



Imran has become an epitome of cowardice, fear
Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Saturday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan has become an epitome of cowardice and fear. In a tweet, terming Imran a foreign agent, Toshakhana watch thief and cowardly person, she said he had plastered his leg to avoid charge sheeting in Toshakhana case.



Those who made Pervaiz Elahi PTI's President know its logic: Sheikh Rasheed
Former interior minister and Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rasheed has asserted that those who made Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi the president of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) know the logic behind the move. Speaking on ARY News programme 'Aitraz Hai', the former interior minister said that those who made Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi the PTI's president know the logic - without specifying anything (Report on Page 8)

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Donation

ISLAMABAD: Education Minister presents donation cheque for quake-affected people of Turkiye, Syria to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday.



Photo: PID

President felicitates President Xi, Ram Poudel, VP Han Zheng

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Saturday in separate tweets extended his felicitations to Chinese President Xi Jinping on his unanimous re-election, Ram Chandra Poudel on his election as President of Nepal and Han Zheng on assuming the office of Vice President of China.

On his Twitter handle, the president congratulated President Xi Jinping and said that the ironclad Pakistan-China brotherhood had grown from strength to strength.

"As China's closest friend and all-weather partners we look forward to working closely with President Xi to take relations to new heights," he added.

In another tweet, the president also extended his warm felicitations to Ram Chandra Poudel on his election as the President of Nepal.

President felicitates President Xi, Ram Poudel, VP Han Zheng

Newly elect president of



Nepal

"Look forward to working with him for advancement of Pakistan-Nepal relations," he added.

In a separate tweet, the president also congratulated to Han Zheng on his new role as Vice President of China.

The president further said that Pakistan commended his many salutary contributions to this unique interstate friendship.

President felicitates President Xi, Ram Poudel, VP Han Zheng

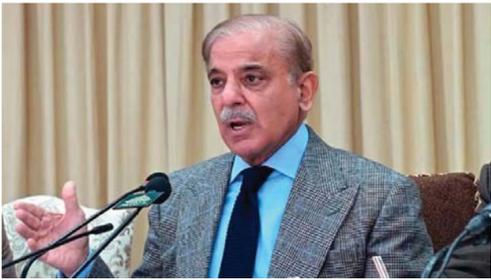
"I'm confident that our time tested All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership will continue to thrive for years to come," he further added.

Imran Khan's evasion of courts amounts to height of cowardice: PM

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday while terming Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan's evasion of courts amounts to the height of cowardice said that the timid deposed PM did not allow the courts to search him as he is guilty.

In a statement on Saturday, he said that Imran Khan was out to create hurdles in the revival of the International Monetary Fund programme which was



reached during the previous tenure of PTI's government. The prime minister said the

creation of chaos on roads and anarchy was a part and parcel of his agenda, aimed at fanning the

fire of instability in the country. "The timid person did not allow the courts to search him as he is guilty," he added.

He said Imran Khan did not want the poor people of the country to be lifted from the issues of price inflation and economic pressure nor desired the steering of national resources.

"Imran Khan's evasion of courts amounts to the height of cowardice," the prime minister observed. First, he (Imran) left the IMF programme and now resisting the courts, he said,

adding he (IK) had also deviated from his promises and ideals.

On the other hand, the prime minister said, Nawaz Sharif and Pakistan Muslim League-N faced the worst kind of vengeance at the hands of NAB-Niazi connivance in the past.

"We have faced the courts and laws in the trumped-up charges framed against our family members including sons, daughters and sisters," he added.

The leadership of PML-N endured the ordeals of death cells and braved the unfounded cases of heroin, he added.

Punjab Elections: PTI expresses concern over non-provision of nomination papers

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Azam Swati has expressed concerns over non-provision of nomination papers to party candidates ahead of general elections in Punjab.

PTI leader Azam Swati penned down a letter to the Election commission of Pakistan (ECP) chief, expressing his concerns over non-provision of nomination papers to PTI candidates.

"PTI candidates have contacted concerned ROs [Returning officers] but the nomination papers are not being provided yet," Azam Swati said. He further said that the move was a deviation from the clear and transparent elections as well as an open violation of the law. He urged the ECP chief to take notice of the situation and direct ROs to provide the nomination papers to the PTI candidates.

Bilawal delivered the powerful message to global unity on Islamophobia

News Desk

UNITED NATIONS: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari Friday wrapped up his 5-day visit to New York, saying that the first-ever commemoration of the International Day to Combat Islamophobia at the UN sent a "very powerful" message of global unity against the "poison" of Islamophobia.

At the same time, the foreign minister told a press conference that Wednesday's "Women in Islam" event, which he also presided, reflected Islamic countries' commitment to the empowerment of women and gender parity.

"We were unanimous that women have a right to education and those depriving their rights are actually doing so in direct conflict with the religion of Islam," he said.

Both events turned the international spotlight on Pakistan as it continues to play a positive role despite a host of challenges it faces.

FM Bilawal said it was evident from Friday's discussion that the growing phenomenon of Islamophobia should be called out and tackled at every step to create more inclusive and safe spaces for



Muslims at individual, community and institutional levels.

The meeting on Islamophobia was co-convened by the President of the General Assembly, Casaba Koroosi, and FM Bilawal as the Chair of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Council of Foreign Ministers.

Last year, the 193-member Assembly adopted resolution 76/254 designating March 15 as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia.

The foreign minister said the world must realize that perpetuating discrimination, hostility and violence towards Muslim individuals and communities, undercuts the ability of affected Muslims to be Muslims and violates their basic rights and fundamental freedoms.

Replying to a question, he said Pakistan believes that continuing engagement with the Afghan inter-

im government was the best means to achieve the international community's objectives for the observance of human rights, especially women's rights, inclusive governance, and an end to terrorism within and from Afghanistan.

It was also in Pakistan's interest that there is a peaceful, prosperous, stable, secure Afghanistan, at peace with itself and with its neighbours, he said.

"It is also in our interest that the Afghan interim government delivers on their commitments to their people and to the international community," FM Bilawal said, adding that if they fail to do, the Afghan people will continue to suffer.

The second victims of such a failure will be the Pakistani people, if they fail to live up to their commitment to ensure that their soil is not used for terrorism, noting the increasing number of terrorist attacks in Pakistan.

To another question, FM Bilawal said that Kashmir and Palestine remain unaddressed by the United Nations. "We would like to see an extra focus not only on Palestine, but also on Kashmir."

Imran to lead election rally tomorrow in Lahore

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan on Saturday announced that he would lead a public rally tomorrow in connection with election campaign, launched for upcoming general elections in Punjab.

Addressing the party workers and supporters via video link, the former premier strongly criticised the caretaker Punjab government and police for "killing" the PTI worker - Ali Bilal aka Zille Shah - and terming the death 'road accident'.

"I will lead the election rally tomorrow at 02:00pm to show them [the government] that we are not domesticated animals," Imran Khan said, directing the party workers and supporters to prepare for the 'election campaign'.

The PTI chief warned that the incumbent government will do anything to 'run away' from the elections, reiterating his claim of another assassination attempt on him or an explosion.

PM welcomes KSA-Iran agreement for resumption of diplomatic relations

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday welcomed the signing of the historic agreement between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Iran for the resumption of diplomatic ties.

On his Twitter handle, the prime minister said "This China-mediated deal augurs well for peace, stability & economic development in ME & Muslim world."

He further observed that it showed that with collective wisdom, win-win outcomes were possible.

Earlier, on Friday, the Foreign Office Spokesperson, in a press statement, said that Pakistan firmly believed that this important diplomatic breakthrough would contrib-

ute to peace and stability in the region and beyond.

Pakistan commended the role played by China's visionary leadership in coordinating this historic agreement which reflects the power of constructive engagement and meaningful dialogue.

"We laud sagacious leadership of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran for this very positive development," it was added.

With a history of consistently supporting and coordinating efforts for bridging gaps between the two brotherly countries, the spokesperson said, "Pakistan will continue to play a constructive role in the Middle East and the region. We hope this positive step would define a template for regional cooperation and harmony."

Pakistan Army upholds resilience and competence: COAS Asim Munir

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir on Saturday said that Pakistan Army upholds soldierly attributes of courage, mutual cooperation, resilience and competence which have been displayed during our ongoing fight against terrorism.

According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the army chief expressed these remarks during the 60 hours long arduous and rigorous 6th International Pakistan Army Team Spirit (PATS) Competition which was concluded at National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC) Pabbi with an impressive closing ceremony.

COAS General Asim Munir graced the occasion as the chief guest, the military's media wing said in a statement.



Some seven Pakistan Army teams, Pakistan Navy, and 10 international teams including Bahrain, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), Morocco, Uzbekistan, Thailand, Jordan, United States of America (USA), Iraq, Kazakhstan and Qatar participated in the competition, while, teams of Azerbaijan, Canada, Gambia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Maldives, Senegal, Sudan, United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the United Kingdom (UK) participated as observers.

Relief Packages

ISLAMABAD: NDMA sailed off another ship for quake-hit Turkiye, Syria on Saturday.



Photo: PID

NDMA sailed off another ship for Quake-hit Turkiye, Syria

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: As part of continuous relief assistance on the Prime Minister's directions, to Quake-affected people of Turkiye and Syria, the NDMA has sailed off another ship PNS Moawin with 550 tons of relief goods from Karachi on Saturday.

Chairman, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Lt Gen Inam Haider Malik and Turkish Consul

General Jamal Sangu and Commander Pakistan Fleet Rear Admiral Faisal Abbasi graced the departure ceremony of the Ship, a news release said.

The Turkish Consul General Jamal Sangu conveyed gratitude to Govt and people of Pakistan for extending humanitarian support in the aftermath of the deadly earthquake in his country.

The ship carrying 2625 family-sized fire resistant winterized tents & 38370

blankets making a total of 367 tons for quake-affected Turkiye, whereas 179 tons aid consisting of 22000 blankets, 144 tons of donations including essential items of daily use for Syria.

NDMA coordinated Ship carrying aid for the two countries has departed today and would reach Mersin port Turkiye on 23 & Lattakia port Syria on 31 Mar 23. Earlier on 28 Feb NDMA sailed off 1st sea cargo of 1000 tons for both

countries through PNS Nasr that will be received at destination in Syria on 13 Mar and 19/20 Mar in Turkiye.

So far NDMA has dispatched 2812 tons of relief assistance to both countries containing Winterized family tents, blankets, ration packs and other essential items.

The relief aid was sent off through all possible means of transportation which includes three C130 PAF aircrafts, one PAF IL 78, three Turkish

Aircrafts, three PIA chartered flights in addition to 29 free belly space on regular flights, one NDMA chartered cargo, 21 NDMA hired NLC trucks, two Naval ships and containers on a civil ship.

NDMA being the lead agency of Pakistan, is spearheading massive relief operations by using every possible available mean of transportation to maximize the assistance for brothers & sisters of affected countries.

Those who made Pervaiz Elahi PTI's President know its logic: Sheikh Rasheed

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Former interior minister and Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rasheed has asserted that those who made Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi the president of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) know the logic behind the move.

Speaking on ARY News programme 'Aitraz Hai', the former interior minister said that those who made Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi the PTI's president know the logic - without specifying anything.

It is pertinent to mention here that Former Punjab



chief minister (CM) Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi was appointed as president of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

A notification to this effect was issued after approval from the former prime minister and PTI chairman Imran Khan.

Sheikh Rasheed said he never imagined Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain and Pervaiz

Elahi would part their ways. "[Punjab Chief Minister] Mohsin Naqvi played a role in separating the Chaudhry brothers," he alleged, terming the chief minister 'front man' of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari.

In response to a question, Sheikh Rasheed said that PTI will take the decision who will overlook party's affairs if party chairman Imran Khan is arrested. "I would have court arrest if I were in Imran Khan's place," he said, adding that he might get arrested and spend Ramazan in jail.

The AML chief noted that

he wants Imran Khan to hold talks with institutions and the army. "I wish for reconciliation between Imran Khan and institutions so that a transparent election could be held," he added.

He also criticised the caretaker Punjab government over the 'killing' of PTI worker Ali Bilal aka Zille Shah, saying that Mohsin Naqvi will be arrested on the autopsy report of Zille Shah.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf worker Ali Bilal lost his life when police and the PTI supporters clashed violently on Wednesday ahead of Lahore rally. The PTI leader-

ship claims Bilal was in police custody when he was killed.

The post-mortem report of PTI activist Ali Bilal, whom the party claims was murdered at the hands of the police, revealed that the worker was subjected to severe torture and died from excessive bleeding.

According to a post-mortem report, Ali Bilal was subjected to torture, and died from excessive bleeding caused by a severe blow to his head. The report revealed that 26 different marks of torture were found on the victim's body, including on sensitive parts, while a part of his skull was badly affected.

Lahore admin refuses to grant PTI permission for rally

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The district administration of Lahore on Saturday denied permission to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to hold a public rally in the provincial capital, scheduled to take place tomorrow (Sunday) in connection with Punjab Assembly elections.

However, the deputy commissioner refused to grant PTI permission, citing the ongoing Pakistan Super League (PSL).

The Lahore administration also warned of imposing Section 144 if the party refuse to postpone the rally.

Earlier in the day, former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan announced that he would lead a public rally tomorrow in connection with election campaign, launched for upcoming general elections in Punjab.

"I will lead the election rally tomorrow at 02:00pm to show them [the government] that we are not domesticated animals," Imran Khan said, directing the party workers and supporters to prepare for the 'election campaign'.

The PTI chief warned that the incumbent government will do anything to 'run away' from the elections, reiterating his claim of another assassination attempt on him or an explosion.

"They [the incumbent rulers] want to kill me as they are afraid of the sea of people," he said, vowing to fight 'till the last drop of blood'.

Punjab polls
The Election Commission of Pakistan has announced the election schedule for the general election in Punjab. "Polling for the election of Punjab provincial assembly will be held on April 30," the election commission announced.

According to the election schedule, candidates could submit their nomination papers from March 12 to 14, while scrutiny of the papers will be held on March 22.

The candidates could withdraw their nomination papers up to April 05 and election symbols to candidates will be allotted on April 06, the ECP announced.

It is pertinent to mention here that President Dr Arif Alvi announced April 30 as the date for elections in Punjab.

Pakistan reiterates concern on India's irresponsible firing of Brahmos missile

City Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has reiterated concerns on India's irresponsible firing of BrahMos supersonic missile into Pakistani territory on March 9, 2022, the FO spokesperson said Friday.

"A year ago, a supersonic missile BrahMos was fired from Suratgarh India into Pakistani territory on March 9, 2022. It endangered human life and property and posed a grave threat to regional and international peace, security and stability."

The Foreign Office spokesperson said in a statement, "Pakistan demonstrated exemplary restraint which is a testament to our systemic maturity and unflinching commitment to peace as a responsible nuclear state."

"The irresponsible act by India was

in violation of international law, the United Nations Charter, the Articles on the Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts, civil aviation rules and safety protocols. It exposed many loopholes and technical lapses in the Indian system regarding the handling of its strategic weapons."

The spokesperson added, "Despite the lapse of one year, the Government of India has not acceded to Pakistan's demand of a joint probe in order to accurately establish the facts surrounding this serious incident. India has also not shared the findings of its internal inquiry with Pakistan. Its unilateral and hasty closure of the so-called internal inquiry has raised serious questions about the command and control systems in place in India for its strategic weapons."

Pakistan's garment exports to China register 33 percent increase in 2022

News Desk

BELJING: Pakistan's garment exports to China have seen a remarkable increase of 33% in the past year which is a significant achievement, as it marks an important milestone in the strengthening of economic ties between the two countries, said Ghulam Qadir, Commercial Counselor, Pakistan Embassy Beijing.

The growth in exports is attributed to the increasing demand for Pakistani menswear in China, which is driven by rising disposable incomes

and changing fashion trends.

Chinese manufacturers are increasingly trusting Pakistan as a source of quality textiles and garments at competitive prices, and this trend has also been bolstered by government initiatives such as free trade agreements that have facilitated increased trade between the two countries, he said in an interview.

He said that Pakistani men's garments annual exports to China in 2022 were \$28.66 million, up from \$21.62 million in 2021, a nearly 33% increase.

Fourth convocation of the Institute of Southern Punjab, Multan

Higher education is the fulfillment of the dreams of young students and their parents: Gilani

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Senator and former Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani has said that completing higher education is the fulfillment of the dreams of young students and their parents, after which the youth can play a role in the development of the country by playing their full role in practical life. He said this in his address as the chief guest at the fourth convocation of the Institute of Southern Punjab, Multan.

In the absence of the Chancellor and Governor in this convocation organized in ISP, they were represented by ISP Board of Governors Chairman Almass Ayub Sabir. While Vice Chancellor of Emerson University Dr. Muhammad Ramzan and Vice Chancellor of MNS University of Engineering and Technology Prof. Dr. Muhammad Kamran were also special guests.

Former Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani said that there is a need to provide quality education to students in the



education sector in this region and he also provided facilities to government educational institutions during his tenure and encouraged private institutions like ISP also got the honor of the university having the authority to issue degrees during his

tenure And ISP has set new standards of good education in the region in a very short time and it was meant to meet the need for better education of the youth of the region and hopefully it will continue. Former Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza

Gilani said that today is a day of happiness and pride for me.

Before the former Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani, Pro-Rector Professor Dr. Hayat Muhammad Awan presented the performance report of ISP in his letter of

appreciation.

In the convocation, Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani, the chief guest, gave degrees to a total of 200 students on completion of education, while more than 50 students were given gold medals. At the end of Convo-

cation Chairman Board of Governors Almass Ayub Sabir gave commemorative shields to former Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani and guest Vice Chancellors. Asim Nazir Ahmad, Rector ISP and senior faculty members of institute

were also present on the occasion and welcomed to guests of honour. The convocation ended with a group photo and lunch of the degree-taking students. In which parents and guests of successful students participated.



PM says special care should be taken to ensure no additional burden on consumers

Abdul Majeed Tahir

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan has said that while negotiating the issue relating to electricity transmission and tariffs with the federal government, special care should be taken to ensure no additional burden is placed on the consumers.

While chairing a high-level meeting at Jammu and Kashmir House at Islamabad, here on Saturday, the PM said that the government would bear the burden itself instead of overburdening consumers.

During the meeting, Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan was given a detailed briefing on electricity issues by Secretary Electricity Department Chaudhry Tayyab.



ment Chaudhry Tayyab.

He also updated the premier about the ongoing talks with the federal government.

The meeting was attended by

Chief Secretary Muhammad Usman Chachar, Principal Secretary/Additional Chief Secretary Development Fayaz Ali Abbasi, Secretary Department of Electricity Chaudhry Tayyab, and others. Whereas, Secretary Parliamentary Affairs Irshad Qureshi, Information Secretary Ansar Yaqoob, Special Secretary Finance Rashid Hanif were present on the occasion.

4 persons including a 10-year-old child died in a road accident

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: 4 persons including a 10-year-old child were death on the spot and 4 injured, the bodies and the injured were shifted to Vehari Hospital as a result of a dangerous accident in the car and Coaster Van near Vehari Road Rab Rakha Chock 100 km South East From Multan

Expressing concern over the incident, Additional IG South Punjab Maqsoodul Hasan ordered the police officers to immediately reach the spot, transfer the Dead Bodies and injured to the hospital and ensure the provision of immediate medical aid and said that the families of the deceased passengers should share their grief. He asked for a detailed report on the causes of the accident and ordered the police to take strict measures to prevent traffic accidents in South Punjab. Persons guilty of negligence should be severely punished

Saylani Welfare Int'l Trust plays key role in saving Pakistan from civil unrest: Qadri



Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: Philanthropic organizations have always played a key role in saving Pakistan from civil unrest due to unprecedented price spiral and record unemployment and hence the business community must lend more charity to these organizations to keep law and order situation within the controlling circumstances, said Molana Bashir Ahmad Farooqi Qadri Founding Chairman of the Saylani Welfare International Trust (SWIT). Addressing the business community in Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI), he expressed that SWIT was established in 1999 on the basis of piety.

"This organization made tremendous progress and now it was providing food to 15 million people daily in addition to contributing its role in almost all other social sectors," he said and adding that, Allah Almighty had empowered him through its blessings and bounties to serve humanity. Quoting recent price hike and unemployment, he said that it has become next to impossible even for the white collared families to meet their basic and fundamental needs within the meagre financial resources. He further said that individuals getting a minimum salary of Rs. 25,000 are not only getting free food for themselves from Saylani DasterKhanwan but are also feeding their families from the food bank of Saylani.

He said that the current wave of inflation has a negative impact on the financial resources of welfare organizations and we need the help of the business community to continue this noble activity with their active support. He eulogized the welfare activities of the Faisalabad based business community and said that he was confident that they would continue to support the Saylani so that we could provide food to the needy segments of the society without any break. About IT, he said that the local centre of IT is providing free training to the needy students and they had expressed their best abilities which was acknowledged by the President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi. Mr. Yasin of SWIT said that its IT centre has provided training to the 7,000 students out of which half of them have started their own businesses. He said that Faisalabad is contributing Rs.11 billion through Saylani charity boxes.

He further said that SWIT was providing free meals to "Panahgahs" and "Langer khans" across the country in addition to many other welfare organizations. "This process was suspended on the request of some of them but due to the price spiral, they have again requested for food", he said and added that the foundation would try its optimum best to fulfil their demand of free meals. He elaborated that every Muslim must take into account his liabilities for human rights.

Anti polio campaign which would continue from 13th to 19th March: Ali Anan

Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: As many as 1.536 million children upto age of five years would be administered polio drops during the next anti polio campaign which would continue from 13th to 19th March in the district and 4869 teams are going to perform their duties during this campaign. The anti polio campaign in the district has been inaugurated here on Saturday at Children Hospital. The Deputy Commissioner Ali Anan Qamar inaugurated the anti polio campaign by administering the polio vaccine drops to the children. DHO Dr. saqib Munir, pashtun leaders and members of civil society were present on this occasion. Expressing his views, the Deputy Commissioner said that the anti polio campaign required deep attention and utmost responsibility to eradicate the polio virus completely from the country.

He directed that each and every child of upto five years age should be vaccinated besides approaching the Nomads and Pashton children. He said adding that he would himself check the performance of polio teams by visiting different areas of district.

He emphasized upon on continuing wide awareness campaign for the information of the parents. The Deputy Commissioner said that the anti polio campaign could only be made successful with the cooperation of the parents and all out source of publicity should be utilized for mobilizing the parents to get their child administered polio drops. He said that administrative machinery would remain active during the polio campaign for the supervision. He informed that this polio campaign would consist of 7 days.

Stand alert

HYDERABAD: Rangers troops stand alert during 771 URS celebrations of Hazrat Lal Shahbaz Qalandar (RA), in the City.



Photo: Online

2nd Day Update: Sakhi Sarwar Zairin tractor trolley accident

Asim Tanveer

DERA GHAZI KHAN :Ten bodies were recovered, 9 people are still missing. Rescue operation is going on with the help of Pak Army. The funeral prayers of the deceased were performed. Every eye is tearful, mourning in the region. The heirs of the missing persons protested against the administration by blocking the inter-provincial highway Quetta Road.

According to the details, a tractor trolley going to Sakhi Sarwar for pilgrimage from Basti Bhandra, a peak area in Dera Ghazi Khan, on which more than 48 people, including men, women and children, from the peak settlement Ahmed Khan Sahani and the surrounding areas were on board. The driver's alleged negligence and speeding. Due to speed, the DG fell into the canal. Five dead bodies and 24 people were recovered on the first day by joint operation of Pakistan Army and other rescue agencies.

The rescue teams resumed the operation early in the morning and recovered five more bodies, including two seven-year-old girls Alishba



and Tanzeela, twelve-year-old Iman Zahra, Nasreen and Karim Mai. The bodies were handed over to the heirs after completing the legal process. However, 9 more missing including 5 Women's and 4 Childrens including are Allah Dewaya, Ruqia Mai, Humira Mai, Saira Mai, Rehmat Mai, Qasim, Abdullah, two brothers Fahadar Mush-taq. And the search for Azadar Mush-taq continues. The district administration has closed the canal. So that there is no more difficulty in the oper-

ation. It should be clear that ten dead bodies have been recovered in the Dodan operation. Who was buried after performing funeral prayers in his native Basti Bhandra. Every eye was teary eyed at the funeral

A place of mourning. The heirs of the missing persons protested against the administration by blocking the inter-provincial highway Quetta Road.

According to the details, a tractor trolley going to Sakhi Sarwar for pilgrimage from Basti Bhandra, a peak

area in Dera Ghazi Khan, on which more than 48 people, including men, women and children, from the peak settlement Ahmed Khan Sahani and the surrounding areas were on board. The driver's alleged negligence and speeding. Due to speed, the DG fell into the canal. There is an atmosphere of mourning in the Pak region. The funeral prayer was conducted by Allama Taqi Shah and Syed Jarrar Hussain. No government official participated in the funeral prayer. Hussain and Syed Zahid Hussain Zaidi participated

The relatives of the missing persons protested by blocking the inter-provincial highway, Dera Quetta Road, and raised slogans against the administration and the Punjab government and demanded the search of the missing 9 persons.

The protestors dispersed peacefully after being assured to complete the operation soon. On the other hand, the rescue operation was stopped after the sunset and darkness, which will be resumed today to search for 9 more missing persons. Including 5 Women's and Four Childrens

Digital Pakistan by Dr. Imran Batada launched at IoBM

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The book "Digital Pakistan" by Dr. ImranBatada was launched at the Institute of Business Management (IoBM), Karachi on Saturday, March 11, 2023. The book offers a complete digital media guideline for policymakers, industry professionals, and students to move forward, transform, and contribute to the GDP of Pakistan. Dr. Ishrat Husain, Former Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan was the Chief Guest at the occasion.

Mr. Fahd Haroon, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Public Communication & Digital Platforms also attended the event. Mr. Haroon holds an

extensive experience in holding government offices covering a wide range of strategic, media and public relation domains.

Dr. Imran Batada, an esteemed professional whose career spans over 20 years both locally and internationally, is currently serving as the Chief Technology Officer and Director Center for Information Technology (CIT) at IoBM. The speakers at the book launch ceremony considerably appreciated his efforts in writing the book that presents a holistic viewpoint and insights on how to best utilize digital media in Pakistan.

In his welcome address, Mr. Talib Karim, President, IoBM stated that: "This year IoBM

has launched two books. The first one was by Dr. ShahidaWizarat, launched in February. Dr. Imran Batada's book is the second in the series. Dr. Imran has done a remarkable job in initiating IoBM to have a paperless environment. We are in the process of developing a campus management software and he has successfully initiated a digital marketing diploma at IoBM primarily to facilitate freelancers. This book is a collection of his articles over many years."

The Chief Guest, Dr. Ishrat Hussain, in his speech, expressed his views noting: "I admire his efforts in compiling his articles in the form of a book. Reading books has become a rare



commodity. We have become 14-word captive readers. We should devote time to reading articles and understanding their content. Bringing articles on various subjects in one book is

a commendable step. I congratulate Mr. Talib Karim for supporting this project."

Mr. Fahd Haroon also lauded the book and said: "This work from Dr. Imran is a timely and

important contribution to the ongoing discussion of digital Pakistan. Digitalization has the potential to revolutionize our business and communication while also bringing an opportu-

nity to connect with people from all over the world. As public office holders, it is our duty to ensure digital platforms are used for constrictive activities"

Amongst those who attended the event were renowned professionals including Ashfaq Ahmed, Head of Digital, Bank-Islami Pakistan Ltd., Shaikat Ali Khan, Global Chief Information Officer, Aga Khan University, TabasumAbid, Director IT and Chief Technical Officer, Sindh Police, Hussein Hassanali, GM, Head IT Audit, Habib Bank Limited, IftikharArif, General Manager IT and E-commerce, Muller & Phillips Pakistan; and Sohaib Hassan, Co-Founder Brand & Media Learning Hub.



Islamabad
15° - 23° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 5:02 am
Zohr 12:18 pm
Asr 4:30 pm
Maghrib 6:12 pm
Isha 7:35 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

Two security guards martyred, one injured in IED blast targeting convoy of MPA Sardar Rind's son

News Desk

QUETTA: The two security guards of the son of MPA Balochistan Assembly Sardar Yar Mohammad Rind embraced martyrdom, while the other sustained injuries on Saturday in an Improvised Explosive Device's (IED) blast that occurred in the Noshman area of Balochistan, the district administration confirmed.

The IED planted alongside the road detonated when the convoy of Mir Sardar Khan Rind, son of the said MPA was on its way to Dhadar, according to Assistant Commissioner Fahad Shah Rashdi.

As a result, the two security guards were martyred instantly while one suffered critical injuries. Luckily, Mir Sardar Khan Rind remained unhurt. The injured guard was moved to Civil Hospital Dhadar. Meanwhile, the personnel of the law enforcement agencies have cordoned off the area and started the search for the arrest of the culprits.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas Mst. Shamaila Noreen W/O Khurram Shahzad Khalid R/O/O Pindi Bahauddin Tehsil & District Mandi Bahauddin.

Allottee of Plot No. 264-E Block-B has appointed Mr. Mehmood Qasim S/O Talib Hussain R/P/O H. No. 2, Street No. 1, Mohallah Manzoor Abad, Tehsil & District Mandi Bahauddin, as his attorney duly registered by Sub Registrar Mandi Bahauddin vide No. 97 Dated: 07-03-2023. The attorney intends to transfer this plot in the name of Mr. Ahmad Bukhsh S/O Jhan Khan R/P/O Dera Tararan, Mumdana, Tehsil Phalia District Mandi Bahauddin.

If anyone has any objection/legal rights of any sort in this regard, he should furnish the same in writing to the undersigned along with his original National Identity Card within 15 days from the publication Notice. After the expiry of this period no excuse what so ever will be listened to and the Deptt. will not be responsible in any way and plot will be transferred in name of Ahmad Bukhsh S/O Jhan Khan.

Deputy Director Punjab Housing & Town Planning Agency Sub Region Jhelum

Political stability, continuity of policies vital for country's progress: Ahsan Iqbal

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal has said that political stability and continuity of policies are vital for ensuring country's progress.

He said this while addressing the Econ Fest on 'How to turn-around Pakistan' at Alhamra on Saturday.

He said that in current circumstances of the country there was no single leader, party or institution which could alone steer the country out of existing challenges adding that if we wanted to move forward there was a need to learn the science of collaboration. Country needed unified solutions for its problems, he added.

He said that when he was studying in engineering university, he got a chance and was elected as

president of students union and through this experience he had learnt that public leadership could play significant role in bringing social change.

He said, "public service requires a passion and conviction and is a great virtue."

He said that Pakistan could turn all dreams of youngsters into reality, but it took someone with dedication, determination and hard work.

Ahsan Iqbal said that political stability and social harmony were essential elements for ensuring progress and prosperity.

If there was a conflict in society then no policy could yield positive results, he maintained.

He said, "If we look back at country's history our policies always remained progressive."

He said that Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, Singa-

por, China, Bangladesh, Vietnam and Turkey were countries which had made speedy progress during last 50 years.

Minister said, "a policy needs minimum ten years to get successful". He said that unfortunately Pakistan had dropped three catches, first in 1960's, second in 1991 and third in 2017 adding that during these times country could have made enormous progress but it did not happen.

He said that China Pakistan Economic Corridor was the big project which had changed country's profile altogether but unfortunately in 2018 government changed policies. Chinese investment was scandalized, he added.

He said from 1947 to 2013 only 18,000 megawatts energy was produced in the country and in four years, PML-N produced and added 11,000 megawatts energy



in the system, but unfortunately this effort was scandalized.

Ahsan Iqbal said once, he asked Dr Abdul Qadir Khan and Dr Ashfaq Ahmad about the success behind achieving their goal.

He said both apprised him that approach of shared vision, stabil-

ity of tenure, following merit in recruitment, posting, transfer, investing on our people, and we were provided with resources all these things helped us to achieve our desired goal."

Minister said that now it was a high time that ownership of devel-

opment agenda should be given to people as this would help in continuity of policies.

He said it was of utmost importance for the country to develop its export potential and there was a need to increase our tax to GDP ratio.

He said that 5E framework had been developed to stabilise country's economy in next two to three years.

Ahsan Iqbal said that 5E framework would provide a platform in achieving set goals.

The 5E framework includes exports enterprise & employment, e-Pakistan empowering youth, environment and food security, energy affordable & efficient and equity education health population, he added.

He also responded to the questions of some participants of the Fest Econ.

Student presenting tablue

RAWALPINDI: Students are performing tublue in private school at Press Club, in the City.



Photo: Online

PML-N leader for formal probe into alleged conspiracy that brought Imran Khan to power

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Javed Latif has called for the establishment of a parliamentary commission to investigate and hold those, who allegedly plotted to bring Imran Khan to power in the rigged elections of 2018, accountable.

Talking to media, he accused the "facilitators" of carrying out a conspiracy against the then PML-N government, adding that the characters who established the monarchy through a conspiracy in 2018, have already



been exposed and should be held accountable.

He also demanded that the report of the commission should

be made public.

Furthermore, the PML-N leader alleged that due to the conspiracy, Imran Khan, along

with his spouse "Pinky Peerani" and "front woman" Farah Gogi, became billionaires, while the price of basic commodities skyrocketed, causing immense hardship for the common people.

"As a result of this conspiracy, two rupees worth of bread is being sold at 25 rupees and the price of one kilogram of ghee has increased from Rs 140 to 700 rupees," he said.

He also accused Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership of spreading lies about the recent killing of a PTI worker in Lahore.

Senator Farooq H Naek's election to IPU human rights committee felicitated

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani on Saturday congratulated Senator Farooq Hamid Naek on being elected as a member of the Standing Committee on Human Rights and Democracy at the 146th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly held in Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain.

Senator Naek, a highly respected lawyer and Parliamentarian from Pakistan, has been recognized for his unwavering commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights and democracy.

His election to the important committee is a testament to his expertise and dedication to advancing these critical issues not only in Pakistan but also around the world.

Expressing confidence in Senator Naek's abilities, the Senate Chairman expressed his belief that the newly elected member would bring his vast experience and knowledge to the vital role and make a significant contribution to the work of the Standing Committee.

PTI seeks judicial investigation into Ali Bilal's death

Bureau Report

LAHORE : Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Saturday demanded a judicial investigation into the death of PTI worker Ali Bilal also known as Zill-e-Shah.

The party claimed that Mr Bilal had been killed by Punjab police at the PTI's rally in Lahore.

PTI senior vice president Fawad Chaudhry questioned if Mr Bilal had died of an accident, why a case was lodged against him, PTI chief Imran Khan, and other PTI leaders.

He said Punjab interim Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi had registered a failed attempt to wash off the blood of Mr Bilal in his presser on Saturday. "Saturday's presser proves that Punjab has turned into a breeding ground for false cases", he added. The party would settle the score, he said, as it did in the cases of the attack on Mr Khan, Arshad Sharif's murder, and the torture on PTI leaders Shehbaz Gill and Azam Swati.

Know More: Imran vows to move against Punjab administration over Lahore incident

Taking to Twitter, he wrote, "Zill-e-Shah's murder is being covered up as the murder of Arshad Sharif, and gun attack on Mr Khan were covered up".

He said the people were aware of the whole story of the imposition of Article 144 in Lahore [while PTI was rallying] adding that the PTI's election rally and peaceful protestors were the targets. "Police's actions grounded the structure of prosecution in the province", he added. It had become increasingly difficult, he said, for the courts to decide whether the accused nominated by the police was guilty or not.



Arslan Ahmed, GM Organiks Plus, receiving Community Impact Award from H.E. Mr. Herman Hardynata Ahmad, Consul-General of Malaysia and Mr. Mehmood Tareen, CEO The Professional Network.

CM Balochistan condemns attack on Sardar Rind's convoy

News Desk



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo on Saturday condemned the blast on the convoy of Sardar Khan Rind, the son of Sardar Yar Muhammad Rind, a member of the Provincial Assembly.

In a statement issued here, the chief minister expressed his grief and sorrow over the martyrdom of two security guards in the act of terrorism.

"Thank God that Sardar Khan Rind remained safe in the explosion," the chief minister said and directed the LEAs to use all resources to bring the elements involved in the explosion to the task.

He said the terrorist elements wanted to create an atmosphere of fear and panic, vowing that law and order situation in the province would be maintained at any cost.

The chief minister extended condolences and sympathies to the families of the martyred security guards.

KP caretaker CM stresses need for strategy to eradicate drugs use

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan on Saturday termed the prevailing situation of drug use in Pakistan and especially in the province of grave concern and stressed the need for a well-devised strategy to eradicate the menace of drugs use on sustainable basis.

He expressed these views while addressing a function organized here in connection with the 30 years celebration of Dost Welfare Foundation.

While lauding the role of the Dost Welfare Foundation in this regard, Muhammad Azam Khan said that the foundation had been working for the last 30 years for the rehabilitation of drug addicts in the province and makes them useful citizens which deserve appreciation.

Azam Khan remarked that during these 30 years of its establishment, the Foundation has extended various kinds of services and facilities to more than 400,000 drugs affectees

for which the management of the Foundation deserves huge felicitation. He expressed the hope that the foundation will continue its selfless services for humanity in future as well.

"The 30 years long journey of Dost Welfare Foundation is full of remarkable achievements which has been aided and supported by its companions and friends who have so generously contributed all their time and efforts in reaching out to the most vulnerable segments in our society to heal and restore their self-respect", the Chief Minister said and added that Dost's services particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, former FATA and parts of Afghanistan, which were veritable war zones for the past 40 years, include victims of war such as refugees, displaced persons, women and children in crisis and community members caught in the crossfire.

Azam Khan stated that the whole country in general and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

in particular are in the grip of massive drug addiction which is affecting the younger generation adversely; and added that according to the UNODC, 11 present population of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is using hardcore drugs, which is almost double figure than other provinces.

"With a professional and dedicated term, Dost Welfare Foundation provides a continuum of care through its program for drug abuse prevention, rehabilitation, vocational skill training, HIV prevention, human rights protection, legal assistance, research and networking with government departments and civil society organizations", the Chief Minister maintained and continued that the foundation is working in areas where normally government agencies do not reach.

He stressed that such work can best be undertaken by non-governmental organizations with government support through public-private partnership.

Azam Khan further said that

besides the treatment and rehabilitation of drug users, Dost Foundation also reaches out to the most vulnerable and marginalized groups of society such as people at risk of or infected by HIV/AIDS, prisons inmates, juvenile offenders, street children, women in crisis, victims of war and disaster and added that it also reaches out to these unfortunate miserable and stigmatized individuals living in difficult conditions through a process of awareness, primary prevention, rehabilitation and social development.

He termed children as future of nation and said that Dost Foundation pays special attention to their welfare and rehabilitation through its child protection partnership and network.

Addressing the function, Managing Director, Dost Welfare Foundation Mrs. Munawar Hamyun, Behram Azam Khan, Aizaz Khan and other speakers highlighted the 30 years journey and achievements of Dost Foundation.

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A way out of the Energy crisis

Javed Ullah Raja

On February 8, 2023, through the English newspaper "Daily The Spokesman" Islamabad, "Proposal to get out public from the electricity crisis" The text of which was as: The country is suffering from a severe energy crisis. No matter how much we talk about the current electricity situation, there is little because, with the increase in population, no sufficient work has been done on electricity production projects. This is the reason that today the country is suffering from a severe crisis of electricity. Lack of electricity and load shedding is a big obstacle to the development of the country. There is no place for factories, projects, and factories that do not have an idea of their importance. The wheel of the economy has been jammed. The production of the factories is being badly affected. If we first find a solution to this problem, we can take the country out of the black clouds of darkness. For this, a strong strategy is to be needed. Let's say for example if this problem is reduced from debt, it will cost a lot of capital and still, the problem will be left. Get, out of this problem.

While Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif has expressed his desire to benefit from solar power generation projects in the country. The production of solar energy in Pakistan is not equal to the country's electricity production. According to a report, the country only 430 megawatts of solar energy are provided in the electricity system i.e. the national grid. Currently, the electricity production in the country is 22 thousand while the demand is 26 thousand megawatts.

I have a suggestion for the government: By this we can solve the problem of electricity for domestic consumers, as well as for the projects. Never-end-

ing treasures are with Allah Almighty Allah. We should keep our eyes on them. I want to focus on solar energy. Previously there were various programs have been launched by the government, for the welfare of the public. Including the yellow cap scheme, laptop scheme and giving subsidies on essential goods in utility stores for the public. The Government should launch a program for, installing solar systems for the public and recover its cost in electricity bills in easy installments.

For alternate energy there are many other sources of electricity, including wind power, solar and hydropower, etc. With solar energy we can benefit elsewhere. And for this, no special raw material or area is to be needed. Rather, it is anywhere in the country in the whether it is a city, village, town or desert, that the treasure of nature can be used for free and forever. Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif has indicated the plan installing solar systems. And instructions have also been given to complete it. "Daily Jang" writes in a report on March 2, 2023, titled "Solar system should be installed in government buildings of Islamabad in 7 weeks, Prime Minister" The report said that Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif directed installing solar systems in government buildings in Islamabad within 7 weeks and ordered to extend its scope to government buildings across the country. The Prime Minister passed this directive. Day across the country In a meeting called to review the progress on solarization of government buildings, the meeting was told that 496 in Islamabad, 340 in major cities of the country, including Karachi, Lahore, Faisalabad, and Quetta, and 1255 government buildings in other areas will be installed solar panels. The installation of solar panels in government buildings in Islamabad should be done on an emergency basis. The Prime Minister

gave clear instructions to the relevant authorities to complete the project within a specified period"

In deed this is very good step to get out of the energy crisis by the government. This project will solve the problem of electricity. Beside this, the entire burden of this solar system project will also fall on the government exchequer. But in the future in terms of electricity, the burden on the treasury of government institutions will be reduced. As the daily "Express-News" in a report dated February 20, 2023, says that IESCO owes billions of rupees to government and semi-government institutions. The spokesman said on behalf of the Islamabad Electric Supply Company. It has been said that various institutions are included under the responsibility of government and semi-government institutions, the same have been identified individually. According to an estimate, there are about 116814 million rupees are in arrears of government and semi-government institutions. In this difficult time, the people have the right to provide the relief. They are surrounded by problems from all sides. The current inflation has affected the majority of the people. The increase in electricity and gas bills started to feel this way that citizens have nothing to do except pay heavy utility bills. The majority of the salaried people also suffer from this every month due to the increase in the supply and prices of electricity, water, and gas. The problem is that all the salaries go towards transportation and utility bills. How can the other needs of life be fulfilled? Treatment, education of children, and attention to other needs of life have become very difficult tasks. Therefore, we, first of all, need to focus on correcting the condition of the people. The country's conditions have become so complicated that the business community is also worried. The ratio of salaries to inflation is not what it was a few years

ago. Therefore, every citizen is in trouble in his own place. The power of the people cannot be denied in democratic governments. The glory of the houses and the kingdoms is due to the people. Therefore, before providing any kind of facilities in the country, putting the people first and taking care of them is the only way to protect the country and the nation. Goodwill and development, with such permanent and integrated welfare projects, the standard of living of the common man can be improved. Because now attention should be given to working on and implementing other such projects in our country, which is also beneficial in the future. We have to pay off the loans over the next several years. So on the other hand, how can the expenditure on welfare works are met? In the last 75 years, there has been little attention paid to productive projects.

If along with this project for government buildings with regard to the solar system is also discussed for domestic consumer's solar system scheme because peoples are more affected by the current rising inflation and the burden of debt, taxes, and then the electricity bills are increasing day by day, as recently the electricity rates have increased further. It is obvious that it will never decrease. Therefore, there is an urgent need to give relief to the public at this time. The Prime Minister is requested to solarize the government buildings program, there should be a considered solar panel projects for domestic consumers as well. This project will definitely burden the exchequer temporarily. But it is also possible to recover this cost which will be received in the form of monthly installments from the domestic public. By this it will be possible to provide electricity to the people on a permanent basis.

Writer is senior analyst and reached on javedullahraja@gmail.com

Crushing freedom of expression

Kashmiri activists and International Muslim women have criticized the Indian government for its repressive policies aimed at criminalizing freedom of expression and using new censorship methods to stifle critical voices in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

The allegations, made during an interactive dialogue hosted by the World Muslim Congress, in partnership with international Muslim women have raised concerns over human rights violations in IIOJK.

The interactive session held in Geneva was attended and addressed by Kashmir Institute of International Relations Chairman Altaf Hussain Wani, Sardar Amjad Yousaf, Dr. Waleed Rasool, Fahim Akram Kayani, Syed Faiz Naqshbandi, Dr. Shugafta Ashraf and others.

Briefing the international audience about the Indian government's massive crackdown-campaign to criminalize freedom of opinion and expression, they highlighted the government's crackdown on dissenting voices through censorship, arbitrary detentions, and attacks on journalists.

The speakers pointed out that since August 2019, the denial of access to information, censorship, and harassment had become alarmingly frequent, and even journalists, civil society activists, and rights defenders were booked under sedition charges for raising their voice against repression and use of excessive force by the Indian occupied forces.

The speakers also noted that the media freedom in Indian Illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir had been deteriorating since Modi took the reins of power in New Delhi, with undue restrictions imposed under media policy 2020 having a chilling effect on objective reporting. They called upon the international community to take notice of the human rights violations in Kashmir and hold the Indian government accountable for its actions.

The Kashmiri journalists, they said, have suffered numerous press freedom violations ranging from killings, torture and kidnapping, arrests and detentions under black laws.

"The people's right to freedom of expression has come under unusual pressure in Kashmir, especially after the Indian government enforced draconian laws such as UAPA and other laws in Kashmir", they said, adding that these lawless laws have helped the Indian government to throttle free-media and silence critical voices who refused to toe the government line.

They said that government-aligned militias and so-called investigating agencies have frequently raided homes and offices of pressmen in Srinagar to create a climate of fear.

Referring to the illegal detention of Hurriyat leaders and prominent Kashmiri rights activists, the speakers said, "Political leadership and human rights advocates who have been critical of India's repressive policy towards Kashmir have been booked under trumped-up charges and thrown in jails".



Anatomy of Violence

Fahad Ali

Pakistan is going through a difficult phase of its existence, and apart from verbiage spewed by multiple socio-political elements that actually incite violence, the degree of violent behaviour in the country has simply become untenable.

People of Pakistan are subjected to the incidents of violence taking place day in and day out sometimes for no cogent cause.

This situation has caused a deep worry within circles that are responsible for larger public safety and has also conveyed a highly negative impression of the country to the outside world.

The reasons for continuation of violence in Pakistani society could be multiple yet the impact of each and every violent act is frightening depressing the societal activity. People not only feel unsafe in wake of indiscriminate and widespread violence but they have now come to develop a fear for their lives that is an exceedingly problematic aspect of the existence of any society.

Violence is as old as human existence and generations of human beings have endured the destructive wrath of this curious phenomenon. Though human race has been subjected to elemental forces of destruction but it was something that involved forces of nature it has hardly any control over but it comes a poor second to the complex forms of human cohesion that unleashed violence on a scale much larger in contrast.

In the process of human evolution and existence violence has remained omnipresent and is witnessed to come in multiple forms and is inflicted upon individuals, communities, cultures and physical environments.

Violence is extremely potent tool seen to be taking place in individual, institutional and social practices in contemporary society. It is usually observed that violence is perpetrated in various forms with some of them being overt and some rather less obvious but quite palpable.

This is tricky fallout and cannot be reasonably explained as all members of a community subjected to such application of force may not be part of the activity that has brought on such violence on them.

One worrying aspect is the tendency to condone violence perpetrated against individuals, communities and the environment on part of the elements that hold reins of power along with their allied power structures, either implicitly or explicitly.

In this context, many quarters insist that violence perpetrated under any pretext— interpersonal, ethnic, racial, regional or national demands investigation from the perspectives of different elements with a view to counter the long-held views of the forces that consider it as a necessary means for wider public safety. It is essential to take into consideration the potential harmfulness of violence in all of its embodiments and shapes, both explicit and implicit that is required to comprehend multiple formations and patterns of violence that may provide a base to take steps for its control.

In case of Pakistan it must be kept in view that the most recurrent form of violence here is political in nature. It is often pointed out that political violence is used as a tool by its perpetrators to gain space and occupy maximum political ground. In this kind of violence, the ways and the means of violence can be changed according to national and international political conditions.

This changing scenario has been amply demonstrated in the recent cases of violence unleashed in the country. Its asymmetrical nature has added to its lethal results and it has become quite difficult for rationalists to devise a suitable method for its control.

While deliberating violence it is essential to understand that its context and meanings are both subjective and identical. While the perpetrators of violence may justify their violent actions as some shape and kind of political struggle but to the elements that are subjected to it such actions become terrorism that is required to be countered by whatever means necessary. In Pakistan it is

imperative to comprehend the dynamics, logic and rationality of political violence for controlling its extent and reach. The tendency is to define political violence as a collective attack against a regime or operatives of a regime.

It is often forgotten that multiple factors such as social, political and economic change leads to rising expectations and in case of these expectations not getting fulfilled a reaction ensues that takes the shape of political violence.

It is often observed that political violence is undertaken not as the first or the foremost means by which to achieve the objectives of a group simply because it keeps its eyes of political solution through parleys. This process has been witnessed in Pakistan in case of many occurrences of political violence. It should be remembered that political terrorism is a derivation of political violence; it is political violence used in an effort to compromise others' bids for political power.

However, unlike political violence, acts of violence can gain independence from the political objectives of individuals or communities. Such violence indicates the urge of perpetrators that is struggling for survival. It must be kept in view that violence in this shape could be checked and controlled once the underlying causes are found and addressed. The nature of such violence can be appropriately taken into account and amelioratory measures could be adopted to contain it. Pakistan is mostly raked with this kind of violence on the state level and it is not very cumbersome to address it.

As far as the endemic violence in the overall structure of the social milieu is concerned, lengthy and serious measures are required to diffuse it. The first and foremost requirement is to inculcate a spirit of pacifism in the social system that is still deliberately influenced by visions of martial grandeur. The social mores are required to be altered whereby reasonable and rational perceptions are encouraged instead of viewing matters emotionally. This process is required to begin from the formative stages of individuals and then gradually moved upwards.

Recurrent incidents of uranium thefts in India pose threat to world

Spokesman Research

The recurrent incidents of uranium thefts and smuggling in India have highlighted the alarming poor security arrangement of the Indian nuclear programme.

The theft of nuclear material over the last two decades in India posed a serious threat of nuclear terrorism, necessitating action by the global powers to address the poor safety standards in the country, defence analysts said on Saturday.

A number of uranium/radioactive substance theft incidents in the recent past occurred in India, which indicated the presence of black market for nuclear materials inside India.

During 2021, 6.4kg of uranium in Jharkhand and likewise 7kg of uranium in Maharashtra were confiscated by the Indian authorities.

On 26 August 2021, 250kg of uranium variant – a highly radioactive and toxic substance – worth \$573 Mn was confiscated in Kolkata and two persons from Indian strategic organizations were arrested. In Dec 2006, a container packed with radioactive material was stolen from a fortified research facility in the town of Rajrapa (Ramgarh District).

According to experts, such incidents raised serious questions over the safety and security of huge stockpiles of fissile material within India.

The Indian Environmental Portal said that a review of 'unusual occurrences' contained within the Indian Atomic Energy Regulatory Board's (AERB) annual reports revealed there had been 16 cases of loss, theft or misplacement of radioactive sources since 20001 in which radioactive material found its way into the environment.

"These are not isolated incidents as India's

history is replete with such evidence of possible involvement of national gangs in creating a black market for uranium trade," a number of defence analysts opined.

Such incidents posed risks of nuclear exchange due to miscalculations between nuclear armed India and Pakistan, the experts added.

Such incidents had raised concerns about India, which emerged as a potential hotspot in the illegal trade of nuclear technology and materials vital for a malicious nuclear supply chain for state and non-state actors.

Given its history, India is considered as one of the most vulnerable states in the world with respect to nuclear safety and security.

"As a state with dozens of local insurgencies and movements, it is a matter of time when a non-state actor succeeds in acquiring sufficient fissile material that can be useful in harming others," they further commented.

In defiance of international obligations, they said India was channeling its civil nuclear program/technologies for military purposes.

"Therefore, the international community must be careful in its nuclear-related dealings vis-à-vis India as it would make the region and world more dangerous," they stressed. On the other hand, they maintained Pakistan was committed to the objective of enhancing nuclear security. It has been fully engaged with the international community to promote nuclear safety and security.

"As a Nuclear capable state, Pakistan takes its nuclear security responsibility very seriously. Nuclear safety and security in Pakistan are based on multiple layers and defense-in-depth concepts. All of Pakistan's export control laws are at par with international standards and the standards set by the NSG and other export control regimes," they added.

Combating Islamophobia at the UN Significant Development: Dr. Fai

Spokesman Report

UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations observed the First International Day to Combat Islamophobia. It was chaired by Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, as the Chair of OIC and addressed among others by Antonio Guterres, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Csaba Körösi, the President of the UN General Assembly and many others.

Secretary General was firm in proclaiming that "On this International Day to Combat Islamophobia, we focus attention — and call for action — to stamp out the poison of anti-Muslim hatred. The world's nearly 2 billion Muslims reflect humanity in all its magnificent diversity. But they often face bigotry and prejudice for no other reason than their faith." UNSG added that "For well over a millennium, Islam's message of peace, compassion, and grace has inspired people the world over." The President of the General Assembly indicated that "Islamophobia is rooted in xenophobia, or the fear of strangers, which is reflected in discriminatory practices, travel bans, hate speech, bullying and targeting of other people."

"It would not be wrong to claim that many in the Western world are currently living in a state of fear of Islam. However, one needs to acknowledge that the threat Islam is seen as posing to the world is imagined rather than real. Unfortunately, though, the repercussions of this irrational fear of Islam are not only affecting individual Muslims in the form of increased discrimination, harassment, and persecution, but also infiltrating into foreign policy decisions worldwide," said Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai, Chairman, 'World Forum for Peace & Justice'.

Dr. Fai added that "Islam, as a growing force in the world, is not a threat and it is compatible with the Western ideals of freedom and democracy. This is not to say that an Islamic society would look like an American one, but neither do any of the socialist democ-

racies or monarchies found throughout Western Europe and much of the Western world are modeled on the American system. It should not be the West's goal in particular America's, to impose their own version of democracy in the Islamic world but rather to support the rise of governments that uphold the same tenets of equality, freedom, and justice that the West holds dear."

Fai suggested that Islamic scholars should concentrate their efforts towards defending universal truths as conveyed through all the sacred scriptures, especially the three Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity & Islam. Some of these timeless spiritual principles are reflected in the thirty articles of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, though many have been still left out.

Fai observed that Islamic ideals encompass universal values, all of which naturally flow out of the ethic of reciprocity. If human beings were to uphold this basic tenet, there would be neither oppression nor denial of human



rights because no one would ever oppress others or deny them their basic rights. The Qur'an contains numerous verses, Fai stated, which beautifully capture what it means to behave in a spirit of brotherhood as it encourages the uttering of kind words, honesty,

restraining anger, avoiding greed, practicing forgiveness, giving due measure, condemning fraud and bribery, behaving humbly, admonishing mockery and sarcasm, honoring one's promises and commitments, and encouraging peace, reconciliation, charity, tolerance, gener-

osity and respect.

The Qur'anic teachings are timeless and universal. The beauty and grace of God's word can be applied anytime, anywhere and is robust enough to address all social issues that may arise. And it is His word that upholds all the human rights ideals of the West and more. The West should be partnering with Muslims across the globe in order to allow for the emergence of societies and governments that would embody these ideals rather than suffer from a baseless and unjustified fear of Islam that colors today's geopolitical landscape.

Fai thanked Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, U.S. Representative to the United Nations whose message was loud and clear when she said, "Let us redouble our efforts to combat prejudice and violence. And let us do everything in our power to ensure the next time we gather for the International Day to Combat Islamophobia, our world is that much more peaceful, tolerant, and just."

Improvement Education Relations

MOU between the two leading universities of Kazakhstan and Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: In collaboration with the Embassy of Kazakhstan to Pakistan, a solemn ceremony of signing a Memorandum of Understanding was organized between the leading universities of Kazakhstan and Pakistan - Al-Farabi Kazakh National University and the Quaid-i-Azam University.

KazNU was represented by a Member of the Management Board, Vice-Rector for Social Development Mr. Nurzhan Aidosov, Quaid-i-Azam University by Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Shaista Sohail.

The parties expressed interest in implementing practical steps to develop and strengthen cooperation between the two universities.

For his part, Ambassador Kistafin congratulated the leadership of the two universities on signing the memorandum and expressed readiness to provide all possible assistance to the development of interuniversity cooperation.

Following the results of the event, an agreement was reached on the organization of a visit of Pakistani universities to Kazakhstan.



Organiks Plus was honored, with the Community Impact Award

News Desk

KARACHI: Organiks Plus was honored, with the Community Impact Award, at the CSR Summit held at Marriott Karachi, by The Professional Network. The award recognized their efforts for enabling women and youth to earn sustainable livelihoods through product development and marketing. The event was attended by esteemed national and international delegates.



As a social enterprise, Organiks Plus has empowered remote communities of Pakistan by marketing their skills and indigenous knowledge as commercially viable and competitive lifestyle products. Their products appeal to national and international quality-sensitive and socially responsible consumers. Over the past few years, their efforts have resulted in improving the household incomes, self-esteem, and prosperity for artisans and small farmers in rural communities in Pakistan.

Arslan Ahmed the General Manager of Organiks Plus received the award on behalf of the organization. Expressing his pride he said "Receiving the maiden Community Impact Award is a momentous achievement for Organiks Plus, recognition of our mission to promote indigenous and natural products and provide economic opportunities for marginalized communities, particularly women and youth. This achievement strengthens our resolve to continue to lead in the concept of a cultural economy with value addition, as we strive to create a sustainable future for all. We remain committed to producing high-quality products and transforming lives through responsible and sustainable business practices."

MIDDLE EAST: A new dawn breaks!

China's involvement in Iran Saudi Arabia dialogue demonstrates the country's growing diplomatic clout on the world stage

Syed Ali Nawaz Gillani

"The rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia is a major flashpoint in the Middle East, and any efforts to ease tensions between the two countries should be welcomed. China's role in mediating between Iran and Saudi Arabia highlights its growing influence in the region and its ability to play a constructive role in promoting stability." - Dr. Naser Al-Tamimi, Middle East analyst and author.

The announcement of the resumption of bilateral relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia, brokered by China, is a significant development in the ongoing political landscape of the Middle East. The tensions between the two regional powers have been a source of instability and conflict in the region, with proxy wars and political maneuvering being played out. However, the success of China's diplomatic efforts in facilitating the rapprochement signifies a potential shift in the region's power dynamics.

China's growing influence in the Middle East is a topic of interest, particularly regarding its role in shaping the region's future. While China has been successful thus far in its pragmatic and non-interventionist approach, many question how it will balance its relationships with competing powers in the complex political landscape of the region. Nonetheless, it is clear that China's strategic and economic interests in the Middle East will continue to impact its role in the world. Whether it can effectively navigate this challenging environment remains to be seen.

The timing of the Iran Saudi Arabia Agreement, which was



signed on the same day (March 10th) as Chinese President Xi Jinping's formal re-election to his third term, cannot be ignored. It serves as a clear indication of China's growing influence and willingness to play a more active role in global affairs, including those in the Middle East.

The deal is also a clue of the waning influence of the United States in the region. For decades, Washington has played a dominant role in shaping the politics and security of the Middle East. However, the recent deal brokered by China signals a shift in the balance of power in the region, as other nations begin to assert their influence.

The resumption of diplomatic relations between Iran and Saudi

Arabia, if implemented in good faith, could pave the way for a wider regional peace agreement. The two nations have a long and complicated history, with sectarian divides and political rivalries fueling tensions. However, the willingness of both sides to come to the negotiating table and engage in dialogue is a positive step forward.

The agreement also serves as a reminder that diplomacy and dialogue are key to resolving conflicts and maintaining peace. The use of force, aggression, and sanctions have often exacerbated tensions in the region, leading to further instability and insecurity. The resumption of diplomatic relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia offers a glimmer of

hope that peaceful solutions can be found to even the most intractable conflicts.

However, the road ahead remains uncertain, and much will depend on the ability of both Iran and Saudi Arabia to honor their commitments and work toward a peaceful resolution. The international community must also play a role in supporting this process, including the United States, which has long been involved in the politics of the region.

The recent resumption of bilateral relations between two arch-rivals, Iran and Saudi Arabia, with the help of China, marks a critical juncture in the perpetual geopolitical turmoil of the Middle East. Despite the numerous challenges that lie

ahead, this significant diplomatic breakthrough provides a ray of hope that peaceful resolutions can be achieved even in the most persistent and entrenched disputes. To preserve the integrity of this momentous accord, it is incumbent upon the international community to extend its support and ward off any political gamesmanship or extraneous meddling.

This development underscores the importance of diplomacy in addressing conflicts, and the potential of neutral parties like China to facilitate resolution of long-standing issues in the Middle East. Notably, China's pragmatic and non-interventionist approach to the region's affairs has played a pivotal role in bringing Iran and Saudi Arabia to the

negotiating table.

The successful mediation by China demonstrates the capacity of a mediator to bring hostile parties together and highlights the value of diplomacy as an effective instrument for conflict resolution. In light of these observations, it is imperative that the international community, including other global players, recognize and endorse the utility of diplomatic channels and aid in efforts towards establishing a more peaceful Middle East.

Besides mediating between Iran and Saudi Arabia, China has actively participated in other regional conflicts, such as the Syrian Civil War and the Yemeni Civil War. China has provided diplomatic support to the Syri-

an government and has been involved in the country's reconstruction. In Yemen, China has sought to remain neutral, advocating for an end to the conflict and providing humanitarian aid to those affected by the war.

China's influence is expanding beyond the Middle East, with its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) being a critical driver of China's growing global influence. BRI seeks to construct infrastructure projects in over 60 countries across Asia, Europe, and Africa, extending China's economic and political reach far beyond its borders. This has generated concerns regarding its intentions and whether it represents a threat to the current world order. The United States, in particular, is wary of China's rise and is attempting to contain its influence through measures such as trade tariffs and military alliances. However, some countries view China's involvement as a welcome alternative to the United States and its allies.

The dynamic nature of China's role in the Middle East and its global pursuits is ever-evolving, and only time will tell how it will influence the future of the region. China's practical and non-interventionist methodology, although efficacious thus far, raises questions regarding its ability to navigate the intricate political terrain of the Middle East while balancing its relationships with rival powers. One undeniable fact, however, is that China's burgeoning economic and strategic objectives in the Middle East and other realms will undoubtedly shape its role in the region and beyond.

The writer is Peshawar based Secretary General of Pakistan China Friendship Association and can be reached through email syed.gilani@gmail.com

Microsoft, Open AI to launch Chatgpt 4 with AI videos

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Microsoft and OpenAI's ChatGPT has already taken the tech-world by storm and now the latest buzz is that the makers are about to upgrade this landmark AI tool next week, allowing users to create AI-generated videos from simple text prompts.

The plan was revealed by Andreas Braun, Chief Technology Officer at Microsoft Germany, at a recent event titled "AI in Focus - Digital Kickoff".

"We will introduce GPT-4 next week ... we will have multimodal models that will offer completely different possibilities - for example videos," said Braun.

GPT-4, as it seems, won't be the first tool to output AI videos. In 2022, Meta launched Make-A-Video, which creates videos based on text prompts

Since ChatGPT was introduced late last year, tech enthusiasts and general users have used it for a variety of scenarios such as summarizing content, generating suggested email copy, and even helping with software programming questions.

A number of apps including Snapchat have incorporated the technology on their platforms.

Microsoft has also added generative AI capabilities to AI Builder, which lets businesses automate workflows, and Dynamics 365, a business management platform.

Also Read: I used ChatGPT and it freaked me out!

Earlier this week, Microsoft announced that ChatGPT is available in preview in Azure OpenAI Service.

"Now with ChatGPT in preview in Azure OpenAI Service, developers can integrate custom AI-powered experiences directly into their own applications, including enhancing existing bots to handle unexpected questions, recapping call center conversations to enable faster customer support resolutions, creating new ad copy with personalized offers, automating claims processing, and more. Cognitive services can be combined with Azure OpenAI to create compelling use cases for enterprises. For example, see how Azure OpenAI and Azure Cognitive Search can be combined to use conversational language for knowledge base retrieval on enterprise data," Microsoft said in a statement.

Khawaja Asif inaugurates exhibition 'We Exhibit 2023'

Correspondent

SIALKOT: Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif inaugurated the first women exhibition "We Exhibit 2023" organized by the Women Chamber and Industry Sialkot (WCCIS) at Family Park here on Saturday.

Speaking on this occasion, he said more than 50% of Pakistan's population consisted of women, adding that women could not move forward unless they were given opportunities to be empowered.

The WCCIS had taken a great step to organize the exhibition and women from other cities of the country were also participating in the event after setting up their stalls, he said.

The defence minister said the exhibition would put a positive impact on lives of the business women. "I pray that the women of Sialkot play their effective role in increasing the export of Sialkot", he added.

Earlier, the defence minister visited stalls set up by women across the country in the exhibition and appreciated their products.

As many as 88 stalls have been set up by various women entrepreneurs and companies regarding cutlery, handicrafts, shoes, leather products, jewelry, furniture, embroideries, gym wear, sportswear in the exhibition.

PIDE's first-ever EconFest

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Speaking at PIDE's first-ever EconFest, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, the Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives said that if you have a dream and the will, this country will help you achieve your dreams but you need to put in a lot of hard work. He was deliberating on what ails Pakistan and "What Can Turnaround Pakistan?" For public service, you need conviction and the desire to help your country and people. He said that if there is a conflict in society, no policy will be successful. Pakistan's 75-year history shows that we made robust policies. However, we are lagging behind countries like South Korea, Turkey, and others in terms of policy consistency.

To develop its economy, the minister said that Pakistan needs to curb tax evasion, increase tax collection, and increase its exports from around Rs. 30 billion to Rs. 100 billion in the next 5 to 8 years. Prof. Ahsan Iqbal said that we also need to develop our youth's IT skills. Moreover, the climate situation needs to be tackled. Most importantly, we need to tackle the issue of energy, which is a huge drain on Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves. Therefore, we need to move to renewable energy resources. The minister said that we also need to focus on equity in education and health.

Stop taxing the poor: Atif Ikram

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Former Vice President of FPCCI Atif Ikram Sheikh on Saturday said that the series of taxation on the poor should be stopped and the deficit should be met by taxing the rich.

Poor do not have enough money to pay further taxes while the rich can easily afford additional taxes but are not being ordered which is sad, he said.

Atif Ikram Sheikh said that the economy is in ruins and the life of the common man has become miserable.

Masses are not able to make their household budget due to runaway inflation so they should be given some relief, he added.

Sheikh who has also served as Chairman

of PVMA said in a statement that the planners are aware of the plight of the people, but despite this, they continue to increase the burden of taxes and electricity and gas bills on them.

He questioned why the elites are not taxed according to their capacity if the government lack resources.

People are always told to suffer in the national interest, but when it comes to the rich, where does the national interest go, he asked.

Atif Ikram said that the poor and middle-class families are very worried and they have to compromise on necessities while the rich use their luxury vehicles as freely as in the days when petrol prices were normal.

He said that the consumption of fuel has



the poor have reduced consumption. Likewise, the consumption of other goods has reduced due to inflation, which is borne by the poor.

Anxiety has become commonplace and education and health have become secondary issues for the poor due to tight budgets which is a ticking time-bomb.

Struggling to keep the economy afloat, the government has been desperate to reach an agreement with the IMF to resume the loan programme that has been suspended since last November.

The IMF has put forward a set of demands for the release of a \$1.1bn instalment that includes the liberalisation of the exchange rate, the removal of subsidies in various sectors and raising taxes which have been abided by but the deal is not in sight.

Economy ruined for political motives

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Saturday said the country's economy has been deliberately destroyed to achieve political goals.

Strict legal action should be taken against the so-called experts who paralyzed the country's economy in an attempt to artificially control the value of the dollar, it said.

Masses should be taken into confidence about the pending IMF deal instead of keeping the nation in the dark, said Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President of PEW.

He said that the capital flight has been happening long before the talent flight from the country.

Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that almost every notable politician, businessman, and bureaucrat considers it their right to buy lavish properties in other countries and open dollar accounts, which is bleeding the fragile economy white.



He said that a former finance minister has revealed that dollars are being smuggled into Afghanistan in large quantities but no one dares to lay hands on these smugglers.

Now, apart from Afghanistan, currency smugglers have found the lucrative Iranian market where demand for dollars is

high, he added.

Pakistan's economy is being destroyed due to the smuggling of dollars, but there is no one to stop these influential smugglers.

Dr. Mughal said that earlier most of Iran's dollar needs were met from Iraq, but now the United States and the Central Bank of Iraq have started to stop the trend in which they have been successful up to 80%, which has badly affected the Iranian currency.

Urban inflation in Iran has crossed 55 percent and the demand for the dollar has increased greatly which has become an unexpected boon for the smugglers.

Currency smugglers having the right connections are busy digging the foundations of the country for profit.

If currency smuggling was not stopped and negative policies were not reversed the US dollar will soon reach to the mark of Rs300, the price of petrol and electricity will have to be increased and the interest rates will have to be hiked, he warned.

Summer season clothes

LAHORE: Women are buying summer season clothes during hot weather at Alhamra Art Council, in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Exports continue to drop as govt ignoring textile sector

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PHMA) has expressed deep concern over continued decline in textile exports, which have dropped by around 28% year-on-year and almost 9% month-on-month, reaching \$1.20 billion in Feb 2023.

PHMA Zonal Chairman Naseer Butt said that apart from the global market slowdown the government is also responsible for the constant decline in textile exports because of its delay in refunds to exporters, demanding the



government to immediately release all pending Sales Tax Refunds, Custom Rebate

claims, DLT claims and Withholding Tax claims to provide relief to the textile exporters so that they could focus on increasing their exports.

He said that the drop in textile exports comes during a turbulent period for textile manufacturers, where they await the refunds payment by the FBR, besides facing the issues of volatile exchange rate, high energy tariffs and climbing markup rate in the country.

He warned that sudden withdrawal of power-sector subsidies to appease the IMF was likely to further hurt Pakistan's already declining exports. Power subsidy was

due to end by June 2023 but the government withdrew it hastily before the cut-off date, he said.

PHMA Zonal chief said that Pakistan's cotton production has dropped by 34.5% in February, which reflected the impact of last year's floods. In this scenario, a threat is looming over the textile industry, which requires around 14 million cotton bales annually.

He said that textile industry has continued to suffer from the effects of domestic economic meltdown as well as global economic slowdown as its exports dropped for the fifth consecutive month.

Business community concerned over Caretaker govt's involvement in trade politics

News Desk

LAHORE: The business community has expressed its serious concern over the involvement of Punjab caretaker government in trade politics and driving campaign for a particular group, violating the election code of conduct, as the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) rules bar a caretaker set-up from performing such acts.

The Election Act 2017 unequivocally restricts a caretaker set-up to only run everyday affairs of the incumbent government as well as assist the ECP. They said that the Punjab Caretaker Minister for Industries, Commerce, Investment and Skill Development S.M Tanveer has started the election drive in favour of the United Business Group (UBG) in various official functions and meetings. In a hurriedly called meeting held here

today, the representatives of various trade organizations, chambers of commerce and industrial associations of all major sectors of the country, have condemned such act of the Punjab Caretaker Minister, as he is visiting different chambers in interior Sindh along with the office-bearers of the UBG to persuade the members of his rival group of the Businessmen Panel (BMP) for voting in favour his group, which has been the loser for the last three consecutive years in FPCCI elections.

They said that the country was facing foreign exchange crisis due to trade deficit, as a result of which banks were having problems in opening LCs. They said that many of the industries had shut down due to non-availability of imported goods or raw materials and the entire supply chain had been affected and the remaining industries were barely functioning.

Pakistan, IMF still away from agreement with final stage hiccups

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have yet to reach on an agreement for the bailout package, citing sources ARY News reported on Saturday.

"The Ministry of Finance and IMF officials last night held negotiations as the two sides have taken an interval of three days, to consider over dissenting points," according to sources.

The two sides will now hold talks on March 13 (Monday), sources said.

The State Bank and the IMF officials last night held talks over the Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies (MEFP), sources said.

According to sources, Pakistan has implemented all advance conditions of the IMF for the staff level agreement. It is to be mentioned here that the agreement between Pakistan and the global lender was expected on February 09.

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar on Thursday said that the staff level agreement with the IMF was expected within next two days.

Addressing a seminar in Islamabad, federal finance minister said that incumbent government has inherited the economic crisis and taking steps for economic revival of the country.

He invited all political parties for the 'charter of economy', which could not be amended by anyone.



Fareed Mukhtar, Business Head Central, Jubilee Life Insurance presenting the Safe Hand of the Match Award to Kevin Pollard after HBL PSL 2023 match between Peshawar Zalmi and Multan Sultans.

Faysal Bank & Naheed Pakistan announced a partnership

COMABER Reporter

KARACHI: Faysal Bank and Naheed Pakistan have announced a partnership to bring Grocery on Installments facility to all Faysal Islami Noor Card customers at a 0% profit rate. This collaboration marks the first time in Pakistan that customers can avail installment financing on grocery shopping in a shariah compliant way, providing greater convenience and ease in their lives. Customers can avail financing on a minimum spend of Rs. 25000/- with Naheed.



The partnership aims to improve payment cycles for Faysal Bank's

merchant partners while making payments easier for Faysal Bank customers through Naheed Pakistan. Naheed benefits from a higher conversion rate, improved average order value, and an increase in sales by offering installments at checkout.

Feroz Khan, Head Unsecured Business & Payment Services, Consumer Finance, Faysal Bank, expressed his excitement about the partnership, "This partnership is a testament to our vision of empowering customers with Shariah Compatible flexible financing options. This

product will also support merchants to get more sales during this period of continued economic uncertainty."

FBL carries the highest local Sharia rating of SCFR1 by the International Islamic Rating Agency (IIRA) and provides the best and widest range of Shariah-compliant banking products and services to meet their customer's Halal banking needs with convenience. With an expanding network of 700 Islamic branches, Faysal Bank has a footprint in over 270 cities/towns across Pakistan.

ICCI hosts Islamabad United cricketers

Commerce Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Ali Naqvi, owner of Islamabad United along with Azhar Mahmood Coach and team members including Azam Khan, Faheem Ashraf and Colin Munro visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry for an interaction with the business community. Faad Waheed, Acting President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry welcomed the visiting guests and thanked them for visiting ICCI.

Speaking at the occasion, Faad Waheed said that the global sports market has grown to over \$ 512 billion in 2023 and Pakistan can achieve a lot of benefits for its economy by promoting cricket and other sports and enhancing exports of sports products. He stressed that the government should establish a state-of-the-art cricket stadium in Islam-



abad to promote local cricketing talent. He wished Islamabad United to win the PSL final and assured that the business community would fully support them. Khalid Iqbal Malik, Group Leader

ICCI said that promotion of sports is very important for Pakistan for nation building. He said that the business community is proud of the performance of Islamabad United and hoped that they would win

the final of PSL. He said that ICCI would play a role for a new cricket stadium in the federal capital.

Ali Naqvi, owner of Islamabad United thanked ICCI for the warm welcome and great hospitality to the players of his team. He said that Islamabad needs an ecosystem of sports in Islamabad including cricket ground, hotels and said that ICCI should play a role for these facilities.

Azhar Mahmood, Coach of Islamabad United said that Islamabad has a lot of talent for cricket and stressed for the need of a cricket stadium and good hotels in Islamabad to bring forward the emerging talent in sport.

Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh, Muhammad Naveed Malik, Khalid Chaudhry, Saif ur Rehman Khan, Ch. Muhammad Ali, Dr. Usman and others asked various questions to the players and were given detailed answers.

South Africa wins by 284 runs as West Indies collapse

Sports Desk

JOHANNESBURG: South Africa's bowlers ripped through the West Indies batting as the hosts completed a 284-run win on the fourth day of the second Test at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg on Saturday.

The West Indies were bowled out for 106 after being set to make 391 to win.

South Africa won the two-match World Test Championship series 2-0.

The match was effectively won and lost in 8.1 overs leading up to lunch when the West Indies crashed to 34 for six.

Fast bowler Kagiso Rabada struck twice in three balls and sparked the collapse after opening batsmen Kraigg Brathwaite and Tagenarine Chanderpaul survived the first 10 overs, putting on 21 runs.

Rabada dismissed Brathwaite for the seventh time in successive innings when he trapped the West Indian captain leg before wicket for 18 with a ball which kept low.

Two balls later Raymon Reifer gloved a catch down the leg side to wicketkeeper Heinrich Klaasen.

Spinners Simon Harmar and Keshav Maharaj also



took two wickets each as the West Indies lost six wickets for 13 runs.

Off-spinner Harmer shared the new ball with Rabada and extracted extravagant turn, having Chanderpaul caught at second slip after the left-hander had faced 36 balls and scored only two runs.

Roston Chase, Jermaine Blackwood and Kyle Mayers all fell cheaply with South Africa's only setback coming after Maharaj won a successful appeal for leg before wicket against Mayers in the last over before lunch.

In celebrating, the left-arm spinner collapsed and was stretchered off the field with a left ankle tendon injury.

Maharaj was taken for a scan. With all-rounder Wiaan Mulder suffering a right index finger injury, which also required a scan, South Africa were effectively down to three frontline bowlers. The West Indies batting, though, had already been wrecked.

Mulder returned after lunch but was not required to bowl.

Joshua Da Silva, Jason Holder and Alzarri Joseph

all played some aggressive strokes after lunch as the last four wickets yielded 72 runs before the match ended soon after the afternoon drinks break.

There had been concerns about Rabada's fitness after he suffered back pain during the first innings but he showed no signs of discomfort during a hostile seven-over spell.

South Africa were bowled out for 321 earlier, with captain Temba Bavuma adding only one run to his overnight 171 before he was caught at deep square leg off Holder.

Quetta Gladiators invite Multan Sultans to bat first in crucial PSL 8 clash



By A Sports -

RAWALPINDI: Quetta Gladiators have won the toss and opted to bowl first against Multan Sultans in the 28th match of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) season eight on Saturday.

PLAYING XI'S

Quetta Gladiators: Mohammad Nawaz (c), Martin Guptill, Jason Roy, Omair Bin Yousaf, Mohammad Hafeez, Iftikhar Ahmed, Umar Akmal (wk), Qais Ahmed, Umair Asif, Naveen-ul-Haq, Aimal Khan.

MULTAN SULTANS: Mohammad Rizwan (c & wk), Usman Khan, Rilee Rossouw, Tim David, Kieron Pollard, Khushdil Shah, Anwar Ali, Usama Mir, Izzatullah Naveed, Abbas Afridi, Ihsanullah.

Amazons defeat Super Women in Women's League Exhibition matches

RAWALPINDI: During the third and final match of the three-match Women's League Exhibition matches, the Bismah Maroof-led Amazons defeated the Nida Dar-led Super Women, becoming the side to lift the trophy.

Chamari Athapaththu's century for her side went in vain as Amazons beat Super Women by 33 runs at the Pindi Cricket Stadium in Rawalpindi today.

Chasing a target of 219 runs, Super Women were restricted to 185-8 in 20 overs.

Athapaththu remained unbeaten on 107 runs in 60 balls with the help of 12 fours and six maximums.

Fatima Sana claimed three wickets, meanwhile Danni Wyatt bagged two scalps. After deciding to bat first, Amazons scored 218-6 in their allotted 20 overs.

Captain Bismah proved her mettle once again with another fifty against her name. She scored 51 runs in 32 balls with the help of six fours and a six.

Meanwhile, Wyatt smashed 43 runs in 20 balls which included seven fours and two sixes.

Tammy Beaumont also chipped in with a 26-ball 39.

Dane van Niekerk calls time on international career

By A Sports -

JOHANNESBURG: Former South African captain and all-rounder Dane van Niekerk has decided to retire from international cricket, ESPN Cricinfo reported on Saturday.

Taking to Instagram, Niekerk hinted at calling time on her decorated career without directly announcing her retirement.

"You have to accept that some chapters in our lives have to close without closures," wrote Niekerk on



her Instagram story.

"There is no point in losing yourself by trying to fix what's meant to stay broken," she added.

Notably, Niekerk's statement came one and a half months after she was left out of the Proteas squad for the recently-held ICC

Women's T20 World Cup 2023.

Niekerk failed to make it to the national contingent as the all-rounder did not meet Cricket South Africa's (CSA) fitness requirements.

In Niekerk's absence, all-rounder Sune Luus led South Africa to their maiden World Cup final, which they lost to the eventual champions Australia.

Niekerk, who made her international debut in 2009, represented South Africa in 107 ODIs and 86 T20Is. She scored a total of 4,052 runs and picked up 203 wickets across formats.

Gill ton powers India's reply but Australia still ahead

Sports Desk

AHMEDABAD: Shubman Gill's sparkling century and an unbeaten 59 by Virat Kohli kept India strong in their first innings reply against a persistent Australian spin attack in the fourth Test on Saturday.

India reached 289-3 at stumps, still trailing Australia's 480 by 191 runs on day three at the world's biggest cricket stadium in Ahmedabad.

Gill stood out with his 128 — the opener's second Test ton — as he built key partnerships including a 113-run stand for the second wicket with Cheteshwar Pujara, who made 42.

Spinners kept coming back with wickets as Nathan Lyon, Matthew Kuhnemann and Todd Murphy took one each on a pitch favouring the batsmen.

The 23-year-old Gill, who

replaced a struggling KL Rahul in the third Test, hit 12 fours and one big six in a good show of batting to surpass his previous Test best of 110.

He finally fell lbw to Lyon's off spin in the final session before Kohli took charge along with the left-handed Ravindra Jadeja, on 16, to see off the day's play.

Kohli reached his first Test half-century since January 2022 after a jittery start to his innings when he got off the mark on the 12th ball.

Australia delayed taking the second new ball, available to the fielding side after the 80th over, by 14 overs.

Earlier Gill overcame a tough spell of run-making in the second session to raise his ton with a fine sweep off Murphy, taking a bow as the raucous weekend crowd applauded, but lost his partner Pujara four



balls later.

Murphy trapped Pujara lbw, ending a stand which prospered after skipper Rohit Sharma fell to Kuhnemann's left-arm spin for 35 in the morning session.

Australia's stand-in-skipper Steve Smith rotated his bowlers, who remained disciplined in their line and length to test the batsmen's patience for much of the hot afternoon.

Gill broke the shackles with two successive boundaries off Cameron Green to bring the crowd alive with delightful cover drives.

India started the day on 36-0 and kept attacking.

Mitchell Starc bowled to plan with his short balls and a heavy leg-side field, but Rohit took on the challenge as he smashed the left-arm quick for a four and a six at long leg.

The pitch has been vastly different from the viciously spinning tracks in the previous three Tests and Usman Khawaja made Australia take early advantage with his 180.

India lead the four-match series 2-1 after Australia won the third Test.

The hosts need a win to clinch the series and secure a berth in the World Test Championship final in June.

Quetta Gladiators' PSL 8 playoff qualification scenario explained



By A Sports -

RAWALPINDI: The 2019 Pakistan Super League (PSL) champions Quetta Gladiators are still in contention to qualify for the playoff of the ongoing eighth edition.

The Gladiators, firstly need to beat Multan Sultans by a big margin in their last group fixture to stay alive in the tournament with eight points in 10 matches.

They would then also want Islamabad United to beat Peshawar Zalmi by a hefty margin on Sunday to qualify for the final four.

The Gladiators need a swing of approximately 100 runs in their favour from the aforementioned games.

However, a defeat in their final fixture would result in their exit from the tournament and Peshawar Zalmi will automatically qualify for the playoff.

Meanwhile, Zalmi can qualify for the playoffs even if they lose by a close margin.

It is pertinent to mention that the Gladiators are currently at the fifth spot in the PSL 8 standings with six points in nine matches, while Zalmi are fourth with eight points in as many matches.

Defending champions Lahore Qalandars, Islamabad United and Sultans have already booked their spots in the playoffs.

Getafe hold Cadiz to 2-2 draw after Unal's late penalty



By A Sports -

CADIZ: Enas Unal scored a brace from the spot to hold home side Cadiz to a 2-2 draw against Getafe in La Liga 25th match-day opener on Friday.

In an enthralling contest between two teams on the verge of the relegation zone, three of the four goals were scored on penalty kicks and ended with a player sent off from each side.

Cadiz equal on 27 points with 14th-placed Valladolid and 13th-placed Espanyol, as they moved to 15th place while Getafe stick to the Cadiz's tail with 26 points, one ahead of Sevilla and Almeria.

Barcelona top La Liga standing on 62 points, nine points clear of arch-rivals Real Madrid.

Cadiz broke the deadlock in the 39th minute through Ruben Sobrino's header after a brilliant cross from Carcelen.

The visitors found the after the break when Unal scored his first penalty goal in the 61st minute. Cadiz regained the lead 20 minutes later through a penalty after the referee sent off Getafe's Domingos Duarte for a foul inside the area.

However, in the dying minutes of the game referee waved another red card, this time to Cadiz defender Isaac Carcelen. Unal netted his second goal of the night from the spot to bring the game to a standstill, moments before the final whistle.

Argentina goalie auctions World Cup gloves for \$45K for cancer hospital



News Desk

BUENOS AIRES: The gloves worn by Argentina goalkeeper Emiliano "Dibu" Martinez in the nail-biting penalty shootout with France at Qatar's World Cup final last year were auctioned Friday for \$45,000 in aid of a children's cancer hospital.

"\$45,000 for the Dibu gloves to help the Garrahan boys!" the Argentine Pediatric Foundation said on Instagram, referring to the oncology ward of the Garrahan Hospital, the main pediatric hospital in Argentina.

The auction was held online Friday and featured Martinez via video-link from his home in England, where he plays for Aston Villa.

The gloves were worn by Martinez as he faced the penalty shootout against France in the final in Qatar, with Argentina winning 4-2, granting Lionel Messi's team the championship after drawing the match 3-3 in extra time.

"When they gave me the option to donate the World Cup gloves, I didn't hesitate, it's a good cause for the boys," said the goalkeeper during the event.

Martinez had autographed the inside of the gloves when announcing the donation in February.

"The World Cup finals are not played every day, (the gloves) are special. But it helps a child much more than me having them hanging in a frame in my house," he said.