Bulgaria must expedite their efforts to capitalize the business potential

## Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: Pakistan and Bulgaria must expedite their efforts to capitalize the untapped business potential between the two countries, said Ms. Irena Genadieva Gancheva, Ambassador of Bulgaria. She was addressing the business community in the Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FCCI) here today. She said that the Joint Economic Commission (JEC) of Pakistan and Bulgaria was scheduled to be held last year which was deferred due to the outbreak of corona.

She was optimistic that it would now be held very soon to settle the problems hampering economic cooperation between the two countries. She said that the SME sector was the common economic strength of two countries and we must promote rela-



tions among these sectors to get maximum dividends. She also endorsed a proposal for the exchange of students, faculty members and businessmen to cultivate close liaison and assured that full support would be provided in this regard. She also expressed concern over the recent devastating floods in Pakistan and said that Pakistan

should avail the facility of GSP Plus to overcome these losses. She said that Pakistan should comply with human rights, labour and environment related laws and clarified this restriction was not Pakistan specific and it was for all countries availing the facility of GSP Plus. Responding to a question, her excellency said that Bulgaria is offering the

best health care facilities while it has top class medical teaching institutions. She said that many Pakistani students are studying in Bulgaria as we would never compromise on the quality of healthcare facilities and medical education.

She also identified the highly developed IT sector of Bulgaria and said that it offers unlimited opportunities in the fast growing sector. "Sofia Technical Park is the main attraction for the world class IT companies from other countries", she said and added that her country was providing the highest speed of Internet in addition to supplying spare parts for the automobiles throughout the EU. Ms. Irena said that 90% of EU traffic passes through Bulgaria, hence it has a comprehensive road and railway network linking almost all European countries.

She also mentioned the first joint webinar of Pakistan and Bulgaria and said that it would open new avenues of cooperation in the fields of security, economy and energy. Responding to another question, she assured to review the complaints regarding restrictions on opening bank accounts or warehouses in Bulgaria by foreigners. She also appreciated the proposal for the promotion of bilateral tourism and said that both countries have scenic natural valleys and historic monuments. Ms. Irena said that the private sector is taking care of the tourism in Bulgaria and she would try to link them with Pakistani counterparts.

Earlier Dr. Sajjad Arshad Senior Vice President FCCI introduced Faisalabad and FCCI and said that textile is its iconic representation of Faisalabad around the world.

# PCBDDA and FIEDMC discuss new bilateral business ties for economic boost of Punjab



## Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Punjab Central Business District Development Authority (PCBDDA), also known as Central Business District (CBD Punjab) and Faisalabad Industrial Estate Development & Management Company (FIEDMC) discussed establishing new bilateral business ties and exploring the spirit of opportunities in terms of domestic and foreign investments in Faisalabad in a formal meeting, held at CBD Punjab House.

The meeting was attended by the CEO, of PCBDDA, Mr. Imran Amin. Chairman FIEDMC, Mr. Waseem Afzal, General Manager FIEDMC, Mr. Rana Muhammad Yousaf, COO PCBDDA, Brigadier (R) Mansoor Janjua, Executive Director Commercial PCBDDA, Mr. Mohammed Omer, Executive Director Technical PCBDDA, Mr. Riaz Hussain, Executive Director Legal PCBDDA, Mr. Bilal Khokhar, other directorate heads and senior officials of PCBDDA and FIEDMC.

During the meeting, the massive investment potential in Faisalabad was highlighted. Chairman FIEDMC, praised the development initiatives convened by CBD Punjab, which have completely changed the development landscape of the province. During the meeting investment potential and new avenues in textile, industries, aviation, auto parts, sports, modern urbanization and other development avenues were brought to light.

While expressing his views Mr. Imran Amin, CEO of PCBDDA, said that "CBD Punjab is committed for playing a vital role in increasing the economic growth of Pakistan by aligning new business avenues for people across the Punjab district. With FIEDMC, we examined ideas based on various business modules. I would want to welcome other authorities to come out with business ideas that can play a crucial part in improving the development and economic viewpoint of the province of Punjab".

Chairman FIEDMC, Mr. Waseem Afzal said that "CBD Punjab, has all the capabilities to become an economic engine of the province. I foresee our mutual projects as a multi-billion-dollar projects, business avenues presented by the authority have great potential to attract lucrative investment for the development of Punjab. To utilize the maximum potential of other economic zones in Punjab, we have to establish the concept of CBDs across the province. We will fine-tune the business modules discussed to give a new direction to the economic development of the province.

The meeting was concluded with a note that all the possible potential investment opportunities should be utilized to the maximum for the economic development of Punjab and all the concerned departments and authorities should dynamically take part in exploring new business avenues to accelerate the economic pace of the province.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, Mr. Att-ur-Rehman s/o Abdul Hanan Akhtar, allottee of plot No. 32-D, Sector-4/B (Khayaban-e-Sir Syed), Area Development Scheme-I, Rawalpindi have appointed General Power of Attorney to Mr. Inayat Ur Rehman Khalid s/o Molana Abdul Hanan Akhtar vide registered deed at No. 828/4 dated 24-03-2022 from Sub Registrar, Rawalpindi. The General Power of attorney wish to transfer the above mentioned plot to Mst. Noreen Gul w/o Mohsin Nawaz.

If anyone have objection of above advertisement submit their objection within fifteen days of this advertisement otherwise objection will not be entertained.  
**Deputy Director Punjab Housing & Town Planning Agency Sub Region Rawalpindi**

# United Marine Agency celebrates in honor of the film artist Neelofer Abbasi

## Bureau Report

KARACHI: Chief Executive Officer (CEO), of United Marine Agency, Sohail Shams along with the guests and participants gave a standing ovation to the legendary artiste Neelofer Abbasi who ruled an era.

Addressing the ceremony, the CEO of United Marine Agency, Sohail Shams said that it is quite difficult to carve a niche in the entertainment industry in Pakistan and Neelofer Abbasi achieved great success with her outstanding performance in cutthroat competition. Her famous TV serial Shahzori had a great impact on our films. Shahzori girl, Neelofer Abbasi,



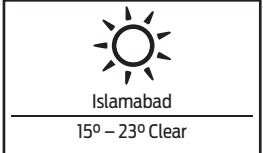
played this bold character brilliantly, although it was so difficult to portray a character of an outspoken daring woman at that time. She made history with this remarkable character in television and PTV does not have an artist like Neelofer

as yet. Chief Guest, Neelofer Abbasi said that my husband Qamar Ali Abbasi inspired me and encouraged him to write. Your love and appreciation is my real asset. What a fortunate person I am to have such a wonderful people who love me

so much. Today I am at this position because of you.

Eminent educationist, politician, and anchor Khush Bakht Shujaat said that we are all here because of Neelofer Abbasi. The play Shahzori was a golden hit, written in the history of drama. We have a long association with Neelofer Abbasi. Her voice is the best voice of the country. She spent quality time in the drama industry.

While Talat Hussain said that Nilu Farabasi naturally played every role, she is a popular and beloved personality of Pakistan. Her husband Qamar Ali Abbasi, father and mother, and her uncle Anwar Ahsan Siddiqui are great assets to our culture.



**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr	5:36 am
Zohr	12:03 pm
Asr	3:23 pm
Maghrib	5:01 pm
Isha	6:30 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

**AKNS strongly condemned the attack on Information Department Muzaffarabad**

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

ISLAMABAD: All Kashmir Newspaper Society has strongly condemned the attack, vandalism and fracturing of an official's leg on the Information Department Muzaffarabad complex and the FIR registered against the officers of the Information Department.

In the statement issued by the spokesperson of AKNS, it has been said that the information department and the journalist community are side by side, each institution has its own dignity, no institution has the right to interfere in another institution.

Expressed regret that some elements stormed the PID complex, displayed inappropriate banners, raised indecent slogans and provoked the employees.

A journalist spreads light through his pen, thus entering a state institution and doing bad deeds does not fall into the category of journalism. The spokesman said that the slogans raised against the owners of newspapers are also condemnable.

Evil elements nail their nefarious purposes? Newspaper owners are conspiring to create misunderstandings between journalists. These same people were involved in negative activities in the past as well. The spokesman said that no one is allowed to blackmail and humiliate anyone under the guise of journalism. If a journalist faces any problem, there is a forum for it. The spokesperson welcomed the high level inquiry committee on behalf of Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan for an impartial investigation of the incident and said that it was expected. The Inquiry Committee will conduct an impartial investigation to avoid such incidents.

# People of Türkiye have deep affiliation with Pakistan: Ambassador of Türkiye

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: A high powered delegation led by the Ambassador of Republic of Türkiye to Pakistan H.E Mr. Mehmet Paçacı called on the Federal Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Rana Tanveer Hussain in his office today on 15th December, 2022.

Rana Tanveer welcomed the Türkiye delegation and said that the two countries have cultural, linguistic and people to people love for each other. Rana Tanveer discussed exchange of expertise and knowledge regarding Vocational and Technical Training. He said that the two countries can benefit from the experience of each other. He acknowledged and praised the long standing brotherly relation between the two countries.

Rana Tanveer welcomed exchange of teachers and students to further mutual cooperation especially for Skilled Vocational Training. He said that there is significant potential in cooperation between the two countries. Minister said that Pakistan

will increase its scholarships for students to go to universities in Türkiye to enhance people to people love and cooperation.

Ambassador of Republic of Türkiye to Pakistan H.E Mr. Mehmet Paçacı said that People of Türkiye have deep affiliation with Pakistan. He said that University to University cooperation and Technical Institution to Technical Institution collaboration is the way forward. He briefed the minister about the multiple on going projects by the Government of Türkiye under Turkish cooperation and coordination Agency (TIKA). The projects cover a wide range of socio-economic aspects. He was told that TIKA completed 20 such projects in 2022 alone.

Minister was briefed about the various on going projects such as development of an Incubation center at QAU, establishment of Ultrasound ward and solarization of DHQ at D.I.Khan, establishment of fashion design and culture centre in GB, Upgradation of medical equipment for Thalassemia patients in various hospitals, establishment of mobile health units



in rural Sindh and Balochistan in addition with numerous primary and secondary schools that have more than 13,000 students enrolled.

Both delegations agreed to revive the

Pak Turk Mobility grant Program which will enhance exchange of teachers between the two countries. In addition with that construction of Centre of Hospitality at NSU will also take place.

Rana Tanveer Hussain said that the future is in Vocational Training of the population of Pakistan. He said that it provides the best opportunity to the people to find jobs. He said that Pakistan and Türkiye through NAVTTC should exchange teachers and students to learn from the expertise of each other.

Rana Tanveer praised the current governments efforts in modernising the education system of Pakistan. Federal Minister thanked the Ambassador and highlighted the cordial and friendly relations between the two countries. Minister said that the two countries have shared history and literature. He said that there is a bonhomie between the two people. He stated that the two countries should enhance and fine tune their mutual relation.

Senior officials of the ministry including Additional Secretary Education Mr. Waseem Ajmal Chaudhry, HEC representative Mr. Awais Ahmed, and Vice Chancellor NSU Dr. Muhammad Mukhtar also attended the meeting.

## Promotion of tourism

ISLAMABAD: Secretary Tourism Tahir Orakzai posing for a group photograph along with participants after the launching ceremony of a project on promotion of tourism, at a local hotel in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

## Ambassador of Azerbaijan called on Minister of State



**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: H.E Khazar Farhadov, Ambassador of Republic of Azerbaijan and Tamerlan Khalilov, Deputy Head of Mission called on Minister of State Faisal Karim Kundi at his office in Islamabad.

Minister of State, Faisal Karim Kundi apprised the ambassador about the different interventions of Benazir Income Support Program and the recent distribution of 70 billion rupees among flood affected people in Pakistan.

Faisal Karim Kundi and Khazar Farhadov agreed to hold a meeting of officials of Pakistan and Azerbaijan for sharing the experiences and lessons learned regarding social protections programs of both the countries.

Faisal Karim Kundi said that Pakistan is serious in expanding bilateral trade with Azerbaijan.

Ambassador of Azerbaijan said that Azerbaijan too is eager to expedite its planning for various projects with Pakistan. Markets of Azerbaijan has a huge potential for Pakistani products, he added.

## Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan will be elected party president optimistically

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

RAWALPINDI: Kashmir's premier political party, All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference's General Council will elect new party president in its session on December 18, 2022 at Faizabad Ch Ghulam Abbas mazar venue. Formal meeting for the purpose has been called by the current party chief Mirza Mohammad Shafique Jarral advocate.

Part forums have already forwarded their recommendations for new party boss for three years, 2023-25; the new party Secretary General told tonight.

Party sources revealed that Sardar Attique position is stronger and party office bearers will revealed their confidence on Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan probably.

## Move to regulate Heated Tobacco Products lauded

**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Determined Pakistan appreciates the Government's efforts towards regularizing heated tobacco products (HTPs) as an alternative to cigarettes in the interest of public health.

In a landmark move, the Federal Cabinet on the request of the Ministry of Health has approved the SRO on heated tobacco products that are scientifically proven to be 95% less harmful than cigarettes. Governments in many developed countries, including the UK, Italy, France, Germany, Spain, Sweden, Japan, New Zealand, etc., have researched and passed legislation in favour of reduced risk alternatives such as heated tobacco products, vapes, snus and other non-combustible alternatives as opposed to cigarettes. Japan, once notorious for its alarmingly high number of smokers, has been witnessing a fall in its sale of cigarettes sales and consumption since the launch of HTPs in its market. The UK Government is also in the process to regularize e-cigarettes, another type of smoke-free product - England's National Health Service prescribes these products for smokers who want to quit cigarettes as part of their plan to cut smoking rates in the country.

Adeeb Aijaz, Co-Founder, Determined Pakistan, on this initiative by the Federal Cabinet, said, "Independent international scientific researches have found that Heated Tobacco Products are much less harmful than cigarettes. Therefore, many developed countries have adopted them as less harmful alternatives to continued smoking. This goal is to reduce the burden of disease on the healthcare system and positively reduce the increment in number of persons with disabilities due to tobacco consumption. There is a fine line between QUIT and SMOKING, called ALTERNATIVES".

Dr. Atyab, a renowned, Dentist in Pakistan, further added "We laud the Government of Pakistan's decision to consider the scientific findings and take inspiration from other developed countries in tackling the smoking problem at home. Sensible regulation of Heated Tobacco Products will enable us to further the health rights of smokers and reduce the burden of smoking on our public health. Prohibitionist approaches do more harm and lead to further fueling the thriving black market."

In Pakistan, around 15 million of its adult population smoke cigarettes, while WHO anticipates the number to exceed 1 billion across the globe in 2025. Providing them with a choice to switch to smoke-free products that are significantly less harmful than cigarettes can go a long way in restoring the health of smokers. Furthermore, a proper legal framework is required for the responsible information and sale of these products to ensure it benefits public health.

## FGEI and HEC inked MOU for PERN Connectivity



**News Desk**

RAWALPINDI: MoU signing ceremony was held at HEC to expand the PERN connectivity to the FGEEI colleges.

The event was attended by DG FGEI Maj Gen Muhammad Asghar, HI (M) and Chairman HEC Prof Dr.

Mukhtar Ahmed, SI.

PERN project of HEC is at the forefront of providing a dependable, robust, and cutting-edge communications network for research and cooperation in fields such as grid computing, telemedicine, high-energy physics, and video conferencing.

HEC will extend PERN facility to 27 x Postgraduate/ Graduate institutions of FGEIs spread throughout the country.

This MoU will benefit FGEI students and faculty members in the same way as it benefits other higher education institutions of Pakistan.

In the end, Chairman HEC thanked DG FGEI for his efforts to enhance collaboration between FGEIs and HEC and expressed trust that it will continue in future as well.

DG FGEI also thanked Chairman HEC and assured of fullest cooperation and support in higher education.

## PRG Pakistan Celebrates Another Year of Success and Recognizes Employees' Achievements

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: To acknowledge employees' success and achievements, PRG Pakistan - one of Pakistan's largest medical billing companies - hosted an annual dinner and employees' recognition ceremony.

Every year, PRG Pakistan has a tradition of hosting a mega event to celebrate the success and achievements of the employees. The company has developed various dynamic programs where best performers are recognized with titles like, Supervisor of Quarter, Manager of the Quarter, Employee of the Year, Manager of the Year, Work Anniversaries, Promotions and applications.

CEO PRG Pakistan

Mansoor Ahmed awarded company vehicles (cars and bikes) to the Supervisors and Managers during a ceremony at a local hotel in Lahore. On the occasion, a cake-cutting ceremony was also held to celebrate 25 years of success of all the businesses.

PRG Pakistan is growing rapidly and aims to become the largest medical billing company in Pakistan. While catering to the growing demand for employment opportunities in the country, the company hires 100+ employees every month.

Speaking on the occasion, CEO PRG Pakistan, Mansoor Ahmed congratulated all the employees who received the appreciation awards for their excellent performance as

proactive team members in the entire PRG Family. He said, "PRG Pakistan is realizing Pakistan's true potential and is committed to providing a platform for job seekers in Pakistan to find relevant employment opportunities. We acknowledge the contributions and talent of our employees and confer them with awards and prizes. During the journey of success, PRG Pakistan has achieved landmark progress and contributed towards increasing employment opportunities for the talented and skilled Pakistanis."

VP Diane Schultz said, "There are many opportunities for talented and skilled Pakistanis. We are providing them opportunities to compete in

the fast-changing and developing world. Pakistani people are skilled enough to tap their true potential and earn revenue for their country. Today, we are gathered to acknowledge the great achievements of our employees and honor their services."

PRG Pakistan offers employment opportunities in Medical Billing, Business Development, Information Technology, Digital Marketing, Human Resources, Accounts Administration, and Quality Assurance. The company provides end-to-end Revenue Cycle Management services and Practice Management services that enable healthcare organizations to attain better practice outcomes.

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# Climate Justice - Practical Possibilities for Pakistan

The establishment of a fund for loss and damage by COP27 has been lauded as a great achievement of Pakistan's foreign Policy. This fund will address losses and damages due to climate change in developing countries. Pakistan expressed its hope that operationalization of funds would reduce disparities in the climate finance architecture. Pakistan vows to contribute constructively in global climate change negotiations and policy actions. Pakistan's young Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has remarked that inclusion of cost and damage funds on the COP 27's agenda is something to be optimistic about. Amid all the hopes of equitable treatment to deal with the existential threat of climate change, here the question arises "is world ready to compensate Pakistan over a man-made Crisis?"

Pakistan, despite being one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change, has championed the case of climate justice not only for itself but all G77. There is a long distance Pakistan has to pass through between conceptualization of an idea and turning it into policy action. There are certain restraints that make the practical possibilities of climate justice a long and tortuous process. Before discussing restraints we first need to understand what Pakistan expects in terms of Climate Justice. The tentative features of Climate Justice are: Debt relief, Time bound Financing for energy transition, De-growth & cutting down emissions in Global North.

When a highly indebted developing country like Pakistan is affected by climate change, then debt relief becomes an essential part of policy response to meet its emergency needs. Repayment of loans

coupled with cost of rebuilding makes it difficult for the economy to recover. A Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) was carried out by the World Bank and IMF in 2020 to let countries use financial resources to fight COVID-19 pandemic. Such initiative was not extended to extreme climate events. Pakistan at this point needs a fiscal space to adapt to climate shocks and debt relief would be crucial to overcome the fiscal deficit. One of the biggest restraints for any international initiative for debt relief is the Russia-Ukraine war and international economic situation developed consequently. According to the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) the world's leading economies are going through recession and steep inflation due to the Russia-Ukraine war. It has cut growth by more than previously predicted. OECD further remarked that central banks need to hike rates to overcome inflation, predicting that major central banks policy rates would be increased at least 4% in 2023. Although the World Bank has warned that such rate hikes would hurt the economy of developing countries the most. Another restraint in this regard is geo-political rivalry between eastern and western creditors. Paris Club is a group of western rich creditor countries. Their biggest concern is that debt relief would end up benefiting Chinese firms, which have been funding infrastructural build ups in developing countries for the past decade. China on the other hand shows concerns that if it proceeds with a cut in principal and interest payments then the money would go to American dominant financial institutions

like IMF and World Bank. These apprehensions between both sides have hurt debt relief efforts which began under the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI). The International Energy Agency (IEA) has urged the countries around the world to speed up their transition to clean energy in order to ward off the disastrous effects of climate change. Energy is profoundly essential in poverty alleviation, to achieve better health and education facilities, to build infrastructure and industries, to ensure food security and deal with extreme climate events. Finding ways to ensure these essentials in developing countries while avoiding high-carbon emissions is one of the biggest challenges in today's world. Transition to clean energy is crucial for sustainable development in Pakistan and other developing countries. However, the strength of the investment in the energy sector is weaker because of the crisis in public health which also triggered recession in the global economy. All around the world there is less fiscal space to support economic activities. The pandemic has heightened pressure on financing and major investment players, thus, practically reversed progress in expanding access to clean energy in developing countries. The historical Carbon Dioxide (CO2) emissions in the atmosphere are due to economic activities carried out by highly industrialized countries or Global North. Yet developing countries or the Global South are facing most of the wrath unleashed by climate change due to these emissions. The general consensus among developing countries is that Global

North should lead efforts to reduce carbon emissions and bear more responsibility to help Global South through financing in infrastructure, clean energy and other emerging technologies. French President Macron has expressed its concerns that such policies will create fragmentation in the West. It will disrupt market competition through Massive subsidies to American companies and will undermine European industries. "Perhaps this law will solve your problems but it will make mine worse," he said. He has called on the EU to formulate "Buy European Act" which will offer similar subsidies to domestic industries. Thus, the economic interests of the west make the transition to green energy very complex. Leading COP27's agenda was a historic moment for Pakistan. It urged the developing countries to mobilize on the issue of Climate Justice. The Pakistani officials highlighted the urgency to tackle climate related issues or else they will continue suffering the consequences of Climate Change. Pakistan's robust foreign policy action on climate change is commendable. At the same time Pakistan needs a holistic approach which looks at climate change from all angles going from micro to macro. It should also aim to address constructive aspects of climate security i.e. something is considered a security problem when it is securitized. The securitization would allow policy makers to view Pakistan's environmental challenges through a 3-level framework of local, International and structural. *Writer is a research officer at the Center for International Strategic Studies (CISS) A7K. Currently she is pursuing her PhD degree in DSS from Quaid-i-Azam University. Her areas of interest include contemporary security and security and conflict analysis.*



Analysis  
Qurat-ul-Ain Shabbir

## 7th forum on China-Pakistan technological, economic cooperation held

The 7th forum on China-Pakistan scientific, technological and economic cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was held by the Pakistan Study Centre at Beijing Technology and Business University (BTBU).

The scientific, technological and economic cooperation between China and Pakistan has continuously injected new impetus into the closer China-Pakistan community of a shared future, CEN reported on Thursday.

In his welcoming speech, Liu Minhua, Vice President of BTBU, highlighted that the university attaches great importance to cooperation with Pakistani universities, scientific and technological organisations and other institutions, and continues to promote the exchanges between China and Pakistan in various fields.

"BTBU will take the initiative to serve Chinese high-level opening-up, deeply integrate into the construction of the Beijing centre for international exchanges, release the achievements of think tanks, build cultural parks, expand people-to-people exchanges and deepen international cooperation," he added.

Prof. Wang Qinlin, Counsel (Director General Level), International Cooperation Department, China Association for Science and Technology (CAST), stated that China and Pakistan are brotherly friendly neighbours and all-weather strategic cooperative partners. CAST will implement the spirit of the meeting between the two leaders with concrete actions and continue to work for the building of a China-Pakistan community with a shared future.

Khan Muhammad Wazir, Deputy Scientific Advisor (International Liaison), Ministry of Science and Technology, Pakistan presented the formal institutional mechanism for existing science, technology, and economic cooperation between the two countries. During the session, Fang Siping, Director of Secretariat Office, Chinese Society of Engineers, CAST, introduced international mutual recognition of qualified Chinese engineers and engineering competency assessment system; Xu Wei, Secretaries General, Beijing Institute of Engineers, explained the international mutual recognition of engineer qualifications; Engr.

Xiao Hua, General Manager of the PKM Project and Chairman of the China State Construction Engineering Corporation Pakistan (Pvt) Ltd, shared his views on promoting in-depth exchanges and integration in the engineering field between China and Pakistan.

Engr Dr Nasir Mahmood Khan, Secretary/Registrar, Pakistan Engineer Council, Prof. Shahbaz Khan, Director and Representative of UNESCO Beijing Office, Muhammad Ammar, Director, International Cooperation Department, TANG International Education Group, and about 70 experts, scholars and youth representatives were also present.

On the occasion, the book titled "In Quest of Knowledge" which is a compilation of the stories of Pakistani scholars during their student days in China, was launched. The Youth Forum themed "cooperation on digital development under the BRI" was also held.



## The Patriot is a surface-to-air guided missile system that was first deployed in the 1980s

### AP Research

Patriot missile systems have long been a hot ticket item for the US and allies in contested areas of the world as a coveted shield against incoming missiles. In Europe, the Middle East and the Pacific, they guard against potential strikes from Iran, Somalia and North Korea.

So it was a critical turning point when news broke this week that the US has agreed to send a Patriot missile battery to Ukraine — something Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has sought for months to augment his country's air defenses. US officials have confirmed the agreement, and an official announcement is expected soon. But experts caution that the system's effectiveness is limited, and it may not be a game changer in the war.

A look at what the system is and what it does:

**What Is The Patriot?**  
 The Patriot is a surface-to-air guided missile system that was first deployed in the 1980s and can target aircraft, cruise missiles and shorter-range ballistic missiles.

Each Patriot battery consists of a truck-mounted launching system with eight launchers that can hold up to four missile interceptors each, a ground radar, a control station and a generator. The Army said it currently has 16 Patriot battalions. A 2018 International Institute for Strategic

Studies report found those battalions operate 50 batteries, which have more than 1,200 missile interceptors.

The US batteries are regularly deployed around the world. In addition, Patriots also are operated or being purchased by the Netherlands, Germany, Japan, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Taiwan, Greece, Spain, South Korea, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Romania, Sweden, Poland and Bahrain.

**Deployment Concerns**  
 A Patriot battery can need as many as 90 troops to operate and maintain it, and for months the US was reluctant to provide the complex system because sending forces into Ukraine to operate it is a non-starter for the Biden administration.

But there were also concerns that deployment of the system would provoke Russia, or risk that a missile fired could end up hitting inside Russia, which could further escalate the conflict. According to officials, the urgent pleadings of Ukrainian leaders and the devastating destruction of the country's civilian infrastructure, including loss of electricity and heat as winter drags on, ultimately overcame US reservations about supplying the Patriots.

**Patriot Capabilities**  
 Ukraine faces a range of Russian threats, and the Patriot is good against some and not that useful against others.

One former senior military official with knowledge of the Patriot system said it will be effective against short-range ballistic missiles and it represents a strong message of US support, but one battery isn't going

to change the course of the war.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the Ukraine deal has not yet been made public, noted that one Patriot battery has a long firing range, but can cover only a limited broad area. As an example, Patriots can effectively protect a small military base, but can't fully protect a large city such as Kyiv. They could only provide coverage for a segment of a city.

Patriots are often deployed as a battalion, which includes four batteries. This won't be the case with Ukraine, which officials said would be receiving one battery.

The Patriot has a more powerful radar that is better at discriminating targets than the Soviet-era S-300 system the Ukrainians have been using, but it has limitations, both Karako and Cancian said.

Raytheon, which manufactures the Patriot, says it has been involved in 150 intercepts of ballistic missiles since 2015. The success rate of the Patriot, however, has been repeatedly questioned. A 1992 Government Accountability Office report said it could not find evidence to support reports that the system had achieved a 70% success rate against Scud missiles in the Gulf War. In 2018, Saudi Arabia's success in using Patriots against missiles fired by Houthi rebels in Yemen was questioned when videos surfaced of systems failing.

But beyond the Patriot's capabilities, its deployment is a big statement of support for Ukraine.

"There's a lot of symbolism here," Cancian said.

## Religious thought of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai

### Asadullah Mahesar

To interpret religion is not the responsibility of common people but they do not give up and illustrate it in their own methods. Because every man has a different approach to understand religion and its interpretation due to the distinctive faith and belief they belong to. Moreover, it varies from religion to religion because it concerns the beliefs, faiths, practices, and devotion but the central assurance is in God or a supernatural power. Hence, it cannot be said that one's elucidation of religion is true and another's untrue, and one belief can never be applied to another either by force or implementation. There are two major classes of people who interpret religion, one is the religious scholars who have different approaches to understanding and addressing the religion and they stress more on ceremonial practices like fasting and praying etc. However, the second group is of Sufi saints, whose analyzing and comprehension of religion is contrary to that of religious scholars and they emphasize more on the spiritual development of masses rather than ritual practices.

Similarly, Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai (1689-1751) is one of the greatest poets of Sindh whose poetry is acknowledged throughout the world and his way of practice and interpretation of religion is unique. The poet lived during the reign of Aurangzeb (d. 1707), the last great Mughal emperor, and he intensely observed the decline of the Mughal empire. Thus, Sindh was under the rule of the Kalhora family, the first native Sindh rulers who established the autonomous state of Sindh in Shah's time. During this period, Sufi Shah Inayat Shaheed and Makhdoom Abdul Rahman were martyred while resisting the brutal rulers moreover, this period was perceived as religious hierarchical in which the Pirs, Sayyids, Zamindars, Pizads, etc., had supremacy over Sindh society.

There are several assumptions of distinctive scholars regarding the religious vision of Shah Latif because

the poetry of Shah Latif is totally based on love, peace, struggle, and human equality and does not focus on the exhibition of worship to God. Because he knew that the progress of humankind is more necessary to accede to God by offering ritual practices. Consequently, the poet did not reveal his creed or sect to his admirers because his only mission was human prosperity. He neither visited any sacred places of Islam (Makah and Madinah) nor praised any Pir, ruler, feudal, etc. in his poetry. Moreover, Shah Latif was closely attached to the Holy Quran and he always kept it along with the Mathnavi of Maulana Rumi and Risalo of Shah Karim, great-grandfather of Shah Latif. The poet did not acquire the knowledge of truth from Muslims only but also spent several years along with Yogis and Sannyasins (Hindus) and visited the sacred places of Hindus just for the sake of inquiring the Truth.

Furthermore, he stresses more on purifying the heart instead of ceremonial practices of religion, as do by religious scholars. According to him, if your heart is pure then your sleeping will be included in worship, but if your heart is impure and you pray more and more than your worship is inutile. He also condemns those Hindus who do not follow their religion by heart. He never preached Islam in front of his Hindu companions because he had broad-minded and liberated from conservatism, who forcibly imposed their religion on other communities. Consequently, Shah Latif addresses the religion in such a way that no one recognizes what the religion of the Shah is. In fact, Shah was a true Muslim and he practiced the sacred deeds of religion in a true way. Moreover, he quoted more than eighty verses of the Holy Quran and Ahadith, sayings of the Prophet (PBUH) in his collection of Shah-Jo-Risalo. Therefore, Makhdoom Abdul Rahim Girohri (d. 1788) says regarding the religious thought of Shah Latif that "God is blessed with Abdul Latif, Who translated the Quran into Sindh".

*Writer is M. Phil. Scholar from NIPS, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad Reached at aliasad326@gmail.com*

# Pakistan spends eight billion rupees annually on the import of potato seeds: Chairman PARC

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: The third latest aeroponic green house for production of virus free seed potatoes has been inaugurated in Pakistan at the National Agricultural Research Center (NARC) in collaboration with the Korean Program on International Agricultural (KOPIA).

Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Chaudhry Tariq Bashir Cheema, Ambassador of South Korea, H.E. Mr. Suh Sangpyo, Chairman, PARC Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali and Dr. Cho Gyoung-rae, Director, KOPIA Pakistan Center and inaugurated the event.

On this occasion, Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Chaudhry Tariq Bashir Cheema said that Government of Pakistan is grateful to the Korean government for the transfer of latest aeroponics technology to Pakistan and the training of scientists. He said that heavy rains and floods in the country have caused a loss of 30 billion US

dollars to Pakistan's agriculture. Agriculture is the guarantee of prosperity in Pakistan. The agriculture is the guarantee of prosperity in Pakistan, but the sector is facing numerous challenges such as supply of quality seeds and climate change. It is that potato is fourth most important and cash-generating crop, but due to the lack of good quality seeds, it is facing problems like reduction in production. In Pakistan, potatoes are cultivated on an area of 300,000 hectares, while 20,000 tons of potato seeds are imported into Pakistan every year.

On this occasion, Korean Ambassador Excellency Mr. Suh Sangpyo said that Pakistan and Korea are promoting cooperation in the field of agriculture and the transfer of aeroponics technology to Pakistan through the Korean Program on International Agriculture is also a link in this chain. In order to ensure food security, large quantities of agricultural commodities have to be imported, for which valuable foreign exchange is spent, the aeroponic seed potato technology



project is important for Pakistan and by eliminating the import of potato seeds through this project. This will be a step towards self-reliance in local potato seed production.

Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman PARC said that in collaboration

with the Korean government technical cooperation flagship project, potato seed production through aeroponics technology, post-harvest reduction in aflatoxin in chili and quality fodder production for livestock are being implemented successfully in the

country. Dr. Ali, while talking about the project of potato seed through aeroponic technology, said that eight billion rupees are being spent annually on the import of potato seed in Pakistan. While only one percent of potato seed is produced locally. He said

that with the help of aeroponic technology, Pakistan will become self-sufficient in the production of potato seeds in the next few years and valuable foreign exchange can be saved. On the occasion, the Director of Korean Program on International Agricultural in Pakistan, Dr. Chugyank Ray, gave a detailed briefing and said that state of the art 3rd aeroponic greenhouse has been setup in record thirty-six days with 290,00 US dollars at NARC. In the greenhouse 4500 plants have been shifted and it has the capacity of growing 9200 plants. He further said that for self-sufficiency in potato seed in Pakistan one more project has been approved by Korean Government through which 840,000 ton virus free potato seed could be produced locally.

Honourable Chaudhry Tariq Bashir Cheema, Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research and H.E. Mr. Suh Sangpyo, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Pakistan unveiled the plaque of aeroponic greenhouse complex at National Agricultural Research Centre, Islamabad.

## Machinery provided by UNIDO-GEF handed over by Pakistan Tanners Association

**News Desk**

KARACHI: Provisioned by United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Karachi Tannery Association south zone (PTA-SZ) handed over modern machinery and state-of-the-art equipment to Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB) for the cleanliness Korangi Leather Sector.

MD SSWMB Mr. Zubair Ahmed Chana while addressing the function said that the SSWMB team is already working to collect garbage, transport, and disposal to the landfill site from Sector 7A Korangi Leather Sector, and in this process PTA (SZ) Environmental Society completely supported us.

He said that the addition of modern machinery provided by UNIDO-GEF cleanliness efficiency in the area will further improve. Executive Director Tariq Nizmani, CEO of Chinese company Ganz Construction Mr. Liu



Tao, PTA (SZ) ES President Gulzar Feroze, UNIDO National Coordinator Irfan Haider, committee members Rehan Hanan, Sheikh Muhammad Imran, Farooq Ahmed, Abdul Aman, Kamran Habib, and other officers were present at the occasion. President PTA (SZ) ES Gulzar

Feroze appreciates the efforts of MD Solid Waste and his team, he said that due to their efforts and strategy, all matters were settled smoothly, Sector-A 7, Sector 15, Sector 17 within the limits of PTA south zone.

He extended that PTA (SZ) support is being provided in the cleaning and

garbage collection work, furthermore, the operational machinery, worth US\$300,000, is part of a larger US\$2 million project supported by the UNIDO funded by the GEF under Korangi Leather Area project for the reduction of GHG emissions from the leather sector.

He further stressed that the project supports more than 120 tanneries (leather sector) most in need of services including the provision of more than 375 waste collection bins, compactor trucks, multi loaders, mechanical sweepers, tractor trolleys, and other equipment distributed to units to assist in the garbage collection and disposal operations. Moreover, under the UNIDO-GEF project, machinery, technical support, and other equipment have been handed over to SSWMB to further improve the sanitation situation in Sector 7A. He added that we have full confidence in the team of SSWMB that these machineries will be put to good use.

## Mastercard and foodpanda to provide vital funding for flood-hit Pakistan, through WFP

**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Mastercard has joined forces with its strategic partner, foodpanda Pakistan—a subsidiary of Delivery Hero—in a campaign supporting its longstanding humanitarian partner WFP. As part of the campaign, for every foodpanda app transaction made by customers in Pakistan using their Mastercard, a donation will be made to the World Food Programme (WFP)'s response to Pakistan floods. This initiative will provide vital relief and food assistance to the people of Pakistan, as the nation rebuilds after recent floods devastated the country.

The collaboration brings together the power of Mastercard and its key partners in supporting Pakistan, which is experiencing its worst humanitarian crisis in a decade after torrential rainfall and devastating flash floods left one-third of the country underwater. From 12 to 26 December 2022, Mastercard will make a donation to WFP for every transaction made using a Mastercard on the foodpanda application. The contributions will fund WFP's



response to the Pakistan floods, efforts which have already reached 2.6 million people with life-saving food assistance.

Mastercard has been harnessing its technology and the impact of its partnerships since the flooding started in June 2022. As well as supporting humanitarian agencies like WFP, the technology company has also engaged with various government entities to support their flood relief effort through Mastercard's Payment Gateway Services. To date, millions of dollars have been collected through various government relief portals.

Ngozi Megwa, Senior Vice President, Digital Partners & Enablers, Eastern Europe, Middle East and Africa, Mastercard, said: "Across the world, we saw the devastating impact of the floods in Pakistan. We continue to work with our partners to expedite the recovery process, collaborating with experts like the World Food Programme in rehabilitating and reconstructing the impacted communities. Through deep partnerships and the power of technology, we believe that corporations and individuals alike can make a meaningful difference. We stand by the people of Pakistan and are proud to activate our network in the private and public sector as we help them to rebuild."

Speaking about the partnership, Chief Executive Officer, foodpanda Pakistan, Muntaha Peracha said, "As a responsible corporate entity, and more importantly as responsible citizens, it is our duty to do whatever we can to help our fellow citizens in this difficult time. We have seen some tremendous work being done by various public and private sector entities, as well as various NGOs who have

really stepped up to make an impact. With this initiative in collaboration with Mastercard, we are empowering consumers and demonstrating the profound impact businesses can have when we stand together for the people."

Chloe Gallagher, Head of Global Partnership Management, WFP's Private Partnerships and Fundraising Division, said: "The World Food Programme is delighted to be working with Mastercard to ensure that critical life-saving food assistance is provided to populations affected by the recent catastrophic floods in Pakistan. This timely initiative will help WFP continue our operations in support of the Government of Pakistan to assist those most in need. We're thankful to Mastercard for their continued support to fight hunger across the world, saving and changing lives for millions of people."

Since 2012, Mastercard and its partners have contributed a total of over US\$40 million to WFP through cause marketing campaigns, consumer fundraising events, support for emergencies, and expertise-sharing.

## Workshop on tourism development, destination management held



**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Destination Investment and Management Plans (DIMPs) and Visitor Management Plans (VMPs) for three tourist destinations (Kalam, Kumrat, and Chitral) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) were launched here on Thursday.

The DIMPs and VMPs promote responsible tourism by suggesting diversity and quality in the tourism offering of these destinations and providing guidance for tourist planning and destination management.

DIMPs and VMPs were prepared by the KP's Department of Tourism (DoT) through KITE project with the support of international experts in one year. The speakers shared the opportunities for public and private sector investments with the participants.

They informed that customized plans for each destination have been prepared to guide the investments from public and private sectors and that destination management will lead to an improved visitor experience, better regulation, and mobilization of resources.

"Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is well positioned as a preferred tourism destination, it has a considerable competitive advantage due to the natural endowments and a culture of hospitality. Government is not only focusing on creating employment opportunities but also making efforts to conserve the natural and cultural assets," said Chief Minister KP Mr. Mahmood Khan in his special message for the event.

Secretary Tourism Muhammad Tahir Orakzai said that efforts are being made to develop new tourist sites and better manage the existing sites. It is important to prepare the sites for tourist influx during peak season and to use this opportunity to create economic opportunities.

Mr. Touseef Khalid, Project Director KITE gave a briefing on sustainable tourism initiatives, and innovative approaches including, development and planning for new and existing destinations, reduced carbon footprint, and heritage preservation.

Ms. Kiran Afzal, a Senior Private Sector Specialist at World Bank, congratulated the DoT on achieving this milestone and mentioned that DIMPs can especially help the authorities manage the high-usage sites by suggesting mitigating measures to safeguard the attractions and prepare the sites against unforeseen crises.

An exclusive discussion on the title 'Sustainable Tourism - The Way Forward' was part of the workshop. The panel comprised Mr. Aziz Bolani, CEO of Serena Pakistan, Mr. Aftab-ur-Rehman Rana, MD PTDC, and Mr. Maqsood ul Mulk, Chairman Board of Directors, Kalash Development Authority. They shed light on various aspects of sustainable tourism and opportunities for the local economy.

KITE is a World Bank funded project that aims to promote responsible tourism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

## AlHuda CIBE is Organizing a Practical Learning Drive for Takaful Industry



**Spokesman Report**

DUBAI: AlHuda Centre of Islamic Banking and Economics, a leading name in Islamic finance industry for institutional set-up, capacity building, and global networking is going to organize an exposure visit for Takaful industry in the hub of Islamic finance industry Malaysia. AlHuda CIBE as consultant and Advisor is one of the organizations which has separate departments for Banking, Microfinance, Takaful, Sukuk and other Financial Instruments, Shariah Advisory, Cryptocurrencies, Fintech, NFTs, Digital Currencies under the umbrella of Islamic Finance

Industry. In the legacy of its inherited role for the development of Islamic finance industry AlHuda CIBE is organizing Exposure Visit and Executive Training on Takaful schedule on January 16 -20, 2023 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. It is an open learning opportunity for the financial industry.

Takaful Consultancy Wing is a specialized department for Takaful Industry which provides services for Takaful Window Operations, Insurance Company transformation to Takaful Company, full-fledged Takaful Company, training, workshops, events, exposure visits, and insurtech product development.

Since our operations AlHuda CIBE serving the financial industry across the globe as consultant and advisor. Every year AlHuda CIBE organizes six to seven exposure visits with the participation of many nationalities. In line of previous track Takaful Consultancy Wing-AlHuda CIBE-UAE is organizing Takaful Exposure Visit with Two Days Executive Training for Takaful (General, Family), Bancatakaful, and Microtakaful, digital Technologies for Takaful Industry, and regulatory assessment.

Mr. Muhammad Zubair Mughal, Chief Executive Officer AlHuda Centre of Islamic Banking and Economics Unit-

ed Arab Emirates on its arrangement said risk management is the base of financial industry, when all over the world Islamic Finance Industry is growing, the learning opportunities for developing markets is the path to set-up markets with rising significance for Islamic Finance Industry. He also highlighted the role of Takaful Consultancy Wing for the development of the Takaful industry across the globe particularly for research and product development. AlHuda CIBE is looking to warmly welcome on board for this practical learning opportunity, for the group registration and organizational nominations discounts are available.

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

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
41,179.76	41,737.62
Day's High	Day's Low:
41,996.82	41,109.95
Index Value	Change
6,550,845,077	-557.86
Percentage	Time
-1.34%	25 Dec, 2022 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,432.44	-62.99
Percentage	Time
-0.84%	15 Dec, 4:25 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
33,204.88	-761.47
Percentage	Time
-2.24%	15 Dec, 11:26 am GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
28,051.70	-104.51
Percentage	Time
-0.37%	15 Dec, 3:15 pm GMT+9

**Open Market Forex Rates**

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	153.1	154.35
Bahrain Dinar	599.15	603.65
Canadian Dollar	164.62	165.97
China Yuan	32.22	32.47
Danish Krone	31.87	32.22
Euro	255.5	257.5
Hong Kong Dollar	28.91	29.26
Indian Rupee	2.72	2.8
Japanese Yen	2.1	2.15
Kuwaiti Dinar	731.56	736.56
Malaysian Ringgit	50.95	51.4
New Zealand \$	143.33	144.53
Norwegians Krone	22.43	22.73
Omani Riyal	583.84	588.34
Qatari Riyal	61.75	62.25
Saudi Riyal	63.9	64.5
Singapore Dollar	165.9	167.2
Swedish Korona	21.78	22.08
Swiss Franc	240.24	241.99
Thai Bhat	6.45	6.55
U.A.E Dirham	66.8	67.4
UK Pound Sterling	297	299.5
US Dollar	231.7	234

# Kazakh Ambassador announces agreements on direct flights & commercial banking channels

**Spokesman Report**

KARACHI: Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI, has expressed his profound gratitude that H. E. Mr. Yerzhan Kistafin, Ambassador of Kazakhstan in Pakistan, has announced the agreement enabling direct flights between the two brotherly countries to be formalized by March 2023. This step will go a long way to promote trade, investments, JVs, tourism and over all economic cooperation, he added.

Mr. Shabbir Mansha, VP FPCCI, highlighted the fact that Pakistan offers an e-visa facility to visitors from Kazakhstan; whereas, visitors from Pakistan are required to seek sponsored visas or a recommendation from FPCCI for visiting Kazakhstan. As a result, the average visa processing time in the current scenario is around 8-10 days working days; which needs to be shortened to the minimum possible time-frame, he added.



Mr. Shabbir Mansha mentioned that since the closure of the National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) in Kazakhstan, commercial & trade transactions are largely based on cash payments or letters of credit (LCs) via UAE or Turkey.

Mr. Shabbir Mansha proposed that Pakistan and Kazakhstan need to jointly explore investment opportunities in conventional & unconventional sectors; specifically, petrochemicals, minerals, tourism and IT services - as these are the sectors which have enormous potential to create win-win synergies between the two countries, he added.

H. E. Mr. Yerzhan Kistafin apprised the large

gathering of prominent business personalities, diplomats, representatives of large commercial banks and logistics companies at the FPCCI Head Office that major commercial banks from Pakistan and Kazakhstan are working towards establishing commercial banking channels between the two countries; and, he is expecting a major boost in bilateral trade volumes due to facilitative measures being taken in travel, visa, regulatory and banking channels.

Responding to the demand of FPCCI, H. E. Mr. Yerzhan Kistafin also informed that his embassy will issue visas to the business, indus-

try and trade community representatives from Pakistan within 5 working days to encourage B2B and chamber-to-chamber engagements. We are hoping to see trade fairs & exhibitions and enhanced B2B cooperation in the near future, he added.

Mr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Awan, Chairman of Pakistan-Kazakhstan Business Council of FPCCI, explained that TIR convention offers great opportunities for Pakistani exporters to enhance their trade with Kazakhstan through cost-effective & land-based transportation. It will also be time-saving, he added.

Mr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Awan also apprised that Pakistan has successfully utilized TIR convention for exports to Azerbaijan and Turkey through land-based routes; and, the same should be done vis-à-vis Kazakhstan.

Caption:  
Mr. Shabbir Mansha, VP FPCCI, is presenting the commemorative shield to H. E. Mr. Yerzhan Kistafin, Ambassador of Kazakhstan in Pakistan. Mr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Awan, Mr. Taimoor Iqbal, Mr. Muhammad Usama, Sahibzadi Mahin Khan and others were also present on the occasion.

# Trade delegation from USA looks for collaboration with local auto parts industry

**Bureau Report**

KARACHI: A business and trade delegation of America Pakistan Business Development forum (AMPAK) led by Farooq Mughal, who is a first Pakistani elected for Georgia house of representative (D-Dacula) the state of Georgia, USA visited a local auto parts manufacturing company as part of their mission to collaborate with local industry.

The delegation was briefed by Director Mehran Commercial Enterprises & expert auto sector Mashood Ali Khan on how to increase trade in engineering between the US and Pakistan.

Honourable Farooq Mughal was the chief guest at the meeting. He is making efforts to develop cooperation with Pakistani entrepreneur in the state of Georgia. He added that they are looking for establishment of



business growth opportunities in both countries and to launch and take active participation in projects.

Mashood discussed with him about creating linkages between US-Pak companies for joint ventures and technology collaborations with SMEs aligned in the supply chain of large OEMs.

"Our aim is to develop cooperation with SMEs in the US in order to achieve possible trade," said Mashood.

He added that there is a need

to develop a portal of SMEs in the US for integration of Pakistan's engineering industry for sub-contracting parts.

"We can focus on different industries that include auto, aerospace, EV, railway, energy, and electronics," he added.

He said that international businesses are looking for alternate destinations for their manufacturing so why not they come to Pakistan.

He added that Pakistan's auto parts makers have developed in-house technology for

sheet metal, forgings, castings, machining, rubber, plastics, electronics, jigs and fixtures, interiors etc.

Mashood also informed the delegation about localization and annual volumes of the local auto industry.

"In the segment of cars we have up to 60% localization level with volumes up to 260,000 and capacity of 500,000," said Mashood.

He added that localization for tractors is about 90% with the volumes of 33,000 and capacity of 100,000.

President AMPAK Sheikh Imtiaz Hussain on the occasion said that their aim is to tie-up the links between Pakistani and American businesses.

"This visit was quite fruitful for us and we are looking forward for business cooperation with the local companies for exports of auto parts to the US," said Imtiaz.

# FFC Awarded Largest National Tax Payer Award for Manufacturing Sector



**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited has been awarded as "Largest National Tax Payer" from Manufacturing Sector" for year 2022 in the "Second Taxpayer Recognition Awards 2022" organized by Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

Representatives from the various multinationals and corporate blue chip companies participated in the event. The award was presented by His Excellency Mr. Arif Alvi, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in a ceremony arranged at Aiwan-e-Sadar. Company Secretary Brig (R) Asrat Mahmood, FFC received the award.

This is second consecutive year where FFC was declared as Largest National Tax Payer in Manufacturing Sector.

# Pakistan's first 5G Innovation Lab at NUST

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: In a breakthrough development, the groundbreaking of Pakistan's first 5G Innovation Lab was held at the National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST). This historic achievement is the result of strategic partnership between NUST and Jazz, Pakistan's leading digital operator. The groundbreaking witnessed an overwhelming number of senior dignitaries, including Secretary IT Mr. Mohsin Mushtaq; SAPM on Youth Affairs, Ms. Shiza Fatima; Rector NUST, Lt Gen (Retd) Engr. Javed Mahmood Bukhari; and CEO Jazz Mr. Aamir Ibrahim to name a few.

By leveraging its high bandwidth, low latency, and advanced security, the 5G Innovation Lab will help researchers to work on potential use cases for 5G in the



fields of Artificial Intelligence, Augmented/Virtual Reality and Cloud-edge Computing Possessing Applications in Education, Healthcare, Industry 4.0, Agriculture, Security, Disaster Management, Entertainment, etc.

Congratulating NUST and Jazz, Mr. Mohsin Mushtaq, Secretary IT said, "This lab will play a pivotal role in helping us build an ecosystem to explore 5G-enabled use cases in Agritech, EdTech etc.,

while serving as a conduit for the interplay of technologies like Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning, Internet of Things, and Cybersecurity." Kaan Terzioglu, VEON Group CEO said, "While our priority is to provide 4G for all, we must also look at the future of communications where 5G will have an important role to play. Pakistan has a job to embrace - Fourth Industrial Revolution." He thanked NUST "for hosting this tech-

nology, because this will be the beginning of Fourth Industrial Revolution."

CEO Jazz Aamir Ibrahim said Pakistan's first 5G Innovation Lab at NUST will help researchers, entrepreneurs, and the academic world, to better understand the opportunities, value and usefulness of 5G spearheading the implementation of use cases for co-innovation ecosystem development. NUST Pro-Rector RIC Dr. Rizwan Rizaz said, "Today we have taken an important step to accelerate research and innovation." He said the 5G Innovation Lab would strengthen and foster a collaborative, and development-focused ecosystem with cutting-edge technology by bringing together visionary startups, industry leaders, technical experts, and investors for shared goals of advancement and growth.

# Temenos and NdcTech sign partnership to expand market reach

**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Temenos (SIX: TEMN) has signed an agreement to grant license rights to NdcTech, a wholly owned subsidiary of Systems Limited and one of its largest regional system integrators partners, to develop further and market the Temenos Country Model Banks on top of Temenos open platform for financial institutions in these seven Middle Eastern countries.

NdcTech is committed to invest and develop regulatory and business specific localized functionality to enhance these Model Banks for banks of all sizes in Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

As part of this agreement, NdcTech will become a trust-



ed partner for upgrade services in those countries to enable customers to seamlessly upgrade their technology stack and offer them a modernization path to a SaaS model on the Temenos Banking Cloud.

Temenos holds a leading position in the region and boasts a raft of clients across these seven countries including some of the largest and most innovative institutions in the Middle East from Al-Rajhi Bank, to First Abu Dhabi Bank to stc pay. All Temenos clients will be able to work with NdcTech and Temenos to enhance the Model Banks and contribute to the product roadmap.

# MMBL Partners with Quwat, Industus to offer Digital Solutions for B2B

**Commerce Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's largest digital bank, Mobilink Microfinance Bank Limited (MMBL) has signed a strategic partnership with Quwat, the fintech arm of Industus - a tech service provider catering to the needs of millions of consumers across Pakistan, to offer a robust portfolio of digitally innovative financial products and solutions to individuals as well as Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

Mobilink Microfinance Bank is part of the VEON group, a global digital operator that provides converged connectivity and online services across seven countries. As part of its digital operator strategy, VEON

is transforming people's lives, creating opportunities for greater digital inclusion, and driving economic growth across countries that are home to more than 8% of the world's population.

Chief Finance & Digital Officer MMBL, Sardar Mohammad Abubakr, and Founder & CEO Industus, Muhammad Saad Khan signed the partnership agreement at MMBL Headquarters with senior officials from both organizations. The partnership is focused on fueling the growth of MMBL's 40 million customers, especially SMEs. Under this partnership, MMBL will be able to meet the growing banking needs of its individual as well as enterprise



customers by improving their access to flexible financing alternatives, including B2B lending and account opening amongst other valuable services.

Leveraging Quwat's strong retail financial network, MMBL will also extend end-to-end support for SMEs

to expand their businesses. To be more responsive to the evolving needs of its growing customer base, MMBL through Quwat's lite-branch concept will be able to bring more unbanked individuals under the financial fold.

Speaking on occasion, Chief Finance & Digital Officer MMBL,

Sardar Mohammad Abubakr shared, "Collaborating with Quwat, a project of Industus - which shares our vision of financially empowering unserved individuals and small businesses through digitally inclusive technologies, is another milestone in our journey of empowerment. Besides traditional banking services, MMBL's partnership with Quwat will enable the bank to make advancements in the digitization of B2B lending which will help small business customers to streamline their business operations. This partnership represents another key support to the microfinance sector and create a better banking experience for all its clients."

## Descon aims for greener pastures with the launch of its agricultural division



**News Desk**

LAHORE: Descon, one of Pakistan's leading conglomerates, has officially announced its intentions to diversify in to agriculture by setting up a division called Descon Agri Businesses (DAB). This new venture seeks to innovate and improve upon the existing farm productivity and agriculture value-chain, helping provide the nation with nutritious produces and sustained economic growth.

Over the decades, Descon has led numerous large-scale projects in Construction, Power-generation, Oil-Refining, Chemicals and other diverse economic-sectors, in Pakistan and abroad. Its entry in to the agriculture sector is not entirely without expertise, as the company acquired shareholding in two innovative agriculture-based enterprises - 'Vital Agri Nutrient' (VAN) and 'Vital Green' (VG) at the start of this year.

VAN is a manufacturer of specialty fertilizers, soil amendments and bio-fertilizers working with farmers and corporate customers to deliver value-added farming solutions. VG provides access to credit, quality-inputs, actionable knowledge, digital tools and market outreach for farmers.

Other initiatives by Descon in this sector include the construction of a state-of-the-art fruit, vegetables, spices and herbs dehydration facility to provide high quality dried products for local and export markets, and a Himalayan Wellness Company, operational since 2019, exporting Himalayan pink salt and high-quality raw honey to the far east and other markets.

# Nasser Hussain asks England to sweep series against Pakistan

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: British cricket commentator and former England captain Nasser Hussain has urged England to focus on trying to sweep Pakistan 3-0 in Karachi rather than pick a side with next summer's Ashes in mind.

England completed a series victory over Pakistan by winning the second Test in Multan on Monday, a week after triumphing in the series opener in Rawalpindi.

The tourists could potentially hand a debut to 18-year-old leg-spinner Rehan Ahmed in the final fixture – if they did, he would become their youngest men's Test cricketer of all time.

The Karachi Test starts on Saturday – with England looking for a ninth win in 10 matches since Ben Stokes became captain and Brendon McCullum head coach.

"I don't think England will take a backward step, I don't see Stokes or McCullum saying, 'we are 2-0 up, we will give people a chance'. I hate hearing that. If you play for England, you deserve that cap, not so they can have a look at you," Hussain, was quoted as saying by Sky Sports News.

"You have to remember where



England were six months ago with one win in 17 Tests and how they have turned it around. Have that same attitude. Don't think of The Ashes, don't think about New Zealand, who they have next in February.

"A 3-0 win in Pakistan would be the best Christmas present for England fans so win this one game and round off an absolutely brilliant six or seven months for English cricket, including the T20 World Cup win."

"England may want to get Ben Foakes back in as he is an exceptional wicket-keeper – and how is Mark Wood's body?

He looked absolutely exhausted, physically and mentally, at the end of the last Test match and you want to look after a racehorse like him. But if he is fit and raring to go, you give him another game.

"Then there is Ahmed. I think England think it is going to spin in Karachi so they may play the extra spinner – but whatever side they pick must be one they think can beat Pakistan, not a side with one eye on the future or 'let's have a look at him'.

"Pick a side that wins 3-0, which would be a magnificent performance on these pitches away from home in alien

conditions."

On Stokes and McCullum reviving England's Test fortunes, Hussain added: "It is a remarkable transformation, one of the great transformations not just in cricket but in sport in general.

"From where the England cricket team were when Rob Key took over [as managing director of men's cricket] for it to turnaround has been a fabulous performance. Not just the winning but the style. Stokes and his men have made it very exciting cricket.

"I think we knew what we were going to get with Stokes. He is tough character and at his best when England are in difficult positions.

"But I have been really impressed with the tactical side, the subtle decisions on field placings, when to take the new ball and when not to.

"Holding back Jimmy Anderson, the greatest new-ball bowler England have ever had and not giving him the new ball. Not giving Ollie Robinson the new ball but giving it to the spinners.

"He has not surprised me tactically because anyone who has played the innings he has must know the game, but he has surprised everyone with how many times he gets his tactical decisions right."

# Hamza Amin, M.Alam and Ansar Mehmood appear as leaders in 49th Pakistan Open Golf

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The four rounds 49th Pakistan Open Golf Championship carrying prize money of eight million rupees, endorsed and entirely backed by the national golf body, Pakistan Golf Federation, operating under the command of newly elected office bearers, commenced at the Lahore Garrison Greens 18 holes Golf Course on Thursday. As the first 18 holes concluded on Thursday evening, the front runners were three golf professionals of the country's golf circuit. Young Muhammed Alam of PAF Skyview was one and the fine and fit looking Hamza Taimur Amin of Islamabad was another. The third one was the seasoned and skilled Ansar Mehmood of Margalla Greens Golf Club. For this

standing of honor Alam and Hamza and Ansar owe it to exceedingly praiseworthy and enthusiastic golf play on a golf course that played long from the back tees and added to that were some tactical pin placements which tested the ability of the participating champions to the full. M.Alam played gross 68, four under par, as did Hamza Amin and similar was the score achieved by Ansar Mehmood. Alam's hole by hole performance was an eagle on the 9th hole, birdies on holes 1,3,7,11 and 14, regulation pars on eleven holes and in between encountered a tragic ending on the par -3,6th hole which was vexing for him, though he composed himself to forgive and forget that messy moment.

Analysis of Hamza's round was birdies on holes 1,3,5,7,9,15, 17 and 18 (eight

in all), regulation pars on six holes and bogies were encountered on holes 2, and 10 and a double bogie on the 8th hole.

Flow of Ansars game was six birdies, ten pars and two bogies on holes 11 and 13. These star performers of the first round seek more honors in the rounds to come.

A few others in line for top performances are Ahmed Baig (PAF Skyview), Minhaj M.Warraich (Rawalpindi) and Matloob Ahmed (Lahore Garrison). All three are bunched together at a score of gross 72 and determined to become more motivated and formidable over the rounds on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

At a score of gross 73 are placed Dilshad Ali (Karachi Golf Club), Muhammed Munir (Rawalpindi), Shahid Javed Khan (Gymkhana) Arif Ali (PTV)

Muhammed Insaf (Rawalpindi), all five are professional players. Also placed at gross 73 is Irtiza Hussain, a fifteen years old amateur of Margalla Greens. He also stands out as the top performing amateur.

More professionals bracketed together at a score of gross 74 are Latif Rafiq, Khalid Khan, Waheed Baloch, Amjad Yousaf Wisal Khan, Muhammed Bilal and Noman Hussain Shah.

An amateur, Muhammed Shoaib is also placed at gross 74. Out of thirty five amateurs only six made the cut. They are Irtiza Hussain, M.Shoaib, Salman Jehangir, Saad Habib, M.Arsalan and Capt Zain ur rehman.

The tee off for second round will take place at 645 am on Saturday at Lahore Garrison Greens Golf Course.

## Return shot

ISLAMABAD: Soha Ali returns a shot against Zainab Ali Naqvi in women single tennis match during Shaheed Benazir Bhutto National Tennis Championship in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

# Islamabad United pick Mubasir Khan in Supplementary category for PSL 8

News Desk

KARACHI: The much-awaited players' draft for the next year's edition of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) season 8 will start here shortly.

PLATINUM CATEGORY

**Round 1**  
Lahore Qalandars: Fakhar Zaman  
Quetta Gladiators: Wanindu Hasaranga  
Multan Sultans: David Miller  
Karachi Kings: Matthew Wade  
Islamabad United: Alex Hales  
Peshawar Zalmi: Bhanuka Rajapaksa

Round 2

Quetta Gladiators: Naseem Shah (Right To Match)  
Peshawar Zalmi: Rovman Powell  
Islamabad United: Rahmanullah Gurbaz  
Karachi Kings: Imran Tahir  
Multan Sultans: Josh Little  
**DIAMOND CATEGORY**  
Islamabad United: Fazalhaq Farooqi  
Peshawar Zalmi: Mujeeb Ur Rahman  
Lahore Qalandars: Hussain Talat  
Quetta Gladiators: Odean Smith  
Karachi Kings: James Vince  
Karachi Kings: James Fuller

GOLD CATEGORY

Peshawar Zalmi: Danish Aziz  
Quetta Gladiators: Ahsan Ali  
Lahore Qalandars: Sikandar Raza  
Multan Sultans: Akeal Hosein  
Karachi Kings: Andrew Tye  
Lahore Qalandars: Liam Dawson  
Peshawar Zalmi: Arshad Iqbal  
**SILVER CATEGORY**  
**Round 1**  
Islamabad United: Abrar Ahmed  
Quetta Gladiators: Umaid Asif  
Karachi Kings: Tayyab Tahir  
Multan Sultans: Usama Mir  
Peshawar Zalmi: Saim Ayub (Wild

Card)

Lahore Qalandars: Dilbar Hussain  
**Round 2**  
Peshawar Zalmi: Usman Qadir  
Islamabad United: Sohaib Maqsood  
Multan Sultans: Usman Khan  
Karachi Kings: Muhammad Akhlaq  
Lahore Qalandars: Mirza Tahir Baig  
Quetta Gladiators: Muhammad Zahid  
**Round 3**  
Lahore Qalandars: Ahmed Daniyal  
Multan Sultans: Sameen Gul  
Islamabad United: Rummam Raees  
Multan Sultans: Anwar Ali

Multan Sultans: Mohammad Sarwar Afridi  
**EMERGING**  
Karachi Kings: Irfan Khan Niazi  
Peshawar Zalmi: Sufyan Muqem  
Islamabad United: Zeeshan Zameer  
Quetta Gladiators: Abdul Wahid Bangalzai  
Lahore Qalandars: Shawaiz Irfan  
Islamabad United: Hassan Nawaz  
Peshawar Zalmi: Haseeb Ullah  
Quetta Gladiators: Aimal Khan  
**SUPPLEMENTARY**  
**Round 1**  
Peshawar Zalmi: James Neesham

Multan Sultans: Adil Rashid  
Quetta Gladiators: Martin Gupthill  
Peshawar Zalmi: Skipped  
Lahore Qalandars: Jordan Cox  
Islamabad United: Moeen Ali  
**Round 2**  
Quetta Gladiators: Omair Bin Yousuf  
Karachi Kings: Tabraiz Shamsi  
Lahore Qalandars: Jalat Khan  
Multan Sultans: Arifat Minhas  
Karachi Kings: Mohammad Umar  
Islamabad United: Mubasir Khan  
NOTE: Franchises are arranged in accordance with their pick order in each category.

PSL 8 Draft: 'We'll pick players according to our team plans' Wasim Akram



Sports Reporter

KARACHI: Legendary fast bowler and Karachi Kings President, Wasim Akram, has disclosed that his franchise will pick the players in today's PSL Draft according to their team plans devised for the upcoming season of the Pakistan Super League.

The much-awaited players' Draft for the eighth edition of the PSL will begin shortly as the players and management of all six franchises have gathered in Karachi.

In an exclusive talk with ARY News before the Draft, Karachi Kings President said every team would be trying to pick the best players for their side.

"We will try to pick players according to our plans," he said. Wasim, popularly known as Sultan of Swing added that in franchise cricket, the teams kept on switching players and experimenting with new names.

Karachi Kings have already recruited veteran Shoaib Malik and promising Haider Ali with last season's skipper Babar Azam in a trade with Peshawar Zalmi. Meanwhile, it has retained Imad Wasim, Sharjeel Khan, Mohammad Amir, Qasim Akram, Aamir Yamin and Mir Hamza.

National team performed brilliantly in the 13th World Bodybuilding Championship has returned home

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Pakistan bodybuilding squad reached safely here after shining at the 13th World Bodybuilding Championship which was held at Phuket.

According to details, more than 40 countries participated in the event. National bodybuilder Shahzad Qureshi secured 3rd position in Men Master Category. He also got 4th spot in 90 kg category. Ajaz Ahmed clinched 4th position in Men Master. Speaking to media, Shehzad Qureshi appealed to the government that the govt please look after bodybuilders. He also appealed that the govt to taken steps to close bogus federations as well. He said that Pakistan Sports Board also shared financial responsibilities with us with NOC.



'Soch Hai Apki' – slogan for Pakistan Super League season 8 unveiled

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Pakistan Super League (PSL) revealed the official slogan for its upcoming eighth edition, scheduled to take place next year from February 9 to March 19. 'Soch Hai Apki' will define the brand new episode of the fastest-growing franchise cricket league around the world.

The much-awaited players' Draft for the eighth edition of the PSL will begin shortly as the players and management of all six franchises have gathered in Karachi.

The Pakistan Cricket Board had already revealed the pick order for the drafts, where defending champions Lahore Qalandars will make the first pick followed by Quetta Gladiators and 2021 champions Multan Sultans. The champions of the 2020 edition, Karachi Kings will make the fourth pick, while two-time champions Islamabad United will have the fifth pick. The 2017 champions Peshawar Zalmi, on the other hand, will make the last pick in the draft. Furthermore, the marquee tournament is slated to take place next year with Karachi, Multan, Lahore and Rawalpindi selected as host venues for the eighth edition of PSL.

Bogus clubs, tortured record used for PFF elections: Haroon Malik

Sports Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) Normalization Committee (NC) Haroon Malik said on Thursday bogus clubs and tortured record were being used for the PFF elections in the country.

While briefing the National Assembly Standing Committee on Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC), he said Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) had entrusted the PFF with the responsibility of conducting the PFF elections in Jan 2021 adding more than four thousand football clubs had applied for registration through the 'Pakistan Football Connect' program. Last year, the number was 2162, he said.