



Terrorists accused in Islamabad blast arrested

Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah said on Tuesday that terrorists accused in Islamabad blast were arrested. Speaking to TV, he said Taxi driver purported to be involved in the attack was innocent adding the driver had not been hired by the accused. The terrorists arrived in Rawalpindi from Kurram agency.



Maulana Tariq Jamil suffers cardiac arrest

Renowned Islamic scholar Maulana Tariq Jamil was shifted to a hospital on Tuesday due to a heart attack. Taking to Twitter, Maulana's son Yousaf Jamil informed that his father (Maulana Tariq Jamil) suffered a heart attack and was shifted to a hospital in Canada. He further said that now his father's condition is stable and requested prayers for his speedy recovery. Later on, Yousaf Jamil's tweet was retweeted from the Islamic scholar's official account.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

High-level meeting

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets a high-level delegation of Uzbekistan led by the Uzbek Deputy Prime Minister/Minister for Investment and Foreign Trade, H.E. Khodjaev Jamshid Abdukhakimovich on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

Shehbaz Sharif pays tribute to Benazir Bhutto as 'crusader for human rights & democracy'



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday paid tribute to politician Benazir Bhutto on her death anniversary, saying that she was a "crusader for human rights and democracy".

Shehbaz Sharif said Benazir Bhutto left an indelible mark on politics of the country, adding that the void left by her martyrdom continues to widen over the years.

He said the black day of 27 December 2007 is an unforgettable day relating to the martyrdom of a beloved leader of the people.

"Benazir Bhutto is a shining example of democratic and political struggle who sacrificed her life while fighting for the rights of people," he said.

He mentioned that as the first woman prime minister of the Islamic world, Benazir Bhutto, was a fascinating story of continuous struggle throughout her life.

"We pay tribute to the historical services of Benazir Bhutto for the country, people and democracy," he said.

He recalled that Paki-

stan Muslim League leader Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Pakistan Peoples Party's Benazir Bhutto gave the historical gift of the Charter of Democracy that started a new era in the country's politics.

He term d the Charter of Democracy a landmark achievement of the political vision of the country's leaders which ushered in a new political culture and tradition in Pakistan.

Shehbaz Sharif said Benazir Bhutto took a bold and clear stand against terrorism and added that her martyrdom showed the country's determination against the menace.

He said Benazir Bhutto also rendered immense services for the strengthening of national defence, constitutional institutions and for social welfare.

The prime minister extended condolences to the family of Benazir Bhutto including his husband Asif Ali Zardari, son Bilawal Bhutto and all other relatives.

He prayed to Allah Almighty to elevate the ranks of all martyrs including Benazir Bhutto, and grant patience to the families.

PM for fast-track solarization of federal govt's buildings to slash costly fuel import bill

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said that they had devised a plan to immediately convert all the federal government entities' buildings on solar power by April next year to slash a huge chunk out of the country's costly fuel import bill hovering around \$27 billion.

Unveiling further details, the prime minister said that the procedures for conversion of solar power should be fast-tracked as they had set April 2023 as the timeline for the implementation of this plan.

Addressing a solarization conference, the prime minister said under the plan, all the federal government ministries, departments, authorities and their offshoots in the provinces would immediately shift on solar energy.

He said it would be a model for the rest of the provincial governments as the federal government would not make additional expenditures over the solarization process.

The prime minister also urged all the relevant authorities and the stakeholders to

complete the required process by the end of April next year and meet the timeline which had been set.

"Consider it as our political, social, national and religious duty to implement it as soon as possible," he opined.

The prime minister said with these urgent measures, they would be able to generate 300 MW to 500MW of cheap power, thus reducing the import bill worth billions of dollars each year.

The prime minister assured that the whole process would be

conducted through transparent bidding via a third party.

He also urged the provincial chief ministers to emulate the federal government's launched pattern and introduce solar systems in their respective provinces and assured the federal government's complete assistance in this regard.

"It is the only option of our survival as a nation," he added.

The prime minister said that the process for the generation of 10,000MW solar power in the country had already commenced and such a conversation by the

federal government buildings would be the first phase.

Enumerating the economic challenges faced by the country due to skyrocketing fuel and gas prices after the Russia-Ukraine conflict, he said that developing countries like Pakistan had to bear the brunt.

He said \$27 billion costly fuel import bill was a big challenge for the countries like Pakistan, adding the ongoing conflict had also surged prices of gas and worsened its availability as the supply to Europe was disrupted. Agencies

Minister chairs meeting to review progress over 1000 ISUs

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday directed the concerned stakeholders to expedite the process of 1000 Industrial Stitching Units (ISUs) in the country, while engaging the private sector for increasing the country's exports.

He made these directions while chairing a meeting to review the progress on establishment of 1000 ISUs to be established in the country to enhance the self-employment and improve the socio-economic condition of the people, said a press release issued here.

The meeting was attended by the Chief Economist, Member Oil and Gas, representatives from Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) and Ministry of Industries.

The Minister said that the sustainable economic growth was possible only through increasing productivity that was leading to more exports and higher economic growth.

Govt committed in development of GB: Dar

Commerce Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar here on Tuesday expressed his government's commitment for the development and progress of all regions including Gilgit-Baltistan.

During a meeting with Finance Minister Gilgit-Baltistan, Jawed Ali Manwa and his team, who called on the federal minister, Dar also stressed for utilization of tourism potential in Gilgit-Baltistan region, according to press statement issued by finance ministry. He said, tourism development would not only enhance the revenues of Gilgit-Baltistan but would



Finance Minister Gilgit-Baltistan, Jawed Ali Manwa and his team during a call on meeting with Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar at the Finance Division.

also portray a beautiful image of the country all over the world.

The minister said the government would extend support for the development of the Gilgit-Baltistan.

Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Finance, Tariq Bajwa, Secretary Finance and senior officers from Gilgit-Baltistan and Finance Division also attended the meeting.

15th anniversary of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto observed in Garhi Khuda Bux Bhutto

News Desk

GARHI KHUDA BUX BHUTTO: The 15th martyrdom anniversary of the slain Chairperson of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and former prime minister Shaheed Mohtarama Benazir Bhutto was observed here on Tuesday with great zeal and respect, renewing the pledge to make Pakistan stronger and viable in all aspects.

Qura'an Khawani and fateha khawani was held in every corner of the country for the departed soul of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto.

People from all walks of life in their messages on the occasion paid rich tributes to Shaheed Benazir Bhutto for her services for the cause of poor and downtrodden people and for the progress and prosperity of Pakistan and restoration of democracy in the country.

In this connection, Speaker NA Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, Governor Gilgit-Baltistan Syed Mehdi Shah, Sindh CM Syed Murad Ali Shah, Federal Minister Shazia Atta Marri, President PPP Punjab Qamar Zaman Kaira and other were also present.

Bilawal House not White House ousted Imran Khan, claims PPP Chairman



Correspondent

GARHI KHUDA BAKHSH, LARKANA: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) chairman and foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari claimed Tuesday that the 'conspiracy of Bilawal House but not White House ousted [Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chief and former premier] Imran Khan.

While addressing a public gathering on her mother and former prime minister late Benazir Bhutto's 15th death anniversary in Garhi Khuda Bakhsh, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that PPP had also ousted former military ruler General Retired Pervez Musharraf so easily.

He said that Imran Khan was the first prime minister who had been ousted in a constitutional way but not from any conspiracy. "He was claiming for being ousted by the United States (US). He was not ousted by the White House but by the conspiracy of the Bilawal House."

"Imran Khan is trying to give credit for his ouster to the White House instead of Asif Ali Zardari. Imran Khan should be aware of his future and that he will also become a chapter of the

past just like Pervez Musharraf. No matter, how much he is going to shout at us, we have to think about the future."

He blamed the former prime minister for the new wave of terrorism. Bilawal said that a 'selected' had been imposed on the nation which was the reason for the resurgence of terrorism.

"We have to get rid of Imran Khan's policy for terrorists and establish the writ of the state. We have to be united again to fight the terrorists."

"We will definitely defeat the terrorists but we will also find the answers about why it happened."

"The selected one damaged the national economy to save his government. The PTI government had enforced such policies which were equivalent to suicide attacks on the economy. We were facing bankruptcy risk for the first time in history. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his economic team saved the country from bankruptcy."

He said that Benazir Bhutto was the name of resistance against the extremists and terrorists. Bilawal said that he was martyred for being a true patriot as the dictatorship always seizes the independence of the people by force.

Visit to Parliament house

ISLAMABAD: A 39-member delegation of National Defence University visited the Senate Secretariat here Tuesday.



39-member NDU delegation visits Parliament House

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: A 39-member delegation of National Defence University (NDU) visited the Senate Secretariat here Tuesday. High ranking officials of the Parliament House welcomed the delegation.

The delegation also visited the Senate Museum, portraying the evolution, history and reorganization of the Upper House of the Parliament. The delegation took keen interest in the artifacts, murals, dioramas, exhibits, historical docu-

ments and above all the statues and photographs of the country's leading politicians.

The delegation toured the Senate Hall and was briefed with regard to the electoral and legislative process at the Senate of Pakistan.

The delegation was apprised about the role of the Upper House for the promotion of national harmony among the federal units.

The delegation thanked the Senate authorities for the awareness and their reception at the Parliament House.

Sanjrani pays condolence visit



ISLAMABAD: Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani on Tuesday visited the Islamabad residence of Senator Dr Humayun Mohmand to commiserate with him over the demise of his father Brig (Retd) Abdul Sattar Mohmand.

Senate Chairman said that Brig (Retd) Abdul Sattar Mohmand was a dignified person and his services will always be remembered.

Expressing heartfelt condolences,

Sanjrani said he was equally grieved over the demise of Brig Sattar.

Chairman prayed to Almighty Allah to forgive all sins of the deceased and grant patience to the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss.

Senate Deputy Chairman Mirza Muhammad Afridi has sent a message to Dr Humayun Mohmand expressing his sincere condolences over the passing of his father.

Audio tapes aimed at blackmailing me: Imran Khan

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan said on Tuesday audio tapes were being released to blackmail him and malign his image.

Speaking to TV, he said conspiracy to oust him as prime minister (PM) was hatched inside the country adding Hussain Haqqani was conspiring against him. "What could be more treacherous than installing thieves on powerful positions and quashing cases against them", he added.

Taking a dig at the incumbent government, he said the incumbent government had ruined all the institutions adding PM Shehbaz Sharif destroyed Federal Investiga-



tion Agency (FIA) first after coming into power. "FIA official Rizwan died of cardiac arrest and four witnesses against Mr Shehbaz are no

more", he added.

Mr Khan went on to say that the amendments to National Accountability Bureau (NAB) law were

helping powerful criminals reign free adding the amendments had given license of corruption to the powerful. "When the court ordered the

NAB to provide evidence of Nawaz Sharif's ownership of London flats, the government rendered NAB and FIA dysfunctional [to avoid the court battle]", he added.

He said the appointment of Najam Sethi as the chairman of Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) would ruin cricket too as Mr Sethi had never played cricket. "Are even Mr Sethi and former PCB chairman Ramiz Raja comparable", he questioned.

Know more: Plot allotment case: Nawaz seeks relief under NAB Amendment Act 2022

The PTI chief while calling the incumbent government "economic hitman" said thieves had ruined the country's economy adding Pakistan was facing history's highest inflation.

BB's struggle for Constitution, democracy to be remembered always: Marriyum

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Tuesday that Shaheed Benazir Bhutto's struggle for the Constitution, the Parliament, democracy, people's rights and social improvement will always be remembered.

Paying homage to former Prime Minister and Chairperson of Pakistan People's Party Benazir Bhutto on her martyrdom day, Marriyum Aurangzeb said in a statement that Benazir Bhutto had a unique



personality.

Marriyum said that Benazir handled the relationships of a brave daughter, mother, wife and sister with great virtue and

courage even in very difficult circumstances.

Terming the slain PPP chairperson as an example of sagacity, bravery and struggle

in politics she said until her last breath, Benazir Bhutto continued to fight for the unity, development and prosperity of Pakistan as a chain of the federation.

Her martyrdom was a great loss to Pakistan which

the nation will never forget, Marriyam said.

Today we also pay tribute to former President Zardari who strengthened the unity of Pakistan by chanting 'Pakistan Khappay' slogan, she said.

Marriyum extended condolences to all the family members including former President Asif Zardari, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Bakhtawar and Asifa Bhutto Zardari.

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

Zardari and Bilawal buried Benazir's vision: Farwad Chaudhry



Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) senior vice president Farwad Chaudhry said on Tuesday former president Asif Ali Zardari and minister for external affairs Bilawal Bhutto buried the vision of Benazir Bhutto.

Referring to PPP's power show at Garhi Khuda Bux, he wrote on Twitter, "Establishment's puppets staged tamasha at Benazir's mausoleum". "Ms Bhutto's assailants could not wipe her name but Mr Zardari and Mr Bilawal buried her mission by limiting the PPP to Sindh only", he added.

Saudi Arabia to hold Hajj Expo 2023 from Jan 9

News Desk

RIYADH: The Saudi Ministry of Hajj and Umrah will organize the 'Hajj Expo 2023' conference and exhibition January 9-12, 2023.

The four-day event, being held under the patronage of Advisor to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and Makkah Governor Prince Khaled Al-Faisal, was part of the ministry's ongoing efforts to build an innovative ecosystem of services and solutions to better serve pilgrims at the Two Holy Mosques, while enhancing their religious and cultural experiences, a ministry press release said.

"It aims to create an integrated and sustainable ecosystem that improves pilgrims' experiences, anticipate their future trends, and establish opportunities for further collaborations, agreements, and local and international initiatives," the ministry added.

Saudi Minister of Hajj and



Umrah Dr Tawfiq bin Fawzan Al-Rabiah, said: "The conference will allow entrepreneurs, innovators, and researchers from more than 200 global organizations to share successful experiences, and brainstorm sustainable quality solutions designed to cater to pilgrims' aspirations and needs."

It reflected the unrelenting support dedicated by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, and the Crown

Prince to the Hajj and Umrah sector, in line with the Saudi Vision 2030, he added.

"With delegations from over 56 countries, the 'Expo Hajj' is expected to witness the signing of 400 agreements and partnerships. It will feature 10 keynote sessions, 13 panel discussions and 'Hajj Talks', as well as 36 workshops and related events and activities, notably the Islamic exposition and the 'Hajj Hackathon' the ministry said.

The 2021 edition of the conference, it added, saw record numbers with over 45,000 attendees and 115 commercial agreements.

The second edition would also feature a wide range of scientific sessions, workshops, and training programmes, with several ministers of Islamic affairs, endowments and Hajj ambassadors and consuls, and Hajj and Umrah operators from around the world, the ministry said.

Minister demands punitive action against those who ruined country's economy



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Mian Javed Latif Tuesday demanded for taking maximum punitive action against those responsible for running the country's economy and triggering political instability in the country.

Addressing a news conference, he said Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan who ruined the country's thriving economy must be exposed and punished.

The minister said Imran Khan was imposed on the nation in year 2018 when the country's economy

was performing excellently and the country was thriving but alas the vibrant economy nose was dived in over three years rule of Imran Khan.

A former prime minister was disqualified to pave way for Imran Khan. However, the experience of elevating Imran Khan had miserably failed and this should be rectified by bringing back Nawaz Sharif after seeking apology from him, the minister expressed.

Nawaz Sharif was disqualified on flimsy grounds just to pave way for Imran Khan, the pampered boy of 72. Imran Khan left the government after lying landmines for new government.

The nation was paying the price of incapable government of Imran in shape of burgeoning inflation and price hike, he said adding that the people of the country were very perturbed that Imran Khan was being facilitated even then.

Govt. restores 11 revoked E&P licenses, receives bids for 14 new blocks

Commerce Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Making a true calculation of the country's existing and future energy needs, the incumbent coalition government has aligned its strategy to achieve self-sufficiency in the oil and gas sector by stepping up exploration activities to exploit indigenous resources in potential areas.

The Petroleum Division, under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, has taken solid steps to find a permanent solution to energy scarcity and reduce reliance on imported fuel by attracting investment in the oil and gas sector.

For this purpose, the government during its first six months, not only restored 11 revoked licenses of different Exploration and Production (E&P) companies but also received bids for the award of 14 new exploration blocks through a transparent bidding process to make the much-needed new oil and gas reserves.

With the award of new E&P blocks, the country would get more than \$92.8 million investment in three years, besides the utilization of funds amounting to over \$1.2 million by the successive E&P companies under the Corpo-

rate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative to carry out welfare activities in surroundings localities of their oil and gas production fields.

The country's existing hydrocarbon deposits are depleting at the rate of around 10 per cent annually because E&P companies unfortunately could not make any major discovery since long. It is hoped that with the restoration of the revoked E&P licenses and the award of new exploration blocks, the companies would accelerate drilling activities to exploit the country's real potential of indigenous resources.

A senior official privy to petroleum sector developments told APP that the government was cognizant of the prevailing oil and gas supply situation and had made sufficient arrangements to meet the needs of the country accordingly.

On instructions of PM Shehbaz Sharif, he said, the supply of petroleum products and gas to consumers was being monitored daily.

He said there existed sufficient petrol and diesel stocks, while the government made timely arrangements to procure additional Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) cargoes for the peak winter season.

Improve sanitation system in urban areas: President AJK

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: President Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry has said that the Department of Local Government and Rural Development of Azad Kashmir should speed up the pace of its ongoing development projects and also improve the sanitation system in urban areas.

He expressed these views during a briefing session arranged by the Department of Local Government and Rural Development here today.

"Now that the local government elections have been held it is high time that the Department of Local Government and other relevant institutions should play their role to make local bodies functional so that power could be transferred to grassroots level, he said adding that tax system should be improved so that Municipal corporation can have a reasonable income for running these institutions.

On this occasion, Secretary Local



Government Syed Shahid Mohiuddin gave a detailed briefing to the President regarding the ongoing development projects and the problems being faced by the department.

Minister for Local Government

Khawaja Farooq Ahmed, Sardar Imtiaz Khan, Secretary Presidential Affairs Dr. Syed Asif Hussain, Secretary Local Government and Rural Development Syed Shahid Mohiuddin, Director General Local Government Muhammad

Shabbir Abbasi, Senior Additional Secretary Local Government Abdul Sattar Khan, Chief Planning Local Government Muhammad Masood, Secretary Local Government Board Sardar Aqeel Mahmood and others were also present.

First Red Bull Off The Roof show in Lahore redefines the live music ecosystem

LAHORE: The place to be was Expo Center, Lahore and the time was right for a musical extravaganza like none other seen in Pakistan before. The first show in the Red Bull Off the Roof series set off in Lahore with a must-see card of musical talent.

The reveal of the Red Bull Off The Roof bus to an awe-struck audience was a sight to behold. The 9000-kilogram silver-and-gray titan appeared to tall over everything in its way as it arrived at the venue.

Headlined by Pakistan's beloved icon Bilal Maqsood (formerly of Strings), the show comprised of talent from various musical styles and genres, all adored by Lahore. From indie pop artist Taha G and hip hop artist Rizzy-Rozzo to viral sensations such as Abdul Hannan and metal heads like Takatak, all electrified the audience like they've been yearning for it.

After the live crowd was hyped up enough after a series of incredible performances, it was time for Pakistan's



beloved veteran to show up and show off. The audience showered the iconic Bilal Maqsood with deafening cheers as he climbed aboard the rooftop stage. Scores of people sang along to his every word and Maqsood had the crowd in the palm of his hands.

Finally, the sensational Hasan Raheem brought his A-game and conquered the night with one hit song after another.

"It's a statement. It's innovative and that's what we need when it comes to our live music ecosystem," said Rozzo

about Red Bull Off The Roof. "Being up there on an elevated platform gives more power to the performer. And it allows the performer to take the audience on a journey, a sort of consensual hypnosis through music."

Red Bull Pakistan CEO Taimour Afaq said, "What Red Bull is doing here is redefining how live music is performed in Pakistan. Red Bull Off The Roof is the first step towards bringing the culture of touring musicians travelling and performing in one town or city after another. This changes the whole concept where once the audience would go to a concert; now the concert has wheels and it comes to wherever you are."

Samsung serves as the official partner of Red Bull Off The Roof. To check out the Red Bull Off The Roof hits, tune into FM91, the event's official radio partner. Bookme.pk serves as the ticketing partner where as Levi's is the event's partner—a one-stop for the perfect winter fashion.

UN must intervene to save Kashmiris from extinction: Dr. Ghulam N. Mir

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: "The Kashmir conflict is first and last a conflict between two distinct national identities, separate and apart from each other. The two could not be more different in their history, culture, religious identity, and ethnicity. Indigenous of Kashmiri traditions have lasted over millennia thanks partly to its unique geography and independent thinking. Having converted to the monotheistic faith over 600 years ago Kashmiris have guarded it tenaciously," this was stated by Dr. Ghulam N. Mir, Chairman, Kashmir Diaspora Coalition & President, World Kashmir Awareness Forum at a seminar organized by Dr. Halil Tokar, Professor and Head of Urdu Language and Literature Chair, Istanbul University. Dr. Tokar is the author of more than two dozen books, includ-



ing "Kashmir File: A Book on history of Kashmir" and Editor, Quarterly, 'Ertibaat-Istanbul'. "But what makes the Kashmir case one of the two most vexing and intracta-

ble cases of the last 75 years is the denial of the right to self-determination to 23 million people of Jammu and Kashmir. Following the illegal Indian invasion and occupation of part of

Kashmir in 1947, which prompted the people of Azad Kashmir (Free Kashmir) and their allies across the border from Pakistan to get involved. A war broke out. United Nations Security Council intervened. UNSC passed several resolutions based on its mandate to hold an UN-supervised free and unfettered plebiscite allowing the people of Kashmir to decide their own political future. Kashmiris have been demanding it and Pakistan is unequivocally supportive of it. But India has refused to implement the UNSC resolutions since 1948., Dr. Mir added.

"The people of Jammu & Kashmir appeal to the Secretary General of the United Nations, the UNHCHR, Amnesty International and other international humanitarian organizations to intervene to save the Kashmiris from extinction," Dr. Mir concluded.

DCO Faisalabad issue the instruction for resolving the problems of the people



Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: The Deputy Commissioner Imran Hamid Sheikh has ordered the officers of the district departments to pay special attention to solving the problems of the people and spare no effort in providing all possible relief to the applicants. He issued these ordered while hearing the complaints of the people during an open court outside his office at reception.

The Deputy Commissioner said that civil rights should be fully protected and immediate legal action should be taken against those who obstruct the basic amenities to public. He directed to relevant department for immediate redressal of public complaints and submitted the compliance report immediately. He said that open court is held on daily basis and to solve the problems of general public was the priority.

University of Agriculture Faisalabad and EPTeck Technologies signed MOU

Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: The University of Agriculture Faisalabad and EPTeck Technologies Pvt Limited has inked a Memorandum of Understanding to collaborate in the areas of academia and research.

The MoU was duly inked by UAF Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Iqbal Ahmad Khan and EPTeck Technologies CEO Engineer Khalil Ahmed Rashid. Both parties agree to work jointly on capacity building, faculty, and staff development programs; exchange of students and staff; exchange academic information and materials, coordinate in curriculum development; coordination in joint or collaborative research projects; organize joint symposia seminars, workshops and conference.

Prof Dr Iqbal Ahmad Khan said that the UAF mission is to lead the change through outstanding achievement in learning, discovery and community services with a special focus on agriculture and rural development. He said that the country was enduring the different challenges in the agriculture sector. For which, we have to adopt the latest agriculture practices and to develop the sector on scientific bases.

Engineer Khalil Ahmed Rashid called for making the joint efforts for knowledge based economy.

Director External Linkages Prof Dr Waseem Akram, Prof Dr Khalid Mushtaq, EPTeck Technologies Director Amir Zahoor and Saleem Akhtar also attended the meeting.

Funeral prayers of Ch Amin



Aarif Chaudhary

MANCHESTER: Chaudhry Amin, prominent socialite from Oldham, Greater Manchester, reunited with his true creator after a short illness, late Muhammad Saleem and uncle of Huddersfield entrepreneur Muhammad Nadeem, father of Muhammad Wasim, Chaudhry Aslam Pandhir-Muhammad Tariq MBE and community leader Baji Tahira was the maternal uncle of Murhum. He held a prominent place in the community due to his modesty, friendliness and humility and was at the forefront of welfare works.

He was laid to rest and a special prayer was offered for the elevation of the ranks. In addition to political, social and business figures of the community, relatives, friends and very close friends participated in the funeral prayer. Bri Shahina Haroon-Mayor Rochdale Ali Ahmed Bar Tania Prominent lawyer Barrister Amjad Malik-Member Bar Tanwi Parliament Afzal Khan-Deputy Mayor Oldham Dr. Zahid Chauhan-Businessmen-Rana Imtiaz Ahmed-Nasemullah Khan-President Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Bar Tania Malik Imran Khal Shahr Yar Khan, Honorary Adviser of Investments in Italy on behalf of the Government of Pakistan, expressed his heartfelt sorrow and said that the deceased's family, friends and close relatives should have the courage to bear the great shock. May he be given a high place in Jannat al-Firdous

Pakistani talents secure second place at the regional finale of Huawei ICT Competition Middle East 2022

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: The winners of the Huawei ICT Competition Middle East 2022, Huawei's flagship longstanding competition, have now been announced at a closing ceremony that took place on December 22 in Muscat, Oman. The Pakistani Team 1, comprising Muhammad Ali and Asad Anwer from Mehran University of Engineering and Technology Jamshoro and Eman Yaqoob from Lahore College for Women University, secured second place following several months of national and regional competitions between some of the region's brightest young minds and leading academic institutions. This year's competition saw 15 teams of the brightest young tech talents compete together, shortlisted originally from 19,300 participants representing 472 universities and 11 countries across the Middle East and Central Asia.

This year, the Jordan team comprising students Hamzah Al-Zubaidi and Aws Al-Rayya from Princess Sumaya Univer-

sity for Technology and Yazan Al Shannik from Yarmouk University won the first prize of \$20,000. The second place went to Pakistan Team 1 in addition to Iraq Team 1, comprising Sadeem Mouloud from Ninevah University, Mohammed Shahr from Salahaddin University and Mohammed Hussein from University of Anbar. The third prize went to the UAE Team comprising Eyasu Araya and Smon Ftwi from Higher Colleges of Technology and Meriem Aoudia from University of Sharjah, the Bahrain Team comprising Dana Kamal, Husain Hasan and Joud Ebrahim from Bahrain Polytechnic, and the Kazakhstan Team comprising Nikolay Zhilaykov from Almaty University of Power Engineering and Telecommunications, Aida Begal-darova from al-Farabi Kazakh National University, and Algerim Turarbekova from International Information Technology University. The top winners will represent the Middle East and Central Asia in the global finals competition that will take place next year in Shanghai, China.

During the ceremony, which was attended by ambassadors to China from the participating countries, Shunli Wang, Vice President of Huawei Middle East & Central Asia, delivered an opening speech followed by remarks by each of His Excellency Dr. Ali bin Amer Al Shaidani, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Transport and Communications and Information Technology for Communications and Information Technology, Talal Said Marhoon Al Mamari, Chief Executive Officer of Oman Telecommunications Company (Omantel), H.E. Li Lingbing, Chinese Ambassador to Oman, and then celebrated the competition's final winners and acknowledged the outstanding participants.

Dr. Ali bin Amer Al Shaidani, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology for Communications and Information Technology, said: "We are thrilled to host the Huawei ICT Competition Middle East 2022 in Oman this year, in partnership with the Ministry of Labour, Omantel, and Huawei.



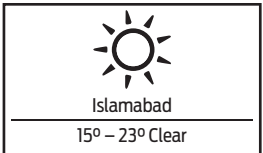
Shunli Wang, Vice President of Huawei Middle East & Central Asia, said: "I would like to thank our partners at the Omani Government, Ministry of Labour, and Omantel for being part of this ceremony. Huawei is committed to supporting and

nurturing young ICT talent in the region. Through the Huawei Middle East ICT Competition, we aim to empower the youth to advance their ICT skills, hence contributing to the talent ecosystem and supporting accelerating digital economies. On behalf of

Huawei, I would like to congratulate all the winners for their compelling efforts during the 2022 edition of the competition. In addition to outstanding training opportunities from experts at Huawei, winners also received awards, including cash

prizes and certificates of recognition. Huawei also celebrated all the women participating in this year's competition through the 'Women in Tech' award, as well as all the tutors through the 'Best Tutors' award. The remaining teams who were not among the lucky winners received the 'Outstanding Performance' award. In addition, a total of 45 students who participated in the Huawei ICT Competition Middle East 2022 regional finals were selected for an internship program at Huawei in their respective countries.

The Huawei ICT Competition is one of several CSR initiatives undertaken by Huawei to nurture youth. Over 80,000 students across the region have participated in the contest since its launch in 2017. During the 2021 edition of the competition, Huawei collaborated with over 20 ministries and 453 institutions and received applications from over 15,000 students, while the 2022 edition of the competition witnessed a remarkable increase in students' participation to reach 19,300 applicants.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr5:42 am
Zohr12:08 pm
Asr3:29 pm
Maghrib5:07 pm
Isha6:36 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police) 15
Bomb Disposal 15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/
Islamabad1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance 1122 &
& Rescue Services 4451122
Motorway Police9266044
Motorway Police9270601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance115
PIA Flight Info 114
PIA Cargo9280979
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DHQ5556311-4
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Holy Family9290322-7
PIMS9261170-79
Polyclinic9218300-09
Shifa International4603666

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CDA9208301-04
Met Office9250360-6
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TMA5770886
Cantonment Board9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan
Corporation9209224
Potohar Town9209224
Rawal Town5773343

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Water Tanker Service
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G-5, G-6, G-7, G-89203883
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-89266316
Wapda Islamabad9217579-80

20 workshops underway to train journalists on modern trends in journalism

News Desk

ISLAMABAD : The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has launched a series of workshops for the capacity building of new and mid-career journalists across the country.

The training workshops were organized at the Pakistan Information Centers which were established by the Press Information Department (PID) to impart professional training to the journalists, said a news release.

Currently, more than 20 training workshops were underway in Islamabad, Lahore, Quetta, Peshawar, Karachi, Muzaffarabad, and Gilgit-Baltistan to train journalists associated with print, electronic and digital media on different topics mainly related to modern trends and challenges in journalism.

Earlier in June 2022, the Pakistan Information Center organized 16 workshops across the country on various topics to impart training to more than 700 journalists.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting's initiative related to the workshops received an overwhelming response from the journalist community and praise from their different organizations, including the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists.

Christmas celebrations

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: A ceremony was held at Drivers Licensing Authority, National Highways and Motorway Police to commemorate Christmas celebrations. Dr Shoaib Suddle Former IGP, President International Police Association and Head of one main Commission on Minorities was the chief guest. Asghar Yousaf Zai DIG Headquarters NHMP and Jamil Hashmi Former AIG logistics NHMP and chairman IPA Islamabad Region was the guests of honour.

Cheques were distributed among the Christian officers and officials of NHMP by the chief guest and the guests of honour. Hakim Khan DSP secretary IPA and Khalid Awan DSP



Finance secretary of the IPA Islamabad represented ICT Police while Farrukh Raza SP Rizwan Abbasi DSP and Malik Liaqat DSP represented the NHMP. Cake was cut by the chief

PIDE, Dr. Nadeem ul Haque. He said Pakistan had suffered a lot because of the energy crisis for many years. Circular debt has been with us for 15 years or so. Pakistan has incurred massive losses (a cumulated loss of more than Rs 5 trillion). It's time to take the matter seriously. This book is an effort from our side.

The Federal Minister for Energy (Power Division), Engineer Khurram-Dastgir Khan graced the occasion with his presence. In his remarks as a chief guest, he said, a policy has been adopted to generate electricity from cheaper sources and thousands of megawatts will be generated from solar power in different areas of the country.

"During the recent floods in the country, we did not let electricity become a problem and ensured power supply in all affected areas" he mentioned.

He said that in the future, all power-generating plants in the country would be planned on local fuel. The foreign exchange would be saved by reducing the consumption of imported oil, furnace oil, and coal.

Federal Minister said that it is a fact that the country has plenty of expensive electricity, but the government does not have plenty of cheap electricity. The challenges for us are many. All issues

PIDE Power Commission launched a book 'Power Sector: An Enigma with No Easy Solution'

City Report

ISLAMABAD :Pakistan's energy sector is going through a severe crisis. The circular debt of the power sector has escalated to Rs 2.44 trillion. To research and find solutions to the long-standing energy sector problems, the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) formed a 'PIDE Power Commission'. The Commission comprises power sector experts with decades-long experience in the sector. With their valuable contribution, PIDE has compiled a book titled 'Power Sector: An Enigma with No Easy Solution', funded by the RASTA programme. The book provides deep insights into various segments of the power sector and suggests workable, sustainable, and integrated solutions to the power sector woes.

The PIDE book "Power Sector: An Enigma with No Easy Solution" was launched today at the Planning Commission. The book is a combined effort of PIDE Power Commission members and staff at the PIDE. PIDE Power Commission comprises the most knowledgeable energy team ever assembled in the energy sector.

At the event, introductory remarks were given by the Vice Chancellor of



mentioned in this book are correct. We have to address these issues.

He said that the Billing issues would be addressed as a top priority to reduce losses in the power sector. In addition, adequate measures are being taken to prevent and catch electricity theft. This will reduce the burden on common consumers.

"At the governance level, significant steps are being taken to collect electricity bills. Because bills are not being paid on a large scale, but only electricity is demanded. In the next two weeks, the vacant vacancies will also be filled", he added

He further added that the government is working fast on eco-friendly and affordable power generation projects that will yield far-reaching results. He said that the Shanghai Electric Power Project of 1320MW would start production next month that would run on Thar coal and provide cheaper electricity.

The federal minister said that to check expensive rates, the government is trying to find cheaper resources that can generate electricity from Rs7 to Rs8 per unit to reduce the burden on the common man. To speed up the development journey, local coal, water, wind, and solar power generation projects are being promoted.

Earlier, a leading member of the PIDE Power Commission, Engr. Tahir Basharat Cheema presented the overview of the book.

The members of the PIDE Power Commission including Engr. Salis Usman, General Manager Power Planning, NTDC; Engr. Mujahid Islam Billah, Ex. CEO, FESCO; Mr. Basharat Ali, CFO, PEPCO; Engr. Sajad Haider Syed, Dy. Manager, NTDC; Engr. Masood Akhtar, Former GM, NPCC; Engr. Azhar Iqbal, Director Finance, PEPCO; Engr. Adnan Riaz Mir, GM, Monitoring, PP&MC; and Engr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, Ex GM, NPCC, were also present at the event.

Construction Work

ISLAMABAD: Labourers placing concrete blocks with the help of heavy machinery on a bridge during construction work of Bhara Kahu Bypass in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

PEC awarded re-accreditation to UAJK Eng. program

Spokesman Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Pakistan Engineering Council in its 108th EAB meeting held on 08 December, 2022 at PEC HQ, Islamabad, decided to award Level-II Re-Accreditation for the Engineering Programs (BS-Electrical Engineering & BS Software Engineering) being offered at the University of Azad Jammu & Kashmir-Muzaffarabad. Based on Satisfactory Assessment of Outcome-Based Assessment procedure B.Sc Software Engineering was granted re-Accreditation for two consecutive sessions 2018 & 2019, and B.Sc Electrical Engineering Re-Accreditation was granted and recommended for consecutive two Sessions 2018 and 2019.

Evidently, it's a great milestone achieved by the Faculty of Engineering and it was only possible under the visionary leadership of Prof. Dr. Muham-



mad Kaleem Abbasi, Vice Chancellor UAJK, continuous efforts of highly qualified faculty and facilities provided by the institution.

The accreditation under Washington Accord will

provide new opportunities to the engineering graduates of the institute and remove barriers in their international mobility for jobs and higher studies in technologically advanced countries. Moreover,

this level II re-accreditation will open new horizons for the engineering aspirants to pursue their studies in a prestigious institute like The University of Azad Jammu & Kashmir Muzaffarabad.

JICA extends its support to the flood affected districts of Punjab and KP



City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Pakistan Office extends its support to the flood affected districts of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Provinces by providing in total 9000 mosquito nets, 80,000 ORS and 400,000 water purification tablets. On the request of Government of Punjab and KP, the Government of Japan and JICA Pakistan Office decided to extend its support to the worst affected districts of both the provinces. In Punjab the target districts are Dera Ghazi Khan and Rawanpur. In KP, the target districts are Kohistan, DI Khan, Tank, Nowshera and Charsada. The expected beneficiaries of this support are around 80,000 families with pregnant or lactating women and children under five.

According to the Post Disaster Need Assessment (PDNA) on Pakistan Floods 2022, around 650,000 pregnant women are facing challenges in getting access to maternal services, nearly 4 million children lack access to health services and substantial increase of communicable diseases such as diarrhea, malaria, dengue and cholera has been observed. In this regard particular attention should be given pregnant and lactating women and children under five. JICA support will help these vulnerable segments of the society and will also help in reducing the outbreaks of communicable diseases.

NDMA issues weather outlook



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Apropos Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), a westerly wave has entered in Northwestern parts of Balochistan and is likely to grip upper and central parts of the country on 28th (night) and may persist till 29th December 2022. Under the influence of this weather system rainfall and snowfall (in hilly areas) is expected in parts of country including: Quetta, Zhob, Barkhan, Ziarat, Nokkundi, Dalbandin, Harani, Qillah Saifullah, Qillah Abdullah, Chaman, Pishin, Gwadar, Jiwani, Turbat, Panjgur, Kalat, Khuzdar, Sibbi, Naseerabad and Lasbella on 27th (evening/night) to 29th December. Moreover, light to moderate rain (with snowfall over the hills) is also expected in Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan, Chitral, Dir, Swat, Malakand, Kohistan, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur, Mardan, Peshawar, Charsadda, Bajaur, Kurram, Waziristan, Kohat, Sargodha, Islamabad, Murree, Galiyat and Pothohar region on 28th (night).

Islamic Calligraphy Exhibition held at Arts Council



News Desk

RAWALPINDI : Punjab Arts council organized an Islamic Calligraphy exhibition here on Tuesday, which was inaugurated by Member of National Assembly Qasim Khan Suri along with Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmad. More than seventy artworks of internationally renowned calligraphers Muhammad Ashraf Heera, Waseem Ashraf, Aslam Dogar and Muhammad Younis Rumi were displayed in the exhibition. While addressing the participants of the exhibition Chief guest Qasim Khan Suri said that Islamic calligraphy is our great cultural, religious and cultural heritage.

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The Sole Panacea: Health Levy



Prof. Fazal Tanha Gharshin

“Your health is your most priceless possession, take care of it.” Jack Lalani.

Health is wealth. We cannot enjoy wealth until we are in good health. A good health is ruined by practicing anti-health activities—smoking, drinking and taking drugs. Practicing anti-health activities is tantamount to falling into death trap. Human trafficking, smuggling, weapon manufacturing and drug trafficking are some of the lucrative businesses of the world. Drug trafficking is one of the biggest revenue source for war-involved countries. Around 350m people in the world are addicted to one or the other kind of drugs, and 9m of them die annually.

Smoking, drinking and taking such other fatal drugs cause for cancer, diabetes, stroke, heart diseases, lung diseases and asthma. In Pakistan, 14m people die of asthma; 33m of diabetes; 8.6m of lung diseases; 0.3m of heart attack; and 0.11m of cancer every year. Basically, USSR-AF-

ghan war and 9/11 introduced Pakistan with human trafficking, drugs, smuggling, crimes, lawlessness, and Kalashnikov culture. 90pc opium and heroin of the world are produced in Afghanistan. Pakistan spends 1.2pc of its GDP on health, but it should be increased to 5pc of its GDP according to the recommendations of World Health Organization (WHO). Drugs bring Rs615bn economic loss to the national exchequer every year; while only Rs150bn revenue is collected from tobacco industries.

Those who smoke, drink and take drugs, are irresponsible, senseless, hostile, quarrelsome, destructive, intolerant, misogynists and guzzlers in nature. Drugs destroy new generations, destruct social values, damage familial unity, ruin all-weather friendships, wreck sweet relations and put the soft fabric of a country in danger. Drugs and crimes have deep relation with each other. Suicide, murder, women harassment, child abuse, burglary, dacoity, street crimes, extremism, terrorism and treachery are some of the drug-induced crimes. Those who take drugs, have no self-esteem, honor and sanity. Bad company, unemployment, overworking, domestic strife, social problems, skyrocketing inflation, illiteracy, child labor, failure in examinations and unsuccessful love affairs are some prominent causes for drug addiction. Womenfolk also falls prey to drugs due to domestic violence, gender discrimina-

tion, divorce, defective health, gynecological diseases, venereal complexities, cultural conservative mores and sexual abuse. The prevalence of Western culture, night clubs, the misuse of social media and the lack of Islamic teachings also lure the youth for drug addiction. When people fail in fulfilling their responsibilities or cannot compete with contemporary issues, they seek refuge in fatal drugs. Wayne Gerard Trotman says: “Happiness is not to be found at the bottom of a bottle or from the tip of a needle; it is not to be found amidst a cloud of smoke or within a sugar-coated pill. If you look for it in these places, you will find naught but despair.” Drugs are the enemies of hopes, ambitions and creativity. Islam declares drinking as the mother of all evils.

In Pakistan, drugs are accessible at low price under the sun. To fight against the menace, Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan, Drug Courts, Anti Narcotic Force, Excise and Taxation, FIA, Police, and ASF are needed to be equipped to the teeth. There would be umpteen solutions to eradicate the evil, but heavy ‘health levy’ is a proven recipe in this respect. A health levy is an excise tax levied on goods and productions harmful to health, such as tobacco, cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, candies, fast foods, soft drinks, coffee, sugar, and gambling. Taking drugs is a sin; if we hate the sin, we should tax the sinners. In western world, health levy is called Sin Tax. Health levy is imposed to increase the price

in an effort to lower demand and find new sources of revenue. Health levy saves lives and economy; it makes drugs inaccessible and costly; it discourages the production of drugs; it lowers the number of sick persons and can lower burden on hospitals; and it protects our new generation from drug addiction. Health levy can restore the deteriorating plight of health and hospitals by the revenue extracted from tobacco companies. Health levy is a blessing that it cleanses a society from disability, aggressive behaviors, negative thinking, prevailing suicides, street crimes and fatal evils. Health levy nurtures healthy activities, creativity, civilization and sanity. Society for Protection of Rights of the Child (SPARC) has time and again urged the government to impose at least 30pc health tax on harmful tobacco products in the forthcoming annual budget, 2022-2023. Hotels, parks, playgrounds, public gatherings and transport terminals were already centers of drugs, but now the drug trade has spread to schools, colleges and universities too. Earlier, only unemployed and uneducated people used to suffer from drug addiction, but now drug addiction has become common among students, educated individuals and well-employed people as well. Pakistan should learn from the world as to how to get rid of drugs in the country. Indeed, health has not been an individual’s constitutional right so far. Like the right to education, the

right to health should be introduced in the country’s constitution.

Research shows that every country has some peculiar rules, regulations and taxes to fight against drugs. Similarly, Philippines has Sin Tax; France has Soda Tax; Mexico has Sugar Tax; Thailand has Excise Sugar Tax; UAE has Excise Tax on Sugary Drinks; Saudi Arabia has Sugary Drink Tax; and the UK has Sugar Tax in order to discourage drugs and make their population drug-free. In Pakistan, The Federal Health Levy Bill is still waiting for implementation since 2019. The bill aimed at collecting Rs38.25bn a year.

Although, there are political unwillingness, constitutional hurdles, pressure groups, drug mafias and international conspiracies in the way of implementing health levy in Pakistan, but it is hoped that the parliament, judiciary, media, law enforcement agencies and public would play a vital role in implementing the bill in letter and spirit. Pakistan cannot afford more drugs and more drug-affected population. Pakistan is already suffering from 8m drug addicts as per the UN report. Drug-addicted population cannot fight against illiteracy, overpopulation, global warming, economic crisis, social disorder and international challenges. The survival of Pakistan lies in drug-free and healthy population. Only healthy population can save Pakistan, and the road to good health goes through heavy health levy.

Retailers reject early closure of markets

The retailers in the country have rejected the government’s decision of early closure of markets, urging the authorities to allow businesses to remain open till 10pm, as the decision will badly affect business activities and thwart all efforts to improve the economic situation in the country.

Tariq Mehboob Rana, the Chairman of the Chainstore Association of Pakistan (CAP), which is the retail sector’s largest body in the country, while talking to the media here in his office on Tuesday, stated that recently announced decision by the Federal Cabinet is based on an unfounded claim of annual savings of Rs. 62 billion. Rather, this measure will counterproductively cause a significant plunge in revenues of up to 30% for retail businesses of which ‘Tier-I retailers’ are connected with the FBR-POS system. Such a sharp dip in sales will amount to several hundred billion rupees of national economic loss across the domestic economy and a proportionate drop in tax collection.

The CAP Chairman urged the government to resolve the issue of early market closure in consultation with the real stakeholders, appealing the authorities that the controversial decision of early market closure should not be implemented without due consultation with retailers.

He said the government should take the business community on board while having such trade related decision and also launch awareness campaign through print and electronic media regarding energy conservation.

He asked the government to have a proper cost-benefit analysis before pitching this ill-advised policy that favors none. The already staggering economy can’t only afford such unwise and unilateral decisions based on assumptions without taking the real stakeholders on board.

These views were expressed by CAP Chairman Tariq Mehboob Rana while speaking to the media regarding the latest consultations between the Federal and Provincial governments in a bid to conserve energy. “Why is the retail sector discriminately singled out regarding energy conservation? Rana questioned. How is the annual saving of Rs. 62 billion calculated if wholesale markets and smaller shops in secondary cities close soon after nightfall?”

CAP also suggested the implementation of Daylight savings in the country to make maximum use of natural light. Moreover, in major metropolises like London, New York, Singapore, and Dubai, high streets and shopping malls usually shut by 10 pm, except during festivals. For similar retail locations in Pakistan, the peak timings are between 7 and 10 pm, and forcing them to close earlier will put a big dent in their viability, additionally making many allied sectors and industries vulnerable. Chain stores do not intend to stay open till midnight or beyond because that is not desirable, especially when utility costs and operating expenses are already touching the sky and the retail trade is still recovering after the COVID-19’s inertia”, said the CAP Chairman.

He also highlighted the neglected factor that tens of thousands of families shut off their home lights and ACs/heaters when visiting shopping malls and major retail markets. The organized retail sector consumes less energy per person because of energy-efficient lighting and cooling/heating technologies. Therefore, any measure to excessively reduce retail hours is unlikely to result in any reduction in electricity consumption.

Record 100 million displaced in 2022, UN says in year-end review

Spokesman Research

A staggering 100 million people were forced to flee their homes in 2022 globally, the United Nations refugee agency said Monday, highlighting the continued UN help to those in need in a myriad of ways, and push for more legal, and safe ways for people to migrate.

That figure, which includes those fleeing conflict, violence, human rights violations and persecution, was announced by the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) in May and described by Filippo Grandi, the head of UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as a record that should never have been set.

The figure is up from some 90 million in 2021. Outbreaks of violence, or protracted conflicts, were key migration factors in many parts of the world, including Ukraine, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Syria, and Myanmar.

Thousands of desperate migrants looked to Europe as a preferred destination, putting their lives in the hands of human traffickers, and setting off on perilous journeys across the Mediterranean.

All too often these journeys ended in tragedy. It has now been more than seven years since the protracted conflict began in Yemen, between a Saudi-led pro-Government coalition and Houthis rebels, together with their allies, precipitating a humanitarian catastrophe that has forced more than 4.3 million people to leave their homes, the agency pointed out.

In May, The UN migration agency IOM and the European Humanitarian Aid wing (ECHO), announced that they were scaling up efforts to respond to the needs of more than 325,000 displaced by the conflict,

including migrants and the communities that host them.

“The situation is also getting worse for migrants in Yemen, especially women, who are living in dire conditions in Yemen with little control over their lives,” said Christa Rottensteiner, chief of the IOM Mission in the country.

Upon arrival, travellers face perilous journeys, with many heading north, en route to Gulf countries in search of work.

They are often forced to journey across local frontlines, at risk of suffering grave human rights violations, such as detention, inhumane conditions, exploitation, and forced transfers.

In Syria, war has now been upending lives for 11 years: nearly five million children born in Syria have never known the country at peace.

More than 80,000 Syrians call the huge Zaatari camp, in Jordan, home: many of them may have to remain outside of their country for the foreseeable future.

“Prospects for return, for the time being, do not look promising”, said Dominik Bartsch, UNHCR Representative in the Jordanian capital Amman, in July. “We are not seeing an environment in Syria that would be conducive to returns.”

Overall, Jordan hosts around 675,000 registered refugees from Syria, and most of them live in its towns and villages among local communities: only 17 per cent live in the two main refugee camps, Zaatari and Azraq.

More than five years ago, hundreds of thousands of Rohingya fled their homes in Myanmar, after a military campaign of persecution. Almost a million live in the vast Cox’s Bazar camp across the border in neighbouring Bangladesh.

In March, the UN launched its latest response plan, calling for more than \$881

million for the refugees, and neighbouring communities (more than half a million Bangladeshis), who are also highly reliant on aid.

This year, Rohingya continued to leave Myanmar, many attempting to cross the Andaman Sea, one of the deadliest water crossings in the world.

When more than a dozen migrants, including children, reportedly died at sea off the coast of Myanmar in May, Indrika Ratwatte, the UN refugee agency’s Asia and Pacific Director, said the tragedy demonstrated the sense of desperation being felt by Rohingya still in the country.

Ten months on from Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, which began on 24 February, and seems likely to continue into 2023, UN refugee agency figures show that, by December, more than 7.8 million Ukrainian refugees had been recorded across Europe.

Soon after the conflict began, UN agencies mobilized to provide support. UNHCR coordinated the refugee response together with sister UN agencies and partners, in support of national authorities.

In neighbouring Poland, for example, staff supported the authorities with registering refugees and providing them with accommodation and assistance.

Filippo Grandi praised European countries for their willingness to take in Ukrainians, the majority of whom sought shelter in neighbouring countries, but expressed his sorrow for the country and its citizens.

“Families have been senselessly ripped apart. Tragically, unless the war is stopped, the same will be true for many more,” he said.

However, this generosity of spirit was not always in evidence, when it came to some members of minority communities. In March, Grandi spoke out the discrimination, racism, and violence they faced.

Climate emergency



Pak energy sector needs up to \$155b investment until 2030: Report-I

Spokesman Report

Pakistan’s energy sector needs investments ranging from US\$62 billion to US\$155 billion until the 2030, according to a report titled “CAREC Energy Outlook 2030” recently released by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

“The energy investment needs until 2030 vary significantly across the three scenarios, with estimates ranging from \$62 billion to \$155 billion. The most significant investments are required in the power generation and energy efficiency sectors because of the rapidly growing demand and low baseline efficiency”, the report added.

One of the objectives of this report is to present a detailed overview and analysis of future energy market trends in Pakistan. For this purpose, three scenarios were developed considering the country’s regulatory framework, technological development, and consumer preferences.

The three scenarios include business-as-usual scenario (projected energy supply and demand, with current energy system and policies), government commitments scenario (projected energy supply and demand, considering individual priorities of the Government of Pakistan), and green growth scenario (projected energy supply and demand, considering enhanced energy transition and environmental policies).

In all three scenarios, the largest investments are needed for the development of the country’s hydropower capacity, ranging from \$11 billion to \$26 billion, the report added.

Moreover, in accordance with the country’s targets for nuclear power generation, investments needed for the expansion and rehabilitation of nuclear facilities account for nearly \$12 billion in the BAU scenario, \$21 billion in the Government Commitments scenario, and \$31 billion in the Green Growth scenario.

Generation rehabilitation and expansion are the

investment categories estimated to require the largest share of the total—ranging from 60% to 75%, or \$38 billion to \$115 billion, varying across scenarios.

The second biggest category is energy efficiency measures on the consumption side, requiring \$12 billion in the BAU scenario, almost \$21 billion in the Government Commitments scenario, and over \$26 billion in the Green Growth scenario.

The modernization and expansion of the power and gas grids, and the introduction of advanced metering equipment require investments of approximately \$13 billion to \$14 billion.

To further unlock Pakistan’s energy market for private companies, the report also proposed addressing several challenges.

It said one of the key challenges is the lack of clarity regarding the categorization of resources. For example, although hydropower is generally considered a renewable energy resource across the world, the Alternative and Renewable Energy Policy has categorized hydropower sources as non-renewables.

Considering the 30% renewable energy target in 2030, it would be hardly possible to reach this level only via wind and solar PV sources. If hydropower were to be included in the definition of renewable energy sources, it would make reaching the stated target and introducing stronger competition more realistic.

Another challenge is the lack of a detailed energy plan for the energy sector. Although the National Energy Policy has been approved, the corresponding division of roles in policymakers who would assign policy areas to all relevant stakeholders has not been completed yet.

In the current framework, sector-specific policies are developed by relevant authorities. For instance, the alternative energy policy is developed by the AEDB, whereas power generation policy is drafted by NEPRA. This not only creates uncertainty regarding the long-term direction of sector development, but also leads to unnecessary bureaucracy and delays in project implementation.

To be concluded

2023 Happy Chinese New Year events announced

By Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD : Cultural Office of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China and China Cultural Center in Pakistan organized a live 2023 Happy Chinese New Year Press Conference which was attended by the senior journalists from renowned Pakistani media groups, newspapers and TV Channels at the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Islamabad.

The 2023 Happy Chinese New Year Press Conference was held in Beijing. Gao Zheng, Director General, the International Exchange and Cooperation Bureau, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of China, vice-president and secretary-general of the China International Culture Association; Zhao Cong, head of China National Traditional Orchestra, and well-known pianist Lang, cultural ambassador of the 2023 Happy Chinese New Year, attended the conference, introducing the 2023 Happy Chinese New Year activities.

Gao said the Happy Chinese New Year, an annual brand activity held to celebrate Spring Festival, has taken off in recent years and is increasingly becoming an important platform for China to share Chinese culture with people from all over the world. The 2023 Happy Chinese New Year will be guided by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of China and hosted by China International Culture Association. Various online and offline activities, including music concerts, temple fairs and parades, will cover the globe.

The press conference also released the mascot of 2023 Happy Chinese New Year. As the coming Chinese New Year is the Year of the Rabbit, the mascot, designed by Central Academy of Fine Arts, is a cute rabbit with long ears based on the shape of a lucky bag.

China will be celebrating 2023 traditional Chinese New Year, generally known as "Chinese Spring Festival" on Sunday, January 22nd, 2023 and lasting until February 9th,



Photos: Online by Sultan Bashir

2023. It is one of the most important and biggest festivals in traditional Chinese culture, and one of the longest holidays, lasting up to 7 days.

Chinese New Year is celebrated in China as well as neighboring countries like Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, South Korea, and all around the world where there are Chinese communities. In Pakistan, there are thousands of Chinese who have lived there for various periods of time. They will also be celebrating the festival in its full cultural and traditional spirit. Many similarities exist between Chinese New Year and Pakistan's traditional "Eid" Festival. Both are based on the lunar calendar and are one of the most important and biggest festivals in their societies and both are family-centric festivals.

Mr. Xing Lijun, the Second Secretary, the Cultural Office of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Pakistan briefed the Pakistani media about 2023 Happy Chinese New Year and upcoming events in connection with the celebration of Chinese Spring Festival. He also highlighted the Pak China Cultural exchange programs with Pakistani journalist's community. He informed that the year 2023 is a year of Rabbit as per Chinese Lunar calendar. Furthermore, Xing said the cultural bonds existing between the two nations are strong enough to support our everlasting friendship. This relationship will expand into all domains of Pakistani life and grow further with the passing of each day. The media interaction was ended by the question answer session.

The Cultural office of the Embassy of China People's Republic of China and China Cultural Center in Pakistan will comprehensively utilize all the human resources in the future to showcase Chinese history, culture and tourism will continue to make relentless efforts for a new chapter of China-Pakistan friendship. For more details please follow the official Facebook, WeChat and Twitter accounts of the Embassy of China and China Cultural Center in Pakistan.

Chinese New Year 2023: Year of the Rabbit



Chinese New Year 2023 will fall on Sunday, January 22nd, 2023, starting a year of the Rabbit. As a public holiday, Chinese people will get 7 days off from work from January 21st to January 27th in 2023.

The Chinese zodiac gives each year an animal sign.

Chinese New Year 2023 is a Year of the Rabbit, more specifically, Water Rabbit, starting from January 22nd, 2023, and lasting until February 9th, 2024.

Recent/upcoming years of the Rabbit are 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1999, 2011, 2023, and 2035. If you were born in one of the years, then you are a Rabbit. You will experience your zodiac birth sign year (benmingnian) in 2023, which is considered bad luck.

The 12 animals of the Chinese zodiac are Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, and Pig.

You can use our free Chinese zodiac sign calculator tool to find your zodiac animal sign and check your horoscope in 2023 on our page Chinese zodiac.

The date is decided by the Chinese Lunar Calendar, which is based on the cycles of the moon and sun and is generally 21-51 days behind the Gregorian (internationally-used) calendar.



day, usually the second after the winter solstice.

China's public holiday for Lunar New Year is 7 days, from Chinese New Year's Eve to the sixth day of the lunar calendar new year.

Offices, banks, factories, shops, and most non-essential services will close doors for a week's holiday. Hotels and large retail outlets stay open and may even be busier than usual! School holidays are four weeks long and migrant workers abandon their factory and construction jobs for weeks to return home.

Holidays in Hong Kong, Macao, and other Asian countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, and Korea are 1 to 3 days.

How Long is Chinese New Year 2023?

Celebrations of Chinese New Year traditionally last for 16 days, starting from Chinese New Year's Eve to the Lantern Festival. The most notable dates of the Lunar New Year 2023 are these three days:

Chinese New Year's Eve on January 21st, 2023
Chinese New Year's Day on January



Solar Date (2023)	Lunar Date	Title	Purpose / Meaning
Jan. 21st	12th month, 30th day 除夕 (Chúxì)	New Year's Eve (除夕 Chúxì)	The most important celebration, includes the family reunion dinner, and staying up until midnight.
Jan. 22nd	1st month, 1st day 初一 (Chūyī)	New Year's Day 初一 (Chūyī)	A day for visiting/greeting family and relatives, giving presents, and visiting ancestors' graves.
Jan. 23rd	1st month, 2nd day 初二 (Chū'èr)	In-Law's Day (迎婿日 Yíngxùrì, or 开年 Kāinián)	Married women visit their parents with their husbands and children.
Jan. 24th	1st month, 3rd day 初三 (Chūsān)	Day of the Rat (鼠日 Shǔrì)	An ominous day, common to stay at home and rest with family, play games.
Jan. 25th	1st month, 4th day 初四 (Chūsì)	Day of the Sheep (羊日 Yángri)	An auspicious day, for prayer and giving offerings, or going to temples or fortune-tellers.
Jan. 26th	1st month, 5th day 初五 (Chūwǔ)	Break Five (破五 Pòwǔ)	Commonly accepted as the day when taboos (from previous days) can be broken.
Jan. 27th	1st month, 6th day 初六 (Chūliù)	Day of the Horse (马日 Mǎrì)	Believed to be the best day to get rid of old, unwanted things. Also an acceptable day to resume labor.
Jan. 28th	1st month, 7th day 初七 (Chūqī)	Day of Mankind (人日 Rénrì)	Believed to be the day people were created. Encouraged to spend out in nature.
Jan. 29th	1st month, 8th day 初八 (Chūbā)	Day of the Grain (谷日 Gǔrì)	Good weather on this day will symbolize good crops for the year. Many families will have a second 'mini' reunion dinner.
Jan. 30th	1st month, 9th day 初九 (Chūjiǔ)	Providence Health (天公生 Tiāngōngshēng)	The Jade Emperor's birthday, giving offerings, lighting incense, and setting off firecrackers.
Jan. 31st	1st month, 10th day 初十 (Chūshí)	Stone Festival (石头节 Shítóujié)	The birthday of the 'god stone', similar to the previous day's rituals.
Feb. 1st	1st month, 11th day 初十一 (Chūshíyī)	Son-in-Law Day (子婿日 Zǐxùrì)	Fathers are expected to 'entertain' or treat their sons-in-law on this day.
Feb. 2nd - 4th	1st month, 12th - 14th day 初十二-初十四 (Chūshí'èr-Chūshísi)	Lantern Day Preparations	Preparations for the lantern festival: cooking, making lanterns, etc.
Feb. 5th	1st month, 15th day 初十五 (Chūshíwǔ)	Lantern Festival (元宵节 Yuánxiānjié)	Marks the end of the festival. Lanterns are lit and hung or flown, people watch dragon dances in the streets, and children answer lantern riddles.

22nd, 2023 5th, 2023
The Lantern Festival on February Each day of the 16-day long festival has a name, and usually an assigned purpose or meaning. Below is a table of all the important dates and their meanings.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index

Current	Prev. Close
39,802.91	40,155.16
Day's High	Day's Low:
40,315.77	39,705.66
Index Value	Change
4,833,482,262	-352.25
Percentage	Time
-0.88%	27 Dec, 2022 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index

Index Value	Change
7,473.01	+3.73
Percentage	Time
+0.050%	23 Dec, 12:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average

Index Value	Change
33,347.16	+143.23
Percentage	Time
+0.43%	27 Dec, 12:06 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average

Index Value	Change
26,447.87	+42.00
Percentage	Time
+42.00	27 Dec, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	153.5	154.75
Bahrain Dinar	602.02	606.52
Canadian Dollar	166.62	167.97
China Yuan	32.51	32.76
Danish Krone	32.35	32.7
Euro	260.5	263.1
Hong Kong Dollar	28.99	29.34
Indian Rupee	2.72	2.8
Japanese Yen	2.25	2.29
Kuwaiti Dinar	739	744
Malaysian Ringgit	50.95	51.4
New Zealand \$	143.33	144.53
Norwegians Krone	22.43	22.73
Omani Riyal	588.08	592.58
Qatari Riyal	61.75	62.25
Saudi Riyal	64.8	65.4
Singapore Dollar	167.97	169.27
Swedish Korona	21.78	22.08
Swiss Franc	242.7	244.45
Thai Bhat	6.52	6.62
U.A.E Dirham	68.6	69.2
UK Pound Sterling	297.5	300.5
US Dollar	232.7	234.9

NEPRA awards Karot Hydropower & Three Gorges for outstanding performance

Bureau Report

KARACHI : National Electric and Power Regulatory Authority awarded Karot Hydropower Project and Three Gorges Wind Farm as "Outstanding Performers". NEPRA organized the "HSE Recognition and Awards Distribution Ceremony 2022" on Friday December 23, 2022 at the NEPRA Tower, Islamabad. This activity was part of its vision "Power with Safety".

Based on the NEPRAs Assessment criteria, Three Gorges Wind Farm (TGW) and Karot Power Company Limited (KPCL) were evaluated as "Outstanding Performers". The outstanding performance refers to the HSE Management System of TGW and KPCL as being adequate, well balanced, and properly maintained to ensure effective readiness and preparedness to manage potential risks to consumers, employees, and contractors.

NEPRA-Pakistan's Power Sector Regu-



lator evaluated HSE Performance of its licensees for the year 2022 by reviewing their operational Health, Safety and Envi-

ronment Management System. The performance evaluation was based on sample documents, records and evidence submitted

by Licensees against the twenty common "Assessment Categories" set by NEPRA.

Chairman NEPRA, Mr. Farooqi in his opening remarks highlighted the significance of NEPRA's drive of "Power with Safety" and stressed that HSE issues are at the forefront of his priorities.

He also said that Pakistan was in a comfortable situation due to power projects setup under the CPEC.

Ambassador of P.R of China, Nong Rong stated that upto now 11 energy projects have been setup under the CPEC, which include Hydro, solar, wind and coal projects. He said that the Karot Hydropower Project is expected to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 3.5 million tons each year.

The award for TGW was received by Mr. Xing Kan Project Manager (CTGO), Bilal Saqib HSE Manager CTGO and the award for KPCL was received by Mr. Naeem Akhtar General Manager HSE (CSAIL) and Mr. Aftab Alam Senior Manager HSE (KPCL).

Visa and Khazana Enterprise sign MoU

Spokesman Report

LAHORE : Visa (NYSE: V), the world's leader in digital payments, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Khazana Enterprise, a cloud-native technology provider for Government of Pakistan, in a strategic step towards driving digital transformation across the government sector in support of Pakistan's cashless future agenda.

The MoU included a number of offerings including best practices between Visa and Khazana, which is serving leading government technology provider and various other government organisations for the provision of products and services across government entities, to boost the digitization of government collection and disbursement processes.

Paving the way for long-term cooperation, the MoU brings together Visa's network of networks strategy and Khazana Enterprise's technological innovation to help empower government entities, small and medium businesses (SMBs), fuelling economic growth with the power of digital payments. The MoU is set to reinforce the collective objectives of both Visa and Khazana, expanding access to financial tools and knowledge for the advancement of financial inclusion.



Leila Serhan, Visa's Senior Vice President and Group Country Manager for North Africa, Levant and Pakistan said: "At Visa, we support companies that develop solutions to power seamless money movement."

Svyatoslav Senyuta, Head of Visa Government Solutions, CEMEA said: "eGovernment platforms are simplifying how citizens and businesses interact with many government departments and ministries."

Shafique U Rehman, Director and Chief Revenue Officer said: "Leveraging

public-private partnerships to bring government payments into the digital age, Visa and Khazana Enterprise aim to set the stage for electronic disbursements, facilitating making or receiving payments to or from the government."

Ahsan Rasheed Khan, Khazana Enterprise's Chief Commercial Officer said: "We are excited to start this journey with Visa and lay the foundation step in our partnership for automating government-based payments."

BMP condemns the unconstitutional demands of the opposition group

News Desk

LAHORE: An important meeting of the Core Committee of the Businessmen Panel (BMP) was held under the chairmanship of BMP Chairman, Mian Anjum Nisar. A large number of core committee members participated in the meeting. The participants of the meeting appreciated the amendment made in the Trade Act during the joint session of the parliament, under the unanimous approval for amending the Trade Act and Rules; and, enhance the tenure from one year to two years of all trade bodies, associations, chambers and especially the officials of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI).

Speaking on this occasion, Chairman Businessmen Panel,

Mian Anjum Nisar, said that all the industrial and commercial organizations of the country, including FPCCI, termed this decision of the parliament as a historic decision and said that the said amendment is an economic development in the right direction; and, will prove to be a milestone in terms of policy advocacy for industrial and commercial organizations.

During the meeting, the participants condemned and rejected the recent unconstitutional & unlawful statement of the chairman of their rival group, United Business Group (UBG), asking the Director General Trade Organizations to act against the constitution of Pakistan for appointment of an administrator in FPCCI after December 31, 2022 - the apex & the largest organization of Pakistan's business community.

Pakistan, Uzbekistan to strengthen cooperation in the field of plant quarantine

Commerce Reporter

ISLAMABAD : Ministry of National Food Security and Research and Agency of the Plant Protection and Quarantine of the Republic of Uzbekistan have agreed to further strengthen cooperation in the field of plant quarantine. In this regard, a ceremony was held at the ministry.

Ibrohim Ergashev, Director General Agency of the Plant Protection and Quarantine of the Republic of Uzbekistan while representing the Uzbek side agreed to improve mechanisms of pest control measures between the two countries.

National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) of the both countries will also share experience through seminars and trainings, and increase coordination on the export consignments between the two countries. The measures will help in pest control and mitigating pests' hazards and damages.

Under the agreement, Ministry of National Food Security and Research will work with the Agency of the Plant Protection and Quarantine of the Republic of Uzbekistan to create an enabling environment for enhancing the trade volume



of plants and plant products between the countries.

During the ceremony, parties expressed their appreciation that Pakistan has granted market access to Uzbek pomegranate, plum, persimmon, fig, grapes, and Uzbekistan has granted market access to Pakistani mango and onion.

Moreover, experts of Pakistan will visit Uzbekistan for on-spot inspection of

phytosanitary system, production sites, processing establishments and packing houses.

The ceremony was also attended by Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Tariq Bashir Cheema, Secretary National Food Security and Research Zafar Hassan and Director Technical Quarantine Department of Plant Protection Muhammad Shahzad Sohail.

RCCI inks MOU with PITB for Job Centre in Punjab Province



Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: RCCI inked an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) on the Establishment of Job Centre in Punjab Province. Job Center in Punjab Province, a collaborative effort of PITB, Labor & Human Resource Department (L&HRD) and the Government of Punjab, is being deployed at divisional and district levels across Punjab. The initiative, though in its initial stage, has already registered 20,000 workers.

President RCCI Saqib Rafiq, Senior Vice President Muhammad Hamza Sarosh and Vice President Faisal Shahzad along with Senior Programme Manager Shams ul Islam, Programme Manager Syed Umar Saeed, attended the signing ceremony.

President ICCI pays tributes to the injured policemen during visit to PIMS

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD :Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry along with a delegation visited Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) to enquire about the health of ASI Hassan Raza and Constable Muhammad Hanif who got injured during a suicide blast in I-10/4, Islamabad on last Friday in which one policeman was also martyred. Engr. Muhammad Azhar ul Islam Zafar Vice President ICCI, Khalid Chaudhry former Senior Vice President, Saifur Rehman Khan former Vice

President, Dildar Abbasi, Zareef Khan and others were in the delegation. Addl/SP (Ops) Iqbal Khan was also present at the occasion.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari paid tributes to the courage and valour of the injured police personnel who endangered their lives to save the city from any big catastrophe. He said that the business community and the citizens feel proud over the excellent performance of police personnel who are ever ready to sacrifice their lives in the line of their duty to protect others. He said that the role of such police persons creates a sense of confidence in the business community

and the citizens.

ICCI President said the Islamabad police has issued a special plan to introduce 25 temporary check posts in the city for enhancing security measures. However, he said that the coverage of safe city cameras should be further increased in the federal capital to boost the security situation in the federal capital. He said that Pakistan needs a peaceful environment to promote business and investment activities for which taking measures to further improve security is the key requirement. He assured that the business community will always cooperate with the

police force in its endeavours to further improve the security situation in the city.

Engr. Muhammad Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI also appreciated the bravery and courage of injured police personnel and said that their commitment towards their duty is highly appreciable. He said that such brave police persons are a source of pride for the nation.

Addl/SP (Ops) Iqbal Khan thanked the ICCI delegation for visiting PIMS to enquire about the health of injured police personnel, which was a source of encouragement for them.



Gardner top-ranked all-rounder in MRF Tyres ICC Women's T20I Player Rankings

Sports Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Australia all-rounder Ashleigh Gardner has grabbed the No.1 position for all-rounders in the latest MRF Tyres ICC Women's T20I Player Rankings after a match-winning performance in the final T20I of the five-match series against India that her team won 4-1.

Gardner, who was named Player of the Match after her effort of 66 not out off 32 balls and a haul of two for 20, has topped the all-rounders' list for the first time after moving up three spots. She has overtaken West Indies captain Hayley Matthews, India's Deepti Sharma and New Zealand captain Sophie Devine, who was at the top through the past year.

Gardner, who finished the series with 115 runs and seven wickets, is also up two



places to a career-best seventh position among batters and progressed three plac-

es to a career-best 14th among bowlers in the latest weekly update that also consid-

ers performances in the last match of the West Indies-England series.

Deepti Sharma's 34-ball 53 against Australia sees her move up three places to 29th in the batting rankings while England's Nat Sciver and India's Richa Ghosh have moved up one place each to occupy 15th and 39th positions, respectively. Grace Harris's unbeaten 64 off 35 deliveries in Mumbai has lifted her 33 places to 61st position.

In the bowling rankings, England seamer Freya Davies has moved up 23 places to 26th position after a haul of three for two against the West Indies while Australia's Darcie Brown is up six places to joint-33rd in the list. England's Issy Wong (up 25 places to 77th) and Windies off-spinner Karishma Ramharack (up five places to 80th) are others to make notable gains.

The PCB is keen to bring Mickey Arthur back as head coach of the Pakistan men's team

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The PCB is keen to bring Mickey Arthur back as head coach of the Pakistan men's team, three years after he was refused a contract extension. ESPNcricinfo has learnt that current head coach Saqlain Mushtaq doesn't want an extension when his contract ends next month, and the PCB also wants to move on from him.

The PCB's new management committee, which took charge last week, has decided to go back to Arthur, with the committee head Najam Sethi confirming that he has been in touch with Arthur. Arthur was Pakistan's coach between 2016 and 2019; they won the 2017 Champions Trophy and rose to No.



1 in ICC T20I team rankings during his tenure.

He was removed following Pakistan's fifth-place finish at the 2019 ODI World Cup, and Misbah-ul-Haq had been given the dual role of head coach and chief selector.

Change in the air as PCB goes back to pre-2019 plans. Sethi's 14-member committee, appointed

by current prime minister Shahbaz Sharif, has disbanded all bodies set up after the 2019 rejig to the PCB's constitution, initiated by then prime minister Imran Khan and implemented by Ehsan Mani. That aside, Ramiz Raja has been removed as the PCB's chair, and Mohammad Wasim has been replaced as chief selector in an inter-

im capacity by Shahid Afridi.

It is learnt that one of the key reasons for the PCB looking at Arthur is his familiarity with Pakistan cricket and many of the current top-level cricketers. And, of course, with Sethi. Arthur was signed-on in 2016 by Sethi during his previous term as the PCB chief. Arthur is currently employed as head coach at Derbyshire in the English county circuit, the contract lasting till the end of the 2025 season.

After his stint with Pakistan ended, Arthur was signed by Sri Lanka on a two-year deal, which was not extended. He moved to Derbyshire, where he has worked with Shan Masood, among others, at length.

Early Years and Lower Primary's Annual Sports Day



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Lower Primary's Annual Sports Day. The Sesame Street Characters-themed colourful decorations enhanced the splendour of the venue.

The activity was a mashup of academic and extracurricular pursuits. The march past presentation, a remarkable display of students' and teachers' cooperation, coordination and teamwork, kicked off the day.

The event was hosted by the members of Eloquent Orators Club, who were well appreciated for their outstanding speaking abilities.

Fatima Tu Zahra, a youthful and curious reporter from grade 2 Rose at HSCR, brought beauty to the Skill and Tell Club's presentation through her extempore lively reporting.

Energizing and vibrant displays of songs of Son and Aerobics club were much appreciated by the parents. Adding to the spirit were mood boosting melodious performances by the school choir which kept the students and audience's spirits high.

The students showcased their strength and skills as they competed in variety of races with fun obstacles and interesting props including hoola-hoop rings, flower pots, posters, monster boxes and much more.

The winners were awarded with medals and yummy treats after the races.

Playing Snooker

RAWALPINDI: Youngsters are playing Snooker alongside a road at Khayaban Sir Syed area, in the city.



Photo: Online

Central Punjab vs Southern Punjab

Abid Ali's third century gives Central Punjab another win in CA Challenge

Sports Reporter

LAHORE: Central Punjab are all set to clinch the title of the Cricket Associations Challenge (One-Day event) as they continue to top the points table after the conclusion of ninth-round matches of the tournament. In today's nine-round match, Central Punjab defeated Southern Punjab by 64 runs on the back of the century from their captain Abid Ali.

In other ninth-round fixtures, Sindh defeated Balochistan by two wickets, while Khyber Pakhtunkhwa overcame Northern by six wickets.

Central Punjab v Southern Punjab

After being asked to bat first, Central Punjab posted 313 for five in 50 overs. Test cricketer and Central Punjab's skipper Abid Ali coming to bat at number three scored a 118-ball 105, which included six fours and two sixes. He and opening batter Imran Dogar added 163 runs for the second wicket after Shawaiz Irfan's departure for 11 with 23 runs on the board. Fahad

Munir was other notable contributor with the bat, scoring 47 not out off 43 balls, smashing three fours and one six.

In return, Southern Punjab were bundled out for 249 in the 46th over. Waqar Hussain (56, 42b, 10x4) and Mohammad Basit (51, 66b, 4x4, 1x6) scored half-centuries in the losing cause.

Central Punjab's Mohammad Waleed bagged four wickets for 49 runs in 9.4 overs. Spinners Ahmed Safi Abdullah and Ali Asfand bagged two wickets each.

Balochistan v Sindh

At the Landi Gymkhana Ground, opting to bat first, Balochistan were dismissed for 174 in the 43rd over. Azeem Ghuman top-scored for his side with a 79-ball 42, striking two fours. Sindh's Asad Malik grabbed four wickets, while Mohammad Ali Khan and Mohammad Taha took two wickets apiece.

In return, Sindh achieved the target in the 48th over with two wickets in hand. Rameez Aziz returned unbeaten

on 43 off 86 balls, hitting three fours. Balochistan's Zainullah bagged five wickets for 40 from 10 overs, while Jalat Khan took two for 31.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa v Northern

At the KCCA Stadium, Northern after being put into bat scored 240 for seven in 50 overs. Aqib Shah coming to bat at number five top-scored for his side, scoring an unbeaten 111 from 129 balls, hitting 10 fours. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Ahmed Khan took three wickets for 57, while Maaz Sadaqat clinched two scalps.

In reply, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chased down the target for the loss of four wickets in the 46th over. Opening batter Maaz top-scored for his side with a 102-ball 88, smashing 10 fours. Haseeb Khan scored 62 off 87 balls, laced with four fours and one six. The pair added 130 runs for the second wicket.

Mehran Ibrahim returned undefeated on 41 off 44 balls and knitted an unbroken partnership of 54 runs for the 107th wicket with Mohammad

Mohsin Khan (25 not out, 22b, 2x4, 1x6).

Scores in brief:

Central Punjab beat Southern Punjab by 64 runs

Central Punjab 313-5, 50 overs (Abid Ali 105, Imran Dogar 98, Fahad Munir 47 not out)

Southern Punjab 249 all out, 45.4 overs (Waqar Hussain 56, Mohammad Basit 51; Mohammad Waheed 4-49, Ahmed Safi Abdullah 2-39, Ali Asfand 2-42)

Sindh beat Balochistan by two wickets

Balochistan 174 all out, 42.5 overs (Muhammad Azeem Ghuman 42; Asad Malik 4-37, Mohammad Ali Khan 2-28, Mohammad Taha 2-41)

Sindh 178-8, 47.2 overs (Rameez Aziz 43 not out; Zainullah 5-40, Jalat Khan 2-31)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa beat Northern by six wickets

Northern 240-7, 50 overs (Aqib Shah 111 not out, Mohammad Hammad 41, Mohammad Huraira



37; Ahmed Khan 3-57, Maaz Sadaqat 2-31) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 244-4, 46 overs (Maaz Sadaqat 88, Haseeb Khan 62, Mehran Ibrahim 41 not out; Aqib Liaqat 2-65)

British boxer Amir Khan called on Director General Sports Punjab



Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: British boxer Amir Khan called on Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi on Tuesday and discussed various aspects for setting up a boxing academy in Nishter Park Sports Complex.

Director Admin Syed Umair Hassan and other top officials were also present on this occasion.

British boxer Amir Khan, who also had a meeting with Punjab Chief Minister Ch Pervaiz Elahi in the morning, also visited different sports venues of Nishter Park Sports Complex. Amir Khan was accompanied by Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi and other officials during his visit.

Talking to media Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi said Pakistan has immense boxing talent and that's why we are going to establish a world level boxing academy to polish this valuable talent. "British boxer Amir Khan will help us in coaching and training these talented boxers".

Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi further said that Punjab Chief Minister Ch Pervaiz Elahi has issued directions to discuss and finalise all necessary details with Amir Khan for the establishment of a world level boxing academy in Nishter Park Sports Complex.

In his media talk, boxer Amir Khan said that he had a very fruitful meeting with Punjab Chief Minister Ch Pervaiz Elahi, who expressed his keenness for the promotion of boxing and setting up of a top level academy. "We are looking for a suitable place for a Boxing Arena in Nishter Park Sports Complex. Lahore has a big population and there must be a world level boxing academy to nurture the raw boxing talent," he added.

Amir said that he will train Pakistan's young amateur boxers at the international standard academy. "Pakistan has great potential in boxing," he added.

The 3rd National Athletes Forum organized by the Athletes Commission of Pakistan



Sports Report

LAHORE: The last day of the event started with an informative presentation of the Athletes Rights and Responsibility by Ms. Sumera Sattar, Executive Member POA, Mr. Muhammad Inam, Chair POA Athletes Commission and Ms. Asma Akram, Young Olympic Ambassador. Mr. Hamdan Nazir, MEMOSIAN, gave on Non-accidental Violence in Sports. Mr. Manzoor ul Hasan, Olympian and Col (R) Saeed Khan interacted with the athletes.

Dr. Bushra Mirza, Vice Chancellor Lahore College for Women University, guest of honor, thanked the POA for this collaboration and said we must take further steps for empowering athletes. She said that LCWU is looking forward to work with POA for this national cause.

Mr. Tayyab Ikram, President FIH, graced the occasion as Chief Guest. Addressing the athletes and students, he said that you (athletes) have huge potential to benefit from their hard work and it is in that process that the athletes empower themselves not only for their own good but also for the social welfare. President POA, Lt Gen (R) Syed Arif Hasan thanked the management of Lahore College for Women University for partnering with the POA for this event. He said that that all the stakeholders should collaborate to work together to support national heroes.

Mr. Muhammad Inam Butt Chairman Athletes Commission of Pakistan Olympic Association expressed his gratitude to all the participants of the forum and assured the athletes that the Athlete Commission would organize more opportunities for the athletes to learn and participate in the leadership processes as they (athletes) will be taking over the responsibility of future leaders.