

# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ  
جز انکلی علیہ السلام رضوان کی ہر بات میں آپ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم سے ملاقات کرتے اور آپ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کے ساتھ قرآن کا ورد کرتے، غرض نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم لوگوں کو بھلائی پہنچانے میں ہرگز لاسے والی ہوتے تھے۔  
(گفتار: حدیث نمبر 6)  
Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited



## Mustafa Nawaz lambasts 'human rights violation' in Pakistan

Former senator and ex-member of PPP, Mustafa Nawaz Khokhar on Saturday expressed concern over the 'human rights violation' in Pakistan and lambasted the 'absence' of rule of law, ARY News reported. Addressing a seminar in Quetta, the former Senator said that restricting people from holding peaceful protests is violation of basic human rights, regretting that there was no rule of law or democracy in Pakistan.



## Sirajul Haq calls out PDM, PTI and PPP for their role in economic hardships

Jl chief Sirajul Haq said on Saturday the names of inflation, illiteracy and slavery were PDM, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and only his party would liberate the occupied Kashmir and bring back Aafia Siddiqui. In a statement, he said the prices of roti and naan had soared to Rs16 and Rs30 respectively, while the prices of flour, onion and cooking oil also had skyrocketed. (Report on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Jamadi-us-Sani 29, Sunday, January 22, 2023

www.dailyspokesman.net

@daily\_spokesman



Daily Spokesman Vol: 15, Issue: 289 Price Rs. 25.00 Pages 8

## Karachi Port Visits

KARTACHI: Chairman Federal Board of Revenue, Mr. Asim Ahmad being briefed about port operations during his visit to South Asia Pakistan Terminal of Karachi Port on Saturday.



Photo: PID

# Govt. attaches significance to freedom of press for transparency, accountability: PM

### Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday said that the government attached high importance to the freedom of the press and media for transparency and accountability.

The prime minister stressed upon enhancement of bilateral ties in the field of journalism between Pakistan and Germany.

The prime minister expressed these views during a call on by a three-member delegation of the German Press Federation led by its President Christian Zarm, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.



Govt. attaches significance to freedom of press for transparency, accountability: PM

The meeting was attended by Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb, PM's Special Assistance Syed Fahad Hussain, secretary of ministry of information and other officials.

The prime minister directed the ministry of information to initiate work in collaboration with the German Press Federation for the establishment of a training facility to exchange professional skills on a public-private partnership basis.

The prime minister also welcomed a proposal of the delegation regarding the exchange of professional delegations between the two countries.

## President Takes notice of increasing online bank frauds, scams incidents

### Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has taken serious notice of the rising trend of online banking frauds where fraudsters obtained contact details of banks' clients by impersonating as bank officials to get account and banking information and then using these details to swindle money out of clients' accounts.

The president directed the Banking Mohtasib of Pakistan to take serious notice of this worrisome trend and take substantive, meaningful, and effective steps by placing appropriate checks and balances, and foolproof security systems by using technology capable of differentiating between the genuine and fraudulent transaction attempts to curb this menace on an urgent basis, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release on Saturday.

The president expressed his concern over the news reports about an online bank fraud



wherein renowned novelist and playwright, Mirza Athar Baig, was deprived of Rs 1.1 million from his bank account by an online fraudster.

The president's secretariat, under the direction of the president, has asked Mirza Athar Baig to lodge a complaint and formally raise the matter with the BMP to get relief if the bank was unable to resolve his issue and compensate him within the stipulated time period.

The president said that it was upsetting that fraudulent activities and practices were on the rise in the banking sector despite the fact that hundreds of such fraud cases had been decided by him through the Banking Mohtasib of Pakistan (BMP) and relief had been provided to the affectees of the online frauds.

## Imran's motive was to create political rumpus in NA: Ahsan Iqbal

### News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal said on Saturday that Imran's motive for rejoining the National Assembly (NA) after dissolving two provincial assemblies was to create political rumpus.

Talking to a private media channel, Ahsan Iqbal said that Imran Khan does not believe in political harmony and solving political issues through dialogue.

Minister accused the PTI chief of sabotaging every positive development in the country with his negative politics and accusations. Imran, he

added, was trying to spread chaos and anarchy by creating a political crisis in Pakistan.

In response to the question of participating in the by-elections, he said, "Which serious political worker will contest the NA elections for 6 months?" There was an opinion within the party to not participate in by-elections for 6 months, Ahsan revealed.

Imran Khan should be allowed to fulfill his ambition by contesting one-sided elections on his own-vacant seats. Criticizing PTI's economic policies minister said that the current economic crisis was a result of Imran Khan's led government's economic mismanagement.

## Karachi Mayor: PPP, PML-N to Work as Coalition Partners

### Bureau Report

KARACHI: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Sindh Chapter have agreed to work as coalition partners for election of Karachi Mayor.

According to details, PML-N Sindh President Shah Muhammad Shah made the announcement during a press conference in Karachi alongside Sindh Minister for Labour and Human Resources Saeed Ghani.

Talking to journalists, Shah Muhammad Shah assured that PML-N will fully support Pakistan People's Party (PPP) in election of Mayor in Karachi.

He mentioned that both political parties had jointly contested the latest local government elections in a number of union committees in the city as this alliance would continue in the upcoming by-elections and general polls in the province.

For his part, Saeed Ghani said it is right of every party to form coalition for election of mayor, however being the single largest party, the mayor should be from Pakistan people's party.

## Supremacy of rule of law key to nation's progress: Imran Khan

### Bureau Report

LAHORE: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan has emphasised the need for Supremacy of rule of law, saying that the latter was necessary for the nation's progress and prosperity.

According to details, the former premier made these remarks during meeting with Insaf Lawyers Wing at his residence in Lahore's Zaman Park.

A number of lawyers announced to join Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) during the meeting.

Imran Khan maintained that rule of law was the key to ensure good governance in the country, urging the lawyers to raise awareness about the supremacy of rule of law among the people of Pakistan.

He noted that there was a dire need for the suprem-

acy of rule of law in Sindh and Balochistan, asking the lawyers to prepare for legal and constitutional struggle.

The PTI chief also lambasted the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) over 'rigging' in the local government (LG) elections, saying that all major political parties have reservations on results of the local body polls.

"PPP has ruined the Sindh province by its corruption," he said, criticising the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) for not taking 'any action against the rigging'.

Speaking of the Wazirabad attack, Imran Khan alleged that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah and another person was involved in the assassination attempt.

"They launched blasphemy campaign against me on social media," he said,

adding that PML-N vice president Maryam Nawaz and Marriyum Aurangzeb levelled 'false' allegations in the press conferences.

Earlier in January, Imran Khan 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.

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."

## Imran failed to prove even single allegation against political opponents in 4 years rule: Marriyum

### City Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Saturday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan remained in power for four years but could not prove a single allegation of corruption or wrongdoing against his political opponents.

Giving her reaction to Imran Khan's statement, the minister said that in the Imran era, the political opponents were put behind the bars by blackmailing the National Accountability Bureau Chairman, but the allegations proved false in the courts, as they could not present a single evidence.

The minister while referring to the ouster of Imran from power corridors, said that now the country had been purged from the mafia and robbers. Now just terming the opponents as thieves will not work, despite four years of all power Imran Khan had not been able to prove a single charge, she said adding all the courts of Pakistan threw his allegations in the dustbin.

## Dar chairs RRMC's first introductory meeting

### Commerce Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar here on Saturday chaired the first introductory meeting of Reforms and Resource Mobilization Commission (RRMC).

Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Revenue Tariq Mehmood Pasha, Chairman FBR Asim Ahmad, Chairman RRMC Ashfaq Yousuf Tola, Dr. Mohammad Iqbal, Abdul Hameed Memon, Dr. Veqar Ahmed, Ghazanfar Bilour, Ardsheer Saleem Tariq and Taqueer Ahmed attended the meeting in person while President Pakistan Tax Bar Association Rana Munir Hussain, President Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, Asif Haroon, Haider Ali Patel, Abdul Qadir Memon and Ziad Bashir virtually attended the meeting through zoom.

The Finance Minister welcomed the members of the Commission and highlighted the economic and financial outlook of the country.

He shared that despite of

inheriting a weak economic legacy, the government was determined to set the economy in right direction and introduce reforms in various sectors to achieve economic stability and growth.

He further highlighted the importance of the RRMC in identifying issues and difficulties in the existing taxation system and suggesting reforms in existing revenue policies for resource mobilization and ease of doing business to achieve sustainable economic growth.

The Finance Minister extended his best wishes and support to the Commission and emphasized the members to put their best efforts for fast-track activity of the Commission in introducing tax reforms for the financial and economic stability and enhancement of revenue generation.

Chairman RRMC Ashfaq Yousuf Tola also briefed the meeting on the formation and responsibilities of the Commission and assured the meeting of its full cooperation to achieve the mandate of the Commission at the earliest for the betterment and progress of the country.

## Dynamic Survey for deserving families

SAPM on Poverty Alleviation, Mr Faisal Karim Kundi participated in a radio program 'Hotline' to guide BISP beneficiaries. He responded to questions of listeners and said that Dynamic Survey will soon be conducted to include maximum deserving families in BISP.



Photo: PID

# Pakistan's bilateral trade with China to reach new heights: FM Bhutto

### News Desk

BEIJING: Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that the bilateral trade relationship with China is expected to flourish further, thanks to the win-win cooperation between both countries in the fight against climate change and investments in renewable energy.

Over the last 71 years, successive generations of leaders have nurtured bilateral ties between Pakistan and China, he said in an exclusive interview with Xinhua at the World Economic Forum, Davos, Switzerland this week.

"Our relationship is based on mutual respect, trust and understanding. Both countries support each other on issues of core interest. Pakistan and China believe in promot-

ing regional peace and stability and share a common dream of national development and prosperity," he said.

Pakistan-China relations have also grown thanks to new initiatives such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) proposed by China in 2013, he said.

The foreign minister emphasized that Pakistan and China today have a multi-faceted partnership.

"We have robust strategic and defense cooperation. Our economic and trade relations are rapidly advancing, ... entering a new phase with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Our financial, investment and industrial sectors maintain close links," he said.

"China has become the



top destination for Pakistan's students and there are strong links between our people nurtured by artists, academia, the scientific community and the media," he said.

Launched in 2013, the CPEC is a corridor linking Pakistan's Gwadar Port with Kashgar in northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. It is aimed at boosting energy, transport and industrial coop-

eration.

With investments in the country's modern transportation networks including roads and railways, energy projects, ports and special economic zones, the CPEC has provided the opportunity for Pakistan to promote development and economic growth.

Regarding the bilateral trade outlook between China and Pakistan, he said that econom-

ic relations are the centerpiece of the Pakistan-China all-weather strategic cooperative partnership.

Trade relations with China have exceeded pre-pandemic levels, he added.

"China is among our top export markets and the largest source of foreign direct investment. Both our countries also have an extensive Free Trade Agreement (CPFTA) that is contributing to our wide-ranging economic relationship."

Since 2013, the CPEC has added a new dimension to the two countries' multifaceted economic relations, especially in energy, infrastructure, trade and investment, the foreign minister said. This cooperation has expanded to include the areas of agriculture, socio-economic development, science and technology and IT, he added.

## Sirajul Haq calls out PDM, PTI and PPP for their role in economic hardships



### Bureau Report

LAHORE : Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) chief Sirajul Haq said on Saturday the names of inflation, illiteracy and slavery were Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and only his party would liberate the occupied Kashmir and bring back Aafia Siddiqui.

In a statement, he said the prices of roti and naan had soared to Rs16

and Rs30 respectively, while the prices of flour, onion and cooking oil also had skyrocketed. He said the lives of people had become difficult, adding that the number of beggars on footpaths was increasing. "Nuclear power and agricultural country is in trouble because of troika," he said and added Imran Khan had dissolved two of his assemblies and the PDM was accepting the resignations of their members.

The JI chief further said the PDM had announced that they would reduce inflation and Ishaq Dar made tall claims of reducing the exchange rate of dollar but today the women were forced to buy flour by running behind the trucks, whereas a poor man in Karachi lost his life to get flour.

## 'PTI changed five finance ministers and I called the last three [jokers],' Mr Sharif said

### Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD : Suleman Shehbaz, son of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, has clarified his tweet in which he labelled last three finance ministers of the country as 'jokers'.

Speaking to media in the federal capital, Suleman Sharif said his "joker" remarks were about the last three finance ministers appointed by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government. "The PTI changed five finance ministers and I called the last three [jokers]," he said.

A journalist asked if the "last three" included Miftah Ismail as well. Suleman said he did not take the name of anyone, and so his tweet



did not label any specific personality as "joker".

On Jan 16, Suleman took to Twitter and said, "The last 3 finance ministers were jokers. They ran a clown show! Dar sb averted a default after atomic detonations in 1998. The challenges are humongous, he is giving his best shot no match for his commitment and hard work. The three jokers have laid minefields!"

# Women's education, empowerment vital to country's development: Governor

### Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Governor Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman said on Saturday that education and empowerment of women was vital for development of the country.

Speaking as the chief guest at Pakistan Tech HR Fest. 2023 at a local hotel, he said that in previous tenures of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), several measures including distribution of laptops among students on merit were taken for students in the universities to promote IT education among the youth.

The governor said that



under the Digital Pakistan Policy, establishment of software technology parks, marketing of local products at international level,

internship and trainings were conducted, which increased the exports of IT products.

He said, "Our women are working side by side with men

in every field of life and even in higher educational institutions, our daughters are performing better than boys." He said that quota was allocated for women in government jobs and also they were empowered financially so that they could contribute to development of the country.

Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman said that as the Punjab governor, he had formed consortia on IT education as well as women empowerment. Through these forums, he added, suggestions would be sought on strengthening links between universities and industries, women's educa-

tion and their empowerment. He said that viable suggestions presented in these consortia would be forwarded to the federal and provincial governments for inclusion in the policies.

The governor said that in the past, projects like 'Women on wheels' were started for working women and effective legislation had been made for protection of women. He said that steps had also been taken to encourage woman entrepreneurs, while 30 per cent quota had been allocated for woman entrepreneurs in national incubation centres established at the federal and provincial levels.

People are impatiently waiting for the general elections: Qureshi

### City Report

ISLAMABAD : Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) vice chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi said on Saturday the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) was restless and anxious due to fear of Imran Khan.

Talking to Twitter, Mr Qureshi said the speaker and deputy speaker of National Assembly left today instead of meeting and facing them.

"PDM's future is a writing on the wall as people are impatiently waiting for the general election," he added.

## Pak-US business ties witnessing growth: Amb. Masood Khan

### Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States Masood Khan said that business-to-business ties between the US and Pakistan were increasing especially in the technology sector.

"The United States is the largest export market for Pakistan and in the years to come bilateral trade is poised to grow," the ambassador was talking to Stuart Holliday, CEO of Meridian International Center and former US ambassador, during his visit to the Meridian International Center, a press release on Saturday said.

Ambassador Khan further

highlighted that the current phase of Pak-US relations centered around enhancing economic cooperation.

"In recent high-level visits, we have prioritized trade, agriculture, businesses, technology, climate change, green energy, disaster preparedness, environment, health and people-to-people exchanges", he added.

Meridian International Center assured that it would help promote closer ties between Pakistan and the United States in the areas of education, leadership training programs, climate change, culture and business.

Meridian International Center is a non-partisan insti-

tution that seeks to advance global security and prosperity through effective leadership and diplomacy.

It creates global leadership exchange and education programmes, partnerships and initiatives that strengthen international cooperation on key issues i.e. security, energy and the environment, economic development, entrepreneurship, global health and culture.

Ambassador Masood Khan said that during previous year, several delegations of Pakistani students, professionals and experts had visited the United States.

"They in the long run will build bridges between Pakistan and the United States",

the ambassador said adding that they would welcome more US students, academics and businesspersons visiting Pakistan.

Ambassador Khan welcomed Ambassador Holliday's suggestion for regular cultural exchanges to project rich heritage of both countries.

He also appreciated the Center's efforts to strengthen engagement between the US and the other countries of the world through diplomacy, leadership and culture to address shared global challenges.

Besides, he observed that greater collaboration in these important areas would create new avenues for cooperation.

## All PTI MNAs had resigned to pave way for general elections in the country: Fawad

### Bureau Report

LAHORE : Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Fawad Chaudhry says he hopes that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), instead of becoming a frontman for Sharifs and Zardari, will pick a suitable person for the slot of the caretaker chief minister in Punjab.

Talking to Twitter, the former information minister said the Article 224-A bound the electoral watchdog to pick the caretaker CM within two days. "The ECP cannot add new names to the list provided by the parliamentary committee," he

added.

In another tweet, the PTI leader said his party had no plan to challenge acceptance of its lawmakers' resignations. All PTI MNAs, he said, had resigned to pave the way for general elections in the country.

Meanwhile, in an interview with a private channel, Mr Chaudhry said 50 per cent improvement was visible after Chief of Army Staff Gen Asim Munir took over. The party, he said, expected that things would further improve. He said Shehbaz Sharif had to take the vote of confidence at all costs.

# 'Military assets' accumulation in Taiwan may create war-like situation'

Tooba Khan

ISLAMABAD: Defence and geopolitical experts from Pakistan and China warn of severe economic repercussions of increasing US-Taiwan military collaboration. Overwhelming approval of the Taiwan Policy Act 2022 by the US Senate seems a green signal to setting up a near future war field in the Asia-Pacific. Though, it is believed that it would have the most profound impact in the bilateral diplomacy and arms sales, covering broad security and military assistance to support Taiwan against potential threats from Beijing.

Though the experts did not rule out the chances of war between China and Taiwan, they say "china will not initiate the war while the US would try to impose on it to stop its economic spread". The US-Taiwan new strategic partnership is also worrisome for the people of both China and Taiwan as they all believe in peace and security.

The webinar was organized by the Devcom-Pakistan (Development Communications Network) and DTN on Saturday.

Lt. General (Retd) Talat Masood was the keynote speaker. Other guest speakers included Ambassador (Retd) Naghmana Naheed Hashmi and geopolitical analyst from Chengdu (China) Dr. Dan



Ge, co-chair of the News One media group Seema Taher, and Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed.

Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed in his introductory remarks said the Taiwan Policy Act 2022 creates a new initiative to bolster Taiwan's defense capabilities, providing almost \$4.5 billion in security assistance over the next four years and designating Taiwan as a "Major Non-NATO Ally"; reforms bureaucratic practices and procedures to bolster support for Taiwan's democratic government; provides additional support for Taiwan's participation in international organizations and in multilateral trade agreements; takes concrete steps to counter China's aggressive influence campaigns. The

accumulation of military assets in Taiwan may ignite a Ukraine-like situation in the Taiwan Strait.

Lt. General (Retd) Talat Masood Taiwan's heavy militarization is unwarranted and will cause a severe dent to the peace and stability not only of the region, but global too. A weaker China will cause recession in the developed world too.

Ambassador (R) Naghmana Naheed Hashmi said "One of the two centennial goals of China is the return of the lost territories and reunification of China and rejuvenation of the Chinese nation by 2049. For China, Taiwan is important for its Sovereignty and territorial integrity as it is historically an integral part of China. It was clear that China would not allow external interfering

forces and internal separatist forces to jointly conspire to undermine its sovereignty, security and territorial integrity.

Talking about the dynamic stability of US-China-Taiwan, the Chinese political analyst Dr. Dan Ge said the US has continuous provocations in the South-China Sea especially at Taiwan Strait despite having formal diplomatic ties with China, and also officially recognize One-China policy. Meanwhile, no endorsement of one-China policy and thereby maintains a "robust unofficial" relationship with Taiwan, including continued arms sales. On the other hand, China always showed the utmost tolerance and restraint towards the US provocations. One-China policy has always been a cornerstone for Sino-US relations as the China Ministry of Foreign Affairs has stated time again. Taiwan's ruling party has been promoting independence through multiple ways, including the modification of textbooks and diplomatic wordings.

Seema Taher said China's economic spread cannot be curtailed by hook or by crook. China is not only an economic might but its military strength is also unchallengeable. Pakistan and its people are on the China side in any case though Pakistan is going through the challenge of balancing diplomatic ties with all strategic partners.

## Available funds for public welfare schemes to be utilized expeditiously: Commissioner

Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: An important meeting was held under the chairmanship of the Divisional Commissioner Mohammad Shahid Niaz and Director General Monitoring and Evaluation Planning and Development Board, Punjab Ifrikhar Shami. Deputy Commissioner Faisalabad Imran Hamid Sheikh, Director Development Dr. Naveed Ifrikhar Aulakh, DD Development Rana Tahir and Deputy Commissioner of the districts joined the meeting through video link. In the meeting, a report was presented by the P&D officers after monitoring the ongoing development schemes across the division. The Divisional Commissioner directed the concerned Deputy Commissioner to visit the scheme and ordered to speed up the construction progress and asked that available funds for public welfare schemes to be utilized expeditiously.

He said that there will be no compromise on transparency. The DG said that the monitoring teams conducted site inspections of 70 development schemes in the four districts of the division in the last one week with the aim of identifying some problems and slow-moving schemes in the ongoing projects. He directed the departments implementing the development programs to check the construction progress and ensure quality by being present on the spot. Deputy Commissioner Faisalabad gave a detailed briefing on the inspection of development projects.

## Polio campaign is going on successfully :DC

Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: The Deputy Commissioner Imran Hamid Shaikh presided over the meeting of the District Polio Eradication Committee and directed that on the last day of the campaign (Sunday, January 22) the polio teams would go door to door to confirm whether the children had been vaccinated against polio and administered polio drops to missing children for any reason? So that the 100% target could be achieved. During the meeting, District Health Officer Dr. Saqib Munir gave the briefing on the implementation of the campaign and told that on the fifth day of the campaign, 262,439 children were vaccinated against polio while a total of 1.48 million children have been administered drops. The Deputy Commissioner said that the successful implementation of the campaign is going on. He directed that fixed teams should be present on the spots and progress should be monitored till the last day of the campaign.

## APHC-AJK chapter released a report on human rights violations in IIOJK



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Kashmir Media Service in collaboration with All Parties Hurriyat Conference Azad Jammu and Kashmir (APHC-AJK) chapter released a report, today, on human rights violations by Indian troops in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

The report, which contains the data of Indian atrocities committed in IIOJK during the last six months, was released at an event organized at the APHC-AJK office in Islamabad. The event was presided over by APHC-AJK Convener, Mahmood Ahmad Saghar, while former AJK President, Sardar Yaqoob Khan, was the chief guest.

The report said that Indian troops in their unabated acts of state terrorism martyred 77 innocent Kashmiris from July 2022 to December 2022. It said that during the period, more than 300 youth were arrested and dozens of people were injured due to the use of brute force by Indian troops and police during cordon and search operations in the occupied territory. It said one youth was subjected to custodial disappearance after he was arrested by the Indian Army.

The report said that during this period, Indian soldiers harassed at least 17 journalists. It has also mentioned the continued illegal detention of journalists Aasif Sultan, Fahad Shah, Sajjad Gul and prominent human rights activists Khurram Parvez and Muhammad Ahsan Untoo.

On the occasion, the speakers also paid rich tributes to the martyrs of Gaw Kadal massacre on their martyro anniversary, today. They said the bitter memories of the massacre are still fresh in the minds of the Kashmiris. They said that more than thirty years have passed since this terrible incident, but the victims' families are still awaiting justice.

The speakers demanded release of all illegally detained Kashmiri Hurriyat leaders and activists languishing in different jails of IIOJK and India. They appealed to the international community to put pressure on India to resolve the Kashmir dispute by giving the Kashmiris their inalienable right to self-determination.

The speakers included AJK former president Sardar Yaqoob Khan, former Amir of AJK Jamaat-e-Islami Abdul Rashid Turabi, former member of AJK Legislative Assembly Farzana Yaqoob, Mahmood Ahmad Saghar, Mohammad Farooq Rehmani, Syed Faiz Naqshbandi, Syed Yousuf Naseem, Sheikh Abdul Mateen, Altaf Hussain Wani, Hassan Bana, Imtiaz Wani, Saleem Haroon, Mir Tahir Masood, Advocate Parvez Ahmad, Raees Ahmad Mir, Zahid Ashraf, Zahid Mujtaba, Raja Nawaz Ahmed, Sheikh Muhammad Yaqoob, Javed Jahangir, Abdul Majeed Lone, Manzoor Ahmad Dar, Mushtaq Ahmed Butt, Raja Shaheen, Gulshan Ahmad, Dawood Yousafzai, Raja Muhammad Zareen Khan, Haji Sultan Butt, Sanaullah Dar, Khalid Shabbir, Qazi Imran, Shaikat Hussain Butt, Bashir Usmani, Afsar Khan, Nadeem Ahmed, Syed Kifayat Hussain Rizvi, Muhammad Ashraf Dar, Sheikh Abdul Majid and Muhammad Shafi Dar.

## Jamaat-e-Islami protest

LAHORE: Activists of Jamaat-e-Islami hold a protest against inflation at Faisal Chowk in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

# PTI always tried to save & secure the nation: Zia Alamdar

Mian Rashid Asghar.

FAISALABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) will follow the advices of the Chairman Imran Khan, said Syed Zia Alamdar Hussain former president FCCI & candidate for NA-104 while addressing a big rally today.

He said that during PDM alliance, Pakistan had been facing multidimensional problems for last 9 months due to PDM's strange philosophy of democracy where the absence of rule of law and justice system has pinched nerves of every citizen.

It can be judged from the fact that the biggest thieves of the country were given clear-chit in billions of corruption cases and were imposed on the nation



through conspiracy.

PTI always tried to save & secure the nation but the notorious dacoits were

imposed on the country through conspiracy and ousted the well-performing PTI government.

He maintained that those who had destroyed the institutions could not rectify and fix them, adding that fight against corruption and injustice is a Jihad in PTI view.

He recalled the PTI-led government's contributions, saying, "During PTI tenure, the industries and agriculture sectors saw growth, while remittances and exports were witnessed considerable increase."

He said "There has never been such a big crisis in the history of the country, that Pakistan is stuck in a quagmire."

He also highlighted the significant increase in default risk for Pakistan, which rose from 5% in April 2022 to 90%.

He emphasized that

true prosperity cannot be achieved without justice.

He further said that the world believed Pakistan was heading towards a Sri Lanka-like situation & Imran Khan has been expressing fear that the country would be running out of funds for purchasing oil like Sri Lanka.

He said that the country has never been in such crisis in the history as it was today. He was of the view that Pakistan is not in a position to bargain with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) amid the prevailing situation.

He said that IMF would only provide loans to Pakistan if the government accepts its strict conditions which will increase the inflation by up to 50%.

# 'Pakistan's Economy and Debt Challenges'

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD : Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri, Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute remarked that the perma-crisis which is a series of crisis occurring globally one after the other, has exacerbated the global inflation crisis, with inflation in Pakistan rising to 24.5% currently. He was speaking at seminar on "Pakistan's Economy and Debt Challenges" organized by SDPI here today.

He suggested that political instability globally and nationally have contributed to exacerbate the economic crisis developing into a vicious cycle. In past few years, Pakistan has managed to sail smoothly amidst the intensifying geo-political tensions, however, the future developments seem concern-

ing. He stressed that "We must remain politically correct with the West since loans from even friendly countries have become conditional to being able to secure the next loan installment from IMF". "Now is perhaps time, political forces in Pakistan realize that IMF is a must despite its tough conditionalities; for the political capital taking non-popular decisions is inevitable." He stressed that we should support the current government in availing the current IMF program and after the elections, the next government as well and demonizing IMF and international finance partners will not do any good.

He warned that Pakistan is on the brink of a crisis like Sri Lanka which needs to be averted otherwise the country will even be able to import essen-

tial goods like medicines and fuel for transport. He said that preempting such events, "the government needs to strengthen social protection to cushion the lower income segments during economic crisis." Referring to the recent international financing pledges he said that we cannot rely on the pledges to shore up our foreign exchange reserves as even in past half failed to materialize while the other half were transformed and remodeled into loans which will only add to the current challenges. He suggested that NDRMF should do follow up on Geneva Convention pledges, present do-able project proposals to avail these pledges.

Dr Vaqar Ahmed, Joint Executive Director, SDPI stressed on political stability as lenders want assurance for repayment of long-term loans often



undermined by political strife in the country. He stressed that "we must not walk away from what is committed to IMF" and that we must demonstrate good public finance management by

quickly packaging public sector development programmes which is instrumental in unlocking these foreign loans. Dr Aqdas Afzal, Assistant Profes-

or, Habib University, predicted that "by agreeing to the IMF's conditions, the country can avert the immediate crisis, but the storm is yet to be over".

Ali Khizar, Head of Research, Business Recorder said that the current economic crisis is unsolvable without going to IMF. He warned of a looming default on the private sector as industries are unable to import raw materials due to the import bans, choking import dependent economy and emphasized damage control for the private sector. He expressed that to resolves debt repayment crisis, we don't have much choice but go to IMF and introduce structural reforms. We must strictly adhere to IMF reviews for multilateral cash flows however, aggressive negotiations on conditionalities is critical to preserve interests.



Islamabad  
15° - 23° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 5:44 am  
Zohr ..... 12:19 pm  
Asr ..... 3:50 pm  
Maghrib ..... 5:28 pm  
Isha ..... 6:54 pm

**EMERGENCY**

Rescue (Police) ..... 15  
Bomb Disposal ..... 15  
Fire Services Rawalpindi/  
Islamabad ..... 1122 & 16  
Emergency Ambulance ..... 1122 &  
& Rescue Services ..... 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

**Anwar Maqsood's**

# Saadhay 14 August: Bought laughter & satire to Islamabad

**Amjad Mehmood**

ISLAMABAD:

The play, which was well-liked in Karachi and successfully ran 100 performances, is now in its final week of performances in Islamabad. Saadhay 14 August, like Karachi, was able to draw large crowds to each performance, and the audiences were astounded by the incredible presentation, drama, choreography, and, of course, the powerful storyline.

Dr. Arif Alvi, the president of Pakistan, attended the performance at the Pakistan National Council of Arts in Islamabad with the first lady. His honorable attendance and fervent admiration for Saadhay 14 August demonstrated that the masterpiece was not only adored by the general public but also by those responsible for setting national policy. Saadhay 14 August is the third and last part in



the trilogy that started with Sawa 14 and Pawny 14 August.

Exceptionally well-written by the legendary Anwar Maqsood and masterfully put together

by Dawar Mehmood. Saadhay 14 August is a thorough thought-provoker and entertainer. The political, economic, and social upheavals in Jinnah's and



Gandhi's respective countries were explicitly presented to them by the inclusion of well-known historical and contemporary personalities. Even when serious situations

are shown, people are seen laughing because of Maqsood's writing magic and every actor's immaculate performance.

characters of the play are shown everything there is to know about Pakistani and Indian politics from Kashmir to Lahore to Delhi to London. From the bustling streets of Lahore to the burgeoning political activism among its citizens—from a state-sponsored film set in Delhi to London—you see the most outstanding, humorous performances along with Sajid Hassan's convincing portrayal of a Sindh politician in London who, like the many politicians and powerful individuals in Pakistan, managed to flee despite having his name on the Exit Control List.

Saadhay 14 August provides satire and amusement in one package. The spectacular Saadhay 14 August team is now travelling to Lahore where they will perform Saadhay 14 August for the city's zealous populace after the incredible house packed performances in Islamabad.

## Pakistan Railways to restore Greenline Express from Jan 27

**City Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways on Saturday decided to restore Greenline Express train between Islamabad and Karachi with newly imported Chinese coaches on the 27th of this month.

According to Pakistan Railways, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif would soon inaugurate the train operation.

The train will run between Margala Railway Station in Islamabad and Karachi with stops at Rawalpindi, Chaklala, Lahore, Khanewal, Bahawalpur, Rohri, Hyderabad and Drig Road. There will be no stop at Drug Road on return. The rack of the train will consist of AC Business, AC Parlour, AC Standard and Economy Class coaches.

The train with high-class facilities shall have separate cabins for women passengers in AC and Economy Class coaches. Booking and reservation of the train have been started.

Meanwhile, Salman Sadiq has been appointed Chief Executive Officer of Pakistan Railways on a current charge basis for three months after his service has been regularized by the Prime Minister.

## Grill Fish

ISLAMABAD: A vendor is busy in preparing grill barbeque fish at his workplace during cold weather in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## Chairman NHA visit N-25, N-40, N-50 & N-65 in Balochistan

**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Chairman National Highway Authority Capt (R) Muhammad Khuram Agha today visited National Highways (N-25, N-40, N-50 & N-65) in Balochistan.

In this connection on Chairman NHA was accompanied by Zonal Head, Mr. Shahid Ihsanullah, Member West Zone Balochistan and Regional Head Balochistan

North Mr. Agha Inayatullah and his team visited National Highways Kuchlak-Khanozai-Kan Mehtarzai-Muslimbagh (N-50). Chairman also visited Quetta-Lukpass Tunnel-Sultan Charayi (N-40) and visited emergency Camps established for removal of snow at Khanozai, Kan Metarzai & Muslim Bagh including the Salt stocked by NHA for snow removal.

Chairman NHA also visited

Kuchlak-Shela Bagh-Khojaktop (N-25). During the visit, Chairman NHA has inspected the Machinery and Emergency Camps established at Shela Bagh and Khojak Top and also visited Highway up till Pak-Afghan Border. He also visited Bolan Top, Kolpur Bypass (N-65) & Dozan Section. In this regard Chairman NHA also passed instructions to the emergency snow removal NHA teams regarding pres-

ent and upcoming expected heavy snow.

During the visit of Emergency Camps, Chairman NHA has given instructions for timely removal of snow during the upcoming spell of snowfall and to keep close liaison with Provincial & District Administration and to extend full Cooperation to them. In this regard he instructed that it must be ensured that traffic must not get stuck in snow.

## Altaf Bhat demanded international probe into HR violations in IIOJK.

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Chairman JKSM demands international probe into HR violations and Indian war crimes in IIOJK.

Chairman of Jammu & Kashmir Salvation Movement (JKSM) Altaf Ahmed Bhat has demanded international probe into HR violations, War crimes, arbitrary killings and forced disappearance by the hands of Indian occupation forces in IIOJK.

In a statement issued here in Islamabad today Chairman JKSM also prayed and paid glorious tributes to the martyrs of Gaw Kadal Massacre of 21 Jan 1990, when Indian occupation forces opened fire on peaceful protesters.

"Kashmiri nation has paid with blood for the freedom of our motherland, but never surrendered or bent before the military might of India, Freedom movement is strong and thriving because of these sacrifices, and the day is near when Kashmir will be free from Indian occupation," Bhat added.

Chairman JKSM Altaf Ahmed Bhat further said that on 21st Jan 1990 Indian troops had killed more than 52 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. But after 33 years till now the victims are awaiting and demand for justice to no avail.

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/ arsoned, 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 IIOJK. Kashmir is the issue of humanity, Its high time UN, OIC, P5, EU, SCO and all other International Organizations and NGOs must raise voice of voiceless Kashmiris and demand India to stop HR violations, demilitarize IIOJK and start the process of plebiscite.

## Victims of Gaw Kadal carnage await justice even after 33 years: Mushaal

**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Mushaal Hussein Mullick, the Chairperson of Peace and Culture Organisation paid glowing tributes to the martyrs of Gaw Kadal massacre on their 33rd martyrdom anniversary and vowed that the brave Kashmiris would carry on the mission of their martyrs until liberating Kashmir from Indian slavery.

In a statement on Saturday, Mushaal, a wife of jailed Kashmiri Hurriyat leader, Muhammad Yasin Malik, said that the memories of Gaw Kadal like bloodbaths were still fresh in the minds of Kashmiris and they would not rest till they turned their dream into a reality.

The Chairperson recalled that over 50 innocent people were killed in Gaw Kadal area of Srinagar in 1990 when Indian fascist forces had resorted to indiscriminate firing on peaceful demonstrators protesting against the molestation of several women at the hand of Indian notorious troops.

She lamented that the victims of Gaw Kadal massacre in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) had been awaiting justice for the last 33 years.

The chairperson urged the UN bodies, human rights organizations bodies to independently probe all carnages carried out by Indian troops in the occupied territory and ensured that the perpetrators and culprits of Gaw Kadal and other massacres in IIOJK could be made example so as they could never commit such inhuman act ever gain.

## Civil Society need to be engaged meaningfully to achieve Sustainable Development Goals

**City Reporter**

ISLAMABAD :As a part of their efforts towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals and accelerating the role of civil society in the process, Awaz CDS has always played an effective role. Post presentation of voluntary National Review Report (VNR) at High Level Political Forum 2022 by United Nations, Awaz CDS came together with Pakistan Development Alliance to strengthen development processes at national level.

A conference was held in this regard on Engaging Civil Society in Decade of Action to Accelerate SDGs Implementation -Lessons from HLPF2022 and Way Forward. The event is jointly organized by National Parliamentary Task Force on SDGs Planning Commission of Pakistan, Awaz CDS-Pakistan, and Pakistan Development Alliance.

Awaz CDS-Pakistan and Pakistan Development Alliance led the civil society engagement processes at the national level and produced spotlight report as well as voluntary local review report in 2022 which were also launched during the conference.

Mr. Ali Kemal, Chief SDGs Planning Commission of Pakistan, said that VNR Report compilation is a massive project and civil society played a very important role in data collection and its successful comple-



tion. Ms. Romina Khurshid Alam – Convener Parliamentary Task Force on SDGs welcomed the audience and said that since the adoption of SDGs as national development goals by Parliament of Pakistan in March 2016, the government has achieved many instructional and strategic milestones to implement SDGs. Pakistan has successfully presented two voluntary national review (VNR) reports at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) at UNHQ in July 2019 and 2022.

Mr. Mohammad Zia-ur-Rehman, Chief Executive Awaz CDS-Pakistan & National Chair Pakistan Development Alliance said that civil society has done a lot of work in the implementation of SDGs and has aided in the improvement of overall situation in Pakistan. He stressed the need for greater and more accurate data collection.

Mr. Ammar Jaffery stressed to engage youth in the process. Munazza Gillani Country Director Sightsavers emphasised on the meaningful engagement of persons with disabili-

ties to ensure no one is left behind to benefit from SDGs.

Representatives of VSO Mr. Hashim Bilal shared the constructive role of volunteers towards the achievement of SDGs. Mukhtar Ahmed Ali Executive Director CPDI called for the political will of the duty bearers and sensitisation of right holders in the processes. Javed Malick Country Director Malala Fund highlighted the need of quality education and gender equality in Pakistan as main pillars to achieve SDGs.

## INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY ISLAMABAD NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The International Islamic University, Islamabad invites sealed tenders on items rates basis from well reputed established contractors registered with PEC (C-6) to undertake following jobs:-

S. No.	Description	Tender cost	Completion Period	Earnest Money
1.	Repair & Renovation of IIIRD Guest House at Faisal	Rs. 3,000	90 Days	2% of the bid cost in the form of Pay Order or Bank Draft in favour of International Islamic University, Islamabad

Complete set of Tender Documents may be purchased by interested firms on submission of a written application along with a copy of valid certificate of registration of firm with PEC, certificate of registration with Income Tax Department, and upon payment of a nonrefundable cost of tender documents as mentioned above. Tenderer may acquire the Tender Documents from the office of the undersigned, (Telephone No.051-9019525/9019531) at New Campus, Sector H-10, Islamabad during office hours on all working days. No tender will be issued on the day of opening of the bids. The tenders shall remain valid for a period of six calendar months after the date of opening of tender.

The bid will be received in the office of the undersigned on or before **February 7, 2023** up to 1100 hours and will be opened on the same day at 1130 hours in presence of the bidders or their representatives. In case of holiday on the day of opening of the bid, the next working day will be considered as receipt & opening of the bid. The University reserve the right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason as per PPRA Rule.

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almas Ayoub Sabir**  
 Vice Chairman: **Asim Nazir Ahmad**  
 Managing Editor: **Naveed Ahmad Khan**  
 Head Editorial Advisory Board: **Amjad Mehmood**  
 Bureau Chief Karachi: **Saleem Zaman Khan.**  
 (mszk786@gmail.com)  
 Bureau Chief Lahore: **Syed Afraz Ali Nazish**  
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)  
 Islamabad Office: **Rose Plaza, I-8 Markaz.**  
 Karachi office: **Flat No.C.3.A.One Comfort, Block No 11.**  
**Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Main Rashid Minhas Road.**  
 Lahore Office: **7-E,Samanberg, Johar Town.**  
 Email: **spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com**  
 Whatsapp: **0346-5008408**

# Senior UN officials urge Taliban to reverse decrees limiting women's freedoms

## Spokesman Report

A high-level United Nations delegation, led by Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed, Friday wrapped up its 4-day visit to Afghanistan during which it conveyed directly to the Taliban authorities the alarm over the recent decree banning women from working for national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), a move that undermines the work of numerous bodies helping millions of vulnerable Afghans, according to a UN spokesperson.

UN Deputy Spokesman Farhan Haq said that the delegation, which included Executive Director of UN Women, Sima Bahous, and Assistant Secretary-General of the Department of Political, Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations, Khaled Khiaari, held meetings with the authorities in both Kabul and Kandahar.

During the visit to Kandahar, the UN delegation held talks with the deputy governor of the province in what was described as a rare meeting by a foreign delegation with the Taliban's leaders in its southern heartland.

Also recently, the Afghan government have moved to close universities to female students across the country until further notice, and have barred girls from attending secondary school, restricted women and girls' freedom of movement, excluded women from most areas of the workforce and banned women from using parks,

gym and public bath houses. "My message was very clear: while we recognize the important exemptions made, these restrictions present Afghan women and girls with a future that confines them in their own homes, violating their rights and depriving the communities of their services," Amina Mohammed said.

"Our collective ambition is for a prosperous Afghanistan that is at peace with itself and its neighbours, and on a path to sustainable development. But right now, Afghanistan is isolating itself, in the midst of a terrible humanitarian crisis and one of the most vulnerable nations on earth to climate change," she said. "We must do everything we can to bridge this gap."

During their mission, Amina and Bahous met with affected communities, humanitarian workers, civil society and other key actors, in Kabul, Kandahar and Herat.

"We have witnessed extraordinary resilience. Afghan women left us no doubt of their courage and refusal to be erased from public life. They will continue to advocate and fight for their rights, and we are duty bound to support them in doing so," Bahous said.

"What is happening in Afghanistan is a grave women's right crisis and a wake-up call for the international community. It shows how quickly decades of progress on women's rights can be reversed in

a matter of days. UN Women stands with all Afghan women and girls, and will continue to amplify their voices to regain all their rights."

The United Nations and its partners, including national and international NGOs, are helping more than 25 million Afghans who depend on humanitarian aid to survive, and remain committed to staying and delivering.

The most recent decrees issued by the Taliban authorities banning women from working for NGOs has forced many partners to pause operations which can no longer be safely and meaningfully deliv-

ered. While the recent exemptions to the ban introduced by the authorities are opening spaces for humanitarians to continue – and in some cases resume – operations, these remain limited to few sectors and activities.

"The effective delivery of humanitarian assistance is predicated on principles that require full, safe and unhindered access for all aid workers, including women", Amina said.

The visit to Afghanistan followed a series of high-level consultations on Afghanistan across the Persian Gulf and Asia. The delegation met with the leadership of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Islamic Development Bank, groups of Afghan women in Ankara and Islamabad and a group of Ambassadors and Special Envoys to Afghanistan based in Doha.

The delegation convened with government leaders from the region and religious leaders to advocate for the crucial role and full participation of women, and rally support for the Afghan people. Throughout the visits, countries and partners recognized the critical role of the UN in building bridges to finding lasting solutions, as well as the urgency to deliver lifesaving support and maintain effective engagement, led by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

They asked that efforts be intensified to reflect the urgency of the situation and stressed the importance of a unified response by the international community.

The need for a revitalized and realistic political pathway was consistently highlighted and all remained firm on the fundamental principles, including women's and girls' rights to education, work and public life in Afghanistan. There was broad consensus that the region and the OIC's leadership on those issues was critical, the spokesman said.

The proposal of an international conference on women and girls in the Muslim World during the month of March 2023 was also considered and agreed in principle.



## Boosting trade, a major challenge for economic revival

Amidst persisting economic crunch and diminishing foreign exchange reserves, boosting country's exports is direly needed for strengthening economy and favorable exchange rate.

Over the years, the non-consistent policies of the respective government gradually dragged the country to the verge of economic recession posing challenges like low growth rate, import-export imbalances, trade and current account deficit and currency exchange rate.

Massive borrowing from local and international financial institutions especially and slowing down flagship programs like China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) during the PTI government tenure had further worsened the situation.

In this scenario, there was a dire need of prudent economic policies to steer the country out of crisis and laying down the foundations of a viable economy, more revenue collection, overcome trade deficit and stabilize our currency.

Therefore, the present government has put in place many prolific initiatives to materialize country's geo-strategic location for developing geo-economic strength with an objective to boost external trade that definitely would lead to streamlining of current account balance and promote economic growth.

Naveed Qamar said Pakistan is also in negotiations with Iran and Afghanistan to enhance mutual trade including barter trade. "Work on border trade markets between Pakistan and Iran was progressing and role of Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry was 'very important' in that regard."

A senior official of the Commerce Ministry has also informed that 15 items had been identified for increasing trade with Afghanistan, including agricultural and pharmaceutical products.

Streamlining the cost of doing business and facilitating businesses in accordance with other regional markets is another area of focus to bolster country's exports. In addition, promotion of agriculture produce could cut food import bill and reduce overall trade deficit. Therefore, the government is taking measures for import substitution, market diversification and promotion of regional trade.

"Policy of trade diversification and non-traditional market access was a major priority to increase exports," remarked Director General Trade Policy Waqas Azeem. "Under diversification policy, we are working on both – the market and product diversification."

He said that after the Brexit, negotiations were underway with the United Kingdom to bolster trade as he expressed confidence for positive results in near future.

"Efforts are also afoot to connect local market with Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) trade alliance," he stated. "Regional trading block is also important and talks are underway with regional trading bloc of Chile, Peru, Mexico and some other countries for the trade alliance."

Waqas Azeem said market and product excess was very important to double the volume of trade with respective countries. "A trade and goods agreement had been reached with Türkiye to enhance mutual trade."

## Auto industry facing unprecedented crisis

Kausar Fatima

The economic woes experienced by the country have put enormous pressure on almost all sectors of economy. Auto industry is also gripped by the economic downturn and is retrenching both its productivity and workforce.

Auto sector has reported a significant fall in production and sales and it looks quite doubtful if it would get out of the current troubles.

The buyers have also suffered due to the difficulties faced by the sector by paying higher prices for vehicles that now stand at all-time high. In this context it is reported that the auto industry has recorded a steep decline in sales and barring the bus segment every other sub-sector is in trouble. The most affected are car sales that have seen a massive drop of 40 per cent.

In this context it is pointed out that throughout the last year the unfair practices prevalent in the auto market have negatively impacted it. The conditions of the auto market have been exacerbated by import restrictions, high increases in car prices due to exchange rate fluctuations and prohibitively high automobile financing rates.

The most obvious consequence of these issues is the profound reduction in passenger car sales, with its dominant share in the auto sector, has taken a tough hit. The steep Though encouraging new automakers from China, Malaysia and South Korea is a step in the right direction but even the vehicles produced by them remain unaffordable to a wide margin of citizenry.

The current position of the auto industry

also raises questions about its demands for multiple concessions and subsidies in wake of the negligible benefit it provides to the majority of Pakistanis thereby not aiding in improving general standards of living in the country.

There is no support arriving from the buyers as rising prices have set the bar high that has gone out of reach of many people. To mitigate the difficulties, Indus Motor Company has raised the prices of Toyota vehicles by Rs.280,000 to 1.2 million citing economic uncertainty, inflationary impact on raw material and the increasing cost of production.

The company also attributed the hike to the exchange rate volatility, increase in utility costs and overhead charges. It added that the situation had made it extremely difficult for the company to maintain the current prices and it was compelled to pass on some of the impact to the market. Indus Motor Company and Pak Suzuki Motor Company have suspended operations multiple times over the last few months due to a shortage of parts.

In respect of leasing, the market is also depressed because the all-time high interest rates with no signs of them coming down in the near future. Moreover the official curbs on auto financing and non-opening of letters of credit have resulting in parts shortage that led to production halts by various assemblers with late delivery in Japanese models also depressing the demand for automobiles. Due to the change of model year, buyers also slowed down purchasing of vehicles which plunged car sales last month to 13,768 from 15,432 units in the preceding month. A huge fall of 59 per cent was recorded in Toyota Corolla and Yaris sales with Toyota

Fortuner and Revo sales fell by 30 per cent.

Toyota competitors Honda Civic/City sales slowed down by 49 per cent. In addition, Hyundai Elantra sales came down by 15 per cent though its sales were recorded better in the preceding months. Hyundai Sonata sales recorded a drop of 56 per cent in last six months of the previous financial year. It is also reported that Total Jeeps and Pickups sales remained 28.4 per cent lower than in the same period of last fiscal year. Another problematic aspect is with reference to the country's agriculture indicator that remained subdued due to a 44 per cent and 63 per cent fall in Fiat and Massey Ferguson sales. Assemblers of these vehicles continued to observe non-production days due to parts shortage and falling sales trends while floods also affected sales.

As far as the 1,000 cc segment is concerned the last six months proved disappointing for Pak Suzuki due to 65 per cent and 68 per cent sales drop in Suzuki Cultus and WagonR. In less than 1,000cc segment, Suzuki Alto 660cc sales remained slow by 15 per cent whereas Bolan sales registered a 61 per cent fall.

Quite obviously the weakening currency has played a vital role in this increase as most vehicles are assembled in Pakistan and most of their parts getting imported in foreign currency that the country is desperately short of.

The real problem is that once the prices of vehicles go up then there is hardly any chance of them coming down getting out of the reach of many segments of population.

*Disclaimer: The views expressed here are solely the author's and do not necessarily reflect the opinions and beliefs of Daily The Spokesman.*

## Afghanistan: Changing the Taliban's mentality toward women will not be easy

Maha Akeel

Bringing attention back to Afghanistan, the Taliban shocked the world last month with the absurd order to local and foreign aid organizations to stop employing female staff because some women had not adhered to the strict dress code. This demand resulted in many of these organizations suspending their operations. Last week, the Taliban assured female health staff and those working in office support roles that they were allowed to resume work. A spokesperson for the Afghan Ministry of Public Health told Reuters that there was a misunderstanding of the orders and that health-related activities were not stopped.

There was a cautious sigh of relief at this change, but it does not alter the daily reality that women in Afghanistan are subjected to old and new restrictions and violations based on unfounded interpretations of religious texts and principles. The most obvious of these is denying girls the right to education, which is clearly and unequivocally guaranteed in Islam.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation, representing the voice of the Muslim world, held an extraordinary meeting last week in reaction to the decisions by the de facto Afghan authorities to close schools and universities for girls and women and suspend women's work in national and international nongovernmental organizations, which the OIC considered a violation of the purposes of Islamic law and the Prophet's message.

Considering the deteriorating humanitarian, social, economic and human rights conditions in Afghanistan — and stressing the significant role of women in social and economic development and peace and security, while confirming the right of women and girls to access all levels of education in accordance with Islamic Shariah — the OIC expressed its disappointment over these latest decisions. It urged the de facto Afghan authorities

to adhere to the principles of the UN and OIC charters, to abide by their international obligations on human rights, and to reopen schools and universities for girls and women and allow them to exercise their right to contribute to the social and economic development of Afghanistan society.

The OIC meeting decided to dispatch a delegation to assess the need for technical and developmental assistance, particularly for small-scale income-generating activities, and to dispatch the OIC secretary-general's special envoy for Afghanistan to deliver the message on supporting the country and on reconsidering the recent decisions on women's work and girls' education. The OIC last year sent all-male delegations to Afghanistan and received assurances from the de facto authorities that they would allow girls to go to school. The International Islamic Fiqh Academy also led a delegation of Muslim scholars, including one woman, and met with Afghan officials and a group of female Afghan scholars. Shortly after these visits, the Taliban reneged on their promise.

The Taliban leaders must hear and see clear, constant messages about the real situation and the consequences of their shortsighted decisions. They need to understand why they need to change their attitude and to have confidence and trust in the messenger. Not all Taliban officials and followers are of the same mindset and worldview. They have moved ahead with some bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation on economic, security and humanitarian projects, despite not being internationally recognized. However, they have expressed rejection and resistance to foreign intervention in their internal affairs, especially when it comes to women.

Women's rights should not be a bargaining tool or optional. Ensuring women's rights and security according to Islamic laws and principles should be an integral part of humanitarian, economic and political assistance.

*Maha Akeel is a Saudi writer based in Jeddah.*

## NA Speaker & Deputy Speaker felicitates Chinese people and govt on the eve of new Chinese Lunar year

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf and Deputy Speaker National Assembly Mr.Zahid Akram Durrani felicitates Chinese people and its government on

the eve of new Chinese Lunar Year. In their separate messages they expressed their belief that Chinese would continue to progress and develop owing to their national traits of hardwork and Commitment. They also resolved that Pakistan & China would contin-

ue to cooperate in all socio- economic sectors for mutual prosperity and development.

Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf has expressed his confidence that Pak-China Friendship would not only enable both countries

to flourish and develop but regional progress also hinges upon unbreakable ties between both countries. He said that successful completion of CPEC projects manifests willingness of both nations and their masses to cooperate for mutual benefit. He said

that Chinese model of progress and development must be followed by all nations.

Deputy Speaker National Assembly Mr.Zahid Durrani has also felicitated Chinese nation on the eve of their new Lunar Year. He expressed his good

wishes for progress and prosperity of Chinese people and hoped that New Chinese year would bring happiness, prosperity and progress in the lives of Chinese people. He also expressed his resolve that Pak-China ties would be strong and cemented more than ever.

### Heavy Snowfall

MUZAFFARABAD: People carrying belongings on their back on their way due to closed road during heavy snowfall at Saran area in the city.



Photo: Online

## World Court receives UN request for opinion on Israel occupation

**Web Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The International Court of Justice on Friday confirmed it had officially received a request from the United Nations General Assembly to give an advisory opinion on the legal consequences of Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories.

The ICJ is expected to draw up a list of states and organisations that will be able to file written statements, but the press release gave no further information about a timeline for that

process. In previous advisory opinions the court also scheduled hearings but it is likely to take at least several months before they can be scheduled.

The Hague-based ICJ, also known as the World Court, is the top U.N. court dealing with disputes between states. Its rulings are binding, though the ICJ has no power to enforce them.

In a move condemned by Israel and welcome by Palestinians, the General Assembly asked the ICJ last month to give an advisory opinion

on the legal consequences of Israel's "occupation, settlement and annexation ... including measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem, and from its adoption of related discriminatory legislation and measures."

The U.N. resolution also asks the ICJ to advise on how those policies and practices "affect the legal status of the occupation" and what legal consequences arise for all countries and the United Nations from this status.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has called the request for a World Court opinion a "despicable decision".

The ICJ last weighed in on the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians in 2004, when it ruled that an Israeli separation barrier was illegal. In the same ruling the ICJ judges said that Israeli settlements in occupied Palestinian territory "have been established in breach of international law".

Israel rejected that ruling, accusing the court of being politically motivated.

### Pakistan strongly condemns the abhorrent act of desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden

**City Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan strongly condemns the abhorrent act of desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden today.

This senseless and provocative Islamophobic act hurts the religious sensitivities of over 1.5 billion Muslims around the world. Such actions are not covered under any legitimate expression of the right to freedom of expression or opinion, which carries responsibilities under international human rights law, such as the obligation not to carry out hate speech and incite people to violence.

Islam is a religion of peace and Muslims, including in Pakistan, believe in respecting all religions. These principles must be supported by all.

The international community needs to show a common resolve against Islamophobia, xenophobia, intolerance and incitement to violence on the basis of religion or belief, and work together for promoting inter-faith harmony and peaceful coexistence.

Pakistan's concerns are being conveyed to the authorities in Sweden. We urge them to be mindful of the sentiments of the people of Pakistan and the Muslims worldwide and take steps to prevent Islamophobic acts.

### Pakistan Embassy in Beijing illuminated on Chinese New Year, Spring Festival

**News Desk**

BEIJING: Pakistan Embassy building in Beijing was decorated with lights and traditional lanterns to sharing joy of the Chinese New Year and Spring Festival starting from January 22.

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in a video message felicitated the people of China on the auspicious occasion and said, "I like to wish a Happy New Year of Rabbit to people of China."

He hoped this year would take relations between Pakistan and China to new heights.

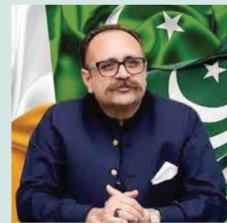
In his message, Pakistan Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque congratulated the people of China on the New Chinese Year of Rabbit and extended warm greetings and best wishes for peace, health, success and prosperity to Chinese friends all over the world.

Chinese New Year is the festival that celebrates the beginning of a new year on the traditional Chinese calendar.

The first day of the Chinese New Year begins on the new moon that appears between January 21 and February 20.

### Indo-Pak talks meaningless sans Kashmiris' participation

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**



MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Sardar Tanvir Ilyas Khan has said that resolution of Kashmir dispute in line with the wishes and aspirations was key to improve bilateral relationship between India and Pakistan.

Reacting to Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif's talks offer to his Indian counterpart, the AJK premier made it clear that talks with India, at any level, would be meaningless without Kashmiris.

While referring to Indian rulers' track record of backtracking from their commitments, he said that the UN resolutions provide a comprehensive roadmap to settle the dispute peacefully but India had always broken the promises and refused to implement the UN resolutions on Kashmir.

The PM said that Kashmiris were not against Indo-Pak relations but revival of ties with India at the cost of Kashmiris' blood was unacceptable.

Terming Kashmir as an unfinished agenda of Indian partition, he said that the Kashmir issue was all about the life and death of millions of Kashmiris.

Pakistan, he said, was the ultimate destination of Kashmiris.

Citing the Kashmiris' decades long struggle the PM said, "Kashmiris have declared Pakistan as their destination even much before the creation of Pakistan".

The people of Kashmir, he said, were still struggling to achieve this long cherished goal set by their ancestors in 1947.

The Prime Minister said that India has always tried to sabotage the Kashmiris' struggle under the guise of dialogue.

He said that India has miserably failed to suppress Kashmiris' struggle for right to self determination and despite oppression and suppression Kashmiri people have refused to accept India's illegal and forcible occupation of their motherland.

The PM said that the Kashmir issue can be resolved only on the basis of self-determination.

He said that many formulas and suggestions were proposed in the recent past to resolve the lingering dispute but they couldn't yield any desired results.

"Our demand is that Kashmiris who have rendered matchless sacrifices should be taken into confidence before entering into a dialogue with India", the PM said adding that resumption of talks with India sans Kashmiris would be nothing but a futile exercise he remarked.

## UK PM Rishi Sunak fined by police for not wearing seat belt

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: British police fined Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Friday for failing to wear a seat belt while he filmed a social media clip in the back seat of a moving car, a potentially embarrassing blow as he tries to revive his party's fortunes.

Sunak, who apologised on Thursday for a "brief error of judgement", had uploaded the video to Instagram during a trip to north west England. It was widely shared by other users who noticed that he had not buckled up.

Local police had said later that day they would investigate, and confirmed late on Friday that an offence had taken place.

It is the second penal-



ty Sunak has received from police after last year they found he broke COVID-19 lockdown rules, along with then-prime minister Boris Johnson.

Sunak becomes the second prime minister after Johnson to have broken the law in such a manner.

The fine represents an additional distraction for

Sunak, whose Conservative Party trails far behind the opposition Labour Party in the opinion polls, ahead of an election due by January 2025 at the latest.

"The prime minister fully accepts this was a mistake and has apologised. He will of course comply with the fixed penalty," a spokesman from Sunak's Downing

Street office said in a statement.

Police in the northern English county of Lancashire said in a statement that a 42-year-old man from London had been served a penalty notice.

Sunak's video comprised an update on the government's "levelling up" plans to reduce regional disparities.

In Britain a person can be fined up to 500 pounds (\$620) if they fail to wear a seatbelt, unless there is an exemption, such as for emergency services, in taxi or when a driver is reversing.

"Thank you Lancashire Police for all you do in road safety campaigning all year round. Also, reminding us no one is above the law," Cat Smith, a Labour lawmaker, said on Twitter.

## Ukraine honours interior minister, other senior officials, killed in helicopter crash

**News Desk**

KYIV: A tearful Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy attended a memorial service on Saturday to commemorate seven senior Interior Ministry officials killed in a helicopter crash this week, a fresh blow to a nation already grieving its many war dead.

Interior Minister Denys Monastyrskiy, his deputy and five other high-ranking ministry officials were killed when their French-made Super Puma helicopter plummeted amid fog into a nursery on the eastern outskirts of Kyiv on Wednesday.

Another seven people were killed, including one child, in the crash. Officials are still investigating the cause of the crash.

The helicopter went down just days after at least 45 people were killed in a Russian missile attack that partially levelled a block of flats in the southeastern city of Dnipro.

On the battlefield, Ukrainian forces are fending off an unrelenting Russian onslaught in the east, where Moscow has expended massive resources for incremental advances 11 months into its full-scale invasion.

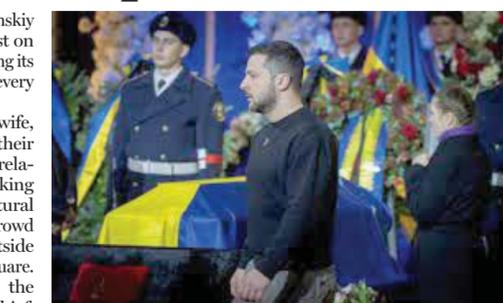
"The indescribable sadness

is covering the soul," Zelenskiy wrote in a Telegram post on Saturday. "Ukraine is losing its best sons and daughters every day."

Zelenskiy and his wife, Olena Zelenska, paid their respects to the victims relatives inside the hulking Ukrainian House cultural centre in central Kyiv. A crowd of mourners snaked outside toward Independence Square.

Kyrylo Budanov, the military intelligence chief, described Monastyrskiy's death as "a huge loss".

"If not for (Monastyrskiy), everything could have been completely different," he told



Ukrainian media, referring to the resistance Ukraine mounted after Moscow's Feb. 24 assault.

"He is a true hero of this

country." Monastyrskiy had been flying to a location near the frontline, a police spokesperson said on Thursday.

### PEMRA Act amendment lists new definition of 'Disinformation'

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Cabinet has approved amendments to Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) Ordinance 2002, listing new definition of 'disinformation'.

According to details, the Federal Cabinet approved the amendments to PEMRA Ordinance 2002 through circulation. The cabinet approved extending PEMRA's jurisdiction to Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir.

The amendments also made licenses for TV channels conditional to not broadcasting 'disinformation'.

As per the new amendments, the Council of Complaints will now look into issues of salaries and dues of media employees.

Earlier in December 2022, President Dr Arif Alvi accorded his assent to the Access to the Media (Deaf) Persons Act, 2022.

The Act provides that after six months of the commencement of the Act, the government shall not allow to broadcast any news bulletin on the national broadcaster, state or private run electronic media, private television channels, cable TV or any other broadcast media without Pakistan sign language interpreters.

The Act also provided that after one year of the commencement of the Act, the government shall not allow to broadcast any program, entertainment, advertisement, talk show, drama, film or any other pictorial segment on the national broadcaster, media, private television channels, cable TV or any other broadcast media without Pakistan sign language interpreters.

# Prime Minister's Office ineffective in creating investment climate

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) hosted a Roundtable titled, "Pakistan's Investment Climate: The Way Forward." Muhammad Azfar Ahsan, Founder & CEO, Nutshell Group; former Minister of State & Chairman Board of Investment (BoI); was the keynote speaker. The Roundtable was a hybrid session, chaired by Khalid Rahman, Chairman, IPS. Ambassador (R) Syed Abrar Hussain, Vice Chairman, IPS, welcomed the guests.

The objective of the session was to explore the current challenges faced by local and foreign investors and the desired economic strategies to overcome the prevailing crises.

Azfar Ahsan started his talk with three main issues; lack of vision, lack of political will, and the need for collaboration. "Although I have zero tolerance for corruption, I believe that a significant reason for the economic crises that we face is incompetence." He further added that under the current circumstances, doing business in Pakistan is no less than jihad.

Elaborating on investment issues, Azfar Ahsan stated that investors need handholding and assurances, as their profits go back into developing the infrastructure in Pakistan; and one success story creates oppor-

tunities for others to follow. Similarly, Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) must be privatized. PSEs have become a major drain on national resources and the Privatization Commission's performance is dismal for the lack of expediency and identification of issues.

Extrapolating on Foreign Direct Investments (FDI), Azfar Ahsan said that the FDI portfolio is less than USD 3 billion, which is not sustainable for a country of over 230 million people. "Our investment climate is challenging for the lack of consistency and facilitation," he emphasized. Commenting on the turnover and lack of continuity, he stated that he was the fourth BoI Chairman and saw the appointment of the sixth FBR Chairman and fifth Finance Secretary during his tenure.

Talking of FDI, Azfar Ahsan said, "Investors need handholding and assurances, as their profits go back into developing the infrastructure in Pakistan and one success story creates opportunities for others to follow."

He insisted that Pakistan must focus on six to eight countries as best case studies, to attract investment. He further highlighted that Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan's investment strategies are excellent model for Pakistan to follow. These economies have shown remarkable development in a short time. "We need to create a similar ecosystem in Pakistan with a simulta-



neous focus on G2G, G2B, and B2B."

While contemplating China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project, Azfar Ahsan highlighted CPEC as a great example of FDI and solemnly noted that not much is being done to productively utilize the opportuni-

ty. He said that the Chinese government has already established Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in 22 countries; BoI had recommended that this should be the top agenda in our meeting with China's President Xi.

The Saudi government has fund-

ing available for eight priority sectors. Their biggest desire is to engage Pakistan as a Food Security partner; they want to establish an Agri Zone in Pakistan, in addition to an oil refinery in Balochistan. Unfortunately, the delay has been at our end, as we have failed

to deliver ready projects; meanwhile, KSA is investing aggressively in other countries. Azfar Ahsan further added that during his meeting with KSA's Investment Minister, they designed an investment strategy for both countries, based on an opportunity of a few billion dollars per annum. No progress has been made since then, and the State is only focusing on getting bail-outs.

Azfar Ahsan believes it is wrong to blame any political government, bureaucracy, or army for the reasons of lack of investment. This is shared responsibility and shared failure. "Right now, there is a compulsion to sign an agreement with the IMF, but USD 1.1 billion is insignificant if we compare it to the potential of investment that we have to generate on our own. We can bring in FDI of USD 6 to 8 billion in three to five years and around USD 15 billion in eight to ten years, given a stable framework of policies that is above any political change."

Syed Tahir Hijazi, former Member (Governance), Planning Commission; Safdar Sohail, Dean, National Institute of Public Policy; Zafar-ul-Hasan Almas, Joint Chief Economist, Planning Commission; and Dr. Shahzad Iqbal Shami, IPS' Senior Research Associate; economists, government officials, analysts, researchers, and media were in attendance.

## PSO clarifies about fuel reserves of Pakistan

**Commerce Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan State Oil (PSO) spokesperson on Friday denied all the rumours about the shortage of fuel reserves and said that there is ample stock of petroleum products in the country, ARY News reported.

According to PSO's spokesperson, the Ministry of Energy and Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) is monitoring the overall situation regarding product availability by other oil marketing companies so that the country's supply chain continues to be maintained seamlessly.

He said that PSO will continue to provide an uninterrupted supply of petroleum products in the country, there is sufficient stock of petrol and diesel in the country available, while 80,000MT of petrol and 90,000MT of diesel have reached Karachi port.

The spokesman OGRA said that local refineries and oil marketing companies are also working to meet the demand for petroleum products.

Last week, the Oil Companies Advisory Council (OCAC) asked the federal government to immediately intervene to ensure the timely issuance of letters of credit to import petroleum products to avoid a fuel shortage in the country.

The Oil Companies Advisory Council (OCAC) wrote a letter on behalf of Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) and refineries highlighting challenges being faced due to delays in the opening of letters of credit (LCs) for the import of petroleum products.

Due to the non-opening of the LCs, few oil cargos have been cancelled.

Pakistan needs to import approximately 430,000 metric tonnes (MTs) of mogas, 200,000 MTs of High-Speed Diesel (HSD) and 650,000 MTs of crude oil every month, which costs around \$1.3 billion.

## Short-term inflation spikes to 31.83pc

ISLAMABAD: Weekly inflation, measured by Sensitive Price Index (SPI), posted an increase of 31.83 per cent for the combined income group on a year-on-year basis ending Jan 19 due to a massive surge in prices of both food and non-food items, according to data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) on Friday.

However, no change was reported in the SPI on a week-on-week basis. This was mainly because of an increase in food items, especially vegetables like onions, over the past few weeks.

## CDA to resolve issues of business community in cooperation with ICCI

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: CDA Member Planning Waseem Bajwa, Member Finance Mazhar Hussain Shah, Head of Treasury Mian Tariq Latif and Director Estate Zahid Ijaz Tarar visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) to give a presentation to the business community on CDA auction of plots scheduled to be held on January 24-26 at Jinnah Convention Center Islamabad. The auction will include commercial, industrial, hotel, hospital, school, petrol pump, class three shopping center, farm houses and residential plots.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that CDA should focus on development works in markets and industrial areas including revamping of sewerage, water supply and sanitation systems, parking facility and carpeting of road to facilitate the growth of business activities. He said that parking plazas in G-9 Markaz, F-10 Markaz and Blue Area should be built on a war footing basis. He said that encroachments from markets should be removed in cooperation with market associations.

Faad Waheed, Senior Vice President ICCI



highlighted the issues of Industrial Areas, I-9 and I-8 sectors.

Engineer Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI said that CDA has improved the design vetting process, but he demanded that the completion certificate of commercial buildings should be issued on time as the delay in their issuance causes losses to the investors. Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi, former President ICCI highlighted the issues of builders and gave proposals to improve the post-auction activities to facilitate the investors.

Waseem Bajwa, Member Planning CDA in his address said the issues of the business community would be resolved in cooperation with ICCI. He said that places have been

identified for constructing parking plazas in several markets, which will be constructed in joint ventures with the private sector.

Mazhar Hussain Shah Member Finance CDA said that a meeting of CDA Chairman and all members will be held with ICCI to discuss issues of the business community to address them. He said that post-auction activities will be streamlined to give special treatment to the bidders. He stressed that the business community should actively participate in the CDA auction to take advantage of these attractive investment opportunities.

CDA Head of Treasury Mian Tariq Latif assured that the property tax issue will be resolved in consultation with ICCI.

## Gas Loadshedding

KARACHI: People are busy in filling their LPG gas cylinders due to gas load shedding in Ranchore Line area in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

## KIA Motors (Festival City) hosted a dinner

**Tahir Amin Malik**

KIA Motors (Festival City) hosted a dinner in the honor of their prestigious Customers and leading Entrepreneurs. Former Test Cricketer Inzamam-Ul-Haq was the Chief Guest, While, Sheikh Sadoon Fazal, CEO KIA Motors (Festival City), Dr Muhammad Dawood Ghous, KIA Motors, Muhammad Ibrahim, Director, KIA Motors, Kashif Anwar, President LCCI, Adnan Khalid Butt, VP LCCI, and Renowned Scholar Naeem Butt were also present on this occasion. The CEO

KIA Motors Sheikh Sadoon Fazal, Their both Sons Dr.M.Daud Ghous, Muhammad Ibrahim Ghous welcomed to all the distinguished guests.

Dr.M.Daud Ghos said that KIA Motors (Festival City) has achieved many awards and our customers are completely satisfied from our services and trust us and Inshallah we will continue cooperate with them regarding our services in future.

M.Ibrahim also talked on this occasion and said that LCCI is playing very vital role for business community and is back

bone for businessman's in this difficult situation which is facing by businessmen. President LCCI Kashif Anwar said that the situation for businessman's is not quite better everything has stopped and Pakistan never defaulted he said that very soon 33 president of Chamber will be united and upcoming Islamabad Convention we will sit and discussed on the issue which are facing by our businessmen's.

He said our inflation rate is now 24% Factories are closing and for this political stability is necessary and all political parties should considered the problems

of businessman's which they are facing. He said we will have to save country system and will have to move our country into the right direction. Former Test Cricketer Inzamam-Ul-Haq appreciated the services of KIA Motors (Festival City) and said that KIA Motors Festival City is unique Vehicle and providing dynamic services for the customer he said that Babar Azam is world class player and as a Captain he has gained much victories is past however I would like to say he will have to give opportunity to play for Pakistan as a Captain.



## PAAPAM rejects ECC decision to import second-hand tractors



The Pakistan Association of Autoparts & Accessories Manufacturers (PAAPAM) has rejected the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC)'s decision to import second-hand tractors, terming the move as totally ill-advised and dangerous, as it would be another nail in the coffin of the local auto parts and engineering industry of Pakistan.

In a joint statement, issued here on Saturday, PAAPAM's Chairman Munir K. Bana, Senior Vice Chairman Usman Aslam Malik and Vice Chairman Taufiq Sherwani, observed that this move has become the last measure to sink the ship of the local industry. They said that the members of PAAPAM were looking forward to innovations and initiatives to revive the tractor industry, but this decision has shocked them beyond measure.

The auto industry is under attack from all the fronts. On the one hand, the government was not allowing import of raw materials on account of depleting foreign currency reserves and on the other hand it is planning to drain these reserves recklessly, by importing junk second hand tractors. Needless to mention, the current tractor manufacturing is already on partial shutdown but, with opening of imports, over a million more jobs will be lost in the engineering industries of the country.

The auto parts engineering industry spokesman stated that the decision of the government to allow second hand tractors would be of no benefit to the farmers, as imported second hand tractors are expected

to be more expensive than locally produced new tractors, considering the fact that Pakistan produces the cheapest tractors in the world. Furthermore, the tractor market is currently not facing any supply issues as the industry is running far below its capacity due to the economic downturn. Both tractor manufacturers had recently suspended their operations due to reduced demand, impacting hundreds of parts makers who were supplying kits to them. Most important, neither mechanics nor spare parts for imported tractors would be available locally to service imported tractors. Second-hand imported tractors would also enhance the fuel bills of the farmers as old imported machines cannot be expected to be fuel efficient.

PAAPAM said the ailing vendor industry was already on life support and could not afford such imprudent decisions by the ECC. PAAPAM demanded that the government call off the decision immediately, as it would be the worst disaster for the country's tractor industry. Around 300 tractor parts manufacturing SMEs currently stand closed due to a near total crash in demand for tractors and a severe cash crunch due to stoppage of verified GST refunds by FBR to tractor assemblers.

Munir Bana further said that, currently 100,000 tractor parts industry workers, mainly in Punjab & Sind regions, are out of jobs, and Government must act now to save this local industry, that feeds Pakistan's agricultural economy, already devastated by recent floods.

# Two int'l squash events for men, women to be organized this year: Qamar Zaman

PESHAWAR: One each PSA Ranking Tournament for Men and Women among 24 others squash tournaments would be organized this year in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, former World Champion Qamar Zaman said while addressing a press conference here Saturday.

He said it is a big achievement of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Squash Association, headed by President Dawood Khan, for receiving the President Prize of Performance Trophy for holding most tournaments in the province.

Announcing a complete schedule of the Annual competitions for the year 2023, Former World Champion and Squash Legend Qamar Zaman said that Pakistan Squash Federation had given formal approval to all our events in their annual calendar for Year 2023.

Accompanied by Associate Secretary and Treasurer of the Association Sajjad Khan, Wazir Gul and President Pakistan Sports Writers Federation Amjad Aziz Malik, Qamar Zaman, who is also Chairman KP Squash Association, said that like every year, this year too, they will try to hold as many tournaments as possible.

A total of 24 tournaments will be held, including 12 national and 12 provincial



level competitions with two international circuits under PSA. According to the schedule, the All Pakistan Junior Boys Squash Championship will be held in Peshawar from January 23-26. The prize money will be Rs. 100,000. All Pakistan Senior Men's Squash Championship will be held in Peshawar from Feb 13-17, the prize money of which is Rs. 100,000. A 10-day training camp will also be organized from May 20-30, 2023.

There will be an All Pakistan Junior Squash Championship with a prize money of Rs. 200,000. All Pakistan Junior Boys Squash Championship will be held from August 8-13, 2023 with a prize money of Rs. 300,000 along with 15-day training camp.

The All Pakistan Women's Senior

Squash Championship will be held from Oct 10-14, with a prize money of Rs.100,000. There will be a 20-day training camp for KP boys while from Dec 12-17 there will be an All Pakistan Junior Squash Championship with a prize money of Rs. 300,000 and a 15-day training camp.

The prize money was Rs 60, 000 and a ten-day event will be organized for it alongside KP Junior Squash Championship from Feb 5-8, KP Junior Girls Squash Championship from March 22-27, and a month-long camp in April and May.

Competitions between training camp and age group players will be held from June 14-17 alongside Inter-Schools Boys and Girls Squash Championship from June 28-30. KP Junior Boys Squash Championship from July 14-16, KP Junior Boys Girls' Squash Championship from August 11-14, KP Men's Senior Squash Championship from August 22-27.

The KP Senior Squash Championship will be held in Peshawar from Oct 24-29, the Inter-District Boys U21 Squash Tournament will be held in Abbottabad from Nov 18-22, while the KP Women's Senior Squash Championship will be

held from Dec 5-10.

Qamar Zaman said that there is more focus on juniors and we are also giving opportunities to girls players as well. The PAF Squash Academy selected the players by visiting the schools, so Inter-School competitions could be organized to find out new faces from schools as well, he added.

He lauded Ex-Chief Minister KP Mahmood Khan and Ex-Sports Minister KP Muhammad Atif Khan for the construction of squash courts inside educational institutions both for girls and boys students because players are getting opportunities at the grassroots level. Now there are facilities of squash courts in each district and hopefully players from other districts would also come up at national and international level.

He said from Dera Ismail Khan to Chitral, the players of various districts have attained facilities of squash courts. Squash courts have already been completed in some districts and work on others have continued, he said and added that hopefully, the government under the aegis of Directorate General Sports KP, would give due attention to the construction of squash courts. APP

## Football Tournament

FAISALABAD: Regional Police Officer (RPO) Sarfaraz Ahmed Falki giving away trophy to the players of the winning team City Traffic Police during annual Police Inter-District Football Tournament at the University of Agriculture Ground.



## Bowlers power India to unassailable lead over New Zealand

By A Sports

RAIPUR: Indian bowlers wreaked havoc over the New Zealand batting lineup by dismissing the touring side for a paltry 108 before openers led their side to a series-winning victory over New Zealand in the second ODI on Saturday.

Put into bat first, the New Zealand batting lineup endured a ruthless attack from the Indian bowlers and bundled out for a mere 108 runs in the 35th over despite Glenn Phillips' fighting 36.

The touring side had a dismal start to their innings as they lost half of their batters for just 15 runs inside 11 overs.

The touring side could



not recover from the shaky start and kept losing wickets at regular intervals before eventually, getting out for just 108.

Phillips offered a fight-back with his gritty 36 off 52, while Michael Bracewell (22) and Mitchell Santner (27) remained the other notable

run-getters for New Zealand.

Mohammed Shami led the bowling charge for India; picking up three wickets for just 18 runs, while Washington Sundar and Hardik Pandya took two each.

Set to chase 109, India sealed a comfortable victory for the loss of just two wick-

ets with 179 balls to spare.

Indian openers Sharma and Shubman Gill laid a solid foundation for the run chase with a 72-run partnership before the skipper perished briefly after amassing his brisk half-century.

Sharma scored 51 off 50 deliveries with the help of seven boundaries and two sixes.

India then lost another wicket in a short span as their in-form batter Virat Kohli fell victim to Santner after managing to score just 11.

His dismissal, however, did not bother India's pursuit much as Gill and Ishan Kishan eased through the hosts to the victory in the 21st over.

## PSL 2023: Lahore Qalandars to kick off campaign for season 8 soon

LAHORE: Lahore Qalandars, champions of the Pakistan Super League 2022, will begin their campaign for the eighth edition of the tournament on February 4 in their home city.

The six-day training camp will be held under the state-of-the-art facilities of Qalandars High-Performance Centre in Lahore.

The entire Qalandars' squad including the captain, Shaheen Shah Afridi, will feature in the camp which will conclude on February 9.

Director of Cricket Operations Lahore Qalandars, Aaqib Javed, stated that the six-day camp will include a couple of intra-squad practice matches and some rigorous net sessions.

"We have planned an extensive PSL campaign to defend the title, as such, all our local players are reporting on February 4 in Lahore," Javed was quoted as saying in a press release.

"A six-day long training session will facilitate players to get themselves reunited and gelled up again.

"Lahore Qalandars is a family and we are in constant touch with our overseas players to bring them into the camp as soon as possible."

Lahore Qalandars will lock horns with 2021 champions Multan Sultans in the opening match of the tournament at the Multan Cricket Stadium on February 13 following a vibrant opening ceremony.

The title holders will then take on their great rivals, Karachi Kings, in a fan-favourite tie at the National Bank Cricket Arena on February 19.

Following this, in their third round-robin clash, the Shaheen Shah Afridi-led side will face Quetta Gladiators at the same venue two days later.

Moreover, the Qalandars will play five of the 10 matches at their home ground, while the rest of the five will be played at three different venues.

**Lahore Qalandars squad**

Rashid Khan, Haris Rauf, Shaheen Shah Afridi, David Wiese, Abdullah Shafique, Harry Brook, Kamran Ghulam, Zaman Khan, Fakhar Zaman, Hussain Talat, Sikandar Raza, Liam Dawson, Dilbar Hussain, Mirza Tahir Baig, Ahmed Danlyal, Shauwaiz Irfan, Jordan Cox, Jalat Khan

## England crush Ireland in U19 Women's T20 WC Super Six clash

By A Sports

POTCHEFSTROOM: England's skipper Grace Scrivens struck a quickfire 93 to power her side to a mammoth 207/2 before bowlers propelled them to a resounding 121-run victory over Ireland in the Super Six clash of the ongoing ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup.

After opting to bat first, England raised a massive 207/2 at the back of a combined brilliance of their top four batters with skipper Scrivens leading the way with a brisk 93.

Earlier, English openers gave their side a flying start as they stitched a magnificent 136-run partnership for the first wick-

et inside 13 overs before Aimee Maguire castled Liberty Heap to provide her side with a much-needed breakthrough.

Heap fell eight short of her half-century as she scored 42 off 29 balls and smashed seven boundaries.

Following Heap's departure, Scrivens stitched a brief partnership for England as she added 22 runs for the second wicket with Niamh Holland before falling to Freya Sargent in the 16th over.

She top-scored for England with 93 off just 56 balls, hitting 15 boundaries and two sixes.

Besides the openers, top-order batter Holland (34\*) and wicketkeeper batter Seren Smale (30\*) also made signif-



icant contributions and made sure their side surpassed the 200-run mark.

For Ireland, only Maguire and Sargent could pick up a wicket.

Set to chase a mammoth 208, the Irish batting lineup failed completely and bundled out for a mere 86 in response.

Middle-order batter Abbi

Harrison offered a brief fight-back with her gritty 16-run knock and top-scored for her side.

Besides Harrison, only Maguire (14) and skipper Siuin Woods (13) could breach the double figures as the rest of the Irish batters failed against a strong English bowling attack.

Hannah Baker and Sophia Smale led the way for England with the ball as they both took three wickets each, while Ryana MacDonald-Gay and Scrivens made one scalp apiece.

Meanwhile, in another Super Six clash, New Zealand edged Rwanda by four wickets to script a winning start to the second phase of their campaign.

## Zubair takes lead in 12th Rashid D Habib Golf Tournament



By Ali Hassan

KARACHI: Home town's Muhammad Zubair took the lead with an under-par score of 10 following the conclusion of the third day's action in the ongoing 12th Rashid D. Habib Memorial National Professional Golf Tournament 2023 at Karachi Golf Club (KGC) here on Saturday.

The third day of the ongoing Golf tournament witnessed the former leader Muhammad Shahzad and Zubair swapping places after the latter scripted an astounding comeback on Saturday to finish at the top of the leaderboard.

Meanwhile, Shahzad, who took the lead on Friday, slipped to the joint-second spot with defending champion Waheed Baloch with an under-par score of eight; two behind leader Zubair.

Furthermore, Matloob Ahmed, who finished with an under-par score of five, managed to secure a joint-fourth place in the leaderboard alongside Amir Khan and Shabbir Iqbal.

However, despite concluding the third day's action on fifth place, Ashat Amjad stole the show with his hole-in-one, which earned him a brand new car from a private bank.

It is pertinent to mention that the final round of the Rashid D Memorial Gold Tournament will take place on Sunday.

## Pakistan Cycling Federation officials will depart to Uzbekistan for commissaire course



By Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Pakistan Cycling Federation three technical officials i.e. Barrister Adnan Ahsan Khan, Mr. Haroon General and Mr. Sarmad Shahab will depart to Uzbekistan to take part in UCI MBX National Elite Commissaire Course scheduled w.e.f 26 to 29 January 2023 at Jizzax Region Uzbekistan.

Here it is worth to mention that this will be the first time in the history of Pakistan Cycling that PCF technical officials will get training in BMX discipline. Since the takeover of PCF by the present setup under the leadership of Syed Azhar Ali Shah more than ten Cycling Commissaires have qualified various UCI courses besides dozens of male and female athletes in various reputable UCI training camps. This all happened due to Mr. Shah untiring efforts for the promotion of sports in general and cycling in particular.

## Diana Baig ruled out of T20 World Cup, Australia T20Is



By Ali Hassan

SYDNEY: Pakistan's pacer Diana Baig has been ruled out of the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2023 and the T20I series against Australia due to an injury to her right hand.

Earlier, Diana sustained the injury in the seventh over of Australia's innings as she made a desperate attempt to wobble a catch off her own bowling.

Australia's Phoebe Litchfield came down the track and drove hard, hitting it back to Diana at knee height and it burst through the latter's hands.

Despite sustaining the injury, Diana completed her spell of 10 overs and picked up two wickets for 56 runs.

She was then taken to a local hospital here where X-Rays confirmed the pacer to have fractured her right hand's finger.

Following this, Diana has been ruled out of the three-match T20I series against Australia - scheduled from January 24 to 29 - and also the upcoming mega event in South Africa.

Consequently, right-handed batter Sadaf Shams, who was a part of the team's travelling reserves for the Australia Tour and T20 World Cup, has replaced Diana in the squad.

It is pertinent to mention that Beth Mooney's magnificent century powered Australia to thump Pakistan by 101 runs and complete clean sweep in the three-match ODI series on Saturday.

## Steve Smith joins elusive list with back-to-back T20 centuries

By A Sports

SYDNEY: Sydney Sixers' batter Steve Smith joined an elusive list of batters with back-to-back centuries in T20s following his unbeaten 125 against city-rivals Sydney Thunder in the ongoing Big Bash League (BBL) 12.

Australia's veteran batter Smith carried on his red-hot form in the ongoing BBL 12 to rack up another century in the ongoing extravaganza as he struck a scintillating century in the Sydney Smash on Saturday.

The right-handed batter went berserk against the Thunder's bowlers as he amassed the triple figures in just 56 deliveries and remained unbeaten 125 off 66, laced with six fours and nine sixes.

Notably, Smith had displayed alike performance in his side's fixture against Adelaide Strikers on Tuesday when he piled 101 off 56 balls.