



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
ہم سے رنج بن گئے ہیں کیا کہا کہ ہم سے زائد نہ شام سے بیان کیا ان سے فاطمہ نے ان سے اہل رضی اللہ عنہا نے کہ رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے سورج کو زمین میں غلام آکر کر کے کا حکم فرمایا۔ (صحیح بخاری، حدیث نمبر 1054)

Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited

Kaira urges UN to ensure true implementation of self-determination resolution for Kashmiris

On the occasion of Kashmir's Right to Self-Determination Day, Adviser to Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira has urged the United Nations to ensure the implementation of its resolutions passed for the right of self-determination of Kashmiris. (Report on Page 8)



US, Pakistan have mutual interest in ensuring Taliban acts against TTP, other terrorist groups: State Dept.

The United States and Pakistan have a shared interest in ensuring that the Taliban acts against terrorist groups, including TTP, and not allow them to use the Afghan soil for their actions, State Department Spokesperson Ned Price said on Wednesday. (Report on Page 8)

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Climate resilient Pakistan!

ISLAMABAD: President hopeful Geneva conference to help Pakistan become climate resilient.



PM emphasizes timely CPEC completion

Agencies

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday held a telephonic conversation with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang wherein he emphasized Pakistan's unswerving focus on timely progress of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects.

During the "comprehensive telephone conversation," the prime minister assured the Chinese Premier that Pakistan would provide a completely secure and conducive business environment for Chinese investors.

"The two leaders' discussion was characterized by warmth and cordiality, in keeping with the best traditions of the Pakistan-China All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership," a PM Office statement said.

Prime Minister Shehbaz and Premier Li exchanged New Year



greetings, noting that bilateral relations had grown to new heights in 2022, and agreeing to maintain the steady momentum of bilateral cooperation in 2023.

Recalling his visit to China in November 2022 and wide-rang-

ing conversations with President Xi Jinping and Premier Li, the prime minister underscored Pakistan's commitment to fostering closer relations with China.

He reiterated Pakistan's unstinting support on China's

core interests.

Both the leaders also discussed regional issues of mutual interest.

Premier Li Keqiang assured the prime minister that China viewed Pakistan not only as a strategic friend but as a coun-

try whose stability and economic welfare was of utmost importance to the region and to China. China would always stand in solidarity with Pakistan, Premier Li added.

Noting the International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan being held in Geneva on January 9, PM Shehbaz briefed Premier Li on the latest progress in post-flood reconstruction and rehabilitation in Pakistan.

He conveyed Pakistan's profound gratitude for China's prompt and generous support for the flood-affected people.

Premier Li assured the prime minister of China's continued support for Pakistan's reconstruction efforts and the success of the Conference.

Both leaders agreed to maintain close communication to fast-track the bilateral cooperation agenda for mutual benefit of the peoples of Pakistan and China in 2023 and beyond.

Terrorist commander, two bombers among 11 killed in South Waziristan operation



ISPR

RAWALPIND: A terrorist commander and two suicide bombers among 11 others were killed on Thursday during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) conducted by the security forces in general area Wana of South Waziristan District and successfully foiled a major terror plot.

According to the Inter-Ser-

vices Public Relations (ISPR), an intense exchange of fire took place with the terrorists, who remained actively involved in terror activities against security forces and target killing of police in South Waziristan.

The terrorist commander was identified as Hafiz Ullah alias Tor Hafiz. A huge quantity of weapons and ammunition was also recovered from the terrorists.

Self-determination right to Kashmiris under UNSC resolutions: Bilawal

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhattu Zardari on Thursday said that the international community should live up to their promises and take measures enabling the people of Jammu and Kashmir to exercise the right of self-determination as enshrined in UNSC resolutions.

The foreign minister, in his message on the occasion of Right to Self-Determination Day annually observed on January 5, said the Day reminded the international community, especially the United Nations, of the imperative of honoring its commitment towards the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

"On 5th of January every year, we renew our support for the right to self-determination of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. On this day in 1949, the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) unanimously adopted a resolution espousing the right to self-determination of the Kashmiri people through

a free and impartial plebiscite under the auspices of the United Nations," the foreign minister remarked.

Foreign Minister Bilawal said the right to self-determination was a cardinal principle of international law that was upheld by international human rights instruments. It has been reaffirmed by the UN General Assembly in its annual resolution on self-determination, he added.

He said the last 75 years of India's occupation of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) were a sad story of repression of the Kashmiri people.

He said India had unleashed a reign of terror in IIOJK, and denied these oppressed people the right to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and lead a life of dignity.

Since it's illegal and unilateral actions of August 5, 2019, India is engineering demographic and political changes in IIOJK to convert Kashmiris into a disempowered minority in their own land, he remarked.

Daesh militants involved in Pak embassy attack killed: Afghan Spokesperson

Spokesman Report



KABUL: Afghan Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid said on Thursday that Daesh militants involved in the attack on Pakistan's embassy in Kabul have been killed in an operation.

On December 2, the Pakistani embassy came under attack in Kabul with Chargé d'Affaires (CdA) to Afghanistan Ubaidur Rehman Nizamani targeted. The gun attack was carried out at a time when Chargé d'Affaires to Afghanistan Ubaidur Rehman Nizamani was walking in the garden of Pakistan's embassy in Kabul.

FIA rejected to provide call record of Wazirabad shooter: Imran Khan

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman and former premier Imran Khan has said that the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) rejected to provide call record of the Wazirabad shooter.

Imran Khan conducted a press conference one day after the joint investigation team (JIT) findings made public regarding the Wazirabad gun attack. He raised serious questions on the JIT revelations regarding the assassination attempt on him.

He said that even the Punjab police is not ready to help them after the Wazirabad gun attack.

Khan said that the shooter Naveed was a trained individual. "He said in his first video statement that he was alone. DPO Gujrat had recorded his statement via his mobile phone which was forwarded to the journalists who posted it on Twitter within six minutes."



"DPO Gujrat had sent the video to specific TV channels who are against us. We are having our government in Punjab but the police officer sent the video to other people."

The former premier said that it was his right to nominate three persons in the first information report (FIR) against the assassination attempt on him. "I cannot lodge a case against them so far. When we are ruling the province, which power stopped the registration of the FIR? I failed [to register an FIR] despite making attempts."

The PTI chief said that the

suspect Naveed was taken into custody by CTD [Counter-Terrorism Department] for eight hours and later another statement was released at 12:00 midnight which was recorded by the CTD.

"The background in the video statement was changed. CTD and its officers are subordinate to the Punjab government but someone else is more powerful than us who stopped them from being part of the investigation."

He said that the JIT asked DPO Gujrat to hand over his mobile phone but he refused it nor cooperated in the investigation.

Khan said that he is raising many questions before the nation about the individuals who were involved in carrying out the attack on him. "I know the people who are behind the assassination plot. If this can happen with a former prime minister, then what is the value of other people. The law should be same for the powerful and weak."

Wazirabad attack was 'planted' by PTI, claims suspect Naveed's counsel

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Mian Dawood, the lawyer of the prime suspect Naveed Bashir in the Wazirabad attack, in which Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chief Imran Khan was injured has claimed that the incident was 'planted' by his own party PTI.

"Wazirabad incident was planned and has nothing to do with the reality," Mian Dawood alleged while addressing a press conference in Lahore.

During the presser, the counsel said the JIT did not investigate the matter on merit and they deny accepting its report. The statements of the policemen were also neglected by the JIT in the Wazirabad attack, Mian Dawood said. After the forensic report of the Wazirabad attack, the situation has been cleared that the JIT has conducted the investigation in a fraudulent manner.

No Shooter other than Naveed involved in attack on Imran: Sanaullah

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah has rejected Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Fawad Chaudhry's claims, insisting that only one shooter, Naveed, was involved in the attack on former premier Imran Khan.

Addressing a press conference, the interior minister claimed that the PTI Chairman was staging a drama for past two months, adding that it does not take more than two weeks' time to recover if he had received bullet injuries on his leg.

Rejecting the PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry's claims, he said that the arrested suspect - Naveed - was only shooter involved in the attack on Imran Khan. "Naveed's statement is 100 percent correct. No second or third person was involved in the attack," he

added. Rana Sanaullah reiterated that the suspect was religiously motivated, alleging that Moazzam - the PTI worker - was killed by the bullet of Imran Khan's guard. He added that the guard must be arrested and interrogated.

The interior minister further said that only seven to eight bullets were fired during the attack, "while PTI leaders claim they received 30-35 bullets."

"Imran Khan has been staging drama for the past two months", he said, adding it does not take more than two weeks' time to recover if he had received bullet injuries.

A day earlier, Fawad Chaudhry claimed that a shooter was sent to kill suspect Naveed - who attacked former prime minister and party chairman Imran Khan during Long March at Wazirabad.

Moot for Energy Conservation

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on the implementation of Energy Conservation Plan on Thursday.



Photo: PID

PM reviews implementation of energy-saving measures

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Thursday here chaired a meeting to review the implementation of the measures taken for saving energy in the country.

The meeting was told about the progress made on the implementation of the solarization projects. In the initial phase solar panels of 1000 megawatts would be installed on federal government buildings.

In this connection, the process of bidding would be started next week.

It was further told that the process of policy-making for the production of solar panels at the local level in the country, had entered the final phase.

Consultation with the industries related to the manufacturing of solar panels had been completed.

The participants were told that in order to increase the production of electric motorcycles, the local industry was

taken into confidence to formulate a comprehensive policy.

It was suggested in the policy that all the industries would be converted by the end of the year to the production of electric motorcycles. The participants agreed to the suggestion.

It was also told that for conserving gas, all new gas geysers would come with conical baffles and by the end of the current year, the installation of baffles on the present geysers would be ensured.

It was told that the produc-

tion of high energy consuming filament/ low quality old electric bulbs would not be allowed after the sale of the present stock.

The present industries would be converted to the new technology bulbs which consume less energy.

The industries which were manufacturing high energy-consuming fans would also be transferred to the new technology and a comprehensive plan would be laid down for replacing the old fans.

The prime minister directed the implementation of the measures in a given timeframe.

Former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, federal ministers Ishaq Dar, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Khurram Dastgir Khan, Advisor to the Prime Minister Ahad Cheema, Minister of State Dr. Musadiq Malik, Special Assistants Muhammad Jehanzeb, Syed Fahd Hussain, Coordinator of PM Rana Ahsan Afzal and officials concerned attended the meeting.

Turkish govt to help restoring home place, tomb of Hassan Ali Effendi

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The Consul General of Turkiye in Karachi Cemal Sangu, on Thursday, said that the Turkish government in collaboration with Sindh Culture and antiquities department was working to restore the home place and tomb of Hassan Ali Effendi located in Hyderabad City.

The Turkish envoy, during the visit of Sindh Madressatul Islam University (SMIU) and a meeting with Vice Chancellor Dr. Mujeeb Sahrai, deans, and other officials, said that the founder of SMIU Hassan Ali Effendi had strong relations with Turkiye's Ottoman rulers and he was given titles of "Bey" and "Effendi" by Sultan of Turkiye.

"Government of Turkiye feels proud of his services for the promotion of modern education in Sindh by establishing the great institute of Sindh Madressatul Islam," the CG said.

Cemal Sangu announced one Ph.D. scholarship on poverty cum merit bases for a student of SMIU in Turkiye and said that the scholarship would be given to SMIU student every year due to the association of its founder Hassan Ali Effendi's relationship with Turkiye.

Pakistan and Turkiye have very friendly relations and the Turkish government was trying further

strengthen these brotherly relations, he said adding that they were working to bring the people of Sindh and other provinces of Pakistan close to the Turkish people for spreading love and harmony in the world.

He further said that the Turkish government had given 128 scholarships to Pakistan's students for undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate programs, last year and Pakistani students must be encouraged to avail these opportunities.

Dr. Mujeeb Sahrai lauded the offer of the Turkish Consul General and said that SMIU would open a Rumi Chair in SMIU and Turkish Corner, where information about Turkiye's history, literature, culture, and education will be available for SMIU's students.

SMIU would also encourage research on the relations of Hassan Ali Effendi with the Ottoman Empire, he said.

TIKA Karachi Program Coordinator Khalil Ibrahim Basaran briefed about projects of TIKA in Sindh and informed that arrangements for Turkish language classes were also being made.

Documentaries on SMIU and TIKA were also screened on the occasion while Dr. Mujeeb Sahrai presented shields and Ajrak to the guests. They also presented a souvenir to the Vice Chancellor.

Education to ensure development, prosperity of Pakistan: President

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi Thursday said only through education, Pakistan could ensure national development and eliminate poverty, unemployment, intolerance and extremism.

He was the chief guest at 24th FCS Convocation ceremony held at National Defence University, Islamabad where four PhD, 48 MPhil and 208 BS graduates were conferred degrees. Medals and distinction certificates were also awarded to the 1st and 2nd position holders.

The chief guest in his address congratulated the graduated students on completion of an important milestone in their academic career. At the end, he extended his heartfelt congratulations to all graduating students, their parents and families on successful completion of their studies.

President, Lieutenant General Nauman Mahmood welcomed the chief guest, dignitaries, faculty, parents and the students on the



ceremony.

He emphasized that a nation's character was shaped in its educational institutions. He further apprised that in the quest of securing higher standards in academia and research, NDU was providing a conducive learning environment and allied facilities to its students.

He added that NDU was putting utmost efforts to prepare the graduates to display character and commitment in their professional career thereby leaving a mark of excellence.

Kaira urges UN to ensure true implementation of self-determination resolution for Kashmiris

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: On the occasion of Kashmir's Right to Self-Determination Day, Adviser to Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira has urged the United Nations to ensure the implementation of its resolutions passed for the right of self-determination of Kashmiris.

In a message in connection with the Day, he said that thousands of Kashmiris have sacrificed their lives for the great cause.

Kaira said, "Today, apart from implementing the resolutions of the United Nations,



India is flouting human rights in the occupied valley", adding not a day passes in Indian illegally occupied Jammu Kashmir (IIOJK) when innocent Kashmiri youths were not martyred.

He said that India was

pursuing Israeli-style policies in IIOJK and changing the demography of the occupied valley under the illegal and unilateral measures of August 5, 2019, to reduce the proportion of the Muslim population in the region.

He said that India was trying to achieve its nefarious goals through extrajudicial killings and genocide of Kashmiris.

The adviser on Kashmir Affairs said that all these actions of India were in open violation not only of the United Nations but also of all international laws and the Fourth Geneva Convention.

He urged the UN and the international community to take immediate steps for preventing Indian state terrorism in Occupied Kashmir and fulfill their responsibilities to give Kashmiris their right to self-determination.

Qamar said that he will

continue to raise his voice for the Kashmiris' right to self-determination and will not back down even an inch from their support.

He said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari were fighting for the rights of Kashmiris at all world forums, citing that as the reason behind the protest against Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in India.

The series of fighting on the forums will continue until the full implementation of the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council for the right of Kashmiris to self-determination, he assured.

Jamaat-e-Islami ends sit-in after getting LG polls' assurance

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) concluded its sit-in in Karachi after getting assurance from the Sindh government regarding the timely organisation of local government (LG) polls as per schedule, ARY News on Thursday.

The dialogues between the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) and the Sindh government remained successful.

Sindh minister Nasir Hussain Shah said that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had postponed the LG polls due to rains. He admitted that some people want to further delay the LG polls.

Shah assured JI chief Hafiz Naeemur Rehman that LG polls will be held on January 15.

Ji Karachi chief Hafiz Naeemur Rehman said that they stopped their

US, Pakistan have mutual interest in ensuring Taliban acts against TTP, other terrorist groups: State Dept.

WASHINGTON: The United States and Pakistan have a shared interest in ensuring that the Taliban acts against terrorist groups, including TTP, and not allow them to use the Afghan soil for their actions, State Department Spokesperson Ned Price said on Wednesday.

"Terrorism remains a scourge that has taken so many Pakistani, Afghans, and other innocent lives. The United States and Pakistan do indeed have a shared interest in ensuring that the Taliban live up to the commitments and that terrorist groups like ISIS-K, like the TTP, like al-Qaeda, are no longer able to threaten regional security," he said in response to a reporter's question at his daily press briefing.

"The Taliban has proven itself unable or unwilling to fulfill the commitments it has made, this is certainly one of those commitments. In the U.S.-Taliban agreement, the Taliban made a commitment to see to it that international terrorists would not operate freely within Afghanistan," Price said.

"The United States has in the operation that we undertook a few months ago that eliminated the leader of al-Qaeda (Ayman al-Zawahiri) - who was living inside, in Kabul - made very clear that the Taliban



had not lived up to that commitment.

As regard the threats by TTP against the top Pakistani political leadership, Price said the US condemns any threat of violence from any group and certainly a threat of violence like this from a terrorist group like the TTP.

"We know that the Pakistani people have suffered tremendously from terrorist attacks. We know that the Taliban has made commitments to curtailing the ability of international terrorists to be able to

operate on Afghan soil. We continue to call on the Taliban to uphold those counter-terrorism commitments," he said.

The US, he said, was committed to working with partners, but President (Joe) Biden also has a commitment to act unilaterally if and when necessary as we did just a few months ago with Ayman al-Zawahiri to take out threats that emerge in Afghanistan that potentially present a threat to the United States, to our allies, and to our interests."

Sheikh Rasheed favours contact between political parties, establishment

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rasheed has favoured contacts between the political parties of the country and the establishment.

Sheikh Rasheed said in a statement that contact should be maintained between all political parties and the establishment. He, however, denied having contact with the establishment nor being contacted.

He announced that he will lead a protest rally at Lal Haveli against inflation. Rasheed said that no power

can stop the organisation of elections. Those who adopted tactics to delay polls are afraid of their humiliating defeat, he added.

The AML chief slammed the interior minister and foreign minister for delivering 'unserious statements'. He said that the rulers will face a failure to further deteriorate the situation in the country.

He clarified that he and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan have no contact with the establishment. Imran Khan will dissolve the Punjab Assembly soon, he predicted.

Govt makes decision regarding extension in winter vacations

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Punjab government has unveiled the decision about the extension of winter vacations.

The School Education Department held a meeting in which the participants decided to not extend the winter vacations.

The education officials stated it is not beneficial to extend the vacations because of children's exams and announced that the educational insti-

tute will be opened from January 9.

It is pertinent to mention here that keeping in view the extremely cold weather in the region, the Azad Jammu and Kashmir government announced the further extension of winter vacations of all educational institutions.

According to a notification issued by the AJK government, all the public and private educational institutions will remain closed till January 8 in lieu of winter vacations.

PARC is ready to convey recent knowledge to the farmers through financial support of ZTBL: Chairman

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: ZTBL will collaborate with PARC for up-scaling of PARC innovative technologies for uplift of farming. PARC and ZTBL extend into a joint venture where PARC through technical expertise and ZTBL the credit permission this technical and financial combination with help in transforming of agriculture which will improve farmers livelihood.

In the presence Members of Board of Directors of ZTBL PARC has signed a MoU with Zarai Taraqiati Bank Limited (ZTBL) to establish a collaborative relationship in promoting and adapting latest/novel agricultural technologies, practices, techniques and Agri mechanization for improving Farm efficiency and for the benefits of farming community. Under this MoU PARC and ZTBL may work jointly to conduct Webinars, field days, seminars, workshops etc. to disseminate latest developments in agriculture for uplifting the livelihood of farming community. Both parties may develop partnership, for



running of joint ventures, pilot projects and Research activities i.e., establishment of demonstration plots, Research Trials on modern agricultural machinery, agronomic practices, crop diversification etc. ZTBL will conduct Zarai Baithaks as an integrated approach and invite PARC Experts for their research outreach for the appropriate benefits of farming community in various parts of

the country. Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman PARC said that PARC will facilitate/invite ZTBL in training and capacity building (physically/virtually) of Bank's staff in improved Agricultural Technology, crop production practices, Dairy/livestock management, Agricultural entrepreneurship and provide technical assistance/guidance to ZTBL

in Transformation of ZTBL Farm Islamabad into Agriculture Tourism Center. Dr. Ali said that PARC will advice ZTBL in development of new loan products and value addition in existing loan able credit products for development of Agriculture Sector and shares their research outputs with manufacturers/suppliers of agricultural machinery, progressive farmers across the country. Finally, After signing the MoU Board of Directors of ZTBL visited National Institute of Genomics & advanced Bio-technology (NIGAB), Aeroponic Green Houses and Farm Machinery Institute. Chairman PARC briefed the Members of Board of Directors of ZTBL about ongoing research activities at NARC. All Members of Board of Directors commended the efforts of PARC in revolutionizing the agriculture sector. Finally Chairman PARC Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali thanked Mr. Asad Ullah Habib, President/CEO, ZTBL and hoped that both the parties will collaborate promoting Agro-economy of the country and inflating farmers' income from agriculture.

It is not possible to save electricity to close the markets early evening: Kashif Chaudhry

Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: The President of the Central Organization of Traders of Pakistan, Muhammad Kashif Chaudhry, reached Faisalabad and said in his statement that until the Prime Minister House, the President's House, the Chief Minister's House, the Governor's House and the residence of the offices and officers of the government institutions including courts utilize unnecessarily the electricity, till that, in shops it cannot be prohibited. It is not possible to save electricity due to the government's decision to close the markets early in the evening for the sake of saving. This government initiative is entirely an economic killing of the businessmen as well Pak. Businesses.



He further stressed on to look into the real base and takes back the cruel decision, and fight for empowering of the federation and provinces with the guide of saving methodology of the traders. It should be avoided and should not be forced to protest for their rights. If the government tries to forcefully close the shops, the traders from all over the country will protest against this decision of the government. The government and its policies will be held responsible for this situation, and must not be imposed on the nation.

The nation makers added that the patriotic business community is cooperating with the government and its administration in good faith to restore the country's devastated economy and meet the energy shortage, but the government is being stingy in encouraging them. He said that the central organization of Traders of Pakistan in this economic anarchy with the worst situation will not allow the economic killing of the businessmen. Such decisions are bad for people and businessmen.

Another System Constraints Removal Project completed in South Region

News Desk

LAHORE: National Transmission & Despatch Company (NTDC) is vigorously pursuing its plan for removal of system constraints in the south region. Recently, a 250 MVA Auto Transformer at 220 kV Grid Station Shikarpur has been successfully augmented from 160 MVA rating and energized by NTDC's Project Delivery (South) team. The augmentation work will enhance the transmission capacity of the grid station to cater the growing demand of domestic, commercial and agri consumers of connected DISCOs.

It is pertinent to note that NTDC has planned and initiated a phase-wise System Constraints Removal Plan throughout the country. In the south region, constraints removal works involve augmentation / extension at 220 kV grid station Industrial-II Quetta, 220 kV Loralai grid station, 220 kV Sibbi grid station, 220 kV Rohri grid station, 220 kV Dharki grid station, 220 kV Bahawalpur grid station, 220 kV T.M. Khan Road grid station, 220 kV Hala Road grid station and 500 kV Jamshoro grid station.

MD NTDC, Engr. Dr. Rana Abdul Jabbar Khan congratulated the concerned project team and appreciated their efforts on completion of yet another constraint removal project.

Street crime and pogroms have increased significantly in Hayatabad

Correspondent

PESHAWAR: Ghulam Bilal said that in the posh area of Peshawar, Hayatabad Street crime and pogroms have increased significantly. The Safe Hayatabad project designed to prevent crimes also failed to prove fruitful. The modern residential town of Hayatabad has become a hotbed of criminals. Apart from the police, city patrolling force, security guards of Peshawar Development Authority's Safe Hayatabad project and watchmen are also present to protect the lives and property of the people, but no one could provide protection to the people. The purpose of Safe Hayatabad project at the cost of crores was to control crime. Despite the recruitment of 2500 security guards, providing them with modern vehicles, arms, wireless, motorcycles, the desired results could not be achieved.

Hayatabad is the most sensitive due to its connection with Khyber Agency, construction and repair of four walls, scanners and CCTV cameras were supposed to be installed under the Safe Project, which has not yet been implemented and the crime rate is increasing.

Protest

KARACHI: Activists of Jamaat-e-Islami hold a protest rally against postponement of local body elections from Sindh Government, at press club in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Focus on the needs and necessities of the Children to emerge prosperous nation

Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: At large, those communities emerged as developed nations, whose institutions played a key role for the nourishment of their children. In fact, a child is the father of a man. In this regard, a walk was held regarding the campaign against "Child abuse" with district administration and in collaboration of Child Protection Bureau.

The Deputy Commissioner Imran Hamid Sheikh led the walk which started from DC Complex and culminated at the same spot after passing different roads. District Officer Child Protection Ijaz Aslam Dogar, Dr. Jaffar Hassan Mubarak, In charge District Control Room Muhammad Sadiq, Akhtar Butt, officers of CPWB and children in a large number participated. Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner said that, district govt was fully committed to provide all



out facilities to the children in education, health and sports sectors and a number of measures had been taken in this regard. He said that it was joint responsibility of the society to protect

the rights of the children and especially the deprived children should not be neglected.

He said that the children should be associated with the social activities

to bring them in the main stream of the development. He appreciated the arrangements of walk and said that the children of different educational institutions, special children and girls guides were provided healthy opportunities of recreational to mark the awareness.

He stressed upon the need of taking drastic measures for the welfare and betterment of street child. He said that the purpose of this walk was to highlight the rights of the children and to provide them the opportunity of amusement. Children must be given each and every facility to develop their lives easily instead pushing them toward the social evils like begging, and let's have determination to fulfill the needs & necessities of the Children to emerge as a prosperous nation he further said & added.

Later the Deputy Commissioner distributed huds among children under the arrangements of MTM.

Arid varsity holds business Gala & IT Expo

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi (PMAS-AAUR) on Thursday organized a Business Gala and IT Expo with an aim to highlight innovative creative business ideas developed by students to cope with the challenge of unemployment in the country.

The Expo would help bring all stakeholders together from the public, private, academia, and social sectors at one platform to explore new technologies/innovations in the field of IT, said a news release.

A number of activities including Speed Programming, Quiz Competition, Digital Photography & Video Documentary, E-Gaming, Business Gala, Marketing, Food Stalls, Sales, Branding and Advertising were performed in this event. In addition to UIIT and UIMS, three other university-affiliated institutes including BIIT, BIMS, and GIMS were also a part of this event.

PMAS-AAUR Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Qamar uz Zaman was the chief guest while University Registrar Aqeel Sultan, deans/directors, faculty members and a large number of students

were also present.

Prof. Dr. Qamar-uz-Zaman inaugurated the event and visited the stalls.

He encouraged the students to keep making efforts for starting businesses which would provide employment to the poor people in Pakistan.

The vice chancellor said that this expo would provide entrepreneurship opportunities to the students so that they could become employers instead of seeking employment.

He also appreciated the efforts of Prof. Dr. Yaser Hafeez and organizers for organizing such a success-

ful event.

On the occasion, a research journal titled "Journal of Management Sciences and Computing (JMISC)" was also launched to promote the research culture in both institutes. The vice chancellor also inaugurated new faculty offices for UIIT faculty members.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Prof. Dr. Yaser Hafeez Director UIIT & UIMS, explained the aims and objectives of the event.

At the end, Prof. Dr. Qamar-uz-Zaman distributed the prizes among the winner and runner up teams in each category.

The Diabetes' Centre conducts free medical and screening camp

News Desk

LAHORE: The Diabetes' Centre, Pakistan's largest and multidisciplinary hospital conducted a free medical and screening camp at Barkat Market

The camp was facilitated by President Barkat Market, Dr Ameen and General Secretary, Amir Malik

A large number of general public participated in the camp. The purpose of arranging such activity is to raise awareness about illeffects of diabetes.

Management of Barkat Market and people at large appreciated TDC's efforts in combatting life-threatening ailment as Diabetes'

Tank police arrested gang involved in cable theft, stolen cables recovered



Adam Khan Wazir

TANK: Tank Police on Thursday arrested gang who used to steal the electricity transformers cables. Stolen cables were also recovered from the possession of the accused.

The Police also recovered 50 kg of hashish during raid on secret information. DSP Headquarters Inam Khan Gandapur addressing a press conference flanked by SHO SMA Asghar Khan Wazir said that unknown thief were involved in stealing transformers cables in Tank from last few days during night.

To arrest the accused, District Police Chief Waqar Ahmed formed

a raiding party under the leadership of SHO SMA Asghar Khan Wazir, who successfully arrested the suspect involved in cable theft and also recovered the stolen cables from the electricity transformers.

On the other hand, the DSP headquarter said that on a tip-off, Asghar Khan Wazir, SHO of SMA police station, recovered fifty kg of hashish hidden underground in Manjikel jurisdiction by unknown drug dealers and filed a case.

DSP Headquarters Inam Gandapur said that Tank police will not hesitate to make any sacrifice to eradicate drug and all resources are being utilized for this.



Islamabad
15° - 23° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	5:44 am
Zohr	12:13 pm
Asr	3:35 pm
Maghrib	5:13 pm
Isha	6:42 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police)	15
Bomb Disposal	15
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Emergency Ambulance	1122 & Rescue Services
Motorway Police	4451122
Motorway Police	9266044
Motorway Police	9270601-20

Women Police Stations

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Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

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MH	561116
Cannt Hospital	9270907-11
DHQ	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
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PIMS	9261170-79
Polyclinic	9218300-09
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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

Earthquake jolts various cities including Islamabad

News Desk

ISLAMABAD : A strong



earthquake jolted Islamabad and several cities of Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit Baltistan, and Azad Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday. According to private media, the magnitude of the earthquake was recorded at 5.8 on the Richter scale. The epicentre of the earthquake was the Hindu Kash region with a depth of 189 kilometres. Tremors were also felt in the federal capital, Charsadda, Peshawar, Batagram, Khyber, Mansehra, and other cities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In Punjab, the tremors were felt in Lahore, Faisalabad, Sheikhupur, Sargodha, Murree and nearby cities where people came out of their offices and residents out of fear. Meanwhile, no loss of life or property has so far been reported as of now. This is the second consecutive day that earthquake tremors were felt in the South Asian country. A day earlier, a 4.2 magnitude earthquake hit several cities in Punjab, including Lahore.

Govt launching internship program to support 30,000 unemployed graduates: Ahsan Iqbal

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning and Development Professor Ahsan Iqbal Thursday said the government is launching the "Talented Youth Internship Program" for 30,000 unemployed graduate youth.

Presiding over a meeting of private sector representatives to provide internship to youth, the minister said the duration of internship will be 6 months and a monthly stipend of Rs 25,000 will be given to the youth.

He said future of the country depends on purposeful education and skill acquisition of youth as two-thirds of Pakistan's population is below 30 years.

Ahsan Iqbal maintained that the main task of the Ministry of Planning is to plan the future of the youth adding that the development of Pakistan depends on the active role of the youth and the private sector. Under this program, he said some

30,000 youth would get an opportunity to work in the industry.

The minister also stressed the need to forget all the differences and work together to get the country out of the economic crisis.

The economy of a country with a population of 220 million does not sink in 8

months, he said adding that when there is a fire in the house, the first thing to do is to extinguish the fire.

He said that every Pakistani should play role in bringing the country out of economic crisis. "Every Pakistani would have to become champion of Turnaround Pakistan Campaign."

Farewell call

Islamabad: Outgoing British High Commissioner, Dr. Christian Turner pays a farewell call on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.



Photo: PID

AIOU holds Int'l conference on "Material Science and Smart Materials"

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD : Allama Iqbal Open University(AIOU) is going to organize a two-day international conference on "Material Science and Smart Materials (CMSSM-2023)" on 7th and 8th January at its main campus in Islamabad. Nuclear scientist Prof. Dr. NM Butt will be the chief guest of the opening ceremony while Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mehmood will preside over the event. Chairman, Department of Physics, Prof. Dr. Syed Zafar Ilyas will be the host the event. Scholars from 3 international and 70 Pakistani universities will present around 350 research papers. This conference will be of great importance for scholars, universities, and industrialists.

World has progressed a lot in the field of science and technology and new inventions have been made for social reconstruction. CMSSM-2023 has been organized to highlight the importance and usefulness of smart content for social well-being. According to Prof. Dr. Syed Zafar Ilyas, this conference is a part of the ongoing activities in the university to promote the research culture in the country. The purpose of the conference is to create awareness and use research in the social, and economic development of the country.

Arrest warrants issued for Barrister Saif over non-appearance before court

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD : Spokesperson to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government Barrister Muhammad Saif was on Thursday issued arrest warrants over breach of Capital Development Authority (CDA) magistrate orders.



Senior Special Magistrate Sardar Muhammad Asif issued the warrants and ordered the Islamabad police to arrest and present Mr Saif before the court on Jan 11.

The CDA maintains that Mr Saif had constructed on the zone 3's National Park, which is in violation of the CDA's landscape ordinance and Environmental Regulations 2008. A case had been lodged against him under MLR 82 in 2018 and the CDA magistrate had asked Mr Saif to appear before him on Feb 8, 2018. However, he did not comply with the orders which led the magistrate to issue him the warrants.

Pakistan, Iraq agree to increase bilateral ties in diverse sectors

Spokesman Report



ISLAMABAD : Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Sajid Hussain Turi on Thursday called on Iraqi Ambassador Hamid Lafta.

During the meeting, they discussed bilateral relations and the problems of Pakistani pilgrims, especially those stranded in Iraq.

Both expressed their desire to sign a MoU soon to increase bilateral cooperation to promote a comprehensive pilgrimage policy, and employment opportunities for Pakistanis in Iraq and send Pakistani manpower to Iraq, and curb illegal immigration.

The Iraqi ambassador formally invited the federal minister to visit Iraq next month to finalize the Hajj policy and export Pakistani manpower to Iraq, which he accepted.

Rally on self determination day demands implementation of resolutions

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD : A large public rally was organized by Pasban Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday (self-determination day) to press demand for the implementation of the United Nations resolution of January 5, 1949, and the annulment of the Indian government action in Kashmir on August 5, 2019.

The march toward the United Nations office presented a resolution demanding to conduct the referendum in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The citizen echoed anti-India and pro-freedom slogans i.e. "Wake Up, Wake Up, UN Wake Up", "Go India, Go Back", "Indian usupers, Leave Jammu and Kashmir", "Kashmir has been watered with blood, Kashmir is ours".

Mushaal urges UN to grant freedom to Kashmir like East Timor, South Sudan

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson of Peace and Culture Organisation Mushaal Hussein Mullick said that many nations of the world were liberated and referendums under UN supervision were held but unfortunately people of Kashmir were deprived of their birth right of right to self-determination despite lapse of over seven-decades, indicating duplicity, hypocrisy and double standard of the international community.

Mushaal, a wife of Yasin Malik, said this in a statement on Wednesday, on the Right to Self-Determination Day to be observed on both sides of the Line of Control and the world over to remind the UN to fulfill its obligations regarding settlement of the



Kashmir dispute under its resolutions including the one passed on January 05, 1949.

Mushaal went on to say that Narendra Modi-led fascist Indian government was using Indian army establishment and dreaded agencies RAW, Intelligence Bureau, National Investiga-

tion Agency and Enforcement Directorate to unleash every kind of oppression to silence the dissenting voices in the occupied valley.

She said that the situation in occupied valley has become more terrible since August 05, 2019 when the Modi regime revoked the special status of

the territory and snatched away all the basic rights and freedoms of the Kashmiri people.

The chairperson said that thousands of Kashmiris including Yasin Malik, APHC Chairman, Masarrat Aalam Butt, Shabbir Ahmad Shah, Aasiya Andrabi and Nayeem Ahmad Khan were languishing in Indian jails in fake and fabricated cases while rest of the sieged area were facing hardships due Indian state terrorism in IIOJK.

She demanded that the UN should fulfill its promise and resolve the Kashmir dispute in the fashion of East Timor and South Sudan, who were granted freedom by holding plebiscite but people of were still facing state terrorism at the hands of brutal Indian occupation forces.

Rain-snowfall over the hills expected in western and upper parts during the weekend

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: A westerly wave entering north Balochistan on Friday night will bring light to moderate rain in western and upper parts of the country during the weekend, according to the advisory issued by the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD).

The met office informed that a westerly wave is likely to enter north Balochistan on Friday (evening or night) and likely to grip upper parts on weekend.

Under the influence of this weather system, light to moderate rain with snowfall over the hills is expected in Quetta, Zhob, Barkhan, Ziarat, Nokkundi, Dalbandin, Harnai, Qilla Saifullah, Qilla Abdullah, Chaman and Pishin on January 07-08.



Moderate rain with snowfall over the hills is also expected in Murree, Galiyat, Neelum valley, Muzaffarabad, Poonch, Hattian, Bagh, Haveli, Sudhanoti, Kotli, Bhimber, Mirpur, Diamir, Astore, Ghizer, Skardu, Hunza, Gilgit, Ghanche and Shigar Chitral, Dir, Swat, Malakand, Kohistan, Mansehra and Abbottabad from

January 07-09.

Light rain is also expected in Islamabad, Potohar region, Charsadda, Bajaur, Kurram, Waziristan and Kohat during the weekend.

About the possible impacts, the met office revealed that rain will be beneficial for the standing crops especially in Barani areas.

Foggy conditions are likely to reduce during the forecast period while day temperatures are likely to fall (05-07) degree celsius during the wet spell.

Snowfall may disrupt normal vehicular traffic in mountainous/hilly areas

Possibility of landslides in Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan can't be ruled out due to which blockage of roads may occur during the forecast period

Al-Shifa becomes a clinical trial site in the region

Tariq Khattak

RAWALPINDI :The Al-Shifa Research Centre hosted its 2nd International Research Conference titled "Landscape of Clinical Trials in Pakistan" with a focus on collaboration and integration for the rise of the clinical trial industry in Pakistan.

The purpose of the conference, held at Al-Shifa Eye Hospital Rawalpindi, was to provide a comprehensive forum for experts and participants from the industry to exchange ideas and present a way forward for the promotion of clinical trials research in Pakistan.

Chief guest Prof Dr. Muham-

mad Iqbal Choudhary, Director at the International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS) Karachi and Coordinator General COMSTECH highlighted the importance of promotion of the clinical trial industry which will lead to the development of the indigenous pharmaceutical industry and innovative medical devices in near future.

He pointed out that instead of being a service provider, we can be innovator in this field with both economic benefits as well as health sector sustainability for our country.

China has adopted the same model which was particularly highlighted in its fight with the

Covid-19 pandemic, he added.

President Al Shifa Trust Eye Hospital Maj Gen (R) Rehmat Khan shed light on the performances of the Al-Shifa Research Centre and, highlighted the significance of clinical trials.

He highlighted how the trust worked in bringing the clinical trials industry to Pakistan under the guidance of Dr. Ume Sughra.

He also mentioned services of the trust in recent floods including a donation of Rs60 million to the flood victims as well as providing basic medical care through free medical camps.

Dean and Chief of Medical Services Al Shifa Trust Eye Hospital, Prof Dr Wajid Ali



Khan, thanked Dr. Choudhary for showing the way forward with Al Shifa becoming a clinical trial site as Pakistan is being recog-

nized in the international market as a region for conducting clinical trials which was previously limited to India in the region.

Seasoned researchers including Prof. Dr. Shahzad Ali Khan, VC and Dean Health Services Academy Islamabad; Prof. Dr.

Tanwir Khaliq, Vice-Chancellor PIMS Islamabad; Dr. Sadia Asim, Director, Dow University of Health Science and Prof Dr. Saima Saeed, Director Indus Hospital delivered keynote speeches.

Mr. Asim Munir, GM of DRK Pharma Solutions; Mr. Muhammad Tanseer Ali, Country Lead Tigermed and Dr. Adnan Zia Shah, Metrics Research, were also among the notable figures.

Researchers and attendees appreciated Al-Shifa Research Centre for organizing an informative and insightful event that provided a stepping stone towards the great potential of Pakistan for clinical trials.

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Courts orders in favor of Retired employees'

Javed Ullah Raja

Ever since the bank owners took over the bank, the families of thousands of pensioners have been subjected to economic terrorism. Thousands of bank pensioners and widow family pensioners have become dear to Allah by waiting for their rightful entitlement. The sick elderly and their widows have approached lawyers and courts for many years for their legitimate rights, which is a cause of great difficulty and trouble for the retired class in this time of huge inflation. Pension and pension arrears are reward for years of hard work they spent and an important valuable asset for retired employees for their future life. It is very excessive for a local bank of the country not to provide pension and benefits to retirees based on their last date of retirement. At last the retired employees knocked the doors of the courts, although the case was decided in favor of the employees, the concerned management has gone several times for review appeals. In this way, the problems of the pensioners

have remained unresolved for many years.

It is very happy that the courts have always protected the rights of the employees and issued judgments in favor of the retired pensioners from the bank.

There are those who gave decisions in favor of the retired employees of the bank by issuing decisions of right and justice, the Peshawar High Court gave

17, 2020, the Supreme Court of Pakistan dismissing the appeal

منزل تری تلاش میں گھومے گی در بدر خلق خدا کی راہ سے روڑے ہٹا کے دیکھے

filed by the bank, the decision of the Peshawar High Court was upheld and thus the highest court of the country also decided in favor of the retired employ-

to the problems of pensioners, violation of rights, injustice and this abuse. I don't know why all the institutions and human rights organizations are silent in giving legitimate rights to the elderly citizens.

Several requests have been paid that banks retired employees should be paid according to their last pay drawn as per the courts orders. Human rights, organizations, are responsible for protecting the rights of every citizen. While here, the legitimate rights of senior citizens are being usurped. Despite the clear orders and court decisions that are in favor of the retired employees, instead of implementing all the orders, the bank management is treating them all as trash in the dustbin. Instead of respecting and implementing the court decisions, even today they are in busy procrastinating. Retired people are still receiving a few hundred and few thousand rupees from the bank towards their pension in the rising tide of sky-high inflation. The silence of our government and all the institutions is depriving the lives of the retired people from the bank. By usurping the rights of the said bank's retired employ-

ees, thousands of old employees, their widows, and family members are suffering mental and financial problems since many years. Aggrieved people are still facing heavy expenses from the courts.

In such a tense, Where should senior citizens go?

To whom should senior pensioners cry?

Whose door should retired employees knock on?

Who should implement the court decree order?

How long will the elderly be abused?

What should be done if the decisions of the higher courts are not implemented? These are all the legitimate rights, for which there is a strong appeal to the Prime Minister of Pakistan Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif, the President of Pakistan, the Supreme Court, the State Bank, the Federal Ombudsman, and the Finance ministry that prompt adjudication of retired employees from the management on their final basic pay as per High courts & Supreme Court orders.

Writer is reached at javedullahraja@gmail.com

ECNEC approves Rs10bn laptop scheme

The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (ECNEC) has approved the National Youth Laptop Scheme worth of Rs 10 billion to help the youth improve their digital skills.

Addressing a press conference here on Thursday, Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal said that 100,000 students would get the laptops under this scheme while Baluchistan students would get a special quota in the scheme.

Further, he said that the students who does not fall under the scheme due to merit would also be able to get laptops on easy installments through commercial banks.

Similarly, he said the ECNEC also approved Sindh Human Capital Investment at a cost of Rs 55 billion and Flood Response Emergency Housing Project at a cost of Rs 160 billion to rebuild the houses in flood-hit areas of Sindh province.

The World Bank is financing both projects.

The ECNEC also approved the scholarship project for 5000 students in Balochistan and erstwhile FATA who would be able to get an education in the universities of developed areas of the country under this project.

Ahsan Iqbal said the ECNEC also approved another project worth Rs 80 billion to reconstruct the infrastructure in the flood-hit areas of Balochistan. He said the federal government was financing this project through its own resources. Under this project, 10,000 Balochistan students would also be given paid internships, he added.

ECNEC also approved a project worth Rs 40 billion under which 20 least developed areas of the country would get development projects for 10 years. Under this project, 40 billion would be contributed by the federal government while Rs 40 billion would be contributed by the respective provincial government.

He said the ECNEC also approved another project under which the engineers and technical graduates would get a one-year paid internship (Rs 40,000 per month) in all the development projects under Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP).

The ECNEC also approved 75 scholarships that would be awarded to Pakistani students who manage to get admission in the world's top universities.

He said Pakistan witnessed the worst climate change disaster last year in which the country had to face a loss of over \$30 billion.

On January 09, he said Pakistan's friendly countries were meeting in a conference in Geneva hosted by the United Nations Secretary-General where the international community will express solidarity with Pakistan and it is hoped that Pakistan would get the resources required to take forward the reconstruction process in the flood-hit areas of the country.

This is an unprecedented challenge that affected our agriculture production and agriculture stocks due to which Pakistan had to import a huge amount of grains and other food items.

A key solution to revitalize economy

Dr. Saeed Ahmad Ali

Agriculture is crucial to economic growth as it accounts for 4 percent of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) while in developing countries, it accounts for more than 25 percent of the GDP.

A healthy, inclusive, and sustainable food system is vital for achieving the rapidly growing world's development goals. Agriculture is the main artery of Pakistan's economy.

It produces around 35 percent of the GDP, nearly 59 percent of the total exports, employing almost 57 percent of the workforce. Around 35 million hectares of fertile land are suitable for agriculture in the country.

According to the agricultural statistics, the actual cultivated area in the country is about 20.54 million hectares, of which 5.61 million hectares are rain-fed.

However, over the last century, domestic demand for food supply has risen geometrically. According to the United Nations, at the current growth rate, the global population is expected to be doubled by 2050. By then, the food demand is projected to increase to around 59 percent to 98 percent.

It has been realized around the world that the enormous potential of the agriculture sector to deal with the dilemma is food security. Therefore, the agriculture sector has a ripple effect on the economy of nations.

Likewise, Pakistan's agriculture sector also needs to be shaped in a way that it could meet the target of confronting the projected demand for food. Beyond this, climate change-driven issues including urbanization, water insufficiency, lack of investment,

and rising production costs pose a challenge to national food security.

Traditional food production is not sufficient to meet the demand. Pakistan has become a net importer of food. Therefore, in tandem with the current grain production system, the country needs to adopt manifold productivity measures.

The substantial shortage in agriculture output can be bridged by transforming our barren lands into fertile lands. Drawbacks in the tail-end irrigation system, deforestation, drought, and intensive traditional farming methods are turning an area half the size of Britain into a desert every year.

According to the United Nations (UN) recent report, by 2030, around 135 million people could lose their shelters and livelihood means to desertification.

Pakistan, being an agricultural country has enormous agricultural potential. Nearly two third of its population is dependent on agriculture-related earnings and activities.

Former chairman of Indus River System Authority (IRSA), Punjab Irrigation Chief Engineer Rao Irshad Ali Khan told APP that the process of stealing water by influential persons through planting devices, pipes, and tubes has been going on for the last many years.

The only solution to end the woes of tail cultivators and other affected growers of the area is to take strict measures against water theft, resulting in severe water shortfall by ordering appropriate, timely, and spot against those involved in it.

Inam Khan, a leading grower, and landlord at BRB canal said that cultivators and farmers were looking after the supply of water to the tail-end fields in the area. He alleged that feudal lords in collusion with irrigation

departments and influential political figures were engaged in water theft.

He alleged that when an honest officer, on a complaint, visits the area, some irrigation department staffers and their companion Baildars immediately inform the corrupt powerful quarters involved in water theft.

Sajid Bashir, Deputy Collector Revenue in Punjab Irrigation Department said that water theft through some illegal out-lets was also destroying the crops of tail-end cultivators while the land is becoming barren.

From time to time, cases in the tail-end areas of Punjab have been reported that the small growers were being forced to sell their land at a cheaper rate to influential landlords, Bashir informed.

Arshad Shah Assistant Director of Punjab Khal Panchayat Authority (PKPA) told the news agency that the Punjab irrigation department had implemented a plan earlier to update its communication and measurement systems by installing sensors to monitor real-time water flow in the channels (Khals) under its command.

The project started with financial and technical assistance from the World Bank in recent years envisages installing sensors across the barrages, distributaries, canals, and channels to monitor real-time flow with the prime target of curbing canal water theft.

To a query, he said that the Eastern Sadiqi canal system in Punjab Bahawalnagar district has been selected as a pilot project for the purpose. He said that this canal system has been selected for a far-flung area that is notorious for water theft. About the project, he informed us that the gradual and phase-wise implementation would help gauge the acceptance of the system by growers who were the real beneficiaries of the project.

Cartoon by Amjad Rasmi.

(Courtesy of Asharq Al-Awsat)



The Reproductive Health of women is in danger

Arisha Irshad Ali

These days, women's reproductive health is a major concern. Pakistani women are the group of people who are most susceptible to problems with reproduction. It is frowned upon in our society to talk about reproductive health. In Pakistan, males are the primary provider of income, hence women turn to them for assistance with all manner

of needs. Dependency is another problem. Men are expected to care for their wives, mothers, and daughters. The bad news is that they have no knowledge of problems with female reproduction. They don't know about it. Our schools are failing—or not even attempting—to instruct students on topics related to reproductive health.

There is opposition to those who share or educate children in schools. The second most frequent malignancy in Pakistan is ovarian cancer.

Additionally, there is a substantial death rate. The mother ignored their worrisome symptoms or perhaps was unable to talk about them, and they died in excruciating pain.

Health care systems are either ineffective or lacking in essential components.

How will the woman be treated? We know why the majority of people won't be able to afford a private hospital. Instead of consulting a doctor, people choose to get their medications from medical shop employees.

Although the medication reduces the symptoms, it cannot get rid of the underlying problem. Additionally influencing this issue is poverty. With a GDP per capita of 1537, how will Pakistanis be able to pay for extremely expensive medicine? Another tale involves sanitary napkins.

Those who live in cities. Everything is celebrated with a meal. We associate happiness with food. We used to feed a crying child sugary treats.

We need to stop consuming fried food in excess and switch to healthier options. Foods with a high sugar content are a burden for the human body. Our body isn't programmed to take this high rush of carbohydrates.

When a female suffers from Gonorrhoea and conceives a baby so there is a high chance that her baby might get blind. This transfer from one partner to another. Syphilis women get pregnant so there is a chance that the child can be mentally retard.

Again, this is alarming our government must run a campaign for this. Make our people aware. The health care system and pads are inaccessible to women. For them, we must build a bridge of opportunities. They are from us and we abide to take care of them.

A true warrior & brave son of Iranian soil: General Qasem Soleimani



Syed Mohammad Ali Hosseini
Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Pakistan

Three years ago, at the dawn of the January 3rd General Lieutenant Qasem Soleimani, the commander of the Quds Force of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, along with his companion Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis and several of their retinues, were targeted by a US drone strike at the Bagdad airport. Shortly after the attack, the then president of the US, Donald Trump blatantly confessed to be involved in this terrorist action and to acknowledge ordering and commanding the assault. That night Gen. Soleimani was supposed to call on some Iraqi officials and to talk about the ongoing events in the region. The delegation traveled to Iraq based on an official invitation to call on Iraq prime minister.

The assassination of Gen. Soleimani, except being a state terrorism against a high-ranking official military staff of the military forces of an independent country, was an obvious breach of international law and an act

of aggression. Also, this was a hazardous maneuver that could negatively affect peace and security in whole of the region by eliminating a successful commander in fight against terrorism as well as by other consequences driven from the terrorist attack. In another point of view, the terrorist action was tantamount to breach of Iraqi sovereignty and an act of aggression against two members of the UN. This year is the third anniversary of the assassination of this valiant hero. It was just three years ago that Gen. Soleimani formally declared the termination of ISIS, and his dream came true when, at the time this terrorist group was totally enervated and at the edge of undermining.

The bravery that Soleimani showed in the fight against extremism and terrorism catalyzed the annihilation of the ISIS in the region and brought peace and security not only to the already war-stricken geography of the Middle East, but also for the whole countries throughout the world including US and Europe. Soleimani reacted to the crisis of ISIS in the circumstances where the whole region had already been swept away by this atrocious terrorist group of ISIS as a result of which some countries were close to collapse. Many believe that if Soleimani had not mobilized an initiative against extremism and terrorism, the map of the region was not the way it's today. He undertook commanding counter-terrorist operations at a time when ISIS declared the Islamic Caliphate and committed the most hideous and unprecedented crimes in the human history against civilians and armies.

Here comes up a contradic-



tory situation where, in different situations, the provenance of ISIS and some other terrorist groups is revealed to be an American tactics. Trump's confessions, among others, in the electoral campaigns, regarding the origin of ISIS is an evident example. Soleimani was a well-known hero against terrorism who spent his whole life combating terrorism and aggression. So what is the case? Trump: we created the ISIS. Aftermath, he same Trump said I personally ordered the attack to Gen. Soleimani. The answer could be found in the double standard politicization adopted by America. The assassination of Gen Soleimani was an obvious breach of international law, human right, and morality that can no doubt bring about the

international responsibility of the perpetrators.

Many jurists, diplomats, politicians and the experts of the international law daresay that the illegal assassination of a high-ranking military staff of a country is a threat to the peace and security of the whole region and the world. Because with the absence of the prudent commanders who have long experiences in fighting against terrorism, there still remains anxiety about the resurgence of the extremist groups like ISIS (Daesh) in the region. Moreover, the terrorist strike against him is an obvious violation of international law, human rights as well as an act of aggression against the sovereignty of another country. The act is regarded as one of the evident exam-

ples of state terrorism committed by a country against another and being accepted formally by high-ranking officials of the country and via the confession of the perpetrator himself in front of the cameras.

Three years had passed and now many speak about the "Soleimani School of Thought", he was a popular commander at the time, and is a legend and a personality beyond history right now. His supporters regard his assassination as the climax of his story and an inevitable end and goal to his devoted life. They say that his martyrdom is more destructive to those against whom he fought and more inspiring to those who loved him than his alive. being a philanthropist and a social and civil activist specially

regarding the development plans and aiding the poverty, flood and quake stricken people in different regions, he was truly favored by many even his critics. The spontaneous overflow of people in the funeral ceremonies is a proof to the claim. He was committed to work for the human dignity and for the betterment and welfare of the people regardless of race, religion, nationality and their life style. In a video getting viral in the social media, he strictly addressed those who encounter different lifestyles regarding women coverage, arguing that they are our sisters and daughters and our human resources.

Three years ago, he was brutally and unmanly assassinated in another country. Time and history are the best teacher and the fair-

est witnesses of the human mind court. Iranian officials promised that the crime will not be left unanswered, and the committers, supporters and assistants of this inhumane crime would be held accountable in a fair court of justice. However, the hideous terrorist act by the then US president was largely condemned by many including politicians, jurists, academicians and public opinion. Iran has declared to use its political, legal and international capacities in order to take action against the suspects and to prosecute the perpetrators of the crime in a fair court.

During the last decades, hostility, terror and killing of the civilians have been the common pain of the two great nations of Iran and Pakistan. The two countries have suffered from this blight and many families have lost their loved ones. Thus, no nation like Iran and Pakistan understands the plague of terrorism. The people of these two Muslim nations feel the anxiety and the concern of terrorism, and a lot of pure blood of the youth of the nations has shed on this path. So far, many a martyrs in the two brotherly countries of Iran and Pakistan have devoted their lifetime and sacrificed their lives for the sacred cause of peace and security.

In the ongoing threatening situation that we see, and with the disastrous prospective that looms large in the region, the Islamic World should take action with a convergent pattern and by putting aside its misunderstandings and misconceptions, mostly guttered by the foreigners, take to maintain the indigenous peace and security emanated from the region itself, before late.

Salutes to Karim Younes, Palestinian prisoner, on his liberation after 40 years

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates salutes Kareem Younes, who after four decades of unlawful imprisonment by the Israeli occupation authorities gained his freedom. His freedom has been long-desired and long-awaited.

In this regard, the Ministry reaffirms that Israel, the occupying power, uses the systematic and widespread policy of arbitrary detention, long-term imprisonments, and discriminatory trials as persecutory tools to punish and intimidate the Palestinian people.

Since the beginning of its settler-colonial occupation, Israel has imprisoned and detained over 800,000 Palestinians. Currently, Israel holds around 4700 Palestinians in its unlawful detention centers, including 150 children and 34 women.

The continued illegal detention of Palestinians and Israel's policy of mass incarceration are integral parts of the system of persecution and apartheid Israel maintains to preserve its colonial occupation of Palestine.

Palestine will continue to reject and oppose these abhorrent practices and grave violations of international law and endeavor to free all Palestinian prisoners.

Karim Younes said "I salute our great people who have engaged in struggle for 100 years without raising the white flag," he said, draped in a kuffiyeh and carrying a Palestinian flag as he marched with loved ones through 'Ara. "I am willing to give another 40 years of my life as a sacrifice for my people, and all of the prisoners have the strength and commitment to sacrifice 40 and 50 years for the freedom of their people....



The messages of the prisoners are many, but the final message is one of love and gratitude to our great people in all of the places of their presence, our people in the West Bank, in Gaza, in the diaspora, in occupied Palestine '48, in Jerusalem... The prisoners carry many questions and concerns, and my heart is with those

who remained in prison, carrying their bodies on their shoulders and walking with death alongside them."

The Israeli occupation regime attempted to deny the Palestinian people their joy at the release of Karim Younes, who has become a national symbol of unity through his decades of

imprisonment. Rather than releasing him at the prison gates of Hadarim or in his home village, he was instead released at a random bus station, away from his family and crowds, at dawn. However, with the help of another passerby, he was quickly reunited with his family and his liberation celebrated. Zionist interior minister Aryeh Deri also threatened to withdraw Israeli citizenship to impose statelessness on Younes and his cousin Maher, who is himself soon to be released on 17 January.

Nevertheless, with his powerful comments and strong welcoming — as well as messages of support from all Palestinian resistance factions and political parties — Karim Younes once again demonstrated the steadfastness and leadership of the Palestinian prisoners and the unquenched will to freedom of the Palestinian people despite 40 years behind bars, 75 years of Nakba and 100 years of colonialism.

Just days before his release, Younes issued a moving statement about his forthcoming liberation: "I am returning to sing again with my people everywhere the anthem of my homeland, the anthem of the fedayeen, the anthem of return and liberation."

Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network congratulates Karim Younes, his family and the entire Palestinian people upon his release, with a celebration that will only be complete with the liberation of all Palestinian prisoners. We join not only his friends and family in Palestine, but also thousands of friends, comrades and supporters in the Palestinian diaspora, Palestinian solidarity movement and global social justice movement in saluting his ongoing commitment to Palestinian liberation.

Pakistan to standby Kashmiris until they exercise right to self-determination: Munir Akram



Spokesman Report

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan will not rest until Kashmiri people realize their UN-pledged right to self-determination through a plebiscite by the UN Security Council resolutions, Ambassador Munir Akram said in a message released in New York.

"January 5, 1949, is an important day in the Kashmiri freedom struggle," he said in his message marking "Right to Self-determination Day"

"This day sanctified the basis for a just solution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan through the consensual adoption of UNCIP Resolution, in line with wishes and aspirations of the Kashmir people," the Pakistani envoy said.

"Regrettably," he added, "India blatantly backed out of its commitments made on 5 January 1949, flagrantly dishonored its international obligations, and continues to deliberately violated international law during the last seven decades.

"The Government and people of Pakistan shall not rest until the people of Kashmir can realize their right to self-determination through a free and impartial plebiscite in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions which remains the only abiding guarantee for a just and lasting solution to Jammu and Kashmir question and end gross and systematic human rights violations in the Indian Illegally Occupied Kashmir."

Erdogan and the Russian president have spoken repeatedly

News Desk

ISTANBUL : Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan told Vladimir Putin in a phone call that peace efforts in the Russia-Ukraine war should be supported by a unilateral ceasefire and a "vision for a fair solution", the Turkish presidency said on Thursday.

Erdogan and the Russian president have spoken repeatedly since Russian forces invaded Ukraine in February. Turkey acted as mediator alongside the United Nations to set up a deal allowing grain exports from Ukrainian ports. "President Erdogan said calls for peace and negotiations should be



supported by a unilateral ceasefire and a vision for a fair solution," the readout said, adding that Erdogan reminded Putin of the positive outcomes of the

grains corridor deal.

Ukraine is a major global grain producer and exporter, but production and exports have fallen since Russia invaded and started blockading its seaports.

The two leaders also discussed Syria, with Erdogan telling Putin that concrete steps needed to be taken to clear Kurdish militants from the Syrian border region, the readout said.

"President Erdogan emphasised that concrete steps should now be taken to clear the terrorist organisation PKK/PYD/YPG from Turkey's border regions, especially Tel Rifat and Manbij," it said.

US Navy warship transits through Taiwan Strait

WASHINGTON: An American warship sailed through the Taiwan Strait on Thursday, the US Navy said, in a move likely to anger Beijing.

The guided-missile destroyer USS Chung-Hoon "conducted a routine Taiwan Strait transit on Jan. 5 (local time) through waters where high-seas freedoms of navigation and overflight apply in accordance with international law," the Navy said in a statement.

"Chung-Hoon's transit through the Taiwan Strait demonstrates the United States' commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific. The United

States military flies, sails and operates anywhere international law allows," it added.

Taiwan lives under constant threat of an invasion by China, which claims the self-ruled, democratic island as part of its territory to be seized one day — by force if necessary.

Washington diplomatically recognizes Beijing over Taipei, but maintains de-facto relations with Taiwan and supports the island's right to decide its own future.

Tensions in the Taiwan Strait have been tense for some years and they soared to their highest level in years

in August 2022 after US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taipei amid warnings from China. Beijing staged days of air and sea exercises around the island as a strong response to the visit of the US official.

Pelosi, the highest-level US visitor to Taiwan in 25 years, praised its democracy and pledged American solidarity during her brief stopover. Chinese anger could not stop world leaders from travelling there, she said.

China summoned the US ambassador in Beijing in protest and halted several agricultural imports from Taiwan.

Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
40,716.74	40,539.30	
Day's High	Day's Low:	
40,790.74	40,539.30	
Index Value	Change	
2,525,055,994	+177.44	
Percentage	Time	
+0.44%	Jan 5, 2023 5:00 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
7,633.45	+48.26	
Percentage	Time	
+0.64%	5 Jan, 4:35 pm GMT	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
32,854.91	-414.86	
Percentage	Time	
-1.25%	5 Jan, 11:37 am GMT-5	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
25,820.80	+103.94	
Percentage	Time	
+0.40%	5 Jan, 3:15 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	161	162.25
Bahrain Dinar	603.73	608.23
Canadian Dollar	171	172.35
China Yuan	32.41	32.66
Danish Krone	32.17	32.52
Euro	265	268
Hong Kong Dollar	29.04	29.39
Indian Rupee	2.72	2.8
Japanese Yen	2.4	2.44
Kuwaiti Dinar	739.7	744.7
Malaysian Ringgit	50.95	51.4
New Zealand \$	144	145.2
Norwegians Krone	22.43	22.73
Omani Riyal	589.62	594.12
Qatari Riyal	62.26	62.76
Saudi Riyal	66.5	67.15
Singapore Dollar	168.46	169.76
Swedish Korona	21.78	22.08
Swiss Franc	241.85	243.6
Thai Bhat	6.59	6.69
U.A.E Dirham	68.5	69.1
UK Pound Sterling	302	305
US Dollar	233.75	236

ECCL showcases its new digital payments solution, 'PayMax'

Commerce Reporter

ISLAMABAD: China Mobile, Parent company of Pakistan's leading telecommunications network, Zong 4G, promoted its first digital payments solution 'PayMax', during an exclusive product showcasing event at Zong HQ in Islamabad. This strategic venture aims to empower the people of Pakistan with a financial solution that is secure, unique and ensures inclusion in the unbanked sector of Pakistan.

China Mobile Pakistan (CMPAK) and Electronic Commerce Company Limited (ECCL), a 100% owned subsidiary of CMPAK ventured into the market of Digital Financial Services after getting the Electronic Money Institution (EMI) License in Pakistan from SBP in March 2022.

After acquiring the license, CMPAK ECCL went on to launch its commercial digital payments solution under the brand name "PayMax" which furthers CMPAK's vision and drive of a more digitally and financially inclusive Pakistan.

Speaking at the occasion, CEO CMPAK & Zong4G, said, "Our mission is 'to provide a trustworthy digital payments system through collaborative ecosystem for cashless payments.'" He concluded by wishing PayMax success in the future.

As a developing country, a significant segment of the economy in Pakistan is still undocumented and operating through tradi-



tional transaction channels which rely heavily on the use of cash, limiting business opportunities and growth severely. With over 60% of the adult population being unbanked, Paymax aims at providing seamless digital payment solutions to them.

A robust digital payments solution makes financial management a lot easier, that too with added security. PayMax—a Digital Wallet Account also plans to partner with financial institutions and solution providers from across the sectors to offer innovative financial products that solve consumer pain points, such as Nano Loans, Handset Financing, Cross Border Payments, Insurance, Channel Interoperability, and Merchant Financing.

Intending to provide a solution that empowers and enables every Pakistani across the country, with PayMax you can register your mobile account by providing a simple KYC, you can carry out Cash Deposits & Cash



Withdrawals, transfer money to or from any bank or wallet in Pakistan, pay more than 1700+ online Billers with this number rapidly growing.

Adding on, CEO ECCL, Syed Naveed Akhtar, said, "Our objective is to turn PayMax into a financially sustainable organization by gaining customers' trust through offering best value use cases, convenience, reliability & great customer experience. Our target market and

focus in the first phase are approximately 34 million Zong 4G tech savvy super data users followed by the rest of the potential digital payment customer base in the country."

PayMax is determined to become one of the leading digital payment solutions providers in the Digital Financial Services Industry, utilizing CMPAK-Zong4G's 45 million subscribers base and an agent network of more than 43,000 BVS retailers all across Pakistan.

Press conference

FAISALABAD: Muhammad Amjad Khawaja Senior Vice Chairman, Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers and Exporters Association addressing a press conference at (PHMA)



Photo: Online

Promotion of investment is very important for Pakistan, Governor KP

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD : Chairman of Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry Khurshid Barlas along with his delegation met Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ghulam Ali at Governor House Peshawar. About the Property Expo and Convention which is being held from 17 to 19 February 2023 at Marbella Cave Marquee, Warsak Road, Peshawar, in the three-day exhibition, prominent builders, developers, allied construction industry from across the country, including bank projects and related to the tourism industry. A large number of different business community will participate

Khurshid Barlas invited Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Govern-



nor Ghulam Ali to attend the 2nd Peshawar International Property Expo and Convention as a Chief Guest, which was accepted by the Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and assured him that he would grace the occasion with his kind presence at 2nd Peshawar International Property

Expo. During the conversation, Governor Ghulam Ali said that holding the Expo exhibition is a good tradition, it will open new avenues for development in the country.

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government is also focusing on the development of construction and housing sector,

thereby taking steps to create employment opportunities in the country, promote economic development and meet the housing needs of the growing population. In the current situation, promotion of investment is very important for Pakistan.

Khurshid Barlas told Governor KP that Pakistan International Property Expo and Convention aims to promote the construction and development of Pakistan, to improve the reputation of Pakistan and to increase trade and investment in the country.

Finally, the Chairman On behalf of Pakistan International Property Expo and Convention, an invitation letter and shield were also presented to Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ghulam Ali.

SECP to reform PMEX for creating linkage with rural economy: Akif Saeed

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The Chairman, Securities & Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) Akif Saeed said regulatory and structural reforms will be introduced along with product development to link Pakistan Mercantile Exchange (PMEX) with the rural economy of Pakistan.

The Chairman SECP, accompanied by senior officials, met the Board of Directors and senior management of Pakistan Mercantile Exchange (PMEX) and the senior management of the Central Depository Company (CDC).

Akif Saeed reviewed the progress of new contracts on Electronic Warehouse Receipts (EWR) and measures to promote trading activity at the PMEX. He said that PMEX can provide alternate avenues of liquidity to the producers and processors of agricultural commodities which will benefit the farmers and boost economy activity. He highlighted need for increasing outreach and tapping the potential of remote areas by ensuring presence of commodity brokers and developing warehouse infrastructure.

In a separate meeting with CDC, the Chairman was briefed about the ongoing projects and future plans for facilitation of investors of capital market. The meeting reviewed digital solutions for investors of capital market and availability of National Saving Schemes certificates in book-entry form. Further, the operations and sustainability of EClear Services Limited, which provides clearing and custodial services to the Trading Only (TO) category of brokers as a subsidiary of CDC, were also deliberated.

Later, the SECP team led by its Chairman held separate meetings with members of the Board of Directors of Mutual Funds Association of Pakistan (MUFAP) and NBF and Modaraba Association. The meeting with MUFAP reviewed the progress and timelines on the conversion of MUFAP into SRO and digitalization of the AML/KYC requirements etc. SECP Chairman stressed on using digital technology for growth of the retail investors in mutual funds. Akif also stressed on introducing new products particularly for retail investors, increasing digital on boarding of small investors.



Mr. Sonmez Karaca, Branch Manager & Ms. Selen Akman Tuncer, Chief of Corporate Communications of Exporters Assembly Association of Turkiye are presenting souvenir to Mr. Suleman Chawla, SVP FPCCI, at the Federation House, Karachi. Mr. Eyyup Yildirim, Commercial Attache of Turkiye is also present on the occasion; along with Mian Nasser Hyatt Maggo, immediate past President FPCCI & Mr. Amjad Rafi, Chairman of FPCCI's Pakistan - Turkiye Joint Business Council (PTJBC)

Import restriction, delay in ST refunds continue to haunt garment exporters

News Desk

KARACHI : The Pakistan Readymade Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PRGMEA) has warned that in the face of continued delay in sales tax refunds and unofficial restrictions on import of raw material the garment industry would stop running gradually, leading to inordinate delay in export orders and damaging the reputation of Pakistan, as several units have already slashed their productions because they are in a difficult situation in the face of growing currency crisis.

PRGMEA Central Chairman Mubashar Naseer Butt



and vice chairman Wasim Akhtar Khan, in a joint statement, said though the central bank has officially removed restrictions on import of raw material under Customs tariff chapter 84, 85, but practically the constraints still continued to haunt the garment industry, leading to severe shortage

of industry raw material in the country, as the authorities have not been fulfilling their commitments in spite of several reminders and meetings.

We are facing severe liquidity crunch due to undue delays in release of our own money in the form of stuck up refunds, besides the barriers created by the SBP in connivance with the commercial banks to open LCs to proceed export shipment, said PRGMEA Chairman.

Mubashar Naseer Butt observed that the value-added textile industry is facing hurdle to get the meager amount of just \$10,000 against the export of \$100,000, which is unfortunate for the country, as

commercial banks are refusing to provide dollars to the exporters on the plea of shortage of greenback and SBP is totally unable to take any action against them.

Moreover, consignments of industry raw material remained stuck at the port despite the government had lifted the ban on the import. The PRGMEA Chairman observed that the business community was expecting that the imports restrictions will be relaxed as soon as the country received installment of the IMF loan but it is unfortunate that the situation has not changed so far mainly due to mismanagement of the authorities.

ICCI shows great concerns over exclusion of edible oil from essential imports

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD : The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has shown great concerns over the alleged reports that the commercial banks are resisting the opening of LCs of edible oil importers-cum-manufacturers as it would create shortage of ghee and cooking oil in the market and cause further hike in the

prices of these commodities. Faad Waheed, Acting President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) said that the State Bank of Pakistan vide its EPD Circular No.20 of 2022, dated 27th December 2022 had allowed the imports related to essential sectors such as food including wheat and edible oil, which was warmly welcomed by the business community of food sector.

Brent crude futures gained 59 cents to \$78.43 a barrel

News Desk

ISLAMABAD : Oil prices rebounded on Thursday after opening the year down more than 9%, the worst yearly start in over three decades, as investors took advantage of the decline to buy futures on expectations long-term fuel demand will remain steady. Reuters reported.

The bounce back followed two days of steep declines to start off 2023 as investors worry about a potential global recession and the short-term economic signs in the world's two biggest oil consumers, the United States and China, appear shaky.

Brent crude futures gained 59 cents to \$78.43 a barrel at 0136 GMT, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures rose 69 cents to \$73.53 a barrel.

Over the previous two sessions, Brent and WTI's declines of more than 9% were the biggest two-day losses at the start of a year since January 1991, according to Refinitiv Eikon data.

Economic data from the United States weighed on prices in the previous session. U.S. manufacturing contracted further in December, dropping for a second straight month to 48.4 from 49.0 in November, in the weakest reading since May 2020, the Institute for Supply Management (ISM) said.

At the same time, a survey from the U.S. Labor Department showed job openings fell less than expected, raising concerns that the Federal Reserve would use the tight labor market as a reason to keep interest rates higher for longer.

U.S. crude oil inventories rose by 3.3 million barrels last week along with gasoline stocks jumping 1.2 million barrels, while distillate stocks fell, according to market sources citing American Petroleum Institute figures.

Government data on inventories is due on Thursday.

In China, data showed that while no new coronavirus variant has been found there, the country has under-represented how many people have died in its recent, rapidly spreading outbreak, World Health Organization officials said.

Concerns about the economic disruptions as COVID-19 works its way through China, the world's biggest oil importer, have added to the pessimism around crude prices.

Pakistan name 16-player squad for New Zealand ODIs

News Desk

LAHORE : With one eye on this year's 50-over ACC Asia Cup and the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup, the Pakistan men's interim selection committee on Thursday named a 16-player squad for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Super League matches against New Zealand, which will be played here at the National Bank Cricket Arena on 9, 11 and 13 January.

Uncapped batter Tayyab Tahir and wrist spinner Usama Mir have been named in the squad after producing stellar performances in the Pakistan Cup, while Shan Masood and Haris Sohail have been recalled after missing out on ODI cricket since 2019 and 2020, respectively. Kamran Ghulam, who is part of the Test squad, has also been included in the ODI side for the first time.

Fast bowler Haris Rauf, who was injured during the first Test against England in Rawalpindi, has regained complete fitness and has been named in the line-up. However, Shaheen Shah Afridi, despite making good progress, has not been included as the selectors, in consultation with the medical panel, have decided to give him more time to reclaim complete fitness. He is expected to return to competitive cricket next month in the HBL Pakistan Super League 8.

Pakistan vice-captain Shadab Khan



was not considered for selection after he suffered a fracture on his right index finger in Australia last week.

Pakistan's ODI squad: Babar Azam (captain), Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Haris Sohail, Imam-ul-Haq, Kamran Ghulam, Mohammad Hasnain, Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Rizwan, Mohammad Wasim Jr, Naseem Shah, Salman Ali Agha, Shahnawaz Dahani, Shan Masood, Tayyab Tahir and Usama Mir.

Shahid Afridi, Interim Chief Selector said: "We had limited ODI cricket last year and this year, we are scheduled to play 11 ODIs before we participate in the ACC Asia Cup, followed by the World Cup in conditions that will be familiar to us. So, we aim to make optimum use of these 11 ODIs by providing opportunities to our consistent performers that will enable us to select the best available play-

ers for the two important tournaments.

"In this background, we have decided to recall experienced Haris Sohail and Shan Masood as we believe the two lads still have plenty to offer to Pakistan cricket. We have not only rewarded Tayyab Tahir and Usama Mir for their outstanding performances in our domestic events, they have also been identified as future prospects. These four players, along with Kamran Ghulam, have good knowledge of our conditions and have the talent and potential to excel at the highest level.

"Players who could not make in the ODI side will remain in contention as the objective from this series is want to have absolute clarity on the pool of players for international cricket in 2023. For this reason, outstanding domestic performers and senior players getting back to form and fitness are being given opportunities to showcase their performances. Workload management and separate squads for red and white-ball cricket is also under consideration, which will require a wider pool of players. I urge the players to continue to work hard and be ready for a call-up.

"I am pleased Fakhar Zaman and Haris Rauf have regained complete fitness and though we will miss Shadab Khan and Shaheen Shah Afridi in this series, their absence will provide Mohammad Wasim Junior, Naseem Shah, Shahnawaz Dahani and Usama Mir to step up and demonstrate what they are actually capable of."

Tayyab Tahir had a successful Pakistan Cup when he won the Player of the Final award for his match-winning 71. He was also adjudged the Best Batter of the Pakistan Cup after scoring 573 runs. Prior to the 50-over tournament, Tayyab had shown consistent form in the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy by scoring 708 runs at an average of 59 with four centuries and a half-century.

Likewise, Usama Mir was named the best bowler of the Pakistan Cup after picking up 28 wickets, following his 10 wickets in four matches in the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy.

Haris Sohail, whose 42nd and last ODI was against Zimbabwe in Rawalpindi in October 2020, has been recalled after scoring 129 runs in five Pakistan Cup matches. In the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy, the left-hander scored 453 runs at an average of 50.33 with a century and two half-centuries. Shan scored 111 runs with a half-century in five ODIs in his last appearance for Pakistan against Australia in the UAE in March 2019. The Southpaw has been a regular feature in Pakistan line-ups, across formats, since his T20I debut against England September-October.

Apart from injured Shadab Khan and Shaheen Shah Afridi, Khushdil Shah, Mohammad Haris and Zahid Mehmood were also part of the side that last played an ODI series against the Netherlands in Rotterdam but have not been selected for next week's series against New Zealand.

Junior Kabadi League announced

News Desk

ISLAMABAD : The Secretary Pakistan Kabadi Federation Rana Muhammad Sarwar has announced the Junior Kabadi League will be organized at Liaquat Gymnasium Islamabad in new year on 13th January. Rana Sarwar said that the outstanding performers will be giving the opportunity upcoming Kabadi World cup which will be held on 28th February at Iran.



Rana Sarwar said on the instruction of the President Pakistan Kabadi Federation Ch. Shafay Hussain we want to bring the new talent due to this Junior Kabadi League and our players can bright the name of in Kabadi world cup through the young talent. Rana Sarwar said that this year we will organize more event in national and international level

Inaugural match of K 20 cup



News Desk

LAHORE : Model Town Green Cricket ground. Pindi Gymkhana won the toss and decided to bat first and the made 127 for 9 due to fog the two over reduce and each both the team could deliver 18 overs. From Pindi Gymkhana Wasif 21, Imtiaz Ahmed 21 and Nadeem made 19 runs. From Model Town Greens Ahmed Arif got 4 for 16 runs and Marvas Khan took 2 wickets for 28 runs. In reply Model Town Greens were all out in 17.4 overs 108 runs. From Pindi Gymkhana Ali Annar took 4 for 22, Zaib Butt 3 for 21 and Asfand Megan took 2 for 16. Ali Annar was declared man of the match after his outstanding bowling spell. Earlier Nadeem Khan, PCB, Director High Performance Center inaugurated the ceremony. On this occasion Test Cricketer Abid Ali, Former Test cricketer Ali Naqvi Muhammad Ilyas, and Chief Organizer of K20 cup were present. Today two matches will be played Model Town Greens will play against P&T Gymkhana and Cricket Center will play against Yuslm cricket club.

Sir Syed University Clinched HEC Zone M Inter University Hockey title

Sports Reporter

KARACHI: Sir Syed University won the HEC Zone M Inter-University Hockey Championship, and defeated IBA by 2-1 after a tough fight. The Championship was organized by Sir Syed University in collaboration with Higher Education of Pakistan at K.H.A. Sports Complex. Chief Guest of the final match was Secretary Sindh Hockey Association, Akber Qaim Khani, and the event was attended by the Registrar SSUET Cdre. (R) Syed Sarfraz Ali, Director Sports SSUET, Mubasher Mukhtar, Chairman KHA, Gulfranz Ahmad Khan, Dr. S.A. Majid, Mohsin Ali Khan, Organizing Secretary Javed Iqbal, Tournament Director Raja Anwar Kamal, Umpire Manager Chaudhry Tanveer Arshad, Tariq Khan and others. TV artiste Faisal Qazi specially



came to see the final.

Asghar, Shahbaz, Irfan, Tahir were the umpires while Zahid Mahmood, Syed Imtiaz ul Hassan and Talat Mahmood were the technical officials.

Sir Syed University has also qualified for the Final Round which will be played in Peshawar next month. Sports Convener SSUET, Qazi Nasr Abbas, while addressing the closing ceremony thanked the partic-

ipating teams, players and officials as well as Karachi Hockey Association for their full support for the success of this event.

He said that the successive holding of successful HEC events under the aegis of SSUET Sports Department is the result of the best teamwork. The final match that was played at the KHA Sports Complex witnessed an exciting contest. Sir Syed University played an

aggressive game from the start and took 2-0 lead in the first four minutes. Credit goes to Ahmed Ali's two consecutive goals. Iftikhar scored one goal for IBA in 13th minute to reduce the lead.

Indus University secured third position in the Championship. Before the closing ceremony, pray was offered to late brother of Director Sports Indus University, M. Wasif for forgiveness.

DG Sports Board distributed the cheques among position holders



Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi has distributed cheques among top position holders of Karvan-e-Khudi painting competition at a ceremony held at National Hockey Stadium on Thursday. Director Admin Syed Umair Hassan and other officials were also present on this occasion.

It may be noted here Karvan-e-Khudi painting competition was held under the auspices of Youth Affairs and Sports Department Punjab in connection with Iqbal Day celebrations at Nishtar Park Sports Complex E-Library recently.

Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi awarded a cash prize of Rs 25,000 to winner Hira Irshad while runner-up M Junaid Younis got Rs 20,000 followed by the third position holder Seher Anwar who was given a cheque of Rs 15,000.

Talking on this occasion, Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi appreciated the performance of young male and female painters in Karvan-e-Khudi painting competitions. "The talented painters beautifully highlighted different features of Iqbal's life and poetry through their impressive paintings," he added.

Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi further said that Youth Affairs and Sports Department Punjab will continue to hold such programmes to pay homage to our great leaders and provide our youth sufficient opportunities to express their hidden abilities.

Karachi Kings sign IXBAT as Titanium sponsor for PSL 8

A Sports

KARACHI: The most followed franchise of the Pakistan Super League (PSL), Karachi Kings have signed IXBAT as Titanium sponsor for the eighth edition of the marquee league.



Taking to Twitter, Kings announced titanium sponsorship with IXBAT.

It is pertinent to mention that the upcoming eighth edition of the PSL is likely to take place in February-March this year across multiple venues.

However, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) will announce the official schedule and venue list in due course.

Furthermore, chair of the PCB management committee Najam Sethi announced to hold PSL and international matches at Arbab Niaz Stadium, Quetta.

6th RMTA National Seniors and Juniors Tennis Championships from Jan 14

Sports Reporter

KARACHI: The 6th RMTA National Seniors and Juniors Tennis Championships will be held from 14th to 20th January 2023 at DA Creek Club Karachi.

The week long national Championships is being organized by Reza Mirza Tennis Academy (RMTA) Sponsored By McDonalds Pakistan and under the auspices of PTF/STA and KTA.

Events included are Juniors 18 Singles and Doubles, Girls 18 Singles and Doubles, Boys U 16 Singles and Doubles, Boys Under 14 Singles and Doubles, Girls Under 14 Singles and Doubles, Boys/Girls Under 12 Singles and Doubles, Boys/ Girls Under 10 Singles and Doubles, Seniors 35 Plus Singles, Seniors 45 Plus Doubles and Seniors 55 Plus Singles.

This is PTF Grade One Tournament, All out station Main Draw Junior players are entitled to Economy class railway fare and Daily Allowances as per PTF Rules.

Last Date of sending entry is 11th January to Muhammad Khalid Rehmani (Referee).

T-20 series

KARACHI-Jan05: Australian high commissioner in Pakistan Neil Hawkin posing for a group photograph along with Pakistan's women cricket team player regarding upcoming One Day and T-20 series, at National Bank Ground in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Sethi slams Jay Shah for unilaterally unveiling Asia Cup calendar

A Sports -

KARACHI: The chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) management committee Najam Sethi slammed Asian Cricket Council (ACC) President Jay Shah for unilaterally announcing the calendar of Asia Cup 2022/23.

The Board of Cricket Control in India (BCCI) secretary who is also the president of ACC on Thursday came with the announcement regarding the pathway structure and cricket calendars for 2023 and 2024 for upcoming Asia Cups.

Meanwhile, PCB management committee chairman Sethi was not pleased by the announcement from



ACC President Shah and took a dig at him for unilaterally announcing the details.

Taking to Twitter, Sethi mentioned Shah and tauntingly thanked the latter for unilaterally announcing the Asia Cup structure and calendar, especially for Asia Cup 2023 for which Paki-

stan is the host while also asking him to present the structure and calendar of the upcoming eighth edition of the Pakistan Super League (PSL).

"Thank you [Jay Shah] for unilaterally presenting [Asia Cup] structure & calendars 2023-24 especially relating to Asia Cup 2023 for which [Pakistan] is the event host," Sethi wrote on Twitter.

"While you are at it, you might as well present structure & calendar of our PSL 2023! A swift response will be appreciated," he added.

It is pertinent to mention that Pakistan got the hosting rights of the Asia Cup 2023 amid the Executive Board meeting of the ACC in October last year.

Late strikes boost NZ as Pakistan chase 319 on final day

KARACHI: Stumps Pakistan 408 and 0 for 2 (Sodhi 1-0, Southee 1-0) need 319 runs to beat New Zealand 449 and 277 for 5 dec (Bracewell 74*, Blundell 74)

Some enterprising batting after tea, a late declaration from Tim Southee, and two Pakistan wickets in the final minutes of the fourth day gave New Zealand a massive advantage going into day five. On the last day of the deadlocked Test series, New Zealand will need eight wickets to win while Pakistan need to either score 319—a record target on Pakistan grounds—or survive a maximum of 90 overs.

New Zealand won two of the three sessions, starting off by dismissing Pakistan's overnight No. 11 inside the first over to take a 41-run lead. After that, Tom Latham (62), Kane Williamson (41), Tom Blundell (74) and Michael Bracewell (74*) made useful batting contri-

butions to take their innings forward.

The way Blundell and Bracewell batted in the third session would've deflated Pakistan, however. Pakistan took three top-order wickets in quick succession after lunch to dream of possibly chasing a lower target, but the Blundell-Bracewell duo put on 120 for the fifth wicket. That helped New Zealand eventually declare on 277 for 5 and set a target of 319.

Then, Pakistan, left with three overs to bat before stumps, lived their worst-case scenario. Abdullah Shafique was bowled by Southee for a duck and Mir Hamza also went for zero courtesy an Ish Sodhi ripper. Pakistan ended the day at 0 for 2.

The day had also begun for Pakistan poorly, lasting only one over with the bat on the fourth morning to be bowled for 408 and conceding a 41-run deficit. Even though Hamza dismissed Devon

Conway with a first-ball duck, Latham and Williamson used their sweeps, and the latter his shots straight back, to put on a partnership of 109.

Latham and Williamson then looked to extend New Zealand's lead, but both were dismissed in a frenetic period of play. Latham, on 57, was caught on the back foot off Abrar Ahmed around the stumps, but survived an lbw dismissal since Pakistan, with only one review in hand, did not go up after umpire Alex Wharf turned it down.

That decision from Babar did not hurt Pakistan, though, since Latham was out for 62 next over trying to flick Naseem Shah off his hips, only to hit it to the left of a diving Abrar at short midwicket. The new batter Nicholls then survived a caught-behind decision from umpire Aleem Dar, but his review changed the decision after no edge was detected.