



Senator Mushahid proposes '5-point action plan to promote Blue Economy

Chairman of Senate Defence Committee, Senator Mushahid Hussain while chairing two sessions of Pakistan International Maritime Expo & Conference (PIMEC) 2023 proposed a 5-point Action Plan to promote Blue Economy. (Report on Page 8)



Ambassador Masood Khan urges more linkages between Pakistan, US educational institutions

Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Masood Khan, Sunday called for forging new linkages between Pakistan and the United States in a number of fields, including education, research and technology, during a visit to the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. (Report on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Relief Activities

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting to review Pakistan's contributions in rescue and relief activities in the post-earthquake situation in turkiye and Syria on Sunday.



Photo: PID

Bilawal pays tribute to women on National Woman day

LAHORE: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said that it is impossible to promote human rights without giving equal rights to women.



According to a statement issued by Bilawal House Media Cell here on Sunday, the Chairman PPP, in his message on National Woman's Day, extended greetings to the entire nation, including all the mothers, sisters and daughters of Pakistan and said that this day is a symbol of Pakistani women's struggle for democracy and resistance to dictatorship.

Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto were role models for the world. "It is a matter of pride for me that Pakistan People's Party is the only party in the country which has been led by two women," he said.

Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that Pakistani women were a metaphor of unparalleled bravery, great talent and indomitable courage, adding that the Madar-e-Millat Ms Fatima Jinnah, Madar-e-Jamhooriat Begum Nusrat Bhutto and Shaheed

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that the Constitution of 1973 guarantees equality, representation, protection and equal opportunities for development of women in Pakistan. The Chairman PPP assured the Pakistani women that his party fully supports their every struggle to end all forms of discrimination and exploitation.

Pakistan to continue assisting quake-affected people of Turkiye, Syria: PM

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday said that Pakistan would continue assisting the quake-affected brethren and sisters of Turkiye and Syria by sending the relief aid.

He said that the fund established for the earthquake-affected people of Turkiye would also be utilized to support the quake victims of Syria.

The prime minister chaired a meeting to review the ongoing relief efforts on part of Pakistan to provide succor to the quake-affected populace of Turkiye and Syria, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

minister said that Pakistan would bear all the expenses on the supply of relief goods to these countries.

He also directed the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to purchase the required items keeping in view of the needs of the quake victims, adding that Pakistan was not only utilizing the air bridge but also ensuring supply of relief assistance through land and sea routes.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Finance Ishaq Dar, Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb, PM's Special Assistant Syed Tariq Fatemi, secretaries of foreign affairs, aviation, chairman NDMA and other high officials.



officials.

The prime minister directed the minister for planning to contact the educational institutions for running an organized fund-raising campaign.

He also asked the ministry of religious affairs to spread aware-

ness in the religious institutions by taking the ulema on board.

Yesterday, a convoy of 21 trucks containing these items had left for the two countries. In the next few days, 1600 tons of ration would be dispatched to Turkiye and Syria through land and sea routes.

The meeting was further briefed that the people had started donating relief goods at the NDMA collection points.

Pakistan was immediately sending more than 11,000 winterized tents to the quake victims whereas 14,000 tents would be dispatched in the next week, and more than 42,000 blankets would be part of the relief assistance.

Ambassadors of Pakistan to Turkiye and Syria also apprised the prime minister of the situation in the quake-affected areas and the requirements of the affected people.

The prime minister directed them to remain in close contact with the respective governments of Turkiye and Syria.

Rana Sanaullah gives FIA nod to arrest Shaukat Tarin in audio leak case

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah on Sunday allowed the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to arrest former finance czar Shaukat Tarin after the completion of an inquiry against him in the audio leak case.

On Saturday, the agency requested permission from the interior ministry to initiate legal proceedings against Mr Tarin and his detention, claiming that Shaukat Tarin's conversation was an attempt to derail the IMF deal and he wanted to harm the coun-

try's security and national interests.

Earlier, audio of PTI leader Shaukat Tarin surfaced in which he allegedly asked Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Finance Ministers to backtrack from IMF commitments in order to pressurise federal government.

In alleged audio, Shaukat Tarin said that they need to backtrack from Rs750 billion commitments and tell the lender that the commitment Punjab made was pre-floods and now the province "cannot honor it".

The PTI leader told the finance

minister to draft a letter and send it to him for vetting so it could be sent to the federal government and later on to the IMF representative in Pakistan.

At Tarin's request, Leghari asked whether Pakistan would suffer if Punjab withdraws from the deal. "Well, frankly isn't the state already suffering because of the way they are treating your chairman [Khan] and everybody else? IMF will definitely ask them: where will you get the money from now?" Tarin responded.

Don't miss: Sanaullah vows to ensure security of foreign nationals

He further said that Centre is sending PTI leadership to jail and filing terrorism case. Tarin said that this could not go on further and the party could not bear being "mistreated" and not respond. "We cannot be blackmailed.

Addressing a presser in Karachi, the interior minister took a jibe at the deposed premier Imran Khan saying that after his ouster he and his stalwarts had been campaigning over false accusations to spread chaos in the country, adding that Shaukat Tarin played a similar role and tried hard to hurt Pakistan under Khan's guidelines.

Siraj blames PDM, PTI for country's economic woes



City Reporter

DINA: Jamat-e-Islami (JI) emir Sirajul Haq blamed on Sunday the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for economic woes.

Mr Haq, speaking at a public gathering, bemoaned the country's mounting debts. He lashed out at the rulers, saying, "These corrupt rulers had dragged the country into a quag-mire."

He also blamed the rulers for "people not getting justice in the country." He also expressed his concerns over "skyrocketing inflation," saying, "Now the masses will not bear more inflation."

Comparing the JI with other political parties, Mr Haq said, "All the political parties are facing corruption charges with the exception of the JI. The JI is the only political party in the country that has never been accused of corruption."

Iranian leader's visit to China

TEHRAN: As a sign of the reinforced high-level contact between Beijing and Teheran, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi is set to visit China this week, giving a boost to the two countries' collaboration in areas including the economy and international hot-spot issues.

At the invitation of President Xi Jinping, Raisi will make a state visit to China from Tuesday to Thursday, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said on Sunday.

In July and September, the two presidents held a phone talk and had a face-to-face meeting in

Uzbekistan's Samarkand, reaching fresh consensus on deepening China-Iran relations, Chinese officials said. As part of enhanced two-way political ties, the Chinese Consulate General in Iran's port city of Bandar Abbas was officially opened in December. It is China's first consulate general in the Middle East country.

"China-Iran high-level contacts have constantly advanced, and pragmatic cooperation in various fields has continued to deepen," Chinese Ambassador to Iran Chang Hua said last month at a reception.

Trade between China and Iran also maintained positive growth last year. China continues to be Iran's leading trade partner, largest export destination and second-largest source of imports, according to the Foreign Ministry.

"China's economy keeps unleashing its dynamism and improving steadily, which will provide greater development opportunities for all countries in the world, including Iran," Fu Lihua, charge d'affaires of the Chinese embassy in Teheran, wrote in an article published by the Tehran Times newspaper last week.

Foreign Minister Qin Gang held his first phone conversation with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian last month.

Advancing the two countries' comprehensive cooperation plan and offering support to safeguard each state's sovereignty were high on the agenda. During their phone talk, the Iranian side said it also appreciated China's "constructive role" in the progress of negotiations on resuming compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the landmark Iran nuclear deal enacted in 2016.

Nation enduring consequences of PTI's incompetence: Maryam

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Chief Organiser Maryam Nawaz on Sunday said the nation was enduring the consequences of the incompetence of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)'s ineligible government led by Imran Khan.

Talking to newsmen, she thanked the media for extending exemplary support in the most difficult period.

She said Imran Khan's wrong policies were responsible for the current economic woes of people, adding that "people know who was responsible for the current problems, inflation and economic crisis." She claimed that Imran Khan was still being "facilitated".

PTI did nothing for the people and the country, during their four years of rule as all their attention was on holding meetings of the spokespersons.

She said the government was doing its utmost to drive the country out of the crisis as the Shehbaz government can't turn a blind eye to inflation. She said she can't deny that there was no inflation, and because of the IMF, we cannot give any relief to the people.

Prime Minister Shehbaz

Sharif's focus was to ensure good governance, getting the country and the nation out of the quagmire of problems.

She said PML-N believes in performance as the foundation, identity and real strength of the party was the delivery of services.

Highlighting the main reason for a weakened position on social media, she said PML-N was a party working in the practical field. Moreover, she added, PML-N's social media was being handled on a voluntary basis, and now the volunteers were being organised at the primary level. "Our volunteers were so efficient that 'Papa Johns' had to launch a crackdown against PML-N."

She said the PTI government had recruited keyboard warriors with hundred of rupees at government expense.

PML-N was developing its own IT wing and Senator Dr Afanullah was working on it, she added.

About former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, she said he was contacted on the last day as well, and he was not angry.

He (Shahid Khaqan) has been working with Nawaz Sharif for the last thirty years, and "if Shahid Khaqan encourages me, it will be a great thing," she added.

Imran to announce 'Jail Bharo Tehreek' in few days

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan said on Sunday he will announce 'Jail Bharo Tehreek' in few days.

In an address via video link, Mr Khan lashed out at Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif, claiming, "Nawaz wanted to debar me from politics and send to jail."

"These people were only concerned with saving their money and were afraid the PTI would come to power," the deposed premier said. The society suffers as a result of torture on those with less power, he added.

Citing the example of the developed countries, Mr Khan said, "In the developed countries,

there is a supremacy of law." In response to the LHC's decision to hold elections in Punjab within 90 days, Mr Khan praised the judiciary, saying the PTI had high expectations of the judiciary.

He feared the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) would mount pressure on the judiciary. "The masses were looking up to the judiciary to protect the constitution," Mr Khan said.

He recalled his call for snap elections to get the country out of its quagmire.

Mr Khan referred to former army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa as "the super king," saying he "used to take all the decisions by himself." "The former army chief said that the United States is not happy with me," added the PTI chief.

Meeting on anti-terrorism

KARACHI: Federal Minister for Interior Rana Sanaullah Khan chairing a meeting on anti-terrorism measures and security of foreign nationals.



Photo: APP

National Women's Day: NA speaker pays tribute to women

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly (NA) Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf said National Women's Day holds great significance in the annals of history owing to the undeterred struggle of Pakistani women for democracy in the face of dictatorship.

He, in a message on the occasion of National Women's

Day, paid rich tribute to women and remarked that they were a metaphor for unparalleled bravery, great talent and indomitable courage.

The speaker further said, "Madar-e-Millat Fatima Jinnah, Madar-e-Jamhooriat Nusrat Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto are role models for the world as they stood strong and expressed great commit-

ment in the testing and difficult times."

He also emphasized that the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan guarantees equality, representation, protection and opportunities for the development of women.

The parliament would continue to make all-out efforts to ensure full implementation of these constitutional rights, he maintained.



Senator Mushahid proposes '5-point action plan to promote Blue Economy'

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of Senate Defence Committee, Senator Mushahid Hussain while chairing two sessions of Pakistan International Maritime Expo & Conference (PIMEC) 2023 proposed a 5-point Action Plan to promote Blue Economy.

He said apart from Blue Economy, marine and mineral resources plus China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and building on a strategic partnership between Pakistan, China and Saudi Arabia would be a catalyst for forging new linkages development approach that can help 'bid goodbye to IMF', said a press release issued here.

Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Amjad Khan Niazi, Vice Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Faisal Rasul Lodhi and other senior officers of Pakistan Navy plus representatives of 50 countries, partic-



ipating in PIMEC, were also present.

Outlining his presentation, Senator Mushahid Hussain said that it's now clear that Pakistan needed a new development path.

He focused on exploring and exploiting marine resources by a strategy for Blue Economy, which, according to the World Bank, has resources worth at least \$ 100 billion. He added that 50,000

square kilometers were added to Pakistan's continental shelf as an exclusive economic zone in 2015, a huge mass of water, almost like a 5th province.

"Added to this maritime economy is the immense mineral wealth, huge reserves of natural gas and 175 billion tons of coal in Thar, all of which cumulatively add up to a hidden wealth of almost a \$ 1 trillion (one trillion dollars), that has not been tapped at all

due to an absence of policy on these areas."

Senator Mushahid Hussain then called for developing an alternative economic developmental strategy through a 5-point Action Plan.

First, the government should immediately establish a National Authority for Blue Economy (NABE), to prepare a comprehensive strategy that involves Pakistan Navy, the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and the private sector as principal stakeholders.

Second, the Ministry of Maritime Affairs should have a Secretary, who is from Pakistan Navy, like the Ministry of Defence has a Secretary from Pakistan Army. "That will make the Ministry of Maritime Affairs a proactive and pivotal player on the Blue Economy."

Third, a special non-governmental Task Force be established comprising

experts, academics, think tanks and relevant private sector for devising a Work Plan in 2023 for promoting awareness about Blue Economy amongst opinion leaders and relevant stakeholders.

Fourth, as part of alternative economic development strategy for Pakistan, develop a linkage between Blue Economy, marine and mineral resources, CPEC, TAPI and developing triangular relationship between Pakistan, China and Saudi Arabia, so that Energy Security becomes a key pillar of Blue Economy framework.

Fifth, media mobilisation was a force multiplier for promoting Blue Economy and in this regard, Media Workshops be organised in Gwadar, Ormara, Keti Bandar and Karachi, so that 'sea blindness' ends with an awareness of the future potential of Blue Economy.

Ambassador Masood Khan urges more linkages between Pakistan, US educational institutions

Spokesman Report

WASHINGTON: Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Masood Khan, Sunday called for forging new linkages between Pakistan and the United States in a number of fields, including education, research and technology, during a visit to the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

One of the key features of the US-Pakistan relationship is that it is people-centric, he said while speaking to the university students. People-to-people ties have been at the heart of this relationship, the ambassador added.

Pakistan's Consul General in New York, Ayesha Ali, accompanied the Ambassador.

Masood Khan highlighted that links between the two countries' scientists, researchers and academics have always been an important component of such



people-to-people ties, and interactions in the higher education field between the institutions of Pakistan and the US are a very important dimension of the overall partnership.

It is against this historically rich backdrop that our two governments have accorded high priority to deepening of our cooperation in the field of education as we chart the course ahead for this defining stand-alone partnership, the Ambassador said.

Kumble Subbaswamy, Chancel-

lor of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, while thanking the Ambassador reflected on the legacy of their frequent exchange programs from Pakistan under the University's Civic Initiative that is run in partnership with the US State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Study of the US Institutes.

The Ambassador thanked the Chancellor for his support and valuable partnership and assured him of the Government of Pakistan's continued support in building linkages between Pakistan's universities with the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Currently, hundreds of Pakistani students are studying at the University in different disciplines.

During the visit, Ambassador Masood Khan interacted with a group of university teachers who visited Pakistan in 2019 before the covid pandemic on an exchange programme

Imran will mount pressure on PDM with his election campaign: Parvez Elahi

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Former Punjab chief minister Chaudhry Parvez Elahi said on Sunday if Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan will pour out the streets for his party's election campaign, the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) will face mounting pressure.

Speaking to media, Mr Elahi said, "The stage for by-elections in Punjab has been set as the Lahore High Court (LHC) gave a ruling in this regard as per the constitution and law."

He urged the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to announce the schedule of elections immediately.

Zardari pays tribute to women who worked for democracy

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) Asif Ali Zardari Sunday paid tribute to the women who raised their voices for the Constitution and democracy during the Zia dictatorship on National Women's Day.

"Mother of democracy, Begum Nusrat Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto were the torchbearers of the struggle for freedom and democracy among the women-folk of the country," he added.

He said Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto defeated the powerful dictators through democratic struggle.

Asif Zardari said the women leaders and workers of the PPP endured imprisonment in the Shahi Fort in



the struggle for the restoration of democracy.

"PPP ensured the participation of women in all sectors," he said, adding that it is important for a dignified and civilized society that women should have equal rights.

He said the mindset that considers women as inferior and weak has to be defeated. The PPP would continue the struggle to give women the dignified position they deserve.

'India expanding settler-colonial project in IIOJK by grabbing Kashmiris' land'

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: India is expanding its settler-colonial project in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) by grabbing more and more land from the Kashmiris.

A report released by Kashmir Media Service, today, said India has been treating Kashmir as its colony right from 1947 when its troops illegally landed in Srinagar on 27th October 1947 against the partition plan of the subcontinent and the aspirations of the Kashmiris.

It said the Modi regime's August 5, 2019 illegal move to repeal the special status of the occupied territory was another step towards colonizing Kashmir. It said colonization of IIOJK has since long been a dream of

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Marginalization of the indigenous population and policies of land grab are obvious manifestations of Modi's colonial project in the occupied territory, it added.

The report said wiping away Kashmir's special status has been a dream of Hindutva forces. As part of its settler-colonial project, India is changing the demography of IIOJK by settling non-Kashmiri Hindus in the territory, it maintained.

The report deplored that India was exploiting Kashmir's natural resources with full impunity through heavy militarization. It said Modi is using Indian business companies and tycoons to expand the colonization of Kashmir.

It said India's colonial settler enterprise in IIOJK is proceeding along the same lines as the Israeli grab land in Palestine. The colonial measures in IIOJK by India are clear violations of the United Nations resolutions, it maintained.

The report said there is deafening silence about Modi's naked colonialism in IIOJK and the world must break its silence about India's colonialism and resolve the lingering Kashmir dispute according to the World Body resolutions and aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

Fawad sees Maryam interfering court's ruling over NAB amendments



Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) senior leader Fawad Chaudhry claimed on Sunday Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior vice president President Maryam Nawaz was trying to put impact on the court's ruling over the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) amendments.

Talking to Twitter, Mr Chaudhry took a swipe at Ms Nawaz, saying, "She is afraid the court would undone the NAB amendments and this will

end the objective of the regime change and will reopen all the cases."

In another tweet, Mr Chaudhry lamented the price of tea (per kg) had been increased from Rs1100 to Rs1500 just within 15 days.

He feared the masses will face further difficulties with another wave of inflation ahead of Ramadan.

Mr Chaudhry schooled the federal ministers, saying, "It is unbelievable the ministers are doing nothing to take the country out of the severe economic crunch."

Shah Mahmood Qureshi blames PDM Govt for economic crisis

Correspondent

MULTAN: Former foreign minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Vice-Chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Sunday blamed the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) government for the economic crisis.

Shah Mahmood Qureshi held a press conference in which he strongly criticised the ruling government and blamed the PDM government for political instability, wheat and economic crisis in Pakistan.

While talking about the current inflation, the senior politician indicat-

ed about another increase of Rs8 per unit in the power tariff. He claimed that the prices of petrol and diesel will also be increased by Rs35 per litre.

Qureshi further said that due to the economic crisis, the farmer package will also be halted from the next month.

The former foreign minister lambasted the government for its 'failed' strategies, stating that the coalition government bankrupted the country in nine months and the central bank was not having sufficient reserves to open letters of credit (LCs).

The Indonesian Navy is participating in AMAN 2023: Envoy

Bureau Report

KARACHI: In discussion with Karachi Council for Foreign Relations (KCFR), Ambassador Adam Tugio underscored the solid foundation of bilateral relation between Indonesia and Pakistan which encompassing all aspects of cooperation. He mentioned the participation of a frigate vessel of Indonesian Navy to AMAN Naval Exercise 2023 as an example on how Indonesia attaches great importance of its partnership with Pakistan to promote global peace and security.

The Envoy further said that cooperation on defence sectors has a potential to grow beyond exchange of military officers and capacity building programs. "More than 50 percent of conflicts is taking place in OIC geographic. Indonesia and Pakistan are the two biggest

UN troops contributing countries and the role of women peacekeepers of the two countries can give significant contribution to create enabling environment for peace and reconciliation in such conflicts", added Tugio.

Ambassador Tugio specifically made reference to newly established mechanism of Joint Ministerial Commission which would allow the two FM's to meet at regular basis for stocktaking progress of bilateral cooperation and give strategic direction to deepening bilateral relation. He further mentioned that Pakistan has full potential to develop its economy due to its geostrategic location to serve as gateway to the broader region in Central Asian. "Pakistan has strong resilience to overcome the economic crises and make strong revival as attested through its history", imbued the envoy.

Ambassador Tugio encouraged Pakistan business community to look Indonesia as trade hub for expanding its export to huge market of more than 640 million people in ASEAN. Responding to the question on doable strategy for Pakistan to strengthen its partnership with ASEAN, he suggested a two-prong approach of institutional collaboration with ASEAN Secretariat and bilateral processes with ASEAN members. The envoy underlined the importance of deepening connectivity through hard elements, such as building infrastructure as well increasing people-to-people connections as soft elements of connectivity. "Pakistan is blessed with scenic beauty landscapes and has the potentials to become center for religious tourism since it has many heritage sites for Buddhism and Islam, noting that 24% people in ASEAN are Buddhist and 46%

are Muslim", added the Envoy.

Another potential cooperation that the Envoy mentioned was on economy shariah and halal market. He stated that 25% of world population today is Muslim and he made reference to PTA of D-8 organisations where Indonesia and Pakistan are members, together with other Muslim majority countries spanning from Asia to Middle East, and from South Asia to Southeast Asia.

Responding to the question on the collaboration on science and technology, Ambassador Tugio underscored the unique position of Pakistan as COMSTECH OIC headquarter is in Islamabad. The Envoy mentioned that last year Indonesian Ministry of Health in collaboration with COMSTECH hosted four health professionals from Pakistan and Egypt for capacity building program on virol-



ogy in Jakarta. The event was chaired by Commodore Retd. Sadeed Anver Malik and Vice Admiral Retd. Khalid Mir attended by members of Karachi Council on Foreign Relations.

Protest

HYDERABAD: Workers of Sindh Hindu Council hold a protest rally against inflation, outside press club.



Photo: Online by Nadeem Khawar

PM AJK announces housing project for members of Kashmir Journalist Forum

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan has said that a housing project for the members of the Kashmir Journalist Forum would be started within 45 days.

While talking to journalists the PM said that in the first phase, land has been allocated in Kotli for the project where plots would be allocated to the KJF members accordingly. He said that the ground breaking of the project would be held soon. "In the second and third phase, land will be allocated in Islamabad and Muzaffarabad", the PM said, adding that the initiative would be taken after due consultations with representatives of the forum.

The PM said that the government was painstakingly working to improve life standard of living of people by providing basic amenities of life. Referring to the launching of Pink Bus service in Muzaffarabad, he said that the bus service for women would be started soon in Rawalkot and other cities.

Regarding the promotion of small industry in the state, the PM said that it was heartening to see that goods



industry is providing decent and dignified employment to thousands of people.

Over five hundred women working in different vocational institutes have been preparing garments at the local level under the auspices of TEVTA.

Likewise, wooden rosaries from local white olives, granite and other precious stones are amongst the top quality goods being produced at local level.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan made a passionate appeal to philanthropists to submit generous donations to help quake victims in Turkey. He said that Turkey has always provided sincere and generous help to Pakistan and Azad Kashmir. "The government and people of Turkey have always helped us in every difficult time, especially in the deadly earthquake of 2005", the PM said adding that it was their responsibility to extend a hand of support to people of Turkey in this situation.

In this regard, the government has established a relief fund titled "Prime Minister AJ&K Disaster and Natural Calamities, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Donation Fund".

produced at local level were getting acceptance everywhere. He said that different kinds of rosaries (Tasbeh) being made at Muzaffarabad were being acknowledged everywhere and becoming identity of Azad Kashmir in the Muslim world.

He said that production of high quality jeans would start from Muzaffarabad soon. Similarly, he said that pet food being imported in bulk quantity would be prepared locally. He said that the government would start a project to breed Angora rabbits for the production of original Pashmina shawls.

"Sericulture will be promoted in order to raw silk", he said.

It is worth mentioning here that, as a result of the revolutionary measures taken by the Prime Minister, local

Environmental Protection Agency Punjab has organised a cycling marathon

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Environmental Protection Agency Punjab has organised a cycling marathon on 12th February 2023 at Liberty roundabout to raise awareness among the masses regarding non-motorised mode of transportation. The event started with an opening ceremony, distribution of cycles, refreshment and shirts followed by cycle marathon and distribution of participation certificates by Director General Khawaja Sikandar Zeeshan. Participant included people from all walks of life presenting a good mix of all age groups. The aim of the rally was to raise awareness for clean & green Lahore.

EPA supports cycling as an eco-friendly alternative and to make people aware of the harmful effects of combustible fuel on the environment and to inspire people to use bicycles to commute rather than travel in vehicles propelled by petrol or diesel, which are in itself vastly depleting and non-renewable resource.

DPO SW visited Gomal police station

Adam Khan Wazir

TANK: According to the details, South Waziristan District Police Officer Shabbir Hussain Marwat visited Gomal Tank police station, which was attacked by terrorists last night, according to the special instructions of Regional Police Officer Dera Division Saleem Marwat.

The DPO gave commendations and cash rewards to the SHO of Gomal Police Station and the personnel for repelling the terrorist attack by showing bravery.

Last night, the terrorists attacked the Gomal police station in the dark of night with small and heavy weapons, which the policemen bravely resisted and forced the terrorists to flee.

The DPO said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police is undoubtedly a force of lions who are invincible.

The attacks of the terrorists will be given a befitting reply, but in no case will they be allowed to succeed in their evil ambitions.

The SHO of Gomal police station and the officials fought the terrorists bravely, every officer of KPK police will fight with the same bravery.

Such cowardly attacks can neither demoralize us nor weaken our ambitions.

The ambitions of the terrorists are to undermine the police force and destroy peace and achieve their nefarious goals, but this is their illusion.

We will always stand before them as a leaden mountain, as we have always stood.

The young men of the police force know how to defend their homeland, their soil and their people and will continue to do so and have full capacity to face all kinds of situations.



Interim government only duty is holding free and fair election, says Asad Qaiser



Correspondent

SWABI: Former Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser has said that interim government only duty is to hold free and fair elections in province. He said that PTI will challenge the illegal transfer and posting in bureaucracy by Governor Kpk. He expressed these views while addressing a public gathering at Swabi.

Former Speaker has said that interim CM was selected by consensus but unfortunately he has surrender his power to Governor. He said that all the cabinet has been finalized by Governor and now transfer and posting are also done from Governor House on consensus of ex opposition leader Akram Durani.

He said that Pakistan Tahreek Insaf will challenge all the illegal transfer posting done by Governor KPK. He said that we will not bear any illegal orders of Governor of interference in holding free and fair elections.

Peoples of AJK facing serious problems of substandard internet service

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: The Central President of Association of Traders Muzaffarabad, Shaukat Nawaz Mir, has demanded from the government of Pakistan and Azad Kashmir that the people in Azad Kashmir in general and Muzaffarabad in particular are facing serious problems due to the provision of poor and substandard internet service to the users. He said that with the connivance of PTA in Azad Kashmir, all the communication companies like Zong, Telenor, Ufone and Scem etc. are providing 2G service of call and internet under conspiracy despite the very expensive package in the name of 4G. He warned that if these communication companies do not take notice of this worrisome

situation, then direct action will be taken.

As such, PTA and the offices of the said communication companies will be surrounded and the responsibility of the serious situation will be imposed on the top officials of the communication companies.

Meanwhile, the former Additional Secretary General of Muslim League-N Youth Wing, Dr. Sharafat Ali Khalji, also expressed a strong reaction against the communication companies and warned them to improve their net service within ten days, otherwise there will be a collective boycott. He said the PTA and communication companies will be responsible for the whole situation. People are facing serious problems due to poor and substandard internet



service provision. He warned that if these communication companies do not take notice of this dubious situation, their offices will protest.

Former Additional Secretary General of Muslim League-N Dr Sharafat Ali Khalji also expressed a strong reaction against the communication companies and

warned them to improve their net service within ten days otherwise there will be a collective boycott and all PTA and communication companies will be responsible for the situation.

An emergency meeting of Anjuman-e-Tajran Abasspur was held today under the chairmanship of Sardar Muhammad Hayat Khan, President of Anjuman-e-Tajran, in which a large number of businessmen and civil society representatives and consumers participated. Concern was expressed over the substandard phone service network Ha Zong, Telenor, S.com, Uphone by various companies. If they do not standardize and improve them, they will not only be collectively boycotted, but their pools and bases will be demolished.

An emergency meeting of



Abasspur Bar Association was held under the chairmanship of Sardar Mushtaq Ahmed Khan President Bar Association in which a large number of lawyers participated. Concern was expressed on Work Ha Zong, Telenor, S.com, Ufone. The speakers warned all the network

companies that if they do not standardize and improve their network service within a month, not only collectively. But they will be boycotted; rather their polls and bases will be demolished.

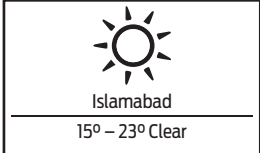
Another meeting was held today under the chairmanship of Sardar Muhammad Shiraz Khan Local Councilor of the public area of Poliss, Tiruti, Laharsi Mang, Chatra, Potha and Potha Street, Dhariyan Abasspur, in which a large number of people participated. The people of the area, students, senior citizens, businessmen and representatives of civil society and ex-users of the network participated in the meeting. Non-standard phone service network Hazong, Telenor, Scem, Uphone from different companies participated in the meeting. Concern was expressed.

The speakers informed all the network companies that if they do not restore the phone and network service in our areas within fifteen days, we will be forced to take direct action.

The students are of the opinion that most of these educational activities are connected to the network service and due to the shutdown of the service; the students are facing academic difficulties.

Despite Barha's reminders, service to these border villages has not been restored.

The public has been warned to standardize and improve their network service to provide uninterrupted services otherwise there will be a collective massive boycott of all the networks and their poles and bases will be pulled down.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 5:32 am
Zohr 12:22 pm
Asr 4:10 pm
Maghrib 5:49 pm
Isha 7:13 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

COMPLAINTS

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

Anti-polio drive to kick off from Monday

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Anti-polio vaccination campaign of varied duration will begin in 24 districts of Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan from tomorrow (Monday).

According to details, a massive anti-polio drive, targeting over 4 million children, under the age of five years, will kick off in districts of Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan.

In Punjab, more than 2.8 million children up to five years age will be vaccinated against during a four-day drive in eight districts.

Meanwhile, a three-day anti-polio campaign will begin in seven districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, during which more than 1.3 million children will be administered vaccine.

Moreover, almost 0.12 million children will be administered anti-polio drops during a seven-day campaign in nine districts of Balochistan.

Earlier in February, it was reported that the nationwide anti-polio campaign, held in three phases in January, 'failed' to achieve set targets.

Sources familiar with the matter said as many as 44.2% of children aged 5 years were said to be inhaled anti-polio drops, but the target was not met. As many as 552,256 children were left without anti-polio drops during the three-phase drive in the country.

In Punjab, 179,128 children, 137,532 in Sindh, 135,557 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 77,435 in Balochistan, 14,309 in Azad Jammu and Kashmir and 3,586 children remained unvaccinated against polio.

Sources privy to the development said 86,286 children were also missed during the anti-polio drive in different areas, while 403,559 children were unavailable during three phases of the anti-polio drive.

Ahsan lauds NDMA for swift relief stresses mobile medical teams for quake-hit countries

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Dr Ahsan Iqbal on Sunday appreciated the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) for swift relief assistance and laid stress to arrange mobile medical teams along with essential medicines for quake-hit countries.

Dr. Ahsan Iqbal chaired the meeting through video link whereas Chairman NDMA, Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik and Turkish Ambassador Mehmet Pacaci joined the session, a news release said.

The NDMA held a special National Emergencies Operation Centre (NEOC) session to

review humanitarian assistance package for quake-hit Turkiye and Syria.

The session was attended by Ambassador of Pakistan in Turkiye Dr. Yousaf Junaid, Ambassador of Pakistan in Syria DG NLC, Air Marshal (R) Shahid Akhter and representatives of Ministry of Health Services, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Pakistan Navy and PDMAs.

The minister said that a fundraising campaign was also launched in educational institutions across the country to collect funds for victims of the earthquakes. The drive was launched in schools, colleges, and universities in response to the prime minister's call.

The Chairman NDMA briefed

that the authority has arranged and dispatched 162 tonnes and 9 tonnes of relief goods to Turkiye and Syria respectively whereas relief consignment of 447 tonnes collectively has been sent off through NLC trucks to both countries.

This consignment contains large family-sized winterized tents and blankets as per current need of quake affectees. Additionally, deputed Pakistan Army USAR team and Rescue 1122 team have undertaken several rescue operations in Turkiye.

The Chairman NDMA informed that consignment of 195 tons consisting double-ply tents and procurement of 1600 tons' of food bags are under process which will be dispatched



through NLC trucks & Pak Navy ships to both countries in coming days.

He highlighted that NDMA is also coordinating additional rescue and medical teams for Syria and Turkiye. He said that

NDMA has notified 13 collection points for donations across the country for quake-affectees.

Turkish Ambassador thanked the people and government of Pakistan for spearheading relief efforts with the highest priority.

The Ambassador also expressed the request of the Turkish side to send additional humanitarian aid in form of insulated tents, solar batteries and generators.

The DG NLC gave briefing on road logistic arrangements for relief supplies to Syria and Turkiye. DG PDMA Punjab informed that PDMA has collected 7986 blankets and 221 food bags through public mobilization which will be handed over to NDMA.

During the meeting, Ambassador of Pakistan in Turkiye Dr. Yousaf Junaid and Ambassador of Pakistan in Syria Air Marshal (R) Shahid Akhter briefed the meeting about current situation and ongoing rescue operations in their respective countries.

Travelling

ISLAMABAD: People are travelling in Green line train imported from China, on their way at Margalla Railway Station in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Journalists rendering best professional services deserve appreciation: Aasma Butt

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: President of All Pakistan Chinese Overseas Youth Federation, Aasma Ismail Butt, said that the journalists who have rendered the best professional services in every era will be appreciated. The journalist community always raised the voice of truth with the power of their pen, they are the fourth pillar of the state, they are the mirror of the society, I salute their services.

Federation President Aasma Ismail Butt said this to senior journalists, photojournalists, field reporters, columnists, broadcasters, sub-editors on the occasion of the prestigious and memorable ceremony of "First Media Awards 2022-23" held at Rawalpindi Arts Council. Center Taj Haider, former Naib Tehsil Nazim Sajjad Khan, Director of FM Radio Channel Friendship Ms. Hopping Ping, Chairman of PAI Khurshid Barlas, social and



political leader Jamshed Khan, promoter of cultural events and ex-bureaucrat Tayyab Khan, Tariq Mughal, executive member of Pindi Chamber of Commerce, Secretary of Pakistan Newspaper Sellers Federation, former federal minister Tikka Khan, former president of PFUJ, senior journalist Nasir Zaidi, president of PFUJ, Afzal Butt, president of Press Club, Anwar Raza, Finance Secretary Nayer Ali and TV anchors participated. A large number of journalists' families were present on this occasion.

President of All Pakistan Chinese Overseas Youth Federation, Aasma Ismail Butt, while addressing the ceremony, said that it is a good tradition to appreciate the services of journalists who have been doing professional services for years so that the upcoming young journalists respect their seniors. And promote journalism with the same responsibility as given by their seniors. Aasma Ismail Butt said that this series of encouraging

the journalist community will continue in the future as well, we stand with our journalist community, our stars and national heroes. On this occasion, Aasma Ismail Butt awarded Jinnah Cap and awards to journalists for their valuable professional services. More than 200 awards given to Journalists in the ceremony. Senior journalist, TV anchor Nasir Aslam Raja has said that recognition of the services and abilities of journalists motivates them, which they deserve.

PPAF bringing real change in less privileged people's lives; says Italian envoy

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Italy to Pakistan Andreas Ferrarese said that Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) was bringing a real change in the lives of less privileged people which was the main objective of the Italian government for lending the support to the government and the people of Pakistan.

He expressed these views while addressing an event titled 'Celebrating the Impact of Community Driven Development', organized by the Programme for Poverty Reduction (PPR) of PPAF here at a local hotel the other day.

The Italian envoy said that Italy wanted to enhance cooperation and ties with Pakistan in diverse areas including economic development.

The members of diplomatic fraternity, government, academia, civil society organizations and the representatives of the communities that were benefited by various initiatives under PPR made their presence on the occasion.

According to the participants, the PPAF in collaboration with the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), had played a remarkable role to usher in a new era of socio-economic development and the uplift of the communities in remote areas of the country.

The PPAF under the PPR, proved to be one of the most successful development cooperation examples for bringing a visible change in the lives of people from 14 remote and less developed districts of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, they added.

Sharing their stories, the representatives from the beneficiary communities informed about the multi-sectoral transformation, initiatives to strengthen indigenous culture, empowering youth, and creating value chains in fisheries, dates, and olive cultivation. Besides, developing community structures and providing quality health and education facilities to the local communities led them to achieve integrated transformation, they expressed.

Director AICS Pakistan Emanuela Benini was of the view that the collaboration under PPR had provided target communities better access to income-generating opportunities and improved civic amenities.

She said, the AICS aspires to lay the foundation for a strong developmental network in Pakistan and the development initiatives taken under PPR were the key reflection of our commitment toward this objective.

PPAF Chief Operating Officer Nadir Gul Barech while thanking the Italian government, said that the people of Italy and AICS were trusting the Pakistan government and PPAF for providing valuable support to uplift the communities living in the remote and most underserved areas of Pakistan.

Pakistan sends 10-member medical team to Turkiye

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: A 10-member medical team from Pakistan left for earthquake-affected Turkiye on Sunday to take part in the ongoing relief operations in the quake-hit areas.

According to the health ministry spokesperson, another medical team of 10 doctors from the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) is set to leave for Syria later today.

He said that a ten-member medical team of PIMS along with the medicines left for Turkiye, while a separate 10-member doctors' team will leave for Syria today's evening. Minister for National Health Services Abdul Qadir Patel extended heartfelt sympathies to the brotherly Turkiye and Syrian people on the human and material loss in the wake of the recent devastating earthquake.

He said that Turkiye has always helped Pakistan and Islamabad will also not leave Turkiye at this testing time and will provide every possible support. He said that the medical team will serve the earthquake victims with full dedication and commitment in both countries.

Poland-Pakistan trade volume reaches over €723 million: Polish Ambassador

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Poland to Pakistan Maciej Pisarski on Sunday said that the bilateral trade volume between Pakistan and Poland has reached over €723 million and both countries are focusing on exploring more avenues of trade and investments in multiple sectors like information technology, food processing, and agriculture sector.

The good news for the Pakistani side was that Poland was in a huge trade deficit of almost half a billion Euro deficit as Pakistani exports in textile, sportswear, foodstuff and leather products were much higher while Poland's exports are less, the Ambassador said. It was mostly due to the intro-

duction of the GSP plus trade mechanism which allowed Pakistani exports to the European Union, he told.

Ambassador Maciej Pisarski said Poland has been one of the fastest-growing export markets for Pakistan. The European Union was the largest destination for Pakistani exports, and Poland had supported the inclusion of Pakistan in the GSP Plus to grant non-reciprocal preferential treatment to Pakistan's exports, a special arrangement under which Pakistani products had privileged access to the European market.

He said, we are celebrating this year the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relationship between Poland and Pakistan and both countries have accomplished a lot as our

economic cooperation both in terms of trade and investment increased.

He said that the bilateral agenda concentrated on economic cooperation, political and military dialogue and the development of people-to-people relations during the last six decades.

Answering a question about educational cooperation, he urged for institutional partnerships between the universities of Poland and Pakistan to seek potential, talented and skillful students in the field of science and technology and higher education for better outcomes. So, this would enhance educational cooperation and people-to-people relationships.



The Ambassador said Poland has been a reliable partner of Pakistan when it comes to gas

exploration. Polish oil and gas exploration companies had invested millions of dollars in Pakistan during the last 25 years. The Polish companies have invested \$300 million in gas exploration and they are willing to do more. If Polish companies would explore more gas in Pakistan then it would be three times cheaper than the imported gas, he added.

He said that the gas explored by the Polish companies was being sold to local consumers in Pakistan considering it a significant aspect of Poland's economic cooperation.

The Ambassador said it was the priority of his mission to enhance parliamentary diplomacy, people-

to-people exchanges, business opportunities, information and renewable technologies, besides cooperation in the economic and defense sectors.

In reply to a question on the Ukraine war, he said that the Russian aggression against Ukraine should be ended. Poland is providing multifaceted support and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine. We have supported Ukraine in terms of military equipment because Poland strongly believes that Ukraine has the right to defend itself", he added.

About his experience in Pakistan, he said, "I have been learning the Urdu language for more than a year and spoke in Urdu that he wants to make better foreign relations with Pakistan".

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Country's only 'History Museum' falling short of capacity

Shumaila Noreen

Nations keep themselves alive by preserving their natural history, scientific heritage and achievements of their ancestors for transferring the legacies of ancient times to coming generations.

Therefore, the role of natural history museums is acknowledged globally as powerhouses of scientific enquiry and voice of authority to inspire the younger generations with valuable knowledge about current and historical specimen.

But, in our country, the only-of-its-kind Pakistan Museum for Natural History (PMNH) is not getting due importance by the authorities despite its huge contribution in terms of collection, preservation, identification of natural history and research activities.

Situated in federal capital, this valuable asset relates to natural resources of the country and is a plausible source of imparting education through dioramas, exhibits, lectures, workshops, seminars, posters and film shows.

The matter of the construction of remaining six blocks of

the museum is lingering on since its establishment in year 1976, compelling the PMNH administration to display maximum specimens of natural resources even in small rooms and corridors.

Visiting the museum is rather painful when one sees the authorities using even small spaces of the constructed two blocks to exhibit nearly 1.5 million conserved specimens of rich natural resources.

The museum comprises a state-of-the-art Gemstone gallery and Biodiversity Galley and galleries hosting Birds of Pakistan, Dinosaurs, Fossils, Higher Plants, Medicinal Plants, Lower Plants, Mammals, Reptiles and Fishes.

Being the only of its kind, this museum provides as a source of education for thousands of the students and researchers who visit it daily and the administration keeping within the available resources try to provide them comfortable environment and maximum facilities.

"PC-I for the construction of six remaining blocks of the museum with a proposed cost of Rs. two billion was approved last year to expand its display and activities to benefit students," informed Acting Director General, PMNH, Dr. Saima Huma

Tanveer.

"As the funds could not be allocated during last budget due to economic crunch and devastating flood, the expansion is delayed. However, we hope that allocations are made during next budget," she said.

Under the supervision of Dr. Saima Tanveer, the PMNH is undertaking a number of research projects of national importance including "cooperative development of an innovative auto-ID platform for beetles (order Coleoptera) from China and Pakistan" with the cost of Rs. five million.

Other projects are "Hazards of wildlife aircrafts strike and their prevention" to be completed at the cost of Rs. 4.3 million and "Biosystematics of Insect Fauna of Khunjerab National Park, Gilgit Baltistan" at Rs. 4.5 million.

The other projects include development of outdoor volcano display, integration of QR code technology to enable visitors to scan code of the exhibit through their android phone and get all linked information, development of teachers training and STEM Resource Lab and maintenance of museum building etc.

Another novel idea conceived by the DG PMNH is to start a training program for school kids

to teach them filming of short videos and acquire knowledge about conservation of nature procedures.

PMNH is the only museum, working under Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF), and has conserved the 1.5 million specimens of rich natural resources collected from all over the country.

During year 2022, in all 7218 people visited the museum during month of November, 13910 in October, 11530 in September, 15643 in August, 23,761 in July, 18,121 in June, 19, 656 in May, 2351 in April, 11912 in March, 14577 in February and 18737 people visited it in January.

"The museum has generated revenue worth Rs. 6,398,755 during the Financial Year 2021-22, through 86,587 visitors including 102,085 students and 658 foreign visitors," the Acting Director General informed.

She said the PMNH prepared 16 technical reports for field surveys and baseline studies of floral and faunal diversity in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) merged districts under "Ten Billion Tree Tsunami (BTTP)" project.

"The collections made were 10,783 specimens including flora, fauna, rocks and fossils

from across. Some 33,111 specimens or samples of plants, animals, rocks, minerals and fossils were curated during the stipulated time," she said.

Moreover, the administration ensured cataloging of 21,193 specimens was done and 7,695 samples were also digitized with the scientific divisions getting published 51 research papers in reputed scientific journals.

Researchers of PMNH carry out extensive field works from the Coast of Arabian Sea to the Alpine Regions, roam through barren areas for collection of flora and fauna, rocks, fossils and minerals for research and education.

PMNH regularly organizes trainings, workshops, seminars, symposia and other educational interactive activities on natural history, environment and biodiversity of the country. It has also formed national and international liaisons with other research institutes within the country and abroad.

Since, this settlement provides ample opportunities for studies and research for both the young students and experienced researchers, therefore, the authorities must pay required heed to this museum for preserving our natural assets for the coming generations.

UN to launch flash appeals for donor

The United Nations and its humanitarian partners will this week launch flash appeals for urgently-needed funds to provide relief to thousands of victims in the earthquake-hit Turkiye and Syria, UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Martin Griffiths has said.

Griffiths was speaking in the Turkish city of Kahramanmaraş where recovery efforts are ongoing in frigid temperatures. the UN said in a press release released in New York.

The top relief official met with families left homeless by the disaster and listened to their stories of shock and devastation.

He also spoke with search and rescue teams as they carried out their operations in the devastated central parts of the city, amid collapsed buildings with excavation equipment digging through the debris.

UN teams are already on the ground, and more than 130 countries have dispatched responders, sniffer dogs, experts and other personnel.

"There has never been an international response, a Turkish response, to a natural disaster, as we see here in these terrible days," Griffiths said.

He praised the courage of people, including parents, who are working round the clock in efforts to rescue their families and children from the rubble – "hoping for one more sound, for one more person to survive."

It is estimated that more than 22,000 people have died in the double earthquake, which struck southeastern Turkiye and northern Syria early on Monday morning.

Millions more have been left homeless, including Syrians displaced by the 12-year war in their homeland and thousands of refugees who have fled across the border.

For Griffiths, the next phase will be to look after those affected by the tragedy, the press release said. "And I've met some of them already today," he said, "people who've lost their homes, whose children don't have schools to go to, who have no food, who have no money, who depend on the generosity of the Turkish people, the Turkish government and the international community."

Griffiths is expected to visit the UN-authorized cross-border operation to Syria in the south of Turkiye on Sunday before traveling there.

Meanwhile, the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, arrived in Aleppo, Syria, on Saturday.

"I'm heartbroken to see the conditions survivors are facing – freezing weather and extremely limited access to shelter, food, water, heat and medical care," he wrote in a post on his official Twitter account.

In a separate tweet, Tedros recounted how he met two babies, Nour and Omar, who lost their parents in the earthquake.

"There are no words to express the pain they are going through. Grateful to colleagues and partners who are providing them with needed care, comfort and love," he wrote.



Thar Coal brings revolution in power sector – I

Mirza Abdul Rehman

The Thar Coal Project is an important milestone in the energy self-sufficiency of Pakistan as it contributes 1320 Megawatt eco-friendly electricity to the national grid, an official informed a group of journalists from Hyderabad on their study tour of Thar Coal Block-II, arranged by Sindh Engro Coal Mining Company (SECMC).

Apart from power generation, he added, this project – executed by Sindh Engro Coal Mining Company with the cooperation of Sindh Government – is providing employment, education, health and other facilities to the people of the backward area of district Tharparkar while the agriculture sector is being developed with the treated saline water drained out from the coal mine of block-II.

SECMC officials and engineers gave a detailed presentation to the media persons about the coal mining process, crushing of the coal extracted from the mine, and then transporting it to the power plant for electricity generation.

The Thar Coal project is a game changer project for Pakistan's energy self-reliance which not only will meet the country's electricity needs but also enable it to export electricity to other countries.

Deputy Manager SECMC

Sagar Kothari informed journalists that the Sindh government has started working on the Thar Coal Power Generation Project in block two under Sindh Engro Coal Mining Company since 2013 and now 1320 MW of power is being added to the national grid from this project.

Apart from this, he said, coal is being supplied from Thar Coal Block 2 not only to the Thar Coal power plant but also to the Lucky Coal Power Plant located in Port Qasim, Karachi. Thar Coal is playing an important role to meet the energy requirements of the country and the project not only is benefiting the economy but also significantly improving the lifestyle of the local population.

On the occasion, Kothari told APP that currently 25,000 tonnes of coal is being extracted from the coal mine per day, from which 1320 MW of electricity is being generated.

Engineer Sayed Mudassar informed that 25,000 tons of coal were also supplied daily from block two to Lucky's power plant, Port Qasim. The Coal production of the Thar Coal Project has been increased from 3.8 million tons to 7.6 million tons per annum which will increase socio-economic opportunities besides ensuring self-reliance on energy.

Deputy Manager Media Junaid Ansari rejected the impression based on rumours spread by

so-called "intellectuals" that poisonous water and gases were coming out of the coal mine and coal-based power plants, and said such rumours were false and incorrect and are spread to defame this national project.

The SECMC also established a village named "New Senhri Dars" at an alternate location for the residents of a village already existing at the site of the coal mine of Thar Coal Block II. As many as 172 houses, a mosque, a temple, separate community centres for Muslims and Non-Muslims and a school were built by the SECMC and a water filtration plant was also installed for the provision of clean drinking water to the villagers, he said, adding that each house owner will also be paid 100,000 per annum for 30 years.

The engineers, technical staff, women dumper drivers and other employees were seen busy in the power generation process while the Thar Million Tree project also changed the ecosystem of the Thar desert area where in the past no one had imagined such environmental change.

The drainage, mostly saline-alkali water, is pumped out from the second and third aquifers, usually 120 meters and 280 meters below the surface, and then transmitted to the Gorano reservoir through a pipeline.

To be concluded

Dae'sh still sizeable threat, UN counter-terrorism officials warn UNSC

Spokesman Report

Despite leadership losses and diminished cash reserves, the extremist group ISIL, or Da'esh, continues to pose a threat to international peace and security, the UN counter-terrorism chief has warned.

In a briefing to the UN Security Council, Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov underlined the need for concerted global action, when he presented the latest UN report on the terrorist organization.

Focusing on the plight of victims and survivors of terrorism worldwide, Voronkov said that beyond the headlines and behind the numbers, there were numerous people and communities who were affected by the "heinous crimes of Da'esh and other terrorist groups and individuals."

The Da'esh threat remains high and has increased in and around conflict zones where the group and its affiliates are active, he added.

Their expansion in central and southern Africa, and the Sahel, remains particularly worrying, the top counterterrorism official said.

"Previous reports raised concerns over an increased risk of attacks in non-conflict areas by unaffiliated lone actors and small cells inspired by Da'esh as pandemic-related restrictions eased," he told the 15-member Council.

"While this has not materialized over this reporting period, the level of terrorist activity continues to be a concern to Member States."

Da'esh also continues to use the Internet, social media and video games for propaganda and recruitment purposes, along with new and emerging technologies, such as

unmanned aerial systems, or drones.

Meanwhile, scores of people affiliated with the extremists, including children, remain in camps and detention facilities in north-east Syria.

Voronkov drew attention to the dire situation, warning against the far-reaching consequences and slow pace of repatriations.

He emphasized that the foreign terrorist fighter issue is not exclusive to Iraq and Syria, but a global challenge, with implications that go beyond accountability and prosecution for crimes.

Fighters with battlefield experience who are relocated to their homelands, or to third countries, further compound the threat.

"As noted in the report, terrorist attacks committed by such individuals have proven to be particularly lethal compared to those committed by purely homegrown terrorists," he said.

"There are also instances of some radicalized women associated with Da'esh who reinvent themselves as recruiters, indoctrinating others, and, in particular, children."

Voronkov outlined three recommendations to address the persistent threat posed by Da'esh and its affiliates.

He called for multidimensional approaches, with "more complementarity" between security responses and preventive measures. These strategies must be gender-sensitive and anchored in international law and human rights.

Finally, given the increased threat from conflict zones, he stressed the need to better understand the complex relationship between conflict and terrorism.

Another top UN official, who also briefed ambassadors, underscored the importance of greater global collaboration in defeating the terrorists.

"Only by working multilaterally and cooperatively will we succeed in mounting an effective response to the evolving global terrorist threat," said Weixiong Chen, acting head of CTED, the secretariat for the Council's own Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC).

"Our measures must be tailor-made, age and gender-responsive, and human rights-compliant," he added.

Chen also reported on recent efforts to address terrorists' use of new and emerging technologies, such as the Delhi Declaration, adopted last October in India.

The Declaration aims to cover main concerns surrounding issues that include the abuse of drones, information and communication technologies, and new online payments and fund raising methods.

Meanwhile, civil society representative Franziska Praxl-Iabuchi, underscored why gender-responsive approaches must be included in counter-terrorism programmes and policies.

This is not just a matter of realizing the participation of women, she said, but is instead about ensuring inclusive, equitable participation and leadership of people of diverse gender identities.

"It requires accounting for the experiences, needs, and challenges of individuals and recognizing how gender identities relate to other identity factors," said Ms. Praxl-Iabuchi, who spoke on behalf of the Global Center on Cooperative Security, an independent, non-partisan policy and research institute.

"Simply put, integrating a gender perspective is a prerequisite for successful human rights-based and people-centered policies and programmes intended to address peace and security issues, including those that aim to counter violent extremism and terrorism."

Pakistan felicitates Iran on 44th anniversary of Revolution

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President of Pakistan Arif Alvi, on behalf of the government and the people of Pakistan, felicitated Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed

Ali Khamenei on the 44th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution.

According to a press release on Sunday by President Secretariat Press Wing, in his message to the leader of the Islamic Revolution, Alvi said that the fraternal relations



between Pakistan and Iran were rooted in linguistic, cultural, and religious bonds.

He also said that Pakistan remained committed to further strengthening of these ties across the entire gamut of bilateral rela-

tions.

Alvi also conveyed his best wishes for Ayatollah Khamenei's health and happiness and for the continued progress, prosperity, and well-being of the brotherly people of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Indonesian Warship KRI REM 331 arrived in Karachi seaport to join Aman 2023



Bureau Report

KARACHI: Indonesian lead frigate/class ship KRI R.E. Martadina 331 has arrived in East Wharf Dock, Karachi Seaport ready to join the 8th AMAN Naval Exercise 2023. The frigate class ship led by Navy Col. Ferry H. Hutagaol and has 140 crews and officers, 14 among them are women officers.

KRI REM 331 was welcomed by Indonesian Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Adam M. Tugio who was accompanied by Indonesian Consul General Dr. June Kuncoro Hadiningrat, Indonesian First Admiral Teguh Prasetyo, and Indonesian Navy Col. Sumarji Bimoaji.

Ambassador Tugio in his short remarks on the ship deck underscored the solid foundation of defence cooperation between Indonesia and Pakistan and that participation of KRI REM 331 to AMAN Naval Exercise 2023 reflected the commitment to work together in strengthening global peace and security. "Threats to maritime security has transformed into new dimensions necessitating international collaboration, and naval exercises such AMAN would allow Indonesia Navy to increase its readiness in responding to the challenges", said the Envoy.

Ambassador Tugio made tour on board the ship to check facilities of KRI Martadinata 331. The war ship with a total length of 105.11 meters and weight 2,365 tons is a class warship light frigate or missile control (PKR) of SIGMA class, built by PT PAL Indonesia in cooperation with Damen Schelde Naval Shipbuilding (DSNS).

The naval cooperation continues to become the most significant foundations for bilateral relation between Indonesia and Pakistan. KRI REM 331 will join AMAN Exercise until February 15, along with participants of 50 countries.

Greece, Turkey urge better relations after quake

News Desk

ANTAKYA: Greece's foreign minister visited Turkey on Sunday in a show of support after the country was hit by a devastating earthquake last Monday, despite a longstanding rivalry between the two NATO countries.

Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias was met with a warm embrace by his Turkish counterpart Mevlut Cavusoglu, according to footage on state-run ERT TV, before they boarded helicopters to quake-hit regions.

His arrival marks the first visit by a European minister to Turkey since the earthquake.

"I would like to convey to the Turkish leadership and the Turkish people the warmest condolences of the Mitsotakis government and the entire Greek people for the losses after the two devastating earthquakes", Dendias said during a press conference with Cavusoglu in Antakya, referring to Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis.

"This is showing the solidarity of Greek people with Turkey and the Turkish population. Greece was one of the first countries to call and propose help



Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias is welcomed by his Turkish counterpart Mevlut Cavusoglu.

to Turkey after the earthquake," Cavusoglu added.

Greece and Turkey have a history of rivalry going back centuries, it has been exacerbated by territorial and energy disputes.

But the two neighbours, which lie on seismic fault lines, also have a tradition of helping each other in natural disasters.

Cavusoglu recalled mutual aid when quakes struck Turkey and Greece in 1999,

when he said at the time that "We don't have to wait for another earthquake for developing our relations".

"I said this as a simple citizen back then, but I think the same today as Turkey's foreign minister," he said. "I hope we will make efforts for finding a solution to our disagreements with dialogue in a sincere way."

Dendias also said that "We do not need to wait for natural disasters to improve

our relations", while adding that Greece's effort to help Turkey would continue.

The Greek government has so far sent 80 tonnes of medical and first aid equipment as well as rescuers that along with the rest European rescuers have saved 205 people, Dendias said.

"Greece will do everything it can to support Turkey at this difficult time, either bilaterally or within the EU," he said.

Pakistan and Uzbekistan: Secrets you never knew



Muhammad Ramzan Mughal

Pakistan and Uzbekistan have a long history of diplomatic relations and have traditionally enjoyed friendly ties. The two countries have cooperated on a range of issues, including trade, security, and regional politics.

Both countries are members of organizations such as the United Nations, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Economic Cooperation Organization, which have helped foster cooperation between the two nations. They also have strong cultural and historical ties, with many Uzbek people tracing their ancestry back to the region that is now Pakistan.

In recent years, Pakistan and Uzbekistan have made efforts to strengthen their economic and trade relations. Pakistan has expressed interest in investing in Uzbekistan's agricultural sector, and both countries have signed agreements to increase cooperation in areas such as energy, transportation, and telecommunications. They also cooperate in the military and security fields as well.

In general, the relationship between Pakistan and Uzbekistan is seen as positive, and both countries have shown a willingness to work together to address common challenges and promote mutual interests.

There are several commonalities in the relationship between Pakistan and Uzbekistan. Both countries have a similar cultural heritage and a shared history of Islam, which is one of the most important factors in their relations. They have a strong tradition of hospitality, and there is a significant amount of people-to-people exchange between the two countries. They also have a large youth population and are actively promoting youth development programs and encouraging

youth exchange programs. Both countries have a strong interest in regional stability and have cooperated on efforts to promote peace and security in the region. Pakistan and Uzbekistan have a positive attitude towards each other and have shown a willingness to work together to address common challenges and promote mutual interests.

Furthermore, Pakistan and Uzbekistan have a long and rich history dating back to ancient times. The region that is now Pakistan was part of the ancient kingdom of Gandhara, which was a center of Buddhism and Hinduism, while the region that is now Uzbekistan was part of the Khwarezmian Empire, which was a major center of Islamic civilization. Both countries were part of the Silk Road, the ancient trade route that connected Asia, Europe, and Africa. This trade route played a significant role in the economic and cultural development of both countries. Both countries have a shared history of Islamic civilization, and many of the region's historic cities and landmarks are related to Islamic culture and history. Both countries have a rich history of art and culture, particularly in areas such as music, dance, and architecture. Many traditional Uzbek and Pakistani art forms have similarities; for instance, both have the common traditional dress. Both countries are located in Central Asia and share a border with Afghanistan. Their strategic location has led both countries to cooperate on issues of regional security and stability. There is a significant amount of people-to-people exchange between the two countries; both countries have a strong tradition of hospitality, and many Uzbeks trace their ancestry back to the region that is now Pakistan, which helps to maintain strong cultural and familial ties. Both countries have a similar outlook on various political and security issues, such as fighting against terrorism and extremism and promoting peace and stability in the region.

Uzbekistan is home to many ancient cities, such as Samarkand and Bukhara, which are known for their well-preserved Islamic architecture and rich history. Visitors can also experience the country's traditional music, dance, and crafts. From the famous Registan Square in Samarkand to the ancient city walls of Khiva, Uzbekistan offers many opportunities to admire beautiful architectural landmarks. From the picturesque Fergana Valley to the beautiful Chimgan Mountains, Uzbekistan offers many opportunities to enjoy the natu-



Connectivity projects between Pakistan and Uzbekistan should be promoted: Envoy

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Uzbek Ambassador to Pakistan Aybek Arif Usmanov has called for promoting connectivity projects between Pakistan and Uzbekistan in order to

bolster their bilateral relations. In an exclusive interview with Radio Pakistan's English Channel Planet FM 87.6, he said Pakistan and Uzbekistan share common history and faith. The Ambassador said historic links are manifested in Sufi traditions in Pakistan. He said political, economic and cultural ties between the two countries are source of unity. He underscored the importance of knowledge sharing in the fields of science.

Uzbekistan has a rich and diverse culture that has been shaped by its history and location at the crossroads of Central Asia. Uzbekistan is known for its traditional crafts, including ceramics, textiles, and jewelry. The country is also famous for its hand-painted silk ikat fabrics. Uzbekistan's traditional music and dance are important parts of its culture. The country is known for its lively and rhythmic folk music, which is often accompanied by traditional dances such as the doira and the takhirab. Uzbek cuisine is known for its hearty and flavorful dishes, such as plov (a rice dish), shashlik (grilled meat skewers), and somsa (a savoury pastry). The cuisine is also characterized by the

use of spices, herbs, and dried fruits. Uzbekistan has many festivals and events throughout the year, including the Navruz (New Year) Festival, the Silk and Spices Festival, and the AlisherNavoi International Music Festival. These events are a great way to experience the country's culture and traditions. Hospitality is a core value in Uzbek culture, and visitors are often greeted with open arms and treated as honored guests. Uzbekistan has a rich literary tradition, with famous poets such as AlisherNavoi and Babur, and many traditional stories and folktales that are still passed down through the generations. On the other side, Pakistan is known for its diverse culture, history, and natu-

ral beauty. Pakistan is home to some of the most spectacular landscapes in the world, including the Himalayas, the Karakoram, and the Hindukush mountain ranges, as well as the lush green valleys of the Swat and Kaghan. Pakistan has a rich cultural heritage, with influences from the ancient Indus Valley Civilization, the Mughal Empire, and the British Raj. Visitors can explore the country's rich history and culture through its many monuments, museums, and traditional bazaars. Pakistan offers many opportunities for adventure and outdoor activities, including trekking, rock climbing, and skiing in the mountains, as well as rafting and kayaking in the rivers. Pakistani cuisine is known for its flavorful and spicy dishes, such as biryani, kebabs, and curries. Traditional sweets such as gulabjamun and rasgulla are also available to visitors. Pakistan is known for its friendly and hospitable people, who are happy to share their culture and traditions with visitors. Pakistan is a unique blend of cultures and influences, which makes it a fascinating destination to visit. Pakistan has a long coastline along the Arabian Sea and offers some of the most beautiful beaches in the region.

Pakistan is known for its traditional arts and crafts, such as textiles, ceramics, and jewelry. The country is particularly famous for its hand-woven fabrics, such as the traditional "ajrak" prints from Sindh and "phulkari" embroidery from Punjab. Pakistan has a rich tradition of music and dance, which reflect the diversity of its culture. From classical music to qawwali, the devotional music of the Muslim Sufis, Pakistani music is an important part of the culture. Visitors can enjoy traditional dances such as bhangra, qissa, Sindhi, and Balochi dances. Pakistan has a rich literary tradition with famous poets such as Allama Iqbal and Faiz Ahmed Faiz and many traditional stories and folktales that are still passed down through the generations. Visitors can experience the traditional way of life in many parts of the country, such as the Kalash valley, Chitral, and the Hunza valley, where people still live in traditional houses, wear traditional clothes and have unique customs and traditions.

In short, Uzbekistan and Pakistan have many common reflections. These common reflections are like rainbow colors that add to the beauty of the sky.

(The writer is a leading freelance photojournalist from Islamabad, Pakistan.)

Govt additional tax measures' annual impact will be over Rs500 billion: BMP

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Anjum Nisar says whole business community opposes Rs170b new taxes to meet IMF conditions

The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) on Sunday opposed the new taxes in the proposed minibudget, as the government has agreed to impose more taxes to put the additional burden of Rs170 billion on exporters and domestic industry, including 1% increase in GST rate, to meet the conditions of the IMF for the revival of its stalled loan program.

Punjab Govt: resolve the issues between the food department and flour mills

Staff Reporter

RAWALPINDI: Saqib Rafiq, president of Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), in a statement has urged the caretaker Punjab government to take immediate steps to resolve the issues between the food department and the flour mills industry.

He asked the Government that flour mills owners and staff should not be harassed. He said that there are serious reservations on the special category and it should be abolished immediately.

Chamber President Saqib Rafiq said that due to inflation, the business community and the public are already facing difficulties in the availability of flour.

He said that specific flour mills are being targeted; operations against flour mills should be stopped.

He also urged that the security of the tracking stations established for the sale of flour. Adherence to SOPs should be ensured, flour mills should be checked under SOPs.

Punjab flour millers announce strike from Monday

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Punjab Flour Mills Association has announced to go on strike from Monday (tomorrow) against the suspension of the wheat quota of over 100 flour mills by the province's food department.

The differences between the flour mills association and the Punjab food department has intensified after the govt's move of suspending the wheat quota.

Chairman Punjab Flour Mills Association in his statement said the flour mills will not receive wheat from govt quota from tomorrow.

The Punjab flour mills chairman further said the supply of wheat in the market will be hampered during the strike.

On the other hand, the sources said that the Punjab food department has ordered to register cases against 10 flour mill owners in the province.

Earlier, wheat prices in Punjab's open market decreased by Rs1,200 per maund, after the increase in wheat quota and import.

OPEC Secretary General says expects demand to reach pre-pandemic levels this year

News Desk

CAIRO: OPEC Secretary General Haitham Al Ghais said on Sunday that the group expects oil demand to exceed pre-pandemic levels this year, reaching almost 102 million barrels a day.

Demand is projected to further rise to 110 million barrels per day by 2025, he said. OPEC oil output falls in January led by Iraq. "OPEC remains committed to supporting oil market stability," Al Ghais said in a speech at the Egypt Petroleum Show.

Chicken price touches rs700 per kg in Karachi

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: The price of per kg chicken meat in Karachi has increased sharply and is being sold at Rs700.

After mutton and beef, chicken meat is also falling out of the reach of the middle class, with live chicken priced at Rs500.

This price hike is due to the closure of several poultry businesses due to a shortage of feed.

Artificial fuel crisis should not be allowed to grow

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Former Vice President of FPCCI Atif Ikram Sheikh on Sunday said the fuel crisis should not be allowed to grow and those hoarding petrol and diesel should be dealt with an iron hand.

The petroleum officials claim sufficient fuel supplies in the country but on the ground, there is a visible shortage at pumps in some of the major cities, he said.

Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority has identified nineteen hoarding dumps in a letter to the Punjab chief secretary and masses are waiting to see decisive, example-setting action from the government, he added.

Atif Ikram Sheikh who has also served as Chairman PVMA said in a statement that the concerned minister has also warned of strict



consequences but it would have been better if the government had moved to cancel the licenses of hoarders instead of just threatening them.

The business leader said that the economic situation is so precarious that artificial shortages can disrupt the production cycle and hit financial markets, triggering a loss of confidence that can hit the entire economy.

The hoarders have got too used to taking advantage of international oil price swings precisely because they have never been made to pay for it. When prices shoot up, they shut down their pumps illegally and when it drops they hide stocks bought at higher prices to pass the difference to consumers.

This practice is not just limited to oil and goes on in all sectors with the authorities always watching from the side as manipulators grow rich and then exercise even greater influence

on the officials.

Atif Ikram noted that it is ordinary consumers of commodities that end up being exploited which must be protected as growth dropping, inflation, unemployment and the economy possibly plunging into default.

It's very unfair that consumers pay extra for oil just because successive administrations ran the country so deep into debt that it can no longer survive without IMF bailouts and its harsh conditions.

After the recent Rs35 per liter jump in petrol price, masses are already worried by rumors of more increase.

He observed that this is a very serious crisis but solving it is not too difficult as the people behind it have been identified and the matter has been left to the relevant authorities to take action.

Punjab Governor to grace ceremony today to pay tribute to late SM Muneer

Bureau Reporter

LAHORE: A ceremony is being organized in Lahore today to pay tribute to the late noted industrialist of Pakistan, SM Muneer, for showing unwavering lifelong commitment to several noble charitable causes in the country.

The non-profit, Green Crescent Trust (GCT), and noted businessman and APTMA Patron-in-Chief, Dr Gohar Ejaz, have joined hands to jointly organize the event. Punjab Governor, Muhammad Balighur Rehman, and provincial Industries Minister, SM Tanveer, will grace the event as chief guest and guest of honour respectively.

The ceremony is going to be attended by noted businessmen, industrialists, concerned philanthropists, and donors who support noteworthy charitable initiatives in the country.

On the occasion, funds will be raised for the education of at least 10,000 children belonging to destitute families in the country. These children are enrolled in the charitable schools of the GCT in the underprivileged and remote parts of the country.

The GCT has been running a network of 160 charitable schools with an enrolment of 30,900 children from less-deprived areas.



GCT, CEO, Zahid Saeed said that the late SM Muneer was one of the leading patrons of the drive of his charity to provide quality school education to the children of the backward areas.

He said the GCT would carry forward the mission of the late leading industrialist and philanthropist by increasing both the number of charitable schools and enrolment of the children from underprivileged areas in them.

He said the GCT had the aim to increase

the number of its charitable schools to 250 with an enrolment of 100,000 out-of-school children till 2025.

More such fundraisers will soon be organized in Saikot, Faisalabad, and Islamabad to support the same charitable enrolment drive.

Renowned TV actor, Adnan Siddiqui, and GCT Trustee Abrar Ahmed will also attend the ceremony to show their commitment to the cause of enrolling out-of-school children.

Selling vegetables

KARACHI: A vendor is selling vegetables at Impress Market in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Huawei seeking to enhance SOE ties

News Desk

SHENZHEN: Meng Wanzhou, who is scheduled to serve as rotating chairperson of Huawei Technologies Co beginning April 1, has made frequent recent appearances to boost cooperation with State-owned enterprises.

Meng, daughter of Huawei founder Ren Zhengfei, visited China National Building Material Group Co Ltd, the world's largest manufacturer of building materials, and China Huaneng Group Co Ltd, a major domestic power company, this week.

Meanwhile, on Wednesday, Huawei held its first launch event of the Year of the Rabbit for its storage network product, as the company works to find more growth engines amid US government restrictions.

Xiang Ligang, director-general of the Information Consumption Alliance, a telecom industry association, said Huawei is working hard to expand the application of its digital technologies and solutions in a wide



range of traditional industries by boosting partnerships with big companies, as its consumer business, such as smartphones, faces challenges due to the restrictions.

On Tuesday, Huawei inked a strategic cooperation agreement with China National Building Material Group in Beijing in the presence of Meng and Zhou Yuxian, chairman of the latter.

Under the deal, the two sides will work closely in new material research and development, digitalization, green and low-carbon technologies and internationalization to promote the high-quality development of both parties.

The same day, Meng also led a team to visit China Huaneng Group and met its chairman, Wen Shugang.

Meng said she hopes the companies will continue to deepen cooperation in digital, coal, new energy and other fields, according to a news release from Huaneng.

Huawei has established a string of dedicated teams to help accelerate digital transformation in sectors like coal, highways, ports, photovoltaic power and data centers.

Despite progress in the above aspects, Huawei is now facing

added pressure from the US government restrictions. Foreign media reported that Washington is considering halting licenses for US companies seeking to export products to Huawei.

In response to such reports, the Ministry of Commerce said on Thursday that China has always opposed the United States' practice of overgeneralizing the concept of national security to impose unjustifiable sanctions on Chinese enterprises.

Shu Jueting, a ministry spokeswoman, said such practices violate the principles of market economics and international economic and trade rules.

"China will continue to firmly safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese enterprises," Shu said.

Huawei ranked seventh in 2022 among the top 10 global semiconductor buyers, but its chip spending went down by 19.4 percent year-on-year last year, according to preliminary data from market research company Gartner. By MASI and ZHONG NAN

PTCL Group provides free calls to Turkiye and Syria



Commerce Reporter

ISLAMABAD: PTCL Group, a subsidiary of e&h has come forward with an industry first initiative to extend support towards millions of people devastated in recent earthquakes in both Turkiye and Syria by providing free calls from PTCL landline and free calling minutes from Ufone 4G.

PTCL & Ufone 4G will provide free international calls from Pakistan to keep them connected to their nearest and dearest in Turkiye and Syria. Ufone 4G customers can avail the facility by dialing *2255#.

PTCL Group is deeply saddened by the natural calamity that has struck both Turkiye and Syria. During these tough times, the entire Group stands together with the millions of displaced people including children, women and elderly believes that it is our duty to extend support towards the affected community.

With the scale of devastation, we understand that many people have their friends or families in both countries and in light of this, we endeavor to utilize our resources to help them get in touch with their loved ones.

PTCL Group takes immense pride in its Pakistani identity and hence feels it is its national responsibility to reach out to the people in distress. All the efforts are in line with the Groups commitment to fostering social wellbeing both in emergency and peace time.

ICCI collects donations from business community for earthquake victims of Turkiye and Syria

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry organized a ceremony to offer Dua for those who died in Turkiye and Syria due to the recent devastating earthquake. The event was attended by a large number of business community including Presidents of various markets. On this occasion, donations were also collected for the relief of earthquake victims.

Speaking at the event, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that the business community is standing with the earthquake victims of Turkiye and Syria in this difficult time and are trying to help them in every possible way. He



RCCI delegation headed by President Saqib Rafiq pose for a group photo after meeting with Dr. Hassan Waqar Cheema Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi.

All set for HBL PSL 8 opening ceremony, today

Bureau Report

MULTAN: All set for the most anticipated tournament in the domestic calendar as HBL Pakistan Super League is going to start tomorrow, February 13, with Multan Sultans, the winners of the 2021 edition would clash with the defenders Lahore Qalandars at the Multan Cricket Stadium.

It is pertinent to mention that Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi would also host the matches of the 8th edition of PSL.

Karachi's National Bank Cricket Arena will host the second match of the tournament when the Karachi Kings will lock horns with Peshawar Zalmi.

Quetta Gladiators will begin their campaign in Multan on 15 February, whereas Islamabad United to play their first match on 16th February in Karachi.

Action will move to the northern half of the country from February 26 with Lahore and Rawalpindi hosting the latter part of the tournament.

Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium will host the four playoffs and the final. This would be in addition to five league games alongside Rawalpindi stadium, which will stage 11 matches.

The winner of the tournament will not only lift the Supernova Trophy but will also collect a cheque of Rs 120 million



while the runners-up will receive a cheque of Rs 48 million.

Final will be played on March 19th.

The HBL PSL was conceived with the idea of providing a platform to the young and emerging cricketers who can have a flavour of international cricket – by playing high-quality cricket under pressure environment – before graduating to the apex level.

The first-ever HBL PSL match in Pakistan – the final of the 2017 edition in Lahore – brought World XI for a three-match T20I series before Sri Lanka played a solitary T20I in Lahore.

The 2018 edition reopened the doors

of international cricket for Karachi as the final between Islamabad United and Peshawar Zalmi, after the two playoffs in Lahore, was followed by the West Indies' tour of the city for three T20Is.

The 2019 edition, when Karachi hosted eight matches, further boosted the confidence of international sides, and the 2020 edition, the first time Pakistan hosted the tournament in its entirety, established Pakistan's credentials as a destination that could host complete international tours.

All six franchises have won the HBL PSL title at least once, which underscores the quality of all six sides and the higher

level of competition in the tournament.

Islamabad United, the inaugural champions, was the only side to win the HBL PSL title twice (the second time in 2018).

Peshawar Zalmi won the 2017 edition. Quetta Gladiators, who were the finalists in the first two editions, won the 2019 competition.

Karachi Kings were the first side to win to lift the trophy at their home when they defeated Lahore Qalandars in Karachi in 2020. Multan Sultans bagged their maiden title in 2021. Last year, Lahore Qalandars lifted the HBL PSL trophy in Lahore.

Before the HBL PSL 8 action kicks off, the Pakistan Cricket Board, in a continuation of its tradition, has lined up a glittering opening ceremony.

The cricket fans in Multan and all around the world will see spectacular performances by different artists and one of the major attractions would be the performances of the singers of the HBL PSL 8 anthem – Abdullah Siddiqui, Asim Azhar, Faris Shafi and Shae Gill.

The fans will also be treated to performances by the renowned music composer Sahir Ali Bagga and talented singer Aima Baig as the two add to the star-studded line-up, which will make the opening ceremony an unforgettable experience, said a press release issued here on Sunday.

Pakistan thump India to win 21st Asian Junior Squash Championship

A Sports -

CHENNAI: Pakistan's junior Squash side on Sunday breezed past arch-rivals India in the final to win the 21st Asian Junior Team Squash Championship here at the Indian Squash and Triathlon Academy.

Pakistan's Noor Zaman locked horns with India's Krishna Mehra in the first encounter of the enthralling final that lasted tense four games with the former, consequently emerging victorious 3-1.

The two players went hard at each other in the hard-fought first game but Noor held his nerves calm to triumph 12-10 to attain the early lead.

Mehra, however, soon responded with an 11-9 win in the second game only for Noor to ante his level up and run away with the victory by soaring in the last game 3-1.

Following Pakistan's magnificent start, squash sensation Hamza Khan – a two-time Asian Junior champion and a British Junior champion – competed



against Paarth Ambani.

It was an easy affair for Hamza as he dominated Ambani and secured a comfortable 3-0 victory.

Following the national junior side's remarkable achievement, the Pakistan Squash Federation (PSF) took to Twitter and congratulated the nation.

"Congratulations Pakistan. Weldone

Team Pakistan we are proud of you. Pakistan is once again Asian champion and beat India in the final of Asian Junior Squash Team Championship 2023 Chennai (India). Pakistan beat India 2/0," wrote PSF as they shared pictures of national players posing with the silverware.

Source: Pakistan Squash Federation

Najam Sethi slams people asking for free PSL passes



LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Management Committee head Najam Sethi Saturday criticised those who have been asking for free Pakistan Super League (PSL) VIP passes, saying most of them can afford to buy the tickets.

The PCB chief, in response to a tweet, wrote that VIPs ask for free passes despite having the purchasing power. He added that the free passes are a way for them to confirm their VIP status.

It should be mentioned that the eighth edition of the PSL is going to start on February 13 in Multan. The inaugural match will be played between defending champions Lahore Qalandars and Multan Sultans, while the final will be played in Gaddafi stadium Lahore.

Sethi has repeatedly urged people to not ask him for free PSL passes or jobs for any undeserving person after taking charge as the PCB chief.

In an earlier tweet on Jan 20, the PCB chief requested his friends and high-profile people "NOT to ask for free tickets/passes to PSL matches starting next month."

He added: "The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the National Assembly that audits PCB has warned us to desist from this practice."

Sethi also requested people not to approach him for any player's inclusion in the team or employment for an undeserving person.

He wrote: "I am also requesting friends and high-ups not to do sifarish for [the] selection of any player or coach, etc, or to give employment or facilitation to any undeserving person. PCB competes with top professional organisations worldwide and cannot afford to be inefficient."

District level Inter-Collegiate Games begins on Feb 13

Our correspondent

LAHORE: The district level competitions of Inter-Collegiate (Men & Women) Sports Championship will begin across the province from February 13 to 17, 2023. DG Sports Punjab Tariq Qureshi stated this while presiding over an important online meeting at National Hockey Stadium.

The meeting was convened to review the arrangements of upcoming District level Inter-Collegiate Sports Championship 2023. The male athletes will take part in nine games including athletics, badminton, cricket, football, gymnastics, hockey, kabaddi, volleyball and wrestling while female players will feature in seven games like athletics, badminton, cricket, foot-



ball, gymnastics, hockey and volleyball in Inter-Collegiate Sports Championship.

Director Sports Chand Perveen, Assistant Director Shaista Qaiser, Additional Secretary Board in Punjab and Special Initiatives HED Dr Rehana Ilyas, Deputy Director Higher Education Department Punjab Waqas Akbar attended the meeting while all DSOs of Punjab participated

through video link.

All the Divisional Sports Officers and Higher Education Department officials briefed the meeting about the input of their preparations and arrangements. DG Sports Punjab directed all the DSOs of the province to make befitting arrangements for Inter-Collegiate Sports Championship.

Tariq Qureshi said that SBP

will provide all possible facilities including venues and technical staff for holding the Inter-Collegiate Sports Championship in an appropriate manner. "Inter-Collegiate Sports Championship will provide a suitable platform to all male and female athletes from all educational institutions of the province to exhibit their talent in their respective games," he added.

He said that SBP will utilize all resources to find talented male and female athletes from all schools and colleges of the province. "There is no doubt that our educational institutions are a true nursery of budding players and we are quite determined to trace several potential athletes from our schools and colleges through Inter-Collegiate Sports Championship," he elaborated.

4th Hi Tech Couples Golf Match was contested

Sports Desk

LAHORE: The 4th Hi Tech Couples Golf Match was contested over 18 holes on Saturday at the Royal Palm Golf Course. And its outstanding feature is that men golfers combine with wives to compete in this remarkable golf event and add a touch of jubilation to their lives. Interestingly not many golf arenas of the country can blow their trumpet over gathering so many couples who possess the expertise, in particular where the ladies appear as skillful and appropriately talented as their male playing partners. As far as this feature goes, Royal Palm stands out and in this event ladies were as much in the spotlight as the men.

Couples Golf Tournament was

contested over 18 holes and golfing prowess loaded couples like Imran Malik and Shazia Malik, Sardar Aqil and Sumer Omer, Col Azam Khan and Maimoona Azam, Raheel Islam and Abeeda Islam, Arif Irfan and Dr Shaheen Irfan, Aqib Zulfiqar and Arooj Kanwal and Mehmood Warriach and Shaheen Warriach made a combative golf contest of the occasion through accurate hitting, crisp fairway shot making and artful handling of the putter on the greens.

While their competitive effort was commendable and golfing score respectable, the unvanquished couple turned out to be Ahmed Zafar Hayat who plays to a noteworthy handicap of three and his artful wife Tehmina Ahmed, who is a elev-

en handicap national level golf player. These two were flamboyant throughout the 18 holes stroke play competition and got noticed for excellent drives and perfect looking all round game. Their nearest rivals were Asim Tiwana and Rabia Tiwana, both possessing remarkable golf playing skills. The couple of Asim and Rabia ended the competition as runners up in gross category. Third gross position was achieved by Shahid Nawaz and Fauzia Shahid.

Net section performers in the Couples Match were Shahzad Azam and Saqiba Batool, first net. Abid Aziz and Minaa Zainab won the second net position while third net went to Ghulam Murtaza and Salbeeha Murtaza. The Couples match produced

quite a few delightful moments.

In the Mens Invitational Event the 14 years old Sher Ali surprised his senior and more seasoned adversaries by playing superbly from the blue tees. His gross score for 18 holes was 75 and net score was 65 in the handicap bracket 0-12.

His display of expertise loaded golfing was the news of the day. Other winners were Shahid Abbas, net runner up and Abdul Islam Nazir, third net. As for the race in handicap bracket 13-18 the net winner was Saeed ul Hasib followed by Lt Col Taimur; second net and Ahmed Buksh Tarrar, third net.

Outstanding performers of ladies section were Rimsha Ijaz, Bushra Fatima and Minaa Zainab.



Nearest to the pin prize went to Hamid Sharif and longest drive to Lt Col Taimur Hassan.

At the conclusion of the 4th Hi Tech Couples and Ladies Golf Championship the prizes were



LAHORE: A view of the final Polo match between FG Polo and Master Paints during Century 99 Punjab cup at Polo club. APP

Sunrisers Eastern Cape thrash Pretoria Capitals to win inaugural SA20 title



A Sports -

JOHANNESBURG: Roelof van der Merwe's magnificent spell powered Sunrisers Eastern Cape to bundle out Pretoria Capitals for 135 before Adam Rossington's half-century led the side to lift the inaugural SA20 title.

Put into bat first, the Capitals' batting lineup faltered in the biggest stage of the league as they could only pile 135 before being bundled out in the final over.

Experienced all-rounder van der Merwe led the bowling carnage on the Capitals as he returned with astounding figures of 4/31 in his quota of four overs.

Besides him, Ottiel Baartman and Sisanda Magala added to the misery of the Capitals by picking two wickets each, while Aiden Markram and Marco Jansen struck out a batter apiece.

Opening batter Kusal Mendis remained the top scorer for the Capitals in their dismal batting display in the final against the Sunrisers. Set to chase a meagre 136, the Sunrisers soared through in the 17th over for the loss of six wickets at the back of a magnificent half-century from their opening batter Rossington.

Femimah's fifty powers India to edge Pakistan in Women's T20 WC



A Sports -

CAPE TOWN: Right-handed Indian batter Jemimah Rodrigues struck a gritty half-century in the tricky run chase against arch-rivals Pakistan and steered her side to a thrilling seven-wicket victory in the ongoing Women's T20 World Cup.

Set to chase 151, India amassed 151/3 in the 19th over at the back of a crucial knock by Rodrigues, who scored an unbeaten 53 off just 38 deliveries.

The right-handed batter top-scored for her side with a magnificent knock that featured eight boundaries.

Pakistan win toss, elect to bat first against India in Women's T20 WC

A Sports -

CAPE TOWN: Pakistan have won the toss and elected to bat first against arch-rivals India in the much-awaited clash of the ongoing ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2023.

PLAYING XI

PAKISTAN: Bismah Maroof (c), Javeria Khan, Muneeba Ali, Nida Dar, Ayesha Naseem, Aliya Riaz, Fatima Sana, Sidra Amin, Aiman Anwer, Nashra Sandhu, Sadia Iqbal.

INDIA: Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Shafali Verma, Yastika Bhatia, Jemimah Rodrigues, Richa Ghosh, Deepti Sharma, Pooja Vastrakar, Radha Yadav, Rajeshwari Gayakwad, Renuka Singh.

Golf Lawns.

Overall the tournament was appealing and fascinating indeed mainly due to efforts of Lady Captain Minaa Zainab and interest of lady golf players