



BISP, Google to help women achieve digital literacy: Marri

Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Chairperson BISP, Ms. Shazia Marri on Thursday said the women empowerment and education through Digital literacy would revolutionise Pakistan's economy and GDP at an unprecedented level. (Report on Page 3)



Wahab Riaz named Sports Minister in Punjab's caretaker government

Pakistan's veteran pacer Wahab Riaz has been named Sports Minister in the recently-announced caretaker government of Punjab. Wahab, who is currently representing Khulna Tigers in the ongoing edition of the BPL, will take the charge as the sports minister of the largest province in due course. (Report on Page 7)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Political situation

ISLAMABAD: Former President Asif Ali Zardari and Chief of Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam (F) Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and discussed the overall political situation in the country. Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and Khawaja Saad Rafiq were also present in the meeting.



Photo: PID

Naval chief calls on prime minister



News Desk
ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi on Thursday called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif here. In the meeting, they discussed the matters pertaining to the Pakistan Navy, a PM Office statement said.

Kashmiris observe Black Day on India's 'Republic Day'

News Desk
ISLAMABAD: Kashmiris across the Line of Control and the world over observed Indian Republic Day, on January 26, as Black Day to protest against the continued denial by India of their right to self-determination in accordance with the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions.



Mehmood Ahmed Saghar, while speaking on the occasion said India had been using brutal tactics to suppress the Kashmiris' freedom sentiment but miserably failed in its nefarious designs. The protesters were holding black flags and banners and placards with slogans against India and in favour of Kashmir's freedom from Indian occupation. Protest rallies were also carried out in Muzaffarabad and other cities of Azad Jammu and Kashmir to mark the day as Black Day. The protesters demanded the world community to break the criminal silence and play its role in stopping Indian state terrorism in IIOJK. Meanwhile, the APHC leaders, in their messages on the day, said that India was not a true democratic country as it had usurped the right to self-determination of the Kashmiri people for the past over seven decades, reported Kashmir Media Service (KMS). APHC leaders, including Ghulam Muhammad Khan Sopori, Rafia Rasool, Dr Musaab and Muhammad Aqib, said that Modi regime had put the entire IIOJK under military siege to celebrate its Republic Day in the occupied territory.

Ahsan affirms govt's resolve for economy's turnaround

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Thursday expressed the government's resolve for a turnaround of the national economy as it had done in 2013. Addressing the inaugural ceremony of Inclusive Digital SDG's Knowledge Hub, the minister said the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government had undone all the successes of the previous Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government, which had put the sinking economy back on track.

He said when the PML-N came into power in 2013, the country was facing the worst economic and power crises, with the menace of terrorism rampant. However, due to hectic efforts made by the PML-N government, the economy made a remarkable turnaround and was put on the path of development. Foreign investment of billions of dollars came especially under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and numerous projects of socio-economic development were launched. However, he said, the PTI government did the opposite, pushing back the country into



the economic quagmire. The minister said Pakistan had to face the worst climate change impacts last year when torrential rains and disastrous floods hit most parts affecting more than 3 million people. The country was paying a huge price for the global emissions despite the minimum share of

less than one percent, he added. Ahsan Iqbal said the world would now have to show responsible behaviour to save natural resources for future generations. For this purpose, he said, the United Nations approved Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for various sectors, which were mainly aimed at providing good quality of life to people across the globe. Even before the SDGs' adoption by the UN, he said, Pakistan had already approved its National Development Goals under the Vision 2025 in 2014 in which all those goals (SDGs) were included.

MQM-P vows to stage protest in Feb

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) leader Mustafa Kamal said on Thursday the party had started preparing to stage protests in February. Talking to the media, he said people of Sindh are raising questions on population count for elections in Karachi. "If 209 constituencies were created for a population of 9.8million, the number should have been doubled for a population of 160million", he added. The population increased by 100%, he said, while the seats were increased by only 38%.

No backchannel diplomacy with India: Hina

Chief Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar on Thursday told the Senate that there was no backchannel diplomacy going on with India. Responding to a supplementary question of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's Senator Faisal Javed at the floor of the upper house of the parliament, she said since the government had come into power, there was no backchannel diplomacy going on between Pakistan and India. Hina made it clear that if backchannel diplomacy was result oriented, it should be done.



She said the messages, being received from India, were all conflagratory that was why; there were no talks on any kind of trade between the two neighboring countries. She expressed the possibility of talks if there was any opportunity and India comes to Pakistan's demand. "It is duty of the politicians to do right things instead of coming in the way of diplomacy," she maintained. Balochistan Awami Party's Senator Danesh Kumar, appreciating the Kartarpur Corridor, said there was Hinglaj Mata temple in Balochistan which was almost five thousand years old adding that Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was also its

worshiper. He expressed the hope that if this archeological site was promoted for religious tourism between Pakistan and India, it would have good impact on the social condition of the people of this coastal area. He asked the minister for taking any peace-building initiative for this ancient religious temple like the Kartarpur Corridor. Terming Kartarpur Corridor a good precedence, Hina said this was obviously a positive suggestion and Pakistan had always played frontman role in the execution of such peace-building projects and it would keep on doing so.

Imran Khan Attack: PTI challenges centre's JIT in LHC

News Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has challenged the federal government's formation of a second joint investigation team (JIT) to investigate the attack on former prime minister and party Chairman Imran Khan, ARY News reported on Thursday. According to details, PTI leader Dr Yasmin Rashid filed a petition in Lahore High Court (LHC), challenging the federal government's formation of a second joint investigation team to investigate Imran Khan attack. Dr Yasmin Rashid filed the petition in which the Centre, Punjab government, and others have been made parties. In the petition, it was argued that the JIT formed by the federal government to investigate the assassination attempt was illegal, adding that the provincial government had already formed a JIT. The PTI pleaded that the Centre cannot form a JIT when another has already been constituted by the Punjab government, asking the LHC to declare the Centre's JIT invalid.

OIC Condemns Desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden, Netherlands

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: An Ambassadorial meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Member States, convened by Pakistan, condemned the recent abhorrent act of desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden and in Netherlands.

Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Munir Akram presided the meeting. In a statement, the meeting said those vile acts were recent manifestations of Islamophobia. The meeting also decided to organize a special meeting at the UN in New York to

commemorate the Day to Combat Islamophobia in accordance with the landmark resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly last year. "Through this event, the OIC countries would call for international solidarity and cooperation in combating and dismantling anti-Muslim rhetoric and practices

including racial profiling, discrimination, negative stereotyping and stigmatization of Muslims" the Pakistani envoy said. As a follow-up of the resolution, he added, "the OIC will urge the UN Secretary-General to formulate an action plan, in coordination with the OIC countries, to halt and reverse Islamophobia"

Which population explosion compelled to increase UCs for capital LG elections, asks IHC

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday while expressing anger on Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) over not conducting local government (LG) elections in Islamabad as per the court's orders inquired which population explosion compelled the government to instruct the ECP to increase union councils (UCs) in the city. A two-member bench comprising IHC chief justice (CJ) Amir Farooq and Justice Saman Rifat Intiaz heard the intra-court appeals involving the ECP, and the federation. The court rejected the Additional Attorney General (AAG) Munawar Iqbal's request to adjourn the hear-

ing saying whether he should adjourn the hearing till his retirement in 2031, and ordered the lawyer representing the ECP Mian Abdul Rauf to present his arguments. The ECP's lawyer argued that the LG elections could not be conducted at the earliest because there was too less time to do so as the bill was first passed by the parliament, then sent to the president for assent, and the process to elect mayor and deputy mayor was also changed. "Despite all this, the ECP wrote to the government for providing logistic support which the government rejected by stating that it was not possible to do arrangements in such a short time, therefore, elections could only be held in seven to ten days", he added.

Meeting in London

LONDON: Advisor to Prime Minister President PML-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Engr. Amir Muqam called on former PM Nawaz Sharif. Maryam Nawaz was also present.



Photo: APP

KP, Punjab's elections to be held on time, says Irfan Siddiqui

Chief Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Senator Irfan Siddiqui said on Thursday that elections for both Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) assemblies would be held at the appropriate time, according to the constitution and law.

Talking to a private news channel, Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) leader said that political vendettas and politically motivated cases should not be made against political opponents. State institutions should not be dragged into politics,

he added.

In response to a query regarding Fawad Chaudhry's arrest, the senator stated that he regretted the treatment given to the PTI leader and despite their differences, he was dejected to see Fawad in a handcuff state on television.

The senator emphasised the need for dialogue and urged politicians to engage in negotiations in order to address national problems. "Derogatory and false allegations should not be used in politics. Such behaviour should be shunned," he urged.

14-member caretaker KP cabinet takes oath



Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: The 14-member caretaker provincial cabinet of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Thursday took oath here at the Governor House.

KP Governor Ghulam Ali administered the oath from the members of the cabinet and felicitated them and conveyed best wishes.

The cabinet members included Abdul Halim Qasuriya, Syed Masood Shah, Hamid Shah, Advocate Sawal Nazir, Bakht Nawaz,

Fazl Elahi, Adnan Jalil, Shafiqullah Khan, Haji Ghafar, Khushdil Khan Malik, Taj Muhammad Afridi, Muhammad Ali Shah, Justice (R) Irshad Qaiser, Shahid Khan Khattak.

Chief Secretary Dr. Shehzad Bangash, Inspector General of Police Moazzam Jah Ansari, Commissioner Peshawar Riaz Mehsud, heads of administrative departments and other political and social personalities participated in the oath taking ceremony.

Exporters to ensure consignments shipped within 45 days: ECC

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet on Thursday directed exporters to ensure the consignments are shipped within 45 days of quota allocation.

Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Dr. Aisha Ghous Pasha, Mr. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi MNA/Ex-PM, SAPM on Finance Mr. Tariq Bajwa, SAPM on Government Effectiveness Dr. Muhammad



Syed Murtaza Mahmud, Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Dr. Aisha Ghous Pasha, Mr. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi MNA/Ex-PM, SAPM on Finance Mr. Tariq Bajwa, SAPM on Government Effectiveness Dr. Muhammad

Jehanzeb Khan, Coordinator to PM on Commerce & Industry Rana Ihsan Afzal, Governor SBP, Federal Secretaries and other senior officers attended the meeting.

For the facilitation of export of sugar, the ECC after detailed

discussion approved revised conditions for Provincial Cane Commissioners who will allocate quota within seven (07) days of the issuance of the notification.

The ECC decided the export proceeds shall be received

either in advance through a banking channel, or within a period of sixty(60) days of the opening of LC for export of sugar.

Ministry of Commerce submitted a summary regarding export of sugar with proposals from SBP and PSMA on certain conditions regarding mode of payment and time period for realization of export proceeds.

It was informed that the ECC has already allowed export of a total of 250,000 MT of sugar on 3rd January, 2023.

However, certain queries have been raised by the stakeholders in the process of export of sugar.

PILDAT issues analysis of 321st session of Senate

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT) has issued an analysis of the 321st session of the Senate which began on September 26 and prorogued on October 21.

As many as 12 sittings were convened during the session spanning 26 days, said a news release.

The 321st session of the Senate met for 25 hours and 39 minutes with an average time of 2 hours and 8 minutes per sitting.

The longest sitting of the session was held on Monday,

September 26 when the House was adjourned after meeting 4 hours and 12 minutes.

The shortest sitting was held on Friday, October 14 when 95.24 per cent agenda items were left over and the House was adjourned due to lack of quorum after meeting for only 6 minutes, even though 41 Senators were recorded as present on the day.

The average delay in starting a sitting was 5 minutes during the session.

On average 43.92 per cent agenda items were left over during the 321st session and the Senate could dispose only 56.08 per cent of its agenda items in 12 sittings.

Lack of quorum was pointed out 6 times in five or 41.67 per cent of the total sittings during the session. The same five sittings were adjourned due to lack of quorum.

During the 321st session,



the Senate passed 14 bills. Out of these, 3 private members' bills were introduced in the Senate while 8 government bills and 3 private members' bills were transmitted from the National Assembly.

'Twenty Private Members' bills were introduced during the session and all of them were referred to the concerned committees. No ordinance was laid or extended during the session.

During the 321st session, total time consumed for discussion on policy issues spanned over only 3 hours while the Senate consumed 11 hours and 46 minutes on discussion of non-policy issues.

The maximum time consumed in discussing policy issues was on a motion 'Imposition of taxes on tobacco industry of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa' for 40 minutes while the House spent 1 hour

and 40 minutes and 1 hour and 37 minutes on discussing non-policy issues of 'Deteriorating economic conditions and inflation in Pakistan' and 'Inefficiency of the government in dealing with floods victims and rehabilitation work' respectively.

It must be noted that PILDAT has classified that a policy issue is such that involves any amendment in a bill or a recommendation on devising a policy. Any discussion on an issue that does not go beyond mere criticism or highlighting a concern does not fall into policy issue and is treated as discussion or time spent on non-policy issues.

Rupee freefall continues as US dollar hits record rs254.75 in interbank

Business Reporter

KARACHI: Following the removal of an unofficial cap on the dollar exchange rate, the rupee took a massive hammering against the US dollar in the interbank and open markets on Thursday.

The rupee's losses continued as the local currency dropped to Rs254.75 against the dollar in the interbank market.

According to forex dealers, the greenback surged by Rs23.86 against the local currency in the interbank market and was traded at Rs254.75.

The greenback is being sold at Rs259.75 in the interbank market, the forex dealers said. On the other hand, the



dollar is being traded between Rs242 to 245 in the open market.

On Wednesday, the Pakistani rupee depreciated against the US dollar in the interbank and open markets after the Exchange Companies Association of Pakistan (Ecap) removed an unofficial cap on the exchange rate.

According to forex dealers, the USD was being traded at Rs252.50 in the open market at 12pm against Tuesday's close of 240.75.

CDA auctions 33 plots worth Rs 40 bln

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has sold 33 plots worth over around Rs 40 billion during a three-day open auction that concluded here on Thursday.

"The authority got an overwhelming response as a large number of investors took part during the last day of the auction," said the CDA in a news release.

The open auction of the residential and commercial plots, supervised by a committee headed by Member Finance of CDA, was held at Jinnah Convention Centre.

The auction committee included CDA's Member State, Member Planning and Design, DFA-II, DG Law, Director Public Relations, Director Urban Planning, Director Regional Planning, Director State Management-II and Director Finance.

Children among 19 killed from mysterious illness in Karachi

Bureau Report

KARACHI: At least 16 children among 19 people have died due to a mysterious fever in Muhammad Ali Laghari Goth in Karachi's Kemari District.

According to details, more than 30 children were still sick of mysterious fever as there were no dispensaries in the area for treatment. Moreover, the smoke coming from 'illegal' factories makes it difficult to breathe for the patients.

Meanwhile, District Health Office (DHO) Kemari Dr Muhammad Arif claimed that the death of two children are due to Measles [Khasra], adding that a team was working further to find out

the reasons behind the deaths in Goth.

DHO Kemari Muhammad Arif stated that the team is collecting samples from the patients and directed them to establish the medical camps and appoint doctors to take further care of the patients.

On the other hand, deputy commissioner (DC) Kemari Mukhtiar Ali Abro sealed multiple illegal factories and arrested four persons while saying that 10 children have died in the area so far.

The DC further stated that the smoke from the factories due to the burning of plastic and other harmful material spread disease among the children.

He added that the smoke caused the throat of the chil-

Lal Haveli likely to be vacated



Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: The Evacuee Trust Properties Board (ETPB) has decided to vacate Rawalpindi's historic Lal Haveli, the residence of former interior minister Sheikh Rasheed.

According to details, the Evacuee Trust Properties Board (ETPB) has prepared a strategy to vacate Lal Haveli within 24 hours.

In this regard, the department has sought assistance from law enforcement agencies (LEAs) - Rangers, police and Federal Investigation Agency (FIA).

Meanwhile, former Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed and nephew Rashid Shafiq announced to resist the Haveli's evacuation.

In October last year, a district and sessions court in Rawalpindi accepted Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed and his brother Sheikh Sadeeq Ahmed's plea challenging the eviction order of the civil judge for his Lal Haveli residence.

during his visit to Gwadar last year had directed the concerned authorities to complete the project in a short period of time, he said.

He said the Central Development Working Party (CDWP) had approved the 132 KV transmission line from Jivani to Gwadar last June.

He said that the construction of the second circuit stringing of 132 KV, and the building of a transmission line from Jivani to Gwadar (94 km) were to be completed at a cost of Rs.2,322.940 million.

Gwadar relies on imported electricity from Iran and the construction of a 132 kV line will connect the coastal city to the national grid for the first time, he said.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif

Dr. Shahida Wizarat's book on 'Alternative to the IMF and Other Out of the Box Solutions' launched

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The book launch ceremony of "Alternative to the IMF and Other Out of the Box Solutions" by Dr. Shahida Wizarat was held on Thursday, January 26, 2023. Mr. Bashir Jammohammad, Chancellor IOBM was the honorary Chief Guest at the occasion. He was accompanied by some distinguished speakers including Ambassador (Retired) Syed Hasan Javed, Pakistan's Former Ambassador to Germany, Singapore and Mauritius; Engineer Abdul Jabbar, VP FPCCI; and Mr. Azhar Jamil, Chairman Citizens Alliance and Qaumi Mahaz-e-Azadi.

During his welcome address, Mr. Talib Karim, President IOBM said that the IMF has been in the news, particu-

larly with regard to Pakistan's economy. He urged the need to develop a short-term strategy on how to repay debts that Pakistan owes. "I hope that the right people will read this book and implement the ideas presented," he added.

Expressing his opinion on the facts and perspectives provided in the book, Ambassador Hasan Javed said, "This book is a remarkable addition to the literature available on this subject. It should be read by political leaders and scholars in developing countries."

Engineer Abdul Jabbar said that the sixty-seven chapters of the book touch on past economic events that altered Pakistan's relations with the IMF. He said, "IMF's decisions and policies should be scrutinized by the developing countries to resolve their econom-

ic crisis." Engineer Jabbar added that, "Dr. Wizarat presents solutions to an array of economic problems."

Speaking at the event, Mr. Azhar Jamil said that Pakistan had an opportunity to put its house in order during the rule of Pervez Musharraf. He added that the tax structure should be equally distributed among the citizens as the burden is more on the poor. "We need to present a detailed reform agenda that is approved by a national consensus to give Pakistan's economic solutions."

During her address, Dr. Shahida Wizarat said that the book includes strategies to resolve the crisis without the need to use foreign exchange reserves. "We do not go to the IMF, we are taken to the IMF," she added. "IMF program is not about reforms. It



is a connection between the opportunities and the IMF where the burden

is on the middle and lower classes." She suggested increasing the quality of exports and prioritizing the goods to be exported including the ban on import of luxurious goods."

Chief Guest, Mr. Bashir Jammohammad said the book has various subjects that are connected to the IMF. He said it is difficult for Pakistan to pursue alternate options other than to continue with the IMF. "The economic situation is so precarious because we have been following the IMF's policies and we cannot get out of it at once. Dr. Wizarat's book must be read to give a holistic outlook of what has been wronged and how to rectify the policies."

The Rector, Deans, faculty members and management of IOBM were also present at the occasion.

Protest

KARACHI: Supporters of Jamaat-e-Islami are shouting slogans during protest against Quran burning in Sweden, outside press club, in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Construction work at CBD Punjab Boulevard Project a step ahead



Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Central Business District Development Authority (PCBDDA), also known as Central Business District (CBD Punjab), is working 24 hours in freezing weather and rain for the timely completion of its ongoing project of CBD Punjab Boulevard and Kalma Chowk Underpass remodeling. Even the recent rain, fog and harsh weather conditions have not affected the pace of construction work.

On the instructions of Chief Minister Punjab, Mr. Mohsin Naqvi and Commissioner Lahore Mr. Amir Jan, Deputy Commissioner Lahore, Mr. Muhammad Ali visited the project site of Kalma Chowk Underpass Remodeling Project. Assistant Commissioner Model Town Mr. Ibrahim Arbab, CTO Lahore Dr. Asad Malhi, SP Traffic Model Town, DSP Traffic Model Town, DG PHA, Executive Director CBD Punjab Mr. Riaz Hussain and staff of CBD Punjab were also present during the visit. Riaz Hussain, Executive Director Technical of CBD Punjab briefed Deputy Commissioner Lahore, about the progress of construction work. The full workforce has been deployed on the clear instructions of the Chief Minister of Punjab, Mr. Mohsin Naqvi and CEO of CBD Punjab, Mr. Imran Amin for the speedy completion of the project.

The technical team of CBD Punjab and the staff of contractor NLC are busy working day and night at the project site. Riaz Hussain further informed that along with complex piles, digging and slabbing of barrels will be completed soon and the work of retaining walls of the rainwater harvesting tank is also in progress.

CEO CBD Punjab Mr. Imran Amin is also visiting the project site on daily basis to monitor the construction work. During his recent visit, he said that all institutions are cooperating fully to complete the project. All resources are being mobilized to complete the project ahead of time and soon the traffic flow will be improved.

Deputy Commissioner Lahore expressed satisfaction with the pace of the construction work. He said that the convenience of the people should be given first priority and the citizens should be relieved from the temporary commute problem. Dr. Asad Malhi along with the technical staff of CBD Punjab, also briefed Deputy Commissioner Lahore, about the alternative plan for traffic. With the completion of the CBD Punjab Boulevard and Kalma Chowk Underpass remodeling project, millions of people will be benefited on daily basis and this project will be a great comfort for Lahore.

Clarification

ISLAMABAD: This is to clarify that there is no change in date for provision of final results of 7th Population and Housing, First-Ever Digital census, i.e. 30th April 2023.

In 5th CMC meeting, which was held on 17th January, 2023, only internal timelines were adjusted without compromising the final date i.e. 30th April, 2023 in view of the import of 126,000 tablets for digital census.

Pak-Afghan border Angoor Adda has been resolved after successful negotiations.



Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: The long-standing dispute between the Pakistanis and Afghans on the Pak-Afghan border in Angoor adda, which had been going on for the past four months, there had been a dispute between Afghans and Pakistani Wazir tribes in the transaction of rupees. Due to which the above-mentioned parties across the border forced hundreds of vehicles loaded with goods to stand next to each other, after successful negotiations, the vehicles were left and sent from both sides.

In this regard, it was unanimously decided by the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and the government of Pakistan that no one will be allowed to forcefully stop the vehicles at Angoor Adda Gate in case of personal differences, without the government on both sides.

Otherwise, strict action will be taken against the violation of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and the government of Pakistan.

President of Arts Council announced to award 10,000 rupees cash prize to Abdul Hadi

News Desk

KARACHI: A special children's festival will be organized in the Pakistan Youth Festival organized by the Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi on Friday, in which children from different schools and colleges will show their skills in painting, acting, singing, while painting will be held from January 23. The results of the candidates participating in painting, photography, essay writing, quiz and Declaration (Urdu-English) competitions from January 23 will be announced on January 27.

There will be a music concert at 4pm in which



famous singers including AUJ band will perform. In the Pakistan Youth Festival, President Arts Council Muhammad Ahmad Shah announced a cash prize of Rs 10,000 to Abdul Hadi for doing excellent beat boxing.

He said that the youth of other cities including Karachi are actively participating in the Pakistan Youth Festival, painting Winners of the photography competitions will be awarded a prize of Rs.25,000.

The festival will feature Battle of the Bands, speech, acting, singing and instrument competitions, two special competitions of photography and live painting, while a theater workshop will also be held.

From 10 o'clock in the morning, there was a rush of candidates participating in various categories in addition to the students of schools, colleges and universities in the Arts Council, the young generation from all sides continued to enjoy the festival while in the semi-finals of the dance, various dance groups and solos of the candidates. The performance capped off the festival

Sohail Aftab Successfully Defends His PhD Thesis



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Sohail Aftab has defended his PhD Thesis successfully with distinction as he obtains Summa-Cum-Laude. He did his PHD research from University of Hamburg, Germany being a scholarship holder of German Academic Exchange Service (GAES) under the supervision of a prominent privacy law scholar Professor Dr. Marion Albers.

His thesis topic was "Protecting the right to privacy in Pakistan" learning from theoretical approaches and European Experiences".

Under his thesis, Mr. Sohail Aftab has undertaken an extensive content analysis of Pakistani media and has highlighted media's intrusive practices in its coverage of sexual violence and issues related to children and women.

Similarly topics like grief journalism and coverage in the course of legal proceedings have also been highlighted.

He has attempted to establish that privacy is strongly connected to human dignity and this basic right is effectively protected in the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) as well as in its member states of Germany and the United Kingdom.

His thesis presents a law reform proposal in the form of privacy legislation. He has also annexed a template legislation based on this finding.

2-Day International Foundry Congress and Exhibition is being held in Lahore

Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: 2-Day International Foundry Congress and Exhibition is being held in Lahore on 14-15 February 2023 which will determine the future direction of Pakistan's foundry industry. This was said by Pakistan Foundry Association General Secretary Asim Qadri while giving a briefing about the International Congress and Exhibition to those related to the foundry industry in the Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Regarding the aims and objectives of the exhibition, he said that at present the foundry sector is running on old technology.

Into exports, this sector will completely disappear and it will also have a negative impact on the overall economic development of Pakistan. He said that Pakistan needs modern technology to enter in global markets. He said that there will be 66 stalls in this exhibition. 60 foundries will participate in it while foreign experts are also coming who will also give advice to develop Pakistan's foundries on modern lines. He said that during the exhibition, there will be 30 technical sessions which will consist of old smelting furnaces to present day new technology.

He said that 12 foreign experts will also participate in the Congress while two most expensive technolo-

gists have also been invited, who will visit various foundries besides upgrading the old furnaces and informing about their benefits. He said that the foundry owners of Faisalabad should take full advantage of this opportunity so that we can progress towards the production of modern machinery. Welcoming Asim Qadri, Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Dr. Khurram Tariq said that if we cannot bring our children into our native professions, it will be a great misfortune and for this purpose we have to make our respective fields international. Development will have to be done according to the standards.

He said that although it is not currently an export sector, he is willing to pursue his case as a potential export industry. Thus Trade Development Authority of Pakistan can also be used for the development of this sector. He assured the foundry owners to help them get a location in M3 Industrial City. President Dr. Khurram Tariq asked Asim Qadri to provide information about the proposed exhibition to the Chamber so that it could be conveyed to the local foundry owners. On this occasion, senior vice president Dr. Sajjad Arshad and vice president Haji Mohammad Aslam Bhali, Ashfaq Ashraf, Jalil Malik, Abdul Rauf, Haji Attaullah and other foundry owners were also present.



Islamabad
15° - 23° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr5:42 am
Zohr12:20 pm
Asr3:54 pm
Maghrib5:32 pm
Isha6:59 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police)15
Bomb Disposal15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/
Islamabad1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance1122 &
& Rescue Services4451122
Motorway Police9266044
Motorway Police9270601-20

Women Police Stations

Islamabad9222596
Rawalpindi9270601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance115
PIA Flight Info114
PIA Cargo9280979
Railway Inquiry117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi5555489
CAA9281092

HOSPITALS

CMH561111
MH561116
MH561116
Cantt Hospital9270907-11
DHQ9290322-7
RGH9290301-7
Holy Family9290322-7
PIMS9261170-79
Polyclinic9218300-09
Shifa International4603666

DEPARTMENTS

CDA9221334-43
CDA9208301-04
Met Office9250360-6
RDA5555864
TMA5770886
Cantonment Board9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan
Corporation9209224
Potohar Town9209224
Rawal Town5773343

COMPLAINTS

Water Tanker Service
E-7, F-10 & F-119204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-89203883
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-89266316
Wapda Islamabad9217579-80
Sui Gas Complaint119, 9272249
Wasa Water Tank
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Suno FM 96 Waziristan Radio's first birthday celebration

Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: Suno FM 96 Waziristan Radio's first anniversary celebration was held, people from different schools of thought appreciated the services of radio staff on regional services.

In the birthday celebration, the cake was formally cut and special prayers were offered for the security of the country, the radio staff and local people participated in the event.

People belonging to different schools of thought paid tribute to the efforts of the radio staff in local services. And appreciated their positive performance.

Waseem Sijjad, manager of FM 96 radio station, said that the staff of radio FM 96 are engaged in public services by working hard day and night.

He said that God willing, he will try to convey the public complaints given to the radio to the higher authorities in the future as well.

FM radio has a very important role in Waziristan to highlight regional issues in a better way.

BISP, Google to help women achieve digital literacy: Marri

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Chairperson BISP, Ms. Shazia Marri on Thursday said the women empowerment and education through Digital literacy would revolutionise Pakistan's economy and GDP at an unprecedented level.

The Federal Minister was the Chief Guest on the occasion flanked by SAPM on Finance, Mr. Tariq Bajwa, CEO, NRSP Dr. Rashid Bajwa, and Chairman NRSP, Shoaib Sultan Khan.

The National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) organised the closing ceremony of national workshop to disseminate the results of Internet Dost and Internet Zabardast projects supported by Google.org the philanthropic arm of Google.

Addressing the ceremony the Minister said this is definitely a revolution that Pakistan needs through digital literacy and training on internet's positive and constructive usage.

The SAPM after listening to the success stories of the

female beneficiaries of Internet Dost project said these two smart and talented women of Pakistan Aqsa Abbasi and Kaneez Fatima told us their success stories achieved through the initiative of Google and NRSP.

"You have changed the lives of your families and communities and I am thankful to you for coming here after facing all odds."

Ms. Marri also presented her example as a woman bringing change in her constituency by winning the National Assembly (NA) by-election through direct vote and brought a revolution against the prevailing old taboos and ill mindset.

"Google is the IT sector of the world and want to appreciate its role as it has emerged as a household name in the world," the Minister said.

Appreciating the testimonials of the project beneficiaries, she said, "I am proud of the language of women in the testimonials which shows a visible change among them."

She emphasised that the role of a father is crucial for building strong women to change societies.



"We know to excel despite problems and challenges as the women in Pakistan face huge challenges and problems and it's not easy for them to reach this level."

She also requested NRSP and Google to have such enterprises in the rural areas of project sites, so that the local masses could observe and learn from them.

Ms. Marri mentioned that the Article 34 of the Constitution says, "The state will have to bring women in all strata of state."

The IMF study claims that Pakistan GDP may rise to 33%

if women workforce number is leveled with that of men. Moreover, the ILO study claims a GDP increase upto 9% amounting \$139 billion if 25% women workforce was increased as par with men, she noted.

"Women equality will benefit country's progress and women empowerment will lead to contribution in its GDP growth. It's the potential that scares a typical mindset which needs to be defeated. We need to join heads for a resilient Pakistan in all spheres," she ended.

Rashid Bajwa, CEO NRSP in his remarks said the NRSP about a year back on February 8th, 2022 celebrated safe internet day and launched Internet Dost initiative.

Tariq Bajwa, SAPM on Finance said the article 25 of the Constitution of Pakistan discusses equal rights for all and Article 20 and 23 discuss full participation of women which we lack in every effort.

"The initiative is the positive step taken in order to bridge that gap as we will have to provide necessary ecosystem for a child or individual alongside premium

space to incentivise that particular individual for achieving digital transformation," he added.

Timothy Tam, Government Affairs and Public Policy Lead at Google via video link from Hong Kong participated the ceremony.

He said millions of people around Asia Pacific have started using internet lifting the number to beyond 2 billion in Asia alone.

He said Google is focussed on ways to interact with people through online. Asia Pacific region uses google everyday and safeguarding the users privacy is the top priority of the Google.

Chairman NRSP, Shoaib Sultan in his vote of thanks said that the endeavour of enhancing communities resilience and preparedness without active participation of the local masses.

He said during his seven decades long journey of community development, he learnt a lot from the local knowledge and believe that unanimous efforts sinking in with the indigenous mindset can help better and result oriented interventions. He also wished luck to the NRSP team for future endeavours.

Self grooming contest

Islamabad: Participants of a self grooming contest pose for group photo with principal Prof Sahab Faisal held at Model College for Girls F-10/2 in connection with intercollegiate ceremony on Thursday.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Radio Pakistan progressing fast on reforms to boost revenue, efficiency of its broadcast



City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The activities to revamp the state broadcaster are being pursued vigorously in the forms of upgradation of infrastructure, including studios, adoption of latest technology, launch of new FM channels, diversification of the content and revenue generation.

Under this robust reform agenda, new state of the art podcast studios have been established in Islamabad and Lahore, which have become operational. With the launch of Sports and Planet FM-87.6 channels, specialized content is being aired for two important segments of the society. On the same lines, new Tech and Environment channels are also being established in Islamabad.

In addition, the incumbent administration is fully focused to improve financial health of the organization with the approach to address the long-standing issue of budget deficit on permanent basis. The variety of projects being undertaken under the platform of the Pakistan Broadcasting Foundation would generate revenue. Alongside implementing these mid-term and long-term initiatives, strenuous efforts are underway to resolve the issue of shortage of funds to ensure timely payment of the staff and artists besides meeting other expenditures.

Under the comprehensive plan of digitization of the organization, the project of installing a digital transmitter is being pursued. In addition, the productions are also being digitized.

Having full realization of the importance of the social media in the current modern age, the administration is fully focused to introduce technology and modern trends in the Social Media section.

On the other side, it is highly regrettable that some elements, having vested interests, feel themselves threatened in the wake of new initiatives. They even resort to leveling baseless, frivolous and slanderous allegations against the people engaged in constructive and reformative activities. However, the administration is fully aware of the ill intentions of these elements and it reserves the right to move on with legal proceedings against them.

Gold price hits all-time high level in Pakistan as rupee loses ground

Gold surged to record highs on Thursday as an intensifying economic turmoil and a weaker rupee sent investors scurrying to the safety of bullion to hedge against the risks to Pakistan's economy already reeling from the political crisis.

Data released by All-Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association (APSGJA) showed that the price of gold (24 carats) surged by Rs4,900 per tola and Rs4,201 per 10 grams to settle at Rs195,500 per tola and Rs167,610 per 10 grams, respectively.

The jewellers' body also said that local gold was "undercost" by Rs1,500 per tola in Pakistan, compared to the Dubai bullion market.

TikTok launches 'Aao Ker Dikhaen' campaign

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: TikTok has announced the launch of its 'Aao Ker Dikhaen' campaign to drive awareness for the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, recently announced by PM Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. The Prime Minister recently spoke about his vision to create one million jobs for the younger generation to address the issue of unemployment across Pakistan, and TikTok will play a vital role in sharing that message.

TikTok has collaborated with the Prime Minister's Office to formulate a comprehensive campaign that will help engage and inform the public about the Prime Minister's Youth Business & Agriculture Loan Scheme.



The global platform will produce and feature multiple informative videos on the app to help educate millions of young internet users about the programme that is set to open up exciting opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs across Pakistan. The 'Aao Ker Dikhaen' campaign is scheduled to go live in early February this year.

TikTok will produce a series of educational videos on the programme to help users navigate the application process and guide them on business ideas to help increase the rate of successful applications. The platform will also highlight success stories to motivate the youth to take advantage of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, which

will provide interest-free loans of up to PKR 0.5 million through Monetary Financial Institutions / Monetary Financial Banks and subsidised loans from PKR 0.5 million to 7.5 million through commercial banks.

Farah Tukan—Head of Government Relations and Public Policy—Middle East, Türkiye, Africa, Pakistan & South Asia at TikTok, said: "We are excited to play our role in giving access to this opportunity to the young generation of Pakistan through the educational videos of the 'Aao Ker Dikhaen' campaign. At TikTok, we are committed to the progress and development of young people. We thank the Prime Minister's Youth Programme for this partnership."

Sri Lanka Preparedness Partnership delegation visits ICCI

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Sri Lanka Preparedness Partnership led by Ms. Chandrika Kularathna visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry and interacted with the business community to learn about their experiences to cope with the disaster management activities. The representatives of Sri Lankan Disaster Management Centre, Asian Preparedness Centre, Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, Sabaragamuwa Chamber of Commerce & Industry and other organizations were in the delegation.

Addressing the delegation, Faad Waheed, Senior Vice President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry briefed the Sri Lankan delegation about the contributions of the business community to reduce the risks of disasters.

He said that the business community has always been at the forefront in collaboration with disaster management authorities of the government to provide relief to the people and businesses in disaster-hit areas. He said that the business community made useful contributions to mitigate the miseries of affected people and businesses during major disasters in Pakistan including Covid-19, 2005 earthquake, floods of 2010 and 2022. He also briefed them about the initiatives of industries to make their production activities environment-friendly in order to reduce the risks of climate-induced disasters. He said that ICCI has arranged ambulance service to facilitate members in case of disasters and other tragedies. He stressed that the private sectors of Pakistan and Sri Lanka should develop close cooperation

to learn from each other and develop new disaster-resilient strategies.

Brig. (Retd) Sajid Naem of Pakistan Resilience Partnership (PRP) said that Pakistan has established strong public-private partnerships and platforms to ignite the momentum for building business resilience. He said that the objective of PRP is to enhance the partnerships, and coordination among government, local humanitarian & civil society organizations, private sector, media and academia to contribute towards strengthening the disaster preparedness and emergency response capacity at national and local levels.

Ms. Chandrika Kularathna Head and other members of Sri Lankan delegation said that the key objective of their visit to Pakistan is to interact with SMEs and learn about their preparedness for continuity of business



post-disasters. They showed keen interest in learning about the disaster management systems in Pakistan so that they could take advantage of them to reduce risks of disasters in their

home country. Rizwana Asif President Islamabad Women Chamber of Commerce, Malik Sohail Hussain former Senior Vice President ICCI and Sana Zulfiqar

of PRP also spoke at the occasion and highlighted the role of the private sector in reducing the risks of disasters in the country through various initiatives.

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Boosting trade, a major challenge for economic revival

APP Report

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 material-

ize 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.

"Controlling trade deficit is a major challenge. Therefore, we are searching new markets to promote regional and international trade for domestic exports," said Commerce Minister Syed Naveed Qamar.

Stressing focus on information technology, agricultural and industrial sectors productivity, the minister said regional trade was very crucial for increasing country's export. "We are continuously negotiating with Central Asian states for economic and trade integration and several agreements have been signed with Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan."

He informed that apart from a mutual transit trade agreement, Uzbekistan had signed a mutual Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) with Pakistan. "A transit trade agreement has been signed with Kazakhstan recently as mutual trade agreements and negotiations were underway between Pakistan and Tajikistan."

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."

As the challenge is enormous, therefore it is obligatory on both the government and business community in the country to join hands for effectively fighting out the dilemma of economic recession.

Besides other facilities for the exporters, the government has also reduced energy prices to curtail the cost of doing business for the export sector including textiles that has been welcomed by textile and other export sectors. Meanwhile, the business organizations are also doing their bit to explore more export market for earning foreign exchange and stabilizing coun-

try's economy.

"Trade diversification at the market and product level is extremely important for increasing domestic exports," said President Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Irfan Malik. "FPCCI has formed its research wing to conduct research on modern commerce and its tools to lend a hand with the government for achieving targets envisaged for improving exports."

No matter that the government is fully focused on resolving trade deficit challenges the environment of political uncertainty is badly hampering its overtures.

Although it is paying full attention to major export sectors by announcing preferential packages for industry, agriculture, IT and pharmaceutical sectors, yet irrational politicking by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf is proving to be too lethal.

Sacrificing national interest for personal gains by Imran Khan has put almost all sectors of economy on halt posing serious challenges to economic managers.

Therefore, time is ripe for all political forces to reach a 'Charter of Economy' to ensure consistent economic policies and steer country out of persisting economic crunch in the country.

Kashmiri observed India's Republic Day as Black Day

In Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) leaders have said that India has no right to celebrate its Republic Day in the territory.

APHC leaders Syed Bashir Andrabi and Khawaja Firdous in their joint statement issued in Srinagar on Thursday, said that actually India was not a democratic country and had occupied Jammu and Kashmir on the basis of force.

The people of Kashmir are observing India's Republic Day as Black Day, they said. They deplored that whenever a special day of India approaches, the Indian troops accelerate their state terrorism in IIOJK and urged the Kashmiri people to observe the Indian Republic Day as Black Day on the appeal of the Hurriyat Conference.

The Hurriyat leaders said the Kashmiri people have continued their struggle for the right to self-determination but due to India's rigid stance the Kashmir dispute is still unresolved and pending with the United Nations.

They said that Jammu and Kashmir was a disputed territory, so India has no right to celebrate its Republic Day in IIOJK. They added that despite the atrocities of the Indian troops, the Kashmiri people would not give up their struggle and would continue it till complete success.

Illegally detained Hurriyat leader, Abdul Samad Inqilabi in a statement in Srinagar said Kashmiri people all over the world are protesting against the atrocities on the Kashmiris by Modi-led fascist Indian government and demanded that the Kashmiris should be given their birthright to self-determination according to the United Nations resolutions.

APHC leaders Khadim Hussain and Syed Sibte Shabbir Qumi in a joint statement in Srinagar said India is not a democratic country and has occupied Jammu and Kashmir against the will of the Kashmiris. They urged the people of the territory to observe the Indian Republic Day, today, as Black Day.

The Democratic Hurriyat Front in a statement issued in Srinagar said the current situation of IIOJK is a big challenge for the international community and appealed to the world powers to help settle the lingering Kashmir dispute according to the UN resolutions and aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

Vice Chairman of Gujjar Pahari Democratic Forum, Advocate Zahoor Ahmad Shah in his statement, denounced the Indian brutalities in IIOJK and said the usurped India has no right to celebrate its Republic Day in the territory.



Tapping youth potential vital for national development

Hussna Khattak

Notwithstanding the country's economic and agricultural resources, Pakistan's population was growing at a rapid pace, thus depleting the job opportunities in government, private, agriculture and industrial sectors.

Being the second most populous country after Indonesia in Muslim world and fifth in the globe, Pakistan's population had swelled to a record 207.68 million with a highest 2.4pc growth rate from 1998 to 2017 including 106.3 million male and 101.3 million females besides 64 percent youth, exerting enormous pressures on the country's socio-economic and agriculture resources.

According to the 2017 National Population Census, 40.3percent of the country's population comprised young population aging from 15 to 29 years while only 3.7 percent were 65 years old and above. The experts predicted that the youth population was likely to double in 2050 for which thousands of employment opportunities would be required in the government and private sectors.

"Unemployment mainly caused by shabby economy, population bulge, energy crisis and flawed education system in Pakistan was likely to reach 8.50 percent by next year if population grows at the same pace and pragmatic measures were not taken for economic and industrial revitalization," said Professor Dr

Dr Naeem while citing a report of an international trading economics model said that the unemployment rate in the country remained 4.35pc in 2021 against 4.30pc in 2020, showing 0.05 pc increase. Alike, the unemployment rate is estimated to reach 6.20 percent in 2022, 6.40 percent in 2023 and 8.50 percent in 2024 in Pakistan in the wake of floods and overpopulation.

In such a situation, he said the nation-

al poverty rate was likely to jack up by 4% points, thus pushing an additional 9.1 million people into poverty, especially in the wake of last year's devastating floods that marooned over 33 million people and inflicted USD 40 billion losses to Pakistan's economy.

According to Pakistan National Human Development Report 2017, about 39 out of 100 youth were employed including 32 of them male and seven female and 57 of 100 youth including 16 male and 41 female were neither working nor seeking jobs while about 94 percent do not have access to a library and 93 percent lacks access to sports facilities.

The report revealed that every year around four million youth enter the working age and if the existing trend of unemployment continues, then over 900,000 new jobs would be required in the next five year for youth.

Ikhtair Wali, Pakistan Muslim League-N KP Spokesman and former member provincial assembly, said that five major initiatives were launched by the present government for economic empowerment of youth under the Prime Minister's Youth Development Program to contain unemployment.

Besides the provision of 20,000 internships for young engineers and diploma holders, he said that 75 national top talent scholarships for master's and PhDs in 25 top universities, the establishment of 250 mini sports complexes, youth transformation plan for 20 under-developed districts and raising of innovation support fund were announced to tap potential of the youth. He said a 'youth sports league' was being launched for emerging players of cricket and football aged 15-25 in all provinces, GB and Azad Kashmir.

Under the landmark PM's youth business and agriculture loans program, he said business loans were being provided through 15 commercial, Islamic and SMEs banks, adding there was no markup on Rs5 million loans, only a five percent mark on Rs5 million to Rs1.5 million loans and seven per cent inter-

est on loans above Rs7.5million benefiting youth ageing from 21 to 45 years.

"I have set up my electronic business after availing PM's loan facility," said 25-year-old Wisal Khan, a young electrician from Pabbi Nowsher a while talking to APP. He said the loan was being provided on easy terms and conditions and youth of KP can also take advantage of the facility by establishing their own business and standing on their own feet.

Ikhtair Wali continued that technical education and vocational training to 50,000 youth and apprenticeships to 25,000 youth would be provided besides paid internship to fresh and post graduates students while about Rs 20 billion scholarships were awarded to talented and deserving students.

He said the size of the federal development budget was Rs 1 trillion during the Nawaz Sharif Government in 2018 which was reduced to Rs550 billion by the PTI government that had badly affected youth and sports projects in the country including KP.

"The former PTI government despite its 10 years long rule failed to complete renovation and up-gradation work on Arbab Niaz International cricket stadium at Peshawar. The construction cost of Arbab Niaz stadium was swelled to over Rs 2 billion and was unlikely to be complete on the set deadline i.e. June 2023," he claimed.

Similarly, he said construction work on Kalam sports stadium stretched on an area of 341 kanals in Swat district could not be started by the previous PTI government despite being the home district of former Chief Minister Mahmood Khan.

Mohsin Jameel Khan, Assistant Manager SMEDA told APP that financial support and technical training in different SMEs business were being provided to the youth of KP under the national business development program. As many as Rs 500,000 grant was being provided for early start up businesses to youth for a period of four months to one

year with 80 percent share by SMEDA and 20 pc by the beneficiary and an additional Rs 0.5 million grant for one to five years for strengthening of their business.

"We have prepared 350 business plans for youth and our experts were available to provide free training and expertise to SMEs," he said. Under the Economic Revitalization Project worth USD 20 billion for KP, he said the youths were provided financial support in purchase of machinery, up-gradation of business, training to staff, and registration of business plans and trademarks etc.

With assistance of Federal Government, he said that the honey processing and packaging common facility centre (CFC), dyeing, washing and processing units for silk clusters and women business development centres in Mingora Swat were established besides setting up of spinning CFC at Islampur Swat to promote infant industries in Malakand division.

Engr Arifullah Shah, senior planning officer, Sports and Youth Affairs Department KP told APP that work on five projects including two for merged areas worth Rs4087 million were underway for empowerment of youth, adding Rs2301 million were allocated for these projects in budget 2022-23.

Arif said work on two projects for merged areas including the establishment of sports complexes and economic uplift of youth costing Rs872 million was in progress while three projects namely youth development package, construction and rehabilitation of youth properties and financial empowerment of youth and women for settled districts of KP would help harness youth potential for national development.

"The land for Kalam cricket ground in Swat has been purchased with an estimated cost of Rs2.1 billion while 30 percent remaining work on Arbab Niaz Cricket stadium would hopefully be completed this year subject to availability of funds," he added.

Saudi amendment to citizenship law

Dimah Talal Al-Sharif

A royal decree was issued recently to approve the amendment of article eight of the Saudi nationality law, which grants Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, prime minister of Saudi Arabia, the authority to grant citizenship.

The amendment included the phrase "in granting the Saudi nationality (by order of the prime minister based on a proposal from the minister of interior)" instead of "by a decision of the minister of interior."

It is important to refer to the old article before it was amended, as previously article eight stipulated that "Saudi nationality may be granted by a decision of the minister of interior to a person born inside the Kingdom of a foreign father and a Saudi mother if the following conditions are met: to have permanent residence status in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia upon reaching the age of maturity; good conduct and behavior; and the applicant must have never been convicted of a criminal judgment or [served] a prison sentence for a moral crime for a period of more than six months."

In addition, the law required the applicant to be fluent in Arabic and submit a request to be granted Saudi Arabian nationality within the year following the age of maturity.

It is also important to note that the new royal decree does not contain an explicit text that requires the granting of Saudi nationality to the children of female citizens as soon as they are born to a Saudi mother.

It is important to understand the amendment as many social media platforms took it to mean the immediate granting of Saudi nationality.

It is worth noting that it is not permissible for a Saudi to acquire foreign nationality without prior permission from the prime minister, and a Saudi who obtains it before obtaining such permission shall stay considered a Saudi unless a royal authority decides to revoke his or her nationality.

U.S. Embassy funded Improving Rule of Law in Balochistan program successfully executed by UNODC

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome today joined United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime (UNODC) Representative Jeremy Milsom and Balochistan Police Inspector General Abdul Khalique Sheikh to celebrate the successful completion of a \$4,578,696 Improving Rule of Law Program in Balochistan, funded by the U.S. Embassy and executed by UNODC. The five-year program commenced in February 2017 and concluded in December 2022. A closing ceremony was held in Islamabad to celebrate the journey and achievements of this important intervention.

In his remarks Ambassador Blome said "Today we recognize the completion of a six-year effort between the United States, Balochistan, and UNODC. In 2017 the United States

was the sole funder for this project, providing \$4.5 million for the Improving Rule of Law in Balochistan project. Over the past 75 years, the United States has invested more than a billion dollars to strengthen Pakistan's civilian law enforcement capacity and keep Pakistani citizens safe. This has included training for more than 120,000 Pakistani police officers, incorporating international standards for crime response, investigations, and handling of evidence into their courses. We contributed to the construction of over 230 border posts along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. In Balochistan, we have provided over \$20 million to purchase bullet proof vests, helmets, and vehicles to enhance law enforcement operations and keep officers safe while fighting crime."

Ambassador Blome also highlighted U.S. flood assistance, adding "To date,



we have committed more than \$200 million in flood-response, disaster resilience, and food security assistance. Our support includes urgently needed food, safe water, sanitation and hygiene improvements, financial help, and shelter assistance. It also includes work

with the Balochistan Police, including replacing police stations destroyed in the floods and providing a new wall and drainage system to better protect the Balochistan Police Training College in Quetta. We are doing what friends and partners do in times of hardship -

support each other."

In his opening remarks, Mr. Jeremy Milsom, Country Representative, UNODC Country Office in Pakistan highlighted UNODC's continued support towards improving the rule of law sector in Balochistan. He thanked U.S. Embassy's International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) section for its support and appreciated the Government of Balochistan's collaboration towards strengthening and reforming criminal justice institutions in the province.

UNODC under INL funding equipped the Crime Branch of Balochistan Police with 10 Mobile Crime Scene Units, 2,250 First Responders and 250 Crime Scene Kits, as well as the renovation of Balochistan's Forensic Science Lab. Furthermore, four Forensic Collection Units to transport evidence were also established. This has been demon-

strated by Ms. Jouhaida Hanano, Advisor, Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Program, UNODC during her presentation on program achievements.

In his closing remarks, Mr. Abdul Khalique Sheikh, Inspector General of Police Balochistan expressed his profound gratitude to U.S. Embassy's International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) "Rule of Law" Program in Balochistan. He said, "These wide-reaching initiatives have made a lasting impact in the lives of common citizens.

The closing ceremony highlighted major successes and the impact of the INL funded program along with challenges and lessons learned.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, a handover presentation of the Forensic Evidence Collection Units was held between U.S. Ambassador Blome and the Balochistan Police.

Pakistan, Canada to initiate Student Exchange Program to promote bilateral cooperation: Minister

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Canadian High Commissioner H.E. Ms. Leslie Scanlon called on the Federal Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Rana Tanveer Hussain in his office today on 26th January, 2023.

Rana Tanveer welcomed the delegation and said that the two countries have a long friendly relation with people to people love for each other. Rana Tanveer discussed exchange of expertise and knowledge regarding Vocational and Technical Training. He said that the two countries can benefit from the experience of each other.

Minister said that in the field of Non-Formal Education, National Skills University (NSU), Islamabad is providing Technical Skills to



the Pakistani youth, which can be enhanced to be a Skill Learning Centre for current and aspiring Pakistani youth to work in Canada.

Minister said that there can be a Student Exchange Program, similar to the Global Undergraduate Exchange Program of the

United States Department of State, which may be conceived and launched at the governmental level

between the two countries. Under this proposed initiative, selected students from Pakistan and Canada will attend one semester in each other's Higher Education institutes to promote mutual understanding of each other's culture, traditions and educational systems.

Rana Tanveer welcomed exchange of teachers and students to further mutual cooperation especially for

Skilled Vocational Training. He said that there is significant potential in cooperation between the two countries.

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

Rana Tanveer praised the current governments efforts in modernising the education system of Pakistan. Federal Minister thanked the Ambassador and highlighted the cordial and friendly relations between the two countries. He stated that the two countries should enhance and fine tune their mutual relation

Pakistan, Kazakhstan agree in principle to sign Trade Transit Agreement



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kazakhstan, Yerzhan Kistafin met with Federal Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar here on Thursday and agreed in principle to sign Kazakhstan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement.

The two discussed potential opportunities for trade and cooperation between Kazakhstan and Pakistan, including the conclusion of several transit trade agreements.

The Minister remarked that the government is keen to further establish strong economic and trade ties between the two countries, and expressed confidence that the two sides would expedite the process of concluding the agreements.

Syed Naveed Qamar observed that Pakistan will host the next session of the Joint Working Group on Trade in the coming months to discuss issues in bilateral trade and undertake measures for enhancing economic integration.

The minister remarked that the MoU between KAZAKH INVEST&QAZ/Trade from Kazakhstan and TDAP & BOI from Pakistan signed on 23rd December, 2022 will further enhance Trade and Investment activities between the two sides. Kistafin expressed his appreciation to the Minister for his support and expressed optimism that the agreements would be finalized soon.

Besides this agreement, the Ambassador also showed keen interest in Pakistani sports goods, furniture, and tourism.

Subsequently, Syed Naveed Qamar, invited the Ambassador as "Guest of Honor" on the 18th Trade Fair of the OIC member states is scheduled to be held from 16-18th June, 2023 in Lahore with the theme of women entrepreneurship.

Supporting Returning Migrants, a Step towards Reintegration and Empowerment



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF) in line with the vision of honorable Prime Minister of Pakistan is developing the capacity of returnee migrants and providing them with trade-specific toolkits as an In-Kind support to help them start sustained self-employment.

In this connection, a ceremony was organized in Islamabad under OPF's Pak - German Facilitation & Reintegration Centre (PGFRC) where toolkits were handed over to 170 returning migrants in the fields of culinary arts, fashion designing, information technology, motorcycle mechanic, solar technician, electrician, plumber, carpenter, and mason received their toolkits alongwith Loader Rickshaws, Passenger Rickshaw and Motorcycles for self-employment. These returnee migrants had also completed a comprehensive business development training from PGFRC in their selected trades.

Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development, Mr. Sajid Hussain Turi was the chief guest at the ceremony. Dr. Amer Sheikh, Managing Director OPF, Dr. Sebastian Paust, Head of Development Cooperation, Embassy of Federal Republic of Germany, Mr. Tobias Becker, Country Director, GIZ, members of Senate and National Assembly Standing Committees on Overseas Pakistanis & HRD, Members, OPF Board of Governors, senior government officials, representatives of international organizations and civil society representatives also attended the ceremony.

Dr. Sebastian Paust from the German Embassy, Mr. Tobias Becker Country Director GIZ, and Dr. Mansoor Zaib Khan, GIZ Pakistan reiterated that PGFRC is playing a critical role in enhancing the capacity of returnee migrants and reducing unemployment rate in Pakistan.

The returnee Pakistani migrants, who received their Tool-Kits expressed their gratitude to the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis & HRD/OPF and the government of Pakistan for supporting them to make a new start and achieve sustainable self-employment in Pakistan.

Australian High Commissioner visited AEO's 43rd Global Education Expo

LAHORE: With over 5000 alumni and 300,000+ IELTS registrations, AEO Pakistan over the past two decades has established itself as Australian & Global Education Specialists, the most trusted IELTS Official Test Centre and the preferred official OET Test Centre in Pakistan. AEO Pakistan operates as the official Liaison office for over 40 leading Australian Universities/Institutions and facilitates the enrolment of international students at these Universities / Institutions. Since 2002, AEO Pakistan has been conducting Australian Education Expos providing an excellent opportunity to Pakistani students planning to Study in Australia. Over the years thousands of students have benefitted from AEO expos held twice annually, across all major cities of Pakistan.

This January once again AEO's 43rd Global Education Expo is being organized across 10 major cities of Pakistan i.e., Lahore, Islamabad, Karachi, Multan, Sialkot, Faisalabad, Abbottabad, Peshawar, Bahawalpur and Hyderabad. The Australian High Commissioner Mr. Neil Hawkins visited the AEO Education Expo Islamabad and appreciated AEO Pakistan's effort in promoting study in Australia over the past 25 years. Australia day cake cutting ceremony was also held.

The next expo of the series is scheduled to be held in Multan 27th January Hotel One, Karachi 28th January Marriott Hotel, Abbottabad 28th January Hotel One, Peshawar 29th January Serena Hotel, Hyderabad 29th January Indus Hotel and Bahawalpur 29th January Four Seasons Restaurant. Entry to the exhibition is FREE with a mask and Scholarships opportunities are also available.



Protest

HYDERABAD: Lawyers hold a protest rally against desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden, at Session Court.



Photo: Online

Palestine condemns Israeli incursion in Jenin Camp, demands International Community action

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the State of Palestine condemns in the strongest terms the bloody and barbaric incursion committed by the Occupation forces since this morning against our people in Jenin and its Camp, which

has so far left at least 9 Martyrs and a number of injuries among the Palestinian citizens, disregarding all human values and Principles as they besieged the Camp and closed it all its entrances and live bullets with the aim of Extrajudicial and Cold-blooded Killing, preventing Medical Staff and Ambulances from reaching the wounded, leaving them

bleeding while they are on the ground to death, and attacking Jenin Hospital and patients with gas bombs, in a chilling image that the Media trusted in the sight and hearing of the International Community. It expresses the arrogance of the Occupation and its insistence on escalating the situation in the arena of conflict, which threatens to blow it up

completely. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Palestine wonders: If the International Community and the American Administration do not move now, in light of these brutal scenes and crimes committed by the Occupying Forces, then when can it move to triumph over its Principles and Positions and preserve what remains of its Credibility?

Halal Research Council Event Calendar for 2023 Announced

LAHORE: The Halal Research Council (HRC) is pleased to announce the release of its 2023 event calendar. This calendar will provide a comprehensive overview of upcoming events related to Halal business and certification.

The calendar includes a variety of events, including conferences, seminars, and workshops. These events will cover topics such as Halal certification, Halal tourism, Halal food

management, Halal logistics and Halal food safety. HRC is committed to provide a platform for the exchange of ideas and knowledge related to Halal business and certification. Through these events, we hope to foster collaboration between industry professionals, academics, and other stakeholders in the Halal industry.

HRC is Organizing events to raise awareness of the Halal industry worldwide which is an

important step in promoting the growth and development of this important sector. The Halal



industry has grown significantly in recent years, with a global market share of over \$2 trillion.

The Halal industry is a major contributor to the global economy, providing employment and economic opportunities for millions of people around the world. It is also an important source of income for many countries, particularly those in the Middle East, North Africa, Japan, Brazil and Thailand etc. However, despite its importance, the Halal industry is often overlooked or misunderstood by many people as it is believed

that it only applies to food, but it is also well-established in the cosmetics, tourism, logistics, and banking industries. That is why it is important to organize events to raise awareness of the Halal industry and its potential benefits. These events can help to educate people about the importance of this sector and the potential economic benefits it can bring together. Such events can also help to dispel any misconceptions or nega-

tive stereotypes associated with the Halal industry. By providing a platform for discussion and debate, these events can help to foster a better understanding of the Halal industry and its potential for growth and development.

These events can also help to promote the growth of the sector by encouraging investment and innovation. By bringing experts from different fields, such events can provide a platform for the exchange of ideas and the devel-

opment of new products and services. This can help to create new opportunities for businesses and entrepreneurs in the Halal industry, which can in turn lead to increased economic prosperity.

The HRC is also proud to announce that it will be hosting the various events throughout the year including 8th International Conference on Halal Food Industry. We invite you to join us in our mission to promote and grow of the Halal industry.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
40,846.53	39,784.90
Day's High	Day's Low:
40,994.69	39,784.90
Index Value	Change
12,827,736,603	+ 1061.63
Percentage	Time
+ 2.67%	Jan 26, 2023 5:00 pm
Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,757.80	+ 12.93
Percentage	Time
+ 0.14%	26 Jan, 4:02 pm GMT
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
33,666.46	-77.38
Percentage	Time
-0.23%	26 Jan, 11:07 am GMT-5
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
27,362.75	-32.26
Percentage	Time
-0.12%	26 Jan, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	176	178
Bahrain Dinar	615.68	620.18
Canadian Dollar	186	188.00
China Yuan	34.12	34.37
Danish Krone	33.83	34.18
Euro	274	276.7
Hong Kong Dollar	29.52	29.87
Indian Rupee	2.81	2.89
Japanese Yen	2.5	2.54
Kuwaiti Dinar	756.69	761.69
Malaysian Ringgit	52.59	53.04
New Zealand \$	148.33	149.53
Norwegians Krone	22.43	22.73
Omani Riyal	600.37	604.87
Qatari Riyal	63.5	64
Saudi Riyal	66.7	68.3
Singapore Dollar	178	179.3
Swedish Korona	21.78	22.08
Swiss Franc	250.23	251.98
Thai Bhat	6.98	7.08
U.A.E Dirham	68.7	69.3
UK Pound Sterling	311	314
US Dollar	253.5	255

Kyrgyzstan to open trade house in Karachi in March

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI, has informed that Kyrgyzstan will open a trade house in Karachi in March 2023. It is an excellent initiative and will solidify people-to-people and business-to-business linkages between the two countries, he added. Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh also emphasized the need to capitalize on TIR Convention to enhance bilateral trade with Kyrgyzstan through the land route – which not only saves the time but is also a major cost-saving factor. He called upon the central banks of both the sides to remove the bottlenecks in transaction processing through effectively operationalizing the banking channels; so that, the true potential of bilateral trade can be unleashed. Mr. Suleman Chawla, SVP FPCCI, apprised the business community that Kyrgyzstan is organizing Pakistan Business Forum in Bishkek in March 2023; which



will provide an excellent opportunity for B2B networking & matchmaking. He extended his full support from the platform of FPCCI to Ambassador Totuiaev Ulanbek Asankulovich for success of the event.

H.E. Totuiaev Ulanbek Asankulovich, Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan in Pakistan, maintained that his embassy is tirelessly working to strengthen Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan economic cooperation and Pakistani textiles, pharmaceuticals, sports goods, surgical equipment and manufacturing materials among other products can find a good market in his country.

Ambassador Totuiaev Ulanbek Asankulovich added that Kyrgyzstan Trade House has already been opened in Lahore in December 2022 and more such initiatives are in the pipeline. He also mentioned that Pakistan can provide the shortest possible passage to the Central Asian Republics to the sea.

Circle and L'oreal Fund for Women celebrates The Digital Literacy Program

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: In collaboration with the women-led not-for-profit tech startup CIRCLE, L'Oréal Fund for Women celebrates the Digital Literacy Program graduating batch in Islamabad. Launched in March 2022, over 5,000 women across 80 cities have been trained in this program, meeting the target set out at the program's inception. The head of Prime Minister of Pakistan's Strategic Reforms Mr. Salman Sufi was the Chief Guest at the ceremony.

With its collaborative Digital Literacy Program, the beauty company hopes to positively impact and improve the statistics of women participating in society as active citizens. By providing a platform to empower and support women in their quest to become financially independent and to become a driving force in the economy, L'ORÉAL FUND FOR WOMEN and CIRCLE are resolute in reducing the gender disparity that exists today.

Held in Islamabad, the event focused on celebrating the exemplary women who are taking charge of their future



by embracing new skills under the Digital Literacy Program, enabling them to navigate the digital space, as well as to learn integral skills that will enable them to participate in the online economy.

The head of Prime Minister of Pakistan's Strategic Reforms Mr. Salman Sufi said, "Women empowerment is an area of critical importance. At the office of the Prime Minister, we consistently strive to introduce reforms that build great empowerment of women with strong avenues for financial stability."

Ambassador of France H.E. Mr. Nicolas Galey said, "This is an important event and in particular I thank L'Oréal for this very ambitious and inclu-

sive social and environmental responsibility policy. I do not forget, of course, the emergency aid provided by L'Oréal to UNHCR for the flood affectees. It is our strong view that no society can progress if women are not fully involved. Gender equality is obviously a question of human rights and basic justice, but also a key factor for development. France is strongly committed to the cause, and I believe that the role of the private sector is as crucial as that of government. I'm very happy and proud that L'Oréal takes initiatives like this program, which is a great contribution to women's empowerment."

Addressing the event and the graduates, L'Oréal Paki-

stan's Managing Director, Qawi Naseer stated, "I am so deeply inspired by the success of the Digital Literacy Program and the impact it has had on the lives of all the women that took a part in it. We aimed to educate 5000 women in Pakistan by the end of 2022—a goal which has now been realized."

CIRCLE founder and CEO Sadaf Abid said, "In today's world, access to internet and digital literacy is a fundamental human right. I feel proud to share that our Digital Literacy Program graduates have learned digital tools, setup businesses and become active contributors to Pakistan's economic growth."

The Digital Literacy Program was initially designed and piloted under the pandemic with the support of UN Women in 2020 and trained 500 low-income women with home-based businesses. The partnership between CIRCLE and L'Oréal Fund for Women covered multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations, particularly SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Inclusive Economic Growth), and SDG 17 (Partnerships).

MCB Bank partners with Telenor Pakistan



Bureau Report

LAHORE: MCB Bank Limited, one of Pakistan's leading banks, has entered into a strategic partnership with Telenor Pakistan, leading telecommunication services provider, to facilitate its digital banking customers with greater access to Telenor Pakistan's prepaid recharge services, special bundles and post-paid services.

Under the partnership, MCB Liveusers will be able to pay for new Telenor packages, special bundles, post-paid services and a host of other services directly from within the MCB Live app, at a single click of a button. The integration provides MCB Live users greater flexibility and convenience in acquiring Telenor Pakistan's services on the go from where

ever they may be.

The agreement was signed by Mr. Shahzad Ishaq – Group Head Digital Banking, MCB Bank and Mr. Umair Mohsin – Chief Marketing Officer, Telenor Pakistan at MCB House, Lahore in the presence of Mr. Jaffar Abbas Shirazi – Division Head Digital Channels & Branchless Banking MCB Bank, Ms. Ambreen Latif Bawany – Head Marketing MCB Bank and other representatives from MCB Bank and Telenor Pakistan.

Speaking at the occasion, Mr. Shahzad Ishaq, Group Head Digital Banking, MCB Bank lauded the shared objective of creating customer convenience and enhancing customer experience through offering Telenor packages and bundles to MCB Bank customers.

Sales and Marketing are two integral parts in Business: Sobia Aqeel

Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: Sales and Marketing are two integral parts and are also extremely important in today's business growth and enhancing profitability. Sales are the bottom line while without marketing and you cannot sell a product, said Mrs. Sobia Aqeel, Chairperson FWCCI Standing Committee on Trade and Export Development. She was addressing to the participants of a training program on 'Sales & Marketing for Women-Owned SMEs' organized by Faisalabad Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FWCCI) in collaboration with Small and Medium Enterprise Development Authority (SMEDA) at FCCI Board Room, Faisalabad.

Introducing FWCCI she said that it represents trade, industry and businesses of women entrepreneurs of Faisalabad and it is one of the top women Chambers in Pakistan. There are over 200 members from different business sectors of the city including home textile, fashion garments Packaging Industry, Beauty Parlors, Hosiery, Rice, Furniture, and information technology/Digital marketing.



She said that FWCCI President Mrs. Rubina Amjad has projected women entrepreneurship at every forum and to the policy makers that hundreds of thousands females are graduating in various disciplines every year from our Universities.

She said that our objective is to facilitate those women who like to go for business career. For this purpose, FWCCI has set up Women Business Incubation Centre with the main objective to provide 'hands on support' with state of the art infrastructure and female oriented environments, to promote women empowerment particularly for young female graduates to start their own businesses.

Qazi Saddam Naseer, from SMEDA addressed the participants while Ms. Uzma Kamal, Resource Person briefed the participants on how Sales & Marketing both can improve the business profitability.

Economic Crisis

HYDERABAD: President Jamshoro Chamber of Commerce and Industry Yasir Malik addressing a press conference along with presidents and representatives of All Sindh Chambers on Economic Crisis, at JCCI Jamshoro Hall.



Photo: Online

The Bank of Punjab celebrates opening of its 780th branch



News Desk

LAHORE: The Bank of Punjab celebrated opening of its 780th branch in Lahore on 25th January 2023, making a total of 116 branches opened during 2022 only. Mr. Zafar Masud (President & CEO – BOP) along with key officials of the bank attended this occasion. Speaking at the event, Mr. Zafar Masud (President & CEO – BOP) appreciated the efforts of the team in achieving the milestone of highest ever branch opening in a single year by the Bank of Punjab.

He added that by opening 116 branches in 2022, Bank has taken a lead in the industry which by any standards is a remarkable achievement. In his address to the team, he shared his vision of expanding the Bank of Punjab's total branch network to 1000 branches by the year 2025 which will give the bank adequate coverage throughout the country. He also emphasized on the growing need of Islamic banking and advised the team to further enhance their focus on Islamic branches expansion.

Jazz partners with Kistpay to provide affordable smartphones

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Jazz, Pakistan's leading digital operator and a part of VEON Group, has signed an agreement with Kistpay, a Shariah-compliant financing platform, to bring smartphones to its consumers with easy installment plans.

This collaboration will offer easy installment-based and Shariah-compliant financing instruments to encourage more middle and low-income people to own a smartphone. Starting as low as PKR 2243 per month, customers can buy smartphones using either the three-month plan or the 6-month plan by visiting the nearest Jazz experience center.

Speaking at the signing ceremony,

Asif Aziz, Jazz's Chief Commercial Officer, said, "This partnership is an extremely important step towards achieving our '4G for All' vision. Owning a smartphone is a key enabler of the digital economy, and this joint initiative will improve the buying ability of unserved and underserved communities by providing installment-based financing options to purchase smartphones."

Asif Jafri, CEO at Kistpay, said, "We are thrilled to partner with Jazz again to provide ease of access and ownership of smartphones to all our countrymen including the youth and women. We are confident that this alliance will boost digital economic growth and empower our rural communities."



Julian Gorman, Head of Asia Pacific, GSMA, also witnessed the signing ceremony virtually and

lauded the efforts of both organizations to help address the device affordability barrier in Pakistan.

While the affordability of smartphones remains a key barrier to mobile ownership and mobile internet adoption, particularly for women and rural populations, Jazz has taken various initiatives to expand the benefits of mobile broadband, especially among low-income segments in Pakistan. Last year the rollout of Jazz Digit 4G smart feature phones was also recognized by the organization representing mobile network operators, GSMA.

This partnership also reflects the company's adherence to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 5 – Gender Equality; SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure; and SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities.

20-K Cup 2023: Ludhiana Gymkhana beat Model Town Club to qualify for final

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Ludhiana Gymkhana Cricket Club qualified for the 20-K Cup 2023 T20 Cricket Tournament after trouncing Model Town Club by 38 runs in the first semifinal played here at the Model Town Greens ground on Thursday.

Ludhiana Gymkhana started the match well and succeeded in piling up a total of 183-9 in the allotted 20 overs. Muhammad Waqas emerged as top scorer with 49 runs off 42 balls while Kashif Siddique played a swashbuckling knock of 43 runs of just 16 balls and Asim Ali Nasir played 32 balls to gather 41 runs.

From Model Town Club, Umaid Asif clinched 4 wickets for 36 while Afzaq



Khan and Mohsin Irshad bagged 2 wickets apiece.

Model Town Club couldn't bat well against the impressive bowling by Ludhiana Gymkhana bowlers and were all out for 145 runs in 18.1 overs. Only Haider and Saleem batted well and scored 42 and 43 runs respectively. Tanveer Aslam and Intasar Ali bowled well and grabbed 2 wickets each while Kashif Siddique got one wicket.

For his all-round performance, Kashif Siddique emerged as player of the match. Model Town Greens will take on Cricket Center Cricket Club in the second semifinal of the prestigious tournament here tomorrow, Friday at the Model Town Greens ground at 11:00 am.

BWF's junior training camp concludes at Nishtar Park Gymnasium

News Desk

LAHORE: Badminton World Federation (BWF) Activity Support Programme Junior Training and Coaching Camp (Boys & Girls) concluded at Nishtar Park Sports Complex Gymnasium Hall here on Thursday.

Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi was the chief guest at the grand closing ceremony of BWF Activity Support Programme Junior Training and Coaching Camp organized by Punjab Badminton Association with the collaboration of Sports Board Punjab.

Director Sports Chand Perveen, Deputy Director Tariq Wattoo, Secretary Punjab Badminton Association Tayyab Sohail, Assistant Directors Shaista Qaiser and Zareena Waqar, Administrator NPSG Gymnasium Hall Mustafa Shah, Chief Sports Consultant Hafeez Bhatti, senior badminton coach



Sajid Hussain and other officials were also present on this occasion.

As many as 25 boys and girls from across the province participated in BWF Activity Support Programme Junior Training and Coaching Camp held from January 14 to 26, 2023.

Secretary Punjab Badminton Association Tayyab Sohail thanked Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi repeatedly for providing best facilities during the BWF Activity Support Programme Junior

Training and Coaching Camp.

Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi was warmly received upon reaching the venue. He also witnessed thrilling matches and later distributed certificates and medals among the prominent performers of the event. The participating players and officials also had group photographs with Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi on this occasion.

Talking on this occasion,

Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi said that Sports Board Punjab is providing all possible facilities for the holding of different sports events and coaching camps in all parts of the province. "We will organize more sports events to trace fresh sports talent of different games. Sports Board Punjab is making effective efforts for the development of badminton among youth of the province," he said.

Following are the results:
U-17 and above Girls: Winner: Areeba Sajid Butt, runner up Maryam Zaheer, bronze Noor un Nisa and Roshan-e-Ahsan
U-13 Girls: Winner: Maryam Zaheer, Runners up Hamail Aftab, bronze Bisma Raza and Dua Fatima
U-17 Boys: Winner: Hussain Shahzad, runner up Faisal Afzaal, bronze M Ahmed and Shahzaib Gillani
U-13 Boys: Winner: Zain ul Abedeem, runner up Saleh Zaheer.

PTCL Group to stage PUBG MOBILE tournament in Pakistan

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's largest telecommunications group - PTCL & Ufone 4G - is bringing aboard professional and aspiring gamers from across Pakistan to compete in a thrilling PUBG MOBILE tournament on its gaming platform, 'GameKey'. PTCL Group launched GameKey - a one-window access platform to a curated selection of the most popular online games to provide a seamless and rewarding playing experience to all gamers.

Pakistan has recently witnessed a rising gaming culture with a marked upsurge in the number of professional gamers and gaming squads that compete in national and international tournaments, thereby successfully putting Pakistan on the global gaming landscape.

PTCL's GameKey aims to strengthen the country's gaming landscape by nurturing new talent and promoting professional gamers. 'GameKey Arena' is driven by the same motivation to help explore new gaming talent while providing a state-of-the-art platform for established players to showcase their talent and mastery of the sport.

Registrations for GameKey Arena are open till 30th January for professional and aspiring PUBG MOBILE players from across the country, regardless of their data network. The nationwide qualifiers will take place online from 1st to 8th February, while the Grand Finale is set to happen on 12th February in Lahore.

Newcastle's Joelinton fined £29,000 on drink-driving charge

News Desk

LONDON: Newcastle midfielder Joelinton has been fined £29,000 (\$36,000) and banned from driving for a year after admitting to a charge of drink driving.

The Brazilian failed a breath test in the early hours of January 12 which showed he had 43 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of breath, above the legal limit of 35 milligrams.

Joelinton said he had drunk two glasses of wine earlier in the evening.

District Judge Paul Currier calculated the fine based on documents showing his weekly wage was £43,000.

Nick Faldo Series Junior Golf Trials to start at Rumanza Golf Course

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The three days trials to select a boys team, for participation in the Nick Faldo Golf Championship will begin today, 27th January at the first designer golf course of Pakistan, Rumanza Golf Course, Multan. Simultaneously trials will be held for selection of two lady players to represent the country in the Nick Faldo Golf Championship. For boys there are three age categories, age category under 21 years, age category under 18 years, and age category under 16 years. For girls the age categories are two, under 21 years and under 16 years.

This will be a test of golf-



ing skills of the young ones of the country who aspire for international honors and an eminent career in golf. Noticeable is the presence of national level players like Omer Khalid, Syed Yashal Shah, Saad Habib Malik, Damil Ataulah and Meka-

yl Majid. They represent the capable category and already have achievements to their credit. A few others like Saim Tahir, Hamza Abbasi, Basil Rehman, Taimur Khan Umar Shahzad and Muhammed Abdullah Khan seek to show their talent and

gain entry to the arena of international golf.

Amongst the competing girls, we have names like Parkha Ijaz, Humna Amjad, Bushra Fatima, Areeba and Amina Tiwana. The determination in their intentions is noteworthy and race for selection will be gritty and resolute.

Rumanza Golf Course has a charm of its own and whether the aspirants get selected or not, participation will provide a useful experience.

First tee off takes place at 930 am on Friday and the playing combination will be Omer Khalid, Muhammed Tahir and M. Hamza from tee number one. Others will follow.

Britain opposed to Russia, Belarus athletes being at Paris Olympics

News Desk

LONDON: Moves to reintegrate Russian athletes for next year's Paris Olympics were strongly criticised by the British government on Thursday.

Culture Secretary Michelle Donelan described plans by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to provide a pathway for Russian and Belarusian athletes to compete under a neutral flag as "a world away from the reality of war being felt by the Ukrainian people."

Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the IOC advised international sports federations last February to exclude athletes from their competitions.

However, on Wednesday, the IOC said in a press release that "no athlete should be prevented from competing just because of their passport."

The British government has offered military and humanitarian support to



Ukraine since the invasion began.

Donelan said they would now work with "like-minded countries" to oppose the reintegration of Russian athletes.

"I want to be clear that this position from the IOC is a world away from the reality of war being felt by the Ukrainian people—and IOC president (Thomas) Bach's own words less than a year

ago where he strongly condemned Russia for breaking the Olympic Truce and urged it to give peace a chance," Donelan said.

"We will strongly condemn any action taken that allows President Putin to legitimise his illegal war in Ukraine—a position the IOC previously shared."

"We, and many other countries, have been unequivocal on this throughout, and we will now work urgently across like-minded countries to ensure that solidarity continues on this issue."

The mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, said on Thursday that she was in favour of Russian athletes competing at the 2024 Olympics as neutrals.

During a call on Tuesday, Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky said he had stressed to his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron that Russian athletes "should have no place" at the Paris Games.

Sania Mirza celebrates with son after advancing to Australian Open final

Sports Desk

MELBOURNE: Sania Mirza, a former World No1 in the doubles discipline and one of the most successful female tennis players from India, has been making a comeback to professional tennis after taking a break. Along with her doubles partner Rohan Bopanna, they have been in great form throughout the tournament and have been able to reach the final of the mixed doubles event at the Australian Open.

Her son Izhaan's joy knew no bounds after her mother advanced to the final of the



Grand Slam to be played on Saturday, Jan 28 at the iconic Rod Laver Arena. Mirza and her doubles partner Bopanna defeated Neal Skupski and Desirae Krawczyk 7-6 (7-5),

6-7 (5-7), 10-6 in the semis and made their way through to the final.

A post shared by Australian Open (@australianopen) After the 36-year-old

Sania won the match, her son was filled with joy as he came running to her mother, who lifted him in her arms. It was Bopanna who took Izhaan down from the stands, after which the latter ran to his mother.

Later, Sania bid adieu to the crowd at the Margaret Court Arena and went inside the dressing room with her son. Back in 2018, Sania became a mother to her first child with Pakistan all-rounder Shoaib Malik. Sania also keeps sharing adorable pictures with her son on social media platforms.

Army to face Navy in Inter-Departmental Basketball opener

Sports Reporter



ISLAMABAD: Defending champion Pakistan Army will compete against Pakistan Navy in the opening match of the Inter-Departmental National Basketball Championship starting tomorrow (Friday), here at Liaquat Gymnasium, Pakistan Sports Complex.

Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF) Associate Secretary Ouj-e-Zahoor informed APP that seven teams, including defending champion Pakistan Army, Pakistan Ordnance Factories (POF), Pakistan Railways, Pakistan Navy, Pakistan Air Force, Wapda, and Police teams would participate in the tournament.

He said that the semifinals would be played on January 30 and the finals on January 31.

As per the schedule, three matches would be played on the opening day. POF will face Railways in the second match, and Wapda will take Police in the third game.

Chairman PCB congratulated Babar Azam for winning ICC award

Sports Reporter

LAHORE: Chairman PCB Management Committee Najam Sethi congratulated Babar Azam for winning the ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy.

Najam Sethi here on Thursday also congratulated Babar Azam for being selected as the ICC ODI Cricketer of the Year and being a part of the ICC Test and ODI Team of the Year.

"Babar Azam made Pakistan proud by winning the most important ICC awards. Babar Azam's performance and achievements are the reward of his hard work, dedication and determination and are a beacon for all young cricketers of Pakistan", said Najam Sethi.

He said "On behalf of PCB, I also congratulate Haris Rauf, Mohammad Rizwan and Nida Dar for being included in the Men's and Women's T20 Team of the Year."

"I am sure that these ICC awards will motivate the entire Pakistan cricket team to perform well this year".

Wahab Riaz named Sports Minister in Punjab's caretaker government



A Sports

LAHORE: Pakistan's veteran pacer Wahab Riaz has been named Sports Minister in the recently-announced caretaker government of Punjab.

Wahab, who is currently representing Khulna Tigers in the ongoing edition of the BPL, will take the charge as the sports minister of the largest province in due course.

The left-arm pacer has represented Pakistan in 156 international matches across formats and picked up 237 wickets. Notably, the 37-year-old pacer was part of the ICC Champions Trophy 2017 winning squad.

Meanwhile, following the appointment of Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi for the caretaker setup in Punjab, the names of the cabinet were finalized, comprising 11 members.

The Caretaker Cabinet of Punjab will take oath tonight at 9 pm. Governor Punjab Balighur Rehman will administer oath from the provincial cabinet.