



Elections Act empowers President to only announce "general elections" after consulting ECP: Sherry

Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman on Monday said the Election Act 2017 empowered the President to announce "general elections" only after consulting the Election Commission of Pakistan.



Sub-national polio vaccination campaign concludes

A sub-national polio vaccination campaign has concluded in nine districts to vaccinate more than six million children under the age of five years. The polio drive was conducted in the seven endemic districts of Bannu, D I Khan, Tank, Lakki Marwat, North Waziristan, Upper South Waziristan and Lower South Waziristan in southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and two districts of Punjab including Lahore and Faisalabad. (Report on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

3rd Riyadh Int'l Humanitarian Forum

RIYADH: Chairman NDMA Lt General Inam Haider Malik led NDMA's delegation participated at 3rd Riyadh International Forum.



Photo: PID

President Arif Alvi announces Punjab, KP election date

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: President Arif Alvi has announced Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) provincial assembly's election date.

As per details, the president announced April 9 for election in Punjab and KP under section 57(2) of the constitution.

In a letter written to Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sultan Sikandar Raja president Arif Alvi said the constitution does not allow to exceed 90 days for holding elections after the dissolution of assemblies and he has taken the oath to defend and protect the constitution.

The letter stated that ECP and governor KP and Punjab are not fulfilling their duties to hold elections within 90 days and the president has



announced an election date to avoid violation of the constitution.

He said that both the constitutional offices are placing the ball in each other's court, which is resulting in delay and creating a serious danger to the constitution. President Arif Alvi said that it is ECP's responsibility to hold the election in 90 days and he started the process of serious consultation on the election date.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has refused to participate in the meeting so hereby the president announces the election date, April 9.

Govt. taking tangible steps to strengthen country's economy: Prime Minister

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said that the government was taking tangible and necessary steps to strengthen the economy and prioritizing reduction in unnecessary imports by enhancing exports.

The prime minister said that the incumbent government also faced the issues of mismanagement of the previous government, adding still in the face of such issues, the government was committed to improving the country's economy with strenuous efforts.

The prime minister was talking to a delegation of Rothschild and Co, one of the world's largest independent financial advisory groups,



that called on him, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The meeting was attended by Minister of State for Finance Dr Ayesha Ghous Pasha and

other relevant officials.

Talking to the delegation, the prime minister mentioned that Pakistan faced natural calamity in the shape of recent floods spurred by the worst climate changes.

The delegation termed the economic situation in Pakistan as stable and said that its talented manpower was its real strength.

The present government was taking steps to take the economy on the right path, they observed.

They also commended Pakistan Stock Exchange as among the best-performing stocks in the region. Pakistan had also created awareness, in an effective manner, about the impacts of the climate changes at the global level, they said.

ECP decides not to attend election meeting at presidency

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Monday decided against attending the meeting summoned by President Arif Alvi to discuss the dates for holding elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The decision was taken in a consultative meeting of the ECP chaired by Chief Election Commissioner, Sikandar Sultan Raja, to decide whether to accept or reject the invitation made by Presidency.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) stuck to its yesterday's stance of no need for consultation with President Alvi for elections in provinces.

The sources within the

ECP said that the was of view to announcing dates for elections in Punjab and KP as the matters are currently being heard in the courts.

In a letter written to the President Secretariat, the Election Commission said it may not be able to enter into a process of consultation with the Presidency, as the matter is subjudice at various judicial fora. It said a final decision in this regard will be taken at the meeting today.

"It is clarified that the Constitution does not empower the ECP to appoint a poll date in case of the dissolution of a provincial assembly by the governor or due to afflux of time as provided in Article 112(1) of the Constitution," the letter highlighted.

ECP being unconstitutionally pressurized to get poll dates: Marriyum

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb Monday said the ECP was being pressurized unconstitutionally to get a date of the elections.

In a statement, the minister said the Election Commission of Pakistan was a constitutional institution and no one would be allowed to transform it into Imran Khan's Tiger Force.

She urged that the office of the President should be loyal to the Constitution and any violation could invoke Article 6.

The minister said the office of the President did not allow favouring of any particular political party.

The minister alleged that President Arif Alvi had already violated the constitution by dissolving the National Assembly illegally last year.

According to the interpretation of the Supreme Court, the office of the President was symbolic, Marriyum Aurangzeb said and pointed that as per Supreme Court verdicts, any collusion with a political party was a violation of the office and oath of the President.

FIA decides to arrest Imran Khan in prohibited funding case

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has decided to arrest PTI chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan in a prohibited funding case.

As per details available with ARY News, Imran Khan will be arrested by the FIA with the help of Lahore police, the sources said. Furthermore, a four-member team has been formed for the arrest, while a summary has been forwarded to the DG FIA for final approval.

On February 2, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) dismissed a petition filed by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) against the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) ruling in prohibited funding case.

Imran Khan secures protective bail from LHC

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan has secured protective bail from the Lahore High Court (LHC) in a case registered at the Sangjani police station, ARY News reported on Monday.

A two-member bench of the LHC led by Justice Ali Baqar Najafi heard Imran Khan's protective bail plea in a case registered at the Sangjani police station.

Khan's lawyer apprised the judge that the PTI chief is present in the court's premises and the central leaders were also present there. He added that the political party has not made any announcement for Khan's appearance before the LHC but a large number of people has still reached here.

The lawyer pleaded with



the court to confirm Khan's attendance in his vehicle. Justice Najafi said that they praise Imran Khan for reaching the court's premises but it is necessary for an accused to appear personally in the hearing for securing bail. Justice Ali Baqar Najafi said that it is not a difficult task to ask Imran Khan to reach the courtroom. Superintendent Police (SP) Security apprised the court that Imran Khan is present outside Justice Tariq Saleem Shaikh's courtroom but his lawyers are not allowing him to get inside. The court later ordered Imran Khan to personally appear in the hearing and adjourned the hearing for 30 minutes. The PTI chief later moved to the courtroom in a wheelchair to appear in the hearing. During the hearing, Imran Khan told the bench that his wounded leg has not fully recovered. He said that any shock to his fractured leg would stop him

from recovering for three months. He sought two weeks from the court as his X-ray will be conducted on February 28.

The LHC bench approved the protective bail of Imran Khan till March 3. Imran Khan also appeared in another hearing at the LHC's courtroom of Justice Tariq Saleem Sheikh to seek protective bail in a case lodged at the Secretariat police station. Justice Sheikh had summoned Khan after finding a different signature on his bail plea.

However, Imran Khan withdrew his bail plea in the Lahore High Court (LHC) in the case. Khan apprised the judge that he was unaware of the bail petition. He added that he asked Azhar Siddiq to let him appear before the court after knowing about the petition.

Analysts see president's election date as challengeable

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Political analysts see that President Dr Arif Alvi's unilateral announcement over the date for holding general elections for the Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa assemblies is challengeable in the court.

Speaking to Dunya News, former caretaker Punjab chief minister and analyst Dr Hassan Askari said "The Election Commission acted evasively, it is clearly written in the constitution to hold elections within 90 days, this matter will go to the court, I think the judiciary will decide."

"Apparently, the President has referred to Section 57. Before the 18th Amendment, the President used to announce the date, after the Amendment, the Governor will announce the date," said former ECP Secretary Kanwar Dilshad.

Senate unanimously approves to hold golden jubilee celebrations

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Senate on Monday unanimously approved the motion to hold golden jubilee celebrations due in March with austerity and sobriety due to prevailing economic situation and floods devastation.

Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani presiding

the 325th session of the Upper House of the Parliament directed Senator Gurdeep Singh of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to move the motion on holding golden jubilee celebrations of the Senate with restraint and austerity and permission of the chamber to be used by foreign dignitaries to address the house on the occasion.

Group Photo of GSP Countries

WASHINGTON DC: Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States, Masood Khan with Alliance of Generalized System of Preference (GSP) Countries on Monday.



Photo: PID

President for using digital technologies to improve healthcare services

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday called for using digital technologies to improve health and well-being of the people of Pakistan and provide them with quality healthcare services.

He emphasised that advances in medical technology could help transform the country's medicine and healthcare system.

The President expressed these views while talking to Chief Executive Officer



of Pakistan and Afghanistan Siemens Healthineers,

Khurram Jameel, who called on him here at Aiwan-e-Sa-

dr, a press release issued by the President's Media Wing said.

Khurram Jameel briefed the President that Siemens Healthineers was one of the leading healthcare solution providers in Pakistan and its mission was to transform healthcare delivery and improve patient experience through digitalization.

Talking to the CEO, the President emphasised that Pakistani healthcare providers needed to embrace innovation and transform healthcare delivery to successfully

meet the challenges in the health sector, besides fulfilling the future healthcare needs of the country.

He underlined the need for establishing partnerships among government institutions, private organizations, and NGOs to work together for the betterment of persons with disabilities and raise awareness about breast cancer.

The President appreciated the efforts of Siemens Healthineers for the development of the healthcare sector of Pakistan.

President has no jurisdiction to announce date for provincial assemblies' election: Tarar

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar Monday said President Dr Arif Alvi could announce the date for the election of the National Assembly and not that of the provincial assemblies after their dissolution.

He had no constitutional jurisdiction to announce the date for the elections of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa assemblies, and thus he had violated the Constitution, the minister said while speaking in the National Assembly.

He said Article 48 (5) of the Constitution allowed the president to announce the date for the election of the National Assembly after it was dissolved by him.

Article 48 (5) says: "Where

the president dissolves the National Assembly, notwithstanding anything contained in clause (1), he shall appoint a date, not later than ninety days from the date of the dissolution, for the holding of a general election to the Assembly and appoint a care-taker cabinet."

Azam Tarar said, "Article 105 (3) allows the governor to announce the date for holding the election to respective provincial assembly if he has dissolved that assembly."

The Article 105 (3) says: "Where the governor dissolves the provincial assembly, notwithstanding anything contained in clause (1), he shall appoint a date, not later than ninety days from the date of dissolution, for the holding of a general election to the assembly and (b) appoint a care-taker

abinet."

The minister said the Punjab Assembly was not dissolved by the governor, rather it stood dissolved after 48 hours of the advice given by the chief minister. The governor had refused to sign the advice.

Moreover, the president could not fix the election date as the matter was sub-judice, he maintained.

As per Article 218 (3), he said, it was the responsibility of the Election Commission of Pakistan to conduct the elections.

Article 218 (3) reads: "It shall be the duty of the Election Commission to organize and conduct the election and to make such arrangements as are necessary to ensure that the election is conducted honestly, justly, fairly and in accordance with law, and that corrupt prac-



tices are guarded against."

The minister said those talking about upholding the Constitution had themselves violated the Constitution in the past also. The National Assembly was dissolved within three minutes by the president after the ruling of the former deputy speaker, which was later set aside by the apex court, he added.

He recalled that the president had even refused to adminis-

ter the oath to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Earlier speaking in the House, Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif said, "The president's announcement of the election date for the provincial assemblies is unconstitutional, and the law will take its course in this regard."

He alleged that President Alvi was "toeing his party's line". According to the Constitution, the president could announce the election date for the National Assembly not that for the provincial assemblies, he added.

National Democratic Movement's Mohsin Dawar lamented that such a situation would not have arisen had the incumbent government had taken those taking unconstitutional measures during the no-confidence motion, to the task.

PM raises issue of Arshad Sharif's murder with Kenyan President



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday held a telephonic conversation with President of Kenya, Dr. William Ruto.

During the call, the Prime Minister raised the issue of renowned Pakistani Journalist, late Arshad Sharif, who was murdered in Kenya.

He thanked the Kenyan President for the cooperation extended to Pakistani investigation teams so far.

The Prime Minister emphasized that Pakistan attached great importance to the late Arshad Sharif's case

and requested for further cooperation from the Kenyan side during the course of investigation in bringing the matter to a closure for the family and people of Pakistan.

Kenyan President assured the Prime Minister of full support and cooperation in the matter.

The two leaders discussed bilateral cooperation and issues of mutual interest.

Highlighting the significance Pakistan attached to its relations with Africa, the Prime Minister conveyed Pakistan's strong desire to strengthen its historical ties with Kenya in all areas of cooperation.

Golden jubilee celebrations of Senate to be commemorated with simplicity

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: A high level committee on Monday decided to commemorate the golden jubilee celebrations of the upper house of the parliament with simplicity due to the current economic crunch.

Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani presided over the meeting of the committee tasked to finalize Senate Golden Jubilee celebrations.

The committee reviewed the progress towards the events and made sure that the celebrations would remain simple.

The Senate Golden Jubilee Celebrations would be a momentous event that highlights the Senate's significant achievements over the past 50 years.

It is an opportunity to reflect on the



institution's rich history and to look forward to the future with renewed enthusiasm and hope.

A special Senate session has already been summoned from March 15 to 17, 2023. It will be attended by the President and Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani, personally visited the venue and corridors of Parliament House building to review the arrangements.

ANF seizes over 1679kg narcotics, arrests 34 suspects

News Desk

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) on Monday seized more than 1,679 kilograms of drugs and over 586 litres of prohibited chemicals in separate raids across the country.

According to the ANF spokesman, the ANF teams conducted 38 different counter-narcotics operations and seized more than 1679 kilograms of drugs and over 586 litres of prohibited chemicals worth over \$57 million in the international market.

The spokesperson added that at least 34 suspects were arrested including three women during the operations. Meanwhile, the ANF team also took 13 vehicles into custody which were allegedly used

in drug trafficking.

All cases have been registered at respective ANF police stations under CNS Act 1997 (Amended 2022) and further investigations were under process.

Last year in December, the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) and Customs team foiled an attempt to smuggle narcotics worth Rs2 billion.

As per details, the smugglers were carrying the narcotics in the ship, and the moment the maritime ship reached they threw the narcotics into the sea.

The Maritime agency arrested the smuggler and recovered the narcotics from the sea.

The deputy collector said that the narcotics confiscated from the smugglers are worth Rs 2 billion.

Javed Latif Compares President Arif Alvi with General Yahya

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Javed Latif on Monday compared President Dr Arif Alvi with former president General Yahya Khan after the former announced date for holding elections for Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, the federal minister castigated President Dr Arif Alvi for announcing election date, saying that it was the prerogative of Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to take such decisions.

He also called for forming a joint investigation team (JIT), headed by a judge of superior courts, to probe the reasons for plunging a thriving Pakistan of 2017 into an economic quagmire.

"Pakistan was progressing fast in 2017 when under a conspiracy, Imran Khan was imposed on the country, whose self-centered policies not only destroyed the economy but also triggered an unprecedented price hike," he claimed.

The JIT, he said, should particularly investigate the reasons behind the steep



increase in prices of items of daily use, including flour, sugar, edible oil, petroleum products, etc., since 2017.

The facts about the removal of then prime minister Nawaz Sharif from power should also be unearthed, Javed Latif added.

The minister said the JIT should also investigate how the \$25 billion loans taken by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government were utilized during its four-year rule. He urged the stakeholders to join hands for driving the country out of the crisis.

The development came after Presi-

dent Dr Arif Alvi announced April 9 as the date for holding general elections for Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) assemblies. The announced date under section 57(2) of the constitution.

In a letter written to Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sultan Sikandar Raja president Arif Alvi said the constitution does not allow to exceed 90 days for holding elections after the dissolution of assemblies and he has taken the oath to defend and protect the constitution.

The letter stated that ECP and governor KP and Punjab are not fulfilling their duties to hold elections within 90 days and the president has announced an election date to avoid violation of the constitution.

He said that both the constitutional offices are placing the ball in each other's court, which is resulting in delay and creating a serious danger to the constitution. President Arif Alvi said that it is ECP's responsibility to hold the election in 90 days and he started the process of serious consultation on the election date.

Sub-national polio vaccination campaign concludes

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: A sub-national polio vaccination campaign has concluded in nine districts to vaccinate more than six million children under the age of five years.

The polio drive was conducted in the seven endemic districts of Bannu, D I Khan, Tank, Lakki Marwat, North Waziristan, Upper South Waziristan and Lower South Waziristan in southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and two districts of Punjab including Lahore and Faisalabad.

The drive was planned after two environmental samples collected from two separate sites in Lahore tested positive for the wild poliovirus in January. The first positive sample of 2023 was detected on January 19 and was genetically linked to the poliovirus found in the Nangarhar province of Afghanistan in November 2022, according to the National Polio Lab at the National Institute of Health.



It was the first evidence of cross-border transmission in more than a year. The second positive sample was reported on January 27, which was genetically linked to a virus circulating in south KP.

Minister for National Health Services Abdul Qadir Patel, in a statement, said parents and caregivers should ensure that their children were vaccinated in every campaign to protect them from the disability-causing virus and to stop it from gaining a foothold in their communities.

He said the presence of wild poliovirus with genetic links to the virus in Afghanistan and south KP in sewage samples was evidence that the virus

was moving with people and circulating in the communities.

The minister said, "The poliovirus on any side of the border is a threat to children in both countries. Only repeated doses of the oral polio vaccine can offer life-long protection."

"Our vaccinators will keep bringing the vaccine to your doorstep as often as needed, so I encourage parents and caregivers to ensure that your children take these drops and remain protected."

Coordinator of the National Emergency Operations Centre Dr Shahzad Baig said in the last phases of its eradication, the poliovirus moved with under-immunized populations, highlighting the importance of repeated vaccination.

He said last year some 37 environmental samples were positive for the wild poliovirus in 13 districts, but the programme remained successful in preventing circulation in the districts of detection and limiting it to the endemic districts of southern KP.

India committing in humane atrocities in IIOJK

Abdul Majeed Tahir

ISLAMABAD: Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan has said that India is committing inhumane atrocities in Occupied Kashmir. They are not animals. This is a matter of the right of self-determination of one and a half million people. The British newspaper Guardian has highlighted the serious violations of human rights by India in Occupied Kashmir and other places. In his video statement, the Prime Minister said that Majoon Tantara, a resident of Kupwara, has been missing for six years, while Nisar Banai



of Sopur was first kept in Bara Mullah Jail, then he was transferred to Haryana

Jail in Punjab. His father is old.

The sister does not have enough money to go to Haryana jail to see her brother. My heart is broken by the cries and sobs of these girls and sisters, they are asking the United Nations for what crime we should be punished. He said that we should expose the ugly face of India to the world. He said that Kashmiris have been deprived of basic rights, they are deprived of treatment facilities, Kashmiris cannot do chemo, cannot do dialysis.

They do not have access to snakebite medicine due to which many deaths have occurred there. He said that India's

attitude towards Kashmiris is beastly, we have to use the platform of OIC. The United Nations and the Security Council must be asked to take notice of the cries and sobs of these girls and sisters and to heal their suffering lest the spark of this region engulfs the world.

He said that Britain The famous newspaper Guardian has exposed the ugly face of India in front of the world regarding human rights. It is very important that we should show this Guardian report to the world that how India is flouting human rights in Kashmir. There is proof that we have to present to the world

On the instructions of IGP KP, RPO Dera visited Ijaz Shaheed Police Lines



Adam Khan Wazir

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: In light of the orders of Inspector General of Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Akhtar Hayat Khan Gandapur, Regional Police Officer Muhammad Saleem Marwat made an emergency visit to Ijaz Shaheed Police Lines Dera in connection with the security audit of police facilities.

RPO Dera issued orders regarding the security of police lines while reviewing the security situation and arrangements on all sides of the check points.

That the entrance to the police line should be closed from two sides and only one main gate should be used for traffic.

DPO Dera Muhammad Shoaib, DSP HQ also accompanied him on this occasion.

DPO Dera while giving a briefing to RPO Dera regarding the security arrangements of police lines said.

That in connection with the steps taken to enter the police lines, police personnel and common people have to go through full checks in the police lines.

Full clothes are searched at the time of entry, RPO Dera made a detailed inspection of the police lines offices, police men's mess, residential barracks, Basalha Koot and other parts.

Meanwhile, he issued instructions to DPO Dera to improve the facilities of the jawans, and ordered to further improve the walls of the police lines in terms of security, Ordered to drain the standing water in the Police Colony in the Police Lines, went to the fronts of the Police Lines and met the policemen.

and while issuing appropriate instructions in the context of security arrangements, he said that in view of the current situation in the country, keep a close eye on the movements of anti-national and criminal elements, suspicious and strangers.

He urged the personnel to use bullet proof jacket and helmet for their own protection.

He urged the policemen to perform their professional duties honestly and diligently while being alert all the time to ensure their own and public safety.

Pakistani startup lands first-ever investment from WahedX for quality hotel rooms

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Amidst a global fundraising slowdown for startups, one Pakistani startup is blazing a new trail with its revolutionary business model and garnering the attention of international investors, including WahedX's first-ever investment in a Pakistani startup.

Lokal, a revolutionary hospitality start-up, is on a mission to democratize access to local travel and communities. The company has recently raised pre-seed funding from international investors, which will be used to fuel its growth and expansion plans. Currently, Lokal is focused on expanding its operations within Pakistan, with plans to later expand to other emerging markets in the MENA and Southeast Asia regions.

Lokal is solving the foremost issue faced by most travelers: the lack of safe, reliable, and affordable accommodation in emerging markets. With luxury chains out of budget, and booking platforms having no control on the actual staying experience, finding a quality budget accommodation is a real inhibitor to travelling locally in many of these markets. To change this, Lokal is creating a network of standardized budget hotel rooms that offer travelers safe, reliable, and high-quality stays.

Lokal appears to be ahead of the curve with a business model focused on unit positive economics rather than rapid growth at all cost. The founding team, drawing on their leadership experiences at companies such as Procter & Gamble and Coca-Cola, chose to pursue a sustainable approach to growth, which has caught the attention of investors seeking to fund startups with a clear path to profitability. As Khurram Kidwai, former P&G Senior Director and co-founder of Lokal, states, "Uber, Airbnb, and WhatsApp are all startups that were born during a recession. While market conditions are challenging today, if you build a business on solid fundamentals, there are tremendous opportunities to grow and disrupt inefficient markets."

Poverty

RAWALPINDI: Gypsy youngsters searching and collecting valuables from heap of garbage alongside a road at Peshawar road in the city.



Photo: Online

Huawei held 2023 Annual Meeting in KSA

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Huawei held its 2023 Middle East and Central Asia (ME&CA) Annual Meeting Awards Giving Ceremony in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on Saturday 18 February, bringing together Huawei representatives from 21 countries. His Excellency Haytham Al Ohali, Vice Minister in the Ministry of Communications & Information Technology, graced the event, held in the Kingdom for the first time.

Huawei used the meeting to align on 2023 objectives while recognizing staff for excellence in driving business objectives and differentiated customer experiences. Executives, led by Steven Yi, Huawei President for Middle East and Central Asia, led discussions on business development for the year ahead.

HE. Haytham Al Ohali said: "We realize the benefits of working with the private sector to enhance our ICT capabilities in support of



Saudi Vision 2030. This partnership marks another important phase in our ongoing collaboration with Huawei, whose outcome will elevate the Kingdom's competitiveness and help to nurture the country's digital economy."

Steven Yi said: "This is a significant milestone for the first time in our history, in Riyadh, where Huawei CEOs and regional management teams from 21 countries gathered in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Huawei will continue to invest in Saudi Arabia and support the growth of local Saudis. At the same time, we will perform more and more regional

management functions in Saudi Arabia and comply with the laws and regulations of the Saudi government. This event was, therefore, an ideal opportunity to celebrate these individual and collective triumphs while formulating another fruitful year ahead. In 2023 and beyond, we remain committed to helping build a connected, intelligent world while inspiring our partners to deliver differentiated services to their customers."

The ME&CA Annual Meeting and Awards Giving Ceremony is the culmination of another highly successful year for Huawei in the region. In February last year, Huawei announced it would

build a cloud region in Saudi Arabia during the inaugural LEAP event, a boost for local businesses and governments' ability to access more robust and secure cloud services. Later in the year, the Kingdom signed an MoU with Huawei on advancing cloud computing and building smart cities. In June last year, Huawei, in partnership with the Saudi Space Commission, unveiled 'Future Space', its first technology experience center in Saudi Arabia. Then in December 2022, The Saudi Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) and Huawei signed an MoU to enhance cooperation in ICT on the sidelines of the historic visit of His Excellency President of China Xi Jinping to the Kingdom. MCIT and Huawei pledged to collaborate to realize a '10Gbps Society', seeking to build a super-fast broadband infrastructure to support the digital transformation goals of Saudi Vision 2030.

UAJK and UKM signed MoU

Spokesman Report

MUZAFFARABAD: The University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (UAJK) and The National University of Malaysia (UKM) have officially formalized their partnership through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The completion of the MoU required the signature of both university Vice-Chancellors, Prof. Dato' Dr. Mohd Ekwan Hj Toriman, the VC of UKM and Prof. Dr. Muhammad Kaleem Abbasi, the VC of UAJK and signifying the formalisation of scientific collaboration and exchange programs between the two institutions.

UKM, recognized for its excellence in research and education, ranked 129th in the QS World Ranking, provides UAJK with access to a wealth of knowledge and resources, fostering a wide range of joint research, faculty and student exchange, and academic pursuits. The partnership between UAJK and UKM presents new and exciting opportunities for research and discoveries in science and technology. Dr. Jamal Kazmi, a distinguished Ph.D. alumnus and staff member at the Institute of Microengineering and Nanoelectronics (IMEN), UKM, played a pivotal role in initiating and fostering this collaboration.

NCHD team distributed blankets & other items to flood affected people

Adam Khan Wazir

TANK: NCHD tank team distributed the goods (non-food items) sent by the International Organization of Migration (IOM) to the flood victims of Tank district.

NCHD Tank Team has been standing side by side with the flood victims in every hour of difficulty, Deputy Director NCHD Zahir Khan said.

Assistant Commissioner Tank, DDMO Amin Ullah Khan and Additional Assistant Commissioner Tank Jamshed Alam Khan were specially present.

On 26th August 2022, the flood victims who were displaced by the worst floods in Tank are still in need.

National Commission for Human Development and International Organization for Migration (IOM) distributed warm blankets and other items to 200 flood affected people of Tank at the



NCHD office.

The remaining 200 winterization kits will be distributed to Chhina and Pai villages, where people from other villages

will be invited.

Chief guest of the event was Assistant Commissioner Tank Aminullah. Assistant Commissioner Tank

Aminullah Khan said that he appreciates the services of IMO and UNICEF who have selflessly served the flood victims day and night.

The best supplies are being provided transparently to the displaced flood victims.

On this occasion, Deputy Director NCHD Tank Muhammad Zahir Khan Gandapur said that in the hour of trouble and difficulty, the flood victims are standing shoulder to shoulder with their brothers, and this series of assistance from NCHD and IMO will continue in the future.

Additional Assistant Commissioner Tank Jamshed Alam along with Abdul Qadir Khan AD South and VCD Focal Person Alam Sher Khan Field Officer NCHD Tank were also present on this occasion.

The flood victims said that they are grateful to NCHD which is serving them in this difficult time.

AIOU holds a seminar on social justice in Pakistan



City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: On the instructions of the Vice Chancellor of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) Professor Dr. Nasir Mehmood, the Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies organized a seminar on the topic of "Social Justice in Pakistan" in connection with the International Day of Justice in collaboration with the Office of Research Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC).

Seminar was presided over by the Chief Justice, Federal Shariat Court of Pakistan, Justice Dr. Syed Muhammad Anwar. Barrister Zafarullah Khan was the guest speaker. Other speakers included Dean Faculty of Islamic Studies, Professor Dr. Shah Mohyuddin Hashmi and Chairman Department of Interfaith Studies, Dr. Ghulam Shamsur Rahman. Additional Director ORIC, Dr. Saima Nasir, principal officers, and faculty members attended the seminar. The speakers vowed to forget the

past and live a better life for the establishment of a society based on social justice. Justice Dr. Syed Muhammad Anwar said that Islam has provided very clear and comprehensive laws for social justice and Allah Almighty has sent the Prophet (PBUH) as the bearer of justice.

He said that the hindrance to justice is our ignorance. Barrister Zafarullah Khan said that peace, development, and prosperity in the world are not possible without social justice.

He added that we have read and heard many stories of justice, but unfortunately, it could not become an academic part of any university.

Social relations are increasingly paralyzed which is a major obstacle to social justice. Prof. Dr. Shah Mohyuddin Hashmi said that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) himself practiced justice and advised his companions to do the same. The Caliphs, Companions, and Saints all practiced justice in their respective eras.



Islamabad
15° - 23° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 5:24 am
Zohr 12:22 pm
Asr 4:17 pm
Maghrib 5:56 pm
Isha 7:19 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

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

HOSPITALS

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

CAP chairman says new taxes to bring economy to a grinding halt

Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Reacting to the destructive proposed finance bill to raise the general sales tax to 18%, the Chainstores Association of Pakistan (CAP) has announced to resist the IMF pressure, as the new taxation measures will add to the miseries of the traders that is already coping with a serious financial crisis.

CAP Chairman Rana Tariq Mehboob observed that the new taxation measures will jolt the very basis of the trade and industry, as the newly-introduced taxes would bring down the purchase power of the consumer that would ultimately hit the manufacturing sector hard. It would be better if the government takes measures to give expansion to the tax net instead of introducing new taxes for the already taxed segments of the society, he said.

He said that the prices of petroleum had already smashed the middle and lower classes. Criticizing the 1 percent sales tax increase, he said it had been the tradition of the government to axe the handful of tax-payers over and over instead of expanding its tax net. Only tier-one retailers are paying the tax in big cities, which has robbed the formal sector of competitiveness and a level-playing field.

Under the domino effect of dollarization, the skyrocketing inflation, which is already in the midst of a decade-high level, along with the unprecedented rupee depreciation, high energy tariffs, escalating markup rate, rising commodity prices, fluctuating exchange-rate and balance-of-payment crisis, will lead to further hike in headline inflation, taking a toll on the local economy, he warned.

ISSI Roundtable discusses Afghan situation, seeks ways to help improve ties

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East & Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) organized a Round-Table discussion with Dr. Omer Zakhilwal, Former Afghan Finance Minister, on developments relating to Afghanistan.

The Roundtable was chaired by Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General, ISSI. Participants included: Ambassador Ayaz Wazir, former Pakistani diplomat; Ambassador Qazi Humayun, former Ambassador to Afghanistan; Ambassador Abrar Hussain, former Ambassador to Afghanistan; Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmad, Member, Development Communications, Planning Commission of Pakistan; Dr. Azmat Khan, former Vice Chancellor, University of Peshawar; Brig. Mehboob Qadir (R), Independent Analyst; Dr. Taimur Shamail, Journalist; Mr. Hassan Khan, Journalist; and Mr. Tahir Khan, Journalist.

Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman ISSI BoG, Directors of the Centre



of Excellence at ISSI, Ms. Amina Khan, Director CAMEA, and members of the CAMEA research team were also present.

The deliberations were focused on the evolving situation in Afghanistan as well

as Pakistan-Afghanistan relations. The political, diplomatic, security, trade and people-to-people aspects of the bilateral relationship were discussed. Participants shared their views and assessments as well as suggestions for a way forward.

Korean GTA delegation

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) Ehsan ur Rehman Mazari poses for group photograph along with Korean GTA delegation headed by GTA President Kim Kyuengduk at Islamabad International Airport.



Photo: Online

Inauguration of Regional Connectivity Desk at RCCI

Commerce Reporter

RAWALPINDI: A Regional Connectivity Desk has been established in the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) in collaboration with Asian Institute of Eco-civilization Research & Development (AIERD).

The aim of the trade desk was to provide information for trade promotion, networking, B2B and networking at the Chamber of Commerce level in Azerbaijan and the five Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The opening ceremony of the desk was attended by the ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan and Dean of Diplomatic Corps H.E. Atadjan Movlamov, the Ambassador of Azerbaijan, Khizr Farhadov, the Ambassador of Kazakhstan, Yerzhan Kistafan, the Ambassador of Tajikistan, Asmatullah Nasreddin, the Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan, Kyrgyzstan, Olenbek Tutoyev, and the Ambassador of Uzbekistan, Aybak Arif Osmanov.

Chamber President Saqib Rafiq, Group Leader Sohail Altaf, Chairman AIERD Zahid Latif Khan, Hari-pur Chamber President Tayyab Swati, RCCI Senior Vice President Muham-



mad Hamza Sarosh, Vice President Faisal Shahzad, Former presidents, executive committee members and chamber members were also present on the occasion.

On this occasion, the speakers and ambassadors in their addresses spoke about trade and investment opportunities in Azerbaijan and the five countries of Central Asia.

The promotion of trade opportunities in various sectors including tourism, visiting religious places, energy and pharma sectors also came under discussion.

They also stressed on simplifying payment channels and procedures for issuing visas, and also urged on direct flights. Later, the ambassadors visited the Trade Desk where they were briefed.

Mubashir Rehman will be defend his research dissertation

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: It is notified for the information of all that Mr. Mubashir Rehmana PhD Scholar of Islamic Studies Department of HITEC University Taxila, will defend his research dissertation on Wednesday March 08, 2023 at 12:00 PM in IQBAL Auditorium of the University. The topic of his research is

"Intelligent Non-Invasive RF Sensing for Health Abnormalities Using Software Defined Radio"

The research has been supervised by Dr Raza Ali Shah. Defence is open to all interested individuals can attend the open defence and be seated by 11:45AM.

COMSATS University Response on Controversial English Composition Quiz

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: A matter dated January 5, 2023, regarding an objectionable quiz was highlighted on social media recently. The COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI) has always taken academic integrity very seriously. In the instant case, a visiting faculty hired temporarily for a semester, used inappropriate and unethical content in a quiz. Being not in line with the values and norms of any educational institution, resultantly, the CUI acted as per rules and regulations, by sacking the visiting faculty and blacklisting him for any future employment at CUI.

As per details, a visiting faculty was hired on temporary basis to teach two courses for Fall 2022 semester at COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI), Islamabad Campus. The matter, regarding the unethical contents of the quiz of the subject, English Comprehension and Composition, was reported by the Head, Department of Humanities, CUI Islamabad Campus on January 05, 2023. A meeting was convened on the same day under the convener ship of the Rector CUI where it was observed that the contents of the quiz were highly objectionable and unethical. Keeping in view the severity of the matter, the services of visiting faculty were immediately terminated, and he was blacklisted for any future employment at CUI.

It is important to mention that CUI is committed to ensuring delivery of quality education. CUI have clear policies and procedures in place to prevent academic misconduct, and expect that all members of our academic community adhere to these standards. CUI will not tolerate any behavior that undermines the academic integrity of our university. CUI would like to assure our students, parents, faculty, and staff that we take matters of academic integrity seriously. CUI will continue to work hard to maintain high academic standards, keeping in view the cultural context of Pakistan.

New Ericsson solutions boost indoor 5G capacity

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Ericsson (NASDAQ: ERIC) has expanded its indoor mobile connectivity portfolio with three new easy-to-deploy and cost-efficient solutions aimed at delivering 5G coverage, capacity and capabilities across the interior of any work or business environment – regardless of the size or complexity of the building. The new solutions become part of the Ericsson Radio Dot System portfolio, further increasing the flexibility of this industry-leading portfolio.

David Hammarwall, Head of Product Area Networks, Ericsson, says: "The new Radio Dot System equipment and location services software further increase the flexibility of Ericsson's indoor portfolio. Scalable and cost-efficient, the expanded portfolio offers a one-stop-shop to accelerate indoor 5G rollouts globally, spreading the benefits of premium indoor connectivity."

Joe Madden, Founder & Chief Analyst, Mobile Experts, says: "The in-building wireless market is so diverse that products have remained extremely fragmented for years. Ericsson has pulled together a line-up of products that are more flexible and adaptable, to handle wide variations in the application."

Ericsson 5G Precise Positioning: software to enable new enterprise use cases and advanced 5G monetization thanks to its unmatched mobile 3D positioning precision of <1m for any 5G device indoors. Only a mobile connection is needed (no sensors) and it is fully integrated with the existing network. The new software feature is also part of Ericsson's Private 5G Networks offering to enable enterprises to easily deploy a 5G network, equipped with this Ericsson-unique software feature.

The IMF fears that their money will be used to pay off Chinese debt

News Des

ISLAMABAD: Former President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt on Monday said the entire burden of the IMF's conditions is being put on the people, which will stoke poverty and further worsen their condition.

The burden of these conditions should also be put on the privileged aristocracy which is getting annual benefits worth 17.4 billion dollars annually, he said. Shahid Rasheed Butt said that bribing nobility at the cost of the poor is the worst cruelty and daylight robbery.

In addition, up to twenty billion dollars are wasted annually in government purchases of which a sizable amount can be saved.

He said that if the privileges and corruption of elites are reduced and this huge amount of money is spent on the people, then the destiny of the country can be changed.

The government always helps the rich instead of the poor but now the process of squeezing the people should be stopped and all IMF reservations should be removed.



Mushaal blasts world's callous approach towards smoldering Kashmir

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson of Peace and Culture Organization, Mushaal Hussein Mullick lashed out at the international community and UN for adopting a 'deaf and dumb approach' towards shouldering Kashmir, which, she said, they can't even hear the heartbreaking pleas of Kashmiri little daughters demanding release of their fathers illegally detained in Indian jails for years.

Mushaal, a wife of incarcerated senior hurriyat leader Yasin Malik, said in a statement on Monday that several families from district Baramulla along with their children protested at Srinagar's press colony against the delay in trials of their kin

held in several jails from many years.

She said that the innocent daughters of incarcerated Kashmiri fathers were demanding releases on a fast track basis with eyes full of tears since they are cognisant of the brutal treatment being meted out by the fascist Indian government against their fathers.

The hurriyat leader stated that Indian notorious government was brazenly violating the fundamental rights of Kashmiri people and unleashed a state terrorism in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) but the so-called civilized world sewed their lips on the world's worst human rights abuses in the occupied valley.

Mushaal said that a little girl, who did not see her father for the past five years, was crying seeking to meet her jailed father. The chairperson Peace and Culture Organisation urged that world powers and human right organisations to listen to the pleas of the innocent souls who wanted release of their fathers incarcerated in Indian jails in fake politically motivated cases.

She said that like other Kashmiri daughters, Raziya Sultana has not seen her father for almost 9 years, who demanded several times to the UN bodies to ensure her father's release and her meeting but neither the world nor the notorious Modi government paid any attention to her repeated requests.

Mushaal urged the world community and UN bodies to ensure release of the Kashmiri political prisoners including her husband instantly because they all were put in the jails not for any crime but only to defuse the flames of the Kashmir freedom struggle.

She said that Kashmir dispute was an international dispute not Indian internal matter, which was recognized by UN resolutions; hence it should be dealt and resolved in its historical perspective.

The hurriyat leader stated that The Guardian also exposed the ugly face of India for not releasing the Bucher Papers on Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, wherein General Roy

Bucher advised Nehru to take Kashmir issue to the UN for a peaceful settlement, but in time the annexation was usurped.

It is pertinent to mention here that the Bucher Papers on Kashmir contained correspondence between Jawaharlal Nehru and General Roy Bucher on Kashmir and the ceasefire.

She said that the promise of independent statehood to Kashmir was violated and now the fascist Modi government tried to prevent the breach of the promise made to Kashmiris from coming to light.

Mushaal went on to say that in 1952, Nehru made a statement in Indian Lok Sabha that Kashmiris were free to decide about their future, and India



would not impose its will on Kashmiris at the gunpoint.

However, she said that Indian notorious government did not make the Bucher Papers public because of its possible political and external implications for India, demanding the report

should be made public so as the world should know about the reality of the Kashmir dispute.

The chairperson urged the world powers to ensure implementation of the UN resolutions in order to settle Kashmir dispute.

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almas Ayoub Sabir**
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 Head Editorial Advisory Board: **Amjad Mehmood**
 Bureau Chief Karachi: **Saleem Zaman Khan.**
 (mszk786@gmail.com)
 Bureau Chief Lahore: **Syed Afraz Ali Nazish**
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)
 Islamabad Office: Rose Plaza, I-8 Markaz.
 Karachi office: Flat No.C.3.A.One Comfort, Block No 11.
 Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Main Rashid Minhas Road.
 Lahore Office: 7-E,Samanberg, Johar Town.
 Email: **spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com**
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Education in Mother Language

Javed Ullah Raja

21st. February every year reminds us that the Mother language should be embedded in our veins. Mother tongue is what a child learns in the mother's lap.

The words that fall into his ears in his mother's lap, slowly he tries to listen and speak. Then as he grows he communicates with other members of the family and siblings, learns more words of the language. His early culture and moral education are in the mother's lap at home.

As the child grows older, he begins to think and understand in his mother tongue. Then he tries to explain the words back and forth by himself and begins to be happy. In this way, the mother tongue becomes embedded in his veins. In most countries of the world, children are given primary education in their mother tongue.

In human life the mother tongue is very important. Due to the mother tongue, a person gets help in all fields what so ever the study or research like science, philosophy, mathematics, and religion. In his language he can easily determine all the factors. Mother tongue refers to the change in a person's abilities, morals, manners and interests, and attitudes. Its development takes place in the entire body of a person.

It is a continuous process that continues throughout life. Today's experts and intellectuals say that the mother tongue is very important for the mental development of children. That is why education is given in the mother tongue in the developed countries of the world. The United Nations Charter stipulates that the child's primary education in his mother tongue is the right of the child. Therefore, primary education should be given in the mother tongue.

Educationists, research institutes and scholars, and intellectuals have suggested the way to educate the child is to make the principle of the journey from the known to the unknown as a guide. When a person moves his mind and thinks about a problem during his higher education, he has to resort to his mother tongue.

Besides, it is a general observation that no matter how much a person is in the world, learning languages, the words of the language that is in his consciousness, sometimes while speaking another language, the words of the mother tongue are played unconsciously. This is the reason that sometimes a person is recognized by his words.

There is no denying that all the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the world are necessary to achieve the needs of a human being so that his future life can be prosperous. But he can express his thoughts freely in every field, whether it is industry and trade, or civilization,

there is progress in the mother tongue with ease.

Education in developed countries is in their own languages, like Russian in Russia, German in Germany, French in France, English in America, Chinese in China, and Korean in Korea. We have often seen young people from our country while go to other countries for education they learn the language of that country before.

A scholar says that the mother tongue cannot be denied. It is necessary to educate our children in our mother tongue i.e. Urdu. Without the mother tongue, the mental development of a person cannot take place. In the present era, while everyone is using the English language, it is considered a development. And without it, education is not considered education.

This is wrong, the one also learn whatever he wants but should give priority to language. Asif Ali Sahib says those five years ago, the United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization UNESCO said that the best way to teach children basic knowledge concepts is in their mother tongue.

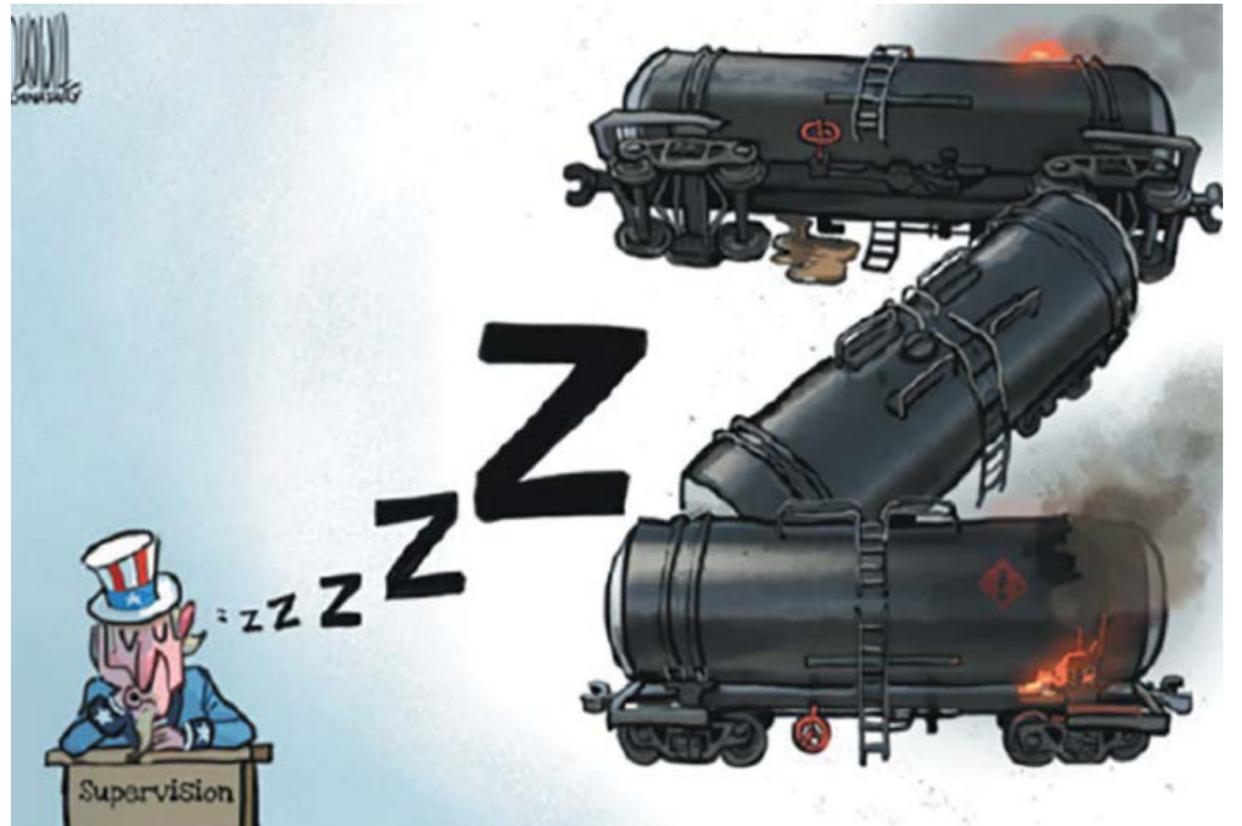
UNESCO decided to celebrate International Mother Language Day on 21st. February every year in November 1999. While this day is celebrated every year since February 2000. The UN Assembly declared 2008 as the International Year of Languages.

In 2013, UNESCO published a

research book entitled "Education in the International World". It was mentioned that it is important to make people aware of the importance of their mother tongue. Years before this, in 1953, UNESCO in its report clearly mentioned that the importance of the mother tongue which effects of education given in the mother tongue is more profound than education in any other languages.

It is to be noted that weak mother tongues are disappearing in the development of the world. Powerful languages are important in the educational institution's system, media, and jobs. These are the languages that are used in powerful circles like administration, government, military, commerce, education, and media, etc. and people have to learn these languages for their own benefit. Today in many undeveloped countries English has overtaken other languages.

This is because it is the language used in the media and business sectors. 21st. February reminds us that despite the imbalance of power in our mother tongues and dominant languages, we should not lose hope. We should realize the importance of our mother tongues. With which we are identified, and also our cultural repository and builds our personality. Someone has said well that if we start speaking other languages and forget our mother tongue, then we will not be 'us' but we will become copies of others. In such a case, we will be strangers to ourselves.



'Self Enumeration Portal'

Federal Minister of Information Technology and Telecommunications, Syed Amin-ul-Haque on Monday inaugurated the "SELF ENUMERATION PORTAL" of 7th Population and Housing Census, 2023 as the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) is going to conduct Pakistan's first ever Digital census.

"Upcoming 7th Population and Housing Census is a paradigm shift towards digitization. Self-Enumeration is one of the innovations and conveniences that this Digital Census has brought to in Statistical System of Pakistan. Through the Self Enumeration portal, it is easy to enter household information. After completing this milestone, Pakistan will become the first country in South Asia to offer the facility of self-enumeration" Chief Census Commissioner Dr. Naeem uz Zafar appraised the participants of the ceremony.

He further informed that Geo-tagging, Tablet-based data collection, real-time monitoring, Complaint management system and computer-assisted telephonic interviews for quality assurance will link the whole process with credibility, reliability and transparency.

He appreciated the efforts of PBS and collaborating partners for working day and night for achieving this milestone.

Muhammad Sarwar Gondal, a Member of Resource Management /Support Services informed the participants about the background and efforts that were made to achieve the goal of Digital Census in Pakistan.

For the credibility of this process, PBS involved all stakeholders from planning to finalization of results.

After submission of the questionnaire, a UTN will be issued which will be saved in your portal and sent to your registered mobile number through SMS. This UTN will be verified by census enumerators during field enumeration.

Chairman NADRA, Mr. Tariq Malik, appreciated the efforts of the NADRA team to adhere to the timelines. In a short time on a war footing, 126000 devices were prepared and distributed.

Syed Amin-ul-Haque appreciated PBS and stakeholders (NADRA, SUPARCO, Provincial Governments, Armed Forces & NTC) to achieve the huge milestone of Self Enumeration.

He further added that it is comforting that we have reached the establishment of a system that can gather the count of individuals in Pakistan in a transparent and credible way. Self-Enumeration Portal is however just the beginning of the Census Data Collection process. He hoped that the way all organizations have been working to attain this goal, the results will be provided as per scheduled timelines.

The official Census song "Tum he Se Hai Tumhara Kal" was also launched in a ceremony. In an attempt to engage online audiences on social media PBS collaborated with MindMap Communications Pvt. Ltd. and Bajao, one of the fastest-growing music streaming services in Pakistan, to organize an online song competition using the slogan Tum He Se Hai Tumhara Kal. Online audiences were encouraged to use the slogan and send in their song entries. The competition's winner was the song entry that receives the most votes on Bajao's Music App.

The inauguration of the Self Enumeration portal is the beginning of the implementation of a Paradigm shift towards digitization that PBS planned to achieve through this Digital Census.

Hope in the darkness of despair

Waseem Khokhar

President of Al-Khidmat Foundation Pakistan Dr. Hafeez ur Rahman has said that Al-Khidmat Foundation and its affiliated institutions, Al-Khidmat Razi Hospital, and AGOSH Centers, are a beacon of hope in the darkness of despair, be it an earthquake, flood, coronavirus or any other natural calamity. The Foundation has gone ahead and supported the victims and helped them. All this has been possible by the grace of Almighty Allah, well-wishers, and generous donors.

Al Khidmat Razi Hospital CBR Town Founder, Chairman Al Jabbar Trust, Mazen Schools, and Jammu Kashmir Salvation Altaf Ahmad Bhat while speaking on the occasion said that Al Khidmat Razi Hospital is a priceless gift for the people of Islamabad from which the poor people are benefiting. He said that Al Khidmat Foundation is the largest charitable organization in the world and it is the identity of Pakistan. We are proud of Al Khidmat Foundation. All the institutions run under it, Al Khidmat Razi Hospital and Aghosh Centers are exemplary. Al-Khidmat Foundation has made Pakistan famous for its immense services all over the world.

Dr. Hafeezur Rehman while addressing the occasion said that Al-Khidmat Razi Hospital CBR Town is an organization with a mission, a face of an ideology. In 2021 Corona Virus gripped the whole country during terrible moments when everyone was afraid and blood relatives could not meet one another brother due to fear, the workers of Al-Khidmat Foundation went out and went door to door to help the people in need, providing medical facilities at door steps and the span of work surpassed over Rs 2 billion during covid outbreak.

When the flood hit the country hard the country, Al-Khidmat Foundation worked for the rehabilitation of the flood victims with ten billion rupees. For reconstruction, we have worked

forward to contribute 6 billion in domestic production.

In the recent earthquake in Turkey and Syria, Al-Khidmat Foundation workers reached the earthquake-affected areas within the first few hours. Within two days, Vice President of Al-Khidmat Foundation Abdul Shakoore went to Turkey, where he supervised the work of Al-Khidmat, and then for rescue, we sent 47 workers to Turkey and they started to perform their services. From the 10th Feb till date, Al-Khidmat Foundation has worked together with the soldiers of the Pakistan Army and rescue volunteers and this work of service is going on. He said that exemplary treatment is being done in Al-Khidmat Razi Hospitals, we are getting our children treated at Al-Khidmat Razi Hospital, and all this has been possible with the help and cooperation of well-wishers and donors.

Dr. Hafeezur Rahman paid tribute to Al-Khidmat Razi Hospital Patron Altaf Ahmed Bhat and the CBR administration for their valuable services to Razi Hospital, appreciated and thanked him for his remarkable services in the support of destitute children.

Al-Khidmat Razi Hospital CBR Town Founder and Patron Altaf Ahmed Bhat while addressing the ceremony said that Al-Khidmat Razi Hospital is a priceless gift for the people. The purpose of this program is to attract good people and the public to the services of Al Khidmat Razi Hospital for the public. It is not an ordinary hospital but it is a great gift for the people of Rawalpindi Islamabad.

This is the best opportunity for well-wishers to generously help such charitable institutions. Altaf Ahmed Bhat said that earlier this hospital was built for three to four hundred patients, but now 1,000 patients per day are being treated daily.

Altaf Ahmed Bhat said that there are fifteen housing societies adjacent to Al-Razi Hospital CBR Town, including PWD, Soan Garden, Aghosh, Jinnah Garden, Media Town, Pakistan Town, Police Foundation, Federation, River Garden, Naval Anchorage, etc. Some villages

including Lohi Bhir, Jawa, Bhandar, and Pahag, and other villages are home to around 5 lacks rich, middle-class, and needy people as no major government hospital was available there.

To meet the shortage of this hospital, we need a plot of 10 crore rupees and 25 crore rupees for its construction. I am sure that there are good people in the villages adjacent to this hospital who will give generous support for the expansion of this hospital and Alhamdulillah the donors present on the occasion have announced to give about seven crores. Altaf Ahmed Bhat, the host of the donor conference and patron of Al Razi Hospital, announced that another similar donor conference will be organized in the month of Ramadan, in which an appeal will be made to collect the required aid.

Chairman Pakistan Sweet Homes Zamrud Khan while appreciating Al Khidmat Foundation and donors for building such a big precious hospital network for humankind said that May Alla helps those who are behind this network and continuously supporting it, helping a poor person is a very good deed. Razi Hospital is a great gift for humanity that exists within Rawalpindi and Islamabad. These are role model hospitals. Good people should help them generously.

"I appeal to you to help Razi Hospital generously, as much as the work of the Al-Khidmat Foundation is not done by any other charitable organization in the whole world. We are proud of this organization, it is serving humanity with a sincere intention which is very exemplary. Zamrud Khan added.

Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami District Islamabad Nasrullah Randhawa said that Al-Khidmat Razi Hospital is performing its services only with the support and help of philanthropists. We are thankful for the cooperation of all the well-wishers, with whose support and help we can serve the people. We are also grateful to the friends of ICNA. This mission of service will continue and can never be forgotten. Medical Director Dr. Tahir Farooq also addressed and presented the report of the hospital.

Across China: Creative tea offerings reflect upgraded consumption scenarios

Xinhua

Tea is often associated with a diverse range of characteristics such as variety, color and aroma, but in recent times, the tea culture has gained significant attention in China, especially as a social pastime.

One such example is Weiluzhucha — People gather around a stove to boil tea and have a matter, reminiscent of their ancestors who indulged in the same ritual a long time ago.

At the cafe called Ziyoudiluying in downtown Beijing, pu'er tea, a type of fermented tea that is renowned for its exquisite fragrance, is prepared on a stove using vermilion clay teapots. A range of delectable snacks like persimmon, jujubes and peanuts are scattered around the pots, as well as being heated, adding to the overall ambiance.

"Brewing tea is a process that demands patience. Friends gather around the fire, chat, drink tea and appreciate the tranquility. Such an ambiance provides a momentary respite to escape the clamor of daily life and embrace a sense of calm," said Tong Shanshan, 31, owner of the cafe.

The total consumption in Beijing is expected to increase by about 5.5 percent in 2023, and efforts will be made to improve the quality of consumption and build a regional dynamic consumption circle scientifically, said Ding Yong, head of the municipal commerce bureau.

Over the past decade, along with the expanding middle class in China and the doubling per capita disposable income, the market of "new tea beverages," including stove-boiled tea and brewed tea combined with fresh fruits and vegetables, among others, has boomed.

Its market size is estimated to reach about 375 billion yuan in 2025, with 26.2 percent of consumers in 2022 showing their intentions to consume more such types of tea, according to a survey by the research firm iMedia Research.

Chinese tea has a rich history of traversing both borders and time, thanks to the ancient Silk Road and the Tea Horse Road. Today, the sought-after commodity continues to demonstrate its vitality in the modern world, while also receiving recognition from the global community.

In 2022, traditional Chinese tea-making techniques were included in the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

At Wuyutai Tea Shop on Qianmen Street, a major commercial hub in Beijing, customers can be seen lining up to buy specialty "tea ice cream."

The renowned brand, established in Beijing in 1887, has gained a reputation for its exquisite jasmine tea. With over 500 outlets across China, the company is now undergoing a transformation to cater to the preferences of young people.

"We have long noted the market changes, and developed the tea ice cream in 2008. It is popular among customers, and more than 30 branches sell the product," said Zhao Shuxin, chairman of the board of Wuyutai Tea.

According to Tang Xin, who heads the research institute of municipal affairs under the Beijing Academy of Social Sciences, the stove-boiled tea activity and the emergence of the market of new tea beverages, integrating traditional culture and modernity, have become a new consumption growth point embraced by Chinese consumers.

"More new forms of Chinese-style consumption will spring up in the future," Tang said.

Dar for further expanding Pak-UK relations

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar said here on Monday that Pakistan had long historic ties with the United Kingdom and relations between the two countries needed to be further expanded for the mutual benefit of the countries.

The minister was talking to British Acting High Commissioner, Andrew Dalgleish who called him here, according to press statement issued by finance ministry.

They exchanged views on matters of common interest including promoting mutual trade and investment between the two countries, the state-



Islamabad: British Acting High Commissioner, Andrew Dalgleish during a call on meeting with Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar at Finance Division.

ment added.

He briefed the envoy about economic challenges coupled with devastating floods and said that the government aimed to bring about economic and fiscal stability leading to economic recovery and growth.

He also appreciated the good will and cooperation extended by the British Acting High Commissioner, the statement added.

On the occasion, the British Acting High Commissioner commended the practical and pragmatic measures being undertaken by the government and extended full support of the British government for the government and people of Pakistan in mitigating the socio-economic challenges.

Former MCMC chairman appointed Communication and Digital Adviser



News Desk

KUALA LUMPUR: Former Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) chairman Al-Ishsal Ishak has been appointed as a Communications and Digital Adviser.

Minister of Communications and Digital Fahmi Fadzil, through a post on his official Facebook today, said the appointment is on a pro bono basis, which is voluntary and unpaid.

In October 2018, Al-Ishsal, who holds a Bachelor of Management (Honours) from Universiti Sains Malaysia and was a Japan Airlines scholar at Sophia University, in Tokyo, was appointed as MCMC chairman for a two-year term in October 2018.

He had served as Chief Digital Officer of McCann Ericsson World group; Chief Executive Officer of Baraka Telecom; Senior Vice-President, Marketing and Product at Malaysia Airlines Berhad; and Head of AirAsia Ancillary Group, as well as held various senior positions at Tune Group.

Al-Ishsal was also the Southeast Asia Managing Director of ECO Capacity Exchange Ltd (London), as well as a trainee and consultant for the Airbus Group before joining Pos Malaysia Berhad as Group Chief Executive Officer.

He had also served at the Malaysian Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC) and is a former member of the National Information Technology Council (NITC).

Tesco raises store workers pay by 7%

News Report

ISLAMABAD: Tesco, Britain's biggest retailer, will raise hourly pay for about 220,000 store workers by 7% from April, another increase that will likely catch the attention of the Bank of England, which is worried about inflationary pressure in the economy.

The supermarket group, one of the country's largest private sector employers, said a deal agreed with shopworkers union USDAW will see store workers get 11.02 pounds (\$13.25) an hour from April 2, up from 10.30 pounds currently.

Workers in inner and outer London will get additional allowances. Tesco said the increase, a third in ten months, will cost it over 230 million pounds and take investment in pay over the last year to 430 million pounds.

On Friday, Asda, Britain's No. 3 supermarket chain, announced a 10% pay rise for its staff. No. 2 Sainsbury's (SBRY.L) announced an increase in January.

The BoE is watching pay settlements closely as it mulls further rises in interest rates.

BoE Governor Andrew Bailey earlier this month expressed concerns about wage-setting, despite signs that the surge in inflation - which hit 11.1% in October before falling to 10.1% in January - had turned a corner.

Tesco said the latest rise reflects the accelerating cost of living its workers are facing.

But it also likely reflects Britain's still tight labour market. Data this month showed that despite being on the brink of recession, the country's jobless rate held close to five-decade lows and employment grew.

The government-mandated National Living Wage will rise to 10.42 pounds an hour from April, an increase of 9.7%.

Tesco said it will also continue to provide staff with free food in store canteens, a salary advance scheme and a discount of up to 1,500 pounds a year off their shopping.

Premiums for Sunday working will, however, be cut from 25% to 17%.

Shares in Tesco, up 12% so far this year, were unchanged in afternoon trading.

Mauritius braces for intense Cyclone Freddy



News Desk

PORT LOUIS, MAURITIUS: Mauritius was battering down the hatches on Monday as an intense tropical cyclone approached, with flights cancelled and public transport halted on the Indian Ocean Island nation.

The Mauritius Meteorological Services (MMS) issued a Class 3 cyclone warning, saying the estimated gusts in the centre of Cyclone Freddy could be around 300 kilometres (190 miles) an hour.

It said the storm was centred about 275 kilometres to the north-east of Mauritius at 7 am (0300 GMT) and moving west-southwest at an increased speed of about 30 kilometres an hour.

"On this trajectory, Freddy continues to dangerously approach Mauritius and represents a direct threat," the weather service said. "As Freddy approaches Mauritius, storm surge is likely to cause coastal inundation in risk areas. It is therefore strictly advised not to go to sea."

Flights have been cancelled to a number of international destinations, and all flights between the main island and the outlying isle of Rodrigues have been halted.

"Air Mauritius is closely monitoring the situation with the authorities and will keep passengers informed of developments," the national carrier said on its website.

Public transport has been halted, and people have been urged to take all necessary precautions to keep safe.

Masood Khan calls US trade preference programs critical to strengthening trade ties

News Desk

WASHINGTON: Pakistan joined the 27-member Alliance of GSP Countries in calling on the United States Senate and the House of Representatives, in a letter, for their bipartisan support to expedite legislation for the renewal of US Generalized System

of Preference (GSP), a trade preference programmes through which Washington seeks to help developing countries expand their economies.

The Pakistan Ambassador to the US, Masood Khan, co-signed the letter, along with the Alliance of other 26 ambassadors, according to a press release issued by the Pakistani embassy.

"With 118th Congress in place, we hope there is a window of opportunity for bipartisan legislation renewing the Generalized System of Preference," stated the letter written by the Alliance to the Chairperson



and Ranking Members of leading legislative committees of the U.S. Congress including Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate, Committee of Foreign Relations of House of Representatives, Senate Committee of Finance and the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives.

Pakistan is an active member of the Alliance. Other countries of the Alliance include Algeria, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, Ecuador, Egypt, Fiji, Georgia, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Lebanon, Moldova, Mongolia, Myanmar, North Macedonia,

Nepal, Paraguay, Philippines, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tunisia, Ukraine and Yemen.

The meeting of the Alliance was hosted by Ambassador Jorge Argüello of Argentina and chaired by the Ambassador of Thailand. Ambassador Masood Khan, accompanied by Minister (Trade) Azmat Mahmood, attended the meeting.

The GSP Programme, authorized by the Trade Act of 1974, came into effect on January 1, 1976 and had been providing preferential duty-free entry to 5,000 products from 119 beneficiary developing countries (BDCs) and 44 least developed beneficiary developing countries (LDBDCs) into the U.S. market. Legal authorization for the GSP program expired on December 01, 2020.

Briefing about the initiative, Masood Khan said that renewal of US GSP Programme was critical to enhanced market access for

the developing countries in the United States.

"The Programme is a conduit to ensuring robust ties with the United States bearing hallmark of strong economic sinews and currency," he said.

"By enabling developing and the least developed countries in having better access to the US market, the Programme has not only served the beneficiary countries but has also facilitated US economy and businesses, both small and large companies, by importing products, including raw material, and maintaining comparative advantage," he continued.

Masood Khan highlighted that COVID-19 and the war on Ukraine had impacted supply chains and resulted in food and energy shortages and consequent hyperinflation. "The renewal of the Programme would help in spurring growth in multiple sectors of the economy and thus lessen the severity of ongoing challenges," he said.

Pakistani-American doctors raise \$365,000 in aid of quake survivors in Turkiye

Spokesman Report

WASHINGTON: An amount of \$365,000 was raised within an hour of a Zoom Telethon organized by Pakistani-American doctors on Sunday to help victims in Turkiye of last week's catastrophic earthquake that killed thousands of people and left millions more in desperate need of aid.

Organizers said that more contributions were expected, both in cash and kind.

Speaking on the occasion, Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Masood Khan, made a passionate appeal to the Pakistani diaspora to contribute generously towards providing relief to the Turkish brethren, as "their suffering is our suffering, their agony is our agony," according to a press release issued by the Pakistani embassy.

Turkiye's Ambassador Hasan Murat



Mercan, who also participated in the virtual telethon, briefed the participants about the magnitude of the calamity.

He thanked the government and the people of Pakistan, especially the Pakistani community residing in the United States, for their prompt and

generous support at this difficult hour.

In his remarks, Ambassador Masood Khan said, "Our hearts go out to the people and government of Turkiye who were hit by one of the deadliest earthquakes in the past one hundred years and one of the biggest natural disasters of our times."

The Pakistani envoy expressed heartfelt condolences of the nation to President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the entire nation of Turkiye over the tragic loss of precious lives and other damages.

Ambassador Masood Khan also lauded the Association of Physicians of Pakistani Descent of North America (APPNA) and its leadership for organizing the telethon and raising humanitarian assistance for the earthquake response in Turkiye.

APPNA, on the occasion, also offered to send a medical mission to Turkiye to support relief efforts.

Biden walks through Ukraine capital ahead of war's anniversary

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: US President Joe Biden walked around central Kyiv on an unannounced visit on Monday, promising to stand with Ukraine as long as it takes, on a trip clearly timed to upstage the Kremlin ahead of the one-year anniversary of Russia's invasion.

Biden, in trademark aviator sunglasses, and President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, in green battle fatigues, walked side-by-side to a gold-domed cathedral on a bright winter morning pierced by the sound of air raid sirens.

"When (Russian President Vladimir) Putin launched his invasion nearly one year ago, he thought Ukraine was weak and the West was divided. He thought he could outlast us. But he was dead wrong," Biden said.

"The cost that Ukraine has had to pay is extraordinarily high. Sacrifices have been far too great... We know that there will be difficult days and weeks and years



ahead."

Outside the cathedral, burnt-out Russian tanks stand as a symbol of Moscow's failed assault on the capital at the outset of its invasion. Its forces swiftly reached Kyiv's ramparts only to be turned back by unexpectedly fierce resistance.

Since then, Russia's invasion has killed tens of thousands of Ukrainian civilians and soldiers on both sides, cities have been reduced to rubble and millions of refugees have fled. Russia claims to have annexed nearly a fifth of Ukraine, while the West has pledged tens of billions of dollars in military aid to Kyiv.

The U.S. president promised a further \$500 million worth of weaponry, including artillery ammunition, anti-armour systems and air defence radars, plus tighter sanctions on Russia.

"This visit of the U.S. president to Ukraine, the first for 15 years, is the most important visit in the entire history of Ukraine-U.S. relations," Zelenskyy said.

Foreign Minister Dmitry Kuleba called the visit a signal to Russia that "no one is afraid of you!"

It was clearly timed to upstage Putin, due to make a major address on Tuesday setting out aims for the second year of what he now calls a proxy war against the armed might of Washington and the transatlantic military alliance NATO.

"Of course for the Kremlin this will be seen as further proof that the United States has bet on Russia's strategic defeat in the war and that the war itself has turned irrevocably into a war between Russia and the West," said Tatiana Stanovaya, a Russian political analyst.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index

Current	Prev. Close
40,673.64	41,118.61
Day's High	Day's Low:
41,162.89	40,623.97
Index Value	Change
4,023,447,577	-444.97
Percentage	Time
-1.08%	20 Feb, 2023 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index

Index Value	Change
8,014.31	+9.95
Percentage	Time
+0.12%	20 Feb, 4:35 pm GMT

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average

Index Value	Change
33,826.69	+129.84
Percentage	Time
+0.39%	17 Feb, 5:12 pm GMT-5

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average

Index Value	Change
27,531.94	+18.81
Percentage	Time
+0.068%	20 Feb, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	178	180.4
Bahrain Dinar	699.18	707.18
Canadian Dollar	194	196.2
China Yuan	38.29	38.69
Danish Krone	37.76	38.16
Euro	282.00	284.80
Hong Kong Dollar	33.56	33.91
Indian Rupee	3.18	3.29
Japanese Yen	2.06	2.11
Kuwaiti Dinar	856.44	865.44
Malaysian Ringgit	59.33	59.93
New Zealand \$	164.23	166.23
Norwegians Krone	25.78	26.08
Omani Riyal	682.82	690.82
Qatari Riyal	73.05	73.75
Saudi Riyal	70.10	70.80
Singapore Dollar	192	194
Swedish Korona	25.26	25.56
Swiss Franc	284.33	286.83
Thai Bhat	7.66	7.81
U.A.E Dirham	72.10	72.80
UK Pound Sterling	314.8	318
US Dollar	264.50	267

Sastaticket.pk:
Partner for
domestic and
international
traveling



News Desk

LAHORE: Sastaticket.pk, Pakistan's leading online travel booking platform, is providing peace of mind by facilitating their customers. Now customers can book their domestic and international traveling PIA tickets through Sastaticket.pk. Now customers will also have access to a wide range of PIA flights to destinations around the globe, including popular destinations such as Dubai, Istanbul, and London.

Sharing his views about the new destinations, Mohib Hassan COO at Sastaticket.pk said, "At Sastaticket.pk, our goal is to provide travellers with the most affordable rates and the most convenient booking experience. We are working to make it easier and more affordable for customers to book their PIA tickets through our platform."

He added, "It's our utmost pleasure to be able to facilitate flight bookings for Pakistan's National Flag Carrier- PIA, and we look forward to more customer acquisition in the foreseeable future."

He further added, "In addition to that, we are also fully committed to providing our customers with the best deals and convenience when it comes to facilitating them in their travel needs."

It is pertinent to mention here that PIA is Pakistan's National Flag Carrier and operates out of its HQ in Karachi, with hubs in major cities such as Lahore and Islamabad. The National Carrier operates domestic as well as International flights to destinations such as the Middle-East, Europe, North America and other Asian countries.

Electricity theft to jump from 380 to 520 billion: 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 utilization of electricity is very low due to its high cost which is hindering social and economic development. A hike in power tariff will further reduce the pace of the country's social and economic development, he said.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that due to a further increase in the price of electricity, its consumption will further decrease and theft will increase which will damage the economy.

The whole electricity system is in the control of elites which can only be improved through the involvement of the local communities.

Talking to the business community, the veteran



business leader said that full involvement of the local community in the electricity sector is being ensured in many developed countries, which has

yielded positive results.

However, in Pakistan, this sector is occupied by political elites and bureaucracy which has been bled white due to incompetence and mismanagement.

He said that public participation has become essential in power generation, distribution, governance, and other matters.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that by 2030, the demand for electricity in Pakistan will increase from 25,000 MW to 40,000 MW, for which arrangements are needed.

He noted that electricity theft has never been controlled in the country's history and according to the official data, electricity worth 380 billion rupees has been stolen during this year, which can reach 520 billion rupees with the increase in tariff.

Out of the stolen electricity, 200 billion rupees worth of electricity was stolen through kundas

and 80 billion through meters.

Electricity is being stolen all over the country, but Bannu Maridan and Sukkur are leading in this regard. Electricity thieves include people from all walks of life including ordinary consumers and government officials.

Now, regular businesses have opened to help with electricity theft, which is in great demand.

According to an estimate, 20 percent of the electricity is stolen and 10 percent of the electricity bills are not paid. About seven thousand megawatts of electricity is lost from the system every month, which causes a loss of billions of rupees.

The losses are passed on to consumers in the name of line losses, which make electricity expensive, increase business costs and make Pakistani exporters lose their competitiveness in the international market.

Due to the incompetence of the officials, the honest consumers and the state are suffering.

Governor Punjab assures to play role for resolving issues of business community

Commerce Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Baligh ur Rehman, Governor Punjab said that the business community of Islamabad is making a good contribution to the economy by promoting business activities and paying taxes, therefore, he would play a role for resolving their key issues. He said this while talking to a delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) that called on him in Governor House Punjab led by Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President.

The Governor Punjab said that a focal person from Governor House would be nominated to work with ICCI to redress the issues of the business community. He said that he would talk to the Federal Finance Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar for consultation with ICCI on important matters of the economy. He said that PML(N) had taken the initiative for the Charter of Economy and once finalized, its implementation should not be disturbed with the change of the government.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that ICCI is working for a new industrial estate in the region and the Punjab Government should cooperate for allocation of suitable land for this important project. He said that



ICCI should be given representation in the boards of business-related departments of the Punjab Government. He said that the completion of Rawalpindi Ring Road and IJP road should be expedited to improve the transportation system in the twin cities.

Faaz Waheed, Senior Vice President ICCI said that the government should focus on new industrial zones as industrialization is important to improve the economy.

Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI said that the government should focus on the agriculture sector that will help in reviving the economy.

Khalid Iqbal Malik, Group Leader ICCI said that a thank tank comprising representatives of government and prominent business leaders should be established to work for bringing the economy out of current turmoil.

Zafar Bakhtawari, former President ICCI paid tribute to the efforts of Muhammad Baligh ur Rehman and added that he is a role model for others.

Muhammad Shabbir, Raja Imtiaz, Ameer Hamza, Faseeh Ullah Khan, Ch. Muhammad Naeem, Khalid Chaudhry, Saif ur Rehman Khan and others were in the delegation.

Press conference

FAISALABAD: President of FCCI Dr. Khurram Tariq addressing a press conference at his office in the city.



Photo: Online

News Desk

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iTechnologi Group partners with IrriWatch to upgrade agriculture sector



News Desk

KARACHI: iTechnologi Group of Companies, the leading technology-based conglomerate, has partnered with IrriWatch, an agritech company based out of the Netherlands, to uplift farming standards by leveraging tech-enabled agricultural solutions.

IrriWatch is the brainchild of Dr. Wim Bastiaansen, who is quite renowned in the field of agriculture intelligence. Besides his various accomplishments, he is globally recognized as the developer of SEBAL, an immaculate thermal remote sensing and ground energy balancing algorithm specifically designed to monitor crop health and planned irrigation activities for vary-

ing farmlands.

This association aims to achieve the greater goals of providing complete digital farming solutions to farmers, reducing post-harvest losses, and improving farmers' livelihoods while meaningfully contributing to Pakistan's economy by addressing the burgeoning issues related to the agriculture sector of Pakistan.

The digitization of farm data includes offering intelligent insights on weather, soil health, crop production, disease prediction, and yield estimation using remote sensing technology. This will further strengthen the digitalization of existing farming operations and help farmers reap the most optimum benefits of their yields.

Naveed Qamar to co-chair PAK-US TIFA Council meeting

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Federal Minister Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar to co-chair Pakistan US TIFA council meeting to be held in Washington DC after eight years. The purpose of Trade & Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) is to enhance the bonds of friendship and spirit of cooperation between the two countries; promote further both countries' international trade and economic inter-relationship; recognizing the importance of fostering an open and predictable environment for international trade and investment, taking into account the membership of the two countries in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and noting that this Agreement is without prejudice to each Party's rights

and obligations under the Marrakesh Agreement.

Establishing the WTO and the agreements, understandings and other instruments relating thereto or concluded under the auspices of the WTO. US & Pakistan will affirm their desire to promote an attractive investment climate and expand trade in products and services consistent with the terms of this Agreement. Both countries shall take appropriate measures to encourage and facilitate the exchange of goods and services and to secure favorable conditions for long-term development and diversification.

Furthermore, both the countries will work on United States-Pakistan Council on Trade and Investment ("the Council"), which shall be composed of representatives of both countries.

ACCA Pakistan Leadership Conversation (PLC) 2023 kicks off

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The 2023 edition of ACCA Pakistan Leadership Conversation (PLC) kicked off with its inaugural session in Islamabad featuring an impressive line-up of country's top thought leaders.

With Pakistan's challenging economic situation in focus, this year's event theme is 'Shaping the future in uncertain times: Learn. Adapt. Thrive.'. A number of panel discussions and keynotes were part of the programme in Islamabad's session addressing today's key business and economic challenges and proposed solutions for climate action, effective public financial management, development of future-ready

talent, and achieving business resilience and economic growth.

ACCA's head of Pakistan, Assad Hameed Khan, initiated the conversation with his welcome address emphasising on the role of professional accountants in nation building.

The Country Head of the International Finance Corporation (IFC) in Pakistan, Zeeshan Sheikh, also shared his views on 'Investment Opportunities for Climate Action'. Muhammad Farooq, Senior Joint Secretary (Development) at the Ministry of Climate Change, spoke on the topic 'National Adaptation Plan: Building Resilience and Reducing Vulnerabilities' aimed at integrating businesses and govern-

ment's efforts to mitigate the impact of climate change.

Notable conversation leaders who deliberated at the conference included Bilal Anwar, CEO, NDRMF, Hassan Daud Butt, Ex-CEO, KPBoIT, Ayla Majid, ACCA's global Vice President, Abid Qayyum Suleri, Executive Director, SDPI, Shehzad Ahmed Malik, President, ICMA Pakistan, Alexa Greenwald, Chief Strategy Officer, TCM, Alia Zafar, Group Head of HR, BoP, Faisal Mushtaq, CEO, TMUC, Ghazwanfar Azzam, President and CEO, Mobilink Microfinance Bank, Samia Qamar, Director and Country Lead (People) at S&P Global, and Zuhair Khalig, Founder and General Partner, TeamUp Ventures.



The aim of the conference is to develop a meaningful framework for growth, facilitate ideation, and shape forward-thinking policy choices and business opportunities, focusing on

high-impact actions to contribute to the country's progress. The leaders will convene again on 22 February in Karachi and then on 23 February in Lahore.

Speakers highlight importance of winter sports tourism

Sports Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Speakers at a conference on Monday while highlighting the importance of winter sports tourism stressed the need for their sustainability.

The conference was organized by the Alpine Club of Pakistan in collaboration with the Bagh Alpine Club and the Medical Transcription and Billing Company (MTBC), said a press release.

The speakers noted that the activities and festivals of winter sports had recently witnessed an upsurge in different mountain regions of the country. The activities were held occasionally for a short period but no one talked about their continuity and sustainability, they said.

Ali Shoukat, General Manger of MTBC, welcomed the participants and highlighted the contribution of his company to the local community and the promotion of winter sports tourism under the initiative of social corporate responsibility.

He underlined the need to facilitate tourists toward more destinations.

ACP President Abu Zafar Sadiq introduced the concept of sustainable sports tourism and stressed the need to enhance the understanding of the role of stakeholders and build synergies among them.

While inviting the attention of the house towards alarming solid waste and unchecked construction of buildings, posing threat to sports Dr Mubashar from the Women University Bagh suggested



that strict regulations were required to improve the situation.

The representatives of line government departments, civil society organizations, community, tourism and sports industry, including Syed Zubair Hassan Zubairi, Kamran Nasim, Akaram Awan, Ali Syed, Nisar Shaiq, Tariq Bashir, Rais Inqlabi, Suhail Hassan, Abdullah Sarfraz, Kamran Nasim took an active part in the

discussion.

Abdul Sattar, representative of the Prime Minister of AJK and Shahid Islam, Deputy Director General, of Pakistan Sports Board in their remarks said the Federal Government and Azad Jammu & Kashmir Government had already taken various steps to promote responsible tourism and would further enhance cooperation among the different tiers of

government and stakeholders to build synergies for the sustainability of not only winter sports tourism but summer tourism as well.

Ammanullah Mani, Secretary of the Bagh Alpine Club, thanked the participants for their active participation and assured them that the outcome of the conference would be shared with all the stakeholders.

Mandhana's 87 fires India into Women's WC semis as Pakistan crashed out

A Sports -

GQEBERHA: Indian opener Smriti Mandhana's career-best 87 powered India to edge Ireland by a mere five runs in the rain-affected clash and into the semi-finals of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup.

India's qualification to the semi-finals marked the end of Pakistan's journey, who take England tomorrow in a dead rubber.

After opting to bat first, India piled a mammoth 155/6 in their set of 20 overs at the back of an astounding 56-ball 87 by Mandhana.

Earlier, Indian openers Mandhana and Shafali Verma scripted a solid start for their side as they raised 62 runs within 10 overs before the latter perished after scoring a cautious 29-ball 24.

Mandhana stood firm and



stitched another vital partnership for her side with skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, who

managed to score 13 off 20 before falling off Laura Delany in the 16th over.

Kaur's dismissal triggered a collapse as Indian batters made desperate efforts to score big

with their star batter Mandhana also falling after her career-best knock while India, consequently finished at 155/6.

Mandhana top-scored for her side with 87 off 56 deliveries with the help of nine boundaries and three sixes.

Delany led the bowling attack for Ireland with 3/33 while Orla Prendergast returned with 2/22.

Set to chase 156, Ireland could only bat for a mere 50 deliveries and scored 54/2, five runs behind the DLS par-score of 59 before the rain played spoilsport.

Irish opener Gaby Lewis remained unbeaten with a brisk 25-ball 32 and saw her efforts going in vain as India sealed a narrow victory that powered them into the semi-finals.

For India, only Renuka Singh could pick up a wicket.

India's hot property against Australia - spinners who can bat

Sports Desk

NEW DELHI: India's spin trio of Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja and Axar Patel were always going to play key roles in the home series against Australia but few, particularly the touring side, expected so much of it would be with the bat.

The three have done justice to their primary role, sharing 32 of the 40 Australian wickets that tumbled in Nagpur and Delhi to help India retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy with a 2-0 lead in the four-test series.

While they, rather predictably, wreaked havoc on tracks designed

to suit their craft, equally telling has been their contribution with the bat.

Batting at nine and eight, Patel's 158 from two innings is second only to Indian skipper Rohit Sharma's 183 and is more than any Australia batsman has tallied in the series so far.

The lower-order trio scored 177 runs in India's 400 in Nagpur to set up their innings victory inside three days.

In Delhi, where India slumped to 66-4 and then to 139-7 replying to Australia's first-innings 263, they contributed 134 priceless runs out of a team total of 262.

Ashwin, as his five test



hundreds suggest, is no dud with the bat, while Jadeja's three centuries include an unbeaten 175 against Sri Lanka.

"They are not lower-order (batsmen), let's get that clear,"

Australia spinner Nathan Lyon said after Saturday's play in Delhi. "Axar and Ash could easily bat in the top six in a few tests in test cricket around the world.

"They have a very long top

order, let's just say that," said Lyon.

It has been particularly frustrating for Australia to somehow get past the Indian top order only to be thwarted by the tail.

"It's probably been the difference in both games," Australian captain Pat Cummins told reporters after their six-wicket defeat on Sunday.

"It's something we'll look at. It's disappointing - those small margins in both games end up making a pretty big difference."

His India counterpart, Rohit, considers it a "blessing" to have spinners who can contribute crucial runs down the order in low-scoring contests.

Lahore Qalandars' Liam Dawson ruled out of PSL 8

Ali Hassan



KARACHI: Lahore Qalandars' all-rounder Liam Dawson has been ruled out of the remainder of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) season eight due to an injury.

According to the details, Dawson suffered an ankle injury amid his side's clash against Karachi Kings on Sunday.

The all-rounder was then taken to a local hospital here and after examining him, the doctors advised Dawson to a four to six weeks rest.

Taking to Twitter, Dawson's PSL franchise Qalandars confirmed that the all-rounder sustained an ankle injury due to which he has been ruled out of the ongoing season.

"Liam Dawson ruled out from [PSL 8] due to an ankle injury. We wish him a speedy recovery," wrote Qalandars on Twitter.

Consequently, Dawson will travel back to England where he will undergo his rehabilitation. His PSL franchise Qalandars are yet to announce his replacement for the remainder of the extravaganza.

It is pertinent to mention that Qalandars will take on Sarfaraz Ahmed-led Quetta Gladiators on Tuesday. The defending champions are currently at the bottom of the PSL 8 standings with two points, while Gladiators hold the fifth spot.

Karachi Kings' squad reaches Multan for first away PSL 8 clash



Sports Desk

MULTAN: Karachi Kings squad has reached here ahead of their first away Pakistan Super League (PSL) season eight clash with home side Multan Sultans, scheduled on Wednesday.

The Kings, who get to the winning track following their dominating 67-run victory over Lahore Qalandars on Sunday, are up for the toughest challenge as they take table-toppers Sultans in their fifth match of the season.

Upon their arrival here, the Kings' squad received a warm welcome from cricket fans.

"Thank you for the wonderful welcome Multan!" wrote Kings on Twitter as the franchise shared pictures of their squad's arrival here.

According to the details, the Kings will hold a practice session at Multan Cricket Stadium tomorrow.

It is pertinent to mention that the Kings hold the third spot with two points, behind Peshawar Zalmi, while the Sultans lead the standings with six points in four matches.

Barcelona thrash Cadiz to regain eight-point LaLiga lead over Real

A Sports -

BARCELONA: Sergio Roberto and Robert Lewandowski scored first-half goals to steer Barcelona to a 2-0 home win over Cadiz in La Liga on Sunday.

Leaders Barcelona regained their eight-point lead over defending champion Real Madrid following the seventh consecutive win in the top Spanish league.

Real narrowed the gap to five points on Saturday when they beat Osasuna in an away game but Barcelona earned three points to strengthen their claim on the 27th La Liga title.

The Catalan giants, who now top the table with 59 points, ended in a thrilling 2-2 draw against Manchester United in the Europe League earlier this week.

Manager Xavi Hernandez made six changes to the starting lineup that last played at Camp Nou on Friday, but there was no slowing down.

Roberto broke the deadlock in the 43rd minute from a rebound after Lewandowski had a header cleared off the line.

The Polish striker doubled the lead three minutes later by slotting home a low shot from the edge of the box.

Barca had a chance to make it 3-0 in the second half but Lewandowski's shot hit the crossbar.

Earlier Atletico Madrid edged past Athletic Club 1-0 at Metropolitan Stadium, thanks to a 73rd-minute winner scored by Antoine Griezmann.

In another Sunday fixture, Rayo Vallecano ended in a 1-1 draw against Sevilla. Meanwhile, Espanyol sealed a thrilling win over Elche with a late decider by Sergi Darder.

Neesham, Powell power Peshawar Zalmi to edge Quetta Gladiators

A Sports -

KARACHI: All-rounders James Neesham and Rovman Powell played sensible knocks in the run chase to steer Peshawar Zalmi to a convincing four-wicket victory over Quetta Gladiators in the ninth match of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) season eight.

Set to chase 155, Zalmi amassed the target in the 19th over with four wickets to spare at the back of a crucial partnership between Neesham and Powell.

Earlier, the Zalmi got off to a poor start to the pursuit as the side lost three wickets for 47 runs in the fifth over with in-form batters Mohammad Haris, Saim Ayub and Tom Kohler-Cadmore perishing cheaply.

Zalmi then endured a huge blow to their pursuit as they lost their skipper Babar Azam in the

eighth over and consequently slipped to 67/4. Babar could score 19 off 18 deliveries.

Following the setback, Neesham and Powell anchored the run chase with a gritty 46-run partnership before Naseem Shah castled the latter to glimmer a ray of hope for the Gladiators.

Powell scored a brisk 23-ball 36 and smashed three boundaries and two sixes.

Following Powell's departure, Neesham joined hands with Dasun Shanaka and steered his side closer to victory before falling victim to Qais Ahmed in the 15th over. He top-scored for the Zalmi with 38 off 23 deliveries with the help of four boundaries and three sixes.

Neesham's dismissal triggered a late twist in the run chase but Shanaka and Wahab Riaz held their nerves calm to steer the side

to their second triumph of the season.

Shanaka scored an unbeaten 16 while Wahab scored 10 not out in 12 deliveries.

Mohammad Hasnain led the bowling attack for the Gladiators with 3/13 in his four overs while Naseem, Nawaz and Qais made one scalp each.

Put into bat first, the Gladiators raised 154/4 despite a dismal start at the back of a magnificent half-century by Iftikhar.

Gladiators openers Jason Roy and Martin Guptill started cautiously against a disciplined bowling attack of Zalmi as they could score 28 runs in the powerplay before the latter lost his wicket in a desperate attempt to go big. Guptill could score 12 off 16.

Following his dismissal, leg-spinner Usman Qadir struck

twice in his consecutive overs; removing Roy (14) and Mohammad Nawaz (2) as the Gladiators slipped to 37/3 in the ninth over.

Following the slump, skipper Sarfaraz Ahmed and Iftikhar anchored the innings with a gritty 74-run partnership for the fourth wicket and broke the shackles.

Meanwhile, Arshad Iqbal castled Sarfaraz in the 17th over to dent the Gladiators' march to a big total. The skipper could score 39 off 30 deliveries and hit five boundaries.

Iftikhar, however, held his ground firm and kept charging in the Zalmi bowlers in the death overs and received significant support from all-rounder Odean Smith, who struck a blistering 12-ball 25.

Iftikhar top-scored for the Gladiators with 50 off 34 deliv-



eries, laced with two boundaries and four sixes.

Qadir led the bowling attack for Zalmi with 2/26 while Arshad

and James Neesham could make one scalp.