



Joint sitting should focus on law & order: Shazia Marri

Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Ms Shazia Marri on Monday stressed the need to focus on law and order in the country by the joint sitting of the parliament as durable peace could help address all other problems, including the economic crisis. (Report on Page 8)



Religious minister urges unity among believers of all religions

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Mufti Abdul Shakoore on Monday said there was a fierce conflict between religious and secular sections of society in today's era. Talking to a 20-member delegation of Sikh community that called on him here in the ministry, he said believers of all religions should unite at one platform and highlight the virtues of their religions in appropriate manners on the globe. (Report on Page 3)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

PM Visited

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Minister EAD Sardar Ayyaz Sadiq, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarrar, SAPM Tariq Fatemi and Attaullah Tarrar on Monday visited the Embassy of Turkiye to condole over the loss of life and property in the recent earthquake in Turkiye.



Photo: PID

Terrorist attack on check post in Dera injures police constable



News Desk
Due to the firing, police constable Imran got injured in the attack. Meanwhile, terrorists managed to flee from the scene. After receiving the information, a heavy police contingent reached the site and started a search operation. District Police Officer (DPO) Muhammad Shoab along with DSP Sadar Hafiz Muhammad Adnan and his squad also reached the site in quick response.

D.I.KHAN: A policeman got injured after the terrorists opened fire on Khutti Police check post in the limits of Dera Town Police Station, on Monday night. According to police spokesman, terrorists, armed with heavy and advanced weapons, opened fire at the check post situated on Dera-Zhob road in the precincts of Dera Town Police station.

Pakistan stands with people of Turkiye in testing times: PM

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Monday assured Turkish ambassador Mehmet Paçaci that in the testing times, the government and the people of Pakistan stood in strong solidarity with the people of Turkiye.

He made the remarks during his visit to the Turkish Embassy here to express condolences over the loss of life and property in the devastating earthquake in Turkiye.

The Prime Minister was accompanied by Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Minister for Economic Affairs Sardar Ayyaz Sadiq, Minister for Law Azam Nazeer Tarrar, Special Assistants to the Prime Minister Attaullah Tarrar and

Tariq Fatemi.

The Prime Minister conveyed his condolences to the Turkish ambassador and prayed for the victims of the earthquake in Turkiye.

He reiterated that Pakistan will continue its rescue and relief efforts for Turkish brothers and sisters until the last affected person was rehabilitated.

The Prime Minister also highlighted the relief efforts of Pakistan for the earthquake victims of Turkiye. He told that Pakistan was sending winter tents, blankets, warm clothes and other essential items for the people of Turkiye.

The PM said brothers in Turkey were sent assistance through air, sea and road while the government was also considering to send aid through trains. He informed that assistance



was being provided on the basis of daily reports from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Pakistan's ambassador to Turkey.

The government of Turkey fully helped Pakistan during the earthquake of 2005, floods in 2010 and in the recent floods, he noted.

He asked the Turkish ambassador to inform about the needs of people of Turkey so that Pakistan could arrange assistance accordingly.

The ministers who accompanied the prime minister also offered their condolences. They said the public and private sectors of Pakistan were ready to extend assistance to people of Turkey. He also recorded his remarks in the condolence book.

Thanking the Prime Minister and the people of Pakistan, the ambassador of Turkiye said that they were touched by the outpouring of sympathy and support from the entire Pakistani nation.

Bilawal calls for 'national consensus' to confront economic challenges

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Monday urged the country's leadership and other stakeholders to develop a 'national consensus' to confront challenges posed by the economy and others.

Speaking in the inauguration ceremony of golden jubilee celebrations of the Constitution of 1973 at Parliament House, he said the Central Executive Committee (CEC) of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) had decided to constitute a committee and assigned it task to evolve consensus among stakeholders on devising code of conduct for resolving all issues of the country and moving forward with the aim to resolving issues of the countrymen.

The foreign minister said the PPP committee would approach all political parties for devising rules of the game to contest polls and smooth functioning of the country. Political parties should come on one page to overcome crises being confronted the country, he added.

Bilawal said the stubborn attitude of Imran Khan and his non cooperation was damaging the interests of masses.

He said for smooth running of the country, rules of the games must be devised and all stakeholders must agree on it for smooth functioning of the country.

Nobody holds mafias accountable, laments Imran Khan

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan lamented on Monday that nobody held the mafias accountable.

Addressing people through video link, the deposed premier took a dig at the incumbent government, saying, "It is clearly written in the constitution that elections will be held within 90 days. But the rulers are making excuses by saying that the country is short of money to hold the elections." Mr Khan lamented that the country had been devastated by the loot of ministers, saying, "In the country, those in power take no time to get NRO." The mafias in the country were enjoying immunity in accountability as nobody held them accountable, he said.

Saying the country gained independence in the name of Islam, Mr Khan said, "What led to the European countries sweeping past the Islamic countries?" Mr Khan went on to say, "I am not a



religious scholar, but I have travelled the world as a result of my cricketing career." Recalling the significance of Riyasat-e-Madina, Mr Khan said, "In Riyasat-e-Madina, the minds of the human beings were made independent mentally. The Madina state was elevated on the basis of principles, he added. Highlighting the prevailing practice of "typical society," Mr Khan said, "We people give more prestige to those who can speak English with more fluency." He took a dig at the political opponents, saying, "The country is witnessing quite an instability as people are being arrested." Drawing a line of demarcation on malpractices in western countries and Singapore, Mr Khan said, "Unlike in our country, there is no such practice of giving NRO to the looters in the west or Singapore." Believing with the theft at macro level, there was no harm in the country, Mr Khan said, "Things started to go wrong when the country's bigwigs started to plunder the national wealth." Recounting the PTI-led government's health card facility, Mr Khan said, "Sadly, the incumbent government discontinued our programme." Underscoring the significance of the supremacy of rule of law, Mr Khan said, "The country witnesses prosperity with the existence of rule of law."

Shaukat Tarin booked for 'scuttling potential deal with IMF'

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The cyber crime wing of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on Monday registered a case against former federal finance minister Shaukat Tarin.

A case has been registered against Mr Tarin over alleged viral audio on social media under the Pakistan Electronic Crimes Act (PICA) on the complaint of Arshad Mehmood. The case was registered against Mr Tarin under provisions of sedition and provocation.

According to the FIR, in the alleged audio leak that had surfaced on the internet, Taimur Saleem Jhagra and Shaukat Tarin were having a conversation with Mohsin Laghari. "The surplus budget shouldn't be returned to the federal government," Tarin was telling Laghari.

On Sunday, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah 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 country's security and national interests.

President emphasises enhanced trade, education cooperation with Senegal



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday underlined the need for enhanced cooperation with Senegal in the areas of trade, economy, and education.

The president, talking to Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to Senegal, Saima Sayed, who called on him here, said that both countries had great potential to increase bilateral trade and economic relations for the mutual benefits of the two sides.

He said that Pakistan considered Senegal as an important

country in the West African region, and asked the ambassador to make concerted efforts towards further expanding the bilateral ties.

He urged the ambassador to work on arranging bilateral exchanges at the ministerial level between the two countries.

The president expressed satisfaction over the participation of Pakistani businessmen in Trade Fairs (Dakar International Trade Fair-FIK-DAK) in Dakar for many years. Such exhibitions would help in further promoting trade relations between the two countries.

Imran considers PTI supporters as 'mentality handicapped': Marriyum

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb Monday said Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan considered his supporters as "mentally handicapped persons".

The PTI chief was in the habit of blowing hot and cold and insulted his voters by saying such things, she said in a statement while commenting on Imran Khan's address.

The minister said abusing someone one day and then forgiving them the next day was Imran Khan's "style of doing politics", whether it were the judiciary, the United States, or national institutions.

She said Imran Khan was brought into power in sheer "violation of the law". There



was no "rule of law" during his tenure of government rather it was the "rule of the jungle". Whether Imran Khan himself had acted upon the rule of law while forcing the then National Assembly speaker and deputy speaker, governor (Punjab) and President of Pakistan to violate the Constitution, she asked.

She added that the country got real freedom when the "foreign agents, thieves, liars, hypocrites and money launderers" like Imran Khan were thrown out of power.

Meeting

KARACHI: US Ambassador Donald Blome called on Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi during the ongoing Multinational Exercise AMAN 23.



Photo: PID

ECC approves gas price revision, debt rescheduling, BISP grant

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet here on Monday approved gas price revision for domestic, commercial and power sectors for six months from January to June, 2023.

The Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division) tabled a summary on Natural Gas Sale Pricing for FY 2022-23 and presented tariff proposals for all consumer categories in accordance with Review of Estimated Revenue Requirement (RERR) for fiscal year 2022-23, according to press statement issued by the finance ministry.

The cabinet committee also allowed the Ministry of Economic Affairs for signing of debt rescheduling agreement with Russia for debt suspension of Covid related amount US\$ 14.53 million.

The approval was given after the ministry present-



ed a summary on G-20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI). This debt relief was announced in April 2020 for IDA eligible countries to mitigate the socio-economic impact of Covid-19.

Under this initiative debt relief was extended through the suspension of principle and interest payments. So far, 37 debt rescheduling agreements with 15 creditor countries have

been signed.

The ECC granted Rs. 40 billion as Technical Supplementary Grant to Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) to meet its budgetary requirements for increase in the unconditional and conditional grants.

The Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety presented a summary on enhancement of BSIP budget.

It briefed the committee on the on-going BISP programmes including Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT) Programme "Benazir Kafaalat" covering around 9 million families, two Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) programmes namely Benazir Taleemi Wazaif and Benazir Nashonuma.

Besides, this disbursement of cash assistance to affectedes of floods as emergency relief of

Rs. 25,000/- was provide per affected family to around 2.7 million families. In Conditional Cash Transfer Programme, there has been accelerated enrolments in Benazir Taleemi Wazaif and it is anticipated that additional 1 million children will be enrolled by the end of June, 2023.

Among others, the meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar; Federal Minister for Power, Khurram Dastgir Khan; Minister of State for Finance and Revenue, Dr. Aisha Ghous Pasha; MNA/Ex-PM, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi; Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Finance, Tariq Bajwa, Federal Secretaries and other senior officers.

Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Syed Murtaza Mahmud, Minister of State for Petroleum, Musadik Masood Malik and Governor State Bank of Pakistan attended the meeting virtually through video link.

Court rejects plea seeking Imran Khan's arrest warrant in judge 'threat' case

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: A district and sessions court in Islamabad rejected a plea to issue an arrest warrant of former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan in a case related to his threatening remarks against

a female judge.

As per details, the senior civil judge Rana Mujahid Raheem announced the reserved verdict on PTI chief Imran Khan Plea.

The court accepted the former chairman Imran Khan's plea to exempt him from personal appearance for

today.

The plea to issue his arrest warrant was rejected and the case was adjourned till March 9.

Earlier, a district and sessions court in Islamabad summoned former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran

Khan in a case related to his 'threatening' remarks against a female judge.

It is pertinent to mention here that a terrorism case was registered against Imran Khan in Margalla police station for allegedly using derogatory language and threatening Additional Session Judge

Zeba Chaudhry in his speech in Islamabad on August 20.

However, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Sep 19 ordered removal of terrorism sections from the case registered against the PTI chief for threatening the woman judge and officials of Islamabad police.

Parvez Elahi asks ECP, governors to stop delaying election date

News Desk

LAHORE: Punjab former chief minister Chaudhry Parvez Elahi asked the Election Commission of Pakistan and governors to avoid derailing the date of the election.

He said there was no excuse for delaying tactics in the election date as the judicial decision made it clear while mentioning the court stood with the supremacy of the constitution.

Mr Elahi said this while meeting with the defence minister Parvez Khattak in which both discussed the country's political situation, especially the forthcoming elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Arshad Sharif case: Supreme Court rejects JIT report

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) on Monday rejected the report of the Special Joint Investigation Team (JIT) formed to probe the murder of senior journalist Arshad Sharif.

The JIT report was submitted to the CJP's Chamber earlier in the day. The report contains details of the investigation carried out in Kenya and the UAE.

The team returned to Pakistan, last week after completing its inquiry in Kenya and the United Arab Emirates.

Hearing the case, a five-member bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Umar Ata Bandial rejected the report submitted by the special JIT and termed it as a story of 'failures' only.

During today's hearing,

CJP asked why Kenya stopped 'cooperating' with Pakistan in the Arshad Sharif murder case. "Foreign Office should investigate the matter and brief the state on the matter," CJP Bandial remarked.

CJP Justice Umar Ata Bandial said there are two important aspects in the Arshad Sharif murder case one is domestic and the other is foreign. The top judge also asked the JIT head and the additional attorney general to find out who leaked the fact-finding report of the case.

The JIT head informed the SC bench, the Kenyan authorities have not handed over Arshad Sharif's iPhone and iPad to them and went on to say the JIT did not find any evidence to reach any conclusion in the case.

The additional attorney

general said the Kenyan authorities have completed their investigation of the two cops arrested in the Arshad Sharif murder case.

The report has been sent to the public prosecutor for further action.

The SC while rejecting the JIT report, asked to contact UN for help in the matter. "How much time is required to seek help from the UN," the CJP asked the Foreign Office's representative.

Cannot tell the exact time as the matter is about cooperation between the two countries, the FO representative replied.

Later the, SC adjourned hearing of Arshad Sharif murder case hearing until first week of March and gave a month to the Foreign Office to determine the time to seek help from UN.

Interior Minister visits Diamer-Basha Dam project

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Interior Rana Sanaullah Khan on Monday visited Diamer-Basha Dam Project, being constructed on River Indus, 40-Kilometre downstream of Chilas town.

He was accompanied by Federal Secretary Interior Yousaf Naseem Khokhar, Chairman WAPDA Engr Lt Gen (Retd) Sajjad Ghani and National Coordinator, National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) Muhammad Tahir Rai, said a press release.

The visit was aimed at assessing the overall security scenario on the mega multi-purpose project, which is of vital significance for the national development in the years ahead.

Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Imdad Ullah Bosal, Chief Secretary Gilgit Baltistan (GB) Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, IG Police KP Akhtar Hayat Khan, IG Police GB Saeed Wazir, Home Secretary KP Khushal Khan, Home Secretary GB Iqbal Hussain, General Manager (GM) Security WAPDA Brig (Retd) Muhammad Tufail, Chief Executive Officer DiamerBasha Development Company Amir Bashir Chaudhary, GM Diamer Basha Dam Dr. Khawar Munir, Commissioner Hazara Shaukat Ali Yousafzai, Commissioner Diamer-Astor Division Dildar Ahmed Malik, Deputy Commissioner Upper Kohistan Asif Khan, Deputy Commissioner Diamer Fiaz Ahmed

and representatives of the consultants and the contractors were also present on the occasion.

During the briefing, the minister was apprised in detail about the security arrangements, which are in place to facilitate smooth construction work on different sites in the project area.

Addressing the meeting, the Federal Minister said that the scheduled completion of Diamer-Basha Dam Project was directly linked with the safe and congenial environment at the project sites, and that could only be made possible by enforcing well-thought out and coherent security plans in the project area. Earlier, the federal minister reviewed the construction activities and security arrangements at the work site.

Scheduled for completion in 2029, Diamer-Basha Dam will have a gross water storage capacity of 8.1 MAF to irrigate 1.23 million acres of additional land. It will have the installed power generation capacity of 4,500 MW and provide 18 billion units of green and clean hydel electricity to the National Grid per annum. A sum of Rs.78.5 billion is being spent on resettlement of affectees and CBMs in health, education and infrastructure development. Thor Hydel Power Station, Thak Hydel Power Station and Cadet College Chilas are among these CBMs. In addition, the locals are being accorded priority in employment opportunities on Diamer-Basha Dam Project.

Punjab election date: Contempt plea filed in LHC

Bureau Report

LAHORE: A contempt plea has been filed with Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday against failure to announce the date of the election in Punjab despite the court's order.

A citizen named Munir Ahmed moved a contempt plea through Azhar Siddique advocate against the Punjab governor, the Election Commission of Pakistan and others.

The plea stated that despite the court's order to immediately announce the election schedule in Punjab, the ECP failed in doing so.

As per the constitution, elections are to be held within 90 days after the dissolution of the assembly and only 60 days are remaining now, the plea stated.

The plea has urged the LHC to

initiate contempt proceedings against Punjab Governor Balighur Rehman, Chief Election Commissioner, Sikan-dar Sultan Raja and others.

Last week, the Lahore High Court (LHC) had ordered the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to organise by-polls in Punjab within three months.

The LHC's Justice Jawad Hassan announced the reserved verdict on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) petition seeking the court orders for Punjab by-polls.

In a 16-page short verdict, the high court ordered the election commission for organising by-polls in Punjab within 90 days.

The LHC directed the electoral watchdog to issue the election schedule in accordance with the Constitution.

PAF'S IL-78 aircraft evacuates Pakistani families, students from Turkiye

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: An IL-78 aircraft of Pakistan Air Force landed back on Monday at PAF Base, Nur Khan after a successful mission of providing humanitarian assistance to the earthquake-stricken people of Turkiye.

According to the Pakistan Air Force (PAF), owing to the efforts of PAF, a number of Pakistani students and families stuck in the area were evacuated through the Ilyushin-78 and were brought back to the homeland safely.

The Pakistani students and families expressed their gratitude for the



overall efforts of Pakistan Air Force in bringing them back to Pakistan and rescuing their fellow countrymen stranded in the natural calamity abroad.

Other such missions by PAF, in coordination with NDMA and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, are also in queue to help the earthquake affectees.

Joint sitting should focus on law & order: Shazia Marri

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Ms Shazia Marri on Monday stressed the need to focus on law and order in the country by the joint sitting of the parliament as durable peace could help address all other problems, including the economic crisis.

Speaking on a motion to create awareness and build consensus to resolve national issues, including law & order situation, terrorism, Jammu and Kashmir, foreign policy, climate change impact etc., she said the parliament always played a key role whenever the incidents of terrorism like the Peshawar Police Lines mosque blast and the Army Public School Peshawar attack, occurred.

She endorsed the viewpoint of Senator Raza Rabbani of Pakistan Peoples Party to convene an in-camera sitting of the parliament to thoroughly discuss the facts behind the gory incidents.

The minister stressed that the 20-point National Action Plan (NAP), which was devised on the recommendations of the joint sitting of the parliament, should be completely implemented to avert the recurrence of terrorist incidents.

She viewed that extremism and terrorism were interlinked as both the menaces had the same narrative and mindset behind them and the war against the two could not be won until a counter-narrative was devised.

She recalled that despite political differences, her party had supported the NAP as it was important to build a narrative based on principles of unity, faith and discipline.

She said the APS attack and Peshawar Police Line mosque blast had shocked the entire nation and to prevent reoccurring such incidents, "we have to fix ourselves. We have to stop spreading hatred, besides teaching schoolchildren and students of religious seminaries how to promote peace."

Power transfer to LG representatives to help resolve people's problems: Tanveer

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MIRPUR [AJK]: Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan said on Monday that for the first time power had been transferred to the lower level through local government elections which would help solve the problems faced by the people at the grass-roots level. "The government will provide all-out support to the elected repre-



sentatives and fully empower them", he said in a statement.

Sardar Tanveer said he believed in upholding democratic and moral values, however, he would ensure strict discipline in the party.

Meanwhile, the AJK PM in another statement expressed deep grief over the sad demise of renowned scholar, writer and actor Zia Mohyeddin and condoled with his bereaved family.

CDC approves 11 development projects costing over 6 billion rupees

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Development Committee (CDC) Azad Jammu and Kashmir on Monday approved 11 development projects costing over 6 billion rupees.

The extra ordinary meeting attended by ministers, advisers, and top officials of the government was chaired by Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan at Kashmir House Islamabad. The projects approved by the CDC included five projects worth more than three billion for physical planning and housing, four projects for public works, and one each for Health and Education.

Among the projects approved in physical planning and housing sector

include the completion of remaining facilities in the reconstruction of the Supreme Court and High Court, installation of an elevator in the High Court Building Muzaffarabad worth 426.65 million 94 thousand, completion of remaining work of water supply scheme phase one at Rawlakot worth 86 crore 68 lakh 41 thousand for the outstanding work of Darek Dam, 74 crore 4 lakh 23 thousand for the upgradation of water supply scheme at Palindri in district Sidhnuti, 66 crore 33 lakh 88 thousand for water supply scheme THQ Chachoi in district Kotli and Greater Water Supply Scheme Hattian Bala worth 43 crore 71 lakh 26 thousand rupees.

In Communication and Works the

projects approved include the remodeling of city squares in the capital city Muzaffarabad, construction of RCC Bridgeon Salar Nala and Panji, Kalri Kasgma Road in district Bhimber worth 53 crore 10 million 70 thousand rupees,

upgradation of Jandala Pir Gili Road part one in Bhimbar district and 48.87 crore for reconditioning of remaining part of Kotli Nikyal road in Kotli district.

In the health sector, the project work included the provision of providing necessary equipment and other requirements to 250-bed DHQ Hospital Palandri and construction of six high school buildings in Muzaffarabad and Jhelum

Increasing food prices, incompetence of the government, Faisal Bhatti

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League Qayyum Central Deputy Secretary Information and Broadcasting Faisal Anwar Bhatti have said that for the past many years, the economy of the country has been sucking the blood of the people, but the rulers have not done enough to restore the economy. If measures are not taken, if the country's treasury is empty, then the people are not to be blamed, but the rulers who continued to rule. Today, it has become difficult for people to eat bread twice a day.

Anjuman Tajran and others protested against inflation, unemployment, lawlessness,



Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: Trade Leaders, President Chaudhry Muhammad Akram, General Secretary Mian Sohail Rafi, Members Anjuman Tajran Press Market and others protested against inflation, unemployment, lawlessness, indifference of institutions and non-availability of essential utilities and said that there is no more room for those who create instability for the country and the nation. They further said that, the items used in the printing press industry are urgently should be brought to a normal state because everything is going away from the power of the people. Unemployment has broken the back of every ordinary and special person.

It is sad moment that the government does not care about the continually shedding tears of the poor and the scaling up unemployment, but they have always cared about their own interests for which they are even ready to die. They said added that, Alas! how are these our so called Massiahs, under whom the people are hungry, unemployed and useless will remain suppressed under the burden of taxes. The prosperity of the country requires that this dear country should be guided on the golden principles of Islam and the system of favoritism should be abolished. They further expressed that the people with hollow slogans? A lot of service has been done for which there is no more room left further in the guise of such slogans.

Therefore, the policy makers have to go ahead and make such a unique policy from which even a common man can be benefited.

Protest against suspension of 3G & 4G in Azam Warsak area



Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: protest demonstration against 3G and 4G suspension under the leadership of ANP in Azam Warsak area of Tehsil Birmal, South Waziristan Lower, hundreds of people participated demanded to restore the network.

According to the details, the residents of the area staged a protest against the suspension of 3G 4G in which a large number of people participated.

The protestors were holding placards with their demands on them and raised slogans against the concerned authorities including the district administration.

Ayaz, the central leader of ANP while talking to the media said that Tehsil Birmal is a densely populated area but it has always been ignored by the higher authorities.

ANP's leading worker Asmat Ullah Dardmal said that we have called an all-party conference tomorrow in which there will be a detailed discussion on the problems of Tehsil Birmal.

Asmat ullah said that the NADRA office has been approved for Azam warsak, but the government is delaying it,

Which we condemn and we demand that in Azam warsak should start work on NADRA office soon.

The protestors said that if our problems are not resolved soon, we will be forced to stage a dharna.

Polio vaccine

LAHORE: A health worker administers polio vaccine drops to a child during a vaccination campaign in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

BOK Raast Islamic banking and international consulting associates signs MoU

News Desk

PESHAWAR: Bank of KhyberRaast Islamic banking and International Consulting associates (Pvt) Ltd. have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to expand access to financial services to the residents of South Waziristan, North Waziristan and Khyber Districts. This partnership will help improve the financial well-being of individuals and communities in these regions.

The partnership will bring together the expertise of both organizations to host a series of financial literacy trainings on State Bank of Pakistan approved training curriculum. These sessions will cover a wide array of topics, including budgeting, saving, investing, credit management, and will target low-income families, students, women and unbanked MSMEs. As part of MOU iConsult will also facilitate and mobilize communities to open bank



accounts and avail financial services. Furthermore, under the MOU women belonging to South Waziristan, North Waziristan and Khyber districts will be trained and provided internship at BOK. "We are excited to partner with International Consulting Associates (pvt) Ltd to expand access to financial services in Merged Districts," said Ali Khan Arbab, Group Head Islamic Banking (A). "We believe that everyone deserves access to financial services that can help them

achieve their goals, regardless of where they live. This partnership will help us bring these services to communities that need them the most." "We are proud to join forces with Bank of Khyber to improve financial well-being in Merged Areas," said Kashif Maqbool Sehgal Regional Head KP iConsult. "We understand the challenges that come with limited access to financial services, and we are committed to providing solutions that support individuals and communities in

these regions." This activity is part of USAID funded project, "FATA Economic Revitalization Programme" (FERP). The project is implemented by UNDP and contributing to long term economic growth of Merged Areas by supporting Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa by creating an enabling environment for businesses, engaging entrepreneurs, and working with private sector to build capacities for inclusive economic growth.

Shan Foods partners with Citizens Archives of Pakistan for CAP Family Carnival 2023

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Shan Foods joined hands with the Citizens Archives of Pakistan (CAP) to sponsor its annual fund raising event, CAP Family Carnival, held at the Beach Luxury Hotel in Karachi.

The Citizens Archives of Pakistan (CAP), founded in 2007, is the only not-for-profit organisation dedicated towards preserving the history and culture of the country, building and maintaining archives, and designing educational tools to raise awareness and instill pride in ordinary Pakistani citizens.

CAP Family Carnival is the NGO's yearly fundraising event, aimed at raising funds for its core projects, while also sharing a snippet of its archive and providing avenues of education, entertainment, and engagement for all generations of the family. The event presented an interactive exhibition curated entirely from the CAP archive that explored 75 Years of Pakistan through the lens of heritage and culture. Through the exhibit, students got an opportunity to learn about everything from the folklore of the region to Pakistan's firsts, including the making of Pakistan's first flag.

China Study Center holds Art Exhibition on Pak, China friendship Cultural, Social relations

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: China Study Center, University of Peshawar is organizing three days Art Exhibition on the theme "PAKISTAN-CHINA ALL WEATHER FRIENDSHIP" focuses on China, Pakistan-China Friendship, China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Chinese Art and Cultural Heritage (buildings, monuments, landscapes, books, works of art, artifacts, traditions, language, calligraphy, culturally significant landscapes, and biodiversity) at China Study Center, University of Peshawar.

Students, Teachers, and artists across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are taking part in the Art Exhibition. A total of 50 art pieces were selected for the art competition by the organizers. The Art Exhibition was inaugurated by Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani Secretary-General Pakistan China Friendship Association KP, (PCFA) in the presence of Prof. Dr. Zahid Anwar Pro-Vice Chancellor and Director China Study Center, University of Peshawar, and his team for organizing such important activities at CSC, UoP. Prof. Dr. Zahid Anwar Pro-Vice Chancellor and Director China Study Center, University of Peshawar on the occasion highlighted that the China Study Center, University of Peshawar is organizing different activities focusing on Pakistan-China friendship.



Gilani Secretary-General (PCFA-KP) said China Study Center, UoP is playing a vital role in bringing Pakistan and China closer. Through these kinds of healthy activities, people will be able to know more about China, its culture, history, and architecture etc. He appreciated the efforts of Prof. Dr. Zahid Anwar Pro-Vice Chancellor and Director China Study Center, University of Peshawar, and his team for organizing such important activities at CSC, UoP. Prof. Dr. Zahid Anwar Pro-Vice Chancellor and Director China Study Center, University of Peshawar on the occasion highlighted that the China Study Center, University of Peshawar is organizing different activities focusing on Pakistan-China friendship.



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SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 5:31 am
Zohr 12:22 pm
Asr 4:11 pm
Maghrib 5:50 pm
Isha 7:13 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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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

AIOU to close MS/ MPhil, PhD admissions tomorrow

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University has commenced admissions in the first phase of spring 2023 semester including BS, MS/MPhil and PhD and tomorrow (15th February) is the deadline for the submission of admission application form. Whereas the last date of admission for Matric and Intermediate programs is February 21. AIOU has also announced the admission entry test schedule for MS/MPhil and PhD programs. These entry tests will be conducted in university's academic complex from February 17-22, 2023.

Moreover, the final examinations of matriculation, FA, FSc and I.Com programs of semester autumn 2022 will begin across the country from March 1 and will continue till April 3. According to Controller Examinations, date sheet is available on the university website (www.aiou.edu.pk). Roll number slips are uploaded to students' CMS portal and dispatched to the students at their addresses as well.

Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof Dr. Nasir Mehmood has instructed the examinations department to ensure transparency and provide all facilities to the students during the conduct of examinations. Examination centers have been established in nearby and easily approachable vicinities of the students for their convenience. Special teams will make surprise visits to the exam centers to eradicate the element of cheating.

Religious minister urges unity among believers of all religions

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Mufti Abdul Shakoor on Monday said there was a fierce conflict between religious and secular sections of society in today's era.

Talking to a 20-member delegation of Sikh community that called on him here in the ministry, he said believers of all religions should unite at one platform and highlight the virtues of their religions in appropriate manners on the globe.

Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (PSGPC) Pardhan Sardar Ameer Singh led the delegation comprising of National Commission for Minorities Member Dr Mimpal Singh and other leaders of Sikh community from Nankana Sahib and Hassan Abdal.

Welcoming the delegation, Minister Abdul Shakoor said the worship of the Sikh religion was incomplete without Nankana Sahib.

On this occasion, the delegates



endorsed that the Sikh community and their places of worship were safe in Pakistan and it was an exemplary country in terms of the protection of minorities.

They said after the constitution of PSGPC in 1999, the management of worship places had significantly improved. The Sikh Yatris coming to Kartarpur from India faced many difficulties, they added.

The delegates also made several suggestions for the welfare of the Pakistani Sikh community in the meeting with the minister.

The minister assured serious consideration and implementation of the recommendations presented by the delegation of the Sikh community.

National Day

ISLAMABAD: Members National Assembly dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan Syed Mohammad Ali Hosseini, and others stand during national anthems of both countries during national day ceremony of Iran at a local hotel, in Federal Capital. Bashir



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Radio Pakistan organizes a grand dialogue on emerging digital broadcasting

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Speakers stress the need for collaboration among key stakeholders to flourish collectively and better serve the nation with positive and constructive information.

Speakers at a grand dialogue on emerging digital broadcasting have stressed the need for collaboration among the key stakeholders to flourish collectively and better serve the nation with positive and constructive information.

These views were expressed by representatives from FMs, Stream Channels and OTT platforms at the dialogue organized by Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation as part of World Radio Day celebrations at Radio Pakistan Headquarters Islamabad on Monday.

The heads of various private FM channels, Stream Channels and technology companies, academicians and health experts contributed their valuable input in the discussion.

They were of the view that the private FMs can benefit from

Radio Pakistan's rich content for informing and entertaining people in a more effective way. Radio Pakistan can also collaborate with the educational institutions to produce quality human resource in the field of mass communication.

Addressing the ceremony, Secretary Information and Broadcasting Shahera Shahid said the radio industry will be fully facilitated to flourish. She said Radio Pakistan and PTV have rich content, and a system is being developed to ensure its availability to everyone. Alluding to Radio Pakistan's largest outreach in the country, she said the equipment of national broadcaster is being upgraded with digital technology to improve sound quality.

In his remarks, Director General Radio Pakistan Tahir Hassan said the emerging trends of digital broadcasting demands collaboration among the relevant organizations. He highlighted the measures being taken to improve performance of the state broadcaster.

Addressing the event, Chief

Executive Officer FM-105 Zulfiqar Ali Shah said we are ready to collaborate with Radio Pakistan for larger benefit of people. He said the private FMs can relay news bulletins being aired by Radio Pakistan.

CEO of an IT company Wahaj Siraj said today the broadcast media is confronting with multiple challenges regarding creativity and innovation and we have to think out of the box solution to tackle them.

Dr. Javed Haroon Qureshi, CEO of a Radio Engineering Company, in his remarks, said Radio Pakistan is rich in creating impressive content and we have to disseminate this content.

In her remarks, Dr. Salma Siddique, Dean Department of Social Sciences NUST, said NUST is ready to collaborate with Radio Pakistan in establishing a Training Academy to train the youth in broadcasting.

Dr. Yasir Niazi, CEO of IMDC, addressing the ceremony, said his organization is ready to cooperate with Radio

Pakistan in imparting education and creating awareness among the masses regarding health issues.

Tassuwar Zaman of China Media Group said the collaboration between Radio Pakistan and China Radio International is proving effective to promote friendship between the two countries and bring peoples of the two countries closer.

Wakeel Khan from Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority said PEMRA will continue to facilitate the radio industry, helping it to inform and entertain people in a better way.

The main event was organized at Radio Pakistan Islamabad on the occasion of World Radio Day, which was moderated by renowned journalist, analyst and former Director General of Radio Pakistan Murtaza Sloangi.

Similar dialogues were also held at the PBC stations in provincial headquarters including Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar, Quetta, Muzaffarabad and Gilgit.

Gerry's International organizes soft launch of Singapore Airlines in Pakistan

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Singapore Airlines (SIA), the flag carrier of the Republic of Singapore has appointed Gerry's International as its General Sales Agent (GSA) in Pakistan. The announcement was made at an event held in Karachi, attended by industry professionals, representatives of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and other government departments, corporate sector senior management and others.

Singapore Airlines will currently be an offline carrier operating through its two online gateway cities of Dubai and Colombo. SIA's partnership with Gerry's International, which is Pakistan's leading aviation and travel services company, offers it a stronger footprint in Pakistan, allowing customers to interact with the airline through a trusted intermediary. Gerry's International role is to promote Singapore Airlines in Pakistan and provide offices with SQ branding as well as provide support in different areas, from sales, reservations and ticketing, marketing and office administration.

Expressing his views on the development at the Soft Launch event, K. Aswin, General Manager, Gulf & Middle East, Singapore Airlines, stated: "We are delighted to partner with Gerry's to continue to develop and expand our presence in the Pakistan market."

Adding his commendation for SIA, Arshad Wali Muhammad Group Director, Gerry's Group said, "Gerry's is honoured to partner with Singapore Airlines and represent it as its GSA in Pakistan. SIA has a reputation of being a trendsetter and Industry Challenger, with continuous innovation as the key driver."

Smart 100 launched to Revolutionize the Housing and Construction Industry

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: To upgrade peoples lifestyle and adapt to the latest and contemporary practices in the field of housing and construction, Smart Hub Construction (Pvt.) Limited has announced the grand opening of its latest residential project, Smart 100, located in F-18, Faisal Town, Islamabad and held an open house event on location. This state-of-the-art house boasts a host of cutting-edge technology and modern amenities, making it a standout among the local real estate offerings.

Zain Bajwa, CEO of Smart Hub Construction, shares the objective and philosophy behind Smart 100. He shared that he observed the living standard of people in America and was inspired to bring this level of smart technology to the people of Pakistan.

Bringing international technology to Pakistan, Smart 100 is a 1 kanal residential unit that is equipped with the world's best home security system, Ring by Amazon. The house also features locks on doors and windows by Lockly, a renowned American brand, and motion sensor and remote controlled lights by Lutron. With 4 bedrooms, study room, a main kitchen, dining area, guest drawing room, powder room, and a clear-to-sky jacuzzi, Smart 100 has something for everyone.

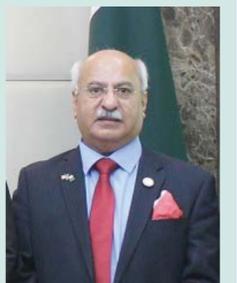
Chaudhary Javed, GM Operations Faisal Town, brother of Mr. Chaudhary Majeed, CEO of ZEDEM International & Faisal Town, inaugurated the open house event held to celebrate the launch of Smart 100. He said, I am extremely grateful and overly joyed to see the launch of this exciting new addition to Faisal Town.

The open house event attracted a diverse crowd, including real estate professionals, investors, youth, and people from different walks of life. People appreciated the variety of modern features and quality of construction offered at Smart 100.

2nd International Property Expo will be held in Peshawar from 17 to 19 February

Commerce Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry is organizing the 2nd Peshawar International Property Expo and Convention from 17th to 19th February 2023 at Marbella Cave Marquee, Warsak Road-Peshawar. This Event is Powered by AH Group of Companies & Sponsored by Square Nine International.



More than forty leading builders and developers from across Pakistan will present their commercial and housing projects to the general public and foreign investors. A day Before the expo starts, a Conference regarding the Investment Opportunities will also be organized on February 16, 2023 at Serena Hotel Peshawar. Commerce Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mr. Adnan Jalil will be the Chief guest.

Vice Chairman Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment Engr. Said Mahmood, DG Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Cultural Tourism Authority, Presidents and representatives of all chambers of commerce of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Prominent businessmen will participate in it. Chairman PAEI, Mr. Khurshid Barlas has said that economic activities in the housing and real estate sector in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the country will get a strong boost, keeping in view the current situation through the property expo.

More than 30 small scale industries are linked to the housing sector thus increasing both investment and employment. Pakistani builders will showcase innovative eco-friendly housing projects for foreign investors. A large number of overseas Pakistanis are expected to attend the three-day property expo.

AH Group Chairman Mr. Yasir Ali Mehsud said that overseas Pakistanis should take advantage of this expo by joint ventures with their Pakistani and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa builders and developers. Prominent builders and developers are very satisfied with the foolproof arrangements of the expo organized by the Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry. After the conclusion of the expo and convention, the award ceremony of this expo and convention will be held on February 23 at Serena Hotel Islamabad in which the awards will be given to Participants.

PTCL Group's largest E-Sports gaming tournament, GAMEKEY Arena concluded in Lahore

Commerce Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Team AGONx18 Esports has been crowned the ultimate PUBG MOBILE champion of Pakistan after the squad carried the day at the grand finale of PTCL Group's largest E-Sports gaming tournament 'GameKey Arena' at Nishtar Park Sports Complex, Lahore.

Sixteen top PUBG MOBILE squads battled it out to decide the champion in the ultimate showdown, spanning 15 maps. AGONx18 was the last squad standing, with 3X ESPORTS and 52 ESPORTS taking the second and third spots respectively. 3X Miracle clinched

the top fragger spot with 38 kills while AG18 FALAK and 52 XHASSAN seized second and third places with 37 and 28 kills respectively.

Over 700 PUBG MOBILE squads participated in the online qualifiers of the tournament which was played on PTCL Group's newly launched E-Sports gaming platform GameKey, which provides single window access to all popular online gaming labels to all data users in Pakistan.

PTCL Group awarded a prize pool of PKR 3,000,000 to the winning and runner-up squads at the prize distribution ceremony preceding an enthralling musical concert by popular Pakistani

singer, Shamooin Ismail. The champion team was awarded PKR 1,200,000 while the two runner-ups received PKR 550,000 and PKR 300,000 respectively.

The top fragger 3X Miracle received a cash prize of PKR 50 thousand while the two runner ups received PKR 30 thousand and PKR 20 thousand for their matchless exploits in the tournament.

Sharing his thoughts at the event, Amir Pasha, Group Director Public Relations, CSR, Corporate Communication and Media, PTCL Group said, "Pakistan has immense untapped potential in E-Sports. PTCL and Ufone

4G intend to tap into this unexplored talent in order to enrich the fledgling gaming culture in the country. GameKey Arena tournament, which was played on our newly launched E-Sports gaming platform GameKey, provides a conducive platform for young and experienced players to explore and groom their talents and use the opportunity to test their skills against the best in the game to be able to grow and succeed as professional gamers."

GameKey Arena was the inaugural tournament on GameKey platform, however, PTCL and Ufone 4G intend to transform it into a calendar event, making it an annual gaming festival



for gaming enthusiasts from across the country.

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SMEDA's support helping transgender community

A unique initiative by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter of the Small and Medium Entrepreneur Development Authority (SMEDA) helped the transgender community in Peshawar in switching from routine practices of begging and dancing towards the honorable livelihood of garments stitching.

A financial grant of Rs 1.5 million by SMEDA for the establishment of a stitching unit at Peshawar transformed into a vocational training center offering skill training in the fields of stitching, embroidery, fashion design to the highly neglected and vulnerable community of transgenders.

"The training center is a success story of our project of establishing 1000 Industrial Stitching Units all across Pakistan including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, AJK, Gilgit-Baltistan and merged districts", informed Rashid Aman, Provincial Chief SMEDA KP.

Rashid apprised that the project was launched with a financial budget of Rs. 350.545 million and so far around 93 Industrial Stitching Units have been established in the country, benefiting hundreds of thousands of people by imparting training and creation of jobs in the textile related field.

The objective of the project was to promote the public-private partnership to boost value addition in the field of textile garments by establishing industrial stitching units by strengthening small and medium entrepreneurs.

The amount of Rs. 1.5 million was provided to an institute REST (Rehabilitation, Education, Skill Development, Training Awareness) led by a trans person Katrina, provincial chief SMEDA told APP.

There were a number of hitches in awarding of the contract to a transgender, but the management decided for going ahead with the objective of providing an opportunity to the neglected community of our society, Rashid remarked.

Around eight Juki Sewing machines were purchased and installed at REST and arrangements were made for the training of the staff by National Textile University Faisalabad.

"The center is performing well and successfully imparting training to transgenders who are now starting up their own business or getting jobs at different tailoring shops," says Rashid with feeling of complacency clearly visible on his face.

"SMEDA's help is a first ever initiative by a public sector institute of posing confidence in our abilities by offering us the opportunity of making earning through honorable sources of livelihood," remarked jovial Katrina, in charge of REST institute.

Around 20 transgenders have benefited by learning the skill of tailoring, embroidery, baby garments stitching etc, Katrina told APP.

She said out of 20 beneficiaries, several have stood up on their feet by starting a business or joining jobs, shunning the old practice of dancing and begging.

She also requested other departments to follow the footsteps of SMEDA and provide opportunities for transgenders in transforming their lives by opting for honorable sources of earning.

Katrina said she is also providing training to trans persons on fashion design and is ready for other programmes of vocational training from the platform of REST if financial and technical support is extended to her.

Pakistan's Exports

Abdus Sattar

The world's exports have increased from US\$384bn to US\$28tr while Pakistan, Bangladesh, India and China's exports increased from US\$0.68bn, US\$0.36bn, US\$ 2.88bn, US\$3.7bn to US\$32bn, US\$ 44bn, US\$ 680bn and US\$2.73tr respectively during last five decades.

Pakistan's exports were US\$3bn, US\$6bn and US\$10bn in 1980, 1990, and 2000 and remained at US\$24bn and US\$28bn in 2010 and 2020, respectively. The exports growth was -17pc during 1972 while 20, 1.1pc in 1980 and 1990 respectively and remained at 16pc in 2000. In 2010 export growth was 15.7pc, while 1.5pc in 2020 and 6.5pc in 2021. The exports as a percentage of GDP were 7pc in 1972. Its share was 13pc in 1980 and 15pc of GDP in 1990. In 2000 it started dwindling to 12pc of GDP. It increased to 14pc in 2010. But its share fell to 9pc as a percentage of GDP in 2021.

In Pakistan, the textile industry's contribution to exports in 2021 was US\$19.33bn—more than 60 pc of total exports. During the pandemic, Pakistan had the edge over Bangladesh and India in textile exports to Europe and the USA. But due to current energy price hike, shortage of raw materials in Pakistan, Bangladesh and India are rapidly capturing Pakistan's textile export markets in Europe and the USA through providing textile products at lower prices.

Pakistan's estimated export potential in pharmaceuticals, construction, mining, auto, fruit and vegetables, dairy

products, halal food, chemicals, handicrafts, IT, transport, logistics and tourism etc., is around US\$88bn. But due to lack of (R&D), high import tariff and cost of doing business etc., exports growth could not be sustained during the last five decades.

Research and Development (R&D) triggers exports – US\$1 invested in R&D brings US\$2 in return. Global R&D has risen from US\$675bn to US\$2.4tr over the last two decades. In HDI rankings,

while China, India, and Bangladesh ranked 32, 62, and 168, respectively, in 2019. The cost of doing business in China, India, Bangladesh and Pakistan remained at 1.1, 7, 9 and 7pc, respectively, in 2019.

High import tariffs could limit redundant imports, while raw materials could impact export expansion. It could adversely damage export competitiveness globally. Keeping in view the importance of global value chains at different stages of production, the share of exports made

ladesh, it was US\$90k in 1972 but US\$ 1.33bn in 2007 and US\$2.83bn in 2008 and dwindled to US\$1.39bn in 2021. In Pakistan, FDI remained at US\$ 17mn in 1972, increasing to US\$5.6bn in 2007, then falling to US\$2bn in 2021.

It has been observed that countries with total factor productivity growth of more than 3pc had GDP growth rate of more than 8pc. Pakistan's annual average growth of total factor productivity and GDP remained at 1.62pc, 4.81pc, respectively, from 1972 to 2019. So despite the above-discussed factors, political instability, lack of continuity and consistency of economic policies are responsible for low domestic productivity and inhibiting export potential during the last five decades.

The export potential could only be achieved through political stability, continuity and consistency of economic policies, security and surety of investors' life and capital. Moving towards smart regulations, electronic portals and one-window operation approvals could attract FDI. Additionally, lengthy and futile procedures and a host of No Objection Certificates discourage investors as well as FDI.

The author is a researcher at the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE).

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Moving towards smart regulations, electronic portals and one-window operation approvals could attract FDI. Additionally, lengthy and futile procedures and a host of No Objection Certificates discourage investors as well as FDI.

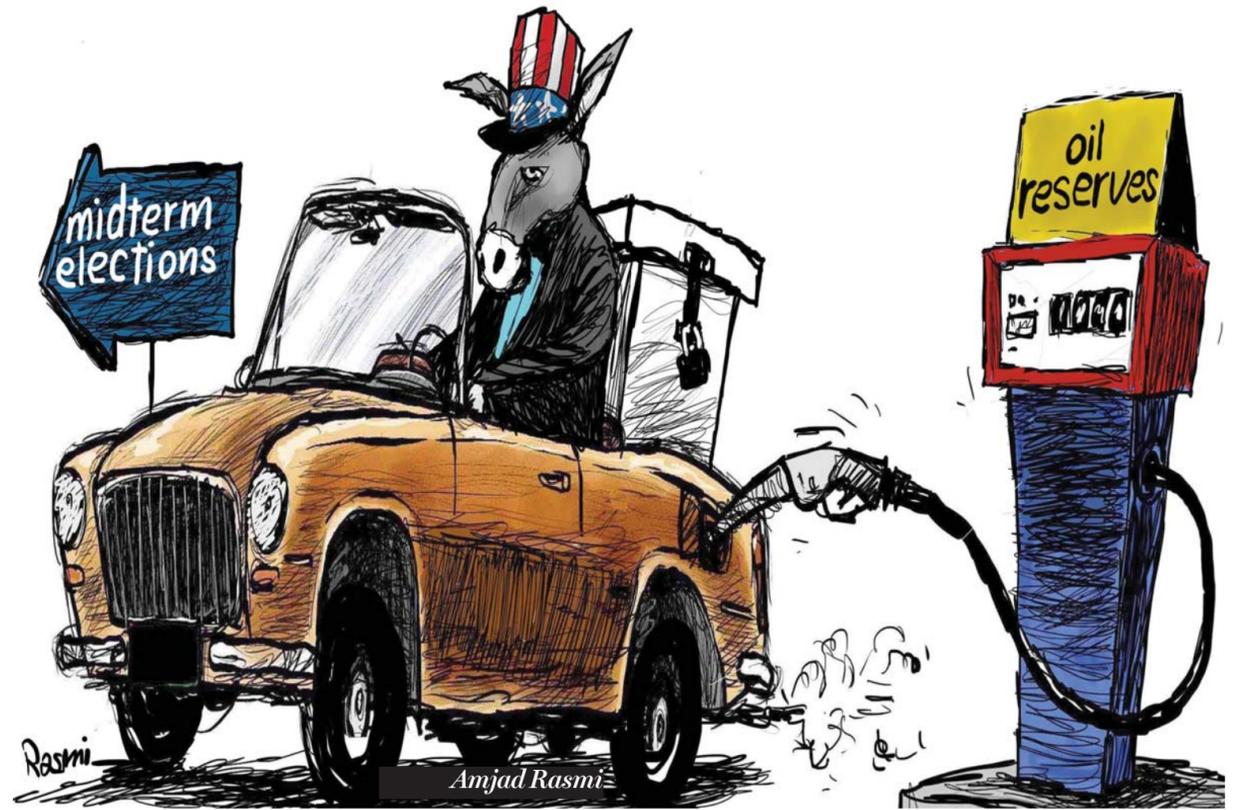
Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan were ranked 126, 132 and 161 out of 192 countries in 2021-22. According to Global Innovation Index, Pakistan came 87th, while China, India and Bangladesh ranked at 11, 40 and 102 positions among the 132 countries in 2022.

India and Bangladesh spent 0.80 and 0.30pc of GDP on R&D in 2020; Pakistan spent less than 0.20pc of GDP on R&D in 2019. India's current science & technology budget is about US\$2bn, a hundred times more than Pakistan's.

Regarding ease of doing business, Pakistan was ranked 108th among 190 econo-

my of imported inputs mounted around 20 to 30pc of imported inputs used at different stages of production in Pakistan. Pakistan's weighted average mean tariff is around 13pc, while its global average is 3, China's is 4, India's is 6, and Bangladesh's is 11pc. In Pakistan, average import tariffs on finished goods are 50pc higher than in South Asia and three times higher than in East Asia.

Foreign direct Investment (FDI) was US\$87k in 1979, US\$156bn in 2007 and US\$ 334bn in China in 2021. In India, it was US\$18mn in 1972, US\$25bn in 2007, and US\$45bn in 2021. In Bang-



Reko Diq: A way forward to shatter debt shackles

Abdul Shakoor Khan

Balochistan province, once known for insurgency and deteriorating law and order, is now ready to assist in boosting country's economy as the government has successfully restructured and restarted the stalled multi-billion dollar Reko Diq project.

Reko Diq that means sand and gold mounds in Balochi language, has an estimated reserve of 5.9 billion tons of ore grading 0.41% copper and gold reserves.

Located in Chaghi district, about 70 kilometres north-west of Naukundi, a town near Iran and Afghanistan, Reko Diq is thought to have the world's fifth largest untapped gold and copper deposits.

"We can say goodbye to International Monetary Fund and other international loan financiers for good, once Balochistan's mines and minerals are fully explored," Chief Minister Balochistan Abdul Qudus Bizenjo said.

Expressing desire for a prosper Balochistan, Bizenjo said that US\$ eight billion Reko Diq project was the largest agreement ever signed in country's history. "This project will not only end Balochistan's sense of deprivation but also help to boost country's economy, create jobs and bring positive changes to masses' lifestyles."

According to an agreement signed with Barrick Gold Company (BGC), Balochistan will reap dividends, royalties and other benefits associated with its 25% stake without having to contribute financially.

Barrick President and Chief Executive Mark Bristow said the completion of legal processes is key to progressing Reko Diq into a world-class, long-life mine that would substantially benefit present and future generations of Pakistani.

"We are currently updating project's 2010

feasibility and 2011 feasibility expansion studies. This should be completed by 2024 with 2028 targeted for first production," Bristow said. "We expect it to be constructed in two phases with a combined process capacity of 80 million tons per annum."

"Reko Diq's ownership structure exemplifies Barrick's commitment to partnering with its host countries and fairly sharing value of our operations with all of our stakeholders," Bristow said.

Furthermore, Reko Diq will pay up to \$50 million in royalties to the Balochistan government until commercial production begins.

Since an agreement was signed in 1993 with the Australian Tethyan Copper Company (TCC) for exploration of these reserves, the Reko Diq project faced numerous challenges. The TCC was later purchased by Canada's Barrick Gold and Chile's Antofagasta.

In response to another agreement signed in 2006, the two foreign companies' shares were fixed at 37.5 percent and Balochistan's share was fixed at 25 percent, CM Balochistan Nawab Aslam Raisani cancelled the company's license in 2011 that was endorsed by the Supreme Court in 2013.

The TCC went to the World Bank Arbitration Court and the federal government agreed to restart the project with BGC in an out-of-court settlement.

Following the federal government's reference, the Supreme Court ruled on December 9 the long-delayed rehabilitation agreement for the gold, silver, and copper mining project as legal.

"Pakistan has reached an out-of-court settlement with a foreign firm that was agreed to revive a mining project stalled since 2011," Farah Azeem Shah, Balochistan government spokesperson said. "It is important that the Barrick Gold Company will invest \$ eight billion in Balochistan."

Recently, BGC has paid the first US\$ three

million (approximately Rs 750 million) to the Balochistan government as part of new Reko Diq partnership.

After signing definitive agreements and completion of legal process last month, Barrick and the Government of Balochistan recently agreed on timeline for disbursement of committed funds to the province.

The new Reko Diq agreement ensures that the project starts benefiting people of Balochistan through advance royalties and social development funds, well before the mine begins production.

"We're making sure that Balochistan and its people will see these benefits quickly. Beginning early next year, Barrick will implement a range of social development programs for providing better healthcare, education, vocational training, food security and provision of potable water," said BGC, CEO Mark Bristow.

BGC's investment in these uplift projects is expected to be around \$70 million over the feasibility and construction periods.

"The people of Chaghi, home of the Reko Diq project, are very optimistic about the district's future development," said Ali Raza Rind, a local journalist. "BGC enjoys good repute in Chaghi district due to its previous mineral drilling in the area and has started hiring local people purely on merit."

He has urged the authorities to launch vocational and technical education programs for local community so the people are well equipped them with latest techniques to become a part of Reko Diq project.

Balochistan Chief Minister Abdul Qudus Bizenjo has also promised to spend Rs 300 to 400 million annually on Chaghi development projects. It is hoped that joint venture of the government and Barrick Gold Company will usher in a new era of development in Balochistan and the country as a whole.

Thar Coal brings revolution in power sector - II

The creation of Gorano Reservoir also led to the formation of a unique saltwater wetland, which has attracted migratory birds and becomes a habitat for several bird species, enhancing the biodiversity of the area. In addition, thousands of fish roe have been released into Gorano Reservoir and varieties of fish can be found in it.

Junaid Ansari said the people were prone to the narrative that coal mining and coal-fired power plants can cause serious pollution to the environment but the latest integrated mine-power projects represented by the Thar project have already proven to be clean and green through the application of advanced technologies.

The purpose of the Thar Million Tree project is to mitigate drought effects and enhance food security using saline water and realize the people of desert areas that the water pumped out from the coal mine is not polluted or poisonous, a SECMC spokesman said.

The NED University graduate and a young engineer, Nimra, also briefed the media team about the first ever Bio-Saline Agriculture Project and Thar Million Tree project in which plantation was carried out at the site of projects with collaboration and expertise of Karachi University, Xinjiang University and Pakistan Agriculture Research Council.

A number of different trees, fodder, fruits and vegetables have been planted and sown in the arid area which was shown to the media persons.

She said that the Thar Million Tree project was started in 2017 and it was expanding day by day. The annual carbon dioxide reduction from the plants is about 600 tons per year, she said, adding that things had changed a lot now as, with six years of devotion to tree planting in the desert, the landscape in the area has been

transformed significantly.

Seven types of desert plants, such as Rhodes Grass, Aloe vera and Pennicim had been planted year by year, starting from one tree to a patch of plants to the sea of green, Nimra added.

Villagers are very glad to see a 'greenland' in the desert and have been using the leaves of these trees as fodder for their animals and now they need not to leave their homes for feeding their animals.

Apart from efforts of reforestation in Thar, the SECMC team had built a reservoir to gather drainage from the mine pit, which would otherwise be wasted in most mining projects.

The visiting journalists also planted saplings inside the Thar Million Tree project site.

During the visit to the coal crushing plant, Junaid Ansari informed that 25 local women dumper drivers were transporting crushed coal of Thar Coal Block-II to the power generation plants set up by Engro Powergen Thar Limited (EPTL) which generates 1,320-megawatt of electricity from Thar Coal.

In Thar Coal Block-I, Shanghai Electric, a Chinese company, has also started work to generate coal-based power from which 1,320 Megawatt electricity would be produced by the end of 2023.

He said the saline sea water drained out from coal mines through pipes is being treated to be used for irrigation purposes and Thar Million Tree Project was proof that plants, fruits, and other agricultural crops have been cultivated that have turned the environment greener.

He said Thar Coal was part of the game changer project, China-Pakistan Economic Cooperation (CPEC), which will usher in the development and prosperity of Pakistan and other countries of the region.

Concluded

Multan's businessmen evince keen interest in trade delegation to Ethiopia

Bureau Report

MULTAN: The business community of Multan on Monday evinced keen interest in becoming the part of a trade delegation flying to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) on March 05-10 for exploring business, trade and investment opportunities.

They showed their interest for joining the delegation during a meeting with H.E. Jemal Beker Abdula, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the FDRE to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan here at the office of Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI).

MCCI President Mr. Mian Rashid Iqbal, while co-chairing a meeting of its members along with H.E. Jemal Beker, urged the interested businessmen to get registered with the Embassy of FDRE in Pakistan to ensure their participation in the historic trade delegation to Ethiopia which was crucial to bring the

two countries more close to each other.

He assured H. E. Jemal Beker of the MCCI's full participation in the trade delegation which would open a new window of opportunities for the Pakistani businessmen in Africa which was market of around 1.4 billion people.

Mr. Nadeem Sheikh, MCCI Senior Vice President, extended gratitude to Ambassador H.E. Jemal Beker Abdula for announcing a trade delegation to Ethiopia for promoting the bilateral trade between the two countries.

He hoped that a large number of businessmen from Multan would be part of the trade delegation which would take the bilateral trade to the new heights.

Mr. Sheikh Muhammad Asim, MCCI Vice President said it was high time to explore Ethiopia which had undergone a lot of transformation under the leadership of a Nobel prize winner Prime Minister H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed who had initiated the development process

by carrying out a reform agenda in his country.

He said Ethiopia was blessed to have H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed as PM who won laurels from the international community for his remarkable initiative to bring peace and stability and prosperity in his country.

H.E. Jemal Beker Abdula thanked the business community of Multan for showing keen interest in the trade delegation and briefed them on the complete details of the historic trip to Ethiopia as well as economic and political landscape.

He said the trip would include subsidized airfares and accommodation, free local transportation, cultural nights, visits to the industrial sites and above all, meetings with the business community and top leadership of Ethiopia.

The ambassador said he was planning to take a big number of delegates and for that purpose, business community from the different sectors



of economy had been reached out. "I am visiting to all the big cities of Pakistan to ensure that every chamber of commerce become part of the delegation and play its due role in strengthening trade relations between the two countries.

He said Ethiopia had created ease of doing business in the country and established one-window operation

to attract foreign direct investment. Besides, it has been producing cheap and clean energy and also had skilled and young labour force.

At the end, he responded to the queries of the business community about the trade and investment in Ethiopia.

Ambassador H.E. Jemal Beker also visited the Bahauddin Zakariya University and held an interactive session with the faculty leadership and students of the Institute of Management Sciences.

During the interaction, the ambassador underlined the need for sharing knowledge globally to brand their country at the world level. He also sought educational cooperation between the two countries through scholarships and exchange programmes.

Dr. Hassan Bucha, Director Institute of Management Sciences, assured H.E. Jemal Beker that the scholarships would be offered to the students of Ethiopia in his institution.

Kazakh building lit with Iran flag colors

Nur Alem, the spherical building in the Kazakh capital, was lit on February 11 with colors of the Iranian flag to mark the 44th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution.



Photo: Online

How is India coping with Indonesia's curbs on palm oil exports?

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Indonesia's plans to restrict palm oil exports are unlikely to create a shortage in top consuming market India, where stocks have risen to a record high following aggressive imports in the past three months, industry officials said.

That's a sharp contrast with last year when a sudden change in export policies by Jakarta forced India to increase purchases from Malaysia, which at the time was selling palm oil at record high prices.

Last week, Indonesia said it will suspend some palm oil export permits to secure domestic supply as cooking oil prices rise ahead of upcoming Islamic festival Ramadan.

India's edible oil imports in the first quarter of the 2022/23 marketing year - which started on Nov. 1 - rose 25% from a year ago to around 4.5 million tonnes, dealers said.

The imports have lifted stocks to a record 3.6 million tonnes as of Feb. 1 compared to 1.83 million tonnes a year ago, they estimated.

"Indonesia's restrictions are unlikely to create any problems in India. Stock levels are comfortable," Ajay Jhunjhunwala, president of the Solvent Extractors' Association of India, told Reuters.

Rapeseed supplies from the new season's crop, which is expected to be 10% to 15% higher than the last year's record harvest, will gain momentum from the next month and increase edible oil availability, he added.

Indonesia's exports restrictions are likely to be lifted after Ramadan month, which ends on April 21, said a Mumbai-based dealer with a global trade house.

"This year a different ball game is there. There is ample sunflower oil supply, which wasn't flowing freely last year because of the Russia-Ukraine conflict," the dealer said.

India's January sunflower oil imports surged to a record 473,000 tonnes, nearly triple average monthly imports as top exporters Russia and Ukraine seek to reduce stockpiles.

Buyers of palm oil will again seek to increase purchases from Malaysia, the world's second biggest exporter, but not to the same extent as last year, said a Singapore-based dealer.

Malaysian stocks at the end of January rose 3.26% from the previous month to 2.27 million tonnes.

"Indonesian farmers suffered last year because of the export ban. This year, Indonesia will not ban the exports altogether, but will limit only for a few weeks," the dealer said.

Indonesia, China agree \$1.2 bln cost overrun for high-speed train



Spokesman Report

JAKARTA : Indonesia and China have agreed to a budget overrun to the tune of \$1.2 billion for the first high-speed train project in the Southeast Asian country, an Indonesian government official told parliament on Monday.

The project was previously estimated to be \$2 billion over budget, raising the total cost to 113 trillion rupiah (\$7.36 billion), according to the consortium of Indonesian and Chinese state companies building the railway, known as PT KCIC.

"We agreed on the cost overrun figure of \$1.2 billion. There are several items that they are still reviewing regarding taxes, frequency clearing fees, but we have agreed on the numbers," said Deputy Minister of State-Owned Enterprises, Kartika Wirjoatmodjo.

Further details including an additional loan from the China Development Bank to cover the extra costs are to be finalised within a month, he added.

Companies involved in the consortium were expected to increase their equity participation, while Indonesia's state-owned railway firm PT KAI, which along with state-owned construction company Wijaya Karya controls 60% of KCIC, received a 3.2 trillion rupiah (\$210.66 million) capital injection from the government last month to help complete the project.

The 142-kilometre line, which will connect the capital Jakarta with one of the country's largest cities, Bandung, was awarded to KCIC in 2015 but has faced several issues including construction delays due to the pandemic.

The project is expected to be completed in June 2023.

NATO's Stoltenberg will not seek another extension of his term, spokesperson says

BERLIN: NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg will end his term as planned in October, a spokesperson for the alliance said, after a newspaper reported a further extension was in the works.

"The mandate of Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg has been extended three times, and he has served for a total of almost nine years," NATO spokesperson Oana Lungescu said late on Saturday.

"The Secretary-General's term comes to an end in October of this year and he has no intention to seek another extension of his mandate."

Earlier, Welt am Sonntag reported Stoltenberg's term was to be extended again as the alliance sought to maintain stability during the war in Ukraine.

Stoltenberg, an economist by training and a former leader of Norway's Labour Party, had his NATO term extended last year.

He was prime minister of Norway from 2000-01 and 2005-13 before becoming NATO chief the following year. He has also been the financing minister and energy minister.

Welt said alliance members wanted to give Stoltenberg the opportunity to chair the organisation's 75th-anniversary summit in Washington in April 2024. He would also be in a position to become president of the World Bank when David Malpass steps down around the same time, it said.

No decision has been made about who will succeed Stoltenberg, but Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez and Britain's Defence Secretary Ben Wallace are among the leading candidates for the post, Welt said.

Foreign Ministry rejects Israel's decision to expand its colonial settlement enterprise

Wafa

RAMALLAH : The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates today said it rejects what it described as Israel's "criminal" decision to expand its colonial settlement enterprise.

"The State of Palestine rejects, in the strongest terms, Israel's ongoing war crimes and acquisition of territory by force, including its criminal decision to expand its colonial settlement enterprise," it said in a statement. "The State of Palestine warns that Israel's declared annexationist policies violate the territorial integrity and independence of the State of Palestine and threaten regional and international peace and security."

While stressing that all settlements are illegal under

international law and are war crimes, the Ministry said that "Israel's isolated efforts to legitimize its illegal settlement enterprise, in gross contempt of UN resolution and the international community's repeated warnings, are aimed to further entrench its illegal occupation and apartheid regime and impose new facts on the grounds."

It added: "The State of Palestine reiterates that Israel, as an occupying Power, has no sovereignty over any part of the State of Palestine, including Jerusalem, and that any attempts to alter the demographic composition or legal status are universally recognized to be null and void, and shall remain so."

The Foreign Ministry said, "Land theft is an Israeli national project, under-

taken by every branch of the Israeli government, and is facilitated by Israeli officials. It is a State-sanctioned crime. The State of Palestine holds Israel, the occupying Power, and its officials fully responsible for the illegal settlement enterprise, the crimes it entails, and the criminal activities and terrorism of settler militias."

It said the UN Security Council "must act in accordance with its resolutions, including 2334, and hold Israel and Israeli officials accountable for their crimes. The Secretary-General of the United Nations must uphold his obligations and urgently convene an international conference with the aim of ending Israel's illegal occupation and ensure that the Palestinian people exercise their right to self-determination in their

independent State."

It stressed that states "must not recognize the illegal situation or render aid or assistance in maintaining this situation and must ensure compliance by Israel, the occupying Power, with international humanitarian law."

The Foreign Ministry concluded its statement by stressing that "Israel's illegal occupation and settlement enterprise are the source of this protracted injustice. Israel, the occupying Power, must dismantle its settlement enterprise, in totality, and end its illegal occupation. The State of Palestine will not relent in its political, diplomatic, and legal efforts to ensure that the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, return, and independence are fulfilled."

India aims to triple defence exports to \$5 bln, sell fighter jets

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday set out ambitions to more than triple annual defence exports to \$5 billion over the next two years, as arms firms flocked to a major air show for a slice of the nation's massive import budget.

The country is looking to sign defence deals worth 750 billion rupees (\$9 billion) at the biennial five-day Aero India event, its biggest ever, as its airlines try to complete jetliner purchases to meet civilian demand and press global aircraft manufacturers to produce more locally, mainly through partnerships.

India has been one of the

world's biggest importers of defence equipment for decades, but it has punched below its weight in the global arms export market.

New Delhi's export ambitions are a sign of its growing clout as it uses the leverage of huge imports to attract investment in its domestic industry.

"Today, India is not just a market for defence companies, it is also a potential defence partner," Modi said in a speech at the show. "I call on India's private sector to invest more and more in the country's defence sector."

India exports defence products to 75 countries, he added. Past Indian exports include Hindustan Aeronautics (HAL) (HIAE.NS) Dhruv helicopters

to the Philippines, Mauritius and Ecuador and Russia-India venture BrahMos Aerospace's supersonic cruise missiles to the Philippines. HAL has also offered its Tejas light fighter jet for sale to Malaysia.

India has also exported other items such as offshore patrol vessels, coastal surveillance systems, avionics, chaff rocket launchers and spares for radars.

The air show aims to promote exports of indigenous air platforms such as Tejas, Dhruv, HTI-40 training aircraft, Dornier light utility helicopter and the light combat helicopter.

India also wants smaller domestic companies and startups to make parts for large defence products globally as well

as to attract foreign investment for joint product development and production.

At the Aero India event, held at the Aero India Station of Yelahanka near Bengaluru, officials cheered aerobatic displays by aircraft including Tejas and Russian-made Sukhoi 30 fighter jets.

Sharing borders with nuclear-armed rivals China and Pakistan, India's largely Soviet-era air force fleet is in desperate need of modernising.

Russia supplied India with around \$13 billion of arms in the past five years, Russian state news agencies reported late on Sunday, and suppliers in the European Union and the United States have been lobbying for a bigger share



of the market.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has made it imperative for India to further diversify its supply base, amid fears of possible

Russian supply disruption and Western pressure on New Delhi to limit ties with Moscow.

Exhibitors at the show include Airbus (AIR.PA), Boeing (BA.N),

Dassault Aviation (AM.PA), Lockheed Martin (LMT.N), Israel Aerospace Industry, BrahMos, SAAB (SAAB.ST), Rolls Royce, Larsen & Toubro (LART.NS), HAL and Bharat Electronics Ltd (BAJE.NS).

India's airlines are also expanding, with Tata Group's Air India expected to announce a potentially record deal to buy nearly 500 jets from Airbus and Boeing worth more than \$100 billion at list prices.

Although unlikely to be announced at the air show itself, the deal coincides with India's largest industry gathering where suppliers hope to win spin-off contracts from the country's defence and civil aviation expansion.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
41,716.95	41,741.78
Day's High	Day's Low:
41,991.16	41,644.31
Index Value	Change
6,718,506,719	-24.83
Percentage	Time
-0.06%	13 Feb, 2023 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,942.72	+60.27
Percentage	Time
+0.76%	13 Feb, 4:29 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
34,122.62	+253.35
Percentage	Time
+0.75%	13 Feb, 11:39 am GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
27,427.32	-243.66
Percentage	Time
-0.88%	13 Feb, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	183	185
Bahrain Dinar	721.62	729.62
Canadian Dollar	206	208.2
China Yuan	40.68	41.08
Danish Krone	38.89	39.29
Euro	287.00	289.50
Hong Kong Dollar	35.19	35.54
Indian Rupee	3.34	3.45
Japanese Yen	2.06	2.11
Kuwaiti Dinar	886.78	895.78
Malaysian Ringgit	64.25	64.85
New Zealand \$	171.16	173.16
Norwegians Krone	26.81	27.11
Omani Riyal	704.83	712.83
Qatari Riyal	75.88	76.58
Saudi Riyal	71.50	72.50
Singapore Dollar	210	212
Swedish Korona	26.1	26.4
Swiss Franc	294.47	296.97
Thai Bhat	8.25	8.4
U.A.E Dirham	74.30	75.00
UK Pound Sterling	326.5	329.2
US Dollar	271.00	274.00

US operational support be used to win war against terror, says Mian Zahid Hussain

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Monday said terrorism has become a big threat to Pakistan, its people, and its economy.

The offer of the United States to help Pakistan combat the menace of terrorism should be welcomed, he said.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that Pakistan has already been weakened by irresponsible politicians, and finance ministers who bankrupted the country for artificial growth, coronavirus, floods, inflation, and prolonged political instability.

These problems have weakened the country and it needs help to fight the growing terrorism, he added.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that terrorism has become a big challenge, our armed forces are fully capable of meeting this challenge and at this critical juncture, the US offer and initiation of negotiations in this regard is very important.

The United States has provided full support to Pakistan during the recent Donors Conference, for which we are grateful to them.

The US also influenced IMF to extend loans to Pakistan and now it should use its clout to finalize the agreement with the lender while the government should immediately implement a series of reforms to revive the economy.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that there was a lot of applause in Pakistan after the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan, which soon turned into concern.

Contrary to our expectations, instead of increased relations with the neighboring country, there was an increase in attacks from its



territory which has become a big problem for us.

Pakistan should get full cooperation from America and other nations in this regard and

this matter should not be limited to information sharing but should be extended to the operational level so that the terrorists can be effectively tackled.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that apart from the United States, China is also interested in eradicating terrorism because it is a major threat to CPEC but Pakistan should balance its relations with the United States and China according to the national interest.

The business leader said that the Pakistani establishment is getting disappointed with the Taliban government, due to which the thinking about them is changing.

Al-Qaeda was a major reason for the removal of the previous government of the Taliban and the TTP is becoming a big threat to the current Taliban government, but the Taliban are unable to control the TTP, so Pakistan is forced to seek support from other sources to get rid of the problem, he said.

Protest

FAISALABAD: Traders shouting slogans during protest against inflation in the country, at Ghanta Ghar Chowk, in the city.



Photo: Online

SECP warns public to avoid unauthorized lending apps

Commerce Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has warned the public about falling prey to unauthorized lending apps, namely "MoneyBox" and "MoneyClub."

The SECP has observed that the apps are using the names of licensed Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFCs) to gain public confidence in offering lending services without any regulatory approval.

SECP has not granted any permission to its licensed NBFCs, QistBazaar (Pvt) Limited and QistPay BNPL (Private) Limited, to launch the apps namely "MoneyBox" and "MoneyClub," respectively. This unauthorized activity poses a serious threat to the public, as these apps have been operating without regulatory approval.

The SECP maintains a publicly available list of licensed NBFCs and digital lending apps that have the SECP's permission to offer lending services. The public is encouraged to verify the regulatory status of any NBFC and its authorized app before transacting any business with a lending entity.

The SECP is acting to protect consumers and promote fairness and transparency in the financial services industry. It is notifying law enforcement agencies to take legal action against the operators of these apps. The SECP advises the public to only use authorized apps offered by entities licensed to operate in Pakistan.

Complaints or evidence against companies involved in unauthorized activities and illegal lending can be sent to complainats@secp.gov.pk.

ICCI and Life Residencia agree to jointly establish Citizens Club

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD : Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) said that the Chamber is trying to establish a citizen club for the benefit of the business community and citizens, so he suggested that Life Residencia should cooperate with ICCI in establishing the club with joint efforts. He said that ICCI is interested in taking several initiatives in cooperation with Life Residencia to serve the business community including the establishment of an Expo Center and provision of low-cost housing options to the traders in Islamabad, so he suggested that the Society should cooperate with ICCI in these efforts. He expressed these views during a meeting with Sarfraz Sial, Chief Executive Officer of Life Residencia during his visit to ICCI along with his team.

Ahsan Bakhtawari said that ICCI intends to work with the Life Residencia on projects that would help promote the interests of the business community and help in revival of the economy. He



also discussed other matters of common interest with Sarfraz Sial and hoped that he would cooperate with ICCI in efforts of mutual interest.

Speaking on the occasion, Sarfraz Sial, Chief Executive Officer, Life Residencia, welcomed the suggestions of Ahsan Bakhtawari and assured his support in their implementation. He said that on the recommendation of ICCI, Life Residencia

is ready to give plots to its members on 10% down payment instead of 20% and to extend the instalment payment period from three years to five years. He further said that on the recommendation of ICCI, its members will also be given a suitable discount in the prices of plots. He assured that he is ready to cooperate with ICCI in the efforts to establish Citizen Club and Expo Centre.

Increased trade between Pakistan and Africa deliberated

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Ways and means for increased trade between Pakistan and the African continent were discussed between Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ethiopia Jemal Beker Abdula and Vice Consul of the Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Ghana, Omar Shahid Butt.

Omar Shahid Butt called on the Ambassador of Ethiopia Jemal Beker Abdula and discussed ways and means to enhance linkages between the business community of Pakistan and those belonging to Ethiopia, Ghana, and other countries.

The business communities of both the brotherly countries



should explore opportunities as we will always welcome Pakistani businessmen and delegations interested in discovering business, trade,

and investment opportunities in Africa, they said.

Jemal Beker Abdula and Omar Shahid Butt observed that Africa is a resource-rich

continent that is not a traditional market for Pakistan as bilateral trade between Pakistan and African countries is very low which should be increased.

We should explore opportunities to bring African countries closer to Pakistan and facilitate Pakistani trade delegations to enter the African market.

Pakistan is a vast market that needs alternative markets to expand its exports while African countries can also import a lot of items from Pakistan for which we must strengthen business-to-business and people-to-people contacts which will boost bilateral ties in diverse sectors like economy, health, education, and others.

UK most significant export markets for Pakistani products



News Desk

KARACHI : Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI, has apprised that UK is one of the most significant export markets for Pakistani products – be it historically substantive & maintainable export numbers; rare bilateral trade plus or the existing potential to increase exports to the UK rapidly. His message said on the occasion of a high-profile & multi-sectoral B2B trade delegation's visit to the FPCCI Head

Office in Karachi.

Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh added that his optimism emanates from the very fact that Pakistan has posted a handsome 38.6 percent increase in exports to the UK as per the available data of last four quarters, i.e. Q4 2021 to Q3 2022; making it £2.5 billion and the surplus in Pakistan's favor was £1.1 billion according to the fact-sheet released on February 1, 2023 by UK's Department for International Trade (DIT).

K-Electric files a robust investment plan of PKR 484 billion

Bureau Report

KARACHI: K-Electric has filed its investment plan FY 2024-2030 for Transmission and Distribution segments. The futuristic plan keeps its customers at the heart of the business and seeks to leverage technology as a mainstay to further improve network reliability for smooth and reliable supply of power, while accelerating Karachi's development, progress, and sustainability.

The new plan envisages to invest PKR 484 billion in the Transmission and Distribution business with a keen eye on projected growth in power demand, loss reduction initiatives, targeted and technology driven investments in the network for improved reliability and safety, as well as initiatives to enable KE off-take additional power from external sources including the National Grid. The goal at the end is to make power affordable, safe, reliable, and smooth.

IMC announced its financial results

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Indus Motor Company Limited (IMC), announced its financial results for the second quarter ended December 31, 2022, witnessing a decline in profit after tax by 74.3% to Rs. 2.62 billion, as against Rs.10.18 billion in the previous year. The decline in net profit was mainly due to lower Completely Knocked Down (CKD) and Completely Built Units (CBU) sales volume and increase in input costs mainly on account of severe PKR devaluation against US Dollar and the rising costs of production. The net operational loss was off-set mainly by higher other income owing to higher interest rates.

The net sales turnover decreased by 35.8% to Rs. 86.83 billion, as compared to 135.18 billion for the same period last year. The Company's overall market share for the quarter stood at 18%.

The combined sales of CKD and CBU vehicles decreased by 52% to 18,672 units compared to 38,632 units sold in the previous year. Vehicle production too decreased by 49% to 18,562 units as compared to 36,120 units produced in the same quarter last year. The decline in production was mainly due to limited imports of CKD kits and vendor supply chain limitations, which led to regular plant shutdowns during the period.

Expressing himself, IMC Chief Executive, Ali Asghar Jamali, commented, "The country continues to reel with the aftershocks of the massive devastation caused by the floods, unrelenting inflation, depleting forex reserves, an increase in the current account and fiscal deficits, along with an unfavourable global environment. The second quarter too has been rough for the auto industry; frequent shutdowns forcing it to operate at less than 50% production capacity as a consequence of continuing import restrictions. With future production volumes expected to hit another low, we are left with little choice but to offer full refund along with interest, to our customers."

The Earnings Per Share of the company for the half year ended December 31, 2022, is Rs. 33.45, compared to Rs. 129.45 in the previous year. Despite the challenging quarter faced by the company, the Board of Directors declared a second interim cash dividend of Rs. 10.2 per share, compared to Rs. 30 per share for the previous year.

Sadiq Sanjrani extends good wishes on start of PSL 8th edition

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani on Monday congratulated the nation on the start of Pakistan Super League's (PSL) 8th edition and extended good wishes to, especially foreign players of participating teams.

In a statement issued, he hoped that cricket fans will watch interesting matches.

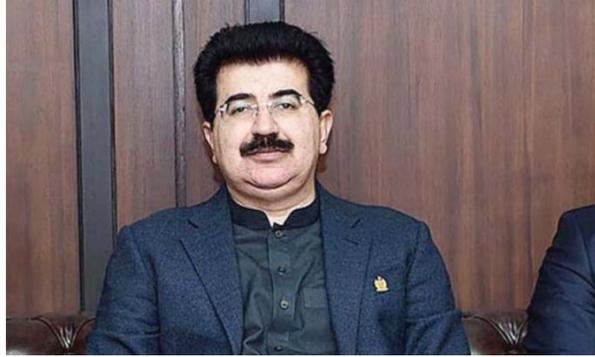
The Senate chairman extended congratulations to the Pakistan Cricket Board, and added that organising PSL in Pakistan was a great success of

PCB which had restored international cricket in Pakistan.

The Senate chairman said the successful organization of the event had highlighted the positive image of Pakistan.

He said the passion of patriotic Pakistanis for PSL was admirable as it brought smiles to the faces of the nation and the splendor of Pakistan's stadiums was restored.

Sadiq Sanjrani said that cricket lovers would get a chance to enjoy the matches in a peaceful environment and he was grateful to the foreign players for coming to Pakistan.



Two more matches were decided in 8th National Physical Disability T20 Cricket Championship 2023

Sports Reporter

ISLAMABAD/KARACHI: Islamabad PD defeated Azad Kashmir PD by 8 wickets while Abbottabad PD defeated Rawalpindi PD by 5 wickets and qualified for the second round. Islamabad PD easily defeated Azad Kashmir PD by 8 wickets in the first match of the ongoing National Championship organized by Pakistan Physical Disability Cricket Association at Bhutto Ground and qualified for the next round. Azad Kashmir batted first and in 18.4 overs the entire team was bundled out for 90 runs. Ahmed Majeed was outstanding by scoring 26 runs. Sajjad Hussain, Sakhd Khan and Waqif Shah took two wickets each. Captain and wicket keeper Usman Paracha hunted 3 players behind the wickets. In response, Islamabad achieved the required target of 92 runs for 2 wickets in 12 overs.

Captain Usman Paracha hit 4 fours and made 32 runs not out. Adil Abbasi scored 23 runs and Usman Ghani scored 21 runs. At the end of the match, Chief Guest, Deputy Director of Navy, Khaleeq Khan, gave a cash award of 1000 rupees along with Man of the



Match trophy to Usman Pracha. General Secretary PPDC and Tournament Director Amiruddin Ansari, Regional Head Raja Muhammad Tahir and Javed Ashraf were also present on this occasion.

In the second match, Abbottabad PD defeated Rawalpindi PD by 5 wickets and qualified for the next stage. Rawalpindi PD batted first and scored 145 runs for the loss of 6 wickets in the allotted 20 overs. Bilal Azim scored 49 runs with the help of 5 fours and one

six while batting well while Muhammad Arsalan also scored 40 runs with the help of 5 fours and one six. Aftab Hussain bowled well and got 4 wickets for just 11 runs. In reply, Abbottabad PD won by scoring 149 runs for 5 wickets. All-rounder Aftab Hussain hit 6 fours in a brilliant half-century of 51 runs, Rizwanullah hit 3 fours and a six in 44 runs not out. Qayyum Khan took 3 wickets. At the end of the match, Regional Head Javed Ashraf gave Aftab Hussain a cash award of Rs. In the

Karachi Kings' captain Imad hopeful for winning start in PSL 8



Ali Hassan

KARACHI: Karachi Kings' captain Imad Wasim expressed his hope for a winning start to the Pakistan Super League (PSL) season eight, scheduled to commence today.

Kings' captain Imad interacted with the media here on Monday, ahead of his side's clash with Babar Azam-led Peshawar Zalmi in this year's extravaganza.

"We are confident of performing well against Peshawar Zalmi and will try to script a winning start to our PSL season 8 campaign," said Imad.

The all-rounder further praised former Kings captain Babar and acknowledged that the latter had a lot of services for the team while also commenting that his statement regarding the trade of players should not be taken in a negative way.

"It doesn't matter whether the players come or go. I think, my statement should not be taken in a negative context," Imad requested.

"We will try to make combinations with the best players available as the PSL is very important for us," he added.

The Kings' captain further commented regarding his team's ace pacer Mohammad Amir, who could not partake in the previous edition of the PSL due to injury, stating he will be a game-changer for the side.

"Amir suffered an injury in the last season which disturbed our combination and dented our campaign. But, I think, this time he's fit and has been playing cricket all over the world so he will play a key role for us," he stated.

It is pertinent to mention here that PSL season 8 will kick off on February 13 in Multan with a grand opening ceremony followed by the curtain-raiser between defending champions Lahore Qalandars and Multan Sultans.

The Kings, on the other hand, will play their first match on February 14 against Babar Azam-led Peshawar Zalmi at National Bank Cricket Arena in Karachi.

Al-Kabir Punjab Karate League starts



Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Al-Kabir Punjab Karate League started here today at Lahore. Lahore Lions and Gujranwala Gladiators qualify for Super-6 round. Pakistan Karate Federation has started the karate league from grass root level. All the 9 divisions of Punjab are participating in this league. In first round

Lahore Lions, Gujranwala Gladiators and Sahiwal Spartans competed with each other at Lahore today in which Lahore Lions and Gujranwala Gladiators qualify for super 6 round.

Faisalabad Falcons, Rawalpindi Panthers and Sargodha Shaheens will compete on next Sunday 19th February 2023 at Faisalabad in Pool-B. In third round Bahawalpur Bulls, Multan Knights and D.G.Khan Dragons will compete on Sunday 26th February 2023 at Bahawalpur in Pool-C.

Competitions are being held in 7 weight categories, Individual Kata and Team Kata events.

In round Super-6, qualified teams will compete for Fantastic-4 (final round).

Mr. Muhammad Jahangir Chairman Pakistan Karate Federation & Deputy Secretary General Pakistan Olympic Association was the Chief Guest at the occasion. He appreciated the efforts of Punjab Karate Association and Lahore Division Karate Association for the promotion of

Karate at Grass root level. He announce that Pakistan Karate Federation will start all Pakistan karate league for player ranking.

Fakhar Zaman becomes second batter to complete 2000 PSL runs



A Sports -

MULTAN: Lahore Qalandars' left-handed opener Fakhar Zaman on Monday became only the second batter in the Pakistan Super League (PSL) history to complete 2,000 runs after Babar Azam.

Fakhar achieved the milestone in the curtain-raiser of the recently-commenced PSL 8 with his magnificent half-century. The left-handed batter scored 66 off 42 deliveries, hitting three boundaries and five sixes.

His 66-run knock not only took him past the 2000-run barrier but also surpassed Kamran Akmal to become the all-time second leading run-scorer of the league's history.

Fakhar has now scored 2005 runs in 64 innings at an average of 31.82 including 17 fifties and a century.

It is pertinent to mention that Fakhar's half-century led Qalandars to post a competitive 175/6 against home side Multan Sultans in the PSL 8 opener.

Mushtaq eyeing a thrill-packed Lahore-Multan opening PSL-8 contest on Feb 13

Sports Desk

MULTAN: Multan Sultans and defending champions Lahore Qalandars are set to open the 8th edition of Pakistan Super League (PSL) on Monday and coach Mushtaq Ahmad believed Multan Sultans, backed by home crowd, would try to keep the momentum in their favour in the action-packed contest on Feb 13.

Arrangements for the PSL-8 are in full swing and Multan Sultans were gearing up in preparations on Friday, two days ahead of the opening match against defending champions Lahore Qalandars.

Mushtaq eyeing a thrill-packed Lahore-Multan opening PSL-8 contest on Feb 13

Labourers preparing the stage for the event of PSL-8 opening ceremony at Multan Cricket Stadium. APP

Multan Sultans coach Mushtaq Ahmad told a news conference that he expected the opening match to be a thrill-packed contest between Multan Sultans and Lahore Qalandars. He said, Multan Sultans, the champions of PSL 2021, would not disappoint the home fanbase.

They would come up with their spirited demonstration of cricketing skills, Mushtaq said adding that all the players were fit and would follow the strategy of demonstrating their natural performance.

PSL

Multan: Labourers preparing the stage for the event of PSL-8 opening ceremony at Multan Cricket Stadium.



Photo: APP

Fakhar's fifty takes Qalandars to 175/6 against Sultans in PSL 8 opener

A Sports -

MULTAN: Left-handed opener Fakhar Zaman scored a magnificent half-century and bolstered his side to post a commendable 175/6 against home side Multan Sultans in the opening match of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) season eight.

Put into bat first, the Qalandars finished at 175/6 at the back of a sensational 66-run knock by their opener Fakhar.

The Qalandars' openers Haris Baig and Fakhar laid a solid foundation for a competitive total with a



magnificent 61-run partnership for the first wicket before Akeal Hossain removed the young batter. Baig scored a brilliant 26-ball 32 that featured five boundaries. Fakhar, on the other hand,

stood his ground firm and put on brief partnerships with Shai Hope (19) and Kamran Ghulam (3) as the two batters failed to make it big with the bat.

Sultans' pick of the bowl-

ers Usama Mir then handed his side a much-needed breakthrough in the 16th over in the form of Fakhar, who top-scored for his side with 66 off 42 deliveries, laced with three boundaries and five sixes.

Following Fakhar's departure, brief yet important cameos by Hussain Talat (20) and Sikandar Raza (19*) took their side to 175/6 in their set of 20 overs.

Usama returned with astounding figures of 2/25 while Ihsanullah bagged 2/37. Akeal Hossain and Shanawaz Dahani, however, struck out a batter each.

Capsey, bowlers propel England to sink Ireland in Women's T20 WC

A Sports -

PAARL: Sophie Ecclestone's magnificent spell powered England to bundle out Ireland for a meagre 105 before Alice Capsey's half-century led the side to a four-wicket victory in the ongoing ICC Women's T20 World Cup.

After opting to bat first, Ireland's batting lineup failed to impress as the side bundled out for a mere 105 runs in the 19th over.

Opening batter Gaby Lewis remained the top-scorer for her side with 36 off 37 deliveries while Orla Prendergast (17) was the other notable run-getter for the Irish side.



Besides their top four, the rest of the Irish batting lineup collapsed with none of them could amass double figures.

Ecclestone led the bowling attack for England with 3/13 in her four overs while Sarah Glenn returned with

ship with Danni Wyatt after England's shaky start as Sophia Dunkley and made sure England get over the line despite a late collapse that saw England slipping from 70/1 to 103/6.

Right-handed batter Capsey top-scored for her side with a quickfire 51 off just 22 deliveries, hitting 10 boundaries and a six.

Cara Murray glimmered a ray of hope for Ireland with her magnificent bowling spell as she picked up three wickets for just 15 runs but the total on board was not enough to guide her side to victory.

Arlene Kelly and Orla Prendergast struck out a batter each for Ireland.