

# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ  
رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا ہے  
رمضان کا مہینہ آتا ہے تو آسان کے تمام  
دروازے کھول دیئے جاتے ہیں، جنم کے  
دروازے بند کر دیئے جاتے ہیں اور شیطان  
کوڑ بھروسے سے جکڑا جاتا ہے۔  
(بخاری، حدیث نمبر 1899)

Barkat Rice Mills  
(Pvt) Limited



## Saudi Arabia-Iran talks pave way for realizing peace, stability in Middle East: China

A Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Tuesday said that the agreement reached between Saudi Arabia and Iran to resume diplomatic ties in the Chinese capital had turned a new page in their relations, paved the way for realizing peace and stability in the Middle East. (Details on Page 8)



## Govt unveils new policy after Toshakhana records expose top politicians

The federal government banned presidents, prime ministers, cabinet members, judges, civil and military officers from buying gifts worth more than \$300 under new Toshakhana policy. The new 'Toshakhana Procedure for the Acceptance and Disposal of Gifts, 2023' includes a fresh set of guidelines for ministries and divisions to adhere to. (Details on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Sha'aban 22, Wednesday, March 15, 2023

www.dailyspokesman.net

@daily\_spokesman



Daily Spokesman Vol: 15, Issue: 340 Price Rs. 25.00 Pages 8

## Pak-Bahrain Relations

ISLAMABAD: H.H. General Shaikh Mohammed Bin Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, Commander of Bahrain National Guard calls on the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

## President asks Governor KP to implement SC's order on poll date



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi in a meeting with Governor of Khyber Pukhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali on Tuesday advised him to implement the verdict of the Supreme Court regarding the holding of general election in the province.

The president mentioned that the apex court had directed that the Governor of KP must, after consultation with the Election Commission, forthwith appoint a date for the holding of the general election to the KP Assembly to avoid any complications as almost a period of two weeks had already passed by.

The meeting was held here at the Aiwan-e-Sadr at the invitation of President Alvi, according to the President's Office.

The matter of election was discussed in light of Article 224 (2) of the Constitution of Pakistan and the order of the honourable Supreme Court of Pakistan (SCP) dated March 1, 2023.

The president emphasized the need for upholding the Constitution and holding general elections within the given time period. He said the election had been mandated by the Constitution, further affirmed by the Supreme Court of Pakistan, and was essential for strengthening parliamentary democracy in the country.

# Staff level agreement with IMF within a few days: PM

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said the staff-level agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) would reach within a few days as the government had accepted even the "toughest" conditions put by the global financial institution.

The prime minister, in an interview with a private television channel (Geo News), said joint efforts were being made by both his economic team and other national institutions to make the process a success.

The prime minister spoke at length on multiple national issues, including the one-year performance of his government, the economic situation, elections, Toshakhana record, party

matters as well as probe into the murder of anchorperson Arshad Sharif.

He said at the time of assuming government, he did not know that his predecessor Imran Khan had agreed on such conditions with the IMF which he later backed out of to undermine Pakistan in the world as well as among global institutions.

"This is why the IMF is making us accept those conditionalities and seeking their implementation. No doubt, these conditions have burdened the common man," he commented.

PM Shehbaz said realising the common man's suffering, the government had decided to provide relief through the Benazir Income Support Programme. However, he said, the imported inflation caused by the Ukraine



war also hit the country in form of increased fertiliser and oil prices.

Moreover, the floods also affected the national economy, and ex-prime minister Imran Khan's "shameful" lies about regime change by the United States created uncertainty, he added.

The prime minister told the interviewer that friendly countries like China were supporting Pakistan despite the fact that Imran Khan had hurt their brotherly ties.

Recounting the baseless allegations leveled by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leadership against him through local television channels as well the United Kingdom's Daily Mail, Shehbaz Sharif said the latter apologised and the UK's National Crime Agency also exonerated him from the charges hurled by that time government.

Asked about the ongoing police attempts to arrest Imran Khan, the prime minister said he had been avoiding the arrest on the excuse of illness or injuries. Despite using foul language against the national institutions, he was given relief every time.

He said during the PTI government, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leadership, including himself, Nawaz Sharif, Maryam Nawaz,

Hamza Shahbaz, Khawaja Asif and Rana Sanaullah, were implicated in false cases and made subject to inhumane treatment in jails.

As regards the registration of around 80 cases against Imran Khan, the prime minister said it was not done by him rather the cases were registered by the citizens and the law would take its course.

"He is wanted by courts, not me. The arrest warrants were issued by the courts, not me or the administration. Now what will happen if the administration does not abide by the court orders?" he questioned.

To a question about the implementation of the Supreme Court verdict on elections, PM Shehbaz said no political party could escape the polls.

## PML-N targeting judiciary for personal gains: Saqib Nisar

News Desk

LAHORE: Former chief justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice (retired) Saqib Nisar has said that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) is 'targeting' judiciary for personal gains.

In an exclusive interview with ARY News, the former CJP said PML-N was of the view that I will 'take care' of them but as "I continue giving judgments on the merit, PML-N turned against me."

Saqib Nisar said Maryam Nawaz wants to achieve 'specific gains' by creating political chaos in the country. "It is a tragedy if someone's child turns mannerless."

Nisar said what should he respond to the 'political lies' of Maryam Nawaz and the PML-N.

In reply to a question, the former CJP denied any contact with the current judges of the top court.

On the Panama case, Saqib Nisar said the SC bench hearing the Panama case told him



that Nawaz Sharif's counsel has admitted the 'wrongdoings' of his client.

Former CJP said he held two meetings with the former prime minister Imran Khan, one when he was in power and another after he was impeached by the PDM parties.

"Imran Khan asked me to suggest another person to lead the NAB cases to a logical conclusion, which I denied," Nisar maintained and said he never talked about former COAS General (retired) Qamar Javed Bajwa with the PTI chief.

Nisar also admitted his meeting with the former COAS Qamar Javed Bajwa and Lt.General (retired) Faiz Hameed. Held several meetings with Faiz Hameed with regard to the case of missing persons as CJP.

## PTI workers take control of Zaman Park after hours-long face-off with police

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers and supporters have taken control of Zaman Park Lahore following hours-long face-off with police, who arrived to arrest former prime minister Imran Khan in the Toshakhana case.

According to details, the police failed to arrest the former premier despite the passage of seven hours as PTI workers laid siege to the path leading to Imran Khan's residence as well as Canal Road.

Taking control of Zaman Park, the PTI workers and supporters chanted slogans in favour of Imran Khan.

An Islamabad police team reached Lahore to arrest Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan after a district and sessions court issued his non-bailable arrest warrants for failing to attend the hearing in Toshakhana reference.

The court of ADSJ Zafar Iqbal restored non-bailable arrest warrants for Imran Khan in the Toshakhana reference. It instructed the police to arrest the PTI chief and present him in court by March 18.



In a statement, the Islamabad police spokesperson said that they have reached Lahore to arrest PTI chief on court orders. Later, party workers and police officials clashed outside his Zaman Park residence in Lahore.

The Islamabad police used water cannons and tear gas to disperse PTI workers gathered outside party chief Imran Khan's Zaman Park residence in Lahore.

Imran Khan's arrest to

deepen prevailing crisis' Former US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad has warned that the arrest of Imran Khan will deepen the crises being faced by the country.

Taking to Twitter, the former US special representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation pointed out that Pakistan was facing a triple crisis - political, economic, and security.

"Despite great potential, it is underperforming and falling far behind its archrival, India," Zalmay Khalilzad said, adding that it was time for serious "soul-searching, bold thinking, and strate-

gising". Giving his thoughts, he said that the sequential cannibalising of its leaders through jailing, execution, assassination is the wrong path. "Arresting Imran Khan will only deepen the crisis," he also noted.

Imran Khan's message

In a video message shared on Twitter, the PTI chief urged the nation to stand resolute and fight for 'Haqeeqi Azadi (real freedom) and rule of law'.

Imran Khan noted that the government believes the nation will 'not react' if he gets arrested, urging the party workers and supporters to prove the incumbent rulers 'wrong'.

"You [the nation] have to prove that we are a living nation", the former premier said, asking the nation to continue its struggle for real freedom and come out of their houses. He further said that he will continue to fight for the supremacy of Rule of Law.

## Pakistan, Canada discuss ways to promote cooperation in trade, investment

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The High Commissioner of Canada, Ms. Leslie Scanlon and Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar here on Tuesday exchanged views on enhancing bilateral relations in various avenues and cooperation in a number of fields including trade, investment and climate resilience.

During a call on meeting of the High Commissioner with the Finance Minister, both the sides discussed overall global economic situation as well as economic policies and programmes of the government in Pakistan.

According to press statement issued by finance ministry, Ishaq Dar said both the countries were having friendly relations and commended the support of Canadian government for flood affected people.

He briefed the envoy about the economic outlook and the challenges being faced by the country, coupled with huge losses due to the devastating floods last year.

He further shared that the government with its pragmat-

ic policy decisions had not only arrested the economic decline but was also steering the economy towards stability and growth.

He also shared that the government had taken difficult decisions in key sectors, including energy sector in order to reduce budgetary and current account deficits and increased the revenue generation.

The minister also informed about the talks held with International Monetary Fund (IMF) Mission and reiterated the commitment of the government to complete the existing program with the fund and fulfill all the international obligations.

The minister appreciated the Canadian investments in Pakistan and extended full support and cooperation of the government to enhance the economic relations between both the countries.

On the occasion, Ms. Leslie Scanlon also shared sentiments of deep rooted friendly relations between Pakistan and Canada and said, both countries enjoy excellent relations and these need to be further promoted especially on trade, investment and Climate resilience.

## Imran Khan gets relief in female judge threatening case

City Report

ISLAMABAD: In another relief for PTI Chairman Imran Khan, a local court in Islamabad suspended his non-bailable arrest warrants in female judge threatening case.

Additional Sessions judge Faizan Haider Gilani suspend former premier Imran Khan's arrest warrants and barred police from arresting him till March 16.

Imran's lawyers Nazam Haider Panjutha and Intizar Haider Panjutha had challenged PTI chairman's non-bailable arrest warrant in

the district and sessions court. On Monday, the court of Senior Civil Judge Rana Mujahid Rahim issued non-bailable arrest warrants for Imran in a case pertaining to using threatening language against a woman additional district and sessions judge and senior police officers.

The court instructed the police to arrest the former prime minister and present him before the court by March 29. It also said that arguments on Imran's petition seeking to be dismissed from the case will be heard in the next proceedings.

## Golden Jubilee

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani unveiling the commemorative stamp during the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the Senate of Pakistan at Parliament House on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

## Saudi Arabia-Iran talks pave way for realizing peace, stability in Middle East: China

## Spokesman Report

**BELJING:** A Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Tuesday said that the agreement reached between Saudi Arabia and Iran to resume diplomatic ties in the Chinese capital had turned a new page in their relations, paved the way for realizing peace and stability in the Middle East and set a fine example for resolving problems between the countries through dialogue and consultation.

"The talks in Beijing have turned a new page in Saudi Arabia-Iran relations, paved the way for realizing peace and stability in the Middle East and set a fine example for resolving problems and disagreements between countries through dialogue and consultation," Wang Wenbin said during his regular briefing held at the

International Press Center (IPC).

The spokesperson said that in response to the noble initiative of President Xi Jinping of China's support for developing good neighborly relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran, the delegations from the two countries recently held talks in Beijing, which yielded important outcomes.

He said that an agreement was reached and a joint tripartite statement was released and added, Saudi Arabia and Iran agreed to resume diplomatic relations.

Wang Wenbin said that the three countries expressed their keenness to exert all efforts towards enhancing regional and international peace and security.

As noted by Wang Yi, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee



and Director of the Office of the Central Commission for Foreign Affairs, it is a victory for dialogue and a victory for peace.

He said that the international acclaim fully demonstrated that lasting peace, stability and security was the shared aspiration of regional countries and that upholding strategic independence and seeking solidarity and cooperation had strong backing from people worldwide.

"No matter how complex the issues are or how thorny the challenges may be, equal-footed dialogue on the basis of mutual respect will lead to a mutually acceptable solution," he added.

He said that the Middle East belonged to the people of the region. Its future must be determined by the people of Middle East countries.

"Countries in the region have China's support to carry forward the spirit of independence, strengthen solidarity and coordination, and join hands to make the Middle East more peaceful, stable and prosperous," he added.

Wang Wenbin said that the Beijing dialogue was a robust and successful effort to put the Global Security Initiative (GSI) into practice, adding, "Tactics like bolster one and bash the other or divide and rule or bloc confrontation have never been proven to work on security issues."

He said that The viable approach to realize lasting peace and security in the region and

beyond was to uphold the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, pursue the long-term objective of building a security community, and follow a new path to security featuring dialogue over confrontation, partnership over alliance and win-win over zero-sum.

State Councilor and Foreign Minister Qin Gang noted that China would be a promoter of security and stability, partner for development and prosperity and supporter of the Middle East's development through solidarity, he said.

The spokesperson said that China would continue to contribute its insights and proposals to realizing peace and tranquility in the Middle East and play its role as a responsible major country in this process.

## Commander Bahrain National Guard calls on Air Chief

## News Desk

**ISLAMABAD:** Commander Bahrain National Guard, General Shaikh Mohammed Bin Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa called on Chief of the Air Staff (CAS), Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, during his visit to Air Headquarters here on Tuesday.

During the meeting, several key areas of mutual interest along with regional developments were discussed, a Pakistan Air Force (PAF) news release said.

On his arrival, a smartly turned out contingent of Pakistan Air Force presented General Shaikh Mohammed Bin Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa the guard of honour.

Later the visiting dignitary was introduced to the Principal Staff Officers. He also laid floral wreath on the martyrs'

monument.

The Chief of the Air Staff shared broad contours of PAF's modernisation plan of smart acquisitions from allied countries, upgradation of infrastructure and revamping of training.

The Air Chief highlighted that both the countries enjoyed long lasting religious and historic relationships which were manifested through unprecedented strategic partnership.

He also reiterated his resolve to further enhance the existing bilateral ties in military to military cooperation, strategic alliance and the training domain.

The CAS further said, "Pakistan values its strong diplomatic, economic and defence relationship with Bahrain which is based on convergence on all important issues relat-



ing to regional peace, security and stability".

The visiting dignitary praised the professionalism of PAF personnel and the exceptional progress made by Pakistan Air Force over the years, especially through indigeni-

zation.

He also appreciated Pakistan's continuous efforts for regional stability and pledged to play his role for further improvement in bilateral military cooperation at all levels.

Both the dignitaries vowed to further consolidate cooperation in various fields including training, emerging technologies and mutual cooperation in aviation industry.

Pakistan Navy regularly undertaking humanitarian assistance & disaster relief missions abroad

Spokesman Report  
**ISLAMABAD:** The Pakistan Navy on Tuesday said it was regularly undertaking humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) missions abroad in line with the government policies in supporting friendly countries during times of natural calamities.

The first Pakistan Navy Ship (PNS) NASR, currently deployed on the HADR mission to Syria and Turkiye, reached Syria on Monday with relief goods for the earthquake affectees.

## NDMA dispatches 5th relief cargo plane to quake-hit Turkiye



## News Desk

**ISLAMABAD:** The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Tuesday dispatched the fifth cargo plane carrying relief items to the quake-hit Turkiye.

The cargo containing 1,200 winterized fire-resistant family tents (90 tonnes load) was dispatched from Lahore, the

NDMA said on its official Twitter handle.

The NDMA, on the directives of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, has so far dispatched total 6,000 Type-II tents to Turkiye via this special flight operation which commenced on March 11, whereas 2,595 tents were sent via the Pakistan International Airlines flights and the Pakistan Navy ships.

## Petroleum sector gets Rs1,312.10 mln for 9 projects in 8 months



## Commerce Desk

**ISLAMABAD:** The government has released funds amounting to 1,312.10 million to advance nine ongoing petroleum-related projects during an eight-month period of the current fiscal year under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP 2022-23) against a total allocation of Rs1.48 billion.

Out of the total disbursement of Rs1,312.10 million, around Rs698.04 million have been spent on petroleum projects to accelerate oil and gas exploration activities from July to February, according to official data available with APP.

As per the PSDP document, the incumbent government had earmarked Rs150.560 million for the establishment of the National Mineral Data Centre (NMDC) Directorate General of Minerals, Rs303.700 million for expansion and up-gradation of Pakistan Petroleum Corehouse (PETCORE) for its sustainable operations to facilitate oil and gas exploration research in Pakistan (HDIP), Rs100 million for Geological Mapping on 50 Toposheets, out of 354 unmapped Toposheets of

Outcrop Area of Balochistan Province, Rs70 million for Legal Consultancy Services for drafting of Model Mineral Agreement and updating of Regulatory Framework (Federal and Provincial Minerals/Coal Departments) and Rs 200 million for Pakistan National Research Programme on Geological Hazards (Earthquakes and Landslides) - Data Acquisition along Active Faults and Identification of Potential Landslides Hotspot Zones.

Similarly, the government specified Rs 224.809 million for strengthening and up-gradation of Karachi Laboratories Complex (KLC) at HDIP Operations Office, Karachi, and Rs100 million to supply 10 MMCFD gas/RLNG at the doorstep (zero point) of Bostan Special Economic Zone, Balochistan (SSGCL), Rs 74.705 million to supply 13 MMCFD gas/RLNG at the doorstep (zero point) of Bin Qasim Industrial Park Special Economic Zone, Sindh (SSGCL) and Rs256.735 million to supply 40 MMCFD gas/RLNG at the doorstep (zero point) of Allama Iqbal Industrial City Special Economic Zone, Faisalabad (SNGPL).



Pakistan Navy regularly undertaking humanitarian assistance & disaster relief missions abroad.

## Govt unveils new policy after Toshakhana records expose top politicians

## Naveed Ahmad Khan

**ISLAMABAD:** The federal government banned presidents, prime ministers, cabinet members, judges, civil and military officers from buying gifts worth more than \$300 under new Toshakhana policy.

The new "Toshakhana Procedure for the Acceptance and Disposal of Gifts, 2023" includes a fresh set of guidelines for ministries and divisions to adhere to.

Under the new policy, the government has announced a ban on gifts such as vehicles, watches, and jewelry worth millions of rupees for high-ranking officials including the president, prime minister, cabinet members, judges, civil and military officers.

"Gift(s) valuing upto USD 300 shall be allowed to be retained by the recipient after due payments as per its assessed market value," the memo said. "The gift(s) exceeding this monetary (sic) limit shall straightaway become State/Toshakhana property to be deposited and disposed of according to Toshakhana Procedure."

Grade 1 to grade 4 employees will be able to receive cash as gifts from foreign dignitaries, it added.

The new Toshakhana policy has also prohibited government functionaries from receiving gifts

for their spouses or for members of their families.

The federal government Sunday declassified the Toshakhana records and uploaded the 466-page data from 2002 to 2023 on the Cabinet Division's website.

Those who acquired gifts from Toshakhana include former presidents, prime ministers, ministers and government officers.

The names that appeared in the publicised Toshakhana records included Pervez Musharraf, Shaukat Aziz, Yousaf Raza Gillani, Nawaz Sharif, Imran Khan, Arif Alvi and Shehbaz Sharif.

## Toshakhana records

## Nawaz Sharif

Former prime minister Nawaz Sharif acquired Mercedes Benz in 2008. The market price of the luxury car was Rs4,25,50,000 which was purchased at the price of only Rs636,000 from Toshakhana

Morever, he purchased a glass set at the price of Rs43,000 and Rs6,000 paid for a carpet. He paid Rs240,000 for cufflink and a watch worth Rs1,200,000. He acquired a vase worth Rs8,000 without paying any amount.

## Asif Ali Zardari

Former president Asif Ali Zardari paid Rs79,005 for the Jovani watch and horse model worth Rs540,000.

He also received gifts of BMW worth



Rs5,078,000 and a Toyota Lexus worth Rs5,000,000. The former president paid Rs16,100,000 for purchasing both vehicles.

He acquired a painting worth Rs10,000 without paying any amount.

He purchased BMW luxury car at the price of 4,100,000 in 2009 whose actual market value was Rs27,300,000.

## Bilawal Bhutto Zardari

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari received vase worth Rs6,500 without paying any amount to the exchequer.

## Shehbaz Sharif

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif did not pay for dozens of items of Toshakhana, including a cow model (Rs8,000), decanter (Rs25,000), wall hanging (Rs17,000), bowl, dagger (Rs50,000), booklet (Rs10,000), stadium model (Rs15,000), onyx plate (Rs2,200), horse metal sculpture

(Rs28,000), chocolate and honey (Rs12,000), jar (Rs10,000), Uzbek products including books (Rs33,000) and painting (Rs28,000).

PM Shehbaz Sharif paid Rs185,000 for golden vase whose actual price was Rs400,000.

The then chief minister (CM) Shehbaz Sharif purchase a decoration piece at Rs5,000 whose actual price was Rs35,000 in 2013.

Sharif kept ceramic bowl (Rs20,000) and a painting with a frame (Rs12,000) without paying a single penny to the exchequer. Other items included vase (Rs22,000), Orange Train model (Rs10,000), souvenir (Rs8,000), honey (Rs1,000), herbal tea (Rs3,000), jam (Rs6,000), three footballs (Rs15,000), decanter (Rs22,000), Arabian coffee container (Rs26,000), Arabian coffee (Rs26,000), bowl set (Rs10,000), carpet (Rs30,000).

## Imran Khan

Imran Khan had a long list of gifts. He retained a Rolex watch valued at Rs 8.5 crore, pair of cufflinks, a pen and one ring by paying only Rs two crore. Whereas originally the cufflinks were valued at Rs 56,70,000, pen Rs 15,00,000 and ring was priced at 87,50,000, according to the record.

He also retained a wooden oud box and two perfumes free of cost. The value of these items was Rs 500,000. He also kept for himself a Rolex

watch priced Rs 1.5 million by paying only Rs 294,000.

While he paid only Rs 338,600 for some other gifts including another Rolex watch valued at Rs 900,000, ladies watch valued at Rs 400,000, 1 Phone valued at Rs 210,000, two gifts suits priced Rs 30,000, four perfumes valued at Rs 35,000, Rs 30,000, Rs 26,000 and Rs 40,000 respectively, a purse valued Rs 6,000, a ladies purse valued at 18,000 and one ball pen priced at Rs 28,000.

## What is Toshakhana

Established in 1974, the Toshakhana is a department under the administrative control of the Cabinet Division and stores precious gifts given to rulers, parliamentarians, bureaucrats, and officials by heads of other governments and states and foreign dignitaries.

As per the country's law, any gift received from dignitaries of a foreign state must be put in the state depository or the Toshakhana.

The Toshakhana controversy caught media attention after former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan was accused of hiding details of the gifts he received during his tenure in the government.

Last year in June, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had constituted a ministerial committee to redesign the Toshakhana policy.

# NSU Vice Chancellor Praises PFOWA Philanthropy in Education Sector

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: A five-member team under the leadership of Prof. Dr. Muhammad Mukhtar, Vice Chancellor of National Skills University Islamabad, participated in the scholarship distribution ceremony of the Pakistan Foreign Office Women's Association (PFOWA). In this ceremony, Dr. Asad Majeed Khan, Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, distributed PFOWA scholarship cheques among meritorious students. This program supports sons and daughters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs employees in grades 1-15. Other initiatives of the PFOWA are in supporting healthcare programs, including widows' welfare.

Addressing scholarship winners and their parents, the Foreign Secretary of Pakistan stressed the need for learning employable skills. According to him, there is a need that our academic institutions must train youth with quality education relevant to the job market. Globalization and the mobility of talents urge skills and technology education to be highly competitive.

The National Skills University Vice Chancellor discussed his university's unique educational initiatives in his keynote address. He particularly emphasized engaging industry leaders in the advisory council who regularly advise the university in designing and



developing curricula based on market demands. According to Prof. Mukhtar, Pakistani youth is smart and innovative. You show them a stair, and they climb on the top. Quoting an example of Mobile Repairing Technicians graduating from his university successful-

ly do mobile marketing by employing E-commerce methodologies. According to him, 29.5 million Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET) in Pakistan is a treasure trove for Pakistani academia. Their proper training in various skills will bring peace and prosper-

ity to the country.

Members of the NSU team, including Dr. Sarwat Naz Mirza, Registrar of the University, Dr. Madiha Khalid, and Ms. Zara Obaid, also briefed students about various skills programs the National Skills University Islamabad is offering.

## A four-member delegation met with Muhammad Nawaz Sharif

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

LONDON: A four-member delegation led by Khawaja Irfan, the central leader of the Muslim League Nawaz United Kingdom PMLN UK met with the Quaid of Muslim League (Nawaz) Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif in his office the other day.

According to detailed received here the PMLN Quaid Sharif praised Mr Irfan's party services in Britain and said that all the workers in general and Kh. Irfan in particular deserve congratulations for the manner in which the people living in UK organ-



ised the party. Sharif said that he will go back to Pakistan very soon and along with other political parties will take the country out of the current economic crisis he added. He said that the coun-

try needs patriotic people at this time so that the Pakistan can be returned to a high position in the ranks of the international community. Sharif also appreciated Irfan's party services

in UK and told him that the people living in UK deserve congratulations for the manner in which the PMLN was organised.

Besides others Khawaja Iftikhar Hussain, Arshad Mahmood Chaudhry, Nasir Butt and former senior retired bureaucrat of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Farhat Ali Mir were also present during the meeting.

On the occasion, Mr Farhat Mir officially announced in the presence of Khawaja Irfan to join the PMLN and expressed full confidence in the leadership of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif.

## Census staff facing difficulties due to suspension of 3G&4G service in South Waziristan

**Adam Khan Wazir**

LOWER WAZIRISTAN: Internet service /3G&4G has been suspended in various areas of South Waziristan Lower Wana for the past three days. Internet service has been completely stopped in different areas of Wana except Spin, Tanai, Raghzai and Karabkot in Tehsil Birmal, due to which people are facing extreme hardship, the suspension of 3G&4G service at a time when the census staff is collecting the data is a question mark.

However, this facility is not available to the census staff, so how will they do their work? The suspension of internet service has also created great difficulties for the census staff and there has been a lot of concern among the people that every 10 years there is a census.

The suspension of internet service at such a time is not a deliberate conspiracy against the residents here, the residents of South Waziristan Lower Wana say that the federal government and the provincial government should immediately take notice of the suspension of internet service.

The federal and provincial governments should immediately issue orders to restore internet service. In order to overcome the difficulties of people connecting with each other through internet as well as to deal with the challenge of suspension of internet service faced by census staff.

If the government does not take immediate steps to restore the Internet, then the fear of large-scale public protests cannot be ruled out.

## Complainants get govt. Jobs under rule 17-a on orders of ombudsman Maj (R) Azam Suleman Khan

**Staff Report**

LAHORE: On the orders of the Ombudsman Punjab Maj (r) Azam Suleman Khan, the complainants of different districts have been provided regular jobs in the provincial departments under Rule 17-A of the Punjab Civil Servants (Appointment & Conditions of Service) Rules, 1974.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, the spokesman of

the Office of the Ombudsman Punjab stated that the education department has recruited Muhammad Waqas Akram of Vehari and Niaz Ahmad of Lahore as junior clerks in the 11th scale after the involvement of the ombudsman office. Separately, Ruqia Siddiq of Kasur and Muhammad Shahid Khan of Sahiwal have been appointed to the auqaf and health departments, respectively. Furthermore,

the spokesman added that the ombudsman office has also mediated for the recruitment of Atiq Ghafoor of the Rajana area as a junior clerk, on a regular basis, in the deputy commissioner's office of Toba Tek Singh.

Further, the municipal committee of Sangla Hill tehsil has settled the family pension arrears of Shoal Masih by paying him an amount of 50,000 and has also recruited his brother,

Azeem Masih, as a sentry worker. Similarly, the municipal corporation Sialkot has provided a naib qasid job to the son of the complainant, Muhammad Riaz, following the Ombudsman's intervention.

The ombudsman's office has been instrumental in promptly and efficiently addressing public problems, resulting in successful resolutions of plaintiffs' grievances, concluded the spokesman.

## CBD Punjab steals the show at Jashan-e-Baharan & Punjabi Culture Day celebrations

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: The Punjab Central Business District Development Authority (PCBDDA) has successfully concluded its participation in the Jashan-e-Baharan celebrations (Spring Festival), organized by the Government of Punjab from March 4, 2023 till March 12, 2023.

This yearly festival was aimed to promote the culture of Punjab by representing different themes, thereby bringing joy and entertainment to the people of the province. PCBDDA, also known as Central Business District Punjab, supported numerous activities during



the festivity days, including Dangal (wrestling), Cycling, and Marathon. The authority also designed an ingenious social media campaign for Punjabi Culture Day to showcase the beauty and diversity of Punjab's rich culture. The campaign, supported by videos and still images, highlighted Punjabi traditions like food, folk-music and sculptures.

The commissioner Lahore division Mr. Mohammed Ali Randhawa appreciated the efforts of CBD Punjab of showcasing its unique projects in a lively manner, which illustrated the efforts of authority in building quality infrastructural projects in the province.

CEO CBD Punjab. Mr. Imran Amin while expressing his view, said, "CBD Punjab

has always backed government initiatives in promoting soft activities. We try to keep ourselves ahead in adding value to the community. Our participation in Jashan E Baharan is a testament to our commitment to promoting the rich culture and heritage of Punjab."

CBD Punjab is a leading development authority, aiming to create vibrant and

sustainable business districts in Punjab. The authority focuses on developing state-of-the-art infrastructure, providing world-class facilities, and promoting a business-friendly environment. CBD Punjab's participation in Jashan E Baharan is part of its broader strategy to engage with the community and showcase the authority's vision and mission.

## President, PM held a one-on-one meeting at Kashmir House Islamabad



**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan called on President Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry here on Tuesday. During the one on one meeting, the duo discussed in detail a whole gamut of issues including the government's moto to establish good governance and strengthening of local government system in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Speaking on the occasion, the President said that holding local bodies elections in the liberated territory after a gap of more than three decades was an important development that would go a long way to address the problems being faced by people at the grassroots level in an efficient manner. Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan on the occasion informed the president about holding a meeting of the office bearers of all the municipal corporations and municipal Committees of Azad Kashmir in Islamabad. The PM also invited the President to attend the upcoming event as a special guest.

## "Kya Haal Hai?" - Sajid Abbas new song

**News Desk**



KARACHI: Sajid Abbas, the Pakistan Idol finalist we all know, admire, and love, has finally released his debut song, which answers the most frequently asked question in the most unusual and thought-provoking way. After a decade-long creative journey in the world of advertising, the song gives us a dose of how this talented singer cum advertiser is all set to make his mark in the industry and pursue his passion for music.

As a versatile creative in the ad world, Sajid Abbas has written and executed numerous television commercials, while his award-winning jingles for renowned brands are already a big hit amongst viewers and advertisers alike. It's no wonder "Kya Haal Hai?" is written by the advertising maestro himself.

Undoubtedly, this is an era of Pakistani music where breakups and love songs have been in the front row for quite some time. It's probably time for the genre to take a backseat and let some pun on reality take over. The song unveils the true picture of our society with unconventional music, minimal yet impactful visuals, and of course, Sajid's melodious voice.

A single-frame shoot with music that's raw and gives us major retro vibes, the video of "Kya Haal Hai?" portrays how simple yet significant the question is.

The concept behind this song is to truly understand the condition of our society as a whole. Where are we? What are we doing? The video is about a common and insightful young man looking out of his bedroom window, pondering the situation of more common people like him in his homeland.

Everything, from the music that reminds us of simpler times to provocative lyrics and flawless execution, "Kya Haal Hai?" is surely set out to be a song that intrigues the hearts and minds of every generation.

## Spotify hosts fans at the first ever gig in Pakistan under 'Pakka Hit Hai' flagship



**News Desk**

KARACHI: Spotify celebrated the launch of the fresh identity of Pakka Hit Hai, the flagship and one of the most loved playlists of the audio streaming service in Pakistan, by inaugurating Spotify's first series of musical performances under 'Pakka Hit Hai Gigs' in Pakistan, with the first show featuring Abdul Hannan and Taha G, two of the youngest vocal sensations among many artists who have been featured on the signature playlist.

Abdul Hannan and Taha G pumped the crowd at the musical night held in collaboration with COLABS, one of the largest flexible workspaces in Pakistan and a leading platform for events, workshops and conferences. The first act of Pakka Hit Hai Gigs was the perfect collection of energy and musical vibes to celebrate a playlist dedicated to the most trending songs for local audiences.

Introduced in July 2022, the love that the Pakka Hit Hai playlist has garnered so far has been unprecedented. With a 90% month-on-month growth in 8 months time span, the platform has redefined the local musical landscape particularly for emerging artists.

Since becoming the first pace of Spotify's Fresh Finds, Abdul Hannan has gone on to deliver exception-

al tunes that continue to top charts regularly. Two of his tracks, Bikhra and Haaray are amongst the most popular melodies on the streaming service, also featuring on the first and fourth spots on the Pakka Hit Hai playlist. Abdul Hannan himself is the most streamed artist on the hub as well. Similarly, Taha G, an electro-pop sensation has also risen through the ranks, recently becoming the RADAR featured artist in the country. Together, these two musicians set the perfect stage for Spotify to introduce a new identity for its most exciting playlist, Pakka Hit Hai.

"Pakka Hit Hai was launched as a one-stop shop for the most popular tracks locally. It has gone on to become a force that is revolutionizing Pakistan's musical industry by highlighting fresh talents, tracks and genres that audiences are loving," said Rutaba Yaqub, Senior Editor for Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh at Spotify. "With the love and attention that it has been receiving, the playlist required a fresher and refined identity that we launched today," she further added.

The nation's most beloved anthem, Kahani Suno 2.0 is currently the second top song on the Pakka Hit Hai playlist with Nehaal Naseem's Beqadra and Ik Lamha by Azaan Sami Khan completing the leading five tracks.



Islamabad  
15° - 23° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr ..... 4: 58 am  
Zohr ..... 12: 17 pm  
Asr ..... 4: 32 pm  
Maghrib ..... 6: 14 pm  
Isha ..... 7: 37 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad ..... 9222596  
Rawalpindi ..... 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

SECP seeks to align Companies Act to promote business growth

ABC

ISLAMABAD: In order to align the company law with international best practices and promote business growth and development in Pakistan, the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has initiated a comprehensive review of the Companies Act, 2017.

To that end, Mr. Akif Saeed, Chairman of the SECP, has established a Special Committee tasked with reviewing the Act, recommending amendments, and organizing an extensive consultation with stakeholders. SECP believes that expert opinions and insights can play a vital role in ensuring that any proposed changes in the Act align with international best practice. SECP welcomes all stakeholders, including industry experts, business owners, investors, lawyers, accountants, corporate consultants, experts, and other stakeholders, to share their thoughts that could improve the Companies Act, 2017. Stakeholders are urged to provide their feedback and suggestions on areas such as governance, compliance, financial reporting, stakeholder facilitation, and any other critical aspect of the Act.

# British Council announces winners of the Study UK Alumni Awards

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The British Council held its ninth annual Study UK Alumni Awards ceremony in Lahore, celebrating the outstanding achievements of UK alumni across Pakistan.

The ceremony was organized by the British Council in Lahore and attended by senior representatives including the Governor of Punjab, Muhammad Baligh Ur Rehman; the Deputy Director British Council, Maarya Rehman and UK alumni in Pakistan. The award judging panel selected recipients for the four award categories: the Science and Sustainability Award, the Culture and Creativity Award, the Social Action Award and the Business and Innovation Award.

The awards winners and finalists are leaders in their fields who have used their experience of studying at a UK university to make a positive contribution to their communities and industries in Pakistan.

The Science and sustainability award was presented to Dr Sarah Qureshi who is a graduate of Cranfield University. She is the CEO and co-founder of Aero Engine Craft and develops eco-friendly jet engines for the



reduction of global warming. The Business and Innovation award was presented to Yaruq

Nadeem who is a graduate of Imperial College London. He generated revenue and start-

up funding of PKR 10+ billion with the conceptualization of 150+ start-ups, has created 4,500+ jobs.

The Culture and creativity award was received by Dawood Shah from the University of Westminster. Dawood is an Advisor and Director for the Culture Department, Government of Balochistan and devoted to enhancing the role of culture & arts, using media & film. While, the Social action award was presented to Munir Siwani who is a graduate of The Open University. He is a teacher and human rights advocate, currently serving as an Assistant Professor of Education, and has disseminated education to underprivileged communities.

Amir Ramzan, Country Director, British Council Pakistan said: "I am very proud of the achievements of our alumni who have used the transformative power of a UK education to bring positive change to their fields in Pakistan. Their success serves as an inspiration to current and future students who wish to study in the UK."

15 finalists were selected for the Study UK Alumni Awards 2022-23 in Pakistan. Pakistan has over 25,000 UK alumni.

## An Art Exhibition 'Potpourri' opened at COMSATS art Gallery



City Report

ISLAMABAD: An Art Exhibition "Potpourri" opened at COMSATS art Gallery on Friday. The exhibition was inaugurated by Prof. Dr. Sajjad A. Madni, Registrar COMSATS University, Islamabad. The exhibition comprised of Art Works of students of the Department of Art and Design COMSATS University, Islamabad. The art works included paintings, collages as well as Maps of Pakistan.

Speaking at the occasion Prof. Dr. Sajjad A. Madni advised students to work hard and produce as much work possible to polish their skills. He said this is critically important for students to get knowledge of trending technologies and bring innovation in their creativity through these. Dr. Madni said that COMSATS University has provided an excellent platform to its students in the form of an art gallery, frequently showcasing international artists as well as local talent.

Speaking at the occasion In Charge COMSATS Art Gallery Farrah Mahmood praised the students for hard work that they put in making their art works.

The art exhibition was attended and admired by people from all walks of life.

## Spring gala kicks off at IIUI female campus



ABC

ISLAMABAD: The International Islamic University (IIU) annual Spring Gala at the female campus commenced on Tuesday that was inaugurated by Naz Baloch Member National Assembly, Parliamentary secretary on climate change.

The inaugural ceremony of the gala was joined by the female students hailing from more than 40 countries. The gala shall witness dozens of competitions between 9 faculties and around 50 departments. These events of sports and co-curricular activities include cricket, athletics, tug of war, badminton, volleyball, futsal, basketball, Hifz, naat, quiz, bait bazi, essay writing, photography and making, flower arrangement and many more.

The inauguration ceremony was also attended by Vice President (Female Campus) Dr. Samina Malik, Students Advisor female Dr. Sumayya Chughtai, Provost female Dr. Humaira Ashfaq, Incharge sports Nadia Mukhtar and female faculty members.

Speaking on the occasion, Naz Baloch said that youth is the future of Pakistan and no society can bring change without the active role of women. She said encouragement of women youth to participate in sports is top priority. She said that talented students, especially females shall be provided opportunities to excel in sports. She congratulated the female campus management on organizing a successful event and assured of every possible support for the youth. Naz Baloch opined that women participation in society and especially their entrepreneurial contribution can help in maintaining a stable and prosperous society.

Dr. Samina Malik said that IIUI is an equal opportunity providing institution and it gives a special place to its female students, that is why a separate campus has been built for them. She said that Islam has stressed on mental and physical health which is possible to get through sports. She further said youth is an omen of the bright future of Muslim world, and they must be provided opportunities to take part in positive activities. She added that the sports gala is a platform for the female students to showcase their talent. She lauded the hard work of the organizing team and students.

Dr. Sumayya apprised on the occasion that the purpose of the gala is to attract female students to establish their businesses, contribute towards the socio-economic development of society and showcase talent in the sports activities. She said the health of women is vital for the progress of society. She opined that study in the university cannot be confined to the game of numbers but performance in sports and co-curricular activities is equally important. She vowed that such constructive events shall continue at the campus. On the occasion, Chairpersons, officers and staff of the sports office and other organizing team members were also present.

Meanwhile, Member of the National Assembly Naz Baloch called on Dr. Hathal Homoud Alotaibi, President IIUI, at his office at the new campus.

During the meeting, the role of universities in building nations and the role of academia in initiatives pertaining to climate change was discussed. IIUI President informed about the profile of the university, its recent activities, collaborations and initiatives of national cause. Naz Baloch appreciated the services of the university and also hailed the arrangements made at the university for the ideal education of females in a dedicated campus. The meeting was also attended by Dr Samina Malik, Vice President Female Campus.

## Nestlé Pakistan to plant 100,000 trees this year

News Desk

LAHORE: Nestlé Pakistan will be planting 100,000 trees this year around its operational areas to support its endeavors to reduce carbon footprint in its ambition to achieve net zero by 2050. To kickoff, Nestlé donated 5,000 trees to Parks & Horticulture Authority (PHA) for a plantation drive at Jilani Park, Lahore under its employee volunteer program - Nestlé Cares.

Leading the activity, Jason Avanceña, Chief Executive Officer, Nestlé Pakistan said, "Under the umbrella of Nestlé Cares, we aim to foster behavior change by engaging our employees in volunteer activities."

"We are committed to be a force for good throughout our value chain by Creating Shared Value," he said, adding that planting trees is one of the ways to "protect, renew, and restore natural resources while strengthening communities, and bringing our purpose and values to life."

Speaking on the occasion, Tahir Wattoo, Director General Parks & Horticulture Authority said, "In light of the effects of climate change, it is a national responsibility of every citizen to work towards a greener Pakistan. I would like to thank Nestlé Pakistan and their employees for stepping forward with this generous donation and performing their civic duty."

## Protest

RAWALPINDI: Police fire teargas shells to push back supporters of PTI during protest against trying to arresting of PTI Chairman Imran Khan in Lahore, at Murree Road in the city.

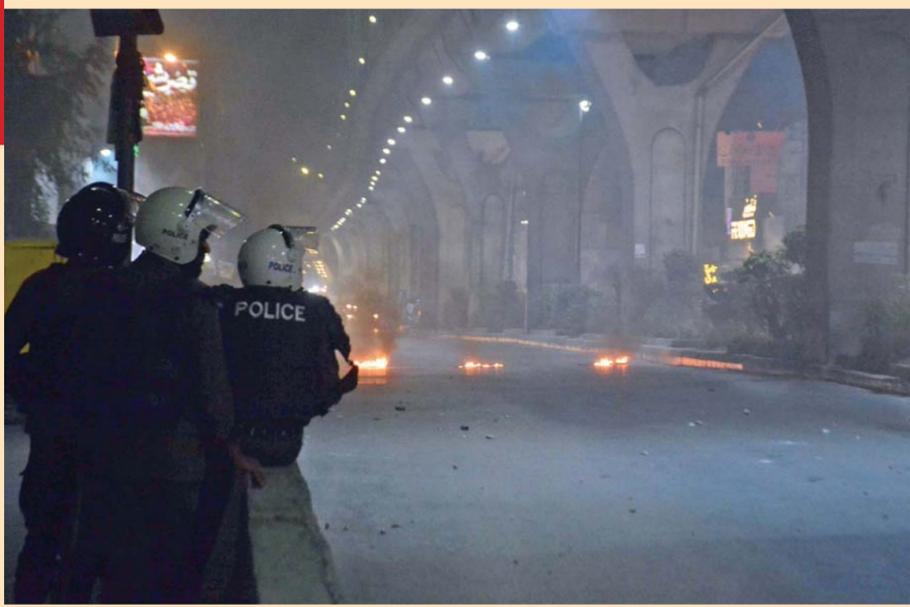


Photo: Online

# Building infrastructure-vital for Pakistan's sustainability

Bureau Report

KARACHI: InfraZamin collaborated with Nutshell Group to jointly host Pakistan's first ever Infrastructure Summit at a local hotel in Karachi. Infrastructure development helps reduce unemployment and stimulates economic growth. In his welcome address, Muhammad Azfar Ahsan, Founder & CEO, Nutshell Group, and former Minister of State & Chairman, Board of Investment, said, "For infrastructure, we need political stability for an empowered public sector funding and though there is a huge potential for economic growth through foreign direct investment, we need to focus on the local investors first and mobilize that money on priority."

Maheen Rehman, CEO, InfraZamin, emphasized the importance of infrastructure development. She said that as a country of 220 million people, we should be spending 10% of our GDP for developing the infrastructure on an annual basis, whereas our current spending is less than 2%. She highlighted the need for rigorous development in the areas of education, health, and agriculture.

Continuing the discussion, Layth Al-Falaki, CEO GuarantCo, said, "Development now is 'climate resilience' and Pakistan being a frontline state for climate crisis needs to inbuild the SDGs into its vision. Now is the right time to invest in climate-resilient projects to rebuild infrastructure in the country."

Corroborating on the same, Jo Moir, Development Director Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office in British High Commission Islamabad, stated, "Due to Pakistan's severe climate vulnerability, we believe in not only providing the right infrastructure for climate resilience but also assisting in the transition to decarbonization."



The Chief Guest, Governor State Bank Pakistan, Jameel Ahmad, added the tangent of Green Economy by elaborating on the sustainable initiatives of the State Bank; "On behalf of SBP, I assure you that we will continue to promote sustainable infrastructure financing and facilitate the financial institutions." Talking about the disastrous floods in Pakistan, Mr. Ahmad highlighted that the country needs USD 16 billion to overcome the devastation. Besides post-flood rehabilitation and development, the country also needs economic feasibility for health, food, water, and agriculture.

Talking about the lessons from the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG) experience on blended finance, Layth Al-Falaki, CEO GuarantCo, said, "At PIDG, we walk the talk, and that sets us apart because we start with a risk appetite. We support the private sector in fragile countries affected by crisis and conflict." The conversation between Maheen and Al-Falaki focused on the possibility of investment in emerging markets of Asia and Africa.

Talking about the future, Layth Al-Falaki commented, "We need to find a way to get investment in capital markets, especially for climate resilience."

Speaking of challenges, Farrukh H. Khan, CEO Pakistan Stock Exchange, commented that the basic challenge is the current practice of banks of investing in bonds and holding on to them for long periods of time." Naz Khan, Principal Country Officer, IFC, Pakistan, said, "The current portfolio of InfraZamin/PIDG in Pakistan is close to 1.3 billion USD and IFC is looking to scale up to almost double in the next 3 years." She also spoke of the needed paradigm shift where infrastructure ownership needs to come from private equity.

Yasir Qadri, CEO, UBL Fund Managers, contributed to the discussion; "We never thought we could raise microfinancing from mutual funds, but we did, and it was quite a large sum, so if we get the product structure right, a lot can be achieved." The session ended when Syed Moonis Abdullah Alvi, CEO, K-Electric, asserted that privatization of the power sector in Pakistan is the only solution

to get rid of the PKR 3 trillion circular debt. Zafar Masud and Farrukh H. Khan appreciated K-Electric's financial modeling and shared their willingness to collaborate.

Moving to the Closing Session, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, Chairperson, Pakistan Stock Exchange, SSGC and Karandaz, summed up the discussion. "It is important to recognize that InfraZamin/PIDG has the power to leverage long-term infrastructure financing from both domestic and foreign investors." She also said that Pakistan's fiscal constraints limit public investment in infrastructure, which makes it critical for us to attract private financing. She expressed her wish to see an infrastructure bank in Pakistan.

The Guest of Honor, Akif Saeed, Chairman, Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan, spoke on the development of capital market ecosystems for sustainable infrastructure funding. He said, "We need to have a dialogue between different stakeholders to have an integrated approach towards infrastructure development and SECP will work hand-in-hand with InfraZamin to achieve this goal for Pakistan."

In her closing remarks, Maheen Rehman said, "The purpose of this summit was to highlight new ways to develop the basic infrastructure needed for Pakistan. InfraZamin along with PIDG and GuarantCo is committed to support financing with innovative instruments where needed." She also spoke on the need for local players and the private sector to be the main engine for growth.

The International Finance Corporation (IFC), UK Aid, Infraco Aisa, Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG) and GuarantCo are partners with InfraZamin Pakistan.

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almas Ayoub Sabir**  
 Vice Chairman: **Asim Nazir Ahmad**  
 Managing Editor: **Naveed Ahmad Khan**  
 Head Editorial Advisory Board: **Amjad Mehmood**  
 Bureau Chief Karachi: **Saleem Zaman Khan.**  
 (mszk786@gmail.com)  
 Bureau Chief Lahore: **Syed Afraz Ali Nazish**  
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)  
 Islamabad Office: Rose Plaza, I-8 Markaz.  
 Karachi office: Flat No.C.3.A.One Comfort, Block No 11.  
 Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Main Rashid Minhas Road.  
 Lahore Office: 7-E,Samanberg, Johar Town.  
 Email: **spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com**  
 Whatsapp: **0346-5008408**

# Could Saudi-Iran agreement augur a new era?

**Dr. Abdel Aziz Aluwaisheg**

The agreement between Saudi Arabia and Iran to resume diplomatic relations after seven years of severed ties and many more years of conflict has raised hopes throughout the region and beyond. Many expect that restoring diplomatic relations is the first step toward de-escalation and resolving conflicts through dialogue and diplomacy. But how likely is it that the resumption of diplomatic ties between the two main regional powers will lead to material changes in Iran's regional policies? How different is this agreement from previous understandings that eventually failed to change Iran's regional conduct?

Saudi Arabia and the rest of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries have consistently stressed that diplomacy is their preferred way to address conflicts with Iran, most recently in a statement issued on Feb. 15 following a meeting of the GCC-US Working Group on Iran at the GCC headquarters in Riyadh. This group was set up in 2015 to coordinate the US and GCC approaches toward Iran, including its nuclear program, ballistic missiles and drones, and its regional activity.

There have been several previous attempts at diplomacy between Saudi Arabia, and the GCC at large, and Iran. Some were more sustained and successful than others.

During Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani's presidency (1989-1997), Saudi Arabia

and Iran engaged in extensive diplomacy, which established a common ground for dialogue and led to regional de-escalation and bilateral goodwill.

Building on that progress, two agreements were concluded between Saudi Arabia and Iran during Mohammed Khatami's presidency (1997-2005): the General Agreement for Cooperation in the Fields of Economy, Trade, Investment, Technology, Science, Culture, Sports, and Youth, which was signed in May 1998, and the Security Cooperation Agreement, which was signed in April 2001.

In December 2007, the GCC invited President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to attend its annual summit, where he gave a reconciliatory speech followed by several rounds of diplomacy during his first term of office. However, Iran's regional policy changed significantly during Ahmadinejad's second term, which started in 2009, becoming more aggressive and meddling. His second term started with bloody protests and accusations of a rigged election, in what was known as the Green Revolution. Many were killed, injured or arrested, including the two opposition candidates.

Faced with stiff opposition at home and challenges to its legitimacy, Ahmadinejad's hard-line government at the time took advantage of the so-called Arab Spring uprisings in early 2011. In Syria, it supported the Assad regime in suppressing peaceful dissent with force, mobilizing sectarian militias from Lebanon, Afghanistan and Iran itself, working under the guidance of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, especially its Quds Force. It adopted similar tactics elsewhere, boasting at some point that it had control of

four Arab capitals.

During Hassan Rouhani's presidency (2013-2021), the GCC nevertheless continued its attempts at diplomacy, engaging with Iran in substantive correspondence and meetings aimed at establishing new and more reliable rules for engagement, including an emphasis on international law and the UN Charter as a basis for dialogue.

Under current President Ebrahim Raisi, the GCC member states have continued discussions with the same aim, including meetings between Saudi Arabia and Iran in Oman and Iraq, paving the way to the announcement in Beijing on Friday.

Statements made after the announcement by the Saudi representative to the Beijing talks, National Security Adviser Dr. Musaed bin Mohammed Al-Aiban, expressed hope that the agreement would lead to good neighborly relations with Iran, enhanced security and stability in the region and the world, and the adoption of the "principle of dialogue and diplomacy" to resolve disagreements.

Saudi Arabia clearly hopes that the agreement will signal the turning of a new page based on a commitment to the "principles and objectives of the Charters of the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and international conventions and norms," including respect for the sovereignty of states and non-interference in their internal affairs.

There is, as such, clear continuity in the messages delivered earlier by the GCC and other member states, placing special emphasis on international law and the conventions and customs of relations between states of the region.

Saudi Arabia has expressed hope that the agreement will help maintain a constructive dialogue.

There are many reasons why Iran has suddenly shifted to diplomacy with Saudi Arabia, after years of aggression both directly and through its regional proxies and collaborators. The Kingdom has been on the receiving end of hundreds of missile and drone attacks over the past few years. Its cities, airports and oil installations have been frequent targets of those attacks. Western sanctions have contributed to limiting Iran's ability to expand indefinitely and local unrest is also a factor in that change of heart, as the hard-liners found themselves spread too thin and unable to provide for Iran's population, which has been battered and impoverished by Tehran's policies.

GCC defense forces and the extensive military presence of many nations in the Gulf, including the US Fifth Fleet, the Combined Maritime Forces and others, have also reduced Iran's military options.

Diplomatic efforts by other GCC countries and Iraq have also helped the two sides get to this point. However, China's role has been instrumental in bringing about this breakthrough, through the personal involvement of President Xi Jinping and his top advisers, including Wang Yi.

The two sides expressed their desire for China's "continuous and positive" role in the future. That role is the new element that could contribute to the success of the next steps after the restoration of diplomatic ties. It enjoys close relations with both Saudi Arabia and Iran and it has put its diplomatic prestige on the line in a very visible way.

## US caught in the relentless grip of gun tyranny

A man holds up a sign denouncing gun violence during a memorial for victims of a mass shooting at Monterey Park City Hall, California, the United States, Jan 23, 2023. [Photo/Xinhua]

Even though gun deaths are so common in the United States that people are becoming numb to them, the latest news of a 3-year-old girl in Texas who found a loaded gun in her home and unintentionally shot and killed her 4-year-old sister is still heartbreaking.

It is all the sadder that this is only the latest in a long litany of fatal shootings involving youngsters as either the perpetrators or the victims. Research published on March 8 on JAMA Network, a consortium of general medical and specialty publications, indicates that guns are already a main cause of youngsters' deaths in the US. While Gun Violence Archive, an online archive of gun violence incidents, recorded the deaths of 227 youngsters in the first two months of 2023. That's almost four a day.

The number of people shot on school property increased 46 percent in the US in 2022, with the number of incidents up 21 percent, according to the K-12 School Shooting Database.

When the founding fathers of the US passed the Second Amendment to the Constitution, they meant to protect US people's ability to resist any tyrant that might emerge. Two centuries later it is that Amendment itself that has become the tyrant. Its deliberate misreading by gun advocates has allowed firearms to proliferate in the US to such an extent that there are now more guns than people in the country.

Those promoting gun ownership disingenuously argue that guns make people safer. If that was the case then the US should be the world's safest country. That is palpably not the case. It is a damning indictment of the US that shootings are so frequent in the country that they are classified as mass incidents with four or more casualties or ordinary ones.

The US is a nation built on the myth of the gun. Guns are enshrined in the national psyche as the securers of the country's independence, the tamers of savages and the upholders of American values. It is a myth that demands regular sacrifices to the bullet. Sacrificial bloodlust that the arms producers and dealers deny they have any responsibility for.

Whether or not to support gun control is not about politics. It is about humanity and conscience. If there is a hell, Satan must be waving a JR-15 in one hand and an "On sale" tag in the other. (Courtesy China Daily)



## Supreme Leader urges sanctioned states to cooperate to neutralize pressures

IRNA

Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, in a meeting with Belarusian president Alexander Lukashenko, called on the sanctioned countries to take collective measures to neutralize the imposed sanctions.

"The countries that have been sanctioned by the United States must cooperate with each other and form a joint assembly to destroy the weapon of sanctions. We believe that such a thing is achievable," the Supreme Leader said during the meeting.

The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution also referred to the sanctions that the US has imposed against Iran since the beginning of the Revolution, and the most severe sanctions that the country experienced during the last twelve years, and said, "The severe sanctions made Iran aware of its capabilities and internal strengths. During this time, the sanctions provided the ground for many developments in Iran and our country was able to advance outstandingly in various fields including science and technology, medicine and biology, aerospace science, nuclear technology, and nanotechnology."

Ayatollah Khamenei emphasized that if the countries that have been sanctioned by the US make complete use of each other's potentials, they all will benefit greatly.

Recalling the fields of cooperation between Iran and Belarus in the fields of science and technology, commerce, and political activities in international spheres, the Supreme Leader referred to the International North-South Transport Corridor, adding, "The establishment of the North-South Transport Corridor is in the interest of both countries, as well as



Russia and the region. Both sides should work hard to create it."

Ayatollah Khamenei underlined that agreements and talks should not conclude in meetings, but should be implemented and followed up at certain predetermined times.

The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution also pointed out that the world today is in need of spirituality and that spirituality can serve as a moving factor for nations.

While expressing great satisfaction during his meeting with Imam Khamenei, the Belarusian president stated, "I have come to Iran to assure you that I am determined to open a new page in the relations between the two countries, and with the cooperation and will of the Iranian president, we will implement all agreements with special follow-up and at certain ascertained times."

The president of Belarus emphasized that,

"the Islamic Republic of Iran has achieved amazing experiences and progress during the sanctions period, and we believe that if we take advantage of the conditions of the sanctions properly, it can be used as an opportunity to make progress. I made this trip to Iran in order to familiarize myself with Iran's achievements."

"The current difficult international situation has shown us who our true and fake friends are. We are determined to have special cooperation with our real partners," Lukashenko added.

The President of Belarus met with Ayatollah Khamenei on Monday afternoon.

Lukashenko on Sunday evening arrived on an official visit to Iran and was welcomed by Iranian Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade Seyyed Reza Fatemi Amin at Mehrabad Airport.

He was also officially welcomed by his Iranian counterpart Ebrahim Raisi on Monday morning.

## Saudi Arabia-Iran detente is good news for a troubled region

Osama Al-Sharif

Friday's Chinese-mediated rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Iran came as a pleasant surprise to most countries in the Middle East and beyond. Such a diplomatic breakthrough is a rare event in a region plagued by endemic crises. It is a deal between two major regional players that promises to impact, in a positive way, on a number of conflicts.

The fact that China brought the two countries together carries a number of key messages. Beijing can be described as an honest and neutral broker. It has no colonial history in the region and its contribution to the region's development and growth cannot be discounted. While Iran and China have been forging an economic and political alliance for years, it is Riyadh's outreach to China, India and Russia that has distinguished Saudi Arabia's foreign policy in recent years. That outreach is paying dividends.

Certainly, the agreement undermines Israeli-US efforts to build a regional security alliance against Iran. The deal sends a strong message that no country in the region, aside from Israel, wants to see a new military conflict erupt. The deal could encourage other countries to seek to normalize ties with Tehran. Such an occurrence would limit Iran's appetite to pursue its regional agenda.

Washington, which cautiously welcomed the deal, has also been taken aback by the fact that China, of all countries, took credit for scoring what can only be described as a major diplomatic victory for Beijing and its leader Xi Jinping, who has built strong ties with both Saudi Arabia and Iran. The timing of the deal is yet another indicator that the US' role and influence in the region is under

threat. Washington only has itself to blame. Its policies in the region, especially in the last two decades, have brought misery to the people of the Middle East.

Even the Abraham Accords, which the Trump administration regarded as its most prominent foreign policy achievement, have failed to end the core of the region's instability, which is the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Now, the rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Iran is expected to set in motion a number of processes to end or at least de-escalate regional conflicts and proxy wars. Iranian media outlets have said that the agreement will help bring a political settlement to Yemen's long war. Ending that war, which has turned Yemen into a failed state and displaced millions, would be the most important outcome of the detente between the two regional rivals. That alone would be seen as a major factor in bringing peace and stability to the Gulf region.

But the path toward full normalization and cooperation will be long and difficult. Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan said the agreement underscores the joint desire by both sides to "resolve disputes through communication and dialogue." However, he added: "This does not mean that an agreement has been reached to resolve all pending disputes between them." Much will depend on Iran's readiness to negotiate in good faith. Any breakthrough will pave the way for further discussions that could include Lebanon, Syria and Iraq.

China's success in mediating the agreement will be welcomed by the region's leaders and people. The Middle East has seen its worst conflicts festering as the US boasted about the region being its sphere of influence. Today, its leaders are looking elsewhere for inspiration and help in conflict resolution.

# US Soy celebrates over 25 years of partnership with Pakistan

News Desk

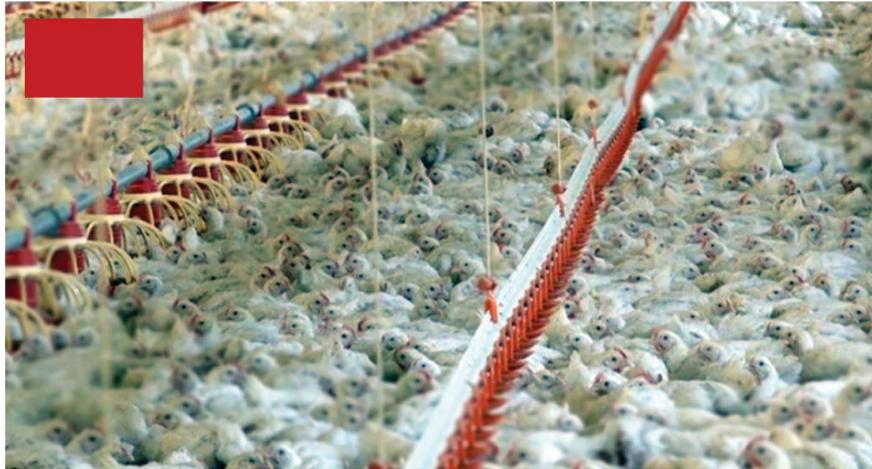
KARACHI: U.S. Soy recently celebrated over 25 years of partnership with the Pakistani agriculture and poultry industry in March 2023. U.S. Soy formally established a trade relationship with Pakistan in 1996, which developed through multiple exchange visits between the representatives of the two countries.

"For over 25 years, we have established a successful and mutually beneficial relationship with the agriculture and poultry industry in Pakistan. As the country navigates to meet its goals of food and nutrition security, U.S. Soy will continue to partner and support the community in this endeavor. U.S. Soy collaborates with the entire ecosystem and value chain in Pakistan providing professional and technical support, conducting animal feeding experiments, holding seminars to facilitate knowledge exchange to create value from U.S. Soybean and soy components. Additionally, U.S. Soy fully supports the establishment of a science based regu-

latory system to link Pakistan with global international trade. Pakistan maintains enormous potential and U.S. Soy is in collaboration with the Government and industry stakeholders to enable the country to benefit from latest technologies," said Kevin Roepke, Regional Director, South Asia & Sub-Sahara Africa, U.S. Soybean Export Council.

Pakistan's trade with the United States is expected to grow in the coming years as per various reports and data from the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and other official bodies. Pakistan and United States have a strong economic and commercial relationship with robust two-way trade and Pakistan is one of United States' largest trading partners.

"Back in the early 1980s, K&N along with Sind Feeds, Mehran Feeds and Pak Feed Industries imported the first consignment of U.S. soybean meal. At that time, cotton seed and rapeseed were being used as the main feed ingredient both of which have anti-nutritional factors. Poultry performance was not optimal. We worked tireless-



ly to lift Pakistan's ban on imported soybean meal in the 1980s and witnessed the performance of our chickens improve substantially. With

the help of U.S. Soybeans, Pakistan's poultry sector expanded exponentially over decades to meet the growing demand for protein. Feed made from

U.S. Soybeans is sustainable, nutritious and results in higher quality chicken for human consumption. The Pakistan Poultry Association (PPA) looks forward

to strengthening its partnership with U.S. Soy to ensure a stable supply of high-quality soybean meal in the country" said Khalil Sattar Chief Executive of K&N's and Patron in Chief of the Pakistan Poultry Association

"We believe in providing our customers with high quality nutritious products and by using sustainable U.S. Soybeans we have been able to consistently deliver our promise" said Shakil Ashfaq, CEO at Shujabad Industries, a long standing USSEC patron in Pakistan.

As of 2022, Pakistan's population stands over 220 million and is expected to grow by 2% every year. To serve this young economy, creating stable sources of affordable, healthy, and nutritious food is essential. Economic growth is connected to food and nutrition security. Pakistan's partnership with U.S. Soy is well positioned on this journey towards progress and will help the people in the country enjoy vitality and good health by meeting nutritional needs, supporting progress in underserved communities and by providing products that enhance quality of life.

# Having access to digital technologies is essential for women in agriculture

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: It is crucial to recognize and address the gender-based barriers that limit women's access to resources and technology in agriculture. The theme of this year's International Women's Day, "DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality," highlighted the potential of technology and innovation to level the playing field and break down these barriers.

As climate change continues to affect agriculture and smallholder women farmers, access to digital technologies can help improve their ability to adapt to these changes and build more resilient farming systems.

Florence Rolle, FAO Representative in Pakistan, emphasized the crucial role of access to digital technologies and tools for women and girls in agriculture during a panel discussion organized in Islamabad by the International Water Management Institute in connection with International Women's Day 2023 (IWD 2023).

"Women and girls in agriculture are more impacted by the climate change, we need to ensure that women and girls have access to digital technologies so that they

may get information on weather, soil quality and crop management. This informed will help them make informed decision; ultimately improving food security and their resilience", she said.

Rolle suggested that the use of mobile phones and other digital platforms would provide smallholder women farmers with the information they need to grow their crops more effectively. She also noted that the number of girls enrolling in agricultural universities is increasing, which bodes well for the future of women in the sector and in leadership positions. Overall, her remarks highlighted the importance of empowering women and girls in agriculture by providing them with the tools they need to succeed in an increasingly challenging environment.

Further to IWD celebrations, FAO organized a panel discussion on the role of women in agriculture at an international conference on "Biodiversity of Arid Zones", featuring Prof. Dr. Ghazala H Rizvani, Director, Hamdard University Karachi, Dr. Shabana Sartaj, Associate Professor, English Literature, SAU, Tando Jam, and Dr. Reema Vistro, Lecturer Agronomy, SAU, Umerkot. The workshop was organized at the

sub-campus of Sindh Agriculture University (SAU), Umer Kot. The importance of promoting gender equality in agriculture for sustainable development was highlighted, and FAO's project interventions were praised for helping women learn new, innovative, and climate-smart agriculture practices while providing them with a platform to voice their ideas. Women farmers from FAO project areas shared their experiences and views on how Women Farm Field Schools in different districts of FAO's interventions are empowering them at the household and community levels.

FAO also celebrated International Women's Day 2023 in Quetta under the European Union funded and International Trade Centre (ITC) implemented project: Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress (GRASP) Project, collaborating with the Women Development Department of the Government of Balochistan, UNWomen, UNHCR, and UNDP. The event brought together stakeholders to discuss how digital technology can accelerate progress towards gender equality. FAO, through its project interventions,



has conducted several trainings on digital literacy and provided tablets (notepads) to men and women farmers in Balochistan. This enables them to stay better

informed about markets to sell their produce, prevailing market prices, and quantity demanded in the market, empowering them to make informed decisions to sell

their produce at the right price and at the right time.

Ms. Robina Wahaj, Senior Water and Land Officer, FAO also participated in a live radio

program at Planet 87.6, a FM channel at Radio Pakistan and advocated for the importance of digital agriculture to uplift women in agriculture.

# Progress of the CICA Environmental Dimension

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Undoubtedly, Asia is on its way to becoming the fastest-developing continent in the world. Projected new trade routes, efforts to develop a sustainable system, and the significance of green transformation in the face of rising energy, food, and security demands. All of these are issues that deeply concern Member States of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), from North Asia to the Indian Ocean and from East Asia to the Aegean Sea. However, how realistic are the ambitious carbon-neutral plans countries aim for in line with their green transformation goals? At this point, with its five dimensions, CICA offers confidence building measures, dialogue, connectivity, synergy, and best practices for its Member States to achieve their goals.

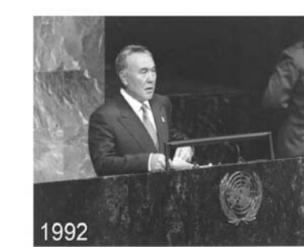
At the Sixth CICA Summit, among the common issues highlighted by the distinguished Heads of State or Government and high-level representatives were combating climate change and the significance of CICA's environmental dimension for future cooperation. Why is the environmental dimension so significant for the future of the CICA region?

The CICA environmental dimension has three priority areas: sustainable development, environment protection, and natural disaster management. Each priority area has its coordinator and co-coordinator. For instance, Thailand is the coordinator for sustainable development, Mongolia is the coordinator for environment protection, where Bangladesh and China are co-coordinators, Iran is the coordinator for natural disaster management, and Bangladesh is co-coordinator.

CICA Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs), the Member States have specified the priorities for cooperation in environmental areas for the implementation of the CICA CBMs, such as sharing information on best practices concerning national policies on environmental protection and sustainable development, exchanging information on natural and industrial disasters in the countries, which, in their view, may affect their neighbors. In addition, seminars, workshops, conferences, and trainings are held within the priority areas of the CICA environmental dimension. In general, the topics coordinating and co-coordinating countries cover are green transformation, sustainable development, low-carbon developments, waste management, carbon markets, natural disasters, and circular economy.

Recent history has shown that Asia is exposed to various climatic events and natural disasters. CICA Member States were affected by sweltering weather conditions, drought, floods in 2022, as well as earthquakes in early 2023. For example, Pakistan has had a challenging year because of floods. According to the World Bank, at least 7 million people were displaced and over 1,700 people died as a result of this disaster. The cost of floods in Pakistan is around 30 billion dollars.

Moreover, the World Health Organization reports that over 7.1 million Bangladeshis were displaced by climate change in 2022. China, India, Thailand, and the Middle East also had difficulties due to climate change last year. Recently, the world has experienced a devastating sequence of earthquakes in Türkiye. After the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the economic damage of the climate crisis and natural disasters



WHAT IS OUR HISTORY



has been taken into account, and the question of how fragile countries are for the future has come to the fore.

CICA covers a broad geography, therefore observing various environmental characteristics. Member States are taking multiple actions to ensure sustainable development and environmental protection. The major environmental problems in Asia include desertification, climate change, lack of water resources, deforestation, earthquakes, and forest

fires. Indeed, there are environmentally vulnerable CICA countries. Among the most vulnerable Member States, according to the University of Notre Dame's Vulnerability index score of the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative (ND-GAIN), are Afghanistan in the 168th and Bangladesh in the 154th place. Pakistan ranks 147th, while Cambodia is in the 133rd place, and India ranks 132nd. The index evaluates a nation's vulnerability, sensitivity, and capacity

for climate change adaptation. There are 177 nations on the scale, and those with high rankings, close to zero, have great climate change resilience. Highest-ranking CICA Member States include Israel in the 14th place, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Türkiye sharing the 28th place followed by Kazakhstan in the 33rd place, the UAE in the 40th, and Qatar in the 44th.

The negative economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has brought countries closer

to producing new solutions. Although developed and developing countries have different agendas, governments are shifting their economic targets to efficient systems aligned with sustainable development goals. Green transformation is one of the most prominent examples of this. Countries that aim to decarbonize their economies are investing more in green technology, fields such as carbon capture, mitigation and adaptation, circular economy, and water management. Along with diversifying energy sources, it is one of the essential steps in energy security.

United Nations Climate Change Conferences are significant to raise awareness and act together against extreme environmental events the world has been facing in recent years. For example, Egypt, a CICA Member State, hosted COP27 in 2022. Among the results drawn here were that nations decided for the first time to set up funds to pay developing countries for "loss and damage" caused by climate-related disasters. Moreover, it was important that China and the USA, the countries with the highest carbon emissions, decided to engage in climate diplomacy at COP27. Furthermore, COP28 will take place in the United Arab Emirates, another CICA Member State. From this point of view, it is a fact that the environmental theme becomes increasingly relevant in Asia.

The initiative of Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to hold a High-level Conference in 2024 in Astana to identify environmental challenges among the CICA members was one of the major outcomes of the Sixth CICA Summit. Thanks to this meeting, the CICA region and the entire world will benefit from the potential establishment of the CICA Council for Environmental Cooperation. Indeed, it will be in the inter-

est of the CICA Member States to hold the 2024 High-level Environmental Conference, where best practices can be shared among the CICA countries and a sustainable mutual dialogue is likely to be ensured. As a result, the CICA environmental dimension is expected to progress rapidly among other CBMs.

The 2024 High-level Environmental Conference is at the forefront of priority initiatives for the CICA Kazakh Chairmanship. Kazakhstan's goal of being carbon neutral by 2060 sets an example for other countries in the region. As part of the preparations for the Conference, in early 2023, CICA Secretary General Ambassador Kairat Sarybaymet with Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of Kazakhstan Zulfilya Suleimenova.

The Secretary General stated that the CICA Member States were extensively introducing green technologies, pursuing the ambitious goal of achieving carbon neutrality. In addition, within the scope of the preparations for the Conference on environment, which is of utmost importance for the CICA Member States, the sides agreed to arrange a series of expert meetings of the CICA Member States to develop goals and objectives for the Conference.

There is no doubt that CICA is an evolving international organization, and the CICA environmental dimension is developing its capabilities. With the dialogue and support of CICA Member States, the interest in environmental topics is increasing gradually in line with the region's sustainable development goals.

Dr. Ugur Turan, expert on the environmental dimension of the CICA Secretariat. Expert had experience working in China and Türkiye as a researcher on international organizations' projects.

## Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

### Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index

Current	Prev. Close
41,816.43	41,856.85
Day's High	Day's Low:
41,953.78	41,705.82
Index Value	Change
5,721,825,923	-40.42
Percentage	Time
-0.1%	14 Mar, 2023 5: 00 pm

### Europe: FTSE 100 Index

Index Value	Change
7,637.11	+88.48
Percentage	Time
+1.17%	14 Mar, 4: 35 pm GMT

### USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average

Index Value	Change
32,138.86	+319.72
Percentage	Time
+1.00%	14 Mar, 12: 42 pm GMT-4

### Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average

Index Value	Change
27,222.04	-610.92
Percentage	Time
-2.19	14 Mar, 3: 15 pm GMT+9

### Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	185	187.2
Bahrain Dinar	742	750
Canadian Dollar	203	205.2
China Yuan	39.64	40.04
Danish Krone	39.65	40.05
Euro	299.50	302.50
Hong Kong Dollar	35.3	35.65
Indian Rupee	3.37	3.48
Japanese Yen	2.06	2.11
Kuwaiti Dinar	907.6	916.6
Malaysian Ringgit	60.58	61.18
New Zealand \$	169.34	171.34
Norwegians Krone	2.23	26.53
Omani Riyal	716.82	724.82
Qatari Riyal	71.84	72.54
Saudi Riyal	74.7	75.5
Singapore Dollar	204	206
Swedish Korona	26.07	26.37
Swiss Franc	297.95	300.45
Thai Bhat	7.98	8.13
U.A.E Dirham	76.7	77.5
UK Pound Sterling	339.2	342.5
US Dollar	282.2	285

# Pakistan Kissan Ittehad President warns of fertilizer shortage

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The President of Pakistan Kissan Ittehad, Khalid Mahmood Khokhar, held a press conference in Lahore whereby he stated that Pakistani farmers are currently waiting in long queues to receive the urgently required fertilizer for Rabi crops. While sowing of cotton has already started in Sindh and Punjab, two major fertilizer plants in the Country remain closed since January 1, 2023. He stated that Pakistan's economy is heavily reliant on agriculture, with \$24 billion of the country's \$31 billion in revenue generated from the sector. Unfortunately, no political party or government has taken any significant steps to promote agricultural development across the Country.

Mr. Khokhar demanded that the Petroleum Ministry should immediately provide gas to the closed fertilizer plants so that farmers can obtain urea at reasonable prices. He also



expressed concern that the country may face a shortage of 700 million tons of urea this

year. The total demand for urea is roughly 6.8 million tons, and both plants can provide around 650 million tons of urea from March 15 to December 31.

Mr. Khokhar also added that with consistently rising cost of production for farmers, it is becoming increasingly difficult for them to compete with neighboring countries that subsidize the same costs for agricultural inputs.

He stated that during the COVID-19 pandemic, agriculture was the only sector that helped feed the Pakistani people, thanks to the blessings of Allah Almighty. While all other sectors were closed, agriculture played an essential role in providing sustenance to the nation.

He highlighted that around 18 million acres of land can be brought under cultivation to ensure food security of the country while this untapped potential can also contribute around USD 34 billion to the National GDP.

# Pakistan has great potential to enhance exports to Africa: ICCI

## Commerce Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is exporting many quality products at competitive prices around the world including textiles products, surgical instruments, pharmaceuticals, cutlery items, leather products, sports goods, chemicals, marble & granite, carpets, & rugs, rice, sugar, cotton and Pakistan can export many of these products to Ethiopia and other African countries. This was said by Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry while addressing a dinner reception hosted by Dr. Teshome Adunga, Mayor of Shagar, the 2nd largest city of Ethiopia, in honor of ICCI delegation during their visit to Ethiopia.

Ahsan Bakhtawari said that Pakistan is well-known in the international market for its surgical and pharmaceutical products while Ethiopia is importing most of these products to meet its needs. He said that Ethiopia should facilitate Pakistani pharmaceutical companies for registration in its market by lowering registration costs that would enable Ethiopia to import quality surgical and pharmaceutical products from Pakistan. He said that Ethiopia should also help Pakistani investors to set up their manufacturing units here and export their products to many African countries. He thanked the Mayor of



Shagar for hosting a dinner reception for ICCI delegation and hoped that the visit of ICCI delegation to Ethiopia would start a new chapter of growing trade and economic relations between Pakistan and Ethiopia.

Speaking at the occasion, H.E. Jemal Beker Abdula, Ambassador of Ethiopia to Pakistan said that Pakistan should increase its footprint in Africa through Ethiopia which is a gateway to the continent of 1.4 billion people. He said that Ethiopia is a fast-growing economy and is offering lucrative business, trade and investment

opportunities with cheap cost of production and skilled labour. Dr. Teshome Adunga, Mayor of Shagar briefed the ICCI delegation about the business and investment opportunity in his city. He said that Ethiopia is fully committed to facilitate the foreign investors and looked forward to investment from Pakistan in Ethiopia.

Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar Vice President ICCI, Zafar Bakhtawari former President and others were in the delegation. A cultural show of Ethiopia was also presented to the delegation.

# SCBPL and BDHC celebrate Women's Day

## News Desk

KARACHI: Standard Chartered Bank Pakistan Limited (SCBPL) in partnership with the British Deputy High Commission (BDHC), Karachi organised an event to celebrate International Women's Day with clients, partners and employees.

A panel discussion was held to focus on "DIGITAL: Innovation and technology for gender equality" led by Khadija Hashimi-Head, CABM AME and Country Head Pakistan SC, Ziana Sakia-CEO Bechlo. Pk, Sarah Khurram-CEO SehatKahani, Azima Dhanjee-Founder Connection Hear, and was moderated by Nida Athar-Director Innoventures Global Private Limited. The key focus of the discussion was on how bringing technology closer to women and other marginalised groups results in more creative solutions and can lead to innovations that meet women's needs and promotes gender equality.

Speaking at the event Rehan Shaikh, Chief Executive Officer at Standard Chartered Bank, said, "We are delighted to partner with British Deputy High Commission once again as the BDHC supports the Bank's efforts to address the social and economic challenges being confronted by Women."

Martin Dawson, Deputy Head of Mission, BDHC said, "You cannot understand development if you don't see it through the eyes of girls and women, and you cannot achieve development unless you unleash their full potential. Women and girls should have control over their choices and their future. Put simply, women and girls should face no constraints on realising their full potential."

# Careem removes 'peak charge' on bikes and rickshaws amid high inflation

## Commerce Reporter

KARACHI: Careem, the leading ride-hailing service in Pakistan, announces to remove 'peak charge' on its bikes and rickshaws categories across Karachi, Islamabad and Lahore. The initiative is taken in light of the recent economic situation in Pakistan where inflation and global fuel prices are at an all-time high.

Peak charge is an AI automated element in the pricing system, which is usually applied when a lot of people need a Careem ride at the same time, resulting in higher waiting times as well. The fares are increased to encourage more Captains to be available in a given area.

With the removal of the 'peak charge', customers will now be able to avail safe, reliable and convenient transportation any time of the day with pocket-friendly rates on the bike and rickshaw categories without worrying about surging inflation.

Speaking about the announcement, Muhammad Imran Saleem, General Manager - Ride Hailing at Careem Pakistan, said, "We are committed to providing safe, reliable and affordable transportation services to the masses in Pakistan, especially during such challenging economic times."

Earlier this year, Careem also reduced its commissions on multiple car types including bikes and rickshaws to improve Captain earnings. Similarly, Careem also resumed bonuses and guarantees making it further lucrative for individuals to work on the platform.

# Date fruit

RAWALPINDI: A vendors is displaying dates for selling purpose before Ramzan Mubarak at Namak Mandi, in the City.



Photo: Online

# Efficient use of fertilizers is essential for climate and food security, Chairman PARC

## Commerce Reporter

ISLAMABAD: In a collaborative effort to address climate, environmental, and economic challenges, the United States Ambassador to Pakistan, Donald Blome, and the Chairman of the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, announced launching of "Fertilizer Right" project in Pakistan. This innovative four years project, costing \$4.5 million, aims to help Pakistani farmers to enhance fertilizer use efficiency through innovative practices. As part of the U.S.-Paki-



stan "Green Alliance" framework, the project prioritizes cooperation to overcome agricultural challenges caused by climate change, with a shared objective of reducing carbon emissions that contribute to climate change. With this vital initiative, the United States and Pakistan are committed to build a sustainable future, supporting farmers and communities to overcome the complex environmental challenges of the future.

On this occasion, Chairman PARC, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali applauded the support extended by the United States to the agricultural sector of Pakistan for decades and also highlighted various collaborative initiatives between USDA and PARC. "Pakistani scientists are being trained under United States capacity building programs and these scientists are continuously contributing to the agricultural development in the country", the Chairman said.

Both sides expressed a strong commitment to collaborate for boosting agricultural sector of Pakistan through joint research and technical support with the ultimate goal of creating a strong economy.

# Fearing a potential drug crisis, PPMA sounded the alarm

## Commerce Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Worst inflation, dollar crisis, material shortage, pharmaceutical companies are near to closure, medicine crisis in Pakistan and fear of the unemployment of millions of people, an increase in the prices is inevitable. Pakistan Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Association (PPMA) sounded the alarm if the government does not pay attention, not only industries will be closed, but medicines will become extinct and millions of people will become unemployed.

These views were expressed by Syed Farooq Bukhari, Chairman of PPMA, Ex-Chairman and Ex-Senior Vice-President FPCCI Khawaja Shahzaib Akram, Mirza Abdul Rehman Chairman Coordination FPCCI Capital Office, Captain Nadeem Zafar, Zahid Saeed Ex-Chairman

PPMA and Ex-Vice-President FPCCI, Mian Asad Shuja, Arshad Mehmood, Tawqeer-ul-Haq, Dr. Faisal Khokhar, Hamid Raza Ex-Chairmen along with More than 100 leaders and company owners including Iram Shakir, and Ayesha Demi from Pharma Bureau held a press conference at FPCCI Capital Office. They are unanimous in the view that the value of the dollar has increased due to which the raw material has become very expensive. The enforcement of the government to sell medicines at a low price will brook the supply chain and cause sewer crises.

They said that it is an international practice that the relevant industry always determines the price of anything in the world, while in Pakistan the government has kept its strict control on the industry which may cause the destruction of the industries.

# L'Oréal Pakistan Appoints Qawi Naseer as MD

## Spokesman Report



KARACHI: L'Oréal Group, a global leader in the beauty industry, is pleased to announce the appointment of Qawi Naseer as the new Country Managing Director of L'Oréal Pakistan. With

effect from February 2023, Qawi Naseer succeeded Junaid Murtaza to lead the company's operations in Pakistan.

Qawi Naseer is an Institute of Business Administration alumnus of 2008 and began his career with Nestlé Pakistan, where he honed his skills in sales and trade marketing. He later joined Unilever Pakistan, where he managed multiple brands with great success. In 2020, Qawi Naseer joined L'Oréal Pakistan as the General Manager for the professional product division. His extensive experience and expertise proved invaluable in driving a profound transformation and spearheading the development of the salon industry.

In August 2022, Qawi Naseer took over the role of General Manager for the consumer product division, where he led the digital transformation agenda. His innovative approach and strategic vision helped position the division for sustained growth and success.

Now, as the new Country Managing Director, Qawi Naseer is the Chief Executive for L'Oréal Pakistan subsidiary, and one of the youngest Country Managing Directors in L'Oréal globally. He is committed to leading the company's ongoing efforts to inspire and transform the beauty industry in Pakistan.

In addition to his role at L'Oréal Pakistan, Qawi Naseer is also serving as a Director on the board of Pakistan France Business Alliance as well as an Elevate Champion to grow women in leadership. He is a visionary leader who is passionate about accelerating digital transformation using data and making a positive impact on society.

# Pindi Warlords, Margalla Tigers pull off wins in wheelchair cricket league

Sports Desk

RAWALPINDI: The inaugural edition of Capital Premier League (CPL) commenced on Tuesday here at Rawal Cricket Ground with Pindi Warlords and Margalla Tigers registering emphatic wins on the opening day.

Country's top-notch wheelchair players are showcasing their skills in the three-day event, being organized by Pakistan Wheelchair Cricket Council (PWCC) in collaboration with the Bank of Punjab.

In the first fixture, Pindi Warlords defeated Islamabad Kings by six wickets. Batting first Kings posted 196 runs on the board in allotted 20 overs, thanks to openers Mobeen and Muhammad Shahid's brilliant knocks, who scored 62 and 54 off 37 and 33 balls respectively. Syed Arsalan Ahmed and Yaseen Munir scored 18 runs each off 11 and 20 balls each.

In reply Pindi Warlords chased the target in 18.1 overs, scoring 198 runs for the loss of four wickets. Openers Gohar Afridi and Khalid Khan hit blazing half-centuries, collecting 85 and 71 runs



off 55 and 41 balls respectively. Gohar was declared player-of-the-match.

Pindi Warlords, Margalla Tigers pull off wins in wheelchair cricket league

In the second match, Margalla Tigers beat Murree Hawks by eight wickets, courtesy to Shair Ali's all-round performance. Batting first Hawks could score just 94 runs as they lost their all wickets

in 10.2 overs. Tigers chased the target in 9.1 over, losing only two wickets. Shair, who hammered 54 off 25 besides claiming a wicket was declared player-of-the-match.

Talking to APP, President PWCC Rookhsana Rajpoot expressed optimism that the CPL would help promote wheelchair cricket in Pakistan.

She said people with some limitations in their body parts were blessed with strong resilience and determination and the league was a manifestation of that.

"In the CPL you will see them telling the world that they are not bound by their disabilities rather they are blessed with special abilities. "It is not merely a league where contests are taking place between different teams but the event offers a chance to the wheelchair cricketers to prove their talent to the world," she added.

Four teams including Islamabad Kings, Pindi Warlords, Murree Hawks and Margalla Tigers are participating in the event.

Pindi Warlords, Margalla Tigers pull off wins in wheelchair cricket league

"However, the number of teams will be increased in the second and third editions. It will be an annual event. We have planned to hold it on regular basis. She asked the people to come and watch the matches, assuring the event would offer a lot of fun and excitement as the wheelchair players compete with the same passion and dedication as regular players.

# Pakistan grabs U14 trophy of Int'l Open Karate C'ship

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's young talented female team bagged the Under-14 trophy of the 25th Kensho International Open Karate Championship 2023 at the Galle Sports Complex, Sri Lanka.

The Pakistani team raised the country's flag in the championship, which included teams from Sri Lanka, Japan, Germany, India and Pakistan, said a press release issued here on Tuesday.

A team from Pakistan secured three gold medals and one silver medal in the championship. The gold medalists include Anahita Fatima, Aiyana Noel, Ayra Adil while Zehab Ghazanfar clinched a silver medal.

The young Kumite Anahita Fatima, Aiyana Noel and Ayra Adil bagged the gold medals in 40Kg, 35Kg and 20Kg categories, respectively while Anahita Fatima downed the opponent player in 20 seconds.

Speaking on the achievement, Anahita Fatima said, "It's my dream to participate in the Olympics and represent Pakistan."

Moreover, male Kumite Zehab Ghaz-



anfar secured the silver medal in the 35kg category. Under the supervision of the Sindh Karate Association, the Pakistan team took part in the international event.

"It is a great honour to share the spectacular victory with a young Karate team comprising four karatekas of Taurus mixed martial arts in an interna-

tional championship held in Sri Lanka." Chief Coach and Secretary Sindh Karate Association Wasif Ali said.

Title and Medal: -40kg females kumite Gold medal, Anahita Fatima; -35 Kg females kumite Gold medal, Aiyana Noel; -20 kg females kumite Gold medal, Ayra Adil; -35 kg male kumite silver medal, Zehab Ghazanfar.

# 1st PFF Introductory Referee Course begins from March 16 in Karachi

Sports Desk

LAHORE: The first Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) Introductory Referee Course will begin on the 16th of March, 2023 in Karachi.

A total of 24 participants will take part in the introductory Referee Course that will conclude on 19th of March. The four-day long course will be headed by Khurram Shahzad who is FIFA MA Referee Instructor and Manager Referee and Muhammad Iqbal Junior (FIFA MA Fitness Instructor).

Sharing his views, Manager Referee Khurram Shahzad said: "I am thankful to PFF NC which took this great initiative. We are lining up the courses to identify talented referees for further development. This is a very good opportunity for the participants to learn the modern trends of the game so that they can spot the top refereeing talent within the region for us to contribute towards the development of refereeing in Pakistan," he added.

# PCB announced umpire and match referee appointments

Sports Desk

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board announced umpire and match referee appointments for the three Playoffs and Final of the HBL Pakistan Super League 8, which will be played from 15-19 March at the Gaddafi Stadium.

Roshan Mahanama, former member of the ICC's elite panel of match referees, will lead the Playing Control Team for the four matches. Alex Wharf and Aleem Dar will be the on-field umpires for the 15 March Qualifier between table-toppers and defending champions Lahore Qalandars and Multan Sultans, while Asif Yaqoob will be the third umpire and Faisal Afridi the fourth umpire.

The 16 March Eliminator 1 involving Islamabad United and Peshawar Zalmi will see Ahsan Raza and Faisal Afridi as the on-field umpires with Alex Wharf and Rashid Riaz as the third and fourth umpires, respectively.

# Garrison Golf Tournament 2023

Sports Desk

LAHORE: The Garrison Golf Tournament 2023, that attracted more than 500 golfers from across the country, concluded at Lahore Garrison Green.

The colorful opening ceremony of the tournament was presided over by Maj Gen Qaiser Saman, GOC 10 Div, and Brig Bilal Sarfaraz, President Lahore Garrison Green.

More than five hundred golfers from various clubs in several categories participated in the tournament, which included AAA Associates' Lahore Golf team including Wajid Riaz, GM Sales, Umar Ijaz, Branch Head Lahore, and



Rana Rehan, Sales Consultant.

The concluding ceremony was attended by a large number of renowned golfers, army officers, and their families. The chief guests at the occasion included Lt Gen Salman Fayyaz Ghani, Core Commander 4 Core Lahore,

Lt Gen (R) Khalid Maqbool (Ex-governor Punjab), Lt Gen (R) Tauqeer Zia (former PCB Chairman), and Lt Gen (R) Hilal Hussain (ex-President Pakistan Golf Federation).

It is worth mentioning here that AAA Associates has continued its efforts to

support professional athletes and games in the country by organizing this grand corporate golfing tournament at Lahore. The major success of the event was that it attracted clubs and golfers from several cities in the country.

AAA Associates has cultivated a reputation as the biggest private-sector sponsor of golf events across the country. It has organized tournaments in collaboration with well-reputed private and corporate entities as well as public institutes and the military. Its sponsorship of the game of golf also includes athletes that are representing Pakistan's golf talent at the international level.

# Captains of Qalandars, Sultans, United, Zalmi optimistic to make it into PSL final

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Skippers of Lahore Qalandars, Multan Sultans, Islamabad United and Peshawar Zalmi were optimistic to make it to the final of HBL Pakistan Super League (PSL) 8 and lift the trophy, when the ultimate stage of the competition kicks off at Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore on Wednesday.

Table-toppers Lahore Qalandars, Shaheen Afridi said, "I am delighted with the consistency my team has shown in this edition. We are very thankful to our fans for their continuous support. We have seen houseful matches in Home of Qalandars where the crowd turns out in large numbers to support us. We cannot wait to

repay their faith with another title."

Lahore Qalandars would face Multan Sultans in the PSL Qualifier on Wednesday.

Multan Sultan's Mohammad Rizwan said, "The first half of the tournament went really well for us and then we lost the way in between. But, I am very happy with how we have made a comeback strongly and ensured that we qualify for the Playoffs.

"We enter the Playoffs with some great fighting spirit and that is what is needed towards the backend of a tournament like the HBL PSL. You need to have that confidence that you can bounce back from any situation and that record run chase and then exceptional performances from our

youngsters like Usman Khan, Abbas Afridi and Ihsanullah have instilled believe in us that we can comeback from anywhere. We are eyeing our third consecutive HBL PSL final now, and, with the help of Allah Almighty, we will try to lift the trophy this time."

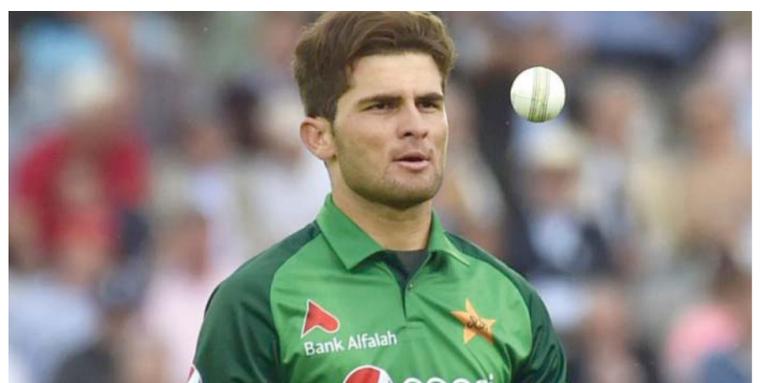
Islamabad United and Peshawar Zalmi would meet in the first PSL Eliminator on Thursday and the team that loses will get knocked out of the event. The winner would face the loser of the Qualifier on Friday. Meanwhile the Winner Qualifier and Winner Eliminator 2 would be up against in the final on Sunday.

Islamabad United's Shadab Khan said, "It has been an exciting season for us, but now we are focused on what lays ahead. As

a captain, I am pleased at how the players have performed and especially at how youngsters have raised their hands in tough situations. The results are not something you can control, but as a team, it is important to remain consistent in your processes and know what you are paying for.

"I am pretty confident with our chances. We have lifted the HBL PSL trophy twice and there is no doubt that we can do it for the third time," he said.

Peshawar Zalmi's Babar Azam said, "I am very happy to see how the youngsters in Peshawar Zalmi have stepped up and made their potential known to the world. Saim Ayub, Muhammad Haris, Haseebullah and Arshad Iqbal have been outstanding and I



am backing them to continue to perform and deliver in the Playoffs.

"While our batting has done wonderfully well, we need to fix some of the loopholes in our bowling department and I am sure that we will also emerge as a strong bowling unit in Lahore," he said.

# Open Tennis Tournament from March 18



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Tennis Association (ITF), in collaboration with Impetus, would be holding the ITC Open Tennis Tournament would kick off at the Islamabad Tennis Complex from March 18.

Tournament Chief Organizer, Davis Cup Coach Fazal Subhan informed APP that Khadija Laghari had been appointed as the Chairperson Organizing Committee of the tournament while Kamran Khalil would act as Tournament Director.

"Eight categories of competitions will be held in the tournament, including men's singles, men's doubles, women's singles, boys under-18, ladies under-18, boys under-14, boys and girls under-12 (mixed) and boys and girls under-10 (mixed) categories."

The finals of the tournament would be held on March 19, whereas prizes will be distributed among the winning players after the final competitions.

# Bangladesh whitewash England 3-0 in T20I series



Sports Desk

DHAKA: Liton Das smashed a Twenty20 career-best 73 as Bangladesh stunned world champions England to sweep the series 3-0 and score a massive upset in front of an ecstatic home crowd.

In a major humiliation for England's normally clinical white ball unit ahead of the 50-over World Cup in India later this year, Bangladesh won the third and final T20 in Dhaka by 16 runs.

The home side already won the first game by six wickets and the second by four wickets to give Bangladesh their first series victory over England in any format.

Set 159 to win after winning the toss and opting to bowl, England managed only 142 for the loss of six wickets despite David Malan making 53 and captain Jos Buttler 40 as Taskin Ahmed took 2-26.

Opener Liton gave Bangladesh a positive start, putting on 55 runs with Rony Talukdar in the opening stand.

England's first breakthrough came when Adil Rashid dismissed Rony for 24 but Najmul Hossain and Liton added 84 runs for the second wicket to keep up momentum.

England missed a chance to dismiss Liton soon after the right-hander completed his ninth T20I half-century when Ben Duckett dropped him on 51 at deep mid-wicket off Jofra Archer.

Chris Jordan brought an end to Liton's 57-ball innings, forcing him to give a catch to Phil Salt at deep midwicket.

England did well to contain the Bangladeshi batsmen after Liton's dismissal with only one boundary struck in the death overs.

But Najmul, who survived on 40 after being given lbw off Jordan, ensured Bangladesh still had a decent score with his third 40-plus innings in the series.

Jordan and Rashid finished with 1-21 and 1-23 for England respectively.

England in reply started poorly as debutant Tanvir Islam dismissed Phil Salt for a duck in the very first over.

But Malan, who survived on review after being given out lbw for six, and Buttler put England back in control with a second-wicket stand of 95.

Mustafizur Rahman added the first twist in the contest by removing Malan, which brought him his 100th T20I wicket.

Buttler was soon run out for 40 with a direct hit from Mehidy Hasan that allowed Bangladesh firmly back into the contest.

Taskin returned to claim the wickets of Moeen Ali (nine) and Ben Duckett (11) before Shakib Al Hasan get rid of Sam Curran (four) to complete the rout.

"It's really disappointing," Buttler said afterwards. "I thought it was a good score to restrict them to.

England won the preceding three-match one-day international series 2-1.