



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



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Pervaiz Ashraf invites PTI members to become part of NA, play their constitutional role

National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf on Thursday invited the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) members to again become part of the National Assembly and play their constitutional role in the larger national interest.



'Poor editing job'—Zulfi Bukhari reacts to 'leaked intimate talk with Bushra Bibi'

Zulfi Bukhari, the former SA to PM, has rejected a recent audio leak allegedly featuring his conversation with PTI chief's wife Bushra Bibi as fake. A day earlier, the audio clip surfaced on social media wherein Bushra Bibi asked the PTI leader about selling some watches of Imran Khan. Later, they can be heard engaging in an intimate discussion and at one point, Zulfi purportedly shared his feelings of being lonely.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Jamadi-us-Sani 6, Friday, December 30, 2022

www.dailyspokesman.net

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Daily Spokesman Vol: 15, Issue: 266

Price Rs. 25.00 Pages 8

Rehabilitation of flood victims

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on Thursday regarding Resilient Pakistan Conference to be held next month in Geneva, Switzerland.



Photo: PID

Rehabilitation of flood-hit population a big challenge: PM

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said rehabilitation of flood victims and the reconstruction of damaged infrastructure was a big challenge for a developing country like Pakistan.

the Resilient Pakistan Conference to be held in Geneva next month. Shehbaz Sharif said hundreds of lives and billions of dollars had been lost this year due to flash floods in Pakistan. He vowed to make every possible effort to accommodate the flood-struck population.

At the climate change conference in Geneva, he said, the government would convey to the world the plight of Pakistan's flood-hit people. The proposals and detailed plan of action regarding the conference were presented before the meeting. The meeting was informed

that the participation of friendly countries as well as development partners and international financial institutions was also expected in the conference. The prime minister directed to finalize the action plan of the conference on priority basis.

Federal Ministers including Ishaq Dar, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Ahsan Iqbal, Sherry Rehman, Marriyum Aurangzeb, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar, Special Assistants Syed Tariq Fatemi, Jahanzeb Khan, Syed Fahd Hussain and concerned senior officials were present. Agencies

President calls for a consensus-based nationwide energy conservation strategy

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday called for launching a consensus-based nationwide, comprehensive and all-encompassing electricity, gas and water conservation strategy to conserve precious national resources and divert them for the welfare and prosperity of the people. The president, during a meeting on energy conservation at Aiwana-e-Sadr, underscored that a comprehensive policy and programme should be prepared after consulting all stakeholders, including the provinces, besides launching an awareness campaign across the country to conserve electricity, gas, and water. Federal Minister for Finance

and Revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Minister for Defence, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Minister for Economic Affairs, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Minister for Industries and Production, Syed Murtaza Mahmud, Federal Minister for Energy, Engr. Khurram Dastgir Khan, Minister of State for Petroleum, Musadik Masood Malik, and senior officials of the Power, Finance, and Industries Division, and National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (NEECA), attended the meeting. The president said that there was a need to generate out-of-the-box ideas, absorb creative ideas, benchmark best practices around the world, develop policies and strategies around them and ensure their implementation on a timeline basis



to achieve the desired objectives in the shortest possible timeframe. "Pakistan can make rapid and accelerated progress in all sectors provided it enhanced and accelerated the implementation speed on initiatives of national importance, following a strict timeline while maintaining quality and ensuring desired outputs and outcomes," he observed. President Alvi said that the Islamic teachings stressed the conservation of resources even if there was an abundance of them. The president appreciated the idea to manage the cool load during summers which could be reduced

substantially from approximately 12700 MW by eliminating the use of inefficient fans of 120 W and replacing them with efficient fans of 60-80 W. He said that a comprehensive building plan for all houses, public places and buildings should be prepared which should compulsorily include the design and selection of construction materials to make all buildings energy efficient, and cost-effective. He proposed that a model of energy-efficient building codes with in-built mechanisms to harvest and harness the rainwater, solarize rooftops and roof-top gardening may first be prepared, tested, and then replicated by all the provinces after achieving consensus to save precious energy resources.

Amnesty scheme repealed for overstaying foreigners in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: The Amnesty scheme for foreigners staying over an extended period in Pakistan will be expired on December 31, 2022. According to the notification, issued by the Ministry of Interior on Thursday, it had directed the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) to stop extending the amnesty scheme to the said individuals residing in Pakistan after the expiry of the due date, said a press release. Agencies

PTI set to take issue of tanking economy to people: Fawad Ch

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) senior vice president Fawad Chaudhry said on Thursday the party would start a protest movement against the incumbent government for failing to improve economy on Friday. Speaking to media outside PTI chief Imran Khan's residence at Zameen Park, he claimed that the protest would continue until the current government was sent packing. Imran Khan, he said, would join the movement three weeks later. "PTI MNAs and MPAs will also lead the movement in their constituencies," he added. He said the countrywide protest



would be started against inflation and tanking economy. "A protest will be staged in Islamabad for the release of Azam Swati on Monday," he added. He alleged that the judge who reserved the verdict in Azam Swati's case had been transferred. Mr Chaudhry questioned whether the Speaker asked to verify the resignations of 11 PTI MNAs. "The PTI will pursue the matter in the

Supreme Court as the Speaker is delaying the acceptance of resignations," he added. He said a technocratic set-up would not work in the country, adding that the only solution to the country's woes was fresh election. Earlier, the PTI discussed the possibility of dissolution of Punjab and KP assemblies besides other matters at a session attended by senior party leaders and senators. Besides briefing Imran Khan over the proceedings in the Senate, the session also deliberated on the matters pertaining to the rejection of resignations of the PTI MNAs by National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf and the talks of installing a technocratic set-up in the country.

Medicinal products' import decreases by 70.20% in 5 months

ISLAMABAD: The import of medicinal products witnessed a decline of 70.20 percent during the first five months of the current fiscal year (2022-23) as compared to the corresponding period of last year. Pakistan imported medicinal products worth \$632.828 million from July-November (2022-23) as compared to the imports of \$2123.489 million from July-November (2021-22), according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

Ishaq Dar directs for finalizing report to settle gas circular debt issue in three days



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, on Thursday, directed the committee constituted for the settlement of circular debt in the gas sector to finalize their report within three working days to settle the said issue. He was chairing a meeting on reforms in Energy Sector, here at the finance division. Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Finance Tariq Bajwa, Ashfaq Yousuf Tola, Secretary of Finance, and senior officers from the finance and petroleum Division attended the meeting. The committee briefed the meeting on the issue of circular debt in the gas sector and presented proposals to offset the burden. The finance minister emphasized the priority of the government to address the issue of the energy sector, including circular debt to bring financial sustainability to the sector and economic growth in the country. The government earlier constituted a committee convened by Ashfaq Yousuf Tola for the settlement of circular debt in gas sector.

3 soldiers martyred, 2 terrorists killed in Kurram fire exchange: ISPR



RAWALPINDI: Three soldiers of Pakistan Army were martyred and two terrorists killed in an intense exchange of fire in general area Arawali, Kurram district, on Thursday. The killed militants remained actively involved in terrorist activities against security forces, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said. The army troops fought bravely and effectively engaged the terrorists, and recovered weapons and ammunition after killing them. The martyred soldiers included Subedar Shuja Muhammad (43), resident of Khairpur; Naik Muhammad Ramzan (32), resident of Khuzdar; and Sepoy Abdul Rehman (30), resident of Sukkur. The sanitization of the area was being carried out to kill terrorists, if any found in the area, ISPR said. The Pakistan Army, it added, was determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of its brave soldiers further strengthened its resolve.

SC strikes out Imran's right to defence in PM Shehbaz defamation suit

LAHORE: The Lahore registry of the Supreme Court of Pakistan (SC) on Thursday struck down Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan's appeal for defence in the Rs10 billion defamation suit filed by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif after the former accused the latter of offering bribe to him for remaining silent in the Panama Papers case. Mr Khan's plea against binning his right to defence in the case by the trial court was heard by a three-member bench, headed by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah. The PTI chief had failed to submit his replies despite multiple orders by the trial court after the PM took the matter to the court. Upon Justice Ayesha Malik's inquiry what impeded the PTI chief to submit replies to the court, Mr Zafar replied that the former PM did so because the questions asked from him were irrelevant. The judge remarked that Mr Khan should have submitted it in writing. Mr Zafar said he had done so and the judge replied that he failed to do this. She further remarked that the trial court repeatedly ordered the PTI chief to submit replies, to which Mr Zafar replied that the court did not rule on the relevance of the questions asked. The justice remarked that if he had informed the court [regarding the objection to questions in time], the court would have moved forward. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah remarked that he might even have written that the questions were scandalised. Two judges including Justice Shah ruled in favour of disposing of Mr Khan's appeal for his right to defence while Justice Ayesha ruled against it. Hence, the appeal stood disposed.

Playing constitutional role

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf invited the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf members to again become part of the National Assembly and play their constitutional role in the larger national interest.



Photo: APP

Pervaiz Ashraf invites PTI members to become part of NA, play their constitutional role

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf on Thursday invited the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) members to again become part of the National Assembly and play their constitutional role in the larger national interest.

Reconciliation was need of the hour to overcome the challenges being faced by the country, he said while talking to a delegation of PTI members of the National Assembly (MNAs), led by former speaker Asad Qaiser.

The PTI delegation included former deputy speaker Qasim Khan Suri, Malik Amir Dogar, Attaulah Khan, Amjad Khan

Niaz, Niaz Ahmad Jakhar, Dr Shabbir Hussain Qureshi, Faheem Khan, Lal Chand Malhi and Tahir Iqbal.

Raja Pervaiz Ashraf said as a speaker, he would give ample opportunity to the PTI members to explain their position at the floor of the National Assembly.

He said the Parliament was the only forum where the politicians could sit together and solve the problems of people and the country. The politicians should have contact on sustainable basis and doors for negotiations must not be closed, he stressed.

Emphasizing the politics of

reconciliation, he said for the sake of the country's interests, the whole leadership should work beyond their political affiliations.

He pointed out that under Article-64 of the Constitution, the resignation should be handwritten. "Once it is received, the speaker meets the respective member to ascertain whether or not it was submitted under duress."

He mentioned that several PTI lawmakers had moved courts, which showed that the party had decided to use the move to pressure the government.

He said some of the resign-

ing PTI members had applied leave from the House, some others came to the House to just mark just their attendance, while some had already pleaded that their resignations must not be accepted.

He said an MNA from Karachi whose resignation was accepted had filed a petition in the Islamabad High Court and submitted an affidavit that he had not resigned.

He said that an MNA was a representative of some 600,000 to 700,000 people and before accepting his / her resignation, the speaker must be satisfied that the same was tendered voluntarily not under

any duress.

Answering the question of Asad Qaiser, the speaker said the National Assembly Secretariat was ready to again write letters to the resigning MNAs. The PTI delegation members replied that they would have to consult the party in that regard.

The meeting was held in a very cordial atmosphere. Deputy Speaker Zahid Akram Durrani was also present in the meeting.

On the occasion, Fateha was also offered for the departed soul of the grandmother of Zahid Akram Durrani. Agencies

Villainous designs of terrorists won't materialise, says Rana Sanaullah

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Interior Rana Sanaullah said on Thursday the terrorists would not be allowed to succeed in their nefarious designs.

He said this during his visit to the PIMS hospital where he inquired after policeman Muhammad Hanif who was wounded in Islamabad's I-10 explosion. The minister also presented a bouquet and cheque to the wounded police official.

Speaking on the occasion, Rana Sanaullah appreciated the policeman for performing his professional duty and said the mental and professional skills of the policemen saved Islamabad from a major accident. He further said martyr Adeel Hussain would be given



a bravery medal and support would be given to the injured personnel.

The minister said terrorists would not be allowed to succeed

in their nefarious designs, adding that the cowardly attacks would not demoralise the security forces.

Suspects involved in Islam-

abad blast 'arrested'

On Tuesday, Sanaullah said that the law enforcement agencies (LEAs) had arrested suspects involved in last week's

suicide bombing in Islamabad.

He said the cab 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. The law-enforcement agencies have detained handlers and rounded up at least five others.

"The banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) accepted the responsibility for the attack," the minister said, which claimed the life of a policeman and wounded several others.

He said the "taxi driver is innocent", and he was not involved in the attack as the suspects had taken the cab on rent from him. The suspects, according to Sanaullah, travelled from Kurram Agency to Rawalpindi.

Section 144 imposed for 1 month in Gwadar

Bureau Report

QUETTA: Balochistan government on Thursday imposed section 144 for a month in District Gwadar.

As per the Interior Ministry of Balochistan, section 144 was imposed in Gwadar for one month, the Chief Minister (CM) of Balochistan directed to take strict action after a police constable was martyred due to the firing by the rally crowd.

According to the Provincial Interior Ministry, restrictions on any sort of protest, rally, or gathering of 5 or more people were imposed. Furthermore, they imposed restrictions on the public display of arms as well.

Major outcomes of Pakistan's active multilateral diplomacy in 2022: FO

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The removal of Pakistan from the Grey List of Financial Action Task Force, the establishment of Loss and Damage Fund at COP27, and enhanced frequency of high-level exchanges are among the major outcomes of Pakistan's active multilateral diplomacy throughout 2022.

During the outgoing year, Pakistan continued to pursue an active multilateral diplomacy both in individual capacity and as member of international groupings, Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said in her weekly press briefing on Thursday.

"We are encouraged with the results of our diplomatic efforts in multilateral settings, the most important of which was Pakistan's success in coming out of the FATF Grey List in October 2022. Another important achievement was the establishment of Fund for Loss and Damage



at COP27 for developing countries," the spokesperson told media while giving a roundup of the major diplomatic during the year.

She said 2022 was an active year for Pakistan's diplomacy as the country followed a policy of enhanced engagements with its close partners and friends. The diplomatic efforts were aimed at enhancing Pakistan's international profile and revitalizing its external relations while protecting national interests.

Throughout the year, there was

enhanced frequency of high-level exchanges with Pakistan's friends and partners, including increased in-person meetings and interactions as the world moved out of the COVID-related restrictions, she remarked.

The spokesperson mentioned that during the year, former prime minister visited China and Russia while the former foreign minister also undertook visits to Romania and Spain.

Moreover, she added, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari visited countries in Asia and Europe, and to the United States.

High-level visits exchanged with Afghanistan, Austria, China, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Germany, Iran, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Turkey, Tajikistan, Togo, the United Arab Emirates, the United States and Uzbekistan helped develop important understandings with those countries, she added.

PM Shehbaz, COAS Asim Munir discuss national security



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif here at the PM House on Thursday.

Professional as well as matters relating to national security were discussed in the meeting, a statement issued by the PM Media Wing here said.

The meeting also discussed rising terror incidents in the country.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has summoned a meeting of the National Security Committee (NSC) on Friday

to discuss matters related to national security.

Sources privy to the matter told ARY News that the PM has convened the NSC meeting at PM House on Friday, which would be attended by the defence minister, interior minister, foreign minister and finance minister as well as the military chiefs.

The NSC huddle would be briefed on the recent terror wave in Pakistan, sources say.

Pakistan has recently witnessed a rise in terror incidents in Balochistan, Islamabad and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

HRCP honours Arshad Sharif with HR award

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Human Rights Council of Pakistan (HRCP) has honoured martyred journalist Arshad Sharif with Human Rights Award "in recognition of his services to humanity." According to details, HRCP honoured martyred journalist Arshad Sharif with Human Rights Award "in recognition of outstanding achievements in the field of human rights".

In a statement, the commission said the martyred journalist had rendered service to the nation in a very short span of his life. The prize is given to individuals or organisations in recognition of making life easier for others.

It is pertinent to mention here that Ulster University in Ireland has decided to introduce an award named after

senior journalist Arshad Sharif, who was assassinated in Kenya's capital Nairobi on October 23.

According to details, Ulster University in Ireland has penned down a letter to Sharif's wife - Somiya Arshad - seeking permission to introduce Best Investigate Journalist award named after the slain journalist.

The senior journalist and former ARY News anchor, was killed in Kenyan capital Nairobi on October 23 where he was living in self-exile.

Kenyan police first said that Arshad Sharif was killed in a case of "mistaken identity" but since the seasoned journalist's post-mortem and his body's transfer to his home country, several Kenyan news outlets have, never questioned the police's conduct but have raised questions over the manner in which he was killed.

Breakthrough in Pak-IMF talks likely in January

Commerce Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan government hopes to revive the deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the disbursement of a loan tranche under the \$7 billion bailout package in the month of January.

Sources said the federal government has become active for a breakthrough with the IMF as the ongoing exchange of information with the fund is termed 'satisfactory'.

The government hopes to get financial help from friendly countries. Islamabad is hoping to get a fresh package of \$6 billion from China and Saudi Arabia, the sources said.

The government is planning to achieve the tax collection target

without imposing fresh taxes on the masses. Sources further said that the government is planning to increase the levy on diesel by Rs50 per liter, which is currently being charged Rs30.

Levy on the petrol is already Rs50 per litre on the demand of the International Monetary Fund.

Earlier, 'dissatisfied' with Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) asked Pakistan to jack up the levy on diesel, ARY News reported, citing sources.

The IMF expressed 'dissatisfaction' over the policies of Ishaq Dar and presented more demands in front of Pakistan for the continuation of the current \$7bn Extended Fund Facility (EFF) programme.

Media persons to adopt modern tools for reporting the news: Shafqat Abbas



Bureau Report

LAHORE: He was addressing a two-day training workshop for journalists of print, electronic and social media, held with the Cooperation of Islamia University Bahawalpur and PID Lahore in Bahawalpur, said a press release issued here on Thursday.

The director general said that the federal government was aware of the importance of the media in present times because it acts as a bridge

between the government and people. He said that the government wanted to enhance the capacities of the media persons and all efforts were being made for the purpose, adding that the two-day training workshop was also a part of it.

He said that the media was the fourth pillar of the state and it had a key role to play at the national and provincial level. Media persons have to adopt modern tools for reporting the news stories for the purpose, he added.

Hamdard Shura monthly meeting held

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: The members of the Shura Hamdard Karachi chapter voiced strong concern over the growing lawlessness in the country in a monthly meeting held yesterday at Hamdard Corporate Head-office on the topic of "Increasing crime rate in Pakistan underlying reasons, solutions, and strategies." The speaker Justice (r) Haziq-ul-Khairi presided over the meeting. Ms. Sadia Rashid, President Hamdard Group also attended the meeting.

Haziq-ul-Khairi in an opening statement said that such crimes were occurring in modern times that were not covered by the existing laws of the country. "There is a need to rewrite the Penal Code, Criminal Procedure, and Evidence Act in accordance with contemporary challenges. No one could have imagined that there would be tiny devices that aid in spying on people's private lives.

Justice (r) Zia Pervez said that there should be a concerted effort on a govern-



ment level to understand the motivation and certain socioeconomic conditions that make people inclined toward committing crimes. It is also a fact that public sentencing and severe punishments in society do not help in curbing crime.

Commodore (r) Sadeed Anwar Malik suggested a higher pay scale for all those who are part of the judicial system. Moreover, there should be secure judicial complexes equipped with amenities and facilities in all provincial capital cities. These complexes should be where the families of judges, police, and staff can reside.

Professor Dr. Ikhtlaq Ahmed suggested that the high-ranking officers of FIA, the Anti-Corruption Department, and NAB should be appointed by the standing committee of the National Assembly. In addition to that, the provincial Anti-Corruption departments and NAB should submit their findings and reports to Parliament on a weekly basis in a public hearing in order to expose the high-ranking corrupt politicians and bureaucrats.

Dr. Rizwana Ansari shared the fact that more than 27 million youth are unemployed at the moment. "These youngsters are more prone to violence and may incline toward criminal activities or worse, they might get involved in terrorism since there have been no serious efforts to build their character and educate them.

Col (r) Mukhtar Ahmed Butt, Prof. Dr. Shaheen Habib, Shaikh Usman Damohi, Senator Abdul Haseeb Khan and Dr. Abu Bakr Shaikh also shared their thoughts in the meeting.

Subsidized atta

KARACHI: People are busy in buying flour bags at subsidy price from a delivery truck alongside a road at Sakhi Hassan area in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Deputy Manager Kohala Hydropower Project calls on Prof. Taqdees Geelani

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Deputy Manager Kohala Hydropower Project Mustafa Umar and Public Relations Manager Nawaz Awan called on Focal Person to PM on Kohala Hydropower project and member Legislative assembly Prof. Taqdees Geelani.

On the occasion various issues related to Kohala Hydropower Project were discussed in detail.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Taqdees Geelani said that the commencement of work on Kohala Hydropower Project on the special directives of Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan has been finalized and work on this extraordinary project will start soon.

She said that due to the efforts and



Muzaffarabad: Chief Secretary Azad Kashmir Muhammad Usman Chachar called on President Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry here on Thursday. On this occasion, the duo discussed in detail the issues of mutual

personal interest of Prime Minister the project was taken out of the cold storage.

Prof. Geelani said that a crucial meeting between the AJK Premier was going to take place very soon in which the Prime Minister would be given a detailed briefing.

Deputy Manager Kohala Hydro Power Project Mustafa Umar and PR Manager Nawaz Awan said that the project administration was keenly waiting to start the work on the project. He said that first installment of compensation has been paid to the victims of Kohala Project he revealed.

He expressed the optimism that the Focal Person Kohala Hydropower Project Professor Taqdees Geelani would play the role of a bridge to settle all the issues pertaining to the project.

'Naqibi Literary Awards' for the year 2021 was held at Lyallpur Museum

Mian Rashid Asghar.

FAISALABAD: The religion of Islam also gives the good news of success in this world and the hereafter through literature and good morals. Literature is a book that takes a common man to a special place, from which the beauty of lives is revealed. Undoubtedly, the reflection of the society is created by its literary aspects.

In this regard, the ceremony of "Naqibi Literary Awards" for the year 2021 was held at Lyallpur Museum. This ceremony was chaired by Dr. Riaz Majeed. Dr. Shabbir Ahmed Qadri, Dr. Jafar Hassan Mubarak (Chief Editor Haraf Jafar Faisalabad), Dr. Arshad Iqbal Arshad, Dr. Asghar Baloch, Shafaq Hussain Shafiqat (distinguished journalist), Amjad Babar (Khyal Ki Shatanj), Dr. Zahid. Yasin Akhian (Harf Hayani), Chaudhry Ashiq Hassi

Adnan Tariq, Dr. Majid, Prof. Dr. Riaz Ahmad Qadri and Waris Ali Waris performed the duties of the association of the awarding ceremony. Director Lyallpur Museum Ghulam Abbas, IT Officer in charge M. Sajid Sattar, Public Relations Officer Shahnaz Mehmood, President Naqibi Karwan Adab Azad Naqibi, Secretary Broadcasting and Publication Rustam Naqibi were also present in the organizers. The poets and writers who got this Naqibi Literary Awards were also present.

Among them, there were Dr. Shabbir Ahmad Qadri (special guest), Dr. Jafar Hassan Mubarak (Chief Editor Haraf Jafar Faisalabad), Dr. Arshad Iqbal Arshad, Dr. Asghar Baloch, Shafaq Hussain Shafiqat (distinguished journalist), Amjad Babar (Khyal Ki Shatanj), Dr. Zahid. Yasin Akhian (Harf Hayani), Chaudhry Ashiq Hassi

King (Lifetime Achievement Award), Dr. Akash Rocky Wilson, Zahid Iqbal Bhil, Naveed Ahmed, Nasir Mahmood Farhad, Mohammad Sarwar Qamar Qadri, M. Sajid Sattar (IT Officer in Charge Lyallpur Museum) Muhammad Aslam Shahzad, Roy Shahadat Ali Khan Khatal, Adl Minhas Lahori (Tani Peiyang Ganjalan), Khadim Naat Mateen Kashmiri (Kot Addo), Syed Zahid Hussain Naimi (Tazkira Uliya Kashmir), Memorial Shield Abdul Majid (Photojournalist), Muhammad Nawaz (Video) Kahmera Maini, Shamim Akhtar (Senior Producer Radio Pakistan Faisalabad), Shahnaz Mehmoed (PRO Lyallpur Museum), Professor Syed Reza Hussain Geelani (Recording of One Thousand Naats), Dr. Maqsood Ahmad Azim (Wasila Bakshish), Masood Chishti, Mr. and Mrs. LM Nasir (Couple of Faisalabad), MR Mirza (Tarsan Lok Pyaar Nanu), Muhammad Ehsan Sani (Lhande Lahore De Punjabi Poet), Mian Ghulam Mustafa. Bismal Lali (Dream), Muhammad Akram Qalandri (Phat de Somme), Inspector Ahmed Adnan Tariq (Khalu Khamkhawa's exploits), Javed Arif (Sanjay Saphane), Muhammad Naveed Qalandri (Pyaar Di Khed), Ehsan Faisal Kanjahi (columns and articles 1994 to 2021), Mohammad Sajid Dhillon (Saraat Al Najaat), Tariq Arsalan Tariq (First Look), Mohammad Siddique Sirat (Chowkwa Khoh), Dr. Mohammad Hanif Khokhar (Dukhan Di Pund), Manoor Shakeel (Mein Nain Bolda), Rabeel Rani (Sad Eyes), Mehboob Ali Mehboob attended this ceremony.

To learn literature, we should take advantage of the services of literary people, they expressed.

The Diabetes Centre to expand its operations in Sahiwal

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Diabetes Centre (TDC), Pakistan's first diabetes and multidisciplinary hospital in a bid to expand its operations has planned a groundbreaking ceremony of a massive hospital in Sahiwal on 6th of January, 2023. The hospital shall be built on 8 Kanal of land donated by a Pakistani Australian, Chaudhry Mustafa, resident of Wollongong.

TDC Sahiwal hospital shall be first of its kind catering large population of Punjab. Giving details of project, Chairman, The Diabetes Centre while speaking to a section of press said that TDC is a registered charity in Pakistan, UK, USA and in Australia. Funds have been raised by Hospital's Australian Chapter headed by a renowned Senior Nephrologist, Dr Asrar H Khan in various fund-raising events held in Australia.

While highlighting the need to provide treatment of diabetes across Pakistan, Dr Asjad Hameed expressed his stern resolve to expand TDC's operations to various regions of country so that people can get awareness and treatment at earliest.

"Diabetes has a trickle-down effect. It is deadly if left untreated and can play havoc to a human body affecting major organs as heart, kidneys, eyes, liver and limbs. In worst case scenario, amputation is the only way out which is indeed sad for the patient and his or her family" Dr Asjad Hameed said.

Crimes cases on raise in Hayatabad Resident Society: Ghulam Bilal Javed

Spokesman Report

PESHAWAR: In a posh area like Hayatabad, the anti-social elements have disturbed the peace of the areas and put the residence under severe stress due to crime rate, known businessman Ghulam Bilal Javed told media men here on Thursday.

The increasing number of incidents in the posh area of Peshawar, Hayatabad, has made life difficult for the citizens, he added. Due to the increasing incidents of terrorism, the residents of Hayatabad have installed security cameras of their own. In the street next to the former DIG's house on Hayatabad Medical Complex Road, two persons entered the house for the purpose of committing an incident, but they got scared when they saw the camera.

When we contacted the Police, they said that these are drug addicts, while the district administration had undertaken to catch the drug addicts and treat them, but the police said that we pick up the drug addicts and hand them over to the Deputy Commissioner Cell established for this purpose and they are passing through rehab under the government project.

Meezan Bank Launches Meezan Visa Infinite Debit Card

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Meezan Bank, Pakistan's leading Islamic Bank, has launched Meezan Visa Infinite Card – the top most debit card among the cards portfolio offering one of the highest limits and greatest benefits to premium customers of the Bank.

As the most celebrated card, it provides a wide range of features & discounts both locally and internationally. The new card complements the lifestyle of elite customers by offering excellent value through exclusive travel perks including access to over 1,000 VIP Airport Lounges globally, 24-hour concierge access, and discount on car rentals in addition to various other international offers by Visa. Moreover, Visa Infinite Cardholders can also enjoy a wide range of specially crafted deals and discounts on local brands across Pakistan.

Commenting on the launch, Shariq Mubeen, Head of Alternate Distribution Channels at Meezan Bank, said, "The launch of Meezan VISA Infinite Card is aimed at providing the world-class, Shariah-compliant payment product to our most prestigious customers. With this card, we have seamlessly blended our exceptional banking services into the lifestyle needs of our elite customers. We are confident insha'Allah that our customers will enjoy the exclusive benefits of this card both locally and globally."

Art Council Karachi opened its door to showcase the talent of its final year batch of 2022



News Desk

KARACHI: Art Council of Pakistan Karachi Opened its door to Showcase the talent of its final year batch of 2022 on Thursday. Six students of Arts Council Institute of Arts and Crafts have exhibited their works. Thesis show was inaugurated by President of Arts Council Muhammad Ahmad Shah, Principal of ACIAC Shahid Rasam, well-known actor Sajid Hasan. Member Government Body Asjad Bukhari and Chairman Media and Publication Committee Bashir Sadozai were also present on this occasion.

Expressing his opinion, President Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi Muhammad Ahmad Shah said that the work of all students is amazing. These students belong to the working class, the difficulties these students are going through in their lives, they have tried to describe this struggle through their works. Behind these pictures are their stories. The work of these artists has just started selling.

Their solo exhibitions are being organized and art lovers have started buying his masterpieces, he added, "I am proud of all of you. The hard

work of the students and our guidance has become a success story. Like our students." The work is not done in any institution.

This is my effort to make these students feel proud that we are the graduate students of Arts Council Karachi. I am the head of the institution from which these children have studied. It is a matter of pride for me. Shahid Rasam, Principal of Arts Council Institute of Arts and Crafts, speaking at the opening ceremony, said that six years ago, these students started their journey and did not think that the destination would be so bright. Every artist has his own story. Let me tell you that Behzad works in a mechanic's shop, today he is a shining star.

Jawad used to work in a paint shop in Lyari. Today, his work is no less than a professional. Among the students who presented works of art painting, sculpture and textile design are Jawad Jan, Ramsha Khan, Behzad Ahmed, Aneela Arshad, Armash Saleem, Rida Ali Shah. Exhibition will be continue till 31st December at the Ahmed Parvez Art Gallery of the Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi



Islamabad
15° - 23° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr5:42 am
Zohr12:09 pm
Asr3:30 pm
Maghrib5:08 pm
Isha6:37 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police) 15
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Fire Services Rawalpindi/
Islamabad1122 & 16
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& Rescue Services 4451122
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Women Police Stations

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G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8 9266316

Govt releases Rs 4.21b for IT project

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The government has released funds amounting to Rs 4.21 billion to execute Information Technology related projects during the first four months of the current fiscal year under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP 2022-23).

According to official data available with APP, the government has authorized the utilization of development funds amounting to Rs 4,211.21 million out of a total allocation of 5,731.70 million for various ongoing and new projects of the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication.

Out of the total authorized/dispensed amount, the total amount spent on the development projects during the corresponding period (July-October) stood at Rs3,487.32 million.

According to the disbursement mechanism of the Planning Division, the development funds allocated in the federal budget are released at the rate of 20 percent in the first quarter (July-September), followed by 30 percent each in the second and third quarters and the remaining 20 percent in the last quarter (April-June) of a fiscal year.

Faisal Karim Kundi visited BISP's Central Zonal office, Lahore

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Net Faisal Karim Kundi has visited the office of the Director General, Benazir Income Support Programme, Central Zonal office Punjab, Lahore today. Senior Politician Nadeem Afzal Chan also accompanied the Minister of State.

Mr. Faisal Karim Kundi visited various sections of Benazir Income Support Programme, Central Zonal office Lahore. On this occasion, the Director General BISP Punjab Arshad Liaquat Chaudary gave him detailed briefing about the performance of the department as well as different initiatives of BISP like Flood relief operations, preparation for launch of dynamic registry and current situation of BTOs in Punjab.

Federal Minister said that as BISP is one of the renowned poverty allevia-



tion programme in the world so we are committed to simplify and further improve the system and performance of Benazir Income Support Program. Minister of State Faisal Karim Kundi appreciate the working of staff and direct them to resolve the issues and complaints received from beneficiaries of BISP on top priority basis.

Rainy weather

ISLAMABAD: Motorists on their way during rainy weather at Jinnah Avenue in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Long march of Kashmiris against Indian occupation reached Muzaffarabad

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Long march organized by Pasban-e-Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir against Indian war crimes besides demand of right to self-determination reached the capital after three days.

According to details, 75 people started the march from Athmuqaam Neelum Valley carried flags and chanted slogans against Indian illegal occupation passed through Kundal Shahi, Jura, Barian, Simari, Chilhana, Noseri, Pathika and Kahori Bazar.

The caravan ended at Burhan Wani Shaheed Chowk was led by Chairman Pasban-e Hurriyat Uzair Ahmad Ghazali, Vice Chairman Usman Ali Hashim, Muhammad Ismail Jagwal,



Muhammad Ishaq Shaheen, Khawaja Muhammad Sadiq, Tanzeer Iqbal, Liaquat Ali Rana, Muhammad Fayyaz Khan, Faisal Farooq Sheikh, Muhammad Mushtaq and Imtiaz Aziz Khan. Speaking on the occasion, Uzair Ahmed Ghazali said that the purpose of the march on the cease-fire line was to repeat the demand of the right to self-determination for the people of

the state and to establish a free and fair Plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir. He maintained that we demand international human rights organizations that they should play their role for the release of Kashmiri prisoners in Indian jails. "World conscience should come forward and declare all the illegal actions of August 5,

2019 null and void", he voiced.

Ghazali said that India should remember that the Kashmiri people will continue their struggle for their freedom at all costs, "India's status in the state is an occupier."

Ghazali appealed to the people of Azad Jammu and Kashmir to come out of their homes on the occasion of Self-Determination Day on January 5 and demanded the United Nations to fulfill its commitments on the right to self-determination.

"The next stage of this march will be completed on January 5 when a rally will be organized from Burhan Wani Chowk to the United Nations Observer Office and a resolution will be presented for provision of the right to self-determination" he added.

SAPM Tasneem Qureshil for enhancement of women's role in business sector



A bouquet of flowers is being presented to Special Assistant to PMMoS for Industries and Production, Tasneem Ahmed Qureshi on his arrival at Rawalpindi Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Rawalpindi City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to PM/MoS for Industries and Production, Tasneem Ahmed Qureshil has called for enhancing women's participation in business sector and labour force as they could play an integral part in the development of the society.

He was addressing as chief guest to a conference on women empowerment and role of business women in economy arranged by Rawalpindi women chamber of commerce and Industry (RWCCI) here on Thursday.

He said small and medium enterprises are very important for any developing economies. These enterprises do not require huge finance to run their business and can easily be managed by the owners.

He said women especially in rural areas, have the potential to be significant change agents as farmers, market vendors, businesswomen, craftsmen, entrepreneurs, and community leaders.

The MoS said without ample participation of the women in business, no society can make progress.

He was of the view business women can make a significant contribution to the country's economic development in case they get opportunities.

He lauded the role of the RWCCI for promoting the cottage industry and training the women to run their small business at local level.

Earlier welcoming the minister of state /SAPM for Industries and production Tasneem Ahmed Qureshi, the Group leader RWCCI, Vice Chairperson SAARC Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Chairperson National Business Women Council, Ms.Hina Mansab Khan informed him about the role of RWCCI in empowering the women.

She highlighted the issues they are facing to run the affairs of RWCCI and sought the help of the state minister to make the process some easy to get loans by the business women.

The SAPM assured the members of the RWCCI that he will try his best to resolve their issues and talk to the authorities concerned for the purpose.

Altaf Ahmed Bhat condemned the killing spree of Kashmiri youth by Indian troops

City Reporter



ISLAMABAD: Chairman JKSM condemns killing spree of youth by Indian Occupation Forces, demands probe into arbitrary killings.

Chairman of Jammu and Kashmir Salvation Movement (JKSM) Altaf Ahmed Bhat has condemned the killing spree of Kashmiri youth by Indian troops in their fresh act of state terrorism in Sidhra area of Jammu.

Chairman JKSM in a Press statement while condemning the killing

of 4 Kashmiri youth has said that the frustrated Modi led BJP govt of India has given impunity to its occupation forces for target killing youth, slapping Journalists, Human Rights activists and Political leaders with lawless laws and arresting them under draconian laws in a bid to torture and punish them for their demand of right to self-determination.

Chairman JKSM Altaf Ahmed Bhat while terming it disastrous for the future of Kashmir said that Youth who are guarantors of Future are being framed in fakes charges, killed in fake CASO's, arbitrary arrests and killings, and destroying residential properties just to punish them for their allegiance with Kashmir freedom movement and demand of Right to Self-determination.

Hundreds of thousands of Kashmiris have sacrificed with their lives for freedom of their motherland Kashmir, and the day is near when Kashmir will be free from Indian occupation. Chairman JKSM added.

Chairman JKSM further added that Indian occupation forces are left unchecked for seizing and attaching properties of Social and Political organisations to arbitrary killing of youth and Hurriyat leaders, their sole purpose is to make Kashmiri leadership and people refrain from the Freedom movement, but India has failed time and again. Kashmir freedom movement is stronger than ever and India has been exposed all over the world for its illegal occupation and grave human rights violations.

Chairman JKSM said that it is high time UN, OIC, P5, UNHRC, and all other international organizations must intervene and stop India from HR violations, and force India to demilitarize IIOJ&K and start the process of plebiscite as per accepted UN resolutions.

AIOU holds seminar on revamping undergraduate education policy



City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: A seminar was held yesterday in Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) regarding the revamping of "Undergraduate Education Policy-2020" of Higher Education Commission (HEC). Director Academics, HEC, Dr. Hidayat Ullah Khan, and Consultant, HEDP, HEC, Dr. Arshad Bashir was the resource person. Director, Directorate of Academic Planning and Course Production (APCP), Dr. Zahid Majeed hosted the event. Faculty members and principal officers also attended the event. Presenting the HEC Undergraduate Policy 2020, Dr. Arshad Bashir said that HEC issued the revised proposed policy and handed it over to the universities after identifying the defects in the Undergraduate Policy two years ago. He said that the opinion of the Vice-Chancellors and faculty members is essential in formulating the policy, hence the feedback from the universities has been sought to make this policy acceptable to the universities.

He said that after incorporating the recommendations and suggestions of universities, the policy will be forwarded to the commission for approval, and policy will be implemented after the approval. The faculty members of AIOU have given various suggestions to further improve the policy. They suggested to include skill sets and Quran translation in general courses. They also gave suggestions to increase the credit hours of social sciences and Islamic studies courses. They also suggested HEC will play a role in filling the gap between industry and academic institutions. HEC representatives assured to incorporate university's feedback and suggestions in the policy.

All labor laws & regulations should come under single window: Irfan Iqbal Sheikh

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI, has demanded that all labor and industrial relations-related laws & regulations should come under a single window to facilitate the employers and employees alike; and, enhance the compliance with the laws & generate better revenue streams for Employees Old Age Benefits Institute (EOBI) and Worker's Welfare Fund (WWF). He was speaking on the occasion of high-profile visit of Provincial Minister Sindh for Labor and Human Resources to FPCCI Head Office.



Suleman Chawla, SVP FPCCI, apprised the session that Pakistan needs to reform its labor laws to retain the status of GSP+ or even attain an even higher status, i.e. GSP++ or GSP 2.0. He, however, maintained that the federal & provincial governments should incentivize the compliance with EOBI, WWF and other labor levies as the business, industry and trade is already under tremendous pressure due to the abysmal ranking of Pakistan in ease of doing business (EODB) and cost of doing business (CODB) indices.

Engr. M.A. Jabbar, VP FPCCI, noted that voluntary compliance with EOBI can increase if there is single levy. He added that Sindh Employees Social Security

Institution (SESSI) has not delivered on its promises as workers do not get proper healthcare services at their hospitals.

Shabbir Mansha, VP FPCCI, proposed that ministry of labor & FPCCI should set up a liaison committee to sort out all pending matters in an alternative resolution mechanism.

Fareed Mahmood Ghani, Convener of FPCCI's Advisory Council on Indus-

trial Relations & Labor Laws, informed that there has been an enhanced awareness among the employers pertaining to labor-related regulations.

Saeed Ghani, Provincial Minister Sindh for Labor & Human Resources, said that his government is pro-poor & pro-worker; but, at the same time, they understand the importance of business community as the business community can only keep their workers continually employed, well-paid and protected, if they are running their businesses profitably.

Saeed Ghani demanded that the institution of EOBI should be effectively & categorically devolved to provinces; so that, the Government of Sindh can take care of its working-class efficiently and without any interference. He also admitted the need to upgrade hospitals under SESSI with modern equipment, infrastructure and senior doctors.

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almas Ayoub Sabir**
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 (mszk786@gmail.com)
 Bureau Chief Lahore: **Syed Afraz Ali Nazish**
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)
Islamabad Office: Rose Plaza, 1-8 Markaz.
Karachi office: Flat No.C.3.A.One Comfort, Block No 11.
 Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Main Rashid Minhas Road.
Lahore Office: 7-E,Samanberg, Johar Town.
Email: spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com
Whatsapp: 0346-5008408

Kashmir and impasse at the UN

Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai

Kashmir is a dispute recognized by the United Nations. It holds the infamy as the most dangerous place on the planet. The 76-year-old conflict in that disputed, divided, devastated, and illegally occupied territory is the bone of contention of the nuclear tension in the region of South Asia. Without a just and lasting peace in Kashmir that vindicates self-determination, trying to reduce missile and nuclear arsenals; and bring normalcy in the region of South Asia will be an exercise in futility.

By all customary moral and legal yardsticks, 23 million people of Jammu & Kashmir enjoy a right to self-determination. The princely state, after British suzerainty for a century, achieved independence on August 15, 1947, when British jurisdiction lapsed. At that time, Kashmir had chosen neither accession to Pakistan nor to India, which had been created as separate nations through a British partition along largely Hindu-Muslim communal lines. Nothing regarding partition or the lapse of British control required Kashmir to renounce independence for absorption in a neighboring nation.

Sir Gopalaswami Ayyanger, the Indian delegate to the United Nations spoke on January 15,

1948, at the Security Council, "When the Indian Independence Act came into force, Jammu and Kashmir, like other states, became free to decide whether it would accede to the one or the other of the two dominions, or remain independent."

Progress towards a solution was, however, blocked by India's refusal to accept that the withdrawal of forces on the two sides should be balanced and synchronized. India, however, was soon un deceived of its delusions over Kashmir's political yearning. Recognizing that its people would never freely vote accession to India, it contrived excuse after excuse to frustrate a plebiscite. When the United Nations proposed arbitration, a reference to the World Court, or any other method of resolving minor demilitarization quarrels, India nixed them all. After a few years, it dropped all pretense of acceding to a referendum by unilaterally proclaiming its annexation of Kashmir. India's proclamation has never been accepted by the United Nations, which continues to list Kashmir as disputed territory and subject to the Security Council's self-determination resolutions.

Not a single politician in India believes for a second that a majority of Kashmiris would prefer accession to India to independence. Yashwant Sinha, leader of BJP and former India's foreign minister said, there is no question

of losing (Kashmir). We have lost Kashmir. P. Chidambaram leader of Indian National Congress and former India's finance minister said, "We have practically lost Kashmir." That explains India's stubborn resistance to implementing the U.N. Security Council's plebiscite resolution which India itself sponsored.

Today, the Government of India has deployed a staggering 900,000 military and paramilitary forces in Kashmir at stupendous monetary costs to suppress indigenous aspirations for freedom and justice. Human rights violations perpetrated with impunity are as grimly regular as the rising of the sun in the east and the setting in the west. Since the beginning of the latest phase of freedom struggle born in 1989 from another rigged election, over 100,000 Kashmiris have died in conflict. Indeed, the grim deaths have become so routine that they are reported in major newspapers like car accidents—buried in the back pages with two or three lines of ink. Every independent human rights organization that has surveyed the Kashmiri landscape has expressed horror and outrage at the human rights inferno created by India, for example, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Genocide Watch, and even the two reports issued by the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights.

Dr. Syed Nazir Gilani, Presi-

dent, JKCHR wrote to the UN Secretary General that "Modi Government has carried out a dangerous act of aggression against the people of Kashmir and has savaged all existing obligations pending under UN Security Council Resolutions."

Adlai Stevenson, former United States Ambassador to the United Nations proved prophetic when he said on February 24, 1964, "It is a matter of the greatest regret to my Government, as it is to so many governments here represented, that India and Pakistan have been unable to reach a settlement either through the mechanism set up by the Security Council or in bilateral talks, and that this dispute continues to occupy so much of the time of the international community... "It must be recognized by both countries that the problem of Kashmir cannot be settled unilaterally by either party. It can only be settled, as I say, by agreement and compromise, taking into account the free expression of will of the people concerned."

It's, therefore, clear that Kashmir needs a strong and determined will and the genius of an imagination that has the negotiating skills and knows how to bring people together. The people of Kashmir still believe that there cannot be a better agency than the Secretary General of the United Nations himself to mediate or facilitate between the parties concerned. Secretary General has

no ambition to assert dominance while as great powers do. Mediation by the Secretary General would be free from the jealousies and the ambitions that characterize individual initiative. The Secretary General will have to remain under no obligation to please any particular power or particular set of powers or groups. Yes, there will be resistance from India but if India is impressed with what she would gain by a just settlement of the Kashmir dispute, her negativity may not be insurmountable.

But persuading India may take time. In the interim, several measures should be taken to ease the misery and tensions of the people of Jammu & Kashmir. Human rights organizations should be given greater access. India's occupation forces should be thinned. All political prisoners should be released. Emergency laws which give India's army immunity for human rights crimes should be repealed. Domicile law which is designed to change the demography of Kashmir should be revoked. There should be freedom of speech, expression, opinion, and assembly given to all peoples irrespective of their political beliefs.

Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai is the Chairman, World Forum for Peace & Justice. He can be reached at: WhatsApp: 1-202-607-6435. Or gnfai2003@yahoo.com
www.kashmirawareness.org

Brother and sister's future separated after Taliban university ban

Marwa was just a few months away from becoming the first woman in her Afghan family to go to university — instead, she will watch achingly as her brother goes without her.

Women are now banned from attending university in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, where they have been steadily stripped of their freedoms over the past year.

"Had they ordered women to be beheaded, even that would have been better than this ban," Marwa told AFP at her family home in Kabul.

"If we are to be so unlucky, I wish that we hadn't been born at all. I'm sorry for my existence in the world.

"We are being treated worse than animals. Animals can go anywhere on their own, but we girls don't have the right even to step out of our homes."

The 19-year-old had recently passed an entrance exam to start a nursing degree at a medical university in the Afghan capital from March.

She was thrilled to be joining her brother, Hamid, in attending the campus each day.

But now their futures have been pulled apart.

"I wanted my sister to achieve her goals along with me — to succeed and move ahead," said Hamid, 20, a student of business administration at a higher education institute in Kabul.

"Despite several problems, she had studied until the 12th grade, but what can we say now?"

The ban by the hardline Islamist government, which seized power in August last year, has sparked global outrage, including from Muslim nations who deemed it against Islam.

Neda Mohammad Nadeem, the Taliban's minister for higher education, claimed women students had ignored a strict dress code and a requirement they be accompanied by a male relative to campus.

But the reality, according to some Taliban officials, is that the hardline clerics that advise the movement's supreme leader Hibatullah Akhundzada remain deeply sceptical of modern education for females.

Girls have also been banned from secondary schools in most of the country.

Women have been slowly squeezed out of public life in recent months, pushed from government jobs or paid a fraction of their former salary to stay at home.

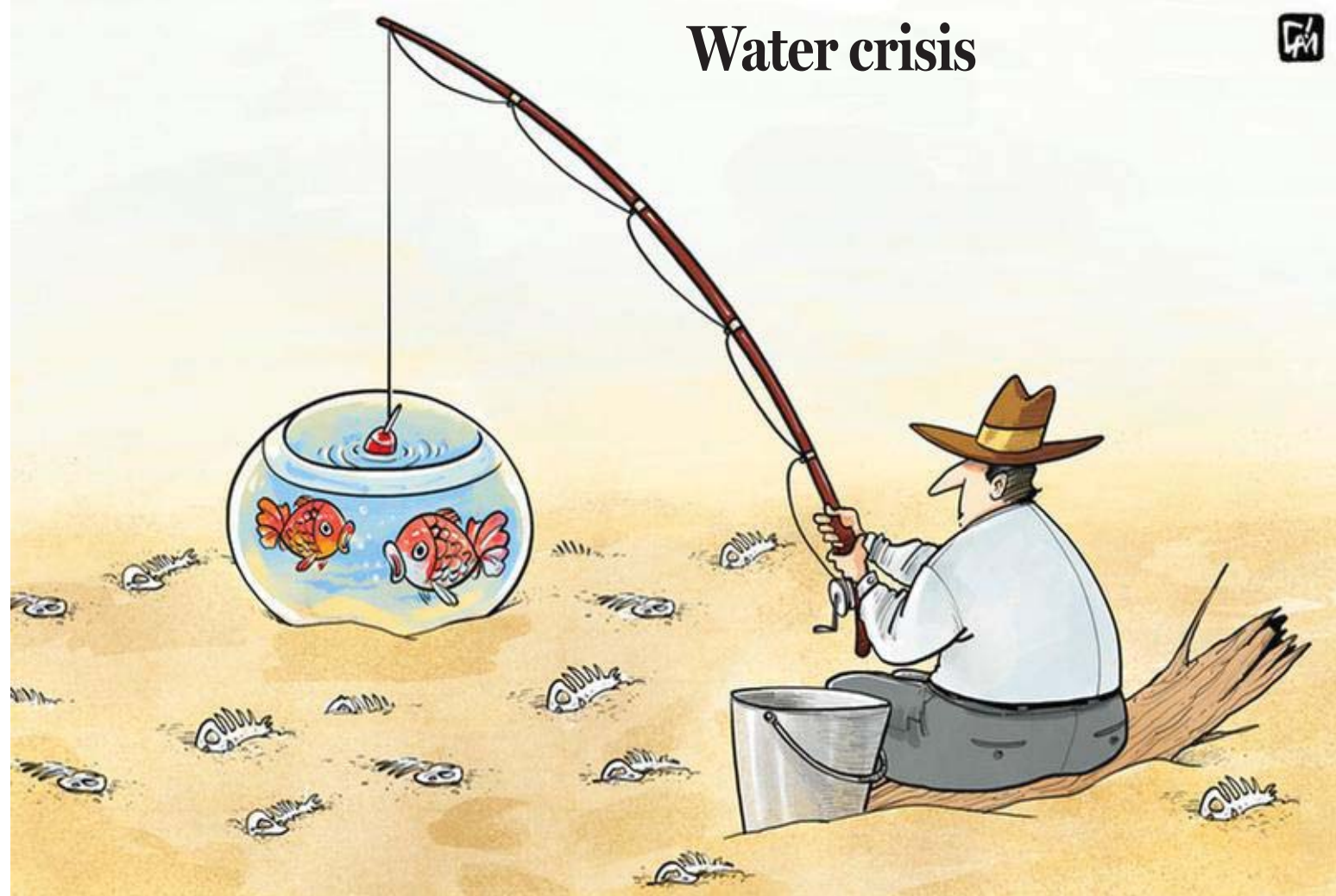
They are also barred from travelling without a male relative and must cover up in public. Women are prohibited from going to parks, fairs, gyms and public baths.

Marwa and Hamid come from an impoverished family but their parents had supported their pursuit of higher education.

With dreams of becoming a midwife, Marwa had planned to visit remote areas of Afghanistan where women remain deprived of health services.

"I wanted to serve women in faraway places so that we never witness the loss of a mother's life during childbirth," she said.

Instead she will now stay home to teach her six younger siblings, while her father, the family's sole breadwinner, earns money as a vegetable vendor.



Snowfall lovers throng to Kalam, Malama Jabba

Spokesman Report

Following MET office's prediction of the snowfall over the hills of Upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including Swat valley, the tourists and snowfall lovers on Thursday thronged to the most scenic Kalam, Bahrain and Malam Jabba valleys to enjoy the first snowfall of the winter season.

Domestic tourists along with families mostly arrived from different districts of Central Punjab and northern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were being seen in sizable number in Upper Swat's valleys of Kalam, Madain, Bahrain and Malam Jabba exploring its mesmerizing natural beauty amid light to modern rains and snowfall that turned weather extremely cold and muggy.

Tourists from Peshawar, Nowshera, Mardan, Charsadda, Lahore, Rawalpindi and Islamabad were seen in large number at Kalam, Malam Jabba and Bahrain to get pleasures from snowfall, trout fish and river rafting.

Besides Kalam and Malam Jabba, the snowy mountains peaks of Gabin Jabba, Miandam, Matiltan, Kalam, Utror, Gabral, Matiltan, Mahodand, Loye Sar resorts have drawn influx of snowfall lovers along with families and children amid great fun and laughter.

"I came from Wapda Town Peshawar to my favorite tourists' destination Kalam for snowfall and trout fish following MET's office forecast for snowfall over the hills of Upper Swat," said Ahtisham Khan, a lecturer of Urdu literature while talking to APP.

He said Swat was known for combination of its seven distinctive features including snowfall that was hard to find together in any tourist destination of Pakistan. In addition to a

home to primitive Gandhara civilization, he said the Swat's unique features including ice skiing, river rafting, adventure sports, snow-clad mountain peaks, trout-fish, and Swat motorway has made it an ideal destination for winter tourism and sports in Pakistan.

Attracting Buddhists, monks and archaeologists from across the world throughout the year, the Swat's archaeological treasures and ancient artifacts housed at Saidi Sharif Museum become a distinctive feature taking tourists to the glorious history of Swat.

The most celebrated monk from Thailand, Arayawango along with 20 disciples has recently visited different Buddhist sites of Swat including Saidi Sharif Museum and Stupa besides Buthkara Buddhist monastery which impressed him a lot. He said Swat was very important in terms of Buddhist history in Pakistan and must be visited by followers of Buddhism from all around the world.

Another striking feature of Swat is skiing sports being played at Malam Jabba every year during winter and such sport was hardly placed in any part of the country.

Malik Luqman, KP tourism department's senior planning officer told APP that a mega project costing Rs238 million was prepared for organizing different winter sports and tourism events in various districts including Swat.

Kalam's winter gala and tour-de-cycle race would be organized in Swat while first-ever sports rafting at River Swat would be held besides an international paragliding event at Saidi Sharif. He said a youth leadership conference and skiing event at Malam Jabba was also planned.

To reduce tourists' load at Kalam, Malam Jabba and Bahrian, he said new tourists spots would be developed at Sola Tanar, Puchar and Jarogo valleys while walking tracks would be developed to promote eco-tourism in Swat.

To maintain natural beauty and avoid pollution at tourist spots in Swat, he said camping pods would be established at new tourists' destinations besides Kalash culture events in Chitral. To link new tourist destination with Swat Motorway, he said that Rs4.8 billion were being spent on development and construction of new roads.

Tourism budget has been swelled to Rs8.6 billion during 2022-23 while work on the world bank's assisted KP Integrated Tourism Project costing Rs17 billion was underway in the province, he added.

Luqman said the construction of 15 jeepable tracks was also proposed in Malakand and Hazara divisions while six tourist facilitation centers were established and work on seven others started.

He said ground breaking of 23 km long Mankyal-Bada Sarai Road has been performed that would be rehabilitated at an estimated cost of Rs 5.70 billion. The project also includes the construction of four bridges and two rest areas. He said that an Integrated Tourism Zone at Mankyal Swat would be established where modern facilities would be provided to tourists under KITE project.

He said Rs 365 million project for feasibility studies for identification of new tourist spots was planned. To promote ecotourism in southern districts of KP, he said that a road to Sheikh Badin tourist resort located at the confluence of DI Khan and Lakki Marwat districts would be constructed with an estimated cost of Rs3 billion while a tourist wing for merged areas was being established to monitor and oversee tourism-related activities there.

Tourism police was made operational at Malakand and Hazara divisions to facilitate tourists. He said Tourism police were deployed on key places of Swat to facilitate tourists and snowfall lovers during winter season.

How Indonesia is navigating the economic storm

Sri Mulyani Indrawati

During the opening of the summit of G20 finance ministers and central bank governors in October, I warned that the world is facing increasing and compounding risks from high inflation, weak growth, energy and food insecurity, climate change, geopolitical fragmentation, and rising debt distress. Low-income countries will bear the highest burden, but middle-income and even advanced economies also face the prospect of substantial pain.

The global economy has been heading into a perfect storm. The COVID-19 pandemic has left scars on all our economies, precipitating a drop in aggregate demand and then aggregate supply. The symptoms are similar to those of a "liquidity trap," with third-party funding in the financial sector remaining high while the real economy stagnates. To solve this problem, the great 20th-century economist John Maynard Keynes proposed countercyclical fiscal policy. If the economy works well, the annual budget deficit should be reined in; but if the economy is slowing, deficits should be permitted to grow.

Indonesia, under a 2003 law, disciplined its fiscal policy by limiting annual budget deficits to less than 3 percent of gross domestic product and total public debt to 60 percent (using the same parameters as the EU's Stability and Growth Pact). But when COVID-19 caused the economy to contract, the annual budget deficit was expected to rise above 3 percent of GDP to create room for stimulus. To enable that flexibility, the government waived the budget deficit limit.

These food and energy supply pressures have left a heavy burden on the global economy, which is still struggling to heal from the wounds that the pandemic inflicted on global value chains. Nonetheless, Indonesia's economy remains relatively resilient, for several reasons.

For starters, Indonesia's own connections to global

value chains are weighted more heavily toward food and beverage products than automobiles and electronics. Second, the country generates a healthy share of its electricity from renewable energy sources. And third, Indonesia has a greater comparative advantage in raw materials than intermediate goods, which means it is less exposed to semiconductor shortages. It also means that it benefited from windfall income and a current account surplus when the prices of primary products (including palm oil, coal, rubber and nickel) rose in 2021.

Looking ahead, however, Indonesia still aims to boost domestic manufacturing by producing more intermediate goods, particularly for major global value chains such as automobiles and electronics.

In 2022, the pandemic shock to aggregate demand met new shocks to the supply of food and energy stemming from the war in Ukraine, resulting in forecasts of global stagflation and recession in 2023. Yet Indonesia's economy continues to move in a positive direction, with significant improvements both in aggregate demand, as measured by the consumer confidence index, and aggregate supply, as measured by the purchasing managers' index.

A higher consumer confidence index allowed Indonesia to maintain robust growth in the second quarter of 2022, when year-on-year household consumption growth exceeded total economic growth for the first time since the start of the pandemic. With the consumer confidence index still rising from July at 123.2 to August at 124.7, and the purchasing managers' index increasing in the third quarter of 2022 from 51.3 in July to 53.7 in September, Indonesia's economic performance continued to improve as the year progressed.

Against the backdrop of an increasingly gloomy global economy, Indonesia and a few other countries have become exceptional. The same advantages that have helped shield it from the storms of the past few years should continue to do so again in 2023.

Sri Mulyani Indrawati is Finance Minister of the Republic of Indonesia.

Putin, Xi to speak Friday via video-link: Kremlin

News Desk

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin will hold talks by video link with Chinese leader Xi Jinping on Friday, the Kremlin said, as Russia seeks to bolster ties with Beijing.

"It will be very important to exchange views on the most acute regional problems, which are both those that are closer to us, to Russia, and those that are closer to China," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters on Thursday.

"In the spirit of a real strategic partnership, our leaders will discuss these problems," Peskov said.

Putin is seeking to strengthen ties with Beijing and boost economic coop-



eration in the face of international condemnation and Western sanctions over Moscow's offensive in Ukraine.

Russia and China this month conducted joint naval drills, which Russia's army chief described as a response to the "aggressive" US military posturing in the Asia-Pacific region.

Last week, Putin inaugurated a gas field in eastern Siberia that will allow Russia to increase its energy exports to China as the West seeks to cut its dependence on Moscow following the Kremlin's assault on Ukraine.

China and Russia have drawn closer in recent years as part of what they call a "no-limits" relationship acting as a counterweight to the global dominance of the United States.

G7 tells Taliban to 'urgently reverse' women aid workers ban

Web Desk

ISLAMABAD: The ministers said they were "gravely concerned that the Taliban's reckless and dangerous order barring female employees of national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from the workplace puts at risk millions of Afghans who depend on humanitarian assistance for their survival."

"We call on the Taliban to urgently reverse this decision," they said in the statement issued by Britain's foreign ministry.

The ban is the latest blow against women's rights in Afghanistan since the Taliban reclaimed power last year.

Less than a week ago, the hard-line Islamists also barred women from attend-



Aid, ActionAid, Save the Children, the Norwegian Refugee Council and CARE.

The International Rescue Committee, which provides emergency response in health, education and other areas and employs 3,000 women across Afghanistan, also said it was suspending services.

"Millions of people in Afghanistan are on the verge of starvation," Christian Aid's head of global programs Ray Hasan said on Monday.

"Reports that families are so desperate they have been forced to sell their children to buy food are utterly heartbreaking," he said, adding that a ban on women aid workers would "only curtail our ability to help the growing number of people in need."

ing universities, prompting global outrage and protests in some Afghan cities.

"Women are absolutely central to humanitarian and basic needs operations. Unless they participate in aid delivery in Afghanistan, NGOs will be unable to reach the country's most vulnerable people to provide food, medicine, winterization, and other materials and services they need to live," the G7 statement said.

"The Taliban continue to demonstrate their contempt for the rights, freedoms, and welfare of the Afghan people, particularly women and girls," it added.

The statement comes after six aid bodies suspended operations in Afghanistan in response to the ban.

They included Christian

Aid, ActionAid, Save the Children, the Norwegian Refugee Council and CARE.

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"Reports that families are so desperate they have been forced to sell their children to buy food are utterly heartbreaking," he said, adding that a ban on women aid workers would "only curtail our ability to help the growing number of people in need."

The impact on civilians, meant that over 100 million people found themselves fleeing violence, wildfires, droughts, poverty and hunger, the UN chief said.

"In 2023, we need peace, now more than ever. Peace with one another, through dialogue to end conflict. Peace with nature and our climate, to build a more sustainable world."

Peace was also needed inside families and homes, "so women and girls can live in dignity and safety," added Guterres, as well as peace on streets that too often have seen violent reprisals from security forces in response to peaceful protest.

Demonstrators and whole communities, need "the full protection of human rights," he said, and for those with religious belief, there needs to be peace in places of worship, together with greater tolerance of other faiths.

There also needs to be peace online, he added, so instead of disinformation, and conspiracy theories, all societies can enjoy the Internet "free from hate speech and abuse."

"In 2023, let's put peace at the heart of our words and actions," the Secretary-General said.

"Together, let's make 2023 a year when peace is restored to our lives, our homes, and our world."

Brazil arrests four people for alleged coup attempt in Bolsonaro riots

Web Desk

BRASILIA: Brazilian police said they arrested four people and carried out nationwide raids on Thursday in investigations into an alleged coup attempt during riots by supporters of defeated far-right President Jair Bolsonaro.

Brazilian authorities, led by the Supreme Court, have been cracking down on a small but committed minority of Bolsonaro supporters who refuse to acknowledge leftist President-elect Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's election victory and are calling for a military coup.

Bolsonaro, who has yet to concede defeat, has pushed baseless claims that Brazil's electoral system lacks credibility, which some of his hardcore base believe.

Thursday's operation comes just days before Lula's inauguration on Sunday, and less than a week after police in Brasilia said they had foiled a bomb plot masterminded by alleged Bolsonaro supporters.

It stemmed from a riot on Dec. 12, the day Lula's victory was certified, when election-deniers camped outside army headquarters attacked the federal police headquarters and set cars and buses on fire in Brasilia after the arrest of a pro-Bolsonaro indigenous leader.

The federal police said on Thursday they were serving 32 search and arrest warrants in eight states under Supreme Court orders.

The alleged crimes were "qualified damage, arson, criminal association, violent abolition of the rule



of law and coup d'état, whose maximum combined penalties amount to 34 years in prison," they said in a statement.

According to Cleo Mazzotti, who heads the federal police's organized crime division, four people had been arrested by mid-morning, with more detentions expected as police continue to search for 21 other suspects.

Two arrest warrants were served in the northwestern state of Rondonia, one in Rio de Janeiro and one in Brasilia, Mazzotti said in a press conference.

Incoming Justice Minister Flavio Dino cheered the operation, saying it was aimed at upholding the rule of law by "protecting life and property" in Brazil.

"Political reasons do not legitimize arson, attacking the federal police headquarters, depredations, bombs. Freedom of expression does not apply to terrorism," Dino tweeted.

On Wednesday, Reuters reported that the Brasilia riots came after days of mounting tensions in the camp following the Dec. 6 arrest of Milton Baldin, a Bolsonaro supporter who had urged the nation's registered gun-owners to come to the capital to protest Lula's electoral certification.

Less than two weeks after the riots, police found a bomb in the capital. George Washington Sousa, a Bolsonaro supporter with links to the army encampment, confessed to making the device to provoke the military into an intervention.

Mazzotti said almost all of the people targeted in Thursday's raids had visited the pro-Bolsonaro camp.

With growing fears about security risks for Lula's Jan. 1 inauguration in the capital, Brazil's Supreme Court on Wednesday decided to ban registered gun-owners from carrying firearms in the federal district until after he takes office.

UN chief stresses need for global peace, 'now more than ever'



Spokesman Report

UNITED NATIONS: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, in his New Year Message, has called for the world peace in 2023, underscoring the need for conflicts to be resolved through dialogue.

"From Ukraine to Afghanistan to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and beyond, people left the ruins of their homes and lives in search of something better," he said in his video message on Thursday.

"Every New Year is a moment of rebirth," he said, adding, "In 2023, we need peace, now more than ever."

The impact on civilians, meant that over 100 million people found themselves fleeing violence, wildfires, droughts, poverty and hunger, the UN chief said.

"In 2023, we need peace, now more than ever. Peace with one another, through dialogue to end conflict. Peace with nature and our climate, to build a more sustainable world."

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"In 2023, let's put peace at the heart of our words and actions," the Secretary-General said.

"Together, let's make 2023 a year when peace is restored to our lives, our homes, and our world."

No evidence to support headline about Agrawal arrest for child porn



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Social media users have mistaken as authentic a headline about former Twitter CEO Parag Agrawal, taken from a fictional article that describes itself as satirical.

The headline, "Former Twitter CEO Parag Agrawal arrested for child porn," was shared on social media in a screenshot.

The headline and photo can be traced to an article published on Dec. 23 by the Vancouver Times website.

An update was added at the bottom of that article saying it is satire. A spokesperson for Vancouver Times also told Reuters via email that the article is satire, and that the Vancouver Times is a satire website.

The publication identifies itself as a "trusted source for satire" on its about-us page.

But the article is not overtly humorous and social media users have shared and commented on the headline as if it is real. One Facebook user shared a link to the article with the remark, "The news from Twitter gets better every day! Parag Agrawal the former CEO of Twitter, has been arrested for possession of child pornography after a tip off from Elon Musk."

Another Facebook user shared the screenshot of the headline with the comment, "Not surprises."

Agrawal did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment.

Verdict

No evidence. An article about the former CEO of Twitter being arrested for child porn was labeled as satire by the website that published it.

This article was produced by the Reuters Fact Check team. Read more about our work to fact-check social media posts.

Serbia arrests Afghan general, sniper on terrorism charges

Web Desk

SARAJEVO: Serbian police have arrested an Afghan army general and a sniper wanted by France on terrorism charges during a raid on an migrant camp in the north of the Balkan country, Tanjug news agency reported on Thursday.



France had issued an international warrant for the two men, police told Tanjug.

In a statement, police said the arrests were made at the makeshift camp near the northern town of Subotica, where 109 illegal migrants were found, 29 of whom were "interesting security-wise".

The statement gave no details on the two men "wanted on international warrants over multiple criminal acts", just saying that police would take measures against them according to law. There were no details of the suspected crimes or why the men were wanted by France.

Police seized an automatic rifle, ammunition and a small quantity of marijuana at the site, the statement said.

They also found 93 migrants at the border with Hungary, who will be taken to migrant centres.

Last month, Serbian police uncovered 600 illegal migrants near its northern border with Hungary following a shootout in a town in which one person was wounded.

The Western Balkans route via Turkey, Bulgaria, North Macedonia and Serbia is the main path for migrants into the European Union, with many using elaborate networks of smugglers who are sometimes armed.

US to impose mandatory COVID-19 tests for travelers from China



CHICAGO: The United States will impose mandatory COVID-19 tests on travellers from China, US health officials said on Wednesday, joining India, Italy, Japan and Taiwan in taking new measures after Beijing's decision to lift stringent zero-COVID policies.

The officials told reporters that beginning on Jan 5, all air passengers 2 years old and older will require a negative result from a test no more than two days before departure from China, Hong Kong or Macao. Passengers who test positive more than 10 days before a flight can provide documentation of recovery in lieu of the negative test result, the federal officials said.

They attributed the change in policy to the lack of information on variants of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and concerns that the increased number of COVID cases in China could result in the development of new variants of the virus.

The United States also is expanding its voluntary genomic sequencing programme at airports, adding Seattle and Los Angeles to the program. That brings the total number of airports gathering information from positive tests to seven. In an abrupt change of policy, China this month began dismantling the world's strictest COVID regime of lockdowns and extensive testing, putting its battered economy on course for a complete re-opening next year.

The lifting of restrictions, following widespread protests against them, means COVID is spreading largely unchecked and likely infecting millions of people a day, according to some international health experts.

Beijing has faced international criticism that its official COVID data and its tally of deaths are inconsistent with the scale of its outbreak.

"We have just limited information in terms of what's being shared related to number of cases that are increasing, hospitalisations and especially deaths. Also, there's been a decrease in testing across China so it also makes it difficult to know what the true infection rate is," a US health official told the briefing.

Given the large number of people in China who have not been exposed to the virus, the introduction of Omicron variants and the rollback of China's zero-COVID policies, US officials are concerned there will be a large number of infections leading to hospitalisations and deaths in China, the official said.

Death toll from Philippine floods, landslides climbs to 33

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: One person died and three others were missing in the southern Philippines after being hit by a landslide, police said Thursday, taking the nationwide death toll from recent rains to at least 33.

Authorities were still searching for more than two dozen other people missing after heavy downpours over the Christmas weekend caused flooding and landslides across central and southern regions. The latest death happened



Wednesday in Mati City in the province of Davao Oriental on Mindanao island when a landslide buried four people

as they fished, police said. The body of a 62-year-old man was recovered and the search for his companions was still under way, Mati City police chief Ernesto Gregore told AFP.

"There was a heavy downpour in the mountains. They were fishing in a river when the landslide occurred," Gregore said.

The weather turned bad over the weekend as the disaster-prone nation of 110 million people prepared for a long Christmas holiday. Hundreds of houses have since been destroyed and

more than 5,000 hectares (12,400 acres) of crops wiped out by rains that have forced tens of thousands of people into evacuation centres, the national disaster agency said.

Most fatalities have been in the province of Misamis Occidental, also on Mindanao, where 15 people died from drowning or rain-induced landslides.

The Philippines is ranked among the most vulnerable nations to the impacts of climate change, and scientists have warned that storms are becoming more powerful as the world gets warmer.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
39,747.35	39,279.43
Day's High	Day's Low:
39,747.35	39,205.17
Index Value	Change
6,265,585,605	+ 467.92
Percentage	Time
+ 1.19%	29 Dec, 2022 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,495.72	- 1.47
Percentage	Time
- 0.034%	29 Dec, 1:47 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
32,875.71	0.00
Percentage	Time
0.00%	28 Dec, 5:22 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
26,093.67	- 246.83
Percentage	Time
- 0.94%	29 Dec, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	155.5	156.75
Bahrain Dinar	603.5	608
Canadian Dollar	168	169.35
China Yuan	32.51	32.76
Danish Krone	32.35	32.7
Euro	260.4	263
Hong Kong Dollar	28.99	29.34
Indian Rupee	2.72	2.8
Japanese Yen	2.35	2.4
Kuwaiti Dinar	739	744
Malaysian Ringgit	50.95	51.4
New Zealand \$	144	145.2
Norwegians Krone	22.43	22.73
Omani Riyal	588.08	592.58
Qatari Riyal	61.75	62.25
Saudi Riyal	65	65.6
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	68.5	69.1
UK Pound Sterling	296.5	299.5
US Dollar	233.5	235.5

Naval Chief urges business community to tap potential of blue economy



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral M. Amjad Khan Niazi said that the blue economy in Pakistan offers great business potential, which still remains untapped and said that the business community should tap it to generate more business and economic activities. He said this while talking to a delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry that called on him led by Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President.

Admiral M. Amjad Khan Niazi said that by 2023, strong growth is expected in maritime industry which would create several jobs and open new avenues of entrepreneurship & commercial innovation and desired that the private sector should explore this industry for business opportunities. He said that Pakistan Navy is organizing Pakistan International

Maritime Expo & Conference (PIMEC) from February 10-12, 2023 under the patronage of Ministry of Maritime Affairs to jumpstart the development of maritime sector and invited ICCI to participate in it.

Real Admiral Muhammad Faisal Abbasi, Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (Ops) said that the business community is the backbone of the economy and it should play role to promote indigenous production of defence equipment and products to further strengthen the defence sector. He said that a maritime science & technology park has been approved and its construction would create more opportunities for business community as well.

Speaking at the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) thanked the Naval Chief for giving time to ICCI delegation for meeting. He said that Pakistan Navy is

importing many parts and equipment to meet its needs of manufacturing frigates and other defence related systems and ICCI wants to join hands with it to explore indigenous production of frigates and other systems that would also benefit the local industry. He said that the indigenous production of defence equipment would reduce the import bill and save precious foreign exchange reserves of the country.

Engr. Muhammad Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI said that Pakistan is blessed with over 1000 Km long coastal line and stressed for close cooperation between ICCI and Pakistan Navy to promote the coastal tourism.

Zafar Bakhtawari, Zahid Maqbool, Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi, Raja Muhammad Imtiaz, Khalid Mahmood Chaudhary, Saif Ur Rehman and Zia Chaudhary were in the ICCI delegation.

Fuel shortage

Due to shortage of energy in country a vendor is selling coal during the winter season at his roadside setup



PIAF wants serious steps to win investors' confidence as FDI continues to decline

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Raising grave concern over the falling trend of foreign direct investment the Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) has said that the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into Pakistan has plunged by 47 percent to \$253 million during the first quarter of the current fiscal year, indicating that the government has failed to win the confidence of foreign investors due to continued rupee depreciation and uncertainty.

PIAF Chairman Faheem ur Rehman Saigol, in a joint statement along with senior vice chairman Nasrullah Mughal and vice chairman Tahir Manzoor Ch, observed that the inflows under the FDI recorded 31.7 percent decline to \$395 million during the quarter under review as compared with \$579 million in the same quarter of the last year.

Quoting the data, Faheem ur Rehman Saigol said that the total foreign private investment into the country fell by 36.3 per cent to \$241.3 million during the quarter under review when compared with \$379 million in the corresponding quarter of the last fiscal year.

The portfolio investment in the capital market registered massive decline in outflow during the quarter under review.

The outflow of portfolio investment recorded \$12.1 million during the first quarter of the current fiscal year as compared with the



outflow of \$100.5 million in the same quarter of the last year.

The foreign public investment under the head of debt securities recorded an outflow of \$18.2 million during the first quarter of the fiscal year 2022/2023 as compared with inflow of \$980 million in the same quarter of the last fiscal year.

The total foreign investment including private and public recorded a decline of 83.6 per cent to \$223 million during the first quarter of the current fiscal year as compared with \$1.36 billion in the same quarter of the last fiscal year.

He advocated the need for raising the country's tax base so that tax-to-GDP ratio improves from current poor level.

He urged the trade officers to explore opportunities to diversify exports of goods and services in their respective areas, asking them to meet the challenges faced by Pakistan in European markets.

He also suggested the ministry to devise strategies for promotion of Pakistani products, calling upon trade officers to take advantage of opportunities offered by China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Huawei Datacom become leading Non-north American vendor to named in Gartner Magic Quadrant 2022

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Huawei announced that it was named a Leader in the 2022 Gartner® Magic Quadrant™ for Enterprise Wired and Wireless LAN Infrastructure, the only non-North American vendor positioned in the Leaders Quadrant. Huawei takes it as a milestone and believes it is yet another testament to the global recognition of Huawei's full lineup of network offerings. Huawei's wide range of solutions include the Cloud Campus 3.0 Solution, Cloud Engine series switches, Air Engine Wi-Fi Access Points (APs), and iMaster NCE automatic and intelligent network management platform.

As an excellent supplier in the global enterprise wired and wireless LAN infrastructure market, Huawei has a host of strengths, including the comprehensive product portfolio, Artificial Intelligence (AI)- and Machine Learning (ML)-enabled network management platform, wireless-first support, and industry-leading "Ability to Execute" and "Comple-



ness of Vision".

Huawei has a holistic set of enterprise wired and wireless LAN infrastructure offerings. Featured products and solutions include the end-to-end Cloud Campus Solution across LANs, WLANs, and WANs, feature-rich Cloud Engine series switches, award-winning Air Engine Wi-Fi APs, and field-proven iMaster NCE automatic and intelligent network management platform. To date, these products and solutions have served millions of customers worldwide across industries, gaining high praise in the process.

Huawei remains committed to the global enterprise market, and constantly innovates to set the benchmark for enterprise

networks in terms of simplified network architecture, best-in-class hardware design, agile software delivery, and flexible business models.

More specifically, Huawei simplifies the campus network architecture from three layers to two with its solution consisting of the central switch and Remote Units (RUs). Keeping hardware innovation in mind, Huawei has unveiled innovative third-generation Wi-Fi 6 smart antennas and a range of brand-new Cloud Engines switches and Air Engine APs. With regard to software innovation, Huawei stands out with the powerful iMaster NCE automatic and intelligent network management platform that underpins the industry's first L3 autonomous driving network for campuses. When it comes to innovative business models, Huawei differentiates itself from other vendors by launching a leaseable and salable cloud management platform model, as well as flexible deployment options, including on-premises, Huawei public cloud, and MSP-owned cloud.

21st World Wind Energy Conference and Exhibition 'Symphony of the Renewables'

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The World Wind Energy Association (WWEA) is pleased to announce the 21st World Wind Energy Conference and Exhibition (WWEC2023), taking place on 16-18 May 2023 in Hobart, the capital of Tasmania (Australia).

The main theme of WWEC2023 is "Symphony of the Renewables" referring to the manifold synergies of a combination of wind power and other renewable energies, such as hydro, solar, geothermal, ocean, bioenergy and storage technologies such as hydrogen - ultimately for a 100% renewable energy supply.

WWEC2023 takes place at a time when governments around



the world have become more aware than ever that renewable energy alone can ensure sustainable development, as the former President of India stated already during WWEC2006 that renewable energies are affordable and accessible and represent freedom and peace energies alike.

WWEC2023 will in particular take the socioeconomic dimensions of renewable energy into account: all sectors of society need to be mobilised, from governments, citizens

and communities, businesses, science and academia, civil society etc. Local ownership and community engagement models will be discussed which will help to ensure, by sharing benefits, that there is strong social support of the energy transformation.

The hosting state Tasmania is an excellent location for WWEC2023, as Tasmania has not only applied a broad variety of renewable energy technology, including some of the world's top wind sites. Tasmania already achieved 100% renewable energy self sufficiency and has also adopted a 200% renewable energy target, aiming at sharing its renewable energy abundance with other states and countries.

WWEA President Hon.

Peter Rae AO: "Wind power, in a symphony with the other renewables, can and yes provide reliable and affordable power - as we are proving every day in Tasmania. We are cordially inviting the international community to join us for the WWEC2023 and share their latest achievements on how to advance even fast to a renewable energy world."

Wind and renewable energy experts from around the world, Australia, Oceania, and the broader Asia-Pacific region will gather in Hobart to discuss how to deploy wind power and other renewables in order to achieve a 100% renewable energy future - or even beyond that. Technical, economic and political conditions will be discussed that need to be available for such a future.

Pakistan to capitalize on exportable services: RCCI



Business Reporter

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) urged the Government of Pakistan to capitalize on exportable services and products requiring minimal infrastructure and investments.

RCCI President Saqib Rafiq while addressing "Corporate Clients Seminar" hosted by Wah Nobel Group at Islamabad Club, said that being competitive, a country's exports should be in line with market trends and quality, and be certified on internationally acceptable standards.

He said that Pakistan has its great importance with respect to strategic location. We can tap Central Asia and

Africa for non-conventional sectors like Information technology, Services, Hospitality and Pharmaceutical.

Central Asian countries are landlocked countries, the only and nearer Sea Port is Gwadar. This has immense potential especially in the Agri market. Mangos, RICE and Oranges already have great demand in these countries, he added.

Saqib Rafiq said that Pakistan is among the economies where digitization is triggering changes in some components of the service sector. Businesses are also capitalizing on opportunities emerging from digitization, such as supply chain efficiency, lower transaction cost and enhanced flexibility in addressing consumer needs.

Accepting all IMF demands is the only option



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Thursday said restoring the confidence of investors without restoring the confidence of the IMF is an illusion.

Running the economy without improving relations with the international organization is like playing with fire, it said.

Accepting all IMF demands is the only option which if delayed will inflict more damage to the economy, said Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President of PEW.

He said that despite reassuring statements from key political leaders and senior officials, rumors of default in the country are gaining momentum, the rupee is depreciating against the dollar and foreign exchange reserves are dwindling alarmingly.

Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that international credit rating agencies are continuously lowering Pakistan's rating, commercial lenders have refused to extend the repayment period of loans, and some international organizations have expressed fear of a serious currency crisis in Pakistan.

He added that the IMF has postponed its review twice, the program will be restored only after the completion of the review and Pakistan will be able to get 1.2 billion dollars.

Owing to the tension between the IMF and Pakistan some other institutions and friendly countries are also not willing to give loans to Pakistan resulting in worries among the business community. Many investors have delayed their investment decisions and they are awaiting some positive signals.

Dr. Mughal said that the policymakers should not deceive themselves and restore ties with the IMF to end anxiety, uncertainty, and rumors which are very harmful to the limping economy.

Shaheen Shah Afridi and Fakhar Zaman not included due to their ongoing knee rehabilitation

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan have recalled hard-hitting batter Sharjeel Khan into the ODI fold after five years, with the team's new chief selector Shahid Afridi naming as many as six uncapped players in the 21-man probable list for the upcoming series against New Zealand.

While the final squad will be trimmed to 16 players next week, there will be no place for both Shaheen Shah Afridi and Fakhar Zaman, due to their ongoing knee rehabilitation.

The 21-man list is mostly made up of younger players in the system like Qasim Akram, Ihsanullah and Tayyab Tahir, who have all made a mark in the domestic circuit. Also included is top-order batter Kamran Ghulam, who scored a record 1249 runs for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the 2020-21 Quaid-e-Azam Trophy, and is among the leading scorers in the ongoing Pakistan Cup with 435 runs from six



matches, including two hundreds.

Pakistan have also called up Shan Masood, who last played an ODI more than three years ago, against Australia. Abrar Ahmed, who recently made his Test debut against England and ended with a record-breaking seven-wicket

haul in the first innings, is also on the 21-man list, as is fast-bowling allrounder Aamer Jamal, who made his T20I debut in September.

Pakistan's last ODI assignment was a three-match series in Netherlands back in August; only Zahid Mehmood

has been dropped from that particular squad, while both Shaheen and Zaman are expected to return to full fitness before next year's Pakistan Super League.

The upcoming three-match ODI series against New Zealand was originally planned to be held in September last year, but the visitors called off their limited-overs tour just minutes before the start of the first ODI, citing security concerns. The upcoming series will fully be held in Karachi, with the matches scheduled for January 9, 11 and 13.

Pakistan's probables: Babar Azam (captain), Abdullah Shafiq, Abrar Ahmed, Aamer Jamal, Haris Rauf, Hasan Ali, Ihsanullah, Imam-ul-Haq, Kamran Ghulam, Mohammad Haris, Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Rizwan, Mohammad Wasim, Naseem Shah, Qasim Akram, Salman Ali Agha, Shadab Khan, Shah Nawaz Dahani, Shan Masood, Sharjeel Khan and Tayyab Tahir.

PCB, Balochistan Govt to jointly renovate Quetta stadium for PSL matches



News Desk

QUETTA: The Balochistan Government and the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Thursday decided to jointly renovate a cricket stadium in Quetta with proper arrangements for holding PSL matches in the provincial metropolis.

The decision to the effect was taken during a meeting of PCB officials with Principal Secretary of Balochistan Chief Minister, Imran Kichki.

During the meeting, issues pertaining to holding of Pakistan Super League (PSL) matches in Quetta were discussed in detail. It was assured that effective steps would be taken for the security of teams and fans.

Imran Kichki said holding of PSL matches in the provincial capital would give an opportunity to the local cricket players to improve their game.

Both the grounds and weather conditions in Quetta were suitable for holding summer cricket camps, he added.

He said Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo had deep interest in promoting sports activities in the province.

The provincial government, he said, was playing an important role in keeping hockey and football alive at the national level.

He said there were a lot of talented cricket players across Balochistan as the game was played at Tehsil level, and organizing matches like the PSL would give them an opportunity to come forward and show their prowess.

Rashid Malik won the 8th Begum Kasum Saifullah Tennis Championship

Sports Reporter

Rashid Malik (Tamgha-e-Imtiaz) and former Davis Cupper and Senior Player, Coach have won the 8th Begum Kasum Saifullah National Ranking Tennis Championship along with his partner Israr Gul in the category of under 45 plus and beat Azeem Khan and Mehmood Khan by 6-4, 6-3, 6-2 and achieved the double winner victory in the Championship. In an interview he said its great honour for me with my partner Israr that we won the double winner final.

Rashid Malik also showed the wonderful performance against Indian player Mittal Mukesh in ITF seniors over the age of 50 plus in Jalandhar Rashid Malik high the flag of Pakistan after defeating Indian Player. Rashid said if Government support the tennis we can produce better result.



Exciting competitions of Potohar Sports Festival 2022



Sports Reporter

LAHORE: The exciting competitions of Potohar Sports Festival 2022 are in progress at different venues of Rawalpindi division under the auspices of Youth Affairs and Sports Department Punjab on Thursday.

The competitions of 10 games including arm-wrestling, hockey, athletics, kabaddi, tug-of-war, badminton, cricket, martial arts, football and volleyball are being organised in the Potohar Sports Festival in which more than 5,000 male and female players are exhibiting their talent.

It is worth-mentioning that Sports Board Punjab is organizing Potohar Sports Festival in Rawalpindi division with an aim to provide better sports facilities to youth of the region. The teams from six districts of Rawalpindi division including Rawalpindi, Attock, Chakwal, Jehlum, Murree and Talagang are participating in the grand event.

Assistant Commissioner Rawalpindi, Deputy Director (B&A) Nadeem Qaiser and District Sports Officer Rawalpindi Shamas Tauheed Abbasi distributed prizes among the winners and prominent performers in some of the competitions which concluded on Wednesday evening.

22,000 fans turn up to watch Lanka Premier League Final

News Desk

COLOMBO: The Lanka Premier League 2022 came to a blockbuster end with 22000 fans cheering for their favourite stars at the final of Lanka Premier. The Jaffna Kings clinched their third consecutive title after pulling off a thrilling two-wicket victory over Colombo Stars in the summit clash at the R. Premadasa International Cricket Stadium. Along with providing exceptional action on the field, the tournament also brought smiles to the faces of the Sri Lankan people after a traumatic economic and political crisis in the nation. The competition also received support from cricket legends Wasim Akram and Sanath Jayasuriya, who were associated with LPL as brand ambassadors.

Through the Lanka Premier League, the IPG Group has made a tremendous contribution in growing the cricketing talent at the grassroots level in Sri Lanka. Stepping on the platform laid by the LPL, the IPG Group is further looking to grow the game of cricket



in Malaysia by starting a similar cricket league in the country next year.

Anil Mohan, Founder and CEO of IPG, the official promoter of LPL said, "We are proud of what we have done in a short span of time. It's nice to see so many fans coming out to the stadiums to watch the matches. The tournament has been a huge success and we hope to come back next year with the same zeal and excitement

in Malaysia by starting a similar cricket league in the country next year.

The third edition of the Lanka Premier League saw some exhilarating performances from young domestic cricketers as well as foreign players. West Indies all-rounder Carlos Brathwaite, who played for Kandy Falcons franchise was the highest wicket taker and was awarded with Orange Cap in the competition. The right arm fast medium bowler took 18 wickets in 8 innings at an average of 9.88. He was closely followed by Nuwan Thushara of Galle Gladiators, who took 14 wickets in 9 matches.

While, top-order batter Avishka Fernando of the Jaffna Kings was the highest run getter and received the Green Cap. The top-order batter scored 339 runs in 10 matches at an impressive average of 37.66, with a highest score of 54. He was closely followed by his teammate Sadeera Samarawickrama, who made 294 runs in 9 innings, at an average of 58.80, with a highest score of 62 (not out). Sadeera was also adjudged as Player of the Tournament for his superb all-round performance.

Jaffna Kings' legbreak bowler Vijayakanth Vijayakanth, who impressed with his performance and took 13 wickets in 8 innings was awarded Emerging Player of the tournament. Meanwhile, Afghanistan's wicketkeeper batter Rahmanullah Gurbaz of Jaffna Kings was given Innovative Player of the tournament. He also received the award for hitting maximum sixes (15) in the tournament.

Meanwhile, Tournament Director, Samantha, said, "The fans have loved every minute of the tournament. The league has seen some exciting young players showcasing their skill on a global stage and I wish them all the best for their future. It has also helped in bringing joy and happiness among the people of this country as it has united the country after a turbulent period of time."

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Sir Syed and Aga Khan University reached the finals of HEC Volleyball Championship

Sports Reporter

KARACHI: Sir Syed University of Engineering and Aga Khan University qualified for the final of the HEC Zone M Inter-University Volleyball Championship held under the collaboration of Sir Syed University and Higher Education Commission of Pakistan. Indus University and IBA got defeated in the semi-final matches. Dr. Sarosh Lodhi, Vice Chancellor of NED University was the Chief Guest of semifinal matches of the ongoing championship in the Gymnasium of NED University.

The event was attended by the Organizing Secretary International, Mubashir



Mukhtar, Director Sports NED University, Madam Farkhunda, Shahid Masood, Mohsin Ali Khan, Javed Iqbal, Nomanuddin and others.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Sarosh

Lodhi, said that HEC is not only contributing to education, but also showing its significant efforts in sports. Director Sports HEC, Javed Memon deserves appreciation for holding successful events

in a row and the efforts of SSUET Sports Department for organizing Volleyball event as Host are laudable.

In the semi-final matches, Sir Syed University defeated Indus University by 9-5 and 25-18, while Aga Khan University beat IBA by 25-23, 25-4 and 15-8 qualifying for the final. The final match of the event will be played today.

Photo Caption: Group photo shows Chief Guest, Vice Chancellor NED University, Dr. Sarosh Lodhi along with Aga Khan University team, Shahid Masood, Mubashir Mukhtar, Mohsin Ali Khan, Javed Iqbal and others on the occasion of semi-final of HEC Zone M Inter University Volleyball Championship.

Kane Williamson 200* and NZ spinners put Pakistan under pressure

The hosts go into the final day two down and still trailing by 97 runs

KARACHI: Pakistan 438 and 77 for 2 (Imam 45*, Sodhi 1-17) trail New Zealand 612 for 9 dec (Williamson 200*, Latham 113, Conway 92, Abrar 5-205) by 97 runs

Kane Williamson's fifth double-hundred in Test cricket helped New Zealand pile up a mammoth 612 for 9 before Tim Southee declared the innings with his side 174 ahead in the first Test in Karachi. By stumps, the visitors had struck twice, leaving Pakistan 77 for 2, still 97 behind.

Having relinquished the red-ball captaincy, Williamson came into this game with questions over his form. His away record in the last few years too didn't paint a great picture; since the start of 2019, he had just 233 runs in eight away Tests, at an average of 15.53 with a best of 48.

But on Thursday, he showed tremendous patience, great control, and exemplary footwork against spin to almost double that tally. He scored an unbeat-

en 200 off 395 balls; according to ESPNcricinfo's logs, he was in control 93% of the time. On multiple occasions he skipped down the track to Abrar Ahmed and Nauman Ali, but instead of looking to hit the ball for a six, he focused on chipping it over the bowler's head for four. In all, he struck 21 fours and a six.

Along with Ish Sodhi, who scored a career-best 65, Williamson added 159 for the seventh wicket. The two overnight batters kept Pakistan wicketless in the first session, which seemed to have borrowed the laziness from a winter morning. In 32 overs in that session, New Zealand added just 79 runs, with Sodhi's contribution being more than Williamson's.

But post-lunch, both batters, especially Williamson, increased the scoring rate. Sodhi brought up his half-century with a four off Abrar. In the next over, Williamson steered Mir Hamza to the deep-third boundary to get to his

150. Shortly afterwards, Williamson first whipped Nauman to the fine-leg boundary and then used his feet to loft him over mid-on for another four. The change in the approach meant the first ten overs after lunch fetched New Zealand 47 runs.

To stem the flow of runs, and to break through, Mohammad Wasim bowled a barrage of short balls to Sodhi, starting around the wicket and then switching to over. He even hit Sodhi on the helmet. But the batter pulled the very next ball, another short one, to the square-leg boundary.

From the other end, Nauman switched to over the wicket and started bowling outside leg stump. Williamson countered that with the reverse sweep, picking up back-to-back boundaries to keep the scoreboard moving.

Sodhi went past his previous best of 63 but fell soon after, miscuing Abrar to mid-off. Southee didn't last long either and was also taken at mid-off, off Nauman.

In the next over, Abrar dismissed Neil Wagner to complete his five-for as New Zealand lost three wickets in two runs.

Williamson was on 186 at that point, and with No. 11 Ajaz Patel for company, farmed the strike as much as possible. On 195, he skipped down the track to Abrar and chipped him wide of long-off for four. A single on the next ball, took him to the double-hundred. New Zealand declared once he reached the milestone.

In response, Imam-ul-Haq and Abdullah Shafique started solidly against a new, turning-from-the-rough ball. Throughout the 31 overs New Zealand bowled in the evening, they had spin at least from one end, mostly from both. Ajaz shared the new ball with Southee, who bowled only three overs in his first spell before throwing ball to Michael Bracewell.

It was Bracewell who eventually broke the 47-run opening stand when Shafique skipped down the track and hit one straight to



mid-on. Sodhi dealt a late blow, trapping Shan Masood lbw for 10. At stumps, Imam was batting on 45, nightwatcher Nauman keeping him company on 4.

In the morning, Sodhi was mainly focused on protecting his wicket. He tried to score only when the bowlers really erred in their lines and lengths. Wasim pitched one short and wide, and Sodhi cut it through point for four. When spinners dropped it short and strayed down the leg side, he went for the pull but on a sluggish pitch,

the timing eluded him.

Wasim played around with his field. At one point, he had a leg gully, a catching backward square leg, and two catching short midwickets for Sodhi. He went slightly round-arm, searching for the reverse-swinging yorker, but couldn't get his length right, and Sodhi faced little trouble blocking those. One such delivery found Sodhi's inside edge and thudded into his pads. Aleem Dar ignored the stifled appeal for lbw, but Babar Azam, more in hope than

anything else, ended up burning Pakistan's final review over that.

Abrar, meanwhile, mixed his legbreaks with googlies. He varied his pace as well, tossing it up as slow as 70kph to darting in as fast as 90. But nothing bothered Williamson and Sodhi. After almost procrastinating for the first 11 overs of the day when he scored just six runs off 29 balls, Williamson skipped down the ground to Abrar and punched him over his head for four.

With little happening for the bowlers, Pakistan took the third new ball as soon as it became available. Hamza got produced a chance immediately, inducing an outside edge of Sodhi's bat but it flew for four through the vacant second-slip region. The one that carried into Sarfaraz Ahmed's gloves shortly afterwards, off the same bowler, no one seemed to notice. That was the second life for Sodhi; Sarfaraz had earlier dropped him down the leg side off Nauman.