



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم اپنی وفات تک برابر رمضان کے آخری عشرے میں اعتکاف کرتے رہے اور آپ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کے بعد آپ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کی ازواج مطہرات اعتکاف کرتی رہیں۔ (گنج ہدای، حدیث نمبر 2026)

Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited

RAWALPINDI

Russia vows to 'cooperate fully' with Pakistan on energy

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Monday that his country would "cooperate fully" to meet the energy needs of Pakistan. Speaking at a joint press conference with his Pakistani counterpart, the Russian FM commended Pakistan for maintaining a neutral position in the Russian-Ukraine war and said that the two countries would continue to cooperate in various fields.



UAE president's Islamabad visit postponed owing to bad weather

UAE President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan's visit to the federal capital was postponed after harsh weather conditions and rain in Bahawalpur district on Monday. The UAE president was earlier scheduled to land at the Noor Khan airbase on a day's visit. The security didn't allow the UAE president's plane to take off at 7:30am because of bad weather. (Report on Page 8)

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Treatment

PESHAWAR: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif inquires after the injured of Peshawar Police Lines terrorist attack at Lady Reading Hospital on Monday.



Photo: PID

At least 59 martyred, 157 injured in mosque suicide attack in Peshawar

Spokesman Report

PESHAWAR : At least 59 people were martyred and more than 150 others suffered injuries as a blast ripped through the Police Lines mosque in Peshawar.

Security officials said the explosion took place around 1:40pm as Zuhr prayers were being offered as a result of which the roof of the mosque caved in. The blast said to be perpetrated by a suicide bomber took place at the mosque where a large number of people had gathered for prayer, police official Sikandar Khan said. "A portion of the building had collapsed and several people are believed to be under it," Mr Khan added.

Police and rescuers shifted the injured to the Lady Reading Hospital and other health facilities. The authorities, who are still assessing the nature of the blast, immediately cordoned off the area.

Videos and pictures shared by social media users show horrific scenes as the injured drenched in blood were shifted to medical centres for first aid.

Medical emergency

The KP health department announced a "medical emergency" in Peshawar in the wake of the blast.



"All the doctors and support staff in the government health facilities in Peshawar are directed to remain on red alert to cope with the emergencies, till further orders," says a notification issued in this regard.

Condemnations

FM Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, condemning the incident, said the

terrorists, their backers and facilitators would be given exemplary punishment. Terror incidents before general and by-elections were not without motive, he added.

Ahsan Iqbal

Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal said the suicide attack was the "worst form" of terrorism. "The aim of such brutal and

cowardly attacks is to weaken the nation's resolve against terrorism, but this resolve will be strengthened by every drop of blood and martyrdom," said the minister.

Asif Ali Zardari

Former president Asif Ali Zardari also condemned the attack and expressed concern over rising terrorism threat in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said the government should end the nurseries of terrorism by following the national action plan.

Former KP CM Mahmood Khan

Former provincial chief minister Mahmood Khan strongly condemned the incident, saying the blast was very "heartbreaking".

"The loss of lives is extremely upsetting," said Mr Khan while praying for the martyrs and for the speedy recovery of the injured.

Shireen Mazari

Meanwhile, former human rights minister Shireen Mazari termed the bomber's "access to a central area of the provincial capital" as another "intel failure".

"Our police are frontline defenders against terrorists, especially in urban areas and need better resources, including equipment," she added.

Resolve of nation against terrorism unwavering in face of attacks: PM says

Adam Khan Wazir

PESHAWAR : Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Monday said the cowardly terror attacks could not weaken resolve of the nation against terrorism and the miscreants and their facilitators involved in attacks on innocent citizens would be punished for their heinous crimes.

He was speaking during his visit to Peshawar after the deadly blast at the mosque of Malik Saad Shaheed Police Lines during Zuhr prayers.

Chief of Army Staff Syed Asim Munir received the prime minister on his arrival.

The PM was accompanied by Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah Khan and Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb.

On this occasion, the

Corps Commander Peshawar briefed the prime minister about the motives behind the terror attacks.

Inspector General Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muazzam Jah Ansari gave the initial investigative report about the suicide attack on the mosque.

The PM was also shown CCTV footage of the suicide attack on the Police Lines mosque.

The participants of the meeting offered feteiha for the martyred, sympathized with the bereaved families and prayed for the early recovery of the injured.

On this occasion, the prime minister said terrorists were attacking the security institutions which were defending Pakistan, adding the terrorists were making a nefarious attempt to create an atmosphere of fear and terror.

Iran and Palestine condemn Peshawar mosque bombing as 'barbaric'

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Embassy of Iran strongly condemns the heinous terrorist attack in a mosque in Peshawar's police lines area. It also extends condolences to the government & people of Pakistan. May God bless the soul of the martyrs. Also prayer for the recovery of the injured.

State of Palestine-The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates: condemns the terrorist attack that targeted a mosque in the Pakistani city of Peshawar

The Ministry of Foreign

Affairs and Expatriates condemns in the strongest terms the heinous terrorist bombing that took place in the mosque in the city of Peshawar, which resulted in dozens of martyrs and dozens of wounded. Terrorism and victory over it.

The Ministry extends its deepest and sincere condolences and sympathy to the friendly Pakistan, its president, government and people, and to the families of the victims, and wishes a speedy recovery for the injured.

PM to chair emergency meeting on law & order in Peshawar: Marriyum

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Monday said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif summoned an emergency meeting to discuss the law and order situation in the wake of the massive blast at the Malik Saad Shaheed Police

Lines' mosques claiming the lives of at least 32 worshippers and injuring over 150 others.

The prime minister rushed to Peshawar to personally take stock of the situation. A preliminary investigation report on the terror incident would be presented to the prime minister in the meeting, the minister said in a tweet.

Dar chairs meeting on telecom sector

Commerce Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar here on Monday chaired a meeting during which discussions were held on Telecom sector in general and PTCL in particular.

According to press statement issued by the finance minister, Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication, Syed Amin Ul Haque, Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, secretaries finance, privatization and IT & Telecom participated in the meeting.

On the occasion, the finance minister underscored the significance of this sector and emphasized that the nominee directors of the government on the Board of PTCL must make active contribution for the best possible performance of the PTCL.

Names of martyred of blast

Spokesman Report

PESHAWAR: The Lady Reading Hospital (LRH) spokesman Monday said the dead brought to the hospital included Inspector Doran Shah, Zohaib Nawaz resident of Dir Lower, Maqsood Ahmed, Rashida Bibi, Rafiq of Lakki Marwat, Constable Naseem Shah, Liaqat of Charsadda, Driver Amjad, Shehryar, Liaqat of Lakki Marwat, Mohammad Ali of Mian Gujjar, Sahibzada, Zahir Shah, Tilawat Shah, Waseem Shah, Gul Ashraf, Hayatullah Khattak, Zubair, Abdul Hameed, Usman, Khalid Khan of Charsadda, Rafiq Khan, Inspector Irfan Khan, FC personnel Shahab of Charsadda, Abdul Wadud, FC personnel Ahmad Khan, Liaquatullah Shah of Lakki Marwat, Atif Mujeeb, Rizwanullah of Charcadda and Hazrat Umer.

The identity of two bodies was not yet ascertained, the spokesman added.

Ulema condemn blast in Peshawar's Police Line mosque

Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: Ulema of all schools of thought on Monday condemned the suicide blast in Peshawar's Police Lines mosque in the strongest terms and said the killers of innocent people had nothing to do with Islam.

Pakistan Ulema Council Chairman and Prime Minister's Special Representative for Interfaith Harmony and Middle East Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, and other religious leadership, in a joint statement, said Ulema, Mashaykh and religious scholars of the Islamic world had declared such attack as Haram (forbidden).

They paid glowing tributes to the martyrs and injured police personnel and prayed for the departed souls and speedy recovery of the injured.

31 bodies of children recovered from Tanda Dam, search for 9 underway

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Some 31 bodies of seminary students, who drowned in the Tanda Dam due to a boat capsized on Sunday, have been recovered so far with 20 more fished out on Monday while the search for the rest nine was still underway.

According to Kohat District Police, 46 children were riding on the boat during a field trip when it overturned in the middle of the dam apparently due to overload. Seven of them were rescued and one of them later died due to injuries at a hospital, while the dead bodies of 10 others were also recovered.

The police said the children, who were 5 to 15 years of age, were not having any safety gadgets or lifesaving jackets on the boat.

Sheikh Rashid summoned by Aabpara Police Station in Zardari accusation case

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Aabpara Police Station Islamabad has summoned Awami Muslim League (AML) chief and former interior minister Sheikh Rasheed at 5 pm. As per details, the AML chief claimed that Asif Ali Zardari has hired a "group of terrorists" to target PTI Chairman and former premier Imran Khan.

A plea has been filed in Aabpara Police Station Islamabad against former interior minister Sheikh Rasheed.

The plea stated that Sheikh Rasheed's accusations are part of a conspiracy and he wants to create threats for Asif Zardari and his family. Furthermore, these baseless accusations were issued to create a rift between PTI and PPP and all the people involved in this should be arrested, the plea stated.

Bilawal, Lavrov agree to deepen Pakistan-Russia cooperation in various realms



News Desk

MOSCOW: Pakistan and the Russian Federation on Monday agreed to pursue initiatives to deepen bilateral cooperation in various realms including education, economy, energy and connectivity.

Bilawal, Lavrov agree to deepen Pakistan-Russia cooperation in various realms This was agreed by the

two sides as Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari held constructive talks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

According to a statement issued by the Foreign Ministry in Islamabad, regional issues including the situation in Afghanistan and cooperation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) were also discussed.

Rescue

PESHAWAR: Rescue officials shifting blast victim to the hospital



Photo: APP

Human, natural resources equally essential for socio-economic prosperity: President

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday said that both human as well natural resources were essential for the socio-economically prosperity of a country.

The president, addressing a ceremony, "GB Dream Road Show", organized by Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) government, said that intellect, consistency in policies, avoiding confusion, and actively cooperating with each other would enable the country to tread the path of development.

The ceremony was attended by Governor of Gilgit-Baltistan Syed Mehdi Shah, GB Chief Minister Khalid Khurshid Khan, the GB ministers and others.

The president said that



he always represented the Gilgit-Baltistan region as its ambassador for promoting its tourist attractions.

Highlighting the importance of IT skills for GB youth, the president said that people with IT skills could earn their livelihood by offering their services in other countries while living in Pakistan through online platforms.

He said that IT sector could

also provide employment opportunities for women allowing them to work from their homes. 2.4 million people from different academic backgrounds had benefited from the Prime Minister's Digital Skills program, Digiskills, adding that such programs could be replicated to provide critical and marketable digital skills to the youth and women of the country.

He said that a GB student who got his training from Digiskills program was earning almost \$100,000.

President Alvi said that there were enormous opportunities for GB in the field of agriculture as well by using vertical farming and drip farming.

He said that GB could not only fulfill its own food requirements but it had the

potential to export to the world like Netherlands which was 19 times smaller than Pakistan but the second-largest food producer in the world.

President Alvi said that there was an abundance of ideas but it was high time now to translate these ideas into practical steps and execute them.

He said that indeed development was not possible without community participation and GB's people should be fully and actively engaged in promoting development in the area.

Chief Minister of Gilgit-Baltistan Khalid Khurshid Khan said that the GB had been neglected in the past in terms of resource allocation and the funds which used to be given were mostly consumed in salary-related expenses.

Pakistan urges diplomatic resolution of Ukraine

Spokesman Report

MOSCOW: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Monday called for the resolution of the Ukraine conflict through diplomatic means saying that developing countries like Pakistan were facing consequences in terms of its economic impact.

"We have a firm belief that all conflicts can be resolved peacefully and there are no obstacles which diplomacy cannot surmount. Ukraine conflict is no exception. Developing countries like Pakistan are facing negative consequences of the conflict in terms of economic impact," the foreign minister said addressing a joint press conference with Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov during his visit to Moscow.

He expressed that hope that the "strong tradition of diplomacy of Russia would help achieve the peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Pakistan urges diplomatic resolution of Ukraine conflict as developing



world faces negative economic impact

The foreign minister said that Pakistan considered Russia an important player in West, South and Central Asia and that the country would keep up high-level contact with the Russian Federation.

Apprising the media of their meeting, Foreign Minister Bilawal said that their "friendly" and "detailed" discussion encompassed all aspects

of bilateral relations and regional matters.

Pakistan urges diplomatic resolution of Ukraine conflict as developing world faces negative economic impact

He said during their meeting, they also discussed bilateral cooperation at multilateral fora including the United Nations and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

Pakistan urges diplomatic resolution of Ukraine conflict as developing world faces negative economic impact

Foreign Minister Bilawal told the media that Pakistan and Russia had "good cooperation" on Afghanistan and wanted to achieve common goals of peace and stability in the war-torn country.

To a question on Pak-Russia energy cooperation, the foreign minister said the incumbent government was committed to coping with the country's energy needs.

He said Pakistan valued its cooperation with Russia, the United States, and Europe and that the country consistently called for dialogue and peaceful resolution of disputes.

In his remarks, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Russia was satisfied over its military cooperation with Pakistan and that both countries were holding regular military contacts including joint exercises and military training.

Babar Awan asks LEAs to ensure security

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Senior Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Babar Awan condemned the terrorist attack in the Peshawar mosque and asked the law-enforcement institutions to ensure security in the country.

Speaking to media, Mr Awan said the nation had rendered sacrifices due to terrorism and now the institutions should improve the security environment of the country.

The PTI stalwart added that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chief Imran Khan

could not be detained as there were not enough reasons, and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo was in London due to fear of his arrest.

Mr Awan said the incumbent coalition government was busy looting the country's resources because they had no intention to improve the economy.

As for the arrest of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Fawad Chaudhry, he said Mr Chaudhry was treated inhumanly and all legal paths were followed so that the court grant him bail.

PDM coalition members differ over contesting by elections

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Differences have surfaced in ruling coalition over contesting by elections, citing sources.

All efforts by the chief of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), Maulana Fazlur Rehman, have failed to adopt a unanimous stance by the components of the political grouping over the participation in by elections.

Pakistan People's Party has decided to contest the by polls and formally informed the PDM leadership about its decision, sources said.

According to sources, Fazlur

Rehman has held two meetings with the PPP leadership to convince the party not to contest the by election.

PPP sources said that the party has taken decision to contest by election over the pressure within the party ranks. Party leaders have forced the leadership to participate in general election.

According to party sources, People's Party has been free to take its political decisions and will not take dictation of any other party or group.

"Maulana Fazlur Rehman had announced boycott of by elections without consulting other parties", sources said.

Sources said that the PPP will contact other PDM parties for support in the election.

It is to be mentioned here that the MQM, another member of the PDM, has already announced to contest the by election.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has released schedule for by-polls on 33 National Assembly seats vacated by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) MNAs.

The ECP has decided to hold by-polls on these NA seats on March 16, for which nomination papers can be received from February 06 to 08.

UAE president's Islamabad visit postponed owing to bad weather



City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: UAE President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan's visit to the federal capital was postponed after harsh weather conditions and rain in Bahawalpur district on Monday.

The UAE president was earlier scheduled to land at the Noor Khan airbase on a day's visit. The security didn't allow the UAE president's plane to take off at 7:30am because of bad weather.

Sources said the new schedule of his visit would be announced in days to come.

Sheikh Mohammed contacted Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and expressed his excuse for not visiting the federal capital. He assured that he would visit Islamabad for two days.

Earlier, Sheikh Mohammed was to be escorted by JF-17 aircrafts to the PAF Noor Khan Air Base where the distinguished guest was to be given a 21-gun salute. Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and important members of the federal cabinet were supposed to welcome the distinguished guest at the air base.

The UAE president arrived in Pakistan on Jan 25, 2023. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif welcomed him at the Rahim Yar Khan airport. There was also a meeting between the two leaders in Rahim Yar Khan.

The federal government had announced holiday in the capital city on Jan 30 (today) ahead of the visit of United Arab Emirates (UAE) president Sheikh Muhammad Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan to the city.

Farrukh Habib moves LHC against 'police harassment'

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Farrukh Habib has moved Lahore High Court (LHC) against possible arrest and 'harassment' at the hands of police.

According to details, Advocate Abuzar Salman filed a petition in Lahore High Court (LHC) on the behalf of Farrukh Habib against the possible arrest and 'police harassment'.

In the petition, the former state minister stated that a 'bogus' case was registered at Ferozwalla Police Station on 'political grounds'.

He urged the High Court to bar police from harassing and arresting him, noting that he had secured an interim pre-arrest bail.

It is pertinent to mention here that a case was registered against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Farrukh Habib and others for 'interfering in official affairs' and 'tearing uniforms of policemen' to get Fawad Chaudhry released.

A first information report (FIR) was registered late night at Feroze-

wala police station on the complaint of federal police officer Adeel Shaukat.

The first information report (FIR) was lodged against Farrukh Habib for 'interfering in official affairs' and 'tearing uniforms of policemen'. The PTI leader has been booked under sections 148, 149, 186, 225, 341, 353, and 395 of the Pakistan Penal Code.

A day later, a local court in Lahore granted interim bail to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader till February 16.

It is pertinent to mention here that Islamabad police arrested Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader and former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry from his residence for 'threatening' Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) members.

A case against Chaudhry was registered last night at the Kohsar police station in Islamabad on the complaint of Secretary of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) Omer Hamid Khan.

The first information report (FIR) was lodged against him for using 'threatening' language against the ECP and its members.

LHC dismisses plea to desal Lal Haveli

Staff Reporter

RAWALPINDI: The Lahore high court (LHC) Rawalpindi bench dismissed the plea to desal Awami Muslim League (AML) Chief Sheikh Rasheed's Lal Haveli residence.

As per details, the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) Administrator said that Lal Haveli is not sealed, the property connected to it, was sealed.

The court directed the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) to sough out this matter in 15 days and hear Sheikh Rashid's plea too.

The judge scolded the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) Administrator for not presenting clear arguments.

Earlier, the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) sealed seven units of Lal Haveli, the residence of Awami Muslim League (AML) chief and former interior minister Sheikh Rashid.

The ETPB staff along with Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and police personnel reached the residence of Sheikh Rashid to seal it in line with the court's orders.

ETPB Deputy Administrator Asif Khan led the operation. Khan said Sheikh Rashid and his brother Sheikh Siddique have 'illegally' occupied seven acres of land of Lal Haveli.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Rasheed has condemned the action of the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) and vowed to move the court against the sealing of his residence.

It is pertinent to mention here that on January 26, it was reported that the Evacuee Trust Properties Board (ETPB) had prepared a strategy to vacate the Haveli, the residence of Sheikh Rasheed, within 24 hours.

Federal Capital's hospitals put on high alert

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination on Monday directed the administrative heads of the Federal Capital's two major hospitals to remain on high alert, keeping in view the prevailing situation after a bomb blast in Peshawar.

According to the ministry's spokesperson, on the direction of the Minister for National Health Services Abdul Qadir Patel, instructions in that regard were issued to the heads of the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) and the Federal Government Polyclinic (FGPC) hospital.

He said keeping in view that the blast victims might be referred to the capital hospitals, the heads of two hospitals were also to ensure the availability of medical and para-medical staff as well as essential services in their respective facilities round the clock.

Following the ministry's directions, the administrations of both hospitals started taking special measures to keep the emergency department on high alert for the provision of medical facilities to injured persons.

Similarly, all vehicles or ambulances will be on standby in the premises of the hospitals to cater to any emergency situation, besides making other necessary arrangements to meet any untoward situation. All the officers or officials working in the emergency department will remain physically present in their respective shifts.

Shazia Marri inaugurates BISP 'Benazir Nashonuma Centre'

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation & Social Safety and Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme—Ma'am Shazia Marri inaugurated Benazir Nashonuma Centre under Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), at Sindh Government Hospital Shah Faisal No.1 Colony, Karachi on 30th January, 2023.

After the inauguration and ribbon-cutting ceremony, Ma'am Shazia Marri undertook a tour of the newly-constructed Benazir Nashonuma Centre at Sindh Government Hospital Shah Faisal, Karachi. Federal Minister then interacted with the beneficiaries of the programme. Assuring them of her wholehearted support, the Minister stressed upon the importance of preventing stunting by targeting the prevalent issue of malnutrition in women and children.

Federal Minister and Chairperson BISP Shazia Marri while addressing the media mentioned that there are three hundred sixty four Nashonuma centres in one hundred thirty nine districts of Pakistan. "BISP started this



pilot project in 2016 which was initially limited to fifteen districts but now it is functional all over Pakistan. Stunting in children and malnutrition of mothers has adverse impact on GDP and Human Capital Development. A multi-pronged strategy has been adopted by BISP, in collaboration with the World Food Program, PPHI Sindh, Federal government and Government of Sindh to address the issue of malnutrition

in women and children", the Federal Minister informed.

The Federal Minister mentioned that BISP aims to target over 1.5 million beneficiaries of this programme belonging to the poorest strata of society, she stressed upon the importance of conditional cash payments and the disbursal of Rs 1600 million, under the programme. She also mentioned that citizens who are not registered with

BISP but are from Sindh can avail the facilities provided by Benazir Nashonuma Centre. Inauguration was attended by prominent members of the Sindh government, civil society and the World Food Program.

Concluding the address, the Federal Minister thanked United Nation's World Food Programme which is a humanitarian organization saving lives in emergencies and using food assistance to build a pathway to peace, stability and prosperity for people recovering from conflict, disasters and the impact of climate change. She stated that, "Pakistan has been ravaged by unprecedented floods. Government had decided to increase the flood relief assistance under Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) from the existing Rs28 billion to Rs70 billion".

Answering to a question by the media the Federal Minister state that Pakistan is going through a rough patch and it is because of the disastrous policies of the previous government however every cloud has a silver lining to it and this government has put its shoulder to the wheel to bring Pakistan back on the right track.

Pakistan's economy destroyed by so-called experts

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Monday said Pakistan's economy was destroyed by so-called economic experts who acted as economic hitmen to fulfill their political agenda.

The country has been under the control of plunderers for many years while one economic hitman after another is ruining the country's economy and there is no one to stop them, it said.

Our representatives are traveling around the world for a billion dollars to hear denials from everywhere which is embarrassing, said Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President of PEW.

He said that political and other elite have more money in their foreign accounts than in Pakistan's exchequer.

Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that the rulers have committed political suicide by expelling former Finance Minister Miftah Ismail otherwise the economic situation would have been stable.

The stubbornness of one person has stalled the IMF program for four months since the expulsion of the former finance minister which has resulted in a loss of almost seven billion dollars.

Miftah would have kept the IMF programme intact and the price of petrol and diesel would not have increased by 35 rupees per liter, which would bring another flood of inflation in the country, he observed.

He said that in a few days, the value of the rupee has been reduced by fifteen percent, which is a clear failure of the policy of the PML-N to stabilize the rupee.

The country is facing gross mismanagement of the ruling coalition and the situation has come to an extent that now onions are considered a luxury.

The government has not been able to do anything except change the NAB law. Overseas Pakistanis are not ready and are sending money through legal channels and they are preferring Handi which is causing huge losses to the country while it will take time to restore their confidence, he noted.

Dr. Mughal recalled that the reluctance of the former prime minister to strike the IMF deal and its decision to disregard the tenets of the agreement with the donor last year are said to be populist decisions that derailed the IMF programme that drove the country to the brink of sovereign default.

Compelled by the twin deficits, the incumbent government revived the IMF Programme and former finance minister Miftah Ismail tried to follow through on the deal by hiking fuel and energy rates.

But, the incumbent Finance Minister avoided IMF's dictates that further deepen the crisis before surrendering to the IMF's wishes. The footdragging by the PDM government in complying with the IMF's conditions was also because of populism, he said.

Talks with IMF are about to begin and Pakistan should urgently complete the 9th review as the government has no choice but to bow to the fund's demands as it has refused to make any concessions due to its continuous breach of promises.



Lal Haveli sealed

RAWALPINDI: A view of sealed Lal Haveli from Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB), in the city, as the ETPB sealed former interior minister Sheikh Rashid's Lal Haveli residence in Rawalpindi over "illegal occupation".



Photo: Online

NdcTech gets recognized by Temenos

News Desk

ISLAMABAD : NdcTech, a global IT Company providing transformational services to the banking sector and winner of Temenos Best Sales Partner Award in MEA attended Temenos Kick-Off 2023 which took place at Palau Congress Centre at Palma de Mallorca, Spain from 17th to 20th January 2023. TKO is an annual event of Temenos, the world's # 1 banking software company, and brings together key management of Temenos and global partners in person to strategize for the new year, explore new product innovations for customers, and identify future opportunities of collaboration.

NdcTech was a key sponsor at TKO 2023 and was recognized



as the "Best Performing Partner in the SaaS World" during the event due to its recent role in cloud banking transformations. This recognition is a testament to NdcTech's accomplishments and contributions towards the banking sector and recognizes its strong footprint in the SaaS world.

The theme of this year's

event was "Winning in the SaaS World" where experts shed light on the cloud first strategies and the shift in SaaS adoption across financial institutions. Some trending topics discussed included Security & Data on Cloud, Payment innovations on cloud, BaaS value chain, Wealth Management & Digital Transformation in 2023.

Ammara Masood, CEO NdcTech was one of the panelists among other thought leaders in the session on "Partnering for Success—Crushing it with Collaboration". While addressing the audience at TKO 2023 she talked about NdcTech's recent collaboration with Temenos on Country Model Banks for 7 countries in

the GCC region & how this strategic development will be a stepping-stone in uncovering the potential of the Banking industry in the region.

"NdcTech's mission is to contribute to the financial world of tomorrow. Working with Temenos over the past 22 years has allowed us to support the banking ecosystem & transform their digital capabilities. Our recent collaboration with Temenos over Country Model Banks is crucial and would provide a phenomenal value proposition to the banks by allowing them rapid time to market. We look forward to strengthening our offerings in partnership with Temenos, by investing to build accelerators and country layers and meet evolving regulatory requirements" said Ammara.

Kalma Chowk remodeling project to be reviewed after every three days

Bureau Report

LAHORE: As per the directions of Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab, Mr. Mohsin Raza Naqvi, Caretaker Provincial Minister for Excise, Taxation, Communication and Works Punjab, Mr. Bilal Afzal, visited the site of Kalma Chowk Underpass remodeling which is the project of Punjab Central Business District Development Authority (PCBDDA), also known as Central Business District (CBD Punjab).

Commissioner Lahore Division, Mr. Muhammad Ali Randhawa, CEO PCBDDA, Mr. Imran Amin, Assistant Commissioner Model Town, Ibrahim Arbab, Managing Director WASA, CEO LWMC, CE LESCO, Director Engineering SNGPL, Lahore, Director PHA, Lahore, Director Rescue 1122, DSP Traffic Police, Gulberg Circle and Directorate Heads of CBD Punjab were present during the visit.

Executive Director Technical



PCBDDA, Mr. Riaz Hussain, briefed the Provincial Minister about the development progress of the project. CBD Punjab has completed the 100% pile work and will complete the slabbing of the barrels in the estimated time, as per the instructions of Chief Minister Punjab, heavy machinery is mobilized to pace up the development progress.

The Provincial Minister also chaired

the meeting to review the progress of the project, which was co-chaired by Commissioner Lahore, while addressing the meeting Bilal Afzal said, "To provide maximum relief to the public is our utmost priority and CM Punjab has a clear vision on this. I have directed all the concerned departments to work together for the timely completion of this project. I can foresee that this project will change the develop-

ment landscape of Lahore". He further added that CM Punjab has specially instructed him to oversee this project as per his directions he will review the development of the project after every three days.

Commissioner Lahore Division, Mr. Muhammad Ali Randhawa while sharing his thoughts said, "Chief Minister Punjab is very keen on the timely completion of this project to minimize the hindrance in the daily commute of citizens of Lahore. The development pace is satisfactory, and I have high hopes that as per the guidelines of CM Punjab, this project will be completed in the stipulated time".

The Government authorities, management of PCBDDA and official contractor of the project as per the directive of the Chief Minister Punjab, have decided to open all the roads by mid of February 2023, and the whole project will be completed by the end of March 2023.

The 31st three-day Urs of Wasif Ali Wasif will begin on Feb 14

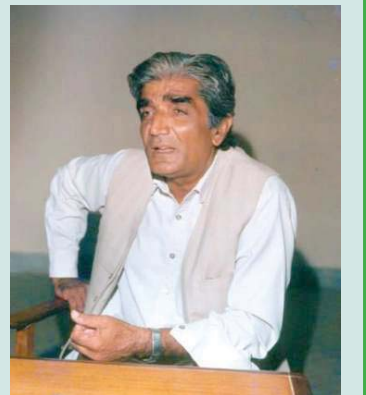
Bureau Report

LAHORE: The three-day-long 31st annual Urs of spiritual scholar, writer and Sufi thinker Wasif Ali Wasif will start on Feb 14 at Miani Sahib in Lahore.

According to the program, the Urs will begin with the laying of the floral wreath at his grave after the Asr prayer. Veteran politician Sardar Nasrullah Khan Dareshk will perform the ritual along with the devotees. Asif Ali Santo and his companions will perform qawwali at night.

On the second day, a seminar will be held in Al-Hamra in which speakers will express their views on the life, philosophy and teachings of Wasif Ali Wasif. A mehfil-e-na'at will be held at night at his grave by famous na'at khawan who will offer their love and devotion to the Holy Prophet (PBUH).

On Feb 16, a session will be arranged about the answers to the questions asked in the life of Wasif Ali Wasif at his Mazar and the last session will be chaired by Kh. Moinuddin Mehboob Koreja.



Aga Khan University holds a book launch ceremony



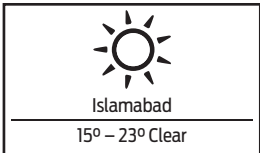
Spokesman Report

KARACHI: The Aga Khan University commemorated the launch of a new book titled "Making Health Systems Work in Low- and Middle-Income Countries" which is a textbook for public health practitioners worldwide.

Published by Cambridge University Press, this book is co-edited by public health experts Sameen Siddiqui, Awad Mataria, Katherine D. Rouleau, and Meesha Iqbal and was simultaneously launched in Karachi, Cairo, Cambridge, Toronto, and Houston. The book has been formulated by the contribution of rich authorship spread across the globe with the purpose to serve as a resource and guide for strengthening health systems in low-and middle-income countries.

Addressing the audience during the ceremony, Dr Sameen Siddiqui, Professor and Chair of Community Health Sciences Department at the Aga Khan University said, "This book bridges the gap between 'what' and 'how' health systems need to be strengthened in support of universal health coverage and attainment of health-related SDGs. We believe it will serve as a great resource to build capacity of public health professionals to understand different approaches to assess health systems and identify options for accelerated progress towards universal health coverage and health security in LMICs."

The book emphasizes the importance of an integrated approach across health systems, priority health programmes, and the upstream health determinants for improving population health worldwide.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	5:40 am
Zohr	12:21 pm
Asr	3:58 pm
Maghrib	5:36 pm
Isha	7:02 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

COMPLAINTS

Water Tanker Service	
E-7, F-10 & F-11	9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8	9203883
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8	9266316
Wapda Islamabad	9217579-80
Sui Gas Complaint	119, 9272249
Wasa Water Tank	
Rawalpindi	0331-5022125

Two-day Global conference titled 'Majlis 2023' began yesterday, January 28

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: 'Majlis 2023', a global conference hosted by the Entrepreneurs' Organization (EO) Islamabad Chapter, kicked off at the Serena Hotel, Islamabad yesterday. Attended by a high-profile EO delegation of successful entrepreneurs from over 16 countries and 10 global chapters, the event began with an introduction to the beauty, diversity, and emerging potential of Pakistan.

The latter half of the event, moderated by Pakistan's top professional development speakers Kamran Rizvi and Azam Jamil, witnessed a unique engagement exercise in which over 100 local and global EO members exchanged perspectives on entrepreneurship's challenges and lessons.

Entrepreneurs from countries as diverse as Egypt, Jordan, Portugal, South Africa, and the United Kingdom appreciated the perspectives offered on entrepreneurship in Pakistan and felt a deeper connection with their counterparts in Pakistan. Founded in 1987, the Entrepreneurs' Organization (EO) is one of the world's largest global peer-to-peer networks with over 16,500 successful founders and corporate leaders and a presence in over 60 countries.



Showcasing the best of Pakistan, 'Majlis 2023' shall continue in Islamabad on January 29th with a series of cultural immersion and learning exercises, specially designed for the wider EO community.

Punjab and KP Polls: Governors yet to inform election date to ECP

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has written letters to Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa governors for dates of holding elections, citing sources, ARY News reported on Monday.

Governors not intimated yet to the election commission about election date, sources said. "It is mandatory for the ECP to issue the election schedule within 90 days," sources at election commission shared.

"An amendment can be made after issuance of the election schedule," ECP sources said. "Issuance of preliminary schedule of elections is compulsory for the election commission," according to sources.

The Election Commission of Pakistan wrote letters to Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa governors on January 25.

The ECP in its letters to Punjab and KP governors, recommended Governor Baligh ur Rehman to hold elections in Punjab between April 09 to 13. Similarly, the election body had suggested the KP governor for holding elections in the province between April 15 to 17.

After the dissolution of the KP and Punjab assemblies, the government and opposition in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa appointed former bureaucrat Azam Khan as caretaker chief minister.

However, in Punjab, the parliamentary panel comprised of the opposition and government members failed to reach on consensus on the caretaker chief minister. As per the procedure, the matter was decided by the ECP, which named Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi as the caretaker chief minister of Punjab to lead the interim setup in the province.

Islamabad security put on high alert



City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: After the Peshawar bomb blast, the Islamabad police have put the security of the federal capital on high alert.

As per details, the Islamabad Capital Territory police tightened security at the entry and exit points of the federal capital.

The police officials instructed the citizens of Islamabad to keep important documents with them including computerized national identity cards (CNICs) besides appealing to the residents to cooperate with the on-duty cops during the checking process.

Security is also being monitored through safe city cameras in the federal capital. Earlier today, at least 50 people were injured in a bomb blast inside a mosque in the Police Lines, Peshawar.

Police and rescuers shifted the injured to the Lady Reading Hospital. The authorities, who are assessing the nature of the blast, immediately cordoned off the area.

Videos and pictures shared by social media users show horrific scenes as the injured drenched in blood were shifted to local medical centres for first aid. A part of the mosque has collapsed. The nature of the blast is unknown as per initial reports.

Islamabad Court rejects plea to extend Fawad Chaudhry's physical remand

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: An Islamabad district and sessions court rejected the police's request to extend Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Fawad Chaudhry's physical remand and sent him to jail on a 14-day judicial remand in a sedition case.

According to details, Judicial Magistrate Waqas Ahmed Raja heard the case against the former information minister registered for 'threatening' members of Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

The police produced Fawad Chaudhry before the judicial magistrate upon the expiry of the latter's second two-day physical remand.

Faisal Chaudhry and Advocate Babar Awan were present in the courtroom as Fawad's legal counsels. ECP's lawyer State Prosecutor and Investigation Officer (IO) were also in attendance.

During the hearing today, Judicial Magistrate Waqas Ahmed Raja sent Fawad to jail on a judicial remand, rejecting the prosecution's plea of extending his physical remand.

The former federal minister was arrested for 'threatening' Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) members.

A case against PTI leader was registered at the Kohsar police station in Islamabad on the complaint of Secretary of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) Omer Hamid Khan.

A case against PTI leader was registered at the Kohsar police station in Islamabad on the complaint of Secretary of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) Omer Hamid Khan.

Insulting of the Holy Quran is unacceptable: Malik Ibrar

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The central president of All Pakistan Private Schools and Colleges Association Malik Ibrar Hussain expressed a strong reaction against the insulting of the Holy Quran in Sweden. He said that the insulting of the Holy Quran is unacceptable, the world of Islam has a solid plan to prevent such incidents. He said that increase in the prices of petroleum products will bring a new wave of inflation, the government should reverse the decision and provide relief to the people who are tired of inflation.



Malik Ibrar Hussain, the central president of All Pakistan Private Schools and Colleges Association, expressed a strong reaction against the insulting of the Holy Quran in Sweden and demanded that the world of Islam adopt a common plan of action. Legislation must be enacted at the global level. He said that such heartbreaking events have become normal in the West which is unacceptable.

The desecration of the Holy Quran by a right-wing extremist is a heinous act, much less condemned. The self-made cloak of freedom of expression cannot be used to hurt the religious sentiments of nearly two billion Muslims around the world. It seems that all this has happened with the permission of the Swedish authorities. This is a very serious incident of provoking the sentiments of two billion Muslims of the world. He demanded the government to call an urgent meeting of the OIC to take concrete steps to prevent such incidents.

He further said that the increase in the prices of petroleum products will cause a wave of inflation in the country. The government should withdraw this decision and provide relief to the people suffering from inflation. He said that the nation is already facing problems due to government's poor strategy and aimless policies, inflation, poverty and unemployment have made it difficult for people to earn two-time bread. In such a situation, the government is increasing the prices of petroleum products day by day and is causing more trouble. He made it clear that if the government does not take care, the civil society can announce to come out on the streets very soon.

Social services

Islamabad: Special Guest Dr. Usman Ghani is giving away a shield to Dr. Murtaza Mughal for social services at the end of the seminar titled, "Homeopathy a Charismatic Treatment." Dr. Tariq Mehmud was also present on the occasion. Spokesman Photo by Ghulam Farid



PPP decides to contest by polls, invites applications for party ticket

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party has decided to contest by polls on the National Assembly seats and invited applications from the party's candidates.

Seasoned PPP leader Farhatullah Babar has called the party candidates to submit their applications for party tickets by February 03.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has released the schedule for by-polls on 33 National Assembly seats vacated by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf MNAs.

The ECP has decided to hold by-polls on 33 NA seats on March 16, for which nomination papers can be received from February 06 to 08.

Former premier Imran Khan will contest the by-election for all 33 vacant seats of the National Assembly, scheduled to take place on March 16, party's senior vice-president Shah Mehmood Qureshi announced on Sunday.

Folk musical night held on the eve of Gandhara festival

News Desk

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Council of the Arts organized folk musical night on 2nd day of the Gandhara Festival 2023. Sain Zahoor, Muhammad Hamza Samina Khan, Syeda Bushra and other singer performed in the folk musical night. Chief Guest of the folk musical night was Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmed. While addressing the audience of the folk night Waqar Ahmed said that we have gathered to spread the fragrances of Gandhara civilization, to refine its art, to spread its colors, to appreciate the masterpieces of its artisans and to inspire its knowledge.

Through these fairs, we will spread the fragrance of tolerance and tolerance in our country, which will stand out as a message of peace and love for humanity. Gandharan land has nurtured the well-known and reliable civilizations of the world and they have highlighted scientific, literary and cultural phenomena.

Punjab Council of the Arts, Rawalpindi has organized first two days of Gandhara Festival 2023 at Gandhara Art Village taxi in Punjab Small Industries Corporation under ADP program, he added. Second



opening of the festival will be held today at Punjab Council of the Arts, Rawalpindi at 02:00 pm.

Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Mr. Liaqat Ali Chataha will be the chief guest of the opening along with Malaysian High Commissioner. Famous Singer Fazal Jatt

will stage Dastan Goi program in his traditional style. While book fairs, Artisan at work, Gandhara Art Exhibition, and Gandhara Painting will also be showcased at the Councils premises. Traditional food and kids zone will stay open for the general public till 04th February.

Another Pakistani student achieves highest mark in ACCA exam

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pass rates have been announced by ACCA (the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) for students who sat their exams in December 2022.

107,142 students from around the world entered for the December sitting of ACCA exams, which saw 128,693 exams completed. Huzaifa Jamil from Lahore, Pakistan, emerged as a global award recipient for earning the highest score worldwide in ACCA's Financial Reporting (FM) paper. 107,142 entered for the December sitting, which saw 128,693 exams completed.

ACCA's campaign manager for Asia Pacific, Rashid Khan, said: 'Huzaifa's drive and ambition serve as a source of inspiration for the talented youth in our



country. His success serves as a reminder that Pakistanis have the potential to

excel on a global stage if they are given the right opportunities and platform. Despite the numerous challenges facing the country, the key to a successful future is to support and celebrate the achievements of young individuals like Huzaifa, and to encourage them to pursue their passions and dreams, unencumbered by obstacles.'

Huzaifa credits his success to hard work and perseverance and is thankful for the support from his parents and teachers at SKANS School of Accountancy.

Huzaifa is privileged to have also memorised the Holy Quran and is eager to embark on a fulfilling auditing career. He looks forward to all the exciting global opportunities and rewards that come with being a globally in-demand ACCA-qualified professional.

Huzaifa has set a high bar for himself with his consistent exam performances and is determined to maintain this level of excellence. He is focused on replicating his success in his remaining exams and is dedicated to building a successful career, earning recognition for his family and country.

The ACCA qualification is highly regarded and widely recognised around the world, offering exciting career opportunities with leading employers. The ACCA Qualification rigorously tests the skills, abilities and competencies that a modern accountant needs, with a firm grounding in ethics and professionalism.

ACCA is world's leading body for professional accountants with 241,000 members and 542,000 future members based in 178 countries and regions.

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Pakistan will continue to be a leading voice for vulnerable, oppressed

Unsa Kiani

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar on Monday said that with the country's human rights progress on an upward trajectory, Pakistan will continue to be a leading voice of the vulnerable and the oppressed.

"From drafting the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the International Convention on Racial Discrimination to establishing the Human Rights Council, Pakistan has remained and will continue to be a leading voice of the vulnerable and the oppressed," she stated here at the 4th Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Pakistan.

The Human Rights Council through the Universal Periodic Review mechanism periodically reviews the human rights record of every UN member state. The ultimate goal of UPR is to strengthen the realization and enjoyment of human rights in a country.

Established in 2007, this peer-driven review mechanism provided a platform for dialogue and constructive

engagement among states.

The Minister of State highlighted the enactment of legislations to safeguard rights of women and children including Women's Property Rights Act, 2020, Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Act 2020 and Anti-Rape (Investigation and Trial) Act 2021.

She said that as an ardent supporter of multilateralism, Pakistan has consistently advocated dialogue, consensus, cooperation, and mutual respect as preferred vehicles to advance the global human rights agenda.

"Today, I am pleased to report that my country's human rights progress is overall on an upward trajectory. We continue to aspire for a progressive and pluralistic society, which puts a high premium on respect for the human rights of everyone, in the words of our founding father Muhammad Ali Jinnah and I quote "as equal citizens of one State", she maintained.

The Minister said that Pakistan's 4th national UPR report was prepared through an inclusive, consultative process involving all national stakeholders. Critically, this report was an outcome of their extensive efforts during the last five years to implement the recommenda-

tions emanating from the country's 2017 UPR, she added.

The Minister of State said that Pakistan was also proud of its vibrant civil society. "With our independent judiciary and legal community, civil society has played a vital role in public awareness-raising and advocacy about inclusivity, accountability, and transparency," she mentioned.

Hina Rabbani Khar said that "While we are proud of our progress and achievements, we are mindful of the need to sustain the momentum and overcome the challenges. The Government has made utmost efforts to advance human rights through institutional, legal, and policy measures."

Touching upon some of the critical areas of this progress that align with several recommendations emanating from Pakistan's last UPR, the Minister of State said that in order to strengthen institutional support, the Government has enhanced the capacity of existing structures on human rights and established new ones.

"The Ministry of Human Rights has upgraded its Regional Human Rights Directorates for effective coordination with provincial stakeholders. Complaint cells have been

established at the Federal and Provincial Directorates under the Human Rights Ministry for redressal and referral of human rights complaints."

"We have further strengthened our domestic mechanisms to enhance the implementation of the international human rights conventions to which Pakistan is a State Party," she added.

In addition to the existing Treaty Implementation Cells (TIC) at the Federal and Provincial levels, the Minister of State said that the Government has launched the National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow-up project based on the United Nations guidelines and good practices.

Likewise, the Human Rights Ministry has established a Human Rights Information Management System, which has institutionalized data collection and analysis about human rights trends in the country, she said, adding, "This system has helped us craft evidence-based policy and administrative measures and prepare Pakistan's periodic treaty bodies reports."

The Minister of State said that in the last five years, Pakistan has enacted several progressive legislations in line

with its international human rights obligations, focusing on the fundamental rights and freedoms of the vulnerable and the marginalized.

She said that Pakistan has taken several steps for women's empowerment. "Last year, we amended the Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2010 to broaden the definition of employees to include non-conventional workplaces and expand the definition of workplace harassment."

"Our Parliament also enacted the Anti-Rape Act 2021 and the Enforcement of Women's Property Rights Act 2020 to build legal deterrence against the menace of rape and deprivation of women of their property rights."

In a landmark move, the Minister of State said that all provincial High Courts have established Gender Based Violence Courts; helplines and women's police stations have been set up across Pakistan.

Our Parliament enacted one of the most progressive laws on transgender rights in 2018 to protect their fundamental rights like inheritance, education, decent work, property ownership, and participation in public affairs, she added.

Pakistan-China to focus on tourism exchanges this year

This year is the year of Pakistan-China Tourism Exchanges. We're completely focused on this. Pakistan has everything it takes to become one of the world's best travel destinations. The government of Pakistan also identified tourism as a key priority, said Ghulam Qadir, commercial counselor of the Embassy of Pakistan in China.

He revealed that numerous tourism-related activities will be happening between the two neighbors in this year.

He informed that roadshows will be held with all of the cultural festivities, showcasing some of Pakistan's tourist attractions and added, "We want our Chinese brothers and sisters to experience Pakistani cuisine and fashion from our trendy brands in Pakistan. We'll come up with a complete guidebook to facilitate travel from China to Pakistan, and vice versa."

"The opening of China's tourism is a very positive sign for Pakistan. Pakistan has made extensive preparations to welcome Chinese visitors," said Aftab ur Rehman Rana, managing director of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation, China Economic Net (CEN) reported.

From January 8, 2023, China resumed outbound tourism after downgrading COVID-19 management measures from Class A to B. According to the 2023 Spring Festival Travel Summary Report released by Ctrip, domestic and foreign travel orders of Chinese tourists increased by four times compared with the Spring Festival of last year.

The popularity of Spring Festival tourism is only a start, and Chinese tourism market will see a remarkable recovery this year.

"International flights within the Asia-Pacific region will recover faster than intercontinental flights for other regions. We plan to gradually expand our international routes," said Qin Ye, deputy general manager of Pudong Passenger Service Center of China Eastern Airlines.

"We've seen new highways, highways, and side roads from south to east to north, and improving the road network is critical for tourism promotion," Aftab ur Rehman Rana said.

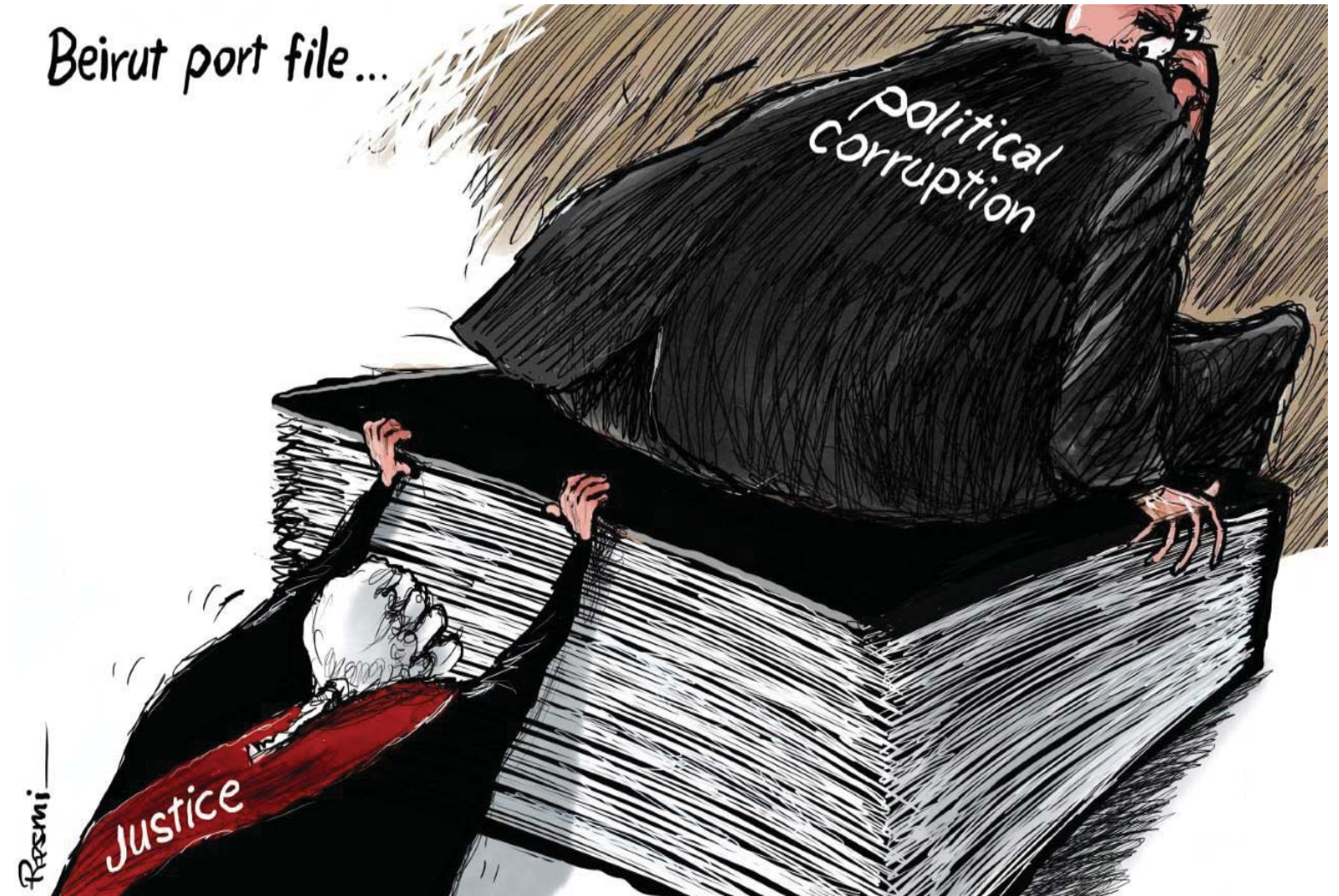
He stressed the important role that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has played in transforming Pakistan's tourism.

"CPEC not only improved access to various business hubs and cities in Pakistan, but also facilitated access to various tourist sites. With improved accessibility, there will be a slew of new developments in the coming years, including the establishment of tourism zones, new hotels, and tourist resorts along the CPEC routes."

Ghulam Qadir also noted that as CPEC enters its second phase of high-quality development, more partnerships, joint ventures, and travel are required. CPEC is an excellent example of the two countries' friendship. We are constructing highways that will connect Pakistan from north to south, down to Karachi and ports, and a railway project will be implemented very soon.

"We have such a long, brotherly, wonderful relationship, and we must capitalize on it. I think with the revival after the Covid-19 pandemic, Chinese people must be looking forward to going out of their homes and traveling to Pakistan," he said with confidence.

Beirut port file...



Will Europe's ban on Russian diesel hike global fuel prices?

Spokesman Report

Europe is taking another big step toward cutting its energy ties with Russia, banning imports of diesel fuel and other products made from crude oil in Russian refineries.

The European Union ban takes effect Feb. 5 following its embargo on coal and most oil from Russia. The 27-nation bloc is trying to sever its last uses of Russian energy and stop feeding the Kremlin's war chest as the anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine nears.

The newest ban has risks: Diesel prices have already jumped since the war started on Feb. 24, and they could rise again for the fuel that is key to the global economy.

"We're leaving money in the road to provide our services," said Hans-Dieter Sedelmeier of the family-run German bus and travel company Rast Reisen.

Most things people buy or eat are transported at some point by trucks, which mostly run on diesel. It also powers farm equipment, city buses and industrial equipment. The higher cost of diesel is built into the price of almost everything, helping push up inflation that has made life harder for people worldwide.

If the cap doesn't block large amounts of Russian diesel, there might be "a short-lived price spike" as the market adjusts. For one, tankers would have a longer journey to Europe from the U.S., Middle East or India than from Russia's Baltic Sea ports, stressing shipping capacity.

But massive new refining capacity is launching in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia later this year and in Oman in 2024. That "could further alleviate any pressure points from

this divorce from Russia," Grati said.

The hope is to reproduce the effect of the oil price cap, which barred Western companies that largely control shipping services from handling Russian crude priced above \$60 a barrel.

Russia says it won't sell oil to countries observing the price ceiling, but the cap and falling demand from a slowing global economy has meant customers in China, India and elsewhere can buy Russian oil at steep discounts, cutting into the Kremlin's revenue.

Boosted by more expensive crude, diesel prices rose to over \$1,000 a ton last week from \$800 a ton in early December. Diesel costs more than \$40 per barrel above the crude used to make it.

One reason for the price hike was a late December storm in the U.S. that disrupted refineries, said Barbara Lambrecht, an analyst at Commerzbank.

Fuel prices have been a major factor behind painful inflation in Europe that has robbed consumers of purchasing power and slowed the economy.

Diesel prices at the pump have swung from 1.66 euros per liter (\$6.43 a gallon) to 2.14 euros per liter (\$8.29 a gallon) in the course of a year.

"That is a gigantic increase," said Christopher Schultes, the third generation of his family to run German trucking company Schultes Spedition.

The company has 27 diesel trucks and 50 employees in the small town of Alsbach-Haehnlein between Frankfurt and Heidelberg in southwest Germany. It already has cut fuel costs by equipping trucks with efficient engines, ensuring trucks leave fully loaded and training employees in fuel-efficient driving.

"We did all that a long time ago, long before Russia invaded Ukraine," Schultes said. "There's no more room for optimization."

To ease the extra diesel costs, the company tried negotiating higher prices with customers who have long-term contracts. Some agreed, some didn't. Even if a contract allows prices to rise with diesel costs, there's a two-month lag.

Regarding the embargo, "I am of two minds about it," Schultes said. "I have to see that the company is in good shape, and that our purchasing is as economical as possible. On the other hand — on the personal level — I say Russia must not be supported."

Meanwhile, Rast Reisen, the bus and travel company near Freiburg im Breisgau in southwestern Germany, has seen diesel fuel rise from 12%-15% of costs to 20%-25%. Because 15 of its 25 buses are part of the regional public transport network, the company can't automatically raise fares, and government increases so far are "a droplet on a hot stone," said Sedelmeier, managing director for public transport.

Rast Reisen had to add a 10- to 15-euro (\$11 to \$16) diesel surcharge to trips to popular destinations like northern Germany's island of Sylt or Croatia's coast because prices spiked after catalogues were printed. Next year, prices for trips will simply be higher.

Energy markets are looking to China and wondering when the world's second-largest economy will recover after the end of drastic COVID-19 restrictions. With low demand for fuel at home, the Chinese government let refineries ramp up their exports.

But if travel picks up in China, that diesel may disappear from the world market, raising prices as competition for fuel increases.

Protecting small farmers' rights for their economic survival

Saleem Ullah

Despite being the mainstay and major contributors to the national economy, small farmers in the country are on the brink of sustenance in view of the rising cost of inputs, low productivity and shrinking profitability.

Cultivating each crop with high expectations of profit and earning living for their families, these farmers earn minimal at the end of the day as a major chunk of their expected profit is usurped by input providers and middlemen.

Even in the main hubs of agriculture; the Punjab and Sindh provinces, the ancestral land after multiple distributions among the heirs had shrunk into small patches. Non-promotion of corporate instead of traditional farming and climatic effects are other factors thinning their output and income thus heralding danger of food security.

The situation is not different in South Punjab where about 77% population lives in rural areas and the majority among them are directly or indirectly linked to agriculture.

Since the region is usually very backward with farmers having the least access to markets, small farmers remain under immense stress due to rising inflation and their continued exploitation by the middlemen, dealers and commission agents.

Umar Daraz, another farmer stated that small farmers owning land less than six acres could not run their kitchen through farming. "The government should pay special heed to their issues as they are in big number and major contributors to agricultural produce."

He also suggested to introducing modern farming and promoting cash crops for immediate relief to farmers.

Vice Chancellor Nawaz Sharif University of Agriculture Dr Asif also opined that it is very difficult for small farmers to earn bread and butter through traditional farming. "We need to shift from traditional farm-

ing to high-value crops. Cluster farming can also be a choice for modern agriculture farming," he stated. "The farmers should shift their focus to tunnel and hybrid systems in the form of clusters."

Since there are scattered examples of good earnings through corporate farming, there is an urgent need for promoting this culture on a mass scale.

Kashif Hanif and Muhammad Naveed from Dhanot in Lodhran district can validly be quoted for earning reasonable income by cultivating high-value crops including cucumber and red chilli.

As they did away with taboos and the old style of farming by focusing on high-value crops, persuading others is also direly needed to ensure better income for farmers and avert the upcoming food security issue.

Regarding peasants' rights, these farmers opined that they should do their bit in opting for novel ways of farming as well as raise voice for their rights for the survival of their families. "In addition to practicing tunnel farming, they should also rear animals as an additional source of income."

Assistant Director Fruits and Vegetable Rana Abbas also supported a reduction in inputs cost and said, "soil health was very important for peasants and they should ensure regular examination of soil to maintain its fertility and get enhanced productivity."

Meanwhile, the Punjab Agriculture department has mentioned to various measures being taken for the benefit of small farmer with an official mentioning to projects worth Rs 300 billion being executed under the national program to enhance produce of wheat, cotton, sunflower and other crops.

"Over Rs one billion subsidy is being provided to around one million farmers through Kisan Cards. Moreover, support price for per 40 kg wheat and sugarcane has been fixed at Rs 3000 and Rs 300 respectively," he said. Apart from this, he said, Rs seven billion subsidy has been provided on certified seeds and latest agriculture machinery and Rs 650 million subsidy on laser land levellers. "Issuance of 'mobile App' for farmers and many other initiatives have also been taken to strengthen farmers economically."

Govt working on a comprehensive plan to make Azad Kashmir an ideal state: PM AJK

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MIRPUR: Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan, has said that the government was working on a comprehensive road map to make the liberated territory an ideal state economically and industrially. The Prime Minister expressed these views while presiding over a high-level meeting that was concerned here to review the progress of all development and non-development departments across Azad Kashmir. The meeting was attended by Ministers, Advisors, Secretaries, Directors and heads of relevant departments.

Speaking on the occasion the PM said, "We have to work hard today for a better tomorrow and make sure that all available resources and manpower are being utilized honestly and effectively". Terming Mirpur city as the most modern and planned city after



Islamabad, the PM said that the infrastructure of the city should be of international standards. "Expatriates are our asset, the government will provide all possible facilities to investors", he said, adding that major obstacles in the completion of Rathoa-Hariyam Bridge have been removed.

"Matters related to funds, work-force, consultants have almost been

settled", the prime Minister said. The PM while terming Qabza mafia as the biggest obstacle in the way of development and prosperity said that the administration must continue to take legal action against the mafia involved in illegal land grabbing. Appreciating the dutiful officers' role in the society, the PM said, "I love the active and worthy officers who run the affairs of

the state responsibly as per the law of the land". The extraordinary meeting also took a detailed review of implementation of the orders of the Prime Minister and the progress made on ongoing development projects throughout Azad Kashmir including Rathoa Hariyam Bridge, PMU projects, roads, standard construction of government buildings and prevention of smuggling of flour.

Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan directed all the concerned secretaries and heads of departments to redouble their efforts to accelerate the process of development so that the development projects underway in different parts of the state could be completed within the given time frame. He said that a grand public park with state of the art facilities should be built in the lake view city where local and overseas Kashmiris and their children can get quality entertainment".

UNHCR, UNFPA, and UNICEF work together for flood-affected communities



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN : UNHCR, the UN Agency Refugee Agency signed two agreements with UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, and UNICEF, the UN Children's Fund, to improve the protection environment for refugee and host communities affected by the devastating floods, especially children and women.

The partnership comes at a time when swathes of Pakistan remain under water, including entire villages and farmlands. Thousands have been displaced, while others have returned to find their homes destroyed and key water, sanitation, and health infrastructure non-existent. In Sindh province, some affected communities can only be reached by boat, their continued isolation compounding their needs, forcing families to make impossible choices. Both child marriage and violence against children have increased in some of the most affected districts.

As the climate crisis is ratcheting up, extreme weather is wearing down the resilience of communities in Pakistan hit by repeated disasters, including in terms of protection. Findings from assessments indicate that in the most affected province, Sindh, 85 percent of key informants indicated that their community members do not have knowledge of gender-based violence services, more than 50 percent are experiencing psycho-social distress and 60 percent are not accessing treatment. "The scale of destruction after the floods is huge, and protection needs among children and women are still growing," according to UNHCR Representative to Pakistan, Noriko Yoshida. "Together our partnership with UNFPA and UNICEF will strengthen the collective response, as part of UN-wide efforts"

Planned joint activities with UNICEF include the distribution of 250,000 dignity kits for women and girls of reproductive age, child protection activities and mental health awareness raising campaigns and community-based activities, bolstering the capacity of District Child Protection Units with caseworkers and psychologists, in addition to mapping available services in affected communities with a particular focus on survivors of violence for case referrals and adequate response.

UNFPA activities include the distribution of 20,000 dignity kits, establishing and strengthening Gender-Based Violence (GBV) referral mechanisms of cases, setting up and operating women and girls' friendly spaces to reduce risks and prevent further harm during after the emergency, community mobilization and outreach campaigns for GBV awareness and sensitization among community members, mapping of available services for survivors, enhancing skills of front-line GBV staff assisting communities, as well as lifesaving GBV response services such as health, psycho-social support, case management and referrals for GBV survivors.

"After the devastating floods, women and girls continue to be at risk of violence, exploitation, and abuse. They must be able to access services critical to their health and survival. UNFPA's priority is to ensure women and girls have access to lifesaving reproductive health and protection services even in the midst of an emergency," said Dr. Luay Shabaneh.

The agreement is expected to continue in 2023 and is aimed to facilitate the transfer of resources from one UN entity to another UN entity to reach the most affected communities under the "One-UN".

Turkmenistan condemns 'barbaric' attack on Azerbaijani Embassy in Iran



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan condemns the armed attack on the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the Islamic Republic of Iran on January 27, 2023, as a result of which there are dead and wounded among the staff of the diplomatic mission.

Turkmenistan declares the inadmissibility of attacks on diplomatic missions and the use of any violence against the personnel of diplomatic departments.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan expresses deep condolences to the relatives and friends of the deceased, and also wishes a speedy recovery to the injured employees of the Azerbaijani Embassy in Iran.

Press statement

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and Prime Minister of Hungary Viktor Orban have made a joint press statement in Budapest.



Inauguration ceremony of eight-week maritime training courses

Bureau Report

KARACHI : United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Country Office in Pakistan (COPAK) organized an inauguration ceremony of an eight-week maritime training and mentoring session in Karachi. Ms. Humaira Ahmed – Federal Secretary, Ministry of Narcotics Control graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. The ceremony was also attended by Major General Aneeq Malik – Director General of the Anti Narcotics Force (ANF); Mr. Muhammad Yaqoob Mako – Chief Collector (Operations), Pakistan Customs Enforcement (South) Karachi, Mr. Usman Bajwa – Customs Collector (Preventive) Kara-



chi; Brigadier Ghulam Abbas – Director General Pakistan Coast Guards (PCG) Karachi; Mr. Liam O'Flanagan – Deputy Consul General of United States of America's Consulate in Karachi; and Dr. Jeremy Milsom – Representative of UNODC COPAK.

The inauguration ceremony marked the commencement of eight-weeks of bulk-carrier search and visit, board, search, and seizure (VBSS) training

courses to be held in Karachi from 30 January to 24 March 2023. These training and mentoring sessions are being conducted under the framework of UNODC's project entitled 'Improved National Response against Drugs and Contraband Trafficking in the Maritime Domain' – funded by the United States State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Pakistan

(INL-P). More specifically, five training courses will be delivered by Master Trainers of the PCG, Pakistan Customs, and the ANF – who were trained in VBSS and Bulk-Carrier Search by UNODC in Seychelles and Cape Town, South Africa in 2022. The Pakistani Master Trainers will be mentored by two international trainers of UNODC's Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP). This series of training and mentoring sessions aims to further refine the technical skills of the Pakistani Master Trainers and to also provide training to an additional sixty fresh trainees from the PCG, Pakistan Customs and ANF on boarding operations and vessel search techniques. While warmly welcoming

the participants, Dr. Jeremy Milsom, Representative UNODC COPAK apprised the forum that UNODC had closely engaged with the Ministry of Narcotics Control during the design and implementation of this INL-funded project since October 2020.

Through a comprehensive presentation, Mr. David O'Connell, GMCP's Programme Coordinator updated the participants about several capacity development interventions by UNODC under the INL-funded maritime security project. He elaborated upon the successful conduct of five VBSS training courses and six Bulk-Carrier Search training courses conducted by UNODC GMCP in Seychelles and South Africa.

International Year of Dialogue as a Guarantee of Peace

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: On January 27, 2023, an official ceremony was held at the Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan dedicated to the announcement of 2023 as the "International Year of Dialogue as a Guarantee of Peace". The event was held in a hybrid format under the conduction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan.

The event was attended by representatives of the main bodies of the UN and its specialized agencies and UN member states, international and regional organizations as well as teachers and students of the higher educa-

tional institutions of Turkmenistan.

In their speeches, distinguished diplomats thanked the Government of Turkmenistan for its consistent work to promote a culture of peace throughout the world, noting that this International Year has a solid cornerstone: Dialogue for Peace, based on our common belief that true peace cannot be preserved or restored without a constructive exchange of views in good faith and that such open and sincere interactions can indeed promote mutual understanding between peoples.

2023 was declared the "International Year of Dialogue as a Guarantee of Peace" in accor-

dance with resolution 77/32 of the United Nations General Assembly by the initiative of Turkmenistan. This initiative is directly linked to the "New Peace Agenda" of the UN Secretary General for building peace, which is consonant with the initiative of Turkmenistan to promote the philosophy of "Dialogue as a guarantee of peace".

Before the draft resolution "International Year of Dialogue as a Guarantee of Peace, 2023" was presented, Turkmenistan held extensive consultations with UN member countries, took into account constructive opinions and proposals. The resolution was co-sponsored by 68 member

countries of the Organization.

As an official document of the 77th session of the UN General Assembly, under agenda item 14 "Culture of Peace", the final document was adopted, which reflects the fundamental goals and principles of the UN Charter, including obligations to resolve disputes by peaceful means and methods.

The Global Initiative "Dialogue as a Guarantee of Peace" promoted by Turkmenistan is aimed at consolidating the efforts of the international community in strengthening the traditions of peaceful and trusting coexistence of the peoples of the world, restoring values and worldviews, defining a culture



of peace and trust as an integral factor in international relations.

Steadily implementing the policy of peacefulness, good-neighborliness and

constructive international cooperation, Turkmenistan consistently expands the geography of interested international partnership and takes an active part

in the development of balanced solutions to urgent problems of mankind.

Our national development is becoming a model development at the international level in the coordination of the domestic and foreign policies of the President, which are based on the principle of permanent neutrality.

At the end of the ceremony, the participants expressed their sincere gratitude to the Leader of the Nation and the President for pursuing a policy of peace and friendship in international relations and wished them good health and longevity, success in their noble work, for the sake of a happy life for the people, and prosperity for the country.

Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
39,871.27	40,450.53
Day's High	Day's Low:
40,666.96	39,844.39
Index Value	Change
4,611,473,244	-579.26
Percentage	Time
-1.43%	Jan 30, 2023 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,784.87	+19.72
Percentage	Time
+0.25%	30 Jan, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
33,919.28	-58.80
Percentage	Time
-0.17%	30 Jan, 12:01 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
27,433.40	+50.84
Percentage	Time
+0.19%	30 Jan, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	184.5	186.9
Bahrain Dinar	698.94	706.94
Canadian Dollar	195	197.2
China Yuan	38.76	39.16
Danish Krone	38.4	38.8
Euro	287.2	290
Hong Kong Dollar	32.05	32.4
Indian Rupee	3.1	3.12
Japanese Yen	2.5	2.54
Kuwaiti Dinar	850.1	859.1
Malaysian Ringgit	60.93	61.53
New Zealand \$	168.66	170.66
Norwegians Krone	26.76	27.06
Omani Riyal	682.86	690.86
Qatari Riyal	70.4	71.1
Saudi Riyal	70.35	71.05
Singapore Dollar	197.17	199.17
Swedish Korona	25.49	25.79
Swiss Franc	285.03	287.53
Thai Bhat	8.01	8.16
U.A.E Dirham	73.3	74
UK Pound Sterling	327.75	331
US Dollar	268	270.5

Country should be shifted to solar energy in six months: Mian Zahid Hussain

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Monday said a hike of Rs35 per liter in the price of petrol and diesel was unpleasant but unavoidable.

The country has not seen such a serious financial crisis in its entire history and the government was trying its best to tame it, he said.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the government has reduced the trade deficit by 8 billion dollars in the first half of the year by administratively stopping imports, resulting in a trade deficit of 17 billion dollars in the first six months of the current financial year compared to 25 billion dollars in the previous year.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that the dollar can jump to Rs300 which can jack up infla-



tion to 35 percent but on the other hand remittances, exports and government revenues will also increase.

The increased revenue should be used for

public welfare schemes and direct subsidies to protect the poor from inflation so that people are not forced to buy substandard items from utility stores, he added.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that consideration should also be given to increasing the amount of subsidy so that the poor people can buy the goods from the shops of their choice, thus the government can not only save funds but also increase its political capital.

The business leader said that about one million Pakistanis living abroad send two and a half billion dollars (650 billion rupees) to their relatives in Pakistan every month, from which 50 million people benefit.

Pakistan can become economically self-sufficient if the money of expatriates can be used wisely, he underlined.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that currently there are serious threats to exports, so the Ministry of Commerce should plan to align the business cost of Pakistani exporters with the cost of exporters of competing countries.

Government should consider establishing

an authority to tackle the problems of the exporters, he said.

Pakistan trades with all countries by sea except for the neighboring countries which is prone to risks so prompt payment of foreign shipping lines should be ensured otherwise Pakistan's exports may be affected.

Pakistan spends up to five billion dollars annually on freight, while currently, the country's foreign exchange volume is less than that.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the ongoing political crisis in the country is being deliberately turned into a financial crisis and some politicians are still engaged in the unholy practice.

The country needs an economic charter more than ever before. Pakistan has imported petroleum products worth ten billion dollars in the last six months, while the entire country can be switched to solar energy in just six months, which can also help get rid of electricity theft and line losses. Pakistan's petroleum import bill can be halved and annual savings of ten billion dollars will be possible, he said.

Selling Milk & Kheer

LAHORE: People are busy buying hot milk and traditional sweet food item Kheer during cold weather after the rain in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

NEPRA Hears KE request for highest ever Rs 10/unit reduction for December FCA

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) will be conducting a public hearing today, January 31, 2023, on KE's request for a reduction of Rs. 10.26/unit on account of Fuel Charge Adjustments (FCA) for December 2022. The FCA is reviewed every month as per the tariff regime applicable across the country and is usually applicable to the consumer's bills for one month only.

FCAs are linked with changes in global fuel prices and passed onto consumer bills under prescribed rules and regulations of NEPRA and the Govern-

ment of Pakistan. December's FCA request was lower primarily due to a reduction in prices of RLNG, furnace oil, and power purchased from CPPA-G by 17%, 15%, and 29% respectively as compared to September 2022 and better utilization of generation mix.

For the past consecutive months, downward trends in prices of fuels have enabled KE to pass on benefits of negative FCA to customers. Per NEPRA guidelines, after scrutiny of KE's submission, the Authority will issue instructions on the period during which these costs can be applied to consumer bills.

December FCA is likely to apply in February 2023 bills.

FFC Announces Final Results for the Year 2022

ISLAMABAD: Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited (FFC) has announced its financial results for the year ended December 31, 2022 in its Board of Directors meeting held on January 30, 2023.

The year 2022 was full of challenges ranging from socioeconomic, geopolitical, governmental and environmental factors. The year witnessed galloping inflation, double digit interest rates and sharp devaluation of Pak Rupee besides heavy floods during second half of the year, negatively impacting costs of the Company. The profitability was further impacted by the levy of super-tax resulting in an effective tax rate of over 40%, besides the exemption of output GST.

Efficient treasury management and increased dividend payout by associated companies resulted in highest-ever other income of Rs 14.4 billion compared to Rs 7.9 billion last year. This enabled the Company to achieve a profitability of Rs 20 billion (despite a supertax levy of Rs 5 billion) with an EPS of Rs 15.76 compared to Rs 17.21 last year. The dollarized profitability of the Company however declined by 29% to USD 97 million compared to USD 137 million last year.

As we step into 2023, the acute shortage of foreign currency reserves in the Country



pose severe challenges towards import of essential materials, spares, chemicals and other inputs required for maintaining urea production levels.

In view of declining gas pressures, the Company along with other fertilizer manufacturers and the gas supplier has undertaken gas Pressure Enhancement Facility (PEF) project which involves significant capi-

tal outlay and is essential for sustained fertilizer production. Therefore, availability of foreign exchange is critical for timely implementation of the sustainability project and continued plant operations.

The company also declared the final dividend of Rs 3.15 per share, with an aggregate distribution of Rs 12.13 per share for the year 2022.

All Pakistan Hotels Association warns of dire consequences if reserves fall further

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Vice Chairman of All Pakistan Hotels Association Mian Akram Farid, while addressing an emergency meeting, said that the declining foreign exchange reserves of the State Bank of Pakistan, which have reduced to the lowest level of about 3.7 billion dollars. There is a lot of concern in the business community over the dollar's soaring high, as the dollar has crossed Rs 265 in the open market on the previous day.

What is already difficult to sustain will become more difficult. The manufacturing sector, which is already under pressure, which has a direct impact on exports, the rupee has already gone up several times more than the common man would like. Or traders have lost their purchasing power. A sudden increase of Rs 35 in petrol and diesel prices will increase the cost of transportation, which will greatly affect the construction sector, along with



the tourism and hotels industry.

He expressed fear that if the government does not take immediate corrective measures, Pakistan's life Shat will suffer from disastrous consequences. He said that strong foreign exchange reserves of any country instills confidence in local and foreign investors, but the continuous decline in Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves is shaking the confidence of the business community and investors. Mian Akram Farid added. He said that the unusual fall in the value of the rupee

will not only lead to a new wave of inflation, but after the increase in interest rates, industrial activities will also be affected due to the increase in the cost of loans, because the cost of production will increase further due to the increase in the cost of imported goods and industrial raw materials.

And the life of the common man has become miserable. He said that due to the rise in interest rates and the falling value of the rupee, it has become difficult to run the industries. Containers full of imported goods are piling up at Pakistan's ports; exporters are unable to make payments due to inability to get dollars. Various factories, including textiles, are closing due to shortage of raw materials and energy problems. We demand that other industries including the construction industry take immediate steps to bring down energy prices appropriately to reduce transaction costs so that construction and industrial activities are not affected.

Emirates operates milestone demonstration flight powered with 100% Sustainable Aviation Fuel



News Desk

KARACHI: Emirates has operated its first milestone demonstration flight on a Boeing 777-300ER, powering one of its engines with 100% Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF). The flight took off from Dubai International Airport (DXB), and was commanded by Captain Fali Vajifdar and Captain Khalid Nasser Akram, flying for more than one hour over the Dubai coastline.

The demonstration flight powered by SAF holds particular significance as the UAE declares 2023 the 'Year of Sustainability'. The year will showcase the UAE's commitment to seek innovative solutions to challenges such as energy, climate change and other issues related to sustainability. The flight supports collective industry efforts to enable a future of 100% SAF flying and help advance the UAE's sustainability objectives.

Emirates' demonstration flight, the first in the Middle East and North Africa to be powered by 100% SAF, supports broader efforts to reduce lifecycle CO2 emissions as the industry looks to scale up its use of SAF. The flights will also help to refine the playbook for future SAF demonstrations, and will also support future certification where 100% drop-in SAF fuel is approved for aircraft.

Currently, SAF is

approved for use in all aircraft, but only in blends of up to 50% with conventional jet fuel.

Emirates worked alongside partners GE Aerospace, Boeing, Honeywell, Neste and Virent to procure and develop a blend of SAF that closely replicates the properties of conventional jet fuel.

At each blend ratio, a host of chemical and physical fuel property measurements were carried out. After multiple lab tests and rigorous trials, they arrived at a blending ratio that mirrored the qualities of jet fuel. Eighteen tonnes of SAF were blended, comprised of HEFA-SPK provided by Neste (hydro processed esters and fatty acids and synthetic paraffinic kerosene) and HDO-SAK from Virent (hydro deoxygenated synthetic aromatic kerosene).

The 100% SAF supplied one GE90 engine, with conventional jet fuel supplying the other engine.

The test flight further demonstrates the compatibility of the specially blended SAF as a safe and reliable fuel source.

The promising outcome of this initiative also adds to the body of industry data and research around SAF blends in higher proportions, paving the way for standardization and future approval of 100% drop-in SAF as a replacement for jet fuel, well above the current 50% blend limit.

Squad registrations for PKR 3 million PUBG MOBILE tournaments



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The registration process for the epic nationwide PUBG MOBILE tournament under PTCL Group's biggest e-sports gaming tournament, 'GameKey Arena' will close tonight.

With an over whelming response, more than 3500 players have entered the contest to battle it out for the coveted crown of PUBG MOBILE Champion. Registrations are open for professional and aspiring players till midnight of 30th January 2023. So get registered now to avail the chance to compete with Pakistan's best gaming talent in the country's biggest gaming arena.

Following the closure of registrations at midnight, the nationwide qualifiers will take place from the 1st to the 8th of February, 2023. Squads from all over Pakistan will show their skill of dominance in the online preliminary round. 10 top squads prevailing in the initial round and 6 nations top PUBG MOBILE teams will be invited to Lahore for the Grand Finale, taking place on 12th February.

PTCL Group's 'GameKey Arena' is being organized under its newly launched gaming platform 'GameKey' which provides one-window access to a curated list of the most popular games to all data users in Pakistan. It is the inaugural edition of 'GameKey Arana', however, the tournament is poised to be an annual e-sports festival for gaming enthusiasts across Pakistan.

Akmal to chair selection committee for age-group trials

A Sports

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Monday, constituted an eight-member selection committee under the chairmanship of former Test wicketkeeper batter Kamran Akmal which will conduct U13, U16 and U19 trials for the selection of regional and district teams.

Besides Akmal, the newly-constituted selection committee includes Sohail Tanvir, Amir Nazir, Taimoor Khan, Junaid Khan, Faisal Athar, Qaiser Abbas and Sanaullah Baloch.

In a statement, released by the PCB, the cricket governing body shared that each selector, alongside the regional/district head coach, will conduct the trials



of the aforementioned age brackets as per the schedule.

"Each selector, along with the head coach of the region/district, will conduct trials according to the schedule, which will be announced in due course," stated PCB.

It is worth mentioning here that Akmal represented Pakistan in 268 matches, while Sohail Tanvir played 121 matches for the country.

Furthermore, Amir Nazir played six Tests and nine ODIs from 1993 to 1995, Junaid Khan appeared in 107 international matches for Pakistan, Faisal Athar played in an ODI in 2003 and Qaiser Abbas played in a Test against England in 2000. Sanaullah Baloch and Taimoor Khan are former first-class cricketers.

Army & PAF to fight for Inter Departmental Basketball C'ship title

ISLAMABAD: Defending champion Pakistan Army entered into the final round to see strong Pakistan Air Force (PAF) in the final encounter of the ongoing Inter-Departmental National Basketball Championship will be held on Tuesday here at Pakistan Sports Complex Islamabad.

Pakistan Basketball Federation Secretary General Khalid Bashir, Army Sports Board Secretary Col. Sadaf Akram, Col Nabeel Ahmed Rana, Championship organising secretary Ouj E Zahoor Pakistan Sports Board DDG Saeed Akhtar, Azam Dar and other dignitaries were also witnessed the championship semi-finals.

Army, who is still unbeatable throughout the championship thrashed out Wapda in the first semi final match by securing 92-65 points.

Army players were far better against the blue shirts



team at half time by leading 14 points as second quarter of the match was concluded with 45-31 points.

Army ace player Tughlab Ammar again led the winning side by scoring 20 points while Abdul Rehman scored 14 points for Army

victory. Usman Khan 18 and Salman Butt scored 12 points for Wapda while Saadat Jehangir, Umair Muhammad, Naveed Ahmed, MM Alam and Choudhry Nadeem were supervised the semifinal match.

In the second semifinal match Pakistan Air Force outclassed POF by 93-68 points to reach the final of the championship. Ahmed Jan was the top player for PAF who scored 28 points with Umair Jan scored 12 points in the match.

Mickey Arthur to be hired as 'director', not head coach

LAHORE: Not long after the announcement that Mickey Arthur was to be Pakistan's first "online" coach, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) announced that it would instead appoint Arthur as "team director" instead of head coach, sources said on Monday.

It has been decided that the position of head coach of the Pakistan cricket team will be terminated, since the board is aiming to work with assistant coaches, and not head coaches, sources revealed.

The PCB will hire three assistant coaches for batting, bowling, and fielding along with the former South African cricketer.

Earlier, sources had told Geo News that New Zealand's former Test cricketer Grant Bradburn is likely to return to the Pakistan cricket setup.

Bradburn, who remained the fielding coach of the Pakistan men's team from 2018 to 2020, is most likely to become Pakistan men's team assistant coach.

Arthur, who led Pakistan to its first-ever ICC Champions Trophy in 2017, will be the team director and look after all matters.

However, the former Pakistan coach will not be available to the national side during the English county season, according to the expected contract.

Arthur will be with the team for the ODI World Cup 2023 and Australia tour.

International representation of Faisal Fayyaz for Pakistan

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Faisal Fayyaz is a well renowned Computer Science Professional, Cambridge certified Computer Science teacher, Wakelet Ambassador, Microsoft Innovative Educator Expert, International

Gymnast, International Olympic Certified Gymnastics Coach & Sports Administrator, Cisco

Pakistan Trainer, Global Speaker, International Event Organizer, Global Educator, Scientist,

Wakelet Community Leader, Professor, Researcher, International Speaker and Subject Specialist of Computer Science, System Software, Robotics, Embedded Systems.

He received Honorary Doctorate Award 2022 in Computer Science on 25th December 2022 in New Delhi by International Internship University and Honorary Doctorate Award 2022 in Philosophy of Diplomacy and International Relations on 27th December 2022 by Wisdom Leadership University. He is the first one Pakistani who received Certificate of Appreciation while presenting research "Importance & diversity of STEM" on 10th May 2022 at 10am in C101 Auditorium, World Congress Center.



Atlanta, Georgia, USA in International Science & Engineering Fair (ISEF 2022) along with mentoring of "Virtual Human Health & Safety Integration System" which project is also Best of the Category award holder and Grand Winner project of 1st time in the history of Pakistan in National Science and Engineering Fair 2022. He won the Title of Best Researcher in International Conference of Computer Science, Information Technology & Innovations, Uzbekistan while presenting his research entitled as "Technology absorbs Education in Young Learners". He is the first youngest Pakistani to be appointed as Ambassador and Country Head by more than 50+ International

Organization of the World in almost all disciplines. Faisal has also received national youth empowerment award by

Educasa International, Minhaj Youth League and Rising Pakistan. He is the first Pakistani who has 750+ International, National, Provincial and University awards for his contribution in the field of Computer Science, Information Technology, Research, Gymnastics,

Co-curricular Activities, Extracurricular Activities, Physical Education & Sports Science. He is the first Pakistani to be appointed by 50+ International Organizations in various high positions. He is the founder of Pakistan Computer Society & Sports Promotion Society International, he initiated

National Information Technology Literacy Campaign while serving as Project Manager in PUCIT, Punjab University, Pakistan. He is the first Pakistani professor who taught

more than 10000+ students in Computer Science & Sports World. He is also certified sports coach and sports administrator by Internal Olympic committee. He is also World Advisor of Sports Science & Sports

Gymnastics in World Sports Open University. He is also former Associate Secretary of Pakistan

Gymnastics Federation and also organized 1st World Gymnastics Conference. He represented as

International player of Pakistan in Commonwealth Games 2002 Manchester, UK, & South Asian Gymnastics Championship 1999 Patiala, Jesulmer, India while served as technical official & Team manager in South Asian Gymnastics Championship 2021, Dhaka, Bangladesh. He is also vice president & Director Asia of Wisdom Leadership University. He is editorial board member of Asia

Pacific Journal of Advanced Education & Technologies. He has initiated and organized a lot of conferences, events, webinars, webtalks and expedition for the welfare of sports, science, and young generation. Faisal has received two times awards from president of Pakistan and roll of honor for Government College, Lahore, Forman Christian College, Punjab University, and Government College of Physical Education.

PGF successfully concludes 12th Pakistan Junior Golf Championship

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Pakistan Golf Federation has successfully concluded the three days 12th Pakistan Junior Amateur Golf Championship 2023 (Faldo Series Trials, Pakistan) which were held at the Nick Faldo designed Rumanza Golf Course, DHA, Multan. This event was conducted under the vigilant and attentive guidance of Salman Abbasi of Rumanza Golf Club who was the Tournament Director and Malik Kamran of PGF and brought elevation for the sixteen years old Saad Habib Malik of Rumanza Golf Club who emerged as the overall Champion with three rounds scores of 72, 67 and 74 and a championship aggregate of 213, three under par. All through the three rounds Saad Habib came up with an outstanding display of golfing skills and added to that was his ability to keep himself composed and self controlled with no nerves even at critical junctions of the Championship. Saad Habib attained first position overall and also got selected in the age bracket 16-18 years to represent the country at the Nick Faldo Finals to be held in Viet Nam in March.

Syed Yashal Shah was the one who got selected in 18-21 years age group. His three rounds scores were 71, 71, 72 and a championship aggregate of 214 two under par

In age group 12-16, Shahmeer Majid will be the nations representative.

As for girls Humna Amjad of PAF Skyview beat Parkha Ijaz (Defence Raya) by one stroke to earn the honor of representing Pakistan. And Bushra Fatima was the best one in age group 12-16 years.

The Secretary, PGF Brig Sajid Akram SI (M) expressed gratitude to Brig Fayyaz Sial and Salman Abbasi of Rumanza Golf and Country Club for conduct of the event in a worthwhile manner. He further said PGF chose Rumanza Golf Course as the arena for this Championship because this is a beautiful golf course coupled with it being a signature facility designed by Sir Nick Faldo.

Also appreciative was the President, PGF, Lt General Qazi Muhammed Ikram HI (M) who was all praise for the performance of competing youngsters belonging to age categories 12-16, above 16 years to 18 years and above 18 years to 21. Indeed holding of the Nick Faldo Trials at Rumanza added fitness and deftness to the competition and boys and girls performed impressively.

Brig Muhammed Shoaib Anwar Kiyani SI (M), Project Director, Multan graced the prize distribution ceremony of 12th Pakistan Junior Amateur Golf Championship (Faldo Series Trials).

Rashid Naseem to attempt setting four world records in Italian TV Show

A Sports -

KARACHI: The serial record-breaker Pakistani Martial Artist Rashid Naseem received an invitation from an Italian TV Show named Lo Show Dei Record to set four different world records.

According to the details, in his stint at the Italian TV Show, Rashid will strive to set four world records including two in the Nunchaku category.

Meanwhile, Rashid will attempt to break most clay targets in a minute using nunchaku and in another record, he will try to remove the most number of playing cards, placed between two bottles.

The serial record-breaker will also participate in a challenge to smash the most number of soda cans by his head and in the fourth challenge he will try to remove the most number of bottle caps, using his head. To participate in the show, Rashid will travel to Italy alongside his student Asmar Javed who has already received a visa from the Italian Consulate.

Rashid was also invited to the Italian Consulate and met the Consul Journal, who assured him of his cooperation in the future.

It is pertinent to mention that Rashid has already participated in various famous TV shows across the world before, including China, Germany, Italy, Korea and Singapore.

No grouping witnessed in Pakistan cricket team' claims Afridi

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Former Pakistan skipper Shahid Afridi said he had not witnessed any grouping within the current Pakistan team during his brief tenure as the interim chief selector.

Afridi, who served as the chair of the interim selection committee for the recently concluded New Zealand series, while rejecting any alleged grouping among the players of the national team, admitted the fact that the liking-and-disliking culture did exist.

"There was no grouping found in the Pakistan team," he said in a private ceremony on Monday. "I admit that captain's liking and disliking do exist."

"It had happened in the past and remained so during my tenure as well," he maintained.

Meanwhile, Afridi also expressed his interest in coaching the player at the under-19 level, saying that is where one should work really hard.



Winter Sports Festival, 2023

Sports Desk

LAHORE: The exciting competitions of Winter Sports Festival 2023 concluded at different State-of-the-Art sports venues of Nishitar Park Sports Complex under the auspices of Sports Board Punjab on Sunday.

Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi was the chief guest at the closing ceremony. He distributed prizes among the winners and other top performers of athletics event on the last day of Winter Sports Festival.

In Winter Sports Festival football final, Multan defeated Sargodha after nerve-wrecking contest. Both teams played 1-1 draw in the stipulated time but Multan emerged winner through sudden death goal. Sahiwal finished third in the event.

Faisalabad athletes dominated the athletics event and won huge appreciation for their magnificent performance. Sunaina Musawwar and Ali Ahmed were declared the fastest female and male athletes of Winter Sports Festival 2023 respectively.

In Winter Sports Festival men's athletics event, Faisalabad got 50 points, Multan 35 and Gujranwala 31 points while in women's athletics event, the top three positions went to Faisalabad (67 points), Rawalpindi (55) and Lahore 45 points.

In Winter Sports Festival judo event, Lahore got first position with 70 points, four gold and one silver medal. Faisalabad remained runners up with 40 points, 3 silver and two bronze medals followed by Gujranwala which scored 30 points, one gold, one silver and one bronze medal.

Director Sports Chand Perveen, Assistant Directors Shaista Qaiser and Zareena Waqar, Olympian Arshad Nadeem, Chief Sports Consultant Hafeez Bhatti, President Punjab Athletics Association Salman Butt and other officials were also present at Punjab Stadium.

Olympian Arshad Nadeem and President Punjab Athletics Association Salman Butt also distributed prizes among the top performers.

Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi, Olympian Arshad Nadeem and Syrus Saud Jan were also given souvenirs on this occasion.

Earlier, Director General Punjab Food Authority Mudassar Riaz Malik and Director Admin Syed Umair Hassan distributed prizes at closing ceremony of table tennis, judo and badminton

events of Winter Sports Festival at NPSC Gymnasium Hall.

Following are the results: Athletics results:

400m Women:
1st Sunaina Musawwar (Pindi), 2nd Mahnoor Asghar (Lhr), 3rd Iram Zahoor (Sahiwal)

400m Men:
1st Shafiqullah (Pindi), 2nd Moed Jabbar (Multan), 3rd Tariq Fareed (Sahiwal)

Long Jump (Women):
1st Mahnoor Asghar (Lhr), 2nd Azka Iqbal (Fsb), 3rd Amra Khan Niazi (Sargodha).

Shot Put (Men):
1st Ali Raza (Multan), 2nd M Azam (Fsb), 3rd Noman (Sargodha)

Shot Put (Women):
1st Khdeejah Mehreen (Fsb), 2nd Rahat Sultana (Pindi), 3rd Janat Jan (Sahiwal).

Table tennis Men's Team event:



Lahore (gold), Multan (silver), Gujranwala (bronze)

Table tennis Women's Team event: Faisalabad (gold), Lahore (silver), Multan (bronze)

Badminton Men's event:
1. Lahore, 2. Gujranwala, 3. Gujrat, 4. Bahawalpur

Badminton Women event:
1. Lahore, 2. Multan, 3. Rawal-

21-17
2nd Single: Raza Ali (Lahore) beat Wahab (Gujranwala) by 21/16, 21-11

2nd Double: Tayyab Shafiq & Raza Ali (Lahore) beat Sohaib & Faiz (Gujranwala) by 21-18, 21-15
3rd Single: Manan (Lahore) beat Sohaib (Gujranwala) by 21-8, 21-9.

Badminton Men's Team Event
3rd Position Match

Gujrat beat Bahawalpur by 3-1
1st Single: Sarfaraz (Gujrat) beat Noman (Bahawalpur) by 21-14, 18-21, 21-14

1st Double: Faizan & Waseem (Gujrat) beat Waheed & Saqib (Bahawalpur) by 21-17, 21-15

2nd Single: Ahtsham (Bahawalpur) beat Ibrar (Gujrat) by 21-15, 21-17

2nd Double: Ibrar & Waleed (Gujrat) beat Faizan & Ahtsham (Bahawalpur)