



Inclusion of women in all sectors imperative for progress: Ahsan

Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal has termed the inclusion of women in all sectors as imperative for country's rapid progress. He said gender disparity is an economic and social challenge. He regretted that women were still deprived of their rightful role. Ahsan Iqbal said the Ministry of Planning and Development has started many initiatives under different development programs for women empowerment.



Pakistan needs continuity in economic policies to restore investment sentiment: President FPCCI

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI, has stressed that it is the collective wisdom of the entire business, industry and trade community of Pakistan that resumption of IMF's EFF program even after the now long-pending staff-level agreement (SLA) cannot solve Pakistan's economic woes; and, the country will continue to be on the tenterhooks of a default. (Details on Page 6)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

High-powered meeting

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of the Federal Cabinet on Thursday.



Photo: PID

Federal Cabinet approves Hajj 2023, Clean Air Policies

PM approves immediate release of over 26,000 MT of wheat to Gilgit-Baltistan

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Cabinet has approved in principle the Hajj Policy 2023 and National Clean Air Policy. The meeting of the Federal Cabinet that was held in Islamabad on Thursday with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in the chair also approved the National Accountability Amendment Ordinance 2023 on the recommendation of the Ministry of Law and Justice.

While chairing the meeting, the Prime Minister said in order to provide all possible facilities to Pakistani pilgrims during their journey and Hajj, the higher authorities should complete an effective and comprehensive strategy with the cooperation of the Saudi Arabian authorities as soon as possible. Regarding National Clean Air Policy, the Prime Minister said that the Ministry of Climate Change is commendable for

formulating the National Clean Air Policy. He said that necessary steps should be taken for effective implementation of clean air policy. The cabinet was informed that air pollution has increased significantly in Pakistan over the years. The policy proposes raising fuel standards from Euro 5 to Euro 6, stricter regulations for industrial emissions, innovation in agriculture and effective treatment of crop waste incineration,

universal waste disposal practices and low-emission cooking methods. It was further informed that the implementation of the policy will reduce the emission of toxic gases by an average of 40 per cent in the next ten years. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has approved immediate release of 26,666 metric tonnes of wheat to Gilgit-Baltistan for two months. According to a notification

issued by the Prime Minister office, Shehbaz Sharif also directed the Finance Division to allocate 2.5 billion rupees for Gilgit Baltistan to meet urgent requirement of the region. The Prime Minister further directed Ministry of Kashmir Affairs to submit a comprehensive and sustainable plan for price rationalization in consultation with all stakeholders for consideration of Economic Coordination Committee within three days.

Three more terrorists killed in NW

Terrorists were involved in attacks against forces and civilians

RAWALPINDI: The security forces on Thursday gunned down three more terrorists in Datta Khel area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's North Waziristan district, a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Thursday. A day earlier, at least six terrorists were killed by the troops during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in the area. According to the military's media wing, the operation was followed by sanitisation of the area by security forces, during which three more terrorists were killed after an intense exchange of fire. Following the recent shoot-out between the security forces and the militant, the death toll of the terrorists surged to nine. The security forces also recovered weapons and ammunition from the killed terrorists, the ISPR said.

Locals of the area appreciated the security forces' response and expressed their full support to eliminate the menace of terrorism from the area, read the statement. The slain terrorists remained actively involved in terrorist activities against security forces and civilians, the ISPR added. With terrorism rearing its head once again in the country, the civil-military leadership has resolved to accelerate action against the perpetrators of terror attacks in the country. They, meanwhile, during the last National Apex Committee sought national consensus to root out militancy. The recent attacks by terrorists in the country's rural and urban centres, claiming the lives of innocent Pakistanis and law enforcers, have triggered the security forces to speed up operations against the culprits. Agencies

Maryam demands probe into death of PTI worker



LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior vice president and chief organiser Maryam Nawaz on Thursday while holding Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan responsible for death of party worker on Wednesday said that the young generation can play its role in changing the fate of the country. Addressing party's youth leadership in Lahore on Thursday, she said that the former prime minister is using youngsters for his politics instead of thinking about their future. "If any party has a plan for the development of the youth, it is the PML-N," she said adding that there will be large number of youth in the upcoming Parliament. Ms Nawaz also demanded an investigation into the death of the youth outside Zaman Park and said that the country cannot progress without justice. Further firing a broadside at the PTI chairman, Maryam Nawaz said it is unfortunate that Mr Khan is ready to lead a political rally but not to appear before court. The PML-N senior vice president went on to say that the youth is the biggest stakeholder of Pakistan, and PML-N gave

the first youth programme. "We do not believe in hollow slogans but practical work for the youth, adding that we have to provide opportunities for the youth." She said the majority of the country's population consisted of the youth, whether it was rural or urban population. She said there was dire need to give them a right direction so that they could contribute to nation-building. Maryam Nawaz, terming the youth real strength of her party, said that their participation in organisational matters would be ensured. The PML-N had become a youth representative party in a true sense, as the party had credit of initiating various schemes aimed at providing better employment and business opportunities to them. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Shehbaz Sharif worked for making the youth self reliance whenever the PML-N got an opportunity to serve the country, and started various initiatives through financial assistance, scholarships, soft loans, etc. The PML-N chief organiser said that Shehbaz Sharif had introduced education-friendly Punjab Education Endowment Fund project, whereas interest-free loan scheme was also launched by the PML-N government. She said the youth was attracted toward the latest technology by providing them with laptops, while local and international scholarships were also provided to brilliant and deserving students. Agencies

ECP demands Rs15b to conduct Punjab, KP polls

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has urgently demanded a budget of Rs15 billion to ensure the smooth conduct of the upcoming general elections in the two provinces of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa assemblies. In a crucial meeting held on Thursday at the election commission, chaired by Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja, the electoral watchdog said that a sum of Rs20 billion was required for the elections. Out of which only Rs5 billion has been provided to the commission so far, leaving a shortfall of Rs15 billion. The commission has appealed

to the government to provide the necessary funds as soon as possible so that preparations for the elections could continue without any further delays. The finance secretary and home secretary were called into the meeting to ensure the provision of funds and security for the said elections. The finance secretary had been informed by the election commission that a whopping Rs65 billion would be required to hold the upcoming general election across the entire country. In the briefing to the election commission, the finance secretary highlighted the challenging

economic situation in the country and expressed difficulties in providing the necessary funds for upcoming elections. The briefing shed light on the current state of the economy, including issues such as inflation, rising debt, and declining revenue streams. The secretary said that additional personnel would be required in both Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces to ensure the safety and security of the polling process. The secretary election commission informed the commission that apart from the police in both

provinces, 297,000 more personnel would be required in Punjab and 56,000 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The interior secretary had been tasked with arranging for the necessary personnel from the Army, Rangers, and other law enforcement agencies and to inform the Commission once the arrangements have been made. The government of Pakistan had called for a meeting with sensitive agencies, including the Intelligence Bureau (IB), Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), and Counter-Terrorism Departments (CTDs) of both provinces on March 10, 2023.

Besides, the inspector general and chief secretary of both provinces called for a meeting next week. A meeting was currently underway with the Ministry of Defense to discuss the necessary arrangements to ensure a fair and secure electoral process. Furthermore, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has expressed his desire to meet with the commission next week to determine the date of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa elections. This meeting is expected to be crucial in deciding the timeline for the elections in this important province. Agencies

Staff level agreement with IMF to be signed in few days: Dar

Says we are very close to signing the agreement with the IMF

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue Ishaq Dar on Thursday said that the staff level agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) would be signed in next few days as all the requirements had already been fulfilled. "We are very close to signing the agreement with the IMF and it would be done in next few days", he said while addressing a seminar "Reviving economic stability through strengthening of public financial management" organized by the ministry of finance here. The minister said that the Pakistan Muslim League (N) government had also completed the full programme with the Fund earlier in 2013-16 and was committed to complete it now as well despite agreeing to tough conditions by the previous government.



He said a shattered economy was handed over to the coalition government, however it showed commitment and sincerity to the state by acting upon all the tough conditions made by the previous government with the IMF. Ishaq Dar regretted that the petty politics was still being played over Pakistan's economy by spreading rumors about falling into default which he said was totally a nonsense attitude. He said the bad economic crisis

which the coalition government inherited were even more deeper and complex than that in 2013 and 1990s but with utmost sincerity and prudent policies of the government, the country had come out of quagmire. "We are now in a position to move forward with full confidence", he said adding that Pakistan has resilience to meet the challenges as it had huge resources to cope with the problems, but the only thing that had been lack-

ing is lack of consistency in policies and mismanagement in the fiscal sector. The minister informed that the country's debt to GDP ratio was improved from 73% to 69% in few years which meant that there was no need to worry about the debts of the country. He said even the developed countries such as USA and UK had high debt to GDP ratios of over 100%, therefore "We need not to worry about". He said the country's foreign exchange reserves got down due to the fact that the government had been only paying back the debts and not getting new debts for last few months. Ishaq Dar also invited all political parties to sit together for resolving the countries long standing economic issues by setting apart their differences. APP

Marriyum strongly criticizes Imran Khan

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Thursday taking a jibe at Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan, said that the foreign-funded Toshakhana thief, responsible for the return of terrorism in the country, did not appear in the court again today using the pretext of security. In a tweet, she said that there was no security problem for the "Avoid the Judiciary" movement, but if the court summoned him, he made excuses of disability and old age. The minister said that "video link jacked" will not present himself for accountability because he was also "a foreign agent and a watch thief." APP

Pakistan's foreign reserves rise to \$ 9.754b

KARACHI: Pakistan's total liquid foreign reserves further rise to US\$ 9,754 million during the week ended on March 03, 2023 as the central bank received US\$ 500 million from China. The State Bank of Pakistan, in a statement on Thursday, stated that reserves held by the central bank increased by US\$ 487 million to US\$ 4,301.0 million while net foreign reserves held by commercial banks were at US\$ 5,453 million. Following the receipt of

US\$ 500 million as GoP commercial loan from China, the total liquid foreign reserves held by the country reached at US\$ 9,754.0 million as of 03 Mar-2023, it added. In the previous week ended on February 24, total liquid foreign reserves held by the country was US\$ 9,267.9 million. Among these, the foreign reserves held by the SBP were US\$ 3,814.1 million while net foreign reserves held by commercial banks were US\$ 5,453.8 million. Agencies

Mental Health important

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi chairing a follow-up meeting on mental health, at Aiwan-e-Sadr on Thursday.



Photo: PID

President calls for addressing mental health issues

Dr Alvi stresses timely adoption of digital innovation for exponential country's development

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi says mental illness is a major challenge which requires an integrated approach by all stakeholders to cater to the mental health needs of the country.

Chairing a follow-up meeting on mental health at President House in Islamabad on

Thursday, he underscored that all programs and initiatives with regard to mental health issues needed to be combined to help address mental issues in the country.

The President highlighted that 24 percent population of the country was suffering from some form of mental health issues that needed immediate attention of the government,

health professionals, civil society organizations, and the media.

Other participants of the meeting emphasized the need for a collaborative care model to provide services to the people suffering from mental health issues.

Meanwhile, President Dr. Arif Alvi has called for timely adoption of digital innova-

tion for exponential development of the country. Addressing a seminar on digitization in Islamabad on Thursday, he said Pakistan can overcome its economic crisis by connecting its people with digital world.

He stressed on providing better facilities and services to public in order to educate them about digital world. Under-

scoring the importance of creating awareness, the President said targeted messages to the masses can play a pivotal role in this regard.

He said opening a bank account from home has made it possible for women to participate in businesses. Dr Arif Alvi said today transaction worth of trillion of dollars are made online which reflects changing banking sector.

Pakistan warns against curbing of humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan

NEW YORK: At the United Nations, Pakistan has warned that curbing humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan would be morally wrong and politically counter-productive.

Speaking in a debate on the situation in Afghanistan at the United Nations Security Council Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Munir Akram said halting or reducing humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan would hurt the human rights of 28 million Afghan people who are already living in abject poverty.

He called for the full funding of the UN Secretary-General's 4.2 billion dollars recovery



plan for Afghanistan.

Ambassador Akram said that a more comprehensive

international effort is required to revive the Afghan economy and its banking and financial sector as well as implementation of the several connectivity projects.

Expressing major concern over the terrorist attacks within and from Afghanistan, he said that Pakistan has, in recent months, endured a series of such terrorist attacks emanating from externally-funded TTP and from other terrorist outfits in that country.

He also expressed hope that the anomaly of Afghanistan's United Nations representation can soon be addressed. APP

Govt ready to release Toshakhana gifts' records: Khawaja Asif

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif Thursday confirmed the government had given go-ahead for making records of Toshakhana gifts public following a high court's orders.

The move comes days after the government apprised the Lahore High Court (LHC) that the records of the Toshakhana gifts since 2002 were being "declassified" and would be uploaded to the internet after final deliberation.

The LHC on January 19 directed the government to submit an affidavit declaring the details of the Toshakhana gifts as "classified".

In a statement, the defence minister said the record of Toshakhana will be uploaded to the Cabinet Division's website. Authorities on February 22 submitted in the court a sealed record of Toshakhana gifts received by the premiers, the presidents, and the bureaucrats from foreign dignitaries since the creation of Pakistan.

Deputy Attorney General Asad Bajwa apprised the court that it was a "classified" record and the court could open it. The final decision in this regard, however, will be made in the upcoming meeting of the federal cabinet. Agencies

Zhejiang becomes top destination of Pakistan's exports to China



BEIJING: Zhejiang Province has become the top destination of Pakistani exports to China in the past three years, said Ghulam Qadir, Commercial Counsellor at the Pakistani Embassy in China.

In 2022, Zhejiang Province imported \$954.59 million Pakistani products and exported \$5.80 billion to Pakistan, adding that in 2021, Zhejiang Province imported \$968.77 million Pakistani products, up from \$436.47 million in 2020, he told CEN.

Zhejiang's imports from Pakistan in 2022 are mainly Refined Copper products (\$456.97 million), billets and

copper unwrought (\$127.13 million), Copper anodes for electrolytic refining (\$123.43 million), Pine nuts (\$20.29 million) and frozen shrimps and prawns (\$11.14 million), he added.

He further said that Beijing was the second destination in China to import Pakistan products (worth \$603.55 million) and the top destination for Pakistani rice. Last year, Beijing imported \$114.62 million semi or wholly-milled Pakistani rice.

"Pakistan would like to increase its export to China and the solution lies in producing higher value-added and therefore more expensive products so

that even a small increase in exports can lead to a large increase in value.

his year we will focus on enhancing our value-added products in China, therefore we are organizing two big expos on textile and food in Pakistan in May 2023 to bring Chinese investors to build factories in Pakistan", Ghulam Qadir said.

It is to be noted that in 2022, Pakistan's exports to China were \$3.41 billion while China's exports to Pakistan were \$23.089 billion and overall trade between the two countries sustained at \$26.50 billion in 2022. APP

LHC suspends Pemra order banning IK's speeches

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Thursday suspended Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority's (Pemra) order, banning the broadcast of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairperson Imran Khan's speeches.

Justice Shams Mehmood Mirza announced the suspension of the order in a verdict he had reserved earlier today. The judge also admitted the PTI chief's request for the formation of a full bench and sent the case to the LHC chief justice. The judge after announcing the verdict adjourned the hearing till March 13.

On Sunday, Pemra slapped a ban on the live broadcast of the deposed prime minister after he heaped scorn on state institutions amid drama over his arrest from Zaman Park in the Toshakhana case. Subsequently,

Khan filed a petition in the LHC for the annulment of the ban, accusing the regulatory authority of exceeding its constitutional powers by imposing the restriction. Today, LHC's Justice Mirza took up the plea for a hearing and inquired about the grounds of the case.

Khan's lawyer informed the court that an earlier ban imposed by Pemra was also suspended by the Islamabad High Court. At this, Pemra's lawyer opposed the argument and argued that the case was in IHC's jurisdiction and not in the LHC.

"A five-member bench has heard a case of similar nature on Monday," the lawyer maintained while requesting the court to forward the plea to a larger bench. At this, the LHC had reserved its verdict. Agencies

IIOJK Governor's statement another manifestation of Indian leaders' aggressive designs: FO



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan says the statement of the Governor of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir is yet another manifestation of the Indian leaders' aggressive designs, which remain a constant threat to regional peace and stability.

This was stated by Foreign Office Spokesperson, Mumtaz Zahra Baloch at her weekly news briefing in Islamabad today.

She categorically stated that the so-called Governor has made baseless claims which can neither change the facts of history nor the legal status of Jammu and Kashmir that remains internationally recognized disputed territory. She said Jammu and Kashmir as never been,

nor will ever be India's integral part.

She said rather than resorting to false and misleading assertions, India must vacate its illegal occupation of the disputed territory, and let the Kashmiris exercise their inalienable right to self-determination through a free and impartial plebiscite under the UN auspices.

The Spokesperson said Indian leaders must not indulge in political rhetoric against other countries.

Replying to a question, she said Pakistan wants peace in South Asia and desires good relations with all its neighbours, including India. She urged India to take necessary steps to create enabling environment for peace in South Asia and resolve all outstanding issues, including the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in peaceful manner.

PSX continues with bullish trend, gains 226 points

ISLAMABAD: The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Thursday, gaining 226.61 points, a positive change of 0.55 per cent, closing at 41,585.54 points against 41,358.93 points the previous day.

A total of 229,088,710 shares were traded during the day as compared to 162,884,970 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs.7.431 billion against Rs.6.333 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 324 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 205 of them recorded gains and 100 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 19 companies remained unchanged.

PSX continues with bullish trend,

gains 226 points

The three top-trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 26,617,120 shares at Rs.1.31 per share; Telecard Limited with 17,051,000 shares at Rs.7.64 per share and Maple Leaf with 12,410,932 shares at Rs.25.94 per share.

Atlas Honda Ltd witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.19.59 per share price, closing at Rs.280.79, whereas the runner-up was Thal Ind Corp with an Rs.19.34.00 rise in its per share price to Rs.288.90.

Pak Services witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs.152.09 per share closing at Rs.1,875.88; followed by Pak Tobacco with Rs.43.57 decline to close at Rs.675.10. APP

Cabinet approves much needed National Clean Air Policy: Sherry

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman on Thursday said the Federal Cabinet had approved the much needed 'National Clean Air Policy', proposed by the Ministry of Climate Change.

The minister, in a series of tweets, thanked all the cabinet members for unanimously approving the policy.

Sherry Rehman said: "This policy was the need of the hour which has been formulated in consultation and partnership with all stakeholders. It aims to reduce air pollution in Pakistan, improve air quality, reduce annual deaths, improve citizens' health, increase economic activity and ensure food security." She said Pakistan was the third most polluted country in

the world in terms of air pollution in 2021, while Lahore and Karachi were the most polluted cities in Air Quality Index 2022-23.

"Air pollution has become a serious environmental and health problem. In 2019, 235,000 people died due to air pollution in Pakistan." The minister noted that air pollution had shortened the average life expectancy in Pakistan by 2.7 years.

According to the World Bank, she said, air pollution in 2013 caused an economic loss of \$47.8 billion in Pakistan, which was 5.88% of the GDP (gross domestic product).

"We needed a comprehensive policy to reduce these losses. All losses can be mitigated by the technical and administrative measures of this policy," Sherry Rehman said.

Everyone has a role to strengthen the system, state: PM AJK

Says govt will utilize its all available resources for the development of the state

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Terming establishment of a merit based system as his government's top priority, the Prime Minister Azad Kashmir, Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan, has said that bureaucracy plays a vital role in policies implementation.

While addressing a meeting of the top officials of the government here today, the PM, while terming bureaucracy as an asset for the State, said that the government would take full advantage of the abilities of its officers.

He said that it was essentially important that people at the helm of affairs must play their role to take the system forward and contribute towards the development of the State. The PM said that he valued the service



of all those who serve the state selflessly. "Whoever is rendering services, whether in uniform or without uniform, I value him", the PM said. "The government will utilize its all available resources for the develop-

ment of the state and the prosperity of an ordinary citizens", the PM said, adding that steps were being taken on a priority basis to raise the standard of living of the common man.

The Prime Minister said that no

compromise should be made with reference to merit. Terming Azad Kashmir as the defense wall of the country, he said that there was a dire need to strengthen the state that happened to be the country's first defense line.

"If we become weak, what message will go to the other side of the Line of Control?", he asked. The meeting was attended by the chief secretary, principal secretary, and secretaries of all departments to the government.

Reiterating their commitment to serve the state in line with the vision of the prime minister, the top officials of the government on the occasion vowed to work painstakingly for the development of the state, good governance and establishment of merit.

Beauty of Spring

ISLAMABAD: A worker is busy in gardening at a nursery in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

All food items in AJK to be sold with approval of Food Authority: Mansoor Qadir

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MIRPUR: Azad Kashmir Secretary Food Mansoor Qadir Dar has said that on the instructions of Azad Kashmir Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan and Food Minister Chaudhry Ali Shan Soni, all food items in Azad Kashmir will not be sold without the approval of Food Authority. We are not making any kind of compromise. In Azad Kashmir, flour contains all nutritional vitamins, while now Ghee and oil used in food will also be added to vitamins A and D, which will give positive feedback about people's health. Will be compiled. In Azad Kashmir, the Food Authority will also set up a mobile testing lab along with a nutrition unit.

He expressed these views while addressing a one-day workshop organized by Azad Kashmir Food Authority, Pakistan Banaspati Ghee and Nutrition International. And discussed the nutritional benefits of adding D.

Secretary Food Authority of Azad Kashmir Mansoor Qadir Dar said that Azad Kashmir Food Authority is imple-



menting the quality and nutritional efficacy of all food items. The testing lab is being activated. He said that the impression of selling substandard food items in Azad Kashmir is completely wrong. Literacy rate in Azad Kashmir has reached 90%. The Food Authority is also performing its duties with full integrity. Due to which the quality of all kinds of food items is also being checked strictly. He said that they will not issue certificates to ghee and oil produced in Azad Kashmir's ghee and oil industries unless it contains vitamins A and D. If all these nutritional benefits are included,

then no child and youth will be involved in any disease caused by deficiency of Vitamin A and D. He highly appreciated the seminar organized by Pakistan Ghee Banaspati and International Nutrition. He said that such seminars should be held in all three divisions of Azad Kashmir so that the people of the region can consume ghee and oil which contains all the nutrients.

In relation to awareness of food fortification, Mr. Zameer Haider, National Program Manager, Intiaz Ali Shah, National Program Manager, and Mubasher Sharif, Zonal Manager, visit-

ed the Food Authority of Azad Kashmir and other institutions including health, social welfare, animal affairs, municipal corporation and educational institutions. The representatives participated in the Food Department, Director Food Sardar Tariq Khan, Deputy Director Muzaffarabad Division, Asif Sajawal and Mirpur Division Chaudhry Muhammad Maruf Food Safety Officers from all over Azad Kashmir, Assistant Food Safety Officers from Mirpur Kotli Bhambar, Poonch Muzaffarabad, Haveli and In addition to Neelam, electric and media representatives also participated in the workshop. National Program Manager Zameer Haider and Intiaz Ali said that mixing fortified vitamin A and D in oil and ghee besides iron zinc in flour (flour) and iodine in salt. How important it is and in the countries where food fortification is done, an increase in health growth has been seen. Former President Javed Iqbal Chaudhry called the fortification in ghee and oil a happy future. Dr. Tania Maira Kausar and Asma Bukhari Advocate from other organizations also expressed their views.

WAWA organizes walk in Lower Waziristan

Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: A walk was arranged by Wana Welfare Association (WAWA) regarding mass enrollment in South Waziristan Lower Wana, in which Additional Deputy Commissioner South Waziristan Lower Kashmir Khan, District Police Officer Shabir Hussain Marwat, President of Wana Welfare Association Rahmat Ullah, tribal elders Wana Councilors Alliance, PPP, ANP, Jamaat-e-Islami and principals of schools, different schools students, including people belonging to different schools of thought, participated in thousands of students.

The students of Musa Nika Public High School and College Wana, New Iqra Public High School Wana, Government High School Wana, Umma Children's Academy Wana, Government High School Kari Kot participated in this walk.

The participants of the walk carried



placards and banners in their hands, on which various slogans were written. Why are government schools

closed? Education is the guarantee of peace, every child in school, knowledge is light,

Iqra University signs MoU with Islamic Azad University



Our Correspondent

KARACHI: Prof. Dr. Wasim Qazi, Vice Chancellor Iqra University, and Dr. Mohsen Moradi, President Islamic Azad University, Mashhad and Rizvi-e-Khorasan province, signed MOU to expand its network of international collaboration.

Speaking on the occasion, Consul General Iran, Hassan Nourian wished to promote multifold relation between the countries through such collaborations. The MoU, he went on to say, will enable the students and faculty to explore vast opportunities in higher education, and research initiatives. It is hoped that this partnership will accelerate scientific ties and research initiatives at Iqra University and Azad Islamic University. Furthermore, this collaboration could help both universities moving up the global ranking ladder of international universities.

Prof. Dr. Wasim Qazi, on the occasion, said that in addition to exchange of our students and faculty, we aspire to exchange the expertise and knowledge in various sectors. The collaboration will also provide opportunities for joint research and development projects, which will benefit both institutions and their respective countries. He went on saying that such partnership will give a boost to education in both regions.

Dr. Jalal Dorakhshah, Vice-Chancellor for International Affairs and Foreign students, Islamic Azad University, Islamic Republic of Iran, said that Islamic Azad University is the third largest private university system in the world, which currently has enrollment of more than 1.2 million local students and 60,000 international students. The university has an outstanding reputation in the region with its 350 branches scattered across the country and various campuses around the globe with 10 research institutes in Iran and five out of Iran.

The signing ceremony was attended by Dr. Masoud Akbarzadeh, Vice Chancellor of Islamic Azad University of Sistan and Baluchistan Province, Mr. Said Talebi Niya, Cultural Attache, Dr. Ali Soroorimajid, Consultant and Chief of Islamic Azad University Presidential Center, Public Relations, and Provincial coordination, Mr. Muhammad Rahimi, Visa Consul, and various other high-profile officials.

Int'l Women's Day celebration held at Hamdard



Staff Reporter

KARACHI: On the occasion of World's Women Day the Hamdard Laboratories (Waqf) Pakistan organised a Women's Day Carnival at Bilwal stadium, Hamdard Public School, where different fun filled activities were organized for the women staff members of Hamdard group including cricket matches, badminton, balloon shooting, arm wrestling, tug of war, carrom, camel riding, dart game and volleyball matches.

The President of Hamdard Foundation Pakistan, Ms. Sadia Rashid graced the event as Chief Guest along with Dr. Ahsana Dar—Dean Faculty of Eastern Medicine, Hamdard University while Prof. Malahat Kaleem Sherwani Director Bait al-Hikmah, faculty members Prof Dr Shamim Akhter dean faculty of Pharmacy, M. S. Kausar coordinator to Vice Chancellor HU and other staff members were also present on the occasion.

While praising the performance of women athletes, Ms. Sadia Rashid remarked that in Islam, women are endowed with all the fundamental rights that are not granted to them in any other society. She further stated that the women in our community possess a wide range of talents and capabilities and can achieve great feats provided they are given positive opportunities.

Int'l Women Day celebrated in Balochistan

QUETTA: International Women Day 2023 was celebrated in Quetta, Balochistan. At an event organized by Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress (GRASP) a project funded by the European Union and implemented by International Trade Centre, rural women entrepreneurs were celebrated. The event was held in partnership with UN Women, Food and Agriculture Organization, UNDP, UNFPA, and Women Development Department Balochistan.

Zahid Saleem Additional Chief Secretary, Home Department graced the occasion as chief guest. Other notable participants included Madam Raheela Durrani, Ex, Speaker Balochistan, Madam Roshan Barucha (Ex-Senator), Ms. Fouzia (chairperson PCSW) and head of all UN agencies at the provincial level.

During the event, the organizations updated the attendees on their gender focused work in the province, and women from various districts came and spoke about their business operations, the challenges they face when it comes to growth, and how they are conversing with the stakeholders to highlight the challenges and address them.

The focus was on innovation and technology for gender equality. A persistent gender gap in digital access keeps women from unlocking technology's full potential. Their under-representation in STEM education and careers remains a major barrier to

their participation in tech design and governance. And the pervasive threat of online gender-based violence—coupled with a lack of legal recourse—too often forces them out of the digital spaces they do occupy.

GRASP has a focus on rural women empowerment, and working in 10 districts of Balochistan, the project is working to improve the business environment, and one of the components is ensuring gender representation across all programme outputs and connecting women entrepreneurs to digital markets.

A number of trainings on enterprise development have resulted in house led businesses run by woman to make online profiles and tap on digital marketplaces such as Daraz.pk and Alibaba to tap virtual markets. Women farmers and business owners have also been connected to leading companies in agriculture and horticulture in Pakistan to ensure training on best practices, and better sales.

ITC GRASP provincial lead Jahanzeb Khan said during the ceremony that the project is strengthening women entrepreneurs through policy reforms, value addition, market linkages and access to finance. A study on availability of Climate Smart Technologies in Pakistan has been conducted; provided drip irrigation systems to SMEs, trained over 250 SMEs on e-Commerce and digital platforms, and provided matching grants for green technologies.



Islamabad

15° - 23° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 5:04 am
Zohr 12:19 pm
Asr 4:29 pm
Maghrib 6:10 pm
Isha 7:33 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

COMPLAINTS

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

Rana Tanveer visits FDE STEM Makerspaces

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister of Federal Education and Professional Training Rana Tanveer Hussain visited FDE STEM Makerspaces developed in collaboration with Robotmea in Islamabad Model School for Girls G-6/1-3 Islamabad.

Minister for Federal Education and professional Training Rana Tanveer visited STEM Makerspace established under Knowledge Economy Initiative PSDP funded project Sponsored by Ministry and Executed by Federal Directorate of Education through M/s Robotmea established at Islamabad model School for Girls G/6-1-3 Islamabad on International Women's day to highlight the accomplishments of Women in technology and encourage students to pursue careers in the fields.

Secretary Education Waseem Ajmal Chaudhary and Director General, FDE welcomed the Minister while Inam Jahangir Director Planning and Ms Riffat Jabeen Director Academics along with their team briefed about the project.

Maroof Cardiovascular Centre concludes Women's Health Awareness month

'The country needs to focus on congenital heart issues as one in 10,000 newborns has a congenital heart problem'

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: February is observed as women's heart health awareness month worldwide. Maroof Cardiovascular Centre, as part of its continuous outreach program, has organized several health awareness sessions at educational institutions, corporate offices, and multinational organizations throughout the month of February, which was concluded on International Women's Day.

Maroof International Hospital's (MIH) Cardiovascular Centre on Wednesday arranged a women's heart health awareness session to educate people about the prevention and treatment aspects of Cardiovascular disease (CVD) among men, women & children.

The Medical Director / Head of the accidents & Emergency Dept addressed the event. Dr. Mir Waheed said that the hospital has a full spectrum of holistic cardiac care services for patients.

He said that the hospital is committed to providing the best



healthcare in the region with an aim to ensure a standard of care that is world-class. He added state-of-the-art facilities are available at Maroof Cardiovascular Centre.

He said that the centre is fully equipped with all the required specialized equipment to be used for the critical care of the patients. He added the centre offers its services 24 hours a day with a team of expert doctors and paramedical staff to serve the patients.

Head of the Cardiology Department, Dr. Omar Idris Mufti, said that various awareness activities were arranged to educate people, especially women, to care for themselves and empower them in their health care decisions.

He said that cardiologists and surgeons have an important role in initiatives for women's heart health as women's heart health often differs from men's in terms of disease onset, presentation of



symptoms, diagnostic disparities, and patient outcomes. He said that, per WHO report, 12 patients die every hour in Pakistan due to heart attacks. He added that, per another report, 30 percent of deaths in Pakistan are due to cardiac arrest.

He added that educating people about immediate treatment for such patients is needed to avoid future medical complications. He also urged adopting a healthy lifestyle to prevent heart disease,

besides a balanced diet and regular exercise.

Dr. Habib Ahmed Khan said that high cholesterol levels are a major risk for cardiac arrest and urged people to check their cholesterol levels to prevent heart diseases regularly. He said a normal cholesterol level is good, but excessive amounts are dangerous.

Pediatric Cardiac Surgeon Dr. Mahim Malik said the country needs to focus on congenital heart

issues as one in 10,000 newborns has a congenital heart problem while 50,000 to 80,000 babies are born every year with such complications; however, 80 percent of such problems are curable. Dr. Imran Ghani, Dr. Noman Izhar, Dr. Tayaba, Dr. Marukh Zahoor, Dr. Noman Izhar also spoke on high blood pressure, the rising trend of coronary artery disease and CABG in women, and high cholesterol levels.

CCP holds seminar on International Women's Day

Emphasizes Role of Women-led SMEs in Driving Economic Growth



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) held a seminar on International Women's Day to discuss the crucial role of Small & Medium Enterprises in the economy with a special focus on contributions and challenges of women entrepreneurs.

The theme of the seminar was, "Women in SMEs: Challenges and way forward" and it was attended by a wide array of stakeholders including the representatives of small businesses, chambers of commerce & industry, commercial counsellors of foreign embassies in Pakistan, women-led SMEs, and regulators. The Chairperson CCP Ms. Rahat Kaunain Hassan along with the senior officers including female staff members were in attendance.

In her opening address, Ms. Rahat Kaunain Hassan highlighted the critical role of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in driving economic growth. She explained that the choice of SMEs as the seminar's theme was due to their impact and estimated contribution of up to 40% of GDP in the economy and being one of the key components of CCP's strategic vision 2020-2023. While discussing the country's economic challenges, she emphasized the importance of enforcing competition principles in such times of crisis as a necessity. Ms. Hassan also emphasized the need to promote women's economic empowerment that will change the economic landscape.

The CCP presented its draft report on "Improving Economic Efficiency of SMEs." The report identifies access to

finance as a major barrier to SMEs. A survey of 50 financial institutions was conducted in 2021 which showed that only 30 out of the 50 lend to the SME sector. Among these 30 FIs, the lending is skewed towards medium enterprises and only two were able to achieve the indicative lending targets set by SBP in the sector. SBP prepared National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS) in 2015 in which SME sector was identified as a priority sector and the target set for SME lending was 17% of private sector financing, to achieve by 2020. However, the SME lending was only 5.40% of the private sector lending in September 2022 and over the last 5 years the lending has remained between 6-7%. The report recommends that the targets need to be enhanced and aggressively followed.

The report also emphasizes the need for an SME Act, an effective SME banking network with focussed SME desks, as well as redefining SMEs to include micro-enterprises with distinct thresholds as per global standards.

Addressing the session, "Empowering Women Entrepreneurs in Pakistan: Challenges and the Way Forward," Founder and CEO at Base6 Private Limited, Dr. Farah Faris Qureshi urged the government to simplify policies and provide an enabling environment for small businesses in the health sector, particularly those run by women. CEO of Pronto Promo, Ms. Saulat Salahuddin highlighted the challenges faced by SMEs in Pakistan, saying that there is no ecosystem for entrepreneurship to flourish both in terms of knowledge, skills, and technology.

Former AJK President calls on President Barrister Sultan



Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: Former President Raja Zulfikar Khan called on AJK President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry here on Thursday.

During the meeting, the duo discussed in detail the issues of mutual interest and the prevailing political and human rights situation in the Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Voicing their serious concern over the continued bloodshed and Indian state terrorism, they agreed to intensify efforts to highlight the issue of Kashmir at the global level.

On the occasion, Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry inquired about the health of former president Raja Zulfikar Khan and prayed for his good health and long life. The former President was accompanied by his son Raja Ali Zulfikar Khan.

Federal Ombudsman vows to resolve public grievances



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Ombudsman Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi has vowed to resolve public disputes/cases of the lower strata of the society through Informal Resolution of Disputes (IRD) system on priority basis. Federal Ombudsman asked his Investigating Officers (IOs) to visit far flung areas to resolve grievances at their doorstep in the shortest possible time.

He said that the Wafaqi Mohtaisb Secretariat has earned public acclaim for its role and the services it has rendered since inception. He was chairing a progress review meeting of Investigating Officers at Head Office, Islamabad. All the IOs from Head Office attended while 17 regional offices participated through video link. He was informed that as compared with last year 32,006 complaints were received with the increase of 56% while 30,132 complaints were disposed of with the increase of 53% in the first two months of 2023.

He was further informed that 66% increase was recorded in receipt of online complaints. He expressed satisfaction over the disposal of complaints in the first two months of 2023. The Ombudsman office resolved these cases by utilizing innovative measures and adopting simple procedures, without taking additional budget or employing human resources, he added. In the context of non settlement of pension, gratuity and insurance claims of poor citizens by the Federal agencies on the ground of non-availability of funds, the Federal Ombudsman called upon his Advisors to submit to him the details to take up the matter with the relevant agencies.

Pakistan, IMF to reach staff level agreement within a few days: Bilal Kayani

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Coordinator on Economy and Energy Bilal Azhar Kayani says staff level agreement with the IMF will pave the way for financial inflows from other multilateral institutions as well.

In a Radio Pakistan Podcast, he said the staff level agreement with the IMF is expected to be reached within a few days.

As part of the short-term measures for addressing the prevailing economic challenges, Bilal Azhar Kayani said the government is fully determined to complete the IMF programme and enhance exports as well as foreign exchange reserves to a comfortable level of 18 billion dollars.

He said reducing burden on people is another important priority. Despite financial constraints,

he said, the government increased allocation of funds for Benazir Income Support Programme.

A mega Ramadan Package has also been announced for the downtrodden segments of the society. In addition, he said, the flood-affected people will also be given special attention under the short-term strategy. He expressed confidence that short-term targets will be achieved before the next general elections.

Answering a question regarding tax and revenue collection, the Coordinator said the government is striving to achieve the revenue targets.

Coming to a medium-term strategy, Bilal Azhar Kayani emphasized on enhancing Foreign Direct Investment and exports. He also underlined the need for value addition and diversification of exports with a special focus on

facilitation of the youth in the start-ups and increase in agricultural produce.

Suggesting long-term measures, Bilal Azhar Kayani said Pakistan's progress will remain elusive without enrolling the out-of-school children, improving quality of education, and providing better health facilities. Women empowerment is another key feature in the long-term strategy.

Responding to a question about the expected results from the ongoing austerity drive, he said the coalition government under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has been taking all possible measures, including curtailing expenditures, to bring economic stability.

Giving context to the current difficult economic situation in the country, Bilal Azhar Kayani said the PTI government's repet-

itive mistakes, incompetence of its economic team and breach of agreement with the IMF led to the current economic crisis.

He said the PTI, on realization of end of its government in last February 2022, unrealistically reduced prices of petroleum products and electricity and also froze them. He said public debt during the PTI government increased by 75 percent from 25,000 to 44,000 billion rupees.

Presenting a comparison with the PTI government, Bilal Azhar Kayani said during the PML-N government in 2013-18, inflation was low and fiscal deficit was under control.

In his response to a question regarding the recent upgradation of Radio Pakistan studios having state-of-the-art facilities, the Coordinator of the Prime Minister said he was amazed to see the new



face of the national broadcaster that harmonizes with the modern-day technological demands.

He said Radio Pakistan is

a national institution, and its growth and sustainability are vital for building and promoting national narrative. He suggest-

ed that Radio Pakistan may earn revenue through various initiatives under public-private partnership.

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Why US-EU relations are in flux

Andrew Hammond

Charles Dickens, perhaps the greatest British novelist of the Victorian era, memorably started his novel "A Tale of Two Cities" with the phrase: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times."

This apparently contradictory statement has enduring relevance in multiple aspects of world affairs, including as a descriptor for the EU-US relationship during the presidency of Joe Biden. These ties are characterized by contradictory impulses in the post-Trump era, as will be highlighted on Friday in a meeting between Biden and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

On the one hand, there is a generally high level of cooperation and alignment in the Ukraine war following Russia's invasion. On the other hand, significant tensions exist in other areas, including over the US Inflation Reduction Act.

On the positive side of the ledger, there is no question that US-EU ties have largely recovered from the nadir of Donald Trump's controversial presidency. This is seen most visibly in their strong cooperation over Ukraine, which recalls the Cold War era, when the transatlantic partners served as the West's geopolitical linchpin, alongside allies like

Japan and Canada, against the then-Soviet Union.

However, in other areas of the bilateral relationship, there are much more mixed signals. This includes policy toward China, where the Biden administration would like to see much greater synchronicity between the US and the EU.

The relationship between the EU27 and China has chilled significantly since the pandemic. Concerns include the opaque way that Beijing is perceived by Europe to have handled the outbreak of the coronavirus crisis in early 2020, as well as the new China security law in Hong Kong and Uighur human rights in Xinjiang.

However, the Biden team nevertheless has concerns over the degree to which the EU might still accommodate China, given the significant economic ties between the two powers, potentially including the ratification of the Comprehensive Agreement on Investment. This is a big China-EU economic deal, which would see European and Chinese firms get better access to each other's market. It is currently in the political long grass in Brussels.

Perhaps the most challenging element of the EU-US relationship right now is the Inflation Reduction Act, a massive \$369 billion investment package for clean tech, which poses a major threat to the EU's goal of remaining a preem-

inent global center for the green industrial revolution. There is a growing sense on the continent that its edge in this race is imperiled by the assertive industrial strategy of the US.

According to a recent report by Climate Power, an independent climate change communications group, more than 100,000 new clean energy jobs were created in the US in 90-plus new projects in the first six months after the Inflation Reduction Act was signed into law. This highlights why the act has sent shockwaves across Europe in recent months, with its massive subsidies for US green industries in areas from renewable power to electric cars. Key EU politicians and firms assert that the law discriminates against those exporting to the US and fear it will lure a critical mass of their businesses, costing jobs and shuttering factories in the green tech sector.

In response, the European Commission has announced a new "Green Deal Industrial Plan for the Net-Zero Age," which will bring in a series of measures, including loosening state aid rules and a new European sovereignty fund. The latter is intended to preserve the EU's competitive advantage on critical and emerging technologies, including biotechnology and clean tech.

Instead of competition in this area, Von der Leyen wants to see a more cooperative framework, akin to the one

agreed earlier this week with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau during her first trip to Canada since her elevation to European Commission president. More details about what has been depicted as an EU-Canada "green alliance" are anticipated at the bilateral High-Level Dialogue on Climate in the coming months.

Europe is looking to Canada as a minerals-rich country, as it has an abundance of potash, palladium, niobium and uranium. With Europe heavily dependent on sourcing raw materials, including from China, it is looking to decrease its risk on this dependency by using "trusted partners," including Canada. It is not just Brussels driving this, but individual EU member states too. Last year, for instance, Germany reached an agreement with Canada that will see the latter export hydrogen to Berlin from 2025.

Going forward, Europe hopes that the US will also turn toward a more cooperative stance on the green economy. If not, the political imperative will grow to try and restore what Brussels wants to be a global level playing field. Von der Leyen wants to preserve Europe's economic attractiveness in what some have termed a green subsidy arms race. Courtesy: Arab News

Andrew Hammond is an Associate at LSE IDEAS at the London School of Economics.



Moving towards renewable, clean energy

Renewable energies are sources of clean, inexhaustible and increasingly competitive energy. They differ from fossil fuels principally in their diversity, abundance and potential for use anywhere on the planet, but above all in that they produce neither greenhouse gases – which cause climate change – nor polluting emissions. Their costs are also falling and at a sustainable rate, whereas the general cost trend for fossil fuels is in the opposite direction in spite of their present volatility. Growth in clean energies is unstoppable, as reflected in statistics produced annually by the International Energy Agency (IEA): they represented nearly half of all new electricity generation capacity installed in 2014, when they constituted the second biggest source of electricity worldwide, behind coal. According to the IEA, world electricity demand will have increased by 70% by 2040—its share of final energy use rising from 18 to 24% during the same period – driven mainly by the emerging economies of India, China, Africa, the Middle East and South-East Asia.

Clean energy development is vital for combating climate change and limiting its most devastating effects. 2019 was the second warmest year on record. The Earth's temperature has risen by an average 0.85 °C since the end of the 19th Century, states National Geographic in its special November 2015 issue on climate change. Meanwhile, some 1.1 billion inhabitants (17% of the world population) do not have access to electricity. Equally, 2.7 billion people (38% of the population) use conventional biomass for cooking, heating and lighting in their homes—at serious risk to their health.

The transition to an energy system based on renewable technologies will have very positive economic consequences on the global economy and on development. According to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), doubling the renewable energy share in electricity generation to 57% worldwide by 2030 will be necessary for meeting the Paris Agreement targets.

Spending billions of dollars on the import of furnace oil and LNG resulted in the economic crises in Pakistan. The energy produced by the furnace oil and LNG is very much expensive that also resulted in the increase in circular debt.

The government needs to move towards renewable energy sources including wind power, solar power, hydro power and coal power. We can produce approximately 30,000MW electricity through wind power. In Turkey, the geysers installed in the residential apartments are solar-based. There is a dire need to install major appliances on solar panels in Pakistan. It is the right time that we must get rid of the energy production through furnace oil.

Russia-Ukraine conflict: The world needs its Uncle Sam back

Khalaf Ahmad Al-Habtoor

With the Russian-Ukrainian war now in its second year, more than 8,000 people have been killed across the two parties and no less than 13,000 people are reported to have been injured, according to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. The US Joint Chiefs of Staff stated late last year that Russian military casualties had exceeded 100,000 soldiers, a toll similar to the number of casualties incurred by the Ukrainian military. These are harrowing figures. The human losses are grave, and nothing can compensate for the sacrifices of the roughly one-third of Ukrainian civilians who have left their homes to flee the war and find a haven for their families. Not to mention the unspeakable economic losses.

No doubt that Ukraine is by far the biggest economic casualty of the war. According to the latest estimates, Ukraine's economic output has fallen by as much as 35 percent. The country's infrastructure has suffered severe and long-term damage. Even with international economic assistance in the postwar period, production in Ukraine will not return to its prewar level for several decades.

As for the economic losses outside Ukrainian borders, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development has estimated that the war might cost the global economy about \$2.8 trillion in production losses. Furthermore, it is still too early to assess the long-term effects of the war on the global economy. Since the start of the war, most NATO and EU members have provided direct financial, military and

humanitarian assistance amounting to more than \$150 billion, of which the US alone has contributed more than \$75 billion.

Signs of resentment have begun to emerge in the US due to the increasing cost of the war to American taxpayers. Even the US media, which was spearheading the confrontation against Russia, has started questioning the

percent more — than every nation in Europe combined."

There is no apparent winner in this war. The picture so far has been dominated by ongoing destruction and bloodshed in a war that could have been nipped in the bud had the parties concerned shown responsibility in dealing with it early on. What is required of US President



war's course.

Michael McKenna wrote in The Washington Times this week: "The line between providing 'assistance' and being an actual combatant nation is becoming very, very diaphanous." He added: "It would be one thing if we were one of many countries providing such military aid. The reality is that the Europeans have produced mostly conversation. The United States has given more to Ukraine — about 50

Joe Biden's administration is to seek dialogue and find a peaceful solution.

Throughout history, Uncle Sam has played the role of a big brother in resolving conflicts worldwide. The US administration is required to restore this role to save Ukrainian and Russian lives, and to reduce homelessness and starvation. The US administration must reconsider its actions and reexamine the possible consequences of the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

McKenna pondered why the White House has never "articulated how they imagine this story ends beyond the Disney-like version in which Ukraine 'wins' and everyone lives happily ever after."

As uncertainty prevails, the media will go further in its campaigns against the US administration's policies in the Russia-Ukraine war. Both warring parties will continue to suffer human losses, while the economic losses under which the European and American peoples groan will increase.

China has put forward an initiative to resolve the Russia-Ukraine conflict, calling for an immediate ceasefire. However, the Biden administration was dismissive. Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban called for direct talks between the US and Russian presidents about the war in Ukraine. Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijarto also warned that we are no longer in the 24th hour, but the 25th, "and this war must end immediately... or there could be great trouble."

It all adds up to show that we might be on the verge of a great world war that could turn into a nuclear confrontation if peace does not immediately prevail on the Russian-Ukrainian front. Therefore, I call upon President Biden to take a historical position and work to find a solution for the conflict and end the war; otherwise, thousands of intercontinental nuclear missiles will cross the skies and no country, not even the US, will be spared. Courtesy: Arab News

Khalaf Ahmad Al-Habtoor is a prominent UAE businessman and public figure. He is renowned for his views on international political affairs, his philanthropic activity, and his efforts to promote peace. He has long acted as an unofficial ambassador for his country abroad.

Time for Change

Tajdar Munir

"We can deny the reality but cannot avoid its consequences". The most revolutionary events changed the world slowly and gradually. But, French Revolution (1789-1799), changed the world at once. The world changed not only political but also socially and economically.

There were bad trouble and complicated problem gathered in France. Which not only controlled France but also restrict the World. In fact, taking breath was became quite difficult. So, their Surpassed life compelled them to take out from depressed life. In result, they take slogan of freedom, equality and fraternity. And, these changes occurred only because of Revolution.

In human history, it is crystal clear that no nation or society remain same. There is a changing factor in their lives internally or externally. However, it is truly said that "Change is foe of past". It defeat all traditions, old customs, and inequality. So, No one can denying the fact that Change is only surviving skill in this Contemporary era. Those who didn't bring change with time, their life punches them back.

Nowadays, Pakistan is stand on the edge of revolution. The people of the country are fed up with the disturbance situations. The nobility class have squabbled middle class lives. They make their lives disgrace, dishonour and shameful. In doing so, they are also mentally disturbed. However, both classes need rapid change and circumstances are awaited for change. Now, it is to be seen that how change comes with revolution or turmoil. In short, those who are living in silly environment, they must have a look at the history of great nations.

Tajdar Munir is a student of Sindh University.

International Women's Day

Serena Hotels embracing equity by celebrating women's services

Begum Samina Alvi calls for providing women inclusive and fair working environment



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels hosted a networking breakfast to celebrate International Women's Day to honour, appreciate, and laud women who have excelled through

achieving success in their professional careers. The invitees included members of the diplomatic community, representatives of international agencies, corporate sector, representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Serena associates, and other women who have been

striving to change behaviours for the betterment of women. These women are focused on paving way for the young and talented women in exploring their potential for career development and economic independence. The meet and greet started in the foyer

where the women had an immersive experience of arts and crafts on display, along with an auditory delight of soulful melodies with a beautiful cake was cut towards the end of the ceremony, re-iterating the celebration of Women's Day.

The Chief Guest for the occasion was the First Lady, Begum Samina Arif Alvi, the guest list included accomplished women from all walks of life who graced the occasion with their collective presence. Keynote speakers were, Ms. Naima Ansari, who has been part of the Islamabad Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Ms. Ayla Majeed, the first Muslim, South Asian, Pakistani woman in the role of Vice President (VP) of the ACCA and Ms. Kashmala Khan Former Federal Ombud-

person for Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace, shared their experiences with the audience.

Begum Samina Alvi also spoke about the efforts that the government has been making for gender parity through different initiatives and emphasized on the importance of providing women an inclusive and fair working environment, regardless of the field they choose.

Serena Hotels has been celebrating the International Women's Day for almost a decade, the company truly believes in gender equality. The Serena Hotels is the only company in Pakistan to be EDGE (Economic Dividends for Gender Equality) Certified, and is a founding member of the Male Champions of Change, Pakistan Chapter.

Chinese judiciary pledges to serve Chinese modernization

The country's high-quality development needs high-quality judicial service

BELJING: Chinese courts and prosecuting agencies will strive to serve Chinese modernization, particularly the country's high-quality development, Chief Justice Zhou Qiang and Procurator-General Zhang Jun said Tuesday.

A justice system with modernized capacity will contribute to Chinese modernization and provide powerful judicial services for building a modern socialist country in all respects, Zhou said when delivering a work report of the Supreme People's Court (SPC) at the ongoing session of the 14th National People's Congress (NPC).

The country's high-quality development needs high-quality judicial service, Zhou added.

The SPC plans to issue guidelines to improve business environment for the private sector. Chinese courts will take resolute actions to protect legitimate property rights and interests of private businesses and entrepreneurs, according to the SPC report.

Judicial policies will be upgraded in terms of property rights, market access, fair competition and social credit to facilitate the development of a national unified market, while judicial protection of intellectual property rights will be intensified and actions taken to contain monopoly and unfair competition.

Courts will also better serve the



country's higher-level opening up by building the capacity of foreign-related justice system.

When reporting the work of the Supreme People's Procuratorate (SPP) at the NPC session on the same day, Zhang also pledged that prosecuting agencies will fully leverage the rule of law to facilitate high-quality development.

Serious economic crimes will be punished to the full extent of the law, and prosecuting agencies will support innovation-driven development and enhance protection on intellectual property rights, Zhang said.

Both courts and prosecuting agencies have made notable progress in serving the country's economic development over the past five years, in terms of business environment, economic security, market competition and higher-level opening-up.

From 2018 to 2022, wrong verdicts of 209 major criminal cases involving property rights had been corrected, and 290 business operators acquitted. "All enterprises were treated equally no matter whether they are state-owned or private, domestic or foreign-funded, small or big," Zhou said.

During the same period, courts across the country concluded 95,000 foreign-related commercial cases and 76,000 maritime cases. A total of 10 special courts were established to handle international commercial disputes.

China prosecuted 13,000 people over crimes concerning the rights of trademarks, patents, copyrights and commercial secrets in 2022, a 51.2-percent rise from 2018, according to Zhang.

Over the past five years, a total of 621,000 people were prosecuted over disruption of market and economic order, up 32.3 percent from the previous five years.

Prosecuting agencies also endeavored to protect the legitimate rights of both Chinese and foreign parties when handling more than 20,000 foreign-related criminal cases in the five years.

High-quality development in China is in great need of supports and services from judicial agencies, and the agencies should also continue streamlining and reforming themselves, said Tang Weijian, a professor with the law school of Renmin University of China.

"I believe that the prospect for socialist rule of law in China will have a brighter future, and so is Chinese modernization," said Tang, also a deputy to the 14th NPC. Xinhua

Taliban governor of Afghan province killed in suicide attack

MAZAR-I-SHARIF: The Taliban governor of Afghanistan's Balkh province, known for fighting against Daesh terrorists, was killed in a suicide attack at his office on Thursday, officials said.

The killing, a day after he met top government officials visiting from Kabul, makes Mohammad Dawood Muzammil one of the highest-ranking figures slain since the Taliban stormed back to power in 2021.

Violence across Afghanistan has dramatically dropped since the Taliban seized control, but the security situation has again deteriorated with Daesh claiming several deadly attacks. "Two people, including Mohammad Dawood Muzammil,

the governor of Balkh, have been killed in an explosion this morning," local police spokesman Asif Waziri said, adding that the blast happened on the second floor of his office, in the provincial capital Mazar-i-Sharif.

"It was a suicide attack. We don't have information as to how the suicide bomber reached the office of the governor," he said, adding that two people were also wounded.

The explosion happened moments after the governor arrived in his office, said Khairuddin, who was wounded in the incident and in a hospital in Mazar-i-Sharif. "There was a bang. I fell on the ground," he said, adding

that he witnessed a friend lose a hand in the blast.

Authorities deployed extra security at the governorate, who forbade journalists from taking photos, an AFP correspondent reported from near the site of the blast.

Muzammil was "martyred in an explosion by the enemies of Islam," tweeted government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid.

Muzammil was initially appointed governor of the eastern province of Nangarhar, where he led the fight against Daesh militants, before being moved to Balkh last year. On Wednesday, he met two deputy prime ministers and other senior officials visiting

Balkh to review a major irrigation project in northern Afghanistan, according to a government statement.

Daesh has emerged as the biggest security challenge to the Taliban government since last year, carrying out attacks against Afghan civilians as well as foreigners and foreign interests.

Several attacks have rocked Balkh, including in Mazar-i-Sharif last year, some claimed by Daesh.

In January, a suicide bomber killed at least 10 people when he blew himself up near the foreign ministry in Kabul, in an attack claimed by Daesh. The Taliban and Daesh share an austere Sunni Islamist ideol-

ogy, but the latter are fighting to establish a global "caliphate" instead of the Taliban's more inward-looking goal of ruling an independent Afghanistan.

At least five Chinese nationals were wounded in December when gunmen stormed a hotel popular with businesspeople in Kabul.

That raid was claimed by Daesh, as was an attack on Pakistan's embassy in Kabul in December that Islamabad denounced as an "assassination attempt" against its ambassador. Two Russian embassy staff members were killed in a suicide bombing outside their mission in September in another attack claimed by Daesh. AFP

Kashmir Conference in House of Commons London held

Spokesman Report

LONDON: Jammu Kashmir Self Determination Movement International team led by Founder Chairman Raja Najabat Hussain Sitara E Pakistan organised Kashmir Conference in House of Commons London.

The event was attended by Former Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan MLA, Professor Taqdees Gillani MLA Focal Person PM AJK, Shadow Minister Naz Shah MP, Debbie Abrahams MP Chairperson APPG on Kashmir in the British, Shadow Minister Barrister Imran Hussain MP Senior Vice Chairman APPG on Kashmir, Lord Qurban Hussain Secretary APPG on Kashmir, Andrew Gwynne MP Chairman Labour Friends of Kashmir, James Daly MP Chairman Conservative Friends of Kashmir, Shadow Minister Dr Afzal Khan MP, Rachel Hopkins MP Vice Chairperson Labour Friends of Kashmir, Mohammad Yaseen MP from Bedford, Robbie Moore MP from Keighley, Sam Terry MP from Ilford, Kate Holme MP of Blackburn, Dr Lord Wajid Khan of Burnley, Former Commissioner Overseas Kashmiris Raja Zubair Iqbal Kiani, Former Advisor PMAJK Mirza Tanweer Akhtar Jarral, Former Mayor of Luton Mohammad Riaz Butt, Secretary General All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference UK Professor Mumtaz Ahmed Butt, Professor Imtiaz Hussain, Raja Zazar Hussain, Barrister Shahzada Hayat, Cllr Obaid from Ilford, Sheikh Ramzi Ahmed Oxford, Rehana Ali Solicitor and Human Right Activist Laiq Ali of Watford, Cllr Mohammad Nazam of Keighley and other dignitaries.

Conference was opened by Shadow Minister Naz Shah MP and Presided by Raja Najabat Hussain.

Spain confirms three dead in mine collapse

SURIA, SPAIN: Three people trapped deep inside a Spanish potash mine when a gallery collapsed earlier on Thursday have died, Catalan leader Pere Aragonès said.

"Unfortunately, we can confirm the death of three young people who were working in the mine," he told reporters outside Cabanasses mine in Suria, 75 kilometers (46 miles) northwest of Barcelona.

Rescuers had recovered and identified the bodies of three people who were "around 30 years old," Aragonès said, sending his deepest condolences to their families and colleagues.

Rescuers said the trio had been trapped "at a depth of about 900 meters" (2,950 feet) after one of the galleries collapsed just before 9:00 am (0800 GMT).

Despite frantic efforts to reach them, it was hours before rescuers got down to the place where they were and were able to confirm their deaths.

"The information we have makes us fear the worst," regional interior minister Joan Ignasi Elena had told reporters at the mine a few hours before as the rescue efforts continued.

The rescue was complicated by the need to ensure the safety of the teams involved, he said, indicating it would be "reckless" to rush such an operation.

Just after midday, Aragonès had announced their deaths on Twitter saying: "We deeply regret the death of the three miners in the accident in Suria mine."

Several minutes later, he deleted the tweet. Many local and national media outlets also said they had died, citing sources in the emergency services, but police said they could not confirm the reports until "they were reached by a doctor" and their families had been notified.

When the gallery collapsed, all three were carrying out "a routine task that they do every day," mine worker Carlos Arnaldo told reporters at the scene.

He said it was "difficult" for him to believe that they might have survived.

"Sometimes the mine gives you no warning: the roof caves in and nothing can be done," he said.

"This is terrible news," tweeted Labour Minister Yolanda Diaz, sending "love and solidarity to the families and colleagues of the workers caught up in the collapse at the Suria mine."

Owned by ICL Iberia, the Spanish arm of Israel's ICL Group, which specializes in fertilizers and chemicals, the Cabanasses mine had recently passed a security inspection, officials said. AFP

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
41,585.54	41,358.93	
Day's High	Day's Low:	
41,648.08	41,358.93	
Index Value	Change	
6,490,223,179	+226.61	
Percentage	Time	
+0.55%	9 Mar, 2023 5:00 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
7,879.98	-49.94	
Percentage	Time	
-0.63%	9 Mar, 4:35 pm GMT	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
32,802.61	+4.21	
Percentage	Time	
+0.013%	9 Mar, 11:58 am GMT-5	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
28,623.15	+178.96	
Percentage	Time	
+0.63%	9 Mar, 3:15 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	182.5	184.5
Bahrain Dinar	734.02	742.02
Canadian Dollar	202	204.2
China Yuan	39.64	40.04
Danish Krone	39.6	40
Euro	295	297.5
Hong Kong Dollar	35.3	35.65
Indian Rupee	3.37	3.48
Japanese Yen	2.06	2.11
Kuwaiti Dinar	901.58	910.58
Malaysian Ringgit	60.58	61.18
New Zealand \$	169.34	171.34
Norwegians Krone	25.19	25.49
Omani Riyal	716.82	724.82
Qatari Riyal	71.84	72.54
Saudi Riyal	74.2	75
Singapore Dollar	194.93	196.93
Swedish Korona	25.09	25.39
Swiss Franc	294.91	297.41
Thai Bhat	7.87	8.02
U.A.E Dirham	76.8	77.5
UK Pound Sterling	331	334
US Dollar	283.2	286

Economic Woes & IMF

Pro-business reforms, remittances not SLA is the answer: President FPCCI

Pakistan needs continuity in economic policies to restore investment sentiment in the country

Our Correspondent

KARACHI: Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI, has stressed that it is the collective wisdom of the entire business, industry and trade community of Pakistan that resumption of IMF's Extended Fund Facility (EFF) program even after the now long-pending staff-level agreement (SLA) cannot solve Pakistan's economic woes; and, the country will continue to be on the tenuous edge of a default for the foreseeable future.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh informed that one should be aware of the fact that Eurobonds account for only 4 percent of Pakistan's external debts as opposed to the much higher ratios for the countries that have defaulted; and, achieving debt restructuring on all other major external debts after the program restructuring should not be an issue for a prudent economist or a finance minister – on the back of economic cost of the floods.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh added that the only



answer here is pro-business reforms, policies and economic agenda – enabling the business community to increase exports; unleash import substitution; build foreign exchange reserves;

enhance the external debt repayment capacity; create jobs and generate tax revenues to fund country's development needs

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh apprised that FPCCI has reached a conclusion that Pakistan needs continuity in economic policies to restore investment sentiment in the country; and, the economic agenda setting should be unanimously agreed by all the political parties for the next 15 years.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh explained that the country faces a deficit in upwards of \$20 billion in the next 18 – 24 months alone to meet its external liabilities; and, there is no way that even another IMF program can offer that much of financing. Therefore, the government should sit with the business community to chalk out a plan to enhance exports and earn precious foreign exchange reserve in the logical, incrementally sustainable and tangible manner.

FPCCI Chief expressed his profound concerns that SBP is still expecting the business community to wait for the gradual lifting of import curbs; even after the staff-level agree-

ment (SLA) is clearly in sight. The industry, production and exports will continue to suffer through this approach that makes no economic sense, he added.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh reiterated that access to finance and export financing must be made possible at an affordable rate. He maintained that textile industry can easily earn \$25 billion in a year; IT & ITES \$5 billion and remittances can touch \$35 billion; if the right economic agenda can be set in consultation with trade & industry stakeholders. The three aforementioned targets can be achieved in the very short-term, i.e. less than a year, through the right policies – and, these would be hard-earned cash to stay in the country, not the loans, he added.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh reiterated that the government should admit its failure that it could not get any waiver, leverage or concession despite the country has suffered one of the worst, widespread and economically costliest floods in the modern human history – resulting in the well-documented losses of \$30 billion.

Herbal medicines

President Hamdard Foundation urges Sindh govt to promote Tibb-i-Unani

Spokesman Reporter

LARKANA: Sadia Rashid, president, Hamdard Foundation Pakistan has urged the Sindh government to promote Tibb-i-Unani as an alternative treatment because the country is rich in indigenous herbal medicines. At a one-day Symposium titled 'Tibb-i-Unani: background and future prospects' held recently at Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto Memorial Library Auditorium, Larkana, she said that time requires the rulers to take the right decisions regarding Tibb-i-Unani. The symposium was organized by the Pakistan Association for Eastern Medicine (PAEM). Ms. Sadia Rashid is also the chief patron of PAEM.

Chief Guest, Prof. Dr. Azhar Ali Shah, Pro-Vice Chancellor, of Sindh University said that the concept of herbal remedies emerged from Sindh province. Therefore, Tibb-i-Unani is our cherished heritage, passed down to us by our ancestors. He further said that Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said graced the land of Sindh with exceptional services to humanity and the revival of Tibb-i-Unani. Our society definitely needs an alternative medical system since a sick nation cannot advance. He suggested that a medical insti-



LARKANA: Prof. Dr. Hakim Abdul Hannan, Former Vice Chancellor Hamdard University addressing at a One Day Symposium titled 'Tibb-i-Unani: background and future prospects' held at Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto Memorial Library Auditorium, Larkana organized by the Pakistan Association for Eastern Medicine. Ms. Sadia Rashid, president, Hamdard Foundation Pakistan, Prof. Dr. Ahsana Dar – Dean, Faculty of Eastern Medicine, HU, Shamsuddin Kalhoro Assistant Director, Sir Shah Nawaz Memorial Library, Prof. Dr. Azhar Ali Shah, Pro-Vice Chancellor, of Sindh University & Rustam Ali Bhutto – Director Health Larkana are present on the occasion.

tion named after Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said be established in Larkana.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Dr Hakeem Abdul Hannan, former HU vice chan-

cellor and PAEM president, said that Tibb-i-Unani was a tried-and-tested affordable method of treatment for centuries. It is important, however, to research Unani medicine in the context

of modern times and introduce Hakims to modern medical innovations.

Moreover, he noted that alternative therapies are being paid more attention across the globe post-Covid-19. The size of the herbal medicine industry is increasing rapidly all over the world. A few countries are reaping the benefits of this rapidly increasing market. It is thanks to Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said that Pakistan has an alternative medicine industry that is comparable to international standards, he said. He added that Pakistan had rare types of land and natural environments that were most suitable for cultivating herbs. Pakistan is in a position to emerge as a global leader in Greek medicine. However, this requires joint efforts.

Researchers of Hamdard University presented their research papers on various ailments and diseases. Among the other notable attendees were Prof Dr. Ahsana Dar – Dean, Faculty of Eastern Medicine, Rustam Ali Bhutto – Director Health Larkana – and Shamsuddin Kalhoro – Assistant Director, Sir Shah Nawaz Memorial Library. Hakims and Tabibas of Larkana and surrounding cities in large numbers attended the symposium.

Carrefour partners with Pink Ribbon to raise Breast Cancer awareness



Bureau Report

LAHORE: Carrefour, owned and operated by Majid Al Futtaim in Pakistan, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Pink Ribbon Pakistan, a non-government organisation dedicated to breast cancer awareness. Carrefour will fully support Pink Ribbon in collecting donations for completing Pakistan's first dedicated breast cancer hospital in Lahore.

During a formal ceremony held at Carrefour head office in Lahore, the agree-

ment was signed by Majid Barzegar, District Manager of Carrefour Pakistan and Omer Aftab, Founder & Chief Executive of Pink Ribbon. Under the signed agreement, Carrefour is to join hands with Pink Ribbon for awareness campaigns in store and through its digital platforms for the noble cause to save lives. Donation boxes will be placed at all Carrefour stores across the country to raise funds for the hospital. Pink Ribbon has announced free-of-cost breast ultrasounds and consultations for Carrefour female colleagues throughout the year.

OGDCL wins top Corporate Philanthropy award



Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Oil & Gas Development Company Limited ranked #1 for "being the largest corporate donor in terms of volume in Pakistan".

Zia Salahuddin, Executive Director (Services), OGDCL received the award from Chairman, Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan Akif Saeed. The Ceremony was organized by PCP and attended by business leaders, civil society officials, bilateral donors, NGOs and media.

Saqib Ahmad to head SAP Pakistan, Iraq & Afghanistan

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Saqib Ahmad, Country Managing Director, SAP Pakistan & Afghanistan, has been given additional charge to lead SAP Iraq. He assumed his additional role as the Managing Director Pakistan, Iraq and Afghanistan with effect from March, 2023.

The new role and added responsibility are a result of Saqib's outstanding performance. He has played a strong leadership role in transforming Pakistan's public and private



sector enterprises into digitally driven entities.

The announcement came soon after the visit of Ahmed Alfaifi, the Senior Vice President & Managing Director of

Middle East and Africa North to Pakistan. During his visit, Alfaifi met with key government and public sector officials including Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman Higher Education Commission (HEC), and Mazhar Ali Shah, Secretary Pakistan Railways.

Ahmed Al-Faifi in a message on the company's internal board congratulated Saqib on his continuous dedication to bringing SAP to new heights. He commended Saqib's efforts

to achieve company goals and contribute to SAP growth in Pakistan.

Ahmed Al-Faifi stated, "SAP is proud to have a dedicated leader like Saqib Ahmad, to look after Iraq along with continuing his role to lead Pakistan and Afghanistan. Saqib has been phenomenal in contributing to the growth of the company and has been delivering outstanding results. He will be working with the Government and private sector in Iraq, for the digitalization of various sectors.

Meezan Bank arranges Beach Clean-up at Sea View

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Meezan Bank, Pakistan's leading Islamic bank recently held a beach clean-up activity at Sea View, Karachi, led by the Bank's management and employees who volunteered along with their families. The activity took place near Nishan-e-Pakistan, Clifton, early in the morning, where employees actively participated in clearing the beach from plastic litter, trash, as well as glass along the shoreline.

The Bank held the event in light of World Wildlife Day as an extension of its sustainability strategy, further emphasizing its support towards creating a positive impact on the environment. During the clean-up, approximately fifty bags of plastic, weighing more than 100 kgs were collected, preventing this waste from entering the ocean ecosystem and protecting marine wildlife.

Zonergy made a strong debut at ME Energy Dubai 2023

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Zonergy Corporation made an impressive debut in the three-day MIDDLE EAST ENERGY DUBAI 2023 was grandly opened at Dubai World Trade Center. Led by Jun Guo, Executive director and President of the company, Zonergy Corporation showcase its Smart Energy solutions for Middle eastern market. This exhibition focuses on the household energy storage system and portable power supply products offered by the company, attracting great attention from visitors.

As one of the regions with the strongest solar radiation intensity and sunshine duration in the world, the Middle East region boasts a vast photovoltaic new energy market. According to Zawya website, the latest report

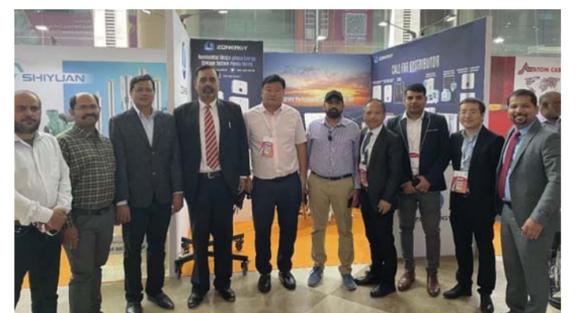
released by APRICORP shows that the low-carbon energy industry in the Middle East and North Africa is ramping up efforts to construct projects, and the project value is expected to reach 257 billion US dollars by 2030.

The company's products and projects receive wide attention from clients, and cooperation intentions are reached on the scene

At this exhibition, Zonergy focused on the latest household energy products of the company considering local needs. Panda series products can satisfy the needs of local families. With a designed modular capacity of 5kWh, it can be flexibly expanded from 5 to 30kWh; with stronger stability, the faulty battery module can be automatically isolated to ensure the stable operation of the system; and powered by built-in smart grid management

system, it can serve the function of power grid dispatching. The portable power bank products offered by Zonergy come in with a wide array of models, including large, medium and small specifications, multiple functions, complete certification, standard lithium iron phosphate battery, ensuring safety and reliability; with the addition of a fashionable exterior, it is especially suitable for people to travel and vacation. Besides, the company also displayed its comprehensive solutions and successful cases on smart microgrid through brochures and other forms.

During the exhibition, an endless stream of local customers and exhibitors came to Zonergy booth. Customers expressed great interest in the company's products and projects, and reached cooperation intentions



on-site.

Under the dual-carbon goal, the global energy structure and system are undergoing an in-depth transformation towards a clean, low-carbon and safe path, heralding a promising

future for the PV storage field. Zonergy will continue to be driven by technological innovation, be customer-centered, provide high-quality products and comprehensive solutions, and jointly create a green future.

PSL Season 8

Fakhar, Rashid storm Qalandars to record victory over United

Qalandars register largest margin of victory in PSL's history

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Fakhar Zaman's whirlwind 57-ball 115 and Rashid Khan's brilliance stormed Lahore Qalandars to record 119-run victory against Islamabad United in the 26th match of the eighth edition of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) at Pindi Cricket Stadium on Thursday.

Chasing a target of 227 runs, the United were bundled out for 107, paving way for the Qalandars to register largest margin of victory in the history of the marquee tournament.

The United only combined for one solid partnership and that too between openers Alex Hales and Rahmanullah Gurbaz. The partnership had flown along to 32 off 23 deliveries.

Rahmanullah Gurbaz scored 15-ball 15, hitting one boundary and one six.

Alex Hales scored 16-ball 18, clobbering a six. Hasan Ali also scored 13-ball 18, lacing with one boundary and two sixes.

Colin Munro (11), Shadab Khan (12), Mubasir Khan (3), Asif Ali (7), Faheem Ashraf (4), Mohammad Wasim (8) and Fazalhaq Farooqi (0) failed to show any significant resistance.

Rashid Khan spearheaded the Qalandars' bowling attack who once again proved his worth. He picked up four



wickets, bowling an economical spell and conceded merely 21 runs.

Rashid was ably supported by rest of the bowlers. Zaman Khan (2-17) and Haris Rauf (2-16) scooped up two wickets apiece. David Wiese (1-17) took a scalp.

Shaheen Shah Afridi (0-18) and Sikandar Raza (0-14) remained wicketless.

After opting to bat first, Fakhar Zaman's fiery 57-ball 115 fired Lahore Qalandars' total to mammoth 226-5 against Islamabad United in the domestic premium tournament.

The Qalandars faced early setback, when Abdullah Shafique was undone by United frontline bowler Fazalhaq

Farooqi.

But it was amazing partnership by Fakhar Zaman and Kamran Ghulam that paved way for the Qalandars' staggering total. The duo stitched 122 run-partnership of just 62, putting the United's bowlers to test.

Fakhar clobbered eight fours and eight towering sixes in 57 balls to smash blistering 115.

Kamran Ghulam was brilliant for his 30-ball 41, studded with four boundaries and two sixes.

Sam Billings looked belligerent for his 22-ball 32.

Rashid Khan scored an unconquered

quickfire 5-ball 15, smashing two fours and one gigantic six.

David Wiese hammered a big six on his first bowl before he was befuddled by Fazalhaq Farooqi.

Sikandar Raza remained unbeaten on 4-ball 1.

There was nothing special to talk about the United' bowling, with the exception of Fazalhaq Farooqi (4-40), who scooped up three wickets.

Hasan Ali (1-33) and Mohammad Wasim (1-48) took a scalp each.

Faheem Ashraf (0-43), Mubasir Khan (0-25) and Shadab Khan (0-32) remained wicketless.

Earlier, Lahore Qalandars opted to bat first against Islamabad United in the 26th match of the eighth edition of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) at Pindi Cricket Stadium on Thursday.

Lahore Qalandars: Fakhar Zaman, Abdullah Shafique, Sam Billings (wk), Kamran Ghulam, Hussain Talat, Sikandar Raza, Rashid Khan, David Wiese, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Haris Rauf, Zaman Khan

Islamabad United: Rahmanullah Gurbaz, Alex Hales, Colin Munro, Shadab Khan (c), Azam Khan (wk), Asif Ali, Faheem Ashraf, Mubasir Khan, Mohammad Wasim Jr, Hassan Ali, Fazalhaq Farooqi.

Swiatek ready to 'fight for every ball'

World number one says she is looking forward, not backwards in Indian Wells

INDIAN: Iga Swiatek, learning to navigate the expectations piled on a world number one, says she's looking forward, not back as she launches her title defense at the Indian Wells ATP and WTA Masters.

The 21-year-old from Warsaw took glory by storm in 2022, her early-season victories including prestigious wins at Doha, Indian Wells and Miami.

She'd finish the year with two Grand Slam titles at the French Open and US Open, but said Wednesday she is trying to "not really think about what happened last year and remember that's a different story."

Swiatek was toppled by Elena Rybakina in the Australian Open round of 16, and after defending her Doha WTA title last month she was stunned in the Dubai final by Barbora Krejickikova.

"Sometimes it's also important to remember that you can lose," Swiatek said. "There are other players who are also playing great tennis. Last season spoiled me a little bit."

She admitted that a stream of easy match wins — she hasn't played a three-setter this year — might have let



a little complacency creep in.

"I still have to kind of remember that I'm going to have tight matches and to fight for every ball," she said.

While she and her coach assess each defeat and work to make adjustments, she said she tries to tune out criticism from outside.

Swiatek herself was pleased with

her play in Doha and Dubai — noting that reaching both finals was, in fact, a strong result even if her loss to Krejickikova, a former French Open champion now 30th in the world — drew scrutiny.

"Last year, before all this huge streak, before winning all these tournaments, I would be so happy with the result, but because of these comments right now I

felt like 'Oh, that's not enough,'" she said.

"So I'm trying not to read a lot of these things and I don't want it to influence me because I'm happy with the work I've made and with how I played in, Doha and Dubai."

Swiatek's number one ranking is safe through Indian Wells and Miami, but she'll be up against a quality field in the California desert, where she's seeking to become just the second woman to defend the title after Martina Navratilova in 1990-91.

After a first-round bye she will open against either Alison Van Uytvanck or Claire Liu. She could face a potentially tricky third-round clash with 2019 champion Bianca Andreescu of Canada.

Two other former champions are in the field, 2021 winner Paula Badosa of Spain and Belarussian veteran Victoria Azarenka, who won in 2012 and 2016.

Australian Open champion Aryna Sabalenka is the second seed, aiming to improve on a 2022 showing that saw her bow out in the second round.

Sabalenka will open against Evgenya Rodina, who beat France's Alize Cornet 6-2, 7-5. AFP

Alcaraz chases Indian Wells title

Rising Spanish star is chasing a third prestigious Masters 1000 title

INDIAN: Top-seeded Carlos Alcaraz can replace Novak Djokovic with a victory at the Indian Wells ATP Masters, and the 19-year-old Spaniard says he'll give it all he's got.

"I'm gonna go for it," Alcaraz said Wednesday as first-round matches got under way in the California desert.

Alcaraz is chasing a third prestigious Masters 1000 title, and if he's successful he'd be just the second player, after compatriot Rafael Nadal, to bag three as a teenager.

The young star will face stiff opposition in former world

number one Daniil Medvedev, who rolls into Indian Wells having won three straight tournaments at Rotterdam, Doha and Dubai.

Some gloss is gone with Djokovic, who won a 22nd Grand Slam title at the Australian Open this year, absent because of US restrictions on non-citizens who have not been vaccinated against Covid-19.

Injury forced Nadal out, but eight of the top 10 men in the world are here, including third-ranked Stefanos Tsitsipas — runner-up to Djokovic in Melbourne — and fourth-



ranked Casper Ruud.

Defending champion Taylor Fritz of the United States is seeded fourth ahead of Medvedev.

Fritz beat Nadal in a dramatic final last year to become the first American to win the men's title in Indian Wells since Andre

Agassi in 2001.

His current No. 5 in the world rankings makes him the highest-ranked US man since Andy Roddick reached number five in September of 2009.

"Of course there's a lot of great players in this draw who have a chance to win the tournament, but I say that I have my chances to win the tournament," Alcaraz said.

"For me winning the tournament and being number one again is a really good goal."

Alcaraz downplayed any lingering injury fears after pulling out of the ATP 500 in

Acapulco last week with a right hamstring strain.

Alcaraz had been clearly hindered in falling to Cameron Norrie in the Rio Open on February 26, although he'd beaten Norrie seven days earlier in the final at Buenos Aires.

Alcaraz's South American run followed a four-month injury layoff, during which he missed the Paris Masters with an abdominal tear and the Australian Open with a hamstring injury.

However, Alcaraz said he wasn't overly concerned about the spate of injuries. AFP

Mbappe's PSG reflect on latest failure

French giants lose 3-0 on aggregate to German club Bayern in last-16 of Champions League

PARIS: Paris Saint-Germain were convinced that persuading Kylian Mbappe to stay would finally deliver them Champions League glory, but the failure to build a strong enough team around the France superstar has contributed to another early European exit.

Wednesday's 2-0 loss to Bayern Munich in Germany saw the Qatar-owned club lose their last-16 tie 3-0 on aggregate and go out in the first knockout round for the fifth time in seven years.

PSG's run to the 2020 final now looks even more like an anomaly, coming in a pandemic-hit season when the Champions League was reduced to a mini-tournament behind closed doors.

There were celebrations last May when Mbappe agreed a new three-year contract to stay with

Lionel Messi and Neymar in the French capital rather than join Real Madrid.

The appointments of Portuguese super scout Luis Campos as head of recruitment and Christophe Galtier as coach to replace Mauricio Pochettino were supposed to be followed by the building of an exciting new team.

It is hard to argue now that PSG are stronger with the likes of Vitorino and Fabian Ruiz than they were with Angel di Maria and Leandro Paredes last year.

"It is not about the construction of the squad. It is just the story of the season. We were missing important players. The squad, over the two legs, was seriously weakened," said Galtier on Wednesday.

He had a point, with Mbappe only able to make a cameo

appearance off the bench after a thigh injury as PSG lost 1-0 to Bayern in the first leg.

Neymar is missing with an ankle injury, while Presnel Kimpembe is out and fellow defenders Marquinhos and Nordi Mukiele both came off during Wednesday's game.

"It has been a very busy season. Players' bodies have been asked to do a lot. There was the World Cup, and obviously when you get to the last 16 it is good to have everyone available," Galtier said.

PSG placed their hope in Mbappe and Messi turning the tie around in Munich, but the latter had little impact while the France superstar saw just 32 touches of the ball.

"As I said in my first Champions League press conference this season, we were going to do our

maximum. The truth is this is our maximum," admitted Mbappe, whose own future will now again become the subject of increasing speculation.

Others are left wondering why a club of PSG's means could not build a deep enough squad around Mbappe to remain competitive despite the injuries.

"If Paris Saint-Germain have ambitions of winning the Champions League, they need to sign players who are up to the required standard," said David Ginola, a former star for the club and now a pundit for broadcaster Canal Plus. "I think they will get the success they are looking for the day they stop betting everything on one player. When are we going to talk about a team?"

One reason PSG were unable to build the team they wanted, even



with the wealth of their Qatari owners, is money.

With so much spent on Mbappe's new deal and the need to respect UEFA's Financial Fair Play rules, they failed to sign the central defender they desperately needed.

Messi is out of contract after this season. There have been talks

National Open Polo C'ship for Quaid-e-Azam Gold Cup

LAHORE: Master Paints/Newage Cables team and Master Paints team recorded victories in different styles in the Century Ventures National Open Polo Championship for Quaid-e-Azam Gold Cup 2023 here at Lahore Polo Club on Thursday.

In the first match of the day, phenomenal performance of Juan Cruz Greguol powered Master Paints/Newage Cables to a thrilling 8-7 win over Diamond Paints in the sudden death chukker.

Greguol was in sublime form and played outstanding polo for his team. He contributed with four fabulous goals for Master Paints/Newage while his teammates Simon Prada (3 goals) and Raja Temur Nadeem (1 goal) played equally well. For Diamond Paints, Mir Huzaifa Ahmed and Chulo Corti played brilliantly and thrashed in three goals each while the remaining one came from Nico Roberts.

The first chukker of the match was played well by both the sides, who succeeded in converting one goal each to finish it 1-1. Master Paints/Newage played better polo in the second chukker as they slammed in two goals against one by Remounts to get a slight 3-2 lead. The third chukker was identical to the second one as once against two goals were converted by Master Paints/Newage against one by Remounts to stretch their lead to 5-3.

Master Paints/Newage maintained their good show in the fourth chukker as well as they banged in another brace against one goal by Remounts to enhance their lead to 7-4. Diamond Paints started the fifth chukker aggressively which paid dividend for them and they succeeded in thrashing in three back-to-back goals to equalize the score at 7-7. No more goal was scored by either side, thus the match entered the sudden death chukker. APP

Noor bags National Tenpin Bowling C'ship title



ISLAMABAD: Noor Al Ain has won the Deaf Women's title of the National Tenpin Bowling Championship organised by the Pakistan Tenpin Bowling Federation at Leisure City Bowling Club, Jinnah Park Rawalpindi.

Muaz Baig and Amna also bagged the Deaf Amateur Open and Ladies single titles respectively.

The championship was inaugurated by Commissioner Rawalpindi Liaquat Ali Chhatta.

President, Pakistan Tenpin Bowling Federation, Ijaz ur Rehman, General Secretary, Mohammad Hussain Chhatta and Divisional Sports Officer Rawalpindi Haji Waheed Babar were also present.

On the opening day of the championship, women's competitions were held on the occasion of International Women's Day. Noor won the women's deaf category competition while Faiza Noor and Sadia won the second and third positions, respectively.

Muaz Baig won the Deaf Amateur Open competition. Qasim bagged the second position, Abdul Rehman took home the third position while Shahzad Ahmed obtained the fourth position.

Amna secured the ladies' single title while Maryam and Tania received second and third positions, respectively.

The competitions including Men's Singles, Men's Doubles, Team Event, Amateur, Deaf (Men's and Women's) and Media categories were being played in the event.

The semi-finals of the event would be held on March 11 while the final on March 12. Prize money of Rs one million has been kept for the championship. APP

SBP rally to create awareness about Rustam-e-Punjab Dangal

LAHORE: The Sports board Punjab (SBP) took out a rally from Liberty Chowk to Main Market for creating awareness among the public about Janshan-e-Baharan Rustam-e-Punjab Dangal, here on Thursday.

Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Shahid Zaman was the chief guest at the rally. Former Rustam-e-Pakistan Mohammad Bashir Bhola Bhala Pehlwan presented a mace to secretary Sports Punjab.

Assistant Commissioner Model Town Sahibzada Yousaf, Director Youth Affairs Syed Umair Hassan, Director Admin Ijaz Muneer, Divisional Sports Officer Lahore Tariq Khanzada, were also present at the largely-attended rally.

Talking to the media, the secretary Sports Punjab said that dangal is the identity of Punjab and a popular sport among the youth. "Punjab Sports Department is taking all essential measures to promote Dangal across the province," he added.

He said that Dangal will be held at Punjab Stadium on March 10 as part of Jashan-e-Baharan celebrations. "All top wrestlers of the province will participate in the Dangal. Our talented youth should come forward and take part in traditional wrestling competitions".

He further said that Punjab Sports Department will adopt all necessary measures to promote the traditional games in all parts of the province. "Jashan-e-Baharan events are being organized in a befitting manner. Marathon Race, Tour de Lahore Cycle Race, Family Race and Wheelchair Race will be organised on March 12," he said.

Galtier said.

"There is a lot of expectation. If we only win the league, has it been a bad season? The big regret is that we were not able to compete with all our strength in this tie."

There are no guarantees a full-strength PSG would have beaten Bayern, or gone on to win the Champions League.

In 11 seasons in the competition in the Qatar era, they have won only seven two-legged knockout ties.

"There is no reason why Paris Saint-Germain in 2023 will learn the lessons they have not learned for 10 years," wrote Vincent Duluc in sports daily L'Equipe.

"There is also no reason to deny that for PSG, when it comes to the last 16 of the Champions League, losing is a culture." AFP