



Pakistan to continue raising voice against human rights abuses in IIOJK: FO

Pakistan will continue to raise its voice on the continuing grave human rights abuses in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), said Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch here on Thursday.



Spring video of Makkah getting huge response in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: The recent spring video of Makkah shared by Saudi Ambassador Nawaf bin Said Al Maliki on his twitter handle is getting huge public response in Pakistan. Sharing the video on his twitter account, he said, "The world's most sacred land had turned green."

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Gender Budgeting in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf addressing the participants of launch of Summary Paper on 'Gender Budgeting in Pakistan' on Thursday.



Imran Khan says 'my disqualification won't affect pti's vote bank'

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Former premier and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan has said that his political party's vote bank will not be affected by his disqualification as the people will vote for his party's narrative, ARY News reported on Thursday.



announced. "PDM is being exposed with every passing day. PDM is completely failed in delivering to the nation."

Imran Khan, while talking to senior journalists, said that Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) failed to deliver to the Pakistanis on all fronts. He directly blamed Finance Minister Ishaq Dar for intensifying the crises.

He said that voices are being raised within the ruling Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N). "I still have many cards to surprise the PDM. The dissolution of the Punjab Assembly was a brilliant stroke against the PDM which will be remembered for decades."

Khan said that Chaudhry Nisar was the first person who had raised his voice against the dynastic politics of PML-N. He said that PTI is not mulling over any option of rallies if the election schedule is not

announced. "PDM is being exposed with every passing day. PDM is completely failed in delivering to the nation."

The PTI chief alleged that the PDM parties used public resources for their own interests. "Only the PTI government can bring the country out of all crises."

He criticised that PML-N supreme Nawaz Sharif is not a politician.

Imran Khan urged to find a 'political solution' to the Balochistan issue. To a question, he said that people will vote for the PTI's narrative even if he is disqualified.

Earlier in the day, former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan asserted that the country cannot afford any delay in elections.

Pakistani leadership fully committed to Kashmir cause: President Alvi

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has asserted that the entire Pakistani leadership, irrespective of their political affiliations, was fully committed to the Kashmir cause, urging the media to highlight illegal Indian actions of August 5, 2019.

The president made these remarks during a luncheon hosted for the Acting President of AJK, Anwar ul Haq, Prime Minister of AJK, Sardar Tanvir Ilyas, Former PM of AJK, Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, members of the AJK Legislative Assembly, and senior political leadership of AJK.

Speaking on the occasion, President Arif Alvi said that the entire Pakistani leadership, irrespective of their political affiliations, was fully committed towards the Kashmir cause and would continue giving their moral, political, and diplomatic support for the inalienable right to self-determination of the Kashmiris.

He observed that there was a clear distinction between the freedom fighters and terrorists,



and the Kashmiri brothers and sisters were waging a just freedom struggle by all means and angles and were sacrificing their lives for the attainment of their right to self-determination.

President Arif Alvi regretted that the Muslim freedom movements around the world were deliberately, wrongly and unjustifiably equated with the terrorist movement, whereas other such movements were termed as just and lawful.

The president proposed that

the media, being the most effective tool to convey around the world any injustice committed anywhere in the world against humanity, must also be used effectively to raise the voice and aspirations of the Kashmiris for their right to self-determination.

He said the media should also highlight the illegal, unlawful, and unjust Indian actions of August 5, 2019 which had unilaterally deprived the Kashmiris of their special status and protection which was provided to them

under Article 370 and 35A of the Indian Constitution and the human right violations committed by India with impunity.

He said that the international media should also be engaged to compare the political, economic, social, cultural and religious freedoms enjoyed by the Kashmiris in AJK and contrast it with the oppression, cruelty, humiliation and suppression of Kashmiris in IIOJK.

The president further said that the Kashmiri brethren in

IIOJK had rendered innumerable sacrifices and as per estimates over 500,000 Kashmiris had embraced martyrdom, 30,000 women had been widowed, 10,000 had been raped, many had been made "half-widows", and thousands of Kashmiris had been crippled and blinded for the rest of their lives.

Meanwhile, Members of the Legislative Assembly of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and senior political leadership unanimously passed a five-point resolution calling on India to reverse its illegal, unlawful and unjust annulment of Articles 370 and 35A of the Indian Constitution on August 5, 2019.

They re-endorsed the principled stand taken by Pakistan to link any negotiation or dialogue with India with the reversal of these actions.

The five-point resolution called upon India to "retract its illegal move to change the demography of IIOJK by illegally issuing domiciles to over 4,200,000 non-Kashmiris and empowering them to buy Kashmiri land and conduct businesses."

Elections only solution to current crisis: Shahid Khaqan Abbasi



its decisions.

He clarified that he is not thinking about creating a new political party or a forward bloc of PML-N. He said that those who came into power should realise their responsibilities. "The nation has given the chance to everyone but no one is serious in resolving the issues."

Abbasi said that national issues cannot be resolved by blaming each other. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said that he is not aiming to create a new political party or a forward bloc within PML-N.

"We want a government whose priorities must be addressing the national issues but not the continuation of blame game. Our government paid the political price of the difficult decisions."

"I cannot support the Twitter message of Suleman Shehbaz. None other than elections is the only solution to the current crisis."

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Senior Vice President Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has said that elections are the only solution to the current crisis, ARY News reported on Thursday.

Shahid Khaqan Abbasi favoured the organisation of fresh elections in the country.

The PML-N senior leader said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif can make difficult decisions and each political party would pay the price for

Two policemen martyred in terrorist attack on check-post

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Two policemen embraced martyrdom after terrorists attacked a security check-post in Takhta Beg area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's (KP) Khyber Agency.

According to details, terrorists fired 'rocket launchers' on a security check-post in Takhta Beg area of Khyber Agency, in which two policemen embraced martyrdom while three others sustained injuries.

The police, in a statement, said the law enforcement agency (LEA) retaliated and killed one alleged militant after an exchange of fire.

PPP assures JI of addressing concerns over alleged rigging in LG polls

Bureau Report

KARACHI: A delegation of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) led by provincial minister Saeed Ghani on Thursday met Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Karachi chief Hafiz Naeem Rehman and assured him of addressing reservations after the later expressed grievances over alleged rigging in recently held second phase of local government elections.

The PPP delegation include Sindh Education Minister Saeed Ghani and Najmi Shah. During the meeting, matters pertaining to second phase of LG elections in Karachi and Hyderabad and other issues came under discussion.

Talking to media after the meeting, JI Karachi chief Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman said that all matters were discussed with the PPP. He said they have serious concerns about the local body elections and the concerns have been shared with the friends from the PPP. "We will again hold



talks if things improve," he said. He further said that legal and matters are involved in the election and the government provides staff to the Election Commission, adding that most of the problems are related to ROs and DROs and we think this problem should be solved in a good way.

On the occasion, provincial minister Saeed Ghani while praising Hafiz Naeem of his hospitality congratulated the winning candidates of JI

and also assured him addressing the party concerns.

He said that the staff works under the supervision of the ECP during the elections, adding that they want the PPP and JI to work together. "Maintaining law and order in the city is everyone's responsibility and we have to try not to increase the tension among the political workers."

Ghani also denied reports of creating three divisions in Karachi.

Govt firm to revive IMF programme: Ayesha Ghous Pasha

ISLAMABAD: State Minister for Finance and Revenue, Ayesha Ghous Pasha here on Thursday

highlighted that the government wants to continue programme with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in such a way that the common man should not bear the burden of tough decisions to be made as per the Fund's condition.

Speaking to the media here after attending the Senate Standing Committee on Finance, Mrs. Pasha said that the government's economic team is having meetings with the Prime Minister to focus on its program with the IMF. APP

Bilawal, Belgian FM discuss bilateral, global matters



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Thursday met Foreign Minister of Belgium Hadja Lahbib and discussed bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest.

Bilawal appreciated the support extended by the government of Belgium for the flood-affected people of Pakistan.

Both sides expressed the resolve to further strengthen

economic, trade, investment and cultural cooperation.

Bilawal Bhutto also met Axel Van Trotsenburg, Managing Director Operations of World Bank and discussed its engagement with Pakistan.

He lauded the pledge of the World Bank of \$2 billion made at Resilient Pakistan Conference and also mentioned its important role as a major development partner. Both side expressed the resolve to achieving shared goals.

Convocation

FAISALABAD: Governor of Punjab, Muhammad Baligh Ur Rehman is addressing during 10th Convocation of Government College University Faisalabad New Campus on Thursday.



Russian energy minister meets PM Shehbaz

Bureau Report

LAHORE: A delegation led by Russian Energy Minister Nikolay Shulginov on Thursday called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif here where in the two sides discussed the supply of oil and gas from Russia to Pakistan on a long term basis.

During the meeting, both the sides agreed on the importance of energy sector for the development of bilateral economic and trade relations.

The two sides also reviewed the matters related to gas pipelines, a PM Office statement said.

Welcoming the delegation the prime minister highlighted the importance Pakistan



attached to its relations with the Russian Federation.

He recalled his meeting with President Vladimir Putin in Samarkand in September 2022 and said that the meeting had reached important

decisions to further strengthen Pakistan-Russia relations.

He also noted with satisfaction the keen desire on both the sides to upgrade the bilateral cooperation in trade, investment and economic

matters.

The Russian energy minister reciprocated the prime minister's sentiments and delivered a special message of Russian President Vladimir Putin to the prime minister.

In his message, President Putin referring to Pakistan as Russia's important partner in South Asia and the Islamic World reiterated Russia's strong interest to deepen the bilateral relationship.

The prime minister provided guidance for the work of 8th Round of Pakistan-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission meeting scheduled to be held in Islamabad on January 20, 2023.

Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Federal Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar, Minister for State for Petroleum Musadik Malik and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Tariq Fatimi were also present in the meeting.

Pakistan to continue raising voice against human rights abuses in IIOJK: FO

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will continue to raise its voice on the continuing grave human rights abuses in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), said Foreign Office Spokesperson here on Thursday.

Speaking at the weekly press conference here, she said Pakistan will also continue to extend unstinted moral, political and diplomatic support to the people of Jammu and Kashmir in their quest for self-determination in accordance with the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

During the last week, Indian oppression in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and

Kashmir (IIOJK) continued unabated, she added.

She said the Indian forces continued to carry out cordon and search operations in different parts of Rajouri, Poonch and Reasi districts, harassing the local population.

In a disturbing event, two Kashmiri youth were killed in a fake encounter in Budgam district after they were dislodged by the Indian troops from a vehicle and shot dead on spot, she said adding a 75-year-old under-trial prisoner, Mohammed Maqbool Khan, died in custody after he was tortured in Kupwara jail. He and his three sons were detained in August last year on trumped up charges.

"For the last one month, a family in Kunan village of

Kupwara has been desperately looking for the whereabouts of their son and brother Abdul Rashid Dar. A mini truck driver, Dar went missing on 15 December after he was whisked away by Army soldiers from 41 Rashtriya Rifles unit. His mother, Khera Begum, has demanded knowledge on Rashid's whereabouts or at least a proof of life," she remarked.

"The case of Rashid Dar, though tragic, is not unique. Over the last three decades, hundreds have gone missing while in the custody of Indian security forces. According to credible counts, some 8000 persons have gone missing in IIOJK since 1989."

She told that Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bilawal Bhutto



Zardari will undertake an official visit to Tashkent, Uzbekistan on 25th January 2023 to attend the 26th meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). The theme of the event is "Year of Strengthening Connectivity", an area of special interest and significance for Pakistan.

FAFEN notes mistakes in form-II for Sindh LG polls result

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Fair and Free Election Network (FAFEN) on Thursday noted mistakes in form-II issued for reporting Sindh local government (LG) elections result in its newly released report.

The report finds that names of polling stations, registered male and female voters, signature of presiding officers, and other important information was missing from the forms. However, provisional result was issued within two days despite allegations of rigging. Collected result for Hyderabad division has still not been reported despite the fact that four days had been stipulated for reporting the result.

Parliamentary body formed to finalise caretaker Punjab CM

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Punjab Assembly Speaker Sibtain Khan has formed a six-member parliamentary committee for finalising the nomination for the caretaker Punjab chief minister (CM) post.

The parliamentary committee was formed in pursuance of letters written to the Punjab Assembly speaker by the Opposition Leader Hamza Shehbaz and Chief Minister Pervaiz Elahi.

The committee members include Malik Ahmed Khan, Hassan Murtaza, Nadeem Kamran, Mian Aslam Iqbal, Raja Basharat and Makhdoom Hashim Jawab Bakht.

The committee has to finalise caretaker Punjab CM name within three days, according to

the notification.

The issue of the nomination of the caretaker chief minister of Punjab was referred to the parliamentary committee after the ruling alliance and opposition failed to finalise caretaker CM Punjab.

After dissolution of the Punjab Assembly, consultations between the ruling PTI and PML-Q, and the opposition Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PMLN) are underway for appointment of the caretaker chief minister.

Opposition leader Hamza Shehbaz has sent names of Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi and Ahmad Raza Cheema to Punjab governor for appointment as the caretaker chief minister of Punjab.

The PTI-PMLQ has finalized three names for the caretaker Punjab CM. The names included Cabinet Secretary Ahmad Nawaz Sukhera, former health minister Naseer Khan and former chief secretary Nasir Saeed Khosa.

"Ruling alliance to oppose ECP nominated caretaker CM Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi said on Thursday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and PML-Q will not accept the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) nominated caretaker Punjab CM.

Talking to media here, Punjab CM Elahi said that PTI and PML-Q will not accept the ECP-nominated caretaker CM. He said that they [PTI, PML-Q] will approach Supreme Court (SC) if CEC nominated a caretaker Punjab chief minister.

"We have sent our final nominees to Punjab governor for caretaker CM," said Pervaiz Elahi, adding that there would be no changes in the nominees.

As per Constitution, both sides have to agree on one name as caretaker CM. However, if this does not happen, the matter will be referred to the parliamentary committee to be set up by the speaker, which will consider the names within three days.

As per the procedure laid out in the law, the speaker will have to constitute a six-member committee comprising three MPAs each nominated by the outgoing ruling party and the opposition.

In case of a failure to reach an agreement, the task to appoint the interim CM would be handed over to the ECP.

NA would complete its constitutional term : Sanaullah

News Desk

LONDON: Federal Minister for Interior Rana Sanaullah said on Thursday Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan was running a campaign to make the country default.

The minister said Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif had summoned him to London to consult over the country's politi-

cal situation and claimed that he would resign if asked by the elder Sharif.

Rana Sanaullah said he was willing to work under the leadership of Maryam Nawaz. He also confirmed that Nawaz Sharif would return to Pakistan after Maryam.

The minister reiterated that the National Assembly would complete its constitutional term and claimed that the next chief minister of Punjab would be from PML-N.

Pakistan wants to boost ties with Sweden in field of IT, Telecom: Amin



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecom Syed Amin Ul Haque Thursday said Pakistan wanted to boost ties with Sweden and European countries in the field of IT and Telecom.

"Pakistan has a conducive environment for investment especially in the IT and telecom sectors, adding that steps are being taken to introduce Pakistan as a brand in the world," the minister said while talking to a high-level delegation of Sweden led by Swedish Ambassador Henrik Persson, said a news release.

The delegation comprises CEOs of Swedish tech companies who were apprised of initiatives regarding the IT and Telecommunication sector of Pakistan.

Amin ensured full cooperation with the tech companies of Sweden in the IT and Telecom sectors.

The Swedish delegation presented different proposals on technology use in education, health, agriculture etc. They noted that climate changes and issues like food scarcity can be better tackled through the use of artificial intelligence.

The Swedish Ambassador also offered Pakistani tech companies the to hold road shows in Sweden.

The delegation expressed satisfaction with ongoing IT and Telecommunication projects.

The meeting was also attended by Additional Secretary (Incharge), MoITT Mohsin Mushtaq, Additional Secretary Aisha Humera Moriani, Member IT Syed Junaid Imam and DG IC Syed Jawwad Ali.

Adding of more water reserves inevitable for Pakistan: Khurram



Commerce Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Power Division Khurram Dastgir on Thursday said that the flood in 2022 was a serious indication of climate change and it was inevitable to add more to water reserves in the country.

Addressing at a ceremony here that there was a dire need to prepare for such situations in the future.

The flood caused severe damage to

power supply infrastructure for which the government was making all-out efforts to restore it, he said.

He said in most of the power supply infrastructure has already been restored in the effected area. Flood brought havoc to areas of Sindh, Balochistan and South Punjab, he said.

The minister said the flood not only affected people but also destroyed agricultural land and crops. Drainage of water from the flood-affected areas was a difficult task but the government utilized all available resources in this regard, he said.

Dastgir said we have to decide in which direction we want to take the country. The new generation will have to contribute to the development of the country, he said.

LHC to hold off order to make Toshakhana gifts public until complete satisfaction

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) remarked on Thursday that it would hold off an order to make details of the Toshakhana gifts public until it would be satisfied that these gifts were kept secret.

The federal government's lawyer was instructed by the LHC to file an affidavit along with the Toshakhana's records during a hearing while addressing the request to furnish information about the people who got gifts from the Toshakhana.

LHC's Justice Asim Hafeez presided over the hearing and Additional Attorney General Nasar Ahmed represented the government. The government had sent the court a written answer outlining the Toshakhana guidelines and its disclosure policy, about which Mr Ahmed informed the court at the beginning of the hearing. The LHC later postponed the hearing till Feb 7 and directed the government to submit an affidavit along with record of Toshakhana.

Earlier, PTI chairman Imran Khan had filed an application in the Islam-

abad High Court (IHC) to withdraw his petition against his disqualification in the Toshakhana case. In October last, the electoral body, in a unanimous decision, found the former prime minister guilty of "corrupt practices" and disqualified him from being a member of parliament. The PTI chief rejected ruling and challenged it in the IHC.

Barrister Ali Zafar, a counsel for Mr Khan, filed the petition arguing that the Lahore High Court (LHC) had already formed a larger bench to hear the identical plea against the verdict of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). He said the PTI had also challenged the ECP proceedings to remove Imran Khan as party head in the same court. He said the decision to take back the petition was taken after the LHC formed a full bench in the case.

However, IHC Chief Justice Aamir Farooq said he would issue the ruling on the separate petition after hearing the other party which had some reservations. The high court has issued notices to all parties in the case and announced its hearing along with the main petition on Jan 25.

The biggest challenge is increasing exports from USD 32 billion to USD 100 billion: Ahsan Iqbal

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Today, the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) discussed in detail how to improve exports in Pakistan. The Honorable Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, said we need to emphasize our tax-to-GDP ratio, which was around 16-18% previously but now reduces to 9% only. We need more investment, both local and foreign. It will make us less dependent on the IMF. The biggest challenge is how to increase exports from USD 32 billion to USD 100 billion. For this, we need to find new products and markets.

He also said to analyze how foreign aid is linked with growth previously. During the era of 1980s, Pakistan got many projects and easy money. In the 1990s, we faced sanctions, and the IMF asked us for commercial borrowing, which escalated our debt servicing. In 2018, we had debt servicing of around 1500 billion, which increased to around 4500 billion recently. It leaves us no space for a development budget.

Earlier, Vice Chancellor PIDE Dr. Nadeem ul Haque emphasized that the regulatory system is the biggest problem in Pakistan, such as unnecessary documentation, taxation, and NOC. Around 122 regulatory agencies collect taxes and do not contribute to productivity. Corporate governance is not very encouraging, and just 31 families in Pakistan are involved in import substitution, and our industrial policies just protect them. The stock market in Pakistan is not financing exporting industries but import substitution.

Mr. Omer Siddique and other researchers from PIDE focused on the historical trend of exports and economic growth in Pakistan. The reasons for the trade deficit are low export competitiveness and a few product lines. Both productivity and investment are declining over time. We previously used development money for consumption, resulting in the lowest productivity in the region compared to Bangladesh, China, India, and Sri Lanka.

The PIDE's Pro Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Durre Nayab, RASTA Director, Dr. Faheem Jehangir, Dr. Muhammad Zeeshan, Mr. Muhammad

Armaghan, and many other economists and researchers were also present at the meeting. The participant of the meeting further added that the lack of competitiveness is another factor, which is coupled with the high cost of commercial energy. Pakistan has the highest commercial energy compared to India and Bangladesh.

They said total factor productivity is low in Pakistan but relatively higher in cotton ginning and internet service providers, indicating more potential for these industries. There is a negative TFP in the textile sector. The ratio of exporting firms is declining in Pakistan due to unstable policy measures.

According to the global innovation index, we are second to the bottom. Research and development in Pakistan are not encouraging. Innovation is less protected in Pakistan, and many companies moved to Vietnam and other countries for research and development. There is no link between academia and industry in Pakistan. As a result, large conglomerates invest in the sector where they are protected, such as real estate. Only around 32% of total listed industries export, and



most of the industries have a very small scale of exports.

"The cost of tax compliance is high in Pakistan. A fragmented tax system disrupts growth in Pakistan. Reducing withholding taxes lines can reduce compliance costs and reduces tax evasion. High corporate income

tax causes policy uncertainty in Pakistan. Sales tax on import works as a tariff. We need to link the concession in customs taxes with export performance. PIDE is developing a tax commission, which will be helpful in analyzing the overall taxation policy in Pakistan. Finally, there is a high

cost of sludge in Pakistan, mainly in the health, construction, and education sectors. The total cost of sludge is around 39% of GDP. Further, the government footprint is around 67% of the total economy in the form of public enterprise and development expenditures," they emphasized.

Hamdard and Blue EX joined hands

Karachi: Hamdard Pakistan and Blue EX joined hands to further strengthen Hamdard's E-commerce platforms and logistics in an auspicious contract signing ceremony held at Hamdard Corporate Head Office Karachi. Fatema Munir Ahmed Managing Director & CEO of Hamdard Pakistan is presenting a memento to Imran Baxamoosa, CEO, of Blue-EX. Dr. Arshad Saleem, COO of Hamdard Pakistan along with the delegation of Blue-EX is also present on the occasion.



29th Convocation of NUST Military College of Signals

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI : As many as 348 undergraduate and postgraduate degrees were conferred at the 29th Convocation of NUST Military College of Signals (MCS). Lt Gen Muhammad Chiragh Haider, HI (M), Inspector General Training & Evaluation (IGT&E), graced the occasion as chief guest. In his convocation address, he congratulated graduating students on their outstanding achievements, and acknowledged the meritorious services of faculty and parents in enabling the graduates to achieve their long-cherished goals. He also lauded NUST for maintaining upward trajectory amongst the world's most prestigious Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), which speaks volumes of its academic and research excellence. He urged young graduates to continue working hard and fulfill their obligations towards the nation and the humanity.

Addressing the audience, Rector NUST Lt Gen (Retd) Engr Javed Mahmood Bukhari extended his heartiest felicitations to graduates, particularly distinction holders, for having successfully passed through one of the most rigorous and comprehensive knowledge ecosystems. Congratulating the parents, he said that their efforts and sacrifices could never be justifiably reciprocated by their children no matter what. The Rector also paid glowing tribute to the faculty for their dedication and playing immeasurable role in the all-round grooming of the graduates. He was all-praise for MCS that, as a pioneer institution of NUST, has been maintaining rich legacy of producing professional engineers, who are culturally enlightened and productive citizens of Pakistan.

Earlier in his welcome address, Commandant MCS Brig Omer Khalid gave an overview of the College's academic and research achievements over the last one year. Undergraduate degrees were awarded to 226 graduates in the disciplines of Electrical and Software Engineering, while, postgraduate degrees were conferred upon 122 students in Electrical Engineering, Software Engineering and Information Security.

Lt Gen Muhammad Munir Afsar, HI (M), Inspector General C&IT, Major Gen Muhammad Ali Khan, HI (M), Signal Officer in Chief, faculty members, educationists, large number of students and their parents attended the ceremony.

DPC meeting at RPO office Dera



Adam Khan Wazir

D KHAN: Departmental Promotion Committee (DPC) meeting was held under the supervision of Regional Police Officer Muhammad Saleem Marwat at Regional Police Office Dera

In which District Police Officer Dera Muhammad Shoaib, District Police Officer Tank Waqar Ahmed and District Police Officer South Waziristan Shabir Hussain participated as members.

According to the merit list, Assistant Sub-Inspectors and Head Constables were presented before the Promotion Committee, out of which 20 Assistant Sub-Inspectors who met the merit were confirmed and 53 Head Constables were promoted to the post of Assistant Sub-Inspector.

On the same occasion, RPO Dera congratulated the promoted police officers and asked them to always keep the spirit of public service in their hearts, and be loyal and honest with your department, eat halal food and use all your resources for the peace of this city.

Country Head Bahria Host Bahria Town 2 Project Briefing

Spokesman Rpeort

KARACHI: Ali Saqlain Real Estate & Builders, a leading Real Estate Company along with the Country Head of Bahria Town, Mr. Shahid Mehmood Qureshi recently presented the Project Briefing of Bahria Town 2 through an exclusive ceremony held near the community estate around 8pm (at) Bahria Farm House Area. The ceremony was hosted by Mr. Shahid Qadri, CEO of Ali Saqlain Real Estate and Builders where the announcement, speech, and presentation took place. Several corporate leaders, people of influence, and esteemed members of the media fraternity were present at the event. Audience members included notable celebrities and influencers such as Shehroze Subzwari, Sadaf



Kanwal, Mashal Khan, Juggan Kazim, Junaid Akram, Anamta Quraishi, Faysal Quraishi, Amna Ilyas, Ushna Shah, Fouzia Aman, Anjija Mithani and Naiha J.Eiman.

The Bahria Town Karachi 2 Project Briefing began with a speech by the Country Head of Bahria Town Karachi, Mr.

Shahid Mehmood Qureshi followed by a presentation by Mr. Shahid Qadri, CEO of Ali Saqlain Real Estate and Builders. The insightful ceremony discussed the future of Bahria Town 2 and the estates being built within the area. Since Bahria Town's current community living, real estate

projects, and buildings have already held promise for years, Bahria Town 2 is also expected to be equally imaginative and world-class. Hence, a handful of celebrities also took to the podium to discuss the future of its urban planning and shared their enthusiasm over the freshly launched project. Bahria Town intends to master the art of urban and town planning while transforming a great vision into reality. With world-class communities that are far ahead of their time, all developments will have the most advanced infrastructure and facilities in the country. The sheer scale, logistics, and quality of this world-class project will be beyond anything experienced by Pakistan before.

Paradise, Bahria Apartments, Bahria Heights, Bahria Central Park Apartments,

Bahria Golf City, Danzoo, Sports City, State-of-the-art Schools & hospitals.

Ali Saqlain & Builders was first established in 2001, considering the rapidly increasing property demands of people and their constant dream of living in their own houses with an ideal lifestyle. Having spent fifteen years of accomplishment in the commercial real estate business, Ali Saqlain had a vision of expanding its line of services beyond facilitating traditional sales and investments, incorporating a complete range of plots, shops for sale in Bahria Town, and commercial and residential property, apartments, consultation, and management services and projects. Now the real estate firm is extending its efforts into Bahria Town 2.

Governor Punjab participates in GCU Convocation

Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: The 10th convocation of Govt College University was held at Quaid-e-Azam Auditorium, New Campus here today.

The Governor Punjab, Muhammad Balighur Rehman participated as the Chief guest. Vice-Chancellor GCU Professor Dr. Shahid Kamal along with University Deans, Directors and Principals took part in this ceremony. Here 38262 male and female students of different sessions of Associate Degree, Master's Degree, LLB and BS Honors were awarded degrees.

249 students were awarded gold medals for achieving distinguished positions in the academic field, while 7 students were awarded gold medals in co-curricular activities.

Whereas 8 Faculty members and officers who retired from the university, including former controller of examinations Prof. Dr. Mazhar Hayat as controller of examinations were also awarded honorary certificates in recognition of their services. The Controller of Examinations Raja Shahid Javed, Professor Dr. Mazhar Hayat and Deputy Registrar Zeeshan Ahmad Khan proceeded with the convocation process.

Governor appreciated the efforts of the university administration in highlighting the professional skills of the students & the Governor of Punjab expressed that it is a matter of pride for me that GC University Faisalabad won the first position not only in Punjab but also globally in the "World Times Higher

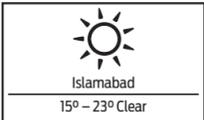
Education Ranking" He exhorted the students that be a part of positive activities on the social media and develop leadership within yourself. The Chancellor Punjab appreciated the efforts of the Vice Chancellor and the University administration for providing financial assistance to the flood victims. The Vice Chancellor thanked Punjab Governor for participating and informing in detail about the achievements and development projects of the university in the past years.

He further said that much attention is being paid to modern research and teaching in the university, in this context, to bring the teacher-student ratio to a minimum level & a record selection board has been conducted through which professors, associate professors and appointments

of other staff have been made on the basis of clean merit. Adding further he informed that, with the construction of medical center equipped with modern facilities, sports complex, new hostels for female students, four new academic blocks, attention is being paid to the welfare of the university employees, for this purpose pension fund, endowment fund and research fund in the university has been established.

He said that in the recent ranking of 2023, we are among the best universities from 600-501, the day is not far when we will be among the 400 best universities in the world. The syndicate members, VC of various universities and officers of district administration were also present on this occasion.





SERVICES
Namaz Timings

Fajr	5:44 am
Zohr	12:18 pm
Asr	3:48 pm
Maghrib	5:26 pm
Isha	6:53 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224
Rawal Town	5773343

Higher Tobacco Taxes – A key revenue source in Pakistan

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD – JANUARY 19, 2023: There's a dire need to adopt a sustainable National Tobacco Control Policy which ensures that no anti-child move is made now or in future. These views by shared in a dialogue organized by Society for Protection of Rights of the Child (SPARC) with policy makers to stress upon the need of implementing strict tobacco control measures to save Pakistani children and youth from the pandemic of tobacco. Key legislators from all political parties attended this event and supported the notion of increasing tobacco taxation and implementing other measures.

Dr. Ziauddin Islam—Former Technical Head/Director, Tobacco Control Cell, Ministry of

NHSR&C shared that in Pakistan, smokers have reached up to 31 million. 466 people die daily in Pakistan due to tobacco induced diseases such as cancer, diabetes, heart diseases, stroke, and chronic lung diseases. Around 1200 Pakistani children between the ages of 6-15 years start smoking every day. To overcome this loss of life and healthcare resources, Tobacco Healthy Levy Bill which is pending since 2019 must be approved immediately. The policymakers agreed that Health Levy Bill must be presented in Parliament and implemented across the country as it is a sustainable solution to decrease tobacco consumption and generate finances for healthcare schemes.

Malik Imran Ahmed, Country Head, Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids (CTFK), stated that due



to cheap and easy affordability of tobacco products, the economic cost of smoking in Pakistan is PKR 615.07 billion which is equal to 1.6% of Pakistan's GDP but the revenue generated from the

tobacco industry is only 20% of the total cost. Evidence suggests that higher cigarette taxes deter smoking initiation, reduce cigarette consumption, and even lead smokers to quit. He added that

last year Pakistan raised tobacco taxes for the first time since 2019 however we are still far off from by the 30% increase suggested by World Health Organization. Policymakers supported these remarks and agreed to raise voice for increase in tobacco taxation as per Pakistan's international commitments and increase in inflation.

Sophia Mansoori, Program Coordinator CTFK said that if the traditional forms weren't enough, tobacco industry has launched novel products (nicotine pouches, e-cigarettes, and heated tobacco devices) which are openly sold to youth through point-of-sales advertising and extensive social media campaigns. There's a need to ban all forms of novel products immediately before our youth becomes addicted to them. The policymakers agreed to support

SPARC and its partners in this regard through legislative measures which are missing at the moment.

The policymakers also unanimously agreed with the closing remarks of Khalil Ahmed Dogar, Program Manager SPARC. Khalil mentioned that in 2022 Pakistani children were hit badly with climate change, viral diseases, and poor nutrition due to inflation. We can't afford to put their health in any further risk. There's a need for all relevant duty barriers to work in tandem and support implementation of a sustainable tobacco control policy which covers implementation of Tobacco Health Levy, Increase in Taxation and Graphical Health Warning, Ban in Novel tobacco Products, and Zero Sales of Tobacco Products near educational institutions.

Extra lights off

ISLAMABAD: A view of extra light off of the Prime Minister Secretariat budding. As the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif ordered the authorities concerned to implement the measures proposed in the national energy conservation plan in the given time frame, stressing that the government would take all possible steps to save the country, Shehbaz chaired a review meeting on the implementation of the energy conservation plan. The meeting was informed about the progress of the solarisation projects. Officials told the prime minister that solar panels of 1,000 megawatts would be installed at the federal government buildings in the initial phase.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

AIOU issued around 2.5 lac degrees, certificates in 2022

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University has issued certificates and degrees to almost 2.5 lac students enrolled in various programs from matriculation to Ph.D in the calendar year 2022, and more than fifty thousand certificates and degrees were verified as well. It is an honor for AIOU that hundreds of thousands of students graduate every year and are able to play a role in the socio-economic development of the country.

AIOU administration has prepared an academic calendar and the heads of all departments are instructed to manage all the academic activities as per that calendar. Admissions, examinations, assignment schedules, result announcements, and issuance of certificates and degrees are done according to the defined schedule.

It is pertinent to mention here that Allama Iqbal Open University is the largest university in the country in terms of the number of students. The total number of enrolled students in AIOU is more than the total number of students in all educational institutions across the country. Allama Iqbal Open University has become an example globally by joining the four big (mega) universities.

Minister PD&SI directed all stakeholders to follow the timelines of Census

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: As per decisions of Council of Common Interest (CCI), Pakistan Bureau of Statistics is working extensively to meet the challenging timelines to conduct first ever Digital census of Pakistan. In this regard, fifth meeting of Census Monitoring Committee was held on 17th Jan 2023 at 3:30pm at National Census Coordination Centre (N3C) under the chair of Prof Ahsan Iqbal, Minister PD&SI. Census Monitoring Committee was constituted in pursuance of decision taken in 49th meeting of Council of Common Interest (CCI) held on 13th January, 2022 to oversee/monitor Census activities to ensure expeditious, transparent and credible census conduct.

The meeting was attended by Members of Commit-

tee from all relevant departments and stakeholders which includes relevant Federal Ministries, Administration of all Provincial and Area governments, DG Military Operations Directorate, NADRA, NTC etc. The main purpose of the meeting was to update all stakeholders about progress / ongoing activities of 7th Population & Housing Census, take decisions on methodology of Census in the snow bound areas, and decide take decisions on issue of on overlapping of National events with Census timelines.

Dr. Naeem uz Zafar, Chief Census Commissioner (PBS), presented in detail the progress on 7th Population & Housing Census related activities. He informed that 495 Census Support Centers have been established where trained staff

is deputed. Provinces have allocated 120,000 Census Field Staff. Pilot Census was successfully conducted in 33 districts. 125,500 Tablets were hardened and delivered to 495 Census Support Centre and training of 121,000 Field Staff is in progress since 7th Jan, 2023 at 992 venues. However, problems were faced in attendance in all provinces especially Sindh & Punjab. He further added that NADRA has informed that all the requirements including The security audit will be completed soon and after security audit, Self Enumeration may be launched depending on provision of required Backend Infrastructure by NTC.

Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, Minister of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives emphasized on the authenticity of Census process which is a huge Nation-

al exercise. He said there should be no compromise on timelines. Census should be transparent and will be successful with the joint efforts of all organizations involved. Provinces should be onboard and consensus must be made on all issues to avoid any controversy and effective utilization of resources.

Mr. Muhammad Sarwar Gondal, Member (RM/SS) informed that the basic purpose of Census is Planning and Policy making and this census has been planned by following UN principles and taking on board all concerns of stakeholders, therefore it will definitely serve the purpose.

Then, Members from other Departments were invited to share their point of view. All the Provinces assured their full support for the successful conduct of national activity.

China played vital role in Development of Pakistan: Aasma Butt

City Reporter

RAWALPINDI: President of All Pakistan Chinese Overseas Youth Federation Aasma Ismail Butt said that China is Pakistan's best friend. China played a vital role in Development of our country Pakistan. Our friend country is maintaining cooperation with Pakistan in all fields. Our effort is to provide full support for the promotion of culture and youth development between the two countries through the platform of All Pakistan Chinese Overseas Youth Federation.

She said this on the occasion of high tea given in honor of senior journalists and personalities from different walks of life. At that moment the senior Journalists appreciated the services of the federation.

Aasma Ismail Butt while informing about the details of the various activities of her organization She said that With the cooperation of our friendly country China, various projects are under consideration to increase the education and capabilities of the young generation of Pakistan. Welcoming various suggestions from journalists, she said that China is also a big market for Pakistani films, but for decades, the popular film "Mira Naam Hai Mohabbat" by Ghulam Mohiuddin and Babra Sharif, Apart from not being able to send any notable films to China, but now we also working on this project from the platform of my federation. She said that famous musician and singer Sahir Ali Baga, who is popular among the young generation, has been appointed as the cultural ambassador of her organization for China. She also assured support for journalists and their children in various fields.

Zong 4G partners with Pakistan's first intranet-based app, GreenApp



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Zong 4G has partnered with GreenApp to integrate services for customers such as mobile top-ups, post-paid, and other bundles, through their retailer network and their app. The partnership was signed in an exclusive signing ceremony in Islamabad on the 27th of December.

The contract was finalized through signing ceremony held on 27th December at Zong HQ. The event was graced by the representatives from Zong 4G, the CEO of GreenApp, Wasif Ayub.

Speaking at the occasion, Mr. Wasif Ayub CEO of GreenApp said, "This partnership is an essential step in providing innovative solutions to both Zong 4G and GreenApp users. We hope to see this relationship grow in the future."

Zong 4G's official spokesperson added, "Zong 4G continues to add value to its user experience and proves once again that it is a customer-centric company by partnering with GreenApp to promote access and reachability for Zong's subscribers."

Zong 4G Along with E-top-up, the Green App helps its users with P2P communication, energy bills, and school fee payments, as well as much more, all in one location. It is a global supplier of voice and data mobile communication services in nine different nations.

GreenApp is Pakistan's first intranet-based mobile application containing facilities for a local audience. GreenApp is an ambitious business that is committed to offering cutting-edge solutions. It has all the resources required to offer its clients the greatest digital services available on the intranet. By partnering with GreenApp, Zong 4G customers get access to over 10,000 retailers currently committed to GreenApp.

Zong 4G prides itself on partnerships such as these, where companies work together to bring people innovative solutions that make everyday life easier and more efficient. Zong 4G understands the importance of having innovative solutions and products in the market, which is why it chose to partner with GreenApp.

Ayub Medical Institution has bagged another great honor

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Dean Prof. Dr. Umar Farooq was given the Lifetime Achievement Award on the occasion of the sixth convocation of Khyber Medical University on the basis of excellent services and high performance in the field of health.

On this occasion, Lieutenant General Surgeon General Nigar Johar of Pakistan was also honored with the same award.

Vice Chancellor KMMU, Secretary Health, Secretary Higher Education and Health Care Professionals besides Deans of various medical colleges also participated in the event.

This award is a proud moment for Hazara and especially Abbottabad and Ayub Medical Institution.

KP Government offered two new Integrated Tourism Zones for Private Investment

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: An Investment Readiness Conference for Khyber Pakhtun Khwa's Integrated Tourism Zones (ITZs) was held today at a local hotel here in Islamabad by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture & Tourism Authority & KITE Project to mobilize private sector investments and to promote responsible tourism. The event was attended by a large number of potential investors. GD KP Tourism Authority, Presidents of ICCI, RCCI, MD of PTDC, Director of KP-BOIT and other trade associations were also present.

The ITZs is a maiden concept in Pakistan which aims to open new tourist destinations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to promote sustainable and responsible tourism by suggesting diversity and quality in the tourism offering of



these destinations and provide guidance for tourist planning and destination management activities.

Aftab ur Rehman Rana, Managing Director of PTDC congratulated the team of KP Tourism Authority, KITE Project, World Bank and KP BOI for launching this flagship project for investment. He said he is happy to see the realization of Tourism Integrated Tourism based on the principles

of sustainable tourism development which was visualized eight years ago while launching the tourism policy of KP Province. He said, now our focus should be on creating an enabling business environment for the private sector and removing all the bottlenecks to encourage private sector investment in tourism and hospitality sectors.

Integrated Tourism Zones (ITZ) feasibility and master plans were

prepared by the KP's Department of Tourism with the support of World Bank under Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Integrated Tourism Development (KITE) project. A team of national and international experts worked over a period of one year on this project to prepare the detailed concepts of these world class resorts.

The provincial authorities and other speakers shared the opportunities for private sector investments with the participants. As part of this exercise, customized plans for each destination have been prepared and will be used to invite the investments from private sector. It is expected that this approach of tourism destinations development and management will lead to improved visitor experience, better regulation of sites and mobilization of resources from the private sector for the identified investments.

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Climate change: How Greta Thunberg's example challenges traditional leadership

Dr. Diana Galeeva

Some girls dream of being a pop star or, in the modern world of social media, an influence on Instagram or TikTok. Others dream of having an impact on humanity, society and the world. There is one story that falls into the latter category — a young woman, different in many ways but also extraordinary; whose seemingly sudden impact may transform the face of traditional leadership.

In 2018, aged just 15, climate activist Greta Thunberg protested outside the Swedish Parliament with a sign that translated as "School Strike for Climate." Within a year, she had been named "Person of the Year" by Time magazine. Also in 2019, she met with world leaders such as UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Austrian President Alexander Van der Bellen and former California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Her passion remains undimmed. This week, she was on the front line with thousands of others in Germany protesting against a plan to tear down the village of Luetzerath to make way for the expansion of a coal mine, calling it "one of the biggest carbon bombs in

Europe." She was even pictured being detained by police, although she was soon released.

To what extent can we speak of a "Greta effect," as — through her example — she shows how today's young women and youth can be heard in debates on the climate crisis? How have her successes and controversies affected approaches to activism and our understanding of leadership?

Thunberg's popularity is not simply present in newspapers, but is also seen in the growing amount of research that aims to understand the so-called Greta effect. For example, a report co-written by Anandita Sabherwal and published in the Journal of Applied Social Psychology used cross-sectional data from a survey of US adults to investigate whether exposure to Thunberg can be useful for predicting whether collective action will be effective, and the likelihood of intentions toward activism being acted upon.

Also interesting in this regard is research published in 2021 by Elisa Iacomini and Pierluigi Vellucci, who considered a polarizing effect in opinion around the climate crisis linked to the "Greta Thunberg phenomenon." They developed an opinion dynamics model measuring different types of contrari-

an agents.

Considering these papers and other research, questions remain about how the Greta effect plays out in different contexts, considering the age, gender and political views of different groups.

Further research — Leann Leung's 2020 thesis — has applied a critical discourse analysis framework to study Thunberg's rhetorical and discursive methods. Perhaps the key to her effectiveness, particularly with younger audiences, is the forceful way she is able to frame her identity as being about activism, ideology and youth. Among the most important findings is the resilience of her rhetoric, which has consistently withstood the challenges of traditional hierarchies in family and society. She has not been co-opted into the existing discourse.

Also, the oppositional status of young people in the climate movement is harnessed not as a shortcoming but as a counterpower, challenging rather than accommodating the dominant narrative. She has the ability to counter existing dominant powers precisely by offering a new model of impact through age, modes of expression, gender and political views.

This is not to say that her intense fame is wholly positive or straightforward, with recogni-

tion of her name also registering with opposed voices, especially online. For example, research by Chang Sup Park, Qian Liu and Barbara Kaye in 2021 analyzed 3,300 user comments from the 11 most-viewed YouTube videos about Thunberg and found that an average of four out of every 10 comments contained some form of incivility. About 40 percent of such comments concerned her age, slightly more than a third were sexist and almost a quarter ableist. Often, the comments were directly derogatory rather than engaging on the topic of climate change — in other words, they were part of the Greta effect.

Similarly, Jieun Jung and colleagues, in their paper "When a Girl Awakened the World: A User and Social Message Analysis of Greta Thunberg," analyzed the role of social media in Thunberg's rise to celebrity by studying Twitter content and user profiles over 14 months. The research found that public figures and celebrities played a crucial role in strengthening her impact. Furthermore, some negative views about Thunberg were at least as closely linked to politically conservative views on age and gender as they were to skepticism about climate change. It is not just what she says or how she says it, but who

she is perceived to be that makes the Greta effect both challenging and effective.

Thunberg is different from the classic images of leadership, such as the feared and pragmatic "The Prince" of Niccolò Machiavelli or Robert Dahl's analysis of leaders as "a controlling group." She brings into question the elitist and institutional assumptions of what makes leadership possible. Her example shows that the traditional faces of power — which are associated with what can be called primary power — can be challenged by contrasting elements, even where these are often considered signs of weakness, such as youth and femaleness.

Nontraditional security threats, in this case climate change, can be specifically addressed by nontraditional leaders, especially where these individuals can show the failure of traditional solutions and offer different, more dynamic perspectives. The Greta effect is a diverse and divisive force, perhaps one that is especially suited to unprecedented global changes. It remains to be seen how this challenge to traditional power can be harnessed and continued by other groups and individuals, especially those outside the traditional positions of power.

Geographies of vulnerability 'caught in recovery trap'

Federal Minister for Climate Change, Senator Sherry Rehman on Thursday said, "The geographies of vulnerability, those of us who live in warmer climates, are caught in a recovery trap.

We are at the ground zero of climate stress as we live in an era of accelerated climate change which leads to extraordinary human suffering.

My worry is that despite excellent progress made at a climate resilient recovery conference, we may not be able to rebuild one-third of the country before the next disaster hits us."

The minister was speaking at the annual Pakistan Breakfast at Davos as the Chief Guest, organised by the Pathfinder Group.

She thanked the organizers for arranging the event annually on the sidelines of the Annual Meeting in Davos, allowing Pakistani policymakers to share their insights with participants from all over the world in Davos, a news release here received said.

The minister praised the efforts of the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister for their leadership on the multilateral stage and exceeding the targets in Geneva during the Climate Resilient Pakistan conference, despite donor fatigue and other crises in the world.

The session was moderated by journalist Nik Gowing, founder of Thinking the Unthinkable and former BBC World News presenter.

The Minister said that climate change and biodiversity are critical issues that require a scientific approach to guide our decisions, but current efforts have fallen short.

"There is an element of denialism still amongst corporate leaders and networks which shows our collective failure as we have not been able to take the public conversations to the required level.

Every little island of rationality works, and every meeting today should be a call to action.

Our models of business and government need to change for that critical mass that is needed to shift the needle on biodiversity loss and climate action because we are way off the mark", she remarked.

Minister Rehman urged that coalitions are needed to meet the climate action targets. "We must build coalitions for climate action.

So far, we have mostly been talking and working in silos due to the boundaries we have set on ourselves.

Everyone is speaking about the individual actions they are taking but we need to move beyond that to a surface with achievable collective action targets and then pledge to actually meet them," she stated.

The Minister also highlighted that the climate financing needs of today are not being addressed by the 20th century international financial architecture as it was created for different challenges, but it is outdated for the crises of the 21st century.

"We need a redesign of the entire Bretton Woods financial architecture and make climate financing agile and easily available for countries that are at the forefront of climate stress.

If we don't take collective and radical actions within this decade, what is happening in Pakistan will come to Davos someday, but after 1/3 of the globe is living in the 19th century again that has bred from our lack of collective action," she said



Gender responsive budget; essential tool to empower women

Tooba Khan

National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf on Wednesday said that effective budgeting for Gender was one of the most effective ways to ensure that women's needs and rights.

Addressing the launching ceremony of "Gender Responsive Budgeting Report" organised by Women Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) here, he said that legislators in Pakistan had been working to increase women's participation in the budgeting process and to ensure that gender considerations were integrated into development planning and implementation.

He stressed the need to ensure that gender responsive budgeting was integrated into all levels of government and that it was effectively implemented and monitored.

The speaker appreciated the efforts of Dr. Rehmani's efforts to launch today's summary paper on Gender Responsive Budgeting in Pakistan.

He said that the party he belonged to have been the staunch believer of women emancipation because empowered women make empowered nations.

He said that his party had always provided unwavering support to promote meaningful participation of women in politics and always advocated the fact that, without them, no democracy was a true democracy.

He urged all participants to support the implementation of gender responsive budgeting in Pakistan.

Earlier, Dr. Shahida Rehmani, in her

inaugural remarks, said that WPC had been working dedicatedly to institutionalize the gender budgeting process.

Women's Parliamentary Caucus has launched the summary paper on "Gender Budgeting in Pakistan". The purpose of summary paper for Women's Parliamentary Caucus is to put forward key strategies and methodologies for implementation of Gender Budgeting in Pakistan.

This paper will serve as a source of inspiration and guidance for further work, especially for WPC but also for other institutions interested in promoting a coherent approach in Gender Budgeting work including civil society.

This strategy paper is the first step towards the process.

She highlighted that to better understand the public spending, we need a gender lens to analysis it. In addition, involving women in the budget-making process can ensure that their perspectives and needs are taken into account that policies and programs are responsive to their needs. Dr. Rehmani also highlighted that in Financial Budget for FY2022-2023, majority of the financial amendments were from Women MPs.

Dr. Rehmani concluded her speech by reiterating that investing in women and girls is not only a moral and social obligation but mandatory for true empowerment of women.

"There is no Social Justice without Gender Justice", said Niels Hegewisch, Country Director of Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Pakistan. In close cooperation with the Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC), FES has developed a Strategy Paper on Gender Responsive Budgeting. After FES organized a

successful Gender Budgeting Workshop in November 2022 with WPC, experts Marion Böker from Berlin and Elisabeth Klatzer from Vienna have returned to Islamabad to continue the valued cooperation.

In the Marriot Hotel of Islamabad, they presented their Strategy Paper to a wide range of parliamentarians, journalists, and members of political and civil society.

Dr. Shahida Rehmani, Secretary of the WPC, highlighted the importance of Gender Budgeting in her opening remarks: "To better understand public spending, we need to apply a gender perspective. Involving women in the budgeting process, ensures their perspectives and needs are taken into account when designing policies and programs."

According to Marion Böker, author of the strategy paper, it means "to apply the gender perspective to the budget and to realize equality of all genders, women, men and transgender." Administrative budgets, such as the one developed by Parliament, allocate money to various entities, but not all benefits are distributed equally, and not everyone is affected in the same way if funds are used differently. For example, cuts to healthcare budgets can disproportionately affect women, as care work is typically done by women.

Dr. Elisabeth Klatzer has identified areas where Pakistan needs to take a more gender-inclusive approach to budgeting. One potential area for achieving greater gender equality is through the agriculture sector. New investments in farming can create opportunities to improve working conditions and pay for women, who are often employed in agriculture under poor conditions and low pay.

National Mourning Day

Spokesman Report

On the night of January 19-20, 1990, as a result of military aggression of the units of the Soviet Army and special forces, as well as contingents of internal troops against Azerbaijan, civilians, including children, women, and elderly were massacred in the cities of Baku, Sumgayit, Lankaran and Neftchala by order of the USSR leadership. As a result of the occupying forces' military aggression 150 civilians were killed, 744 were seriously injured, and 4 people went missing.

The Soviet army sent to the country in order to forcefully suppress the mass protests of the Azerbaijani people and the national independence movement started in response to the discrimination policy of the USSR leadership against the people of Azerbaijan, the deportation of hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis from their historical lands in the territory of present-day Armenia, and Armenia's unfounded territorial claims against Karabakh, committed an unprecedented massacre against the civilian population grossly violating international law and the Constitution.

On January 21, 1990, immediately after the tragic events, at the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan in Moscow, National Leader Heydar Aliyev, demonstrating his solidarity with the Azerbaijani people, strongly condemned the crime committed against the Azerbaijani people, demanded political and legal assessment of the massacre, and punishment of the perpetrators.

At the special session of the MilliMajlis (Parliament) held in February 1994 the brutal killing of innocent people on 20 January 1990 was qualified as military aggression and a crime, and in March 1994 a decision "On the tragic events committed in Baku on 20 January 1990" was adopted. 20 January was declared the National Mourning Day.

20 January tragedy had a decisive influence on the formation of the national identity of Azerbaijan and became a turning point in the restoration of the independence of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijani people, who were subjected to military, political, and moral aggression of the Soviet regime 33 years ago, showed commitment to their historical traditions of struggle.

On that tragic day, the sons of the motherland, who gave their lives in defense of justice wrote a brilliant page in the heroic chronicle of our people. On January 20, 1990, which was marked in our history as a day of tragedy, as well as of national pride, the Azerbaijani people conveyed to the world that they deserve to live free, sovereign and independent.

Despite the fact that 33 years have passed, the events of 20 January, one of the most terrible crimes committed in the 20th century, in which all international legal documents were grossly violated, were not given an international legal assessment.

The leadership of the former Soviet Union is directly responsible for this crime. According to international law, the 20 January tragedy should be qualified as a crime against humanity, and its instigators and perpetrators must be punished.

Today, the souls of our heroic martyrs who gave their lives for the independence of Azerbaijan, as well as for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our country are at peace.

Under the leadership of the Victorious Commander-in-Chief, the courageous Azerbaijani Army liberated our territories, which were under occupation for 30 years, and the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan was restored. Actions against the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan will continue to be adequately countered.

We once again commemorate with deep sadness the dearest memory of our compatriots who sacrificed their lives for the territorial integrity of our country, the freedom of our people, and the independence of our state.

President Tokayev Announces March 19 as Mazhilis Election Day

Spokesman Report

ASTANA: President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev announced early elections to the Mazhilis, the lower chamber of the Parliament on March 19, after he dissolved the chamber and terminated the powers of the maslikhats, local administrative bodies, reported Akorda press service.

Tokayev proposed holding elections to the Mazhilis and maslikhats in the first half of this year in his state-to-the-nation address. "Thus, the period from the announcement of this initiative to the voting day will be more than six months. During the years of independence, candidates and political parties have never had so much time to prepare for an election campaign," he said.

Elections of deputies of the maslikhats at all levels will be appointed by the Central Election Commission.

The Mazhilis election will enter its final stage in the political renewal cycle initiated by the President, which started with a presidential election on Nov. 20 and continued with the upper chamber of the Parliament, the Senate election, on Jan. 14.



"The holding of early elections to the Mazhilis and maslikhats is dictated by the logic of the constitutional reform, supported by citizens at the national referendum. According to its results, our country moved to new, more fair, and more competitive rules of formation of the representative branches of power," said Tokayev. "These elections will embody the

changes taking place in society and will give a strong impetus to further modernization of our political system," his statement reads.

The upcoming Mazhilis election will implement the amendments to the Constitution that were adopted as a result of the national referendum that took place on June 5.

One of the major changes includes

transitioning the Mazhilis to a mixed proportional-majoritarian model, where 70 percent of deputies will be elected proportionally from party lists, and 30 percent by majoritarian rule from single-member districts.

The elections to the maslikhats of districts and cities of national importance will also be held under a mixed electoral system, with a 50/50 ratio.

The constitutional reform also alleviated the party registration process, reducing the registration threshold fourfold from 20,000 to 5,000 members. The minimum requirement for the number of regional party representations was also reduced from 600 to 200 people.

Two new parties, the Baitak party and the Respublica party, have registered since the amendments came into force. Overall, seven parties are now registered.

One of the electoral changes is the addition of the "against all" column, the reduction of the threshold for parties to enter the Mazhilis from seven to five percent, and the legislative establishment of a 30 percent quota for women, youth, and persons with special needs in the distribution of deputy mandates.

Chairman JKSM pays glorious tributes to the Martyrs of Gaw Kadal Massacre

News Desk



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Jammu & Kashmir Salvation Movement (JKSM) Altaf Ahmed Bhat remembers and pays glorious tributes to the Martyrs of Gaw Kadal Massacre.

In a statement issued here in Islamabad today Chairman JKSM Altaf Ahmed Bhat paid glorious tributes to the martyrs of Gaw Kadal Massacre, and said that Kashmiri nation has paid with blood for the freedom of our motherland, but never surrendered or bent before the military might of India.

Chairman JKSM Altaf Ahmed Bhat further said that on 21st Jan 1990 Indian troops had killed more than 50 innocent people by resorting to indiscriminate firing on peaceful demonstrators in the Gaw Kadal area of Srinagar. The demonstrators were protesting against the molestation of several women by troops, the previous night.

Chairman JKSM further added that since 1989 Indian occupation forces have committed worst Human Rights violations in Kashmir.

Since then, more than 96,163 innocents are killed, 72,82 are killed in custody, 165,428 civilians arrested, 110,49 structures were destroyed/arsened, while 22,954 women are widowed, 11,256 molested and gang raped.

Chairman JKSM Altaf Ahmed Bhat said that its an eye opener for the developed world how India is crushing Dissent, Humanity, and breaking all International and Humanitarian norms in IIOJ&K. Kashmir is the issue of Humanity, hence collectively International Organizations, Scholars, NGOs must raise the voice of voiceless and besieged Kashmiris in the world.

Financial sector capable to provide riba-free services

Bureau Report

KARACHI: It is the religious and constitutional duty of all to lay out a roadmap for the conversion of the financial system of Pakistan to riba-free according to the injunctions of Islam and implement it accordingly. All sectors of government borrowing, external debts, the banking sector, the non-banking sector, capital market, as well as legal and regulatory framework need to bring changes at strategic as well as operational level.

This was underscored during a session titled "Implementing the FSC Judgement on Riba: Addressing the How", jointly organized by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), IBA-CIEF (Institute of Business Administration's Centre for Excellence in Islamic Finance (IBA CEIF), and Centre of Islamic Economics (A division of

Jamia Darul Uloom, Karachi) at the IBA City Campus.

The session was addressed by Ahmed Ali Siddiqui, director, IBA-CEIF, Omar Mustafa Ansari, secretary general, Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI), Mufti Irshad Ahmad Aijaz, chairman, Shariah Advisory Committee, State Bank of Pakistan and Securities & Exchange Commission of Pakistan, Farrukh Raza, CEO, Islamic Finance Advisory & Assurance Services (IFAAS) Group, Dr. Imran Usmani, vice chairman Shariah Supervisory Board, Meezan Bank, and Khalid Rahman, chairman, IPS.

The experts highlighted that all of these financial and related sectors already have the capacity to convert existing non-Islamic procedures and means to Islamic standards by rein-

forcing the appropriate ways and means to implement the Federal Shariat Court judgment.

The speakers further emphasized that the federal government must devise a conversion policy with yearly targets and proper monitoring of all sectors. This national-level strategy must be developed with the consensus and inclusion of all stakeholders to ensure coordination and commitment to Shariah-compliant guidelines.

The government should also focus on creating an enabling environment by consulting all related organizations, introducing educational reforms, and taking capacity-building measures for officials. Along with the national-level strategy and policy, sector-level planning is also significant.

In his concluding remarks, Khalid Rahman highlighted that while international economic dynamics may pres-

ent challenges in some contexts, but in the larger context it provides an opportunity for Pakistan to contribute to the system by introducing a change that would fill the gaps and meet the economic needs of the world. He further underlined that transformation to Islamic banking demands a change in all sectors of the economic system and Pakistan, as it is in a journey in progress, can incorporate developmental changes.

In this regard, a culture of conservation, political will to implement, transparency, a culture of commitment to the constitution, the moral training of society, reforms through academic and educational channels, and work at constitutional, infrastructural, institutional, as well as operational levels in all capacities are the areas that need consequential improvements to carry out the change in the system.

Flood relief efforts in Pakistan



News Desk

LAHORE: The Lahore Press Club held an event to highlight the need to expand existing flood relief efforts in Pakistan, focusing on Coca-Cola's contributions across the country.

The event was attended by Special Assistant to the Prime Minister of Pakistan on Public Policy & Strategic Communication, Fahd Hussain as Chief Guest, joined by President of the Lahore Press Club, Azam Chaudhary and Vice President of Coca-Cola Pakistan, Fahad Ashraf.

Speaking at the event, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Fahd Hussain said, "In addition to the government of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif securing over USD 9 billion in relief for the flood affected, companies like Coca-Cola and the private sector as a whole have also played a pivotal role by providing on ground stabilisation and relief in Sindh and Baluchistan in close coordination with the government as early as September."

Fahad Ashraf, Vice President of Coca-Cola Pakistan highlighted, "We have always been part of an immediate response plan after every disaster in Pakistan since the 50s, but the scale of this is unprecedented. Our response was then carefully designed to assist everyone with a special focus on food safety, clean drinking water and rural women and minority communities. Yet we are conscious that this is just a drop in the quantum of needs still unmet."

Through the National Disaster Authority (NDMA), Coca-Cola Iqceek Pakistan provided 120,000 litres of clean drinking water.

Pak-Afghan Relations

Islamabad: Sardar Ahmad Khan Shakib, Charge d' Affaires, Afghanistan Embassy in Islamabad, visited ISSI & met with Director General Amb. Sohail Mahmood. During the meeting, views were exchanged on myriad dimensions of Pakistan-Afghanistan relations and strengthening think-tank linkages.



Iranian Embassy condemns terror attack that killed Pakistani security forces

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Iranian Embassy in Islamabad on Wednesday condemned a terrorist attack in Pakistan's Balochistan Province that left four security personnel dead earlier in the day.

The embassy said in a statement said that terrorism is a common problem facing Iran and Pakistan, with both neighboring countries being victim of that "evil phenomenon."

The Iranian diplomatic mission in Pakistan's capital also expressed sympathy with the families of the victims of the terror attack that took place in Balochistan's Panjgur district.

According to Pakistan's Inter-Services Public Relations, militants "targeted a convoy of security forces patrolling along the border."

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif strongly condemned the incident, saying "nation pays homage to the sacrifices of their martyred soldiers in line of duty".

President Arif Alvi and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari denounced the attack as well.

PRCS organizes youth gathering and marathon event for rehabilitation of flood victims

City Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Red Crescent Society organizes mega youth gathering and marathon event of 5000 youth including students of different institutions of twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad for the relief and rehabilitation of flood-affected families. The event was held at Jinnah Convention Centre here today.

Addressing the ceremony, PRCS Chairman Sardar Shahid Ahmad Laghari said that the main purpose of this event was to raise funds, mobilize youth and volunteers and to channelize their efforts for relief and rehabilitation activities for the flood-affected communities. He said the Red Cross Red Crescent

Movement has 15 million volunteers and PRCS has a batch of 750,000 trained volunteers. "The volunteers associated with the PRCS in the flood affected areas have made history and the role of volunteers in rescue and relief has been key", he added.

Sardar Shahid Ahmad Laghari said that PRCS has provided humanitarian assistance to over 2.3 million people through health care, Mobile Health Units, provision of food, non-food items, tents, cooked food, health and hygiene promotion. He requested the participants to join PRCS and play their effective part for the rehabilitation of flood victims. "What can be a greater good than if someone's day is enlightened by your

donation, if someone gets a warm quilt from the given charity, the prayer coming out of the trembling lips will give you joy, your small part can become someone's happiness", he added.

The Guest of Honor, former Deputy Speaker and Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Faisal Karim Kundi said that the Red Crescent has comforted the nation in every difficult time. He said equipping the youth with training in first aid and disaster management is the distinction of the Red Crescent. He said the current leadership of PRCS has shown its iron.

The Patron-in-Chief of Pakistan Sweet Homes, Zamard Khan, in his speech, praised the efforts of PRCS, describing the

youth as a symbol of change. He said that the youth role in the rehabilitation of the flood victims is highly commendable.

Chairman PRCS Gilgit-Baltistan Brigadier (Rtd) Saleem Mehmood, Chairman PRCS Punjab Justice (Rtd) Sheikh Ahmed Farooq also addressed the participants. Earlier, Secretary General Obaid Ullah Khan in his welcome speech thanked all the participants and highlighted the history of Red Crescent, and voluntary services.

On this occasion, the Red Crescent Associate Members Drive was launched and two people were awarded honorary membership. All the participants took an oath to work as volunteers with the Red Cres-



cent. Cash prizes were distributed among the position holders of Marathon. Mobile Blood Camp

was also setup where 33 units of blood donations were collected. In the end, commemora-

tive shields were presented to Zamrad Khan and Faisal Karim Kundi.

Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
38,831.58	38,791.09
Day's High	Day's Low:
39,064.90	38,730.30
Index Value	Change
5,616,617,249	+40.49
Percentage	Time
+0.1%	Jan 19, 2023 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,759.37	-71.33
Percentage	Time
-0.91%	19 Jan, 4:05 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
33,087.29	-209.67
Percentage	Time
-0.63%	19 Jan, 11:13 am GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
26,405.23	-385.89
Percentage	Time
-1.44%	19 Jan, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	173.5	174.75
Bahrain Dinar	610.67	615.17
Canadian Dollar	185.5	186.85
China Yuan	34.02	34.27
Danish Krone	33.42	33.77
Euro	269.5	272.2
Hong Kong Dollar	29.36	29.71
Indian Rupee	2.81	2.89
Japanese Yen	2.48	2.53
Kuwaiti Dinar	750.3	755.3
Malaysian Ringgit	52.59	53.04
New Zealand \$	148.33	149.53
Norwegians Krone	22.43	22.73
Omani Riyal	596.4	600.9
Qatari Riyal	63.08	63.58
Saudi Riyal	66.2	66.9
Singapore Dollar	178	179.3
Swedish Korona	21.78	22.08
Swiss Franc	250.23	251.98
Thai Bhat	6.98	7.08
U.A.E Dirham	68.6	69.3
UK Pound Sterling	307	310
US Dollar	237.25	239.5

All efforts to be made to farmers, says Tariq Cheema

Commerce Reporter

ISLAMABAD : A meeting of the committee formed by the Prime Minister for Agriculture Yield Improvement was held under the chairmanship of Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Tariq Bashir Cheema on Thursday.

The Prime Minister had constituted the committee to suggest measures for agricultural yield improvement and to review steps for availability of quality seeds, inputs and farm machinery.

Federal Minister Tariq Bashir Cheema said that this forum provides an opportunity to take a comprehensive stock of the agriculture sector and find ways to improve its yield and productivity. "All effort should be made to uplift the agriculture sector and bring our farmers at par with their international counterparts," he added.



While briefing the committee, Food Security Commissioner Waseem Ul Hassan said that progressive farmers in Pakistan have a higher yield per acre compared to the country's average. He added that tractors, cultivator, disk harrow, rotavator are used in almost every crop.

Deputy Governor State Bank of Pakistan Sima Kamil told the committee that 45% of the financing annual target has been achieved of the PM's Kissan Package. She added that 444 billion has been disbursed for farming purpose while 401 billion has been disbursed for livestock, benefiting 3.2 million farming households.

"The commercial banks will soon start to disburse 56 billion for farm mechanization," said Sima Kamil.

Federal Minister Tariq Bashir Cheema said that he will brief the Prime Minister on the suggestions of the committee.

Secretary National Food Security and Research Zafar Hassan said that the ministry has extensively worked on the Track and Trace of seed bags. He hoped it will be functional in 3 months' time and will help in improving seed quality and availability.

Mubadala Energy, OMV and PARCO join forces to explore opportunities in sustainable fuels

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Mubadala Energy, the Abu Dhabi-based international energy company, has announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with OMV Downstream GmbH (OMV) and Pak-Arab Refinery Limited (PARCO) to explore opportunities in sustainable fuels and feedstock production in Pakistan.

Under this agreement the companies will explore the possibility of pursuing projects in circular economy initiatives, including plastics production and recycling, sustainable fuels and feedstock as well as the development of synthetic oil and chemical products. The collaboration builds on a well-established partnership between Mubadala Energy, OMV and PARCO and seeks to utilize cutting edge technologies while leveraging existing infrastructure and market access.

Mansoor Mohamed Al Hamed, Mubadala Energy CEO, commented: "We have set out a clear strategy to pursue new energy sectors and low carbon solutions in support of the energy transition. For OMV, the project supports the company's net zero



emissions targets and is line with a strategy to become a leading, innovative producer of sustainable fuels and feedstock. For PARCO, the agreement has the potential to position the company as an important player in the circular economy and deepen integration into the chemicals & materials industry, while proactively developing sustainable, low-carbon solutions that help diversify its business.

Mr. Shahid Mahmood Khan, Manag-

ing Director, PARCO, commented: "As the energy lifeline of the nation, we resolve to secure a sustainable energy future for the Country. Pakistan has immense potential to move towards environmentally friendly fuels.

Martijn van Koten, Member of the OMV Executive Board and Executive Officer Fuels & Feedstock, said: "We are delighted to participate in this joint activity, which supports our sustainable business strategy.

ICCI demands simplification of regulations for ease of doing business

Commerce Reporter

ISLAMABAD : Ahsan Zafar Baktawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that the prevailing complicated business regulations are a barrier to promote business and investment activities in Pakistan and stressed that the Board of Investment should speed up its process of regulatory reforms to promote ease of doing business in the country. He said this while talking to a delegation of Board of Investment (BoI) that visited ICCI led by Zulfikar Ali, Director General (Reforms) and briefed the business community about the Pakistan Regulatory Modernization Initiative to facilitate the business community.

ICCI President said that the new environmental laws are creating more problems for the private sector as their compliance is not possible, especially for old businesses and industries and stressed that BoI should work in consultation with stakeholders to reform and simplify them.

Engr. Muhammad Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI said that BoI should take a focal person from every chamber of commerce and associations for its Pakistan Regulatory Modernization Initiative (PRMI) to bring concrete reforms in the business regulations and a timeline should be set up for this project.

Zulfikar Ali, Director General (Reforms) and Adnan Munir Director (Regulatory Modernization) BoI gave a detailed presentation on PRMI to the business community. The said that BoI is establishing a Pakistan Business Portal to provide one stop shop facility to businesses for licensing, registration and no-objection certificates through an online system linked to all relevant government departments. This project is likely to be completed by 2027.

They said that BoI has received over 230 proposals for reforms in regulations out of which 115 reforms have been completed while more are process.

They said that under PRMI activities, mapping of all business regulations is being done to analyze and eliminate unnecessary regulations and simplify and automate remaining regulations in order to facilitate the business community.

Ameer Hamza, Maqsood Tabish, Muhammad Shabbir, Muhammad Naeem Executive Members ICCI, Khalid Chaudhry and Muhammad Naveed Malik former Senior Vice Presidents ICCI also gave many useful proposals for making regulations more business friendly.

Preparing truck art

RAWALPINDI: Workers busy in preparing truck art items in their workplace at Carriage Factory area in the city.



Photo: Online

Faysal Bank Limited Eyes on Growth through Automation

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: In line with the bank's core value of innovation through process automation, Faysal Bank Limited has entered into an agreement with AKS IQ for the development and implementation of a state-of-the-art trade solution.

The innovative solution will help Faysal Bank Limited to execute import and export transactions in a highly automated environment and provide flexibility to perform checks on price verifications, vessel tracking, dual use of goods etc. through pre-defined checks, validations, workflows, and reference data sources.

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Speaking at the signing ceremony, Syed Muhammad Fraz

Zaidi (Head of Operations) said, "For Faysal Bank, technology as an enabler is a key focus area. We have invested significantly in this area and are now starting to reap the benefits. As we automate and digitize our products and services delivery mechanisms, we will be able to serve our customers even better and improve on efficiencies."

Speaking at the signing ceremony,

Syed Muhammad Fraz Zaidi (Head of Operations) said, "For Faysal Bank, technology as an enabler is a key focus area. We have invested significantly in this area and are now starting to reap the benefits. As we automate and digitize our products and services delivery mechanisms, we will be able to serve our customers even better and improve on efficiencies."

Faysal Bank Limited carries the highest local Shariah rating of SCFR1 by the International Islamic Rating Agency (IIRA) and provides the best and widest range of Shariah-compliant banking products and services to meet their customer's Halal banking needs with convenience. With an expand-

Pakistan's security and survival is linked to a stable economy

Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: Pakistan's security and survival is linked to a stable economy and in this regard President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) Dr. Khurram Tariq emphasized the importance of democracy and making the government aware of its importance. He drew attention to the fact that the charter of all the political parties must be based on the practical welfare of the people & It is very important to agree to the Charter of Democracy so that the change of governments does not stop the process of economic and industrial development because it is not possible to run the country without the continuity of economic policies.

He said this while addressing the former presidents and elected members of the executive committee. In this meeting, Mian Muhammad Idrees, senior vice president Dr. Sajjad Arshad, vice president Muhammad Aslam Bhali, former presidents Atif Munir Sheikh, Muzamil Sultan, Ayub Saber, Apart from Shabbir Hussain Chawla and Chaudhry Muhammad Nawaz, former Vice President Bilal Waheed Sheikh, Engineer Ahmed Hasan, Ayub Aslam Munj, Muhammad Tayyab, Muhammad Azhar Chaudhry, Kashif Zia, Arif Ehsan Malik, Muhammad Amjad Khawaja and Sheikh Muhammad Fazil also participated.

While giving a briefing about the All Chambers Summit 2023 on the occasion of the 15th All Pakistan Chambers Presidents Conference organized by the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, he said that at the moment all the economic indicators are negative while the stock exchange has reached the brink of collapse.

He said that the gap between our income and expenditure is increasing every day and the current account deficit will reach unsustainable levels in the next few years. He said that due to political uncertainty, economic activities are also having negative effects. While what we have to do for only one billion dollars from the International Monetary Fund. He described the contribution of Pakistan's business community as greater than the IMF's assistance and called for immediate steps to safeguard its needs and interests.

PPMA earnestly appealed to govt to adopt emergency fiscal measures

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Association (PPMA) has earnestly appealed to the government to adopt emergency fiscal measures for the immediate resumption of import of the raw material used in the production of medicines and essential medical equipment for the uninterrupted treatment of patients in the country including those who require lifesaving interventions.

Speaking at a press conference here on Wednesday, PPMA Central Chairman, Syed Farooq Bukhari, accompanied by other office-bearers of his association, said the prevailing foreign exchange crisis had badly hit the production of medicines in the country.

He said the drug producers had run out of the compulsory resources required for the indigenous production of essential medicines in the country. He said the government should treat drug manu-

facturers as an essential industry whose raw material should remain available throughout the year without its import being hampered due to the unavailability of dollars with the banks.

Mr. Bukhari said that drug makers should continue with their production even during wartime as like any other essential service or industry.

He told media persons that the drug manufacturers despite facing unnecessary price regulations had been efficiently fulfilling up to 95 per cent of the medicines required in the country.

The PPMA Chairman said that around 770 drug producers in the country had been facing a serious crisis as they didn't get essential imports of raw and packaging materials required for producing over 90 per cent of medicines needed by patients in the country.

He said that a massive sum of US \$ 150 million would be required to import the medicines otherwise indigenously produced in the country.

20-K Cup 2023: MT Whites, City Gymkhana, Ali Garh triumphant

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Model Town Whites, City Gymkhana Cricket Club and Ali Garh Cricket Club emerged as triumphant in the 20-K Cup 2023 T20 Cricket Tournament matches played here at different venues on Thursday.

All-rounder Naveed Malik excelled in Model Town Whites' thrashing 9-wicket victory over Yu Slim Club in the 34th match of the tournament. Naveed Malik not only smashed scintillating 59 runs but also clinched 3 wickets for 16 runs to emerge as player of the match.

Yu Slim Club, batting first, could score 119-9 in 20 overs. Safer Azam struck 43 and Amir Jamil 22 runs. Naveed Malik bagged 3-16, Aon Shahzad 2-20 and Shahab Khan 2-28. Model Town Whites easily chased the target in 10.2 overs, losing just 1 wicket. Naveed Malik hammered 59 and Aon Shahzad hit 40. Majid Majeed took the only wicket.

Brilliant batting performance by Rana Arslan steered City Gymkhana to a 20-run win over Lucky Star Club in the 35th match. Rana Arslan not only cracked



classic 75 runs but also got one wicket that helped him become a player of the match.

City Gymkhana, batting first, posted a huge total of 186-10 in 20 overs. Rana Arslan was top scorer with 75 runs while Muhammad Bilal scored 47 and Rizwan

Haider 30 runs. M Subhan bowled extremely well and clinched 6-10 while Daniyal Hanif took 2-25. Lucky Star could score 166-8 in 20 overs. Zain ul Hassan slammed 61 while Junaid Ali hit 39 and Zeeshan Khadim 24 runs. Saad Athar

grabbed 4-20 and Abdul Rehman took 3-29.

Zeeshan Ashraf guided Ali Garh Club to a thumping 8-wicket triumph over Shah Faisal Club in the 36th match. Zeeshan Ashraf was in sublime form and hammered 70 runs to emerge as man of the match.

Shah Faisal Club, batting first, scored 128 runs for the loss of 7 wickets in 20 overs. M Ilyas scored 27 runs, Gohar Hafeez 19 and Naimat Ullah 17 runs. Faraz Ahmad claimed 3 wickets for 40. Ali Garh comfortably chased the target in 14.3 overs for the loss of just 2 wickets. Zeeshan Ashraf made superb 75 and Nouman Ali 41 runs.

On Friday (20th January 2023), three matches will be played.

Cricket Center will play Shinning Club in the 37th match of the tournament at Model Town Greens ground, Prince Cricket Club will compete against City Gymkhana Cricket Club in the 38th match at Ittefaq Cricket Ground while in the 39th match of the tournament at Model Town Club, Shah Faisal Cricket Club will vie against Ludhiana Gymkhana Cricket Club.

Secretary Sports inspected Punjab Tennis Stadium

Sports Reporter

LAHORE: Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Musarrat Jabeen and Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi inspected different sports venues and facilities at Nishtar Park Sports Complex.

They were accompanied by Director Admin Syed Umair Hassan, Deputy Director Planning Rauf Bajwa and officials of Project Management Unit (PMU) during their inspection visit.

Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Musarrat Jabeen and Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi inspected Punjab Tennis Stadium, tennis hostel, State of the Art Tennis Courts, Sports Board Punjab's cricket academy, NPSC Gymnasium Hall, Co-Working Space and Youth Helpline at SBP E-Library, under construction Squash Complex project and Sports Medicine Clinic during their detailed inspection visit.

Director General Sports Punjab M Tariq Qureshi gave a thorough briefing to Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Musarrat Jabeen about multiple features and details of under construction sports facilities.

While giving briefing, Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi



informed the honourable secretary sports Punjab that State of the Art Tennis Courts are equipped with all international level facilities and now we will be able to organize international level tennis tournaments at our own venues. "Pakistan tennis stalwart Aisam-ul-Haq and other top tennis coaches will also impart modern training to young players at Sports Board Punjab Tennis Academy," he added.

After this, Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Musarrat Jabeen and Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi visited the site of Sports Board Punjab's first ever Sports Medicine Clinic. Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi on this

occasion said this Sports Medicine Clinic will be the first of its kind in the history of the country. "Definitely, it will be a great facility for all players and sports persons. Renowned health experts and other medical officers will be there for quality treatment of all male and female athletes who got injuries before, during and after sports competitions," he added.

Then, Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Musarrat Jabeen and Director General Sports Punjab M Tariq Qureshi also took a round of under-construction Squash Complex and inspected the pace of work. Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Musarrat Jabeen on this occasion issued strict instructions to

officers concerned to complete the remaining construction work as early as possible.

She said that these new sporting facilities will help Pakistan in producing several world class sports stars in future. "Our country has plenty of potential in every field including sports. It just needs proper grooming and international level facilities and training and Sports Board Punjab is doing exactly the same thing to make the future of Pakistan sports bright," she further said.

DG Sports Punjab M Tariq Qureshi on this occasion told that the Squash Complex will play a key part in the promotion of squash game in the province. He said after completion, it will be Pakistan's first world class squash venue where Pakistan can host international squash events. "Squash is quite a popular game among our youth and we are quite determined to produce more world class squash players in future after the completion of this mega project."

Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi further said that all international level facilities will be provided in the squash complex. "The construction of the State of the Art squash complex project in Nishtar Park Sports Complex is definitely a major development in regard to the future of squash in Pakistan."

National Ice Sports Championship kicks off in GB



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The six-day National Ice Sports Championship commenced in Naltar, Gilgit-Baltistan on Thursday with a colorful opening ceremony, attended by a huge number of sports lovers welcoming and celebrating the scenic snow-clad mountains event.

"The championship is a regular annual feature of the Winter Festival at Naltar, in which many teams are participating to entertain the people through healthy games. Locals also setup stalls of handicrafts, fruits, and foods during the event," he added.

He said every year, the championship welcomes local and international tourists and provides them with a magnificent opportunity to gather refreshing memories.

The festival includes competitions of ice hockey, ice-skating, paragliding, indigenous games, and a freelancing seminar and talks on climate change, climate actions eco-system, biodiversity, and wildlife, he added.

He said the championship would greatly help in promoting and projecting winter tourism in the country.

Thailand's Saengkham upsets Ronnie O'Sullivan in World Grand Prix



A Sports -

GLOUCESTERSHIRE: Rookie Thai cueist Noppon Saengkham handed an upset defeat to reigning world champion Ronnie O'Sullivan in the second-round fixture of the ongoing World Grand Prix 2023 here on Wednesday.

The top-ranked cueist Ronnie had a shocking end to his World Grand Prix campaign as he succumbed to an upset defeat at the hands of 33rd-ranked Saengkham.

In an enthralling second-round clash of the ranking event, Saengkham outclassed Ronnie by 4-2 in the Best of Seven.

Ronnie scripted a perfect start to the match as he scored a century in the first frame before dominating Saengkham in the next.

Following a 2-0 deficit, Saengkham soon fired back by claiming three consecutive frames to move one frame within a historic victory.

The sixth and final frame of the match saw a tight tug of war between the cueists but it was Saengkham who held his nerves calm to edge Ronnie by 68-53 and secured a sensational victory.

Following the triumph, Saengkham will now take on Mark Williams in the quarter-finals.

Djokovic barrels into Australian Open third round as seeds fall

MELBOURNE: Novak Djokovic scrapped his way into the Australian Open third round Thursday to ramp up his bid for a 22nd Grand Slam crown, but Ons Jabeur was prime among the numerous seeds to crash out.

Most of the carnage occurred in the men's draw — second seed Casper Ruud, Taylor Fritz, Alexander Zverev and Diego Schwartzman were all sent packing on day four at Melbourne Park.

With the shock exit on Wednesday of hobbling defending champion Rafael Nadal, the top two seeds are both now gone.

With top-ranked Carlos Alcaraz also absent through injury, it presents a huge opportunity for Djokovic, who even before that was hot favourite to win a 10th Melbourne crown.

The 35-year-old Serb required a medical timeout and had heavy strapping on his left thigh against 191st-ranked qualifier Enzo Coucaud.

He was also bothered by some rowdy fans and at one point during the match demanded that a drunken fan be thrown out.

But Djokovic recovered his poise and fitness to beat the Frenchman 6-1, 6-7 (5/7), 6-2, 6-0, and faces 27th seed Grigor Dimitrov in round three.

"There was a lot happening tonight in the match," Djokovic, who has been struggling with a hamstring injury, told the Rod Laver Arena.

His on-court interview was momentarily paused when a spectator shouted out.

"I love you too, thank you," said Djokovic, who has enjoyed a warm return to Melbourne Park following his deportation a year ago because of his stance on Covid vaccines.

Netball Women Championship 2023

FAISALABAD: Sports women march-past parade during inauguration ceremony of All Pakistan 10th HEC Interschool Netball Women Championship 2023 at The University of Faisalabad on Thursday.



Pakistan women's team reach Sydney to play third ODI, first T20I



Web Desk

SYDNEY: Pakistan women's team reach Sydney, where they will play the third ODI and first match of the three-T20I series.

Earlier, the women team lost two ODI matches from Australia. In the second ODI, Australia sealed the victory by 10 wickets. Australia's 19-year-old Phoebe Litchfield scored her second unbeaten ODI 50 in a row while Darcie Brown was player of the match after taking three key wickets. Pakistan were bowled out at Allan Border Field for 125 in 43 overs.

Australia cantered to victory in the 20th over with Litchfield (67no off 61 balls) and fellow opener Beth Mooney (57no off 55) toying with the bowling attack.

Iftikhar hits ton as Fortune Barishal thump Rangpur Riders in BPL

A Sports

CHITTAGONG: Pakistan batter Iftikhar Ahmed fired all cylinders to go berserk and hit a 45-ball century to power his Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) team Fortune Barishal to a dominating 67-run victory over Rangpur Riders.

Put into batters, Fortune Barishal endured an early setback as they slipped to just 46/4 in the

sixth over.

However, Iftikhar, coming out to bat at number six, turned the game on its head with his belligerent hitting and stitched an unbeaten record partnership with skipper Shakib Al Hassan.

The duo put on a record 192-run partnership for the fifth wicket and powered their side to a mammoth 238/4. Their unbeaten stand was the highest fifth-wicket partnership in the T20 format.

Iftikhar was the core aggressor of the game-changing fifth wicket stand as he struck a quickfire 100 off just 45 balls, hitting six boundaries and nine sixes.

Shakib, on the other hand, was also impressive as he scored 89 not out off just 43 balls and smashed nine boundaries and six sixes.

Young pacer Hasan Mahmud led the bowling attack for the Riders with 2/31 while Haris Rauf also picked two wickets but was

expensive as he leaked 42 runs.

Set to chase 239, the Riders could amass 171/9 in their quota of 20 overs despite a vital 44-run knock of Shamim Hossain.

The Riders kept losing wickets at regular intervals amid the pursuit and none of their batters could go big. Shamim (44) and Mohammad Nawaz (34) put on a brief fight amid their 57-run partnership for the seventh wicket but it was not enough.

