

PM lauds Chairman PCB, CMs, admin, teams for making PSL-8 a huge success

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday appreciated chairman Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), chief ministers of Sindh and Punjab, provincial administrations, police and the contesting teams for making the 8th edition of Pakistan Super League (PSL-8) a huge success. (Report on Page 7)



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Free wheat flour bag

LAHORE: A woman is carrying free wheat flour bag from Punjab Government, in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Pakistan, China agree to expand political, security, economic cooperation

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China have reviewed the entire spectrum of bilateral relations and agreed to expand and reinforce political and security cooperation, bilateral trade, economic and financial cooperation, cultural exchanges, tourism, and people-to-people ties. The third round of Pakistan-China bilateral political consultations (BPC) was held in Beijing, Foreign Secretary Dr. Asad Majeed Khan led the Pakistan delegation while the Chinese side was led by Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong. Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release on Sunday.

BPC is a regular institutional mechanism between Pakistan and China. Nothing the completion of a decade of the China-Pakistan



of ever-deepening friendship between Pakistan and China. They also agreed to remain engaged in the expansion of CPEC including on participatory

enhance high-level engage-

ments and dialogue mechanisms and make the channels of communication even more robust", the two sides agreed.

The foreign secretary thanked the Chinese side for its consistent and generous support for the economic stability of Pakistan and the humanitarian assistance during the devastating floods in 2022.

Vice foreign minister Sun Weidong affirmed China's support for Pakistan's sovereignty, territorial integrity and economic security.

The two sides exchanged views on a range of regional and global issues of mutual interest and expressed satisfaction over their close cooperation and engagement on important regional developments including in Afghanistan.

Pakistan and China would further strengthen dialogue and cooperation in multilateral platforms.

Governor, Saudi delegation discuss better facilities for Hajj pilgrims

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: A delegation of Saudi Arabia, which make arrangements for Hajj pilgrims called on the Sindh Governor Mohtasham Khan Tessori at Governor House here on Sunday.

They discussed the provision of better facilities to Pakistan Hajj pilgrims, investment in the Sindh province, and other issues of mutual interest.

The Governor said that the bilateral relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia were established at people to people level. He said that the people of Pakistan gave extra-ordinary value to Saudi Arabia due to sacred places.

Imran vows to take legal action against police over 'siege' of his house

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Sunday vowed to take legal action against police he found to have broken into his house, at a time when his wife Bushra Bhui and seven children were at home, and looted things. Addressing the nation via video link hours after facing the court in Islamabad and the police's search of his house, he said he had constituted his legal team over the matter adding that he would lodge a case against the policemen who attacked his house. "The LHC had ordered that only SP Police would enter Mr. Khan's house but [on the contrary]," a heavy contingent of police entered his home", he added, they committed contempt of court, he said, by doing and hard wait", he added. When he said, "Who allowed them to break my houses gate, he asked.

He said he had pleaded with the court to shift the case from Islamabad to Lahore adding that he never refused to appear before the court. He said the nation knew him for more than fifty years adding that they knew he never broke the law. "The police broke my house's locks and looted it in my absence", he added. Which crime, he asked, he had committed and 96 cases lodged against him by those who themselves were criminals. He went on to say that if anyone was doubtful of their crimes, he must google them adding that international newspapers and books quoted former prime minister Nawaz Sharif as a thief and termed former president Asif Ali Zardari Mr. Topo. "I established committed atrocity by imposing them on us", he added. They wanted, he said, to throw him out of their way and it were they who got me attacked [in Wazirabad]", he added. He maintained that the Punjab caretaker government appointed police officers who attacked on May 25 adding that the decision-makers would be responsible for the storm to come.

Low income people to be provided Rs 50 per liter subsidy under petroleum package: PM

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Sunday said low income poor people will be given a subsidy of Rs 50 per liter under petroleum relief package.

While chairing a review meeting on the relief package here, he said the petroleum relief will be given to low income consumers who have motorcycles, rickshaws, 800 cc cars and other small cars.

He said the programme of petroleum subsidy would be started soon and a comprehensive strategy would be formed with the cooperation of relevant departments for effective implementation of the subsidy programme.

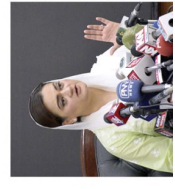
He said motorcycles, rickshaws and small cars were used by low income people and the petroleum subsidy would give relief to the poor.

The government was making effort for all possible help to the poor people despite its economic difficulties, he added.

Minister of State for Petroleum Musadik Malik briefed about the strategy for providing petroleum subsidy to the low-income segment of society.

Minister for Finance Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Advisor to PM Ahsan Ishaq, Special Assistant to PM Farah Khan, Secretary Finance, Secretary Petroleum and high-ranking officials attended the meeting.

Zaman Park 'bunker of terrorists', laboratory for petrol bombs: Marriyum



Bureau Report

LAHORE: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Sunday said that Imran Khan was not a politician but a "terrorist", his Zaman Park residence was a bunker of terrorists and a laboratory for petrol bombs.

Addressing a press conference here, the information minister said that if the writ of the state, judiciary and police would be challenged, the civil war would erupt in the country.

Marriyum Aurangzeb said the police job was to provide protection to the courts which were the guardian of justice. "If the courts compromise the police will, then there will be a civil war in this country and every street of this country will have its own law."

If Imran was allowed to front the law gangs, hoodlums and terrorists would emerge from every street and attack courts and police, she said.

"If you think that by giving protection and this concession to a Lardie there will be rule of law in this country, then, you are wrong, the minister said.

Marriyum said the courts have been summoning a person since August 23 last year but he did not appear and when the court ordered to arrest and produce the person, he instigated his followers to attack the judiciary. It has never happened in the history of the country that a criminal was summoned in court and was provided with the facility to make attendance from his car.

Imran Khan who ruled and dominated this country for four years had put all political opponents in death cells to settle political scores. He did not even spare sisters and daughters, of political opponents to the courts which arrested (even from) hospitals beds.

Imran during his misrule destroyed the national economy, made the people unemployed and deprived them of two timely meals.

Imran orchestrated Zaman Park's standoff to get people's sympathies ahead of Punjab election: Experts



Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Political experts here Sunday claimed that former prime minister Imran Khan has allegedly orchestrated Zaman Park's PTI workers-Punjab police standoff plot in a bid to get people's sympathies ahead of the Punjab Assembly election. "Following announcement of the election for Punjab Assembly election by Imran Khan has allegedly orchestrated Zaman Park's PTI workers-Punjab police standoff plot by using PTI workers

sympathies ahead of the Punjab Assembly election. Following announcement of the election for Punjab Assembly election by Imran Khan has allegedly orchestrated Zaman Park's PTI workers-Punjab police standoff plot by using PTI workers

Hamdard Naunehal Assembly

Every Pakistani to maintain health at an optimal level: Sadia Rashid says

Bureau Report



KARACHI: Ms. Sadia Rashid, President of Hamdard Foundation Pakistan, said that it is the duty of every Pakistani to maintain health at an optimal level. The neglect of health threatens the survival and security of the nation is strong and healthy. She said this yesterday during her presidential address at the meeting of Hamdard Naunehal Assembly Karachi organized by Hamdard Foundation Pakistan titled "Health for All", held at Bari-ul-Hikmah, Auditorium, Madinat-ul-Hikmah, Karachi. Renowned educationist and a close associate of Shaheed Hakim Moham-

was always eager to learn. Children should emulate his traits. Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Saïd's patriotism and philanthropy were exemplary. As young people, you should also be passionate about serving your country. Only then will you be able to succeed. Young speakers from different schools said that health is the blessing of Allah and pledged that they would serve Pakistan by being healthy and raising awareness about health in society. Speaker Muhammad Mubeen Mughal (Hamdard Public School) conducted the proceedings of the meeting. The meeting ended with Dua-e-Said offered by the students of Hamdard Public School and Hamdard Village School.

Protest

KARACHI: Supporters of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) former Prime Minister Imran Khan hold an anti-government rally in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

for the establishment of a healthy society, it is necessary that individuals get the opportunity for balanced development in all aspects. She advised the youths to adopt a healthy lifestyle and use mobile and internet only for necessity and actively participate in sports.

Ms. Stella Jafar said that Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Saïd possessed many exceptional qualities and abilities. He is a role model for the young generation by every standard. He was a remarkable individual. He was extremely intelligent, passionate, perceptive, humanistic and had a sincere heart and a plight for others. Despite his calm tone, he spoke authoritatively. He was a great listener and never argued with people. He

will be continued uninterrupted till 25th of Ramadan daily from 9 am to 5 pm. The Deputy Commissioner directed the Assistant Commissioners to keep a watchful eye on all the necessary arrangements at the distribution centers and said that the caretaker government of Punjab is directly monitoring the entire process of transportation and fair distribution of flour so as to slight lapses or negligence will not be tolerated. On this occasion, the recipients of flour thanked the caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi and said that due to the efficient arrangements of the district administrations, the beneficiaries are getting flour at a fast pace, which is a good move under the current needs.

Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: Under the Ramadan special package, the distribution office flour (ATTA) has started in the district. On the first day of distribution at many as 118,963 bags of 10 kg flour were distributed at 44 centers. The Deputy Commissioner Ali Anam Qanun visited the various distribution points of Rizvi, Shadiq Chowk, Lockwood Park, Iqbal Madina Chowk, Model B, Bazar, Road Sports Complex, Sannanabad, Al Fatah Sports Complex, Saleem registered shops of PAMP. Assistant Commissioner Mubammad Zubair also accompanied with him on the occasion. The Deputy Commis-



sioner inspected the process of providing flour to the people registered under the Benazir Income Support Program and said that transparency is the hallmark of this scheme which will not be compromised at any cost. He checked the provision of seating for men and women and availability of drinking water at the centers. He urged the duty staffers to provide bags of flour to the beneficiaries with respect and takes steps to guide them. He said while talking to the media persons that the registered people of Benazir Income Support Program should bring their original National Identity Card along with the verification message by sending a message to 8070 and get three bags of flour

at the centers and this scheme will be continued uninterrupted till 25th of Ramadan daily from 9 am to 5 pm. The Deputy Commissioner directed the Assistant Commissioners to keep a watchful eye on all the necessary arrangements at the distribution centers and said that the caretaker government of Punjab is directly monitoring the entire process of transportation and fair distribution of flour so as to slight lapses or negligence will not be tolerated. On this occasion, the recipients of flour thanked the caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi and said that due to the efficient arrangements of the district administrations, the beneficiaries are getting flour at a fast pace, which is a good move under the current needs.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas Mst. Bibi Shahan W/O Sher Khan a lottee of plot No. 11e-B Block "C" Peoples Colony Area Development Scheme Attack has appointed General Power Attorney to her nephew Mr. Mehrzood Khan S/O Firdaus Khan vide registered deed No. 56/4 dated 02/02/2023 with Sub Registrar Attack.

Now General Power Attorney wish to transfer the plot in the name of Mst. Aqab Khan/D/O Sher Khan.

If anyone have objection of above advertisement submit their objection within fifteen days of this advertisement otherwise objection will not be entertained.

Deputy Director PHATA Region Rawalpindi

Security forces inaugurated a fitness club for health and fitness in Wama



Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: Security forces inaugurated the Wama Fitness Club to improve health and fitness activities in Lower South Waziristan district. After the inauguration, the Mr. Championship was held. A talent hunt for boxers was also organized in which various boxers showcased their boxing skills. Each individual was given cash prizes to appreciate their talent and encourage them to improve further. Locals appreciated the efforts of the security forces for providing a platform for their fitness activities. On the other hand, the tribal elders said that organizing a fitness club for health and wellness by the security forces is a welcome and positive step. They said that apart from development projects in the area of security forces, promoting the health and fitness activities of the youth is equivalent to a worthy grandfather.

Mujahid Hospital is playing a key role in providing medical facilities



Bureau Report

FAISALABAD: Mujahid Hospital is playing a key role in providing medical facilities to the people of the eastern part of Faisalabad, while the members of Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and to continue the expansion and good work of this institution. The business community will continue to provide financial support to this hospital. This was said by Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Dr. Khuram Farq while addressing the annual function of Mujahid Hospital. He said that due to his association with medicine, he has a spiritual relationship with Mujahid Hospital. This hospital was established 40 years ago as a clinic which today has attained the status of a modern and state-of-the-art hospital. He said that today there is hardly any person who does not know this hospital. Dr. Khuram Farq especially appreciated the establishment of heart center in Mujahid Hospital and said that in Faisalabad Institute of Cardiology no doctor is available after 3 pm but now people will be able to benefit from it. He said that if heart-attack patients get timely medical help, 80% of people can be saved from dying. He also expressed satisfaction that the facility of angiography has been provided here while the process of heart surgery will also be started soon. He described the provision of medical facilities to four lakh patients as a great achievement during the last one year and said that no other private hospital treats so many people in the spirit of service.

He also appreciated the establishment of paramedical institute in the hospital and said that the surgery is limited to the completion of the operation theater while the long preparation phase is done by the paramedical staff. He said that there is a severe shortage of paramedical staff in Pakistan. There are 90,000 vacancies for paramedical staff in the UK alone. The paramedical institute of Mujahid Hospital will not only solve the shortage of paramedical staff in the country but also earn valuable foreign exchange for the country by exporting them abroad. He proposed to associate various departments of the institute with prominent personalities of the world of Islam, Al-Farooq and Ibn Al-Haytham and said that he would also give scholarships to the children of orphans for their education here. Dr. Khuram Farq emphasized on prevention of diseases along with treatment and said that Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry will fully cooperate with Mujahid Hospital in this regard. He said that children and their mothers should know what kind of food can prevent common diseases. He asked that you provide a digital copy of the bulletin of Mujahid Hospital so that it can be circulated among more than 8 thousand members of the Chamber. On this occasion, Mujahid Welfare Council President, Mujib Iqbal Butt informed about the performance of the hospital and said that the construction of a modern multi-storied building is going on with the support of well-wishers.

The promise made to the tribal people at the time of FATA Merger with KP should be fulfilled

Adam Khan Wazir


Addressing the Rights of Tribes, the speakers said that the ongoing fighting between PTI and PDM is a fighting of chair and the success of both is the failure of the people of Pakistan. The speakers said that for the last several decades, the tribal people have been pushed into a lane, 70 percent of the youth here are working in foreign countries due to poverty and unemployment. While efforts are being made to uplift the people of the tribal reserves, which is not only regrettable but also tantamount to abuse. On this occasion, the speakers demanded to fulfill the promise of a short annual development fund worth one hundred and ten billion rupees in the recommendations of Saraj-e-Aziz, including providing health, education and employment



for the tribal people. The speakers took full advantage of Toshiakhana and today they accuse each other that your theft is big while our theft is small. The speakers hinted that the establishment is robbing the people with both hands by riding

peace and order in the merged tribal districts, remove the backwardness of the tribal districts and develop them like other districts of Pakistan. The government is running away from the recommendations of the Saraj-e-Aziz Committee on FATA reforms in different pretexts, which is not only a violation of the rights of the tribals but also an abuse. The government should immediately implement the recommendations of the committee and fulfill the promise of 110 billion rupees annually and 1100 billion rupees in 10 years. Tribal districts have the same right to national resources as other provinces, so the announced 3% share of NFC award should be provided soon.

On the weakness of PDM and PTI. It should be remembered that Jamaat-e-Islami has started a movement in relation to "Movement for Tribal Rights" in which they have put the following points for the rights of tribal people. Work should be taken without discrimination to establish

 Islamabad
15° - 23° Clear

SERVICES
Namaz Timings
Fajr 4:51 am
Zohr 12:16 pm
Asr 4:35 pm
Maghrib 6:18 pm
Isha 7:41 pm

EMERGENCY
Rescue (Police) 15
Bomb Disposal 15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ 15
Islamabad 1722 & 16
Emergency Ambulance 1122 & 16
& Rescue Services 451722
Motorway Police 9266044
Motorway Police 927001020

Women Police Stations
Islamabad 922596
Rawalpindi 927061020

ENQUIRY
Edit/Ambulance 15
PIA Flight Info 92801114
Pakistan Cargo 92801114
Railway 92703117
Railway Exchange 92703115
RAWA Rawalpindi 55255469
CAA 9281092

HOSPITALS
GH 651111
MH 50116
MH Hospital 50116
Gantt Hospital 927909114
DHO 556311-4
R&H 92903017
Holy Family 92903027
PMS 926107079
Polyclinic 921501049
Sina International 4003860

Chairman CDA inaugurates Rotary Tree Plantation

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Rotary Club Islamabad Metropolitan which has an international network of 14 million neighbors, friends, leaders and problem-solvers, launched a plantation drive in Islamabad yesterday to ensure a clean environment and to combat environmental pollution and its hazards.

This plantation campaign was inaugurated by Chairman CDA, Capt. Noor-ul-Amin Mengal. Rotary Club Islamabad Metropolitan initially planned more than 1000 trees during this national campaign. Islamabad include more than 1000 of Sukh Chain and Silver Oaks. A grand ceremony was also organized on the occasion of inauguration of this national campaign.

On this occasion, Chairman CDA Capt. Noor-ul-Amin Mengal while appreciating this people-friendly project and campaign said that it is very gratifying that organizations like Rotary Club Islamabad Metropolitan are coming forward and serving the society by their self-contribution. He thanked the team and members of Rotary Club Islamabad Metropolitan for this noble cause and national project and reit-



ated CDAs commitment to ensure its full cooperation.

On this occasion, President Rotary Club Islamabad Metropolitan Mr. Imran Ghaznavi welcomed Chairman, CDA and thanked him for taking time to inaugurate this campaign. The President of Rotary Club Islamabad Metropolitan said that Rotary International has been working for the past 110 years, to bring positive change in the society and ensure public welfare.

FCCI calls for conducive business environment for large-scale manufacturing

Mian Rashid Asghar

ISLAMABAD: Smart policies are needed to solve Pakistan's economic problems and move towards the fourth industrial revolution, and Pakistan Engineering Council has to play its key role in this regard. This was stated by Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FCCI) President Dr. Khuram Tariq during a meeting with a delegation of Pakistan Engineering Council. He elaborated conducive business scheme that before large-scale manufacturing, it is necessary to establish steel, petrochemical and engineering industries and this work should have been done in 1980, but we "missed the train" due to which we gradually became an importing country.

He further said that unfortunately, despite the lack of a large-scale manufacturing policy, large industries were established here without planning, many of which are closing down or moving abroad. Giving the example of India, Dr. Khuram Tariq said that this neighboring country started working on large-scale manufacturing in 1991. At that time India's foreign exchange reserves were only 1 billion dollars but today it has gone far ahead of us. He said that there is not a single multinational



pharmaceutical company in Pakistan yet. He said that the Pakistan Engineering Board also did not play its role in these areas so that the textile industry might get abundant raw material.

He further said that at the national level we have to realize our responsibilities while living within the realm of large-scale manufacturing so that the potential of this sector can be fully exploited. He said that in this regard we will also share a form with you on the basis of which future planning can be done.

Senior Vice President Dr. Sajjad Ahsad said that we will share this form with various associations to identify key types of machinery for various sectors.

Alibaba Group's Daraz facilitates donation for flood relief efforts in Pakistan

News Desk

KARACHI: In response to the devastating floods that hit Pakistan last year, Daraz has announced that it will facilitate a donation of around US\$920,000 from its China-based parent company, Alibaba Group, to support efforts to rehabilitate communities affected by the disaster. The donation will be made to the Children's Foundation, a globally recognized and respected non-profit organization working since 1995 to provide quality education to the underserved population of the country. The funds will be utilized to build a school in the Badlin District of Sindh for 180 children to resume their education at the earliest possible, and its upkeep for the next five years.

Daraz Pakistan will be managing the



overall partnership with The Citizens Foundation to govern the construction of the school and monitor the projects progress on a monthly basis.

Ehsan Sayra, Managing Director, Daraz Pakistan, stated, "The country has been through the worst natural disasters in its history, affecting a significant number of our population and infrag-

ent & CEO, of The Citizens Foundation, expressing his views on the occasion said, "For 27 years, TCF has been committed to providing quality education for the less privileged children of Pakistan. To fulfill this mission, we look towards collaborating with organizations that share our vision of a better and literate Pakistan."

Mr. Faiz Chumsky, Charge d'affaires of China Embassy, Islamabad, appreciated this effort and shared "I am very pleased to learn that Chinese Alibaba Group has committed to donate USD \$920,000 to support rehabilitating communities affected by the floods, and we are very happy to see such a noble deed from someone who is so close to our nation."

Syed Asaad Ayub Ahmad, President of Sindh to accommodate 180 children to resume their studies.

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI) H.E. Dr. Fathal Ferozud Al-Ahmed, held an interactive meeting with the differently abled male and female students studying in various departments of the university.

Worthy President said that if any of these students face an issue he/she must directly approach his office where they will be heard completely. He assured that all the differently abled students shall have full support and cooperation during their studies and their issues shall be solved on priority basis.



IIUI President paid tribute to their

parents for encouraging and making arrangements for the studies. On the occasion, students thanked IIUI President for continuous support and conveyed regards and wishes from their parents.

Meanwhile, Dr. Muhammad Khair, Director Academics, on the directives of President IIUI listened to the issues of the students and assured that all the problems shall be solved as soon as possible. Addressing the students, he said they were the omen of encouragement for all of us while he also vowed that anyone creating issues in the campus for the differently abled students shall not be tolerated.

Protest for restoration of the suspended train service on the Kotri Dadu Rohri track



Azad Baloch

DADU: For the restoration of the suspended train service on the Kotri Dadu Rohri track, Seera Sarjanihar Forum led by Mushohor Memon and others reached Dadu Railway Station on the 57th day and recorded the protest and raised slogans.

Leader of Seera Sarjanihar Forum, Mashhoor Memon and others said that it has been 8 months since the floods and rains and with the connivance of the railway administration and the private transport mafia, the poor people have been deprived of cheap and safe train rides. Citizens are hanging in the bands of private transport mafia. Due to floods and rains Kotri to Dadu Rohri track has been affected which has been cleared for 6 months.

Special trains for Urs of Qalandar Lal Shahbaz are being run on the track, but the services of Bolan, Khushal Khan Khattak and Moin Jo Daro Express running on this track have been stopped without reason. He has demanded the railway minister and the railway authorities to provide relief by restoring the suspended train service in the area.

Measles Epidemic spread in Kacho, three children died of lack of treatment.



Azad Baloch

DADU: Measles epidemic spread in Kacho, the disaster-hit area of Dadu and the third largest backward area of Sindh, three children died due to lack of treatment. 8-year-old Majeed Shahani, 12-year-old Bankho daughter of Kareemdad Shahani, 8-month-old Hameed Shahani son of Wahheed Shahani have died due to the outbreak of measles in the villages of Loop and Khandani of Union Council Randu Rahim Khan of Kacho. More than two dozen children are reported to be suffering from measles.

So far, the medical teams of the health department have not been able to reach the affected villages, the children are helpless and waiting for help.

According to parents of those who died children in the measles epidemic, measles has spread in our area, they have informed the officials of the health department, but no teams have been sent. Our children have died due to the incompetence of the health department. And suffering from other diseases whose lives are at stake.

Imran ruined economy: Murtaza Abbasi

News Desk

ABBOTTABAD: Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi on Sunday said that Imran Khan took the government under a conspiracy to "roll back CPEC and ruined the economy of the country".

He expressed these views while addressing the inauguration ceremony of the 16597 million Sui gas project in the suburban village of Bagawal Bahotabad. Former MPA Sardar Aurangzeb Nalotha and a large number of people from different walks of life were also present. The minister further said that Imran Khan left the treasury empty and now he was fleeing from the courts. The trend of disrespecting the decisions of the judiciary reflects an agenda that was predicted by Hakim Saeed and Dr. Israr Ahmed, he added.

Navaz Sharif and PML-N got 13 years of power in this country, and 70% of Pakistan's development projects were attributed to the PML(N) and Navaz Sharif, the minister said.

Murtaza Javed Abbasi while criticizing Imran Khan said the latter had a long list of corruption cases starting from Toshakhana to others, and today, he was granted bail in nine cases within a minute, on the other side Navaz Sharif faced 190 charges in 6 months.

The minister said that Navaz Sharif was a hero of the nation who made Pakistan atomic power and brought the country on the path of progress and prosperity. He said that Navaz Sharif left his sick wife in the hospital and went to jail with his innocent daughter, he did not violate the law and constitution. He said that Imran Khan dissolved the provincial assemblies by persuading members to resign, instead of taking the country forward through the democratic system and destroying the economy.

Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Murtaza Javed Abbasi, stated that the promise made to the people in 2016 had now been fulfilled. He said that whenever Pakistan Muslim League-N brought a project, efforts were made to stop it so that the credit would not be given to the party.

Murtaza Abbasi said that in Hazara Circle Wapda, only 800 employees were working out of 2,400 approved positions, but after the approval of the Hazara Electricity Supply Company (HESCO), the number has reached 7,800.

He said that projects worth Rs. 24 billion had been completed in Haripur, Manshera and Abotabad, and after the accountability of PTI new general elections would also be held.

Cost of dialysis up by 40% in few months, experts say

ISLAMABAD: The cost of dialysis and treatment of kidney diseases has witnessed constant rise in Pakistan due to the rising cost of "imported consumables" used, while the number of kidney patients has also escalated following an increasing number of diabetic and hypertensive patients as well as consumption of contaminated water.

Pakistan Kidney Center Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Dr. Khalid-ur-Rehman said that the cost of dialysis has increased per person in comparison to what it was a few months back.

"Now dialysis costs around Rs5,500 per person against Rs4,000 a few months back due to an increase in the prices of consumables used in the process of blood purification, while the number of kidney patients is constantly on the rise due to an alarming rise in the number of diabetic and hypertensive patients in Pakistan," he said, speaking at a fundraising event on Saturday.

KP govt starts mapping of mineral deposits, plans study of lithium metal in Chitral

Hussna Khattak

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government has started geographical mapping of potential unexplored mines and mineral deposits in different districts of the province including managed areas besides planning of exploration study of lithium metal in Chitral.

We have started mapping of the potential mines and mineral sites in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with assistance of Geological Survey of Pakistan (GSP). The mapping of 75,000 square kilometers areas in KP including Chitral and 600 sq km areas in Orakzai and Kurram districts were completed.

On the basis of GSP's survey, the exploration of minerals would be started on scientific lines," Jala Khan, Senior Planning Officer (SPO), Mines and Mineral Department Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa told to media.

The project would be completed with an estimated cost of Rs997 million. Besides establishment of a geosone laboratory and technical training and certification Center in the province, he said the government will strengthen KP's mineral testing laboratories for which modern equipment and machinery would be exported with an estimated cost of Rs893 million to save the precious

Public health experts demand on banning HTPs

A local Not-For-Profit Organization Blue Veins and Lady Reading Hospital (LRH), the largest tertiary healthcare facility that caters to the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, jointly organized a provincial seminar on "Emerging Use of Newer Tobacco & Nicotine Products including Heated Tobacco Products (HTPs), impact on public health, and required response in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa."

A seminar was held here on Sunday aimed to highlight the public health impacts associated with the emergence of newer nicotine and tobacco products.

The seminar was attended by healthcare professionals, researchers, policymakers, and representatives from various organizations and Government Departments.

Speakers at the seminar included experts in the field of tobacco control and public health. They presented the latest research findings on the harmful effects of heated tobacco products and discussed the potential risks to users and non-users.

The speakers and participants of the seminar demanded an immediate ban and regulations on the usage and marketing of Velo, vapes, HTPs, and other smokeless tobacco products for the best interest of public health in the province.

The seminar also highlighted the importance of implementing policies and regulations that restrict the use and marketing of heated tobacco products.

Participants agreed that further research is needed to fully understand the long-term health effects of these products and that the Health authorities should not rely on the facts & research provided by Tobacco industry.

Dr. Sumaira Bakhtiyar, Assistant Professor Family Medicine, Dr. Shumaila, Resident Pulmonologist, Dr. Nudrat Gul Physiotherapist, Dr. Sherryar Khan PGR Cardiologist, Dr. Laila Noushad Psychiatry Department LRH, Dr. Sufyan Khalique Assistant Professor and Dr. Wassem Janjua, Tobacco Control Expert, SDPI made presentations and deliberations.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Human Rights and Relief Muhammad Inuran Khan and Additional Assistant Commissioner General, Mishaab Wakeed said, "Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is committed to stopping the illicit trade and sale of cigarettes and other tobacco items. As a society, we need to be vigilant about the marketing tactics used by the tobacco industry to promote these new products."

Dr. Nek Dad, Public Health Director, of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) said, "The rise of newer tobacco products and HTPs is a cause for concern, as these products are not without their own health risks. It's important that we educate the public on the potential harm of these products, and work to create policies that restrict their use and marketing."

Tariq Barki, Associate Hospital Director, LRH said, "The evidence is clear: newer tobacco products and HTPs are not a safe alternative to smoking. They may be marketed as such, but the science tells a different story. We need to prioritize public health over corporate profits, and take action to protect people from the harmful effects of these products."

Qamar Naseem Program Manager Blue Veins said, "The health experts and social activists are committed to promoting public health and raising awareness of the risks associated with heated tobacco products and we will continue to work together to educate the public and policymakers about the dangers of these products."

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marble and gemstones wealth.

He said a Harvard complex would be established at Hayatabad industrial estate Peshawar where one window facilities and consultancy services would be provided to investors.

He said land would be purchased for the establishment of offices of the department in mineral rich Chitral, Dir, M, Manshera, DI Khan and Swabi, adding 850 cases were registered against illegal miners.

Jala Khan said that till to date, 3000 online lease applications on the portal have been received from interested parties. The amount of Rs60,000 per lease from the contractor awarding party who was providing up to 600 acres of land for excavation, he said, adding the project cost about Rs156 million.

About future projects, Jala Khan said that exploration study of lithium metal in Chitral besides other metallic minerals would be conducted and studies in this regard were also started.

According to KP Board of Investment and Trade (KP-BIT), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has an estimated potential of 14 trillion ton a year of marble, limestone, dolomite, soapstone, silica and other mineral resources, 70 million carats gemstones, 1.10 billion bbls of oil reserves, 7.5 million tons a year production of maize, wheat, sugarcane and tobacco. The estimated potential of 16 trillion cubic feet natural gas reserves, US \$92 billion per year

the case of doing business.

The projects including exploration of decorative stones" in Mohmand, Bajaur and Khyber, exploration of metallic minerals including gold, silver, manganese, iron and chromite, development of rare metallic mines, coal, marbles, platinum, silver and gold reserves in Orakzai and strengthening of Project Management Unit (PMU) were completed besides infrastructure development of clusters of mining, establishment of mineral check-posts and establishment of Mines Safety and Mechanized Mining Centres.

Mohmand Marble City was being constructed on 350 acres of land. A similar marble city is also being constructed in Buner district to facilitate 200 marble and allied industrial units besides creating jobs at local level.

Over 28 units have already started production in Marble City Risalpur while 20 and 70 percent portions of Rashakai and Nowshera SFZ, respectively were earmarked for marble and mines industrial zones.

Work on Jalozai and Rashakai economic zones were accelerated to bolster marble exports. Besides relocation of marble units of Wasak Road to the nearest industrial zones to counter air pollution, Salt and gypsum City would be established in Karak to promote gemstones in the province.

Anjad Rasmi



Shameful attempt of promoting anti army narrative on allotment of land in Punjab-I

completed in phases."

The army plays a role every year, improving the foreign exchange reserves by exporting the agriculture products. The project is a cultural challenge, as provision of water to make the land cultivable will be a gigantic task. The Joint venture management agreement was signed on March 8, 2023, with the Punjab government. "Under the agreement, the Punjab government will hand over the state lands of 45,267 acres to the army for corporate agriculture farming."

According to the economic outlook of the country, the army will facilitate the project and do nothing else. So the criticism in the social media is uncalled for."

The army will play a role at the management level to make the project a success story. However, the ownership of the land will continue to stay with the provincial government. Until the project, state get any profit or share in the revenue to be mapped from sources to agriculture farming, corporate to one of the largest newspaper of Pakistan. "Corporate agriculture farming will be initiated on 45,267 acres of the Government of Punjab in Bhakkar, Khushab and Shalwal districts. The project will be

Bhakkar. The Revenue Board of Punjab has been asked to provide by March 17, 981 acres of the rice stock department, Chak 61 MB, tehsil and district Khushab, and by 18 March 887 acres of land of the Agriculture Department, Chak 5 MB, tehsil Qaidabad, district Khushab. The Revenue Board has also been asked to hand over 725 acres of land of the provincial government, Chak 12/11 L, Tehsil Chichawatni, district Sahawal. The departments are allowed to keep portions as per their requirements for research needs. However, research proposals will be shared for better management.

Pakistan's geographical area is 1,967 million acres (MA), of which 792.7 million acres are suitable for agriculture, of which 52.4 million acres of land is a cultivated area (irrigated and unirrigated). The area under irrigation is 48.2 million acres. This shows that 20.9 million acres of land is still needed to be irrigated. Sindh has 9.5 million acres of land, which can be brought under cultivation, Punjab has 5.9 million acres, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) 3.1 million acres and Balochistan has 9.8 million acres which, if irrigated, would produce a green revolution.

To be concluded

Taping natural resources vital for economic growth-II

Hussna Khattak

The annual exports of gemstones of Pakistan remained per year about USD 3.7 billion.

Hayatur Rehman, Director of Mines and Mineral Department KP said that an exploration of general gemstones lease of Rs50 million for Swat has been granted besides another mine lease for Shangha. He said that Rs.7 billion in revenue was collected last year from the mines and mineral sector and this revenue could be increased by Rs20 billion per year if modern technology were used in marble, granite and gemstones excavation.

The government has introduced Mining Cadastre Portal to bring investors one step closer to the mineral resources of the province, he said adding the portal provides an e-government platform for all stakeholders to engage directly with the department and ensure international standards of transparency and improve the ease of doing business.

Jala Khan, senior planning officer of the mines and mineral department said that to date, 9000 online lease applications on the portal were received from interested parties. "We charged Rs60,000 per lease from the contract awarding party who was providing up to 600 acres of land for excavation," he said, adding the project cost about Rs156 million.

"We started the mapping of the potential mines and mineral sites in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with the assistance of the Geological Survey of Pakistan (GSP). The mapping of 65,000 square kilometers areas in KP including Chitral and 600 sq km areas in Orakzai and Kurram districts were completed. On the basis of GSP's survey, the exploration of minerals would be completed," he said, adding the project would be completed with an estimated cost of Rs997 million.

Besides the establishment of a gemstone laboratory and technical training and certification Center in the province, he said the government was strengthening KP's mineral testing laboratories for which modern equipment and machinery would be exported with

an estimated cost of Rs993 million to save the precious marble and gemstones' wealth.

He said a mineral complex would be established at Hayatabad industrial estate Peshawar where one-window facilities and consultancy services would be provided to investors. He said the land would be purchased for the establishment of offices of the department in mineral-rich Chitral, Dir, Manshera, DI Khan and Swabi, adding 850 cases were registered against illegal miners.

About future projects, Jala Khan said that an exploratory study of lithium metal in Chitral besides other metallic minerals would be conducted and studies in this regard were also started.

The projects included exploration of decorative stones in Mohmand, Bajaur and Khyber, exploration of metallic minerals including gold, silver, manganese, iron and chromite, development of rare metallic mines, coal, marbles, platinum, silver and gold reserves in Orakzai and strengthening of Project Management Unit (PMU) were completed besides infrastructure development of clusters of mining, the establishment of mineral check-posts and establishment of Mines Safety and Mechanized Mining Centres.

Javed Khattak, Chief Executive Officer, KP Economic Zones Development and Management Company said that Mohmand Marble City was being constructed on 350 acres of land. A similar marble city is also being constructed in Buner district to facilitate 200 marble and allied industrial units besides creating jobs at local level.

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Concluded

Disclaimer: All reports and recommendations have been prepared for your information only. Summary and Analysis are not recommendations to buy or sell. This information should only be used by investors who are aware of the risk inherent in securities trading. The facts, information, data, indicators and charts presented here have been obtained from sources believed to be reliable, but their accuracy and completeness cannot be guaranteed. Daily The Spokesman and its employees are not responsible for any loss arising from use of these reports and recommendations.

Parliamentary elections start in Kazakhstan

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The process of parliamentary elections has started in Kazakhstan which is a milestone in the country's history after the constitutional reforms on Sunday.

Today's parliamentary elections in the country are held in 20 regions of the country, including the capital Astana, which will mark the beginning of a new democratic era, said a press release received here.

Polling started this morning in the whole country at 8 o'clock, along with which the process of parliamentary started, after which queues of people are expected to form at the polling stations, after which voters are exercising their right to vote in all 20 regions of the country, including the federal capital Astana.

When the polling started this morning, the enthusiasm of the people was visible, after which queues of people were seen at all the polling stations.

On this occasion, 250 international journalists covered various polling stations and asked questions and answers from the public.

On this occasion, 800 international observers who came to Kazakhstan visited different regions of the country and expressed their confidence in the

polling arrangements and described the arrangements of the Election Commission of Kazakhstan as the best.

On this occasion, international media and representatives of the country, including the European Union, visited the polling stations of the federal capital and the city of Akmolra, Kazakhstan, where the arrangements for the elections were seen to be good and smooth polling was seen in all the polling stations and the enthusiasm of the voters remained intact and the election was held.

The election polling staff also seemed diligent. On this occasion, the international observers while talking to the media representatives said that the best polling arrangements have been made by the Election Commission and the people are expressing their full confidence in the elections.

During the polling, young and old people through the polling stations and women also exercised their right to vote in large numbers. It was snowing in and around the capital Astana from this morning, but during the day the weather became pleasant and the sun came out.

Seeing the public enthusiasm on this occasion, experts believe that the voting

turnout will increase.

The Secretary said that Kazakhstan has started a series of constitutional reforms in the last ten months which have been diligently worked on and



Yerman while talking to media here in Astana said that today's March 19th 2023 parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan will give the people a choice to choose the leadership of their choice.

He said that the parliamentary elections held today, March 19, 2023, will provide an opportunity to the people of Kazakhstan to exercise their right to vote while deciding the leadership of their country.

which means strengthening democratic values and making the country a strong and developed federation.

He said that making constitutional reforms and conducting elections within ten months is a milestone in the history of Kazakhstan.

For which our institutions and all partners deserve praise, with whose efforts we are entering a new democratic era today.

He said that the new legislation

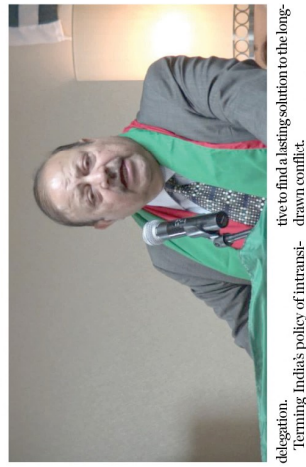
AJK President terms India's intransigence stumbling block in way of peaceful solution of Kashmir dispute

About Majeed Tahir

MIRPUR: Azad Jammu and Kashmir President Barrister Siltan Mahmood Chaudhary said there was a dire need that the influential world governments, especially the US should play their role in the early peaceful resolution of the lingering issue of occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

He expressed these views while addressing the participants of the training course of the National Defense University at the presidency at the State metropolis on Sunday.

Military officers from more than 25 countries, including the United States, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Zimbabwe, Germany, South Africa, Pakistan, Nepal, Myanmar, Indonesia, Kenya, Bangladesh, Bahrain, Oman, Malaysia, Jordan and Iran were in the



draw to find a lasting solution to the long-drawn conflict.

Referring to third-party mediation, the AJK president said that countries like US should play the role of mediation to solve this problem once and for all.

While referring to the list deterio-

rating situation in the Indian Occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the AJK president said that the international community has a moral responsibility to get the dispute resolved in line with the UNSC resolutions, besides guaranteeing the right to self-determination to the people of Kashmir, also provided a comprehensive roadmap for an amicable settlement of the dispute.

"All that Kashmiris want is that the United Nations must fulfil its obligations on Kashmir and make sure that the resolutions are implemented", the AJK president said, adding that India, which took the Kashmir issue to the United Nations, was now refusing to implement the UNSC resolutions that granted the right to self-determination to the people of Kashmir.

He said that Kashmiris had rendered matchless sacrifices to achieve their promised right.

Pak-Kyrgyzstan can play role in regional economic integration: Younis

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Kyrgyzstan Trade House and Coordinator of Federal Tax Ombudsman Meher Kashif Younis Sunday said that Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan could play a key role in regional economic integration. Speaking to a delegation of industrialists and traders today led by Faran Shahid Arain at Kyrgyzstan Trade House (KTH), he highlighted profound fraternal relations and deep-rooted linkage between both countries.

He said, Kyrgyzstan is keen on

enhancing bilateral trade and further strengthening and promoting the existing economic ties through investment.

He said, on the other hand, Pakistan also attached great significance to Kyrgyzstan for better cooperation in multiple sectors including trade, energy, education, science and technology and cultural exchanges between the two Muslim brotherly countries.

He said the geographical location of Pakistan is special for CARs and Kyrgyzstan as these landlocked countries can access many global markets



through Pak ports. He said close interaction between the traders and people-to-people contact besides B2B ties will pay dividends to the country.

He said KTH would help in achieving results-oriented goals of promotion strong economic cooperation among the traders.

He said Central Asian Republics (CARs) and Kyrgyzstan are estimated to be over 90\$ billion market with potential for business and investment, however, Pakistan's trade with these countries is not upto the mark.

Meher Kashif Younis said Pakistan can export many products to these countries including textile, leather, pharmaceuticals, agriculture products, electrical appliances communication, machinery equipment and in

our healthcare system and investment in polio is an investment in the country's overall health system," he said.

The French Development NEOC, the AFD committed to supporting the Pakistan Polio Eradication Initiative (PEI) in immunization activities, disease surveillance, polio campaign monitoring and other technical areas, and filling the funding gap of \$55 million (under the PC-1 for polio eradication, 2022-2026) that the programme needed.

Shahzad Baig emphasized the significance of the polio infrastructure to Pakistan's health-care. "We are very grateful to the French Government for this Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) for Polio Eradication."

"The Pakistan Polio Eradication Programme is a vital part of

building sector. He pointed out that these countries including Kyrgyzstan import a large variety of machinery and equipment from other sources and Pakistan can become a major exporter of high value products and similarly Pakistan can import energy and other products from Kyrgyzstan and other countries.

He said, Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan to Pakistan Ulanbek Totubaev is making hectic endeavours to promote bilateral trade between two countries and facilitating the importers and exporters to explore investment avenues and joint ventures.

He said KTH is a symbol of trade cooperation between private sectors of both countries.

He said, Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan have centuries-long cultural, religious and economic relations well before their creation.

Meher Kashif Younis said both Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan are rich in mineral resources and have high skilled human resources. Pakistani products have been found to be very competitive with affordable prices and can capture a better market share in Kyrgyzstan.

for Polio Eradication. The delegation held a meeting with the Country Representatives of WHO and UNICEF and discussed how the polio infrastructure was on the forefront in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent flood response.

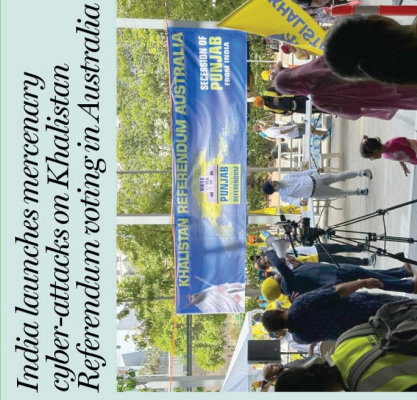
After the NEOC meeting, Special Health Secretary Mirza Nasiruddin Din Bashshour Almaz held a webinar at the Ministry of Health and spoke about the impact on Pakistan's health infrastructure after the 2022 floods, which left 2,000 health facilities damaged.

"Despite the challenges of last year, the Government of Pakistan did not waver in its resolve to eradicate polio. We remain committed to the cause and the

multiple vaccination campaigns we have held since the floods are a testament to that commitment," Meher Kashif Younis said.

Ms. Agnes emphasized on strengthening the primary health care system, integrated disease surveillance and response systems and prioritizing preparedness for emerging and re-emerging diseases and future emergencies, including building the capacity of frontline workers for primary health care and other needs.

Ms. Agnes also mentioned how the polio infrastructure is a strength for the country and an opportunity for Pakistan to use it for other health and emergency responses post eradication. The delegation members appreciated the progress Pakistan



India launches mercenary cyber-attacks on Khalistan Referendum voting in Australia

News Desk

BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA: More than 11,000 Sikhs took part in the second phase of the Khalistan Referendum voting at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre amid a massive wave of Indian cyber-security mercenary attacks on the electronic voting machines.

There was a disruption in the voting thrice as the electronic online voting system came under a massive cyber security attack by suspected Indian hackers. The first attack was launched—and the system shut down—within 30 minutes of the start of the voting. The system was restored within 90 minutes. For the second and third cyber-attacks, the system was restored within 20 minutes each time.

Pro-Khalistan secessionist group Sikhs For Justice (SFJ), which organised the referendum voting, said it suspected that the Indian state-backed hackers were involved in the planned attack. The SFJ said this was not the first time that the Indian state had done so as similar attempts have been during previous voting phases across Europe. It said there was evidence available that the Indian govt was involved in cyber-attacks against the Sikhs.

Large banners in support of Khalistan and Sikhs rights hung outside the Exhibition centre reading "Khalistan Referendum, Punjab, Shimla Capital" and "Khalistan Referendum, Seccession of Punjab from India".

The March 19 "Battlefield - Brisbane" Khalistan Referendum Voting Centre was dedicated to Shaheed Bhai Harmeet Singh Bhaowal and Shaheed Bibi Baljinder Kaur who were bombed to death along with their nine months old son Pavitar Singh on December 05, 1992, by the Indian Police forces in Jalyana.

Madimir Putin pays surprise visit to Mariupol since its fall

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin made a surprise visit to Mariupol, state media reported on Sunday, his first to the city since it was captured after a lengthy siege at the start of Moscow's offensive in Ukraine.

The trip comes after an arrest warrant was issued for Putin by the International Criminal Court (ICC), over Russia's alleged deportation of thousands of Ukrainian children during the conflict.

Russia besieged Mariupol at the start of its offensive last year, destroying the Azovstal steel works, the last holdout of Ukrainian forces in the city. According to the state news agency TASS on Sunday, Putin flew to Mariupol by helicopter on Saturday and took a tour of the city, at times driving a car.

He visited several sites and spoke with residents, and was presented with a report on the reconstruction work of the city.

AFD pledges \$55 mln to support Pakistan's Polio Program

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: French Development Agency (AFD) has become a partner with its commitment to filling the funding gap of the Government of Pakistan in its efforts to end polio. A delegation of the AFD and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation met the Special Health Secretary and Operations Centre for Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) for Polio Eradication. The meetings were part of the delegation's week-long visit



COVID-19 response, which capitalized on the experiences of polio surveillance on the programme."

The French Development Agency delegation was headed by Agnes Soueif, Director of Health and Social Protection, while the Gates Foundation delegation was led by Jay Wegner, Global Head

of Health and spoke about the impact on Pakistan's health infrastructure after the 2022 floods, which left 2,000 health facilities damaged.

"Despite the challenges of last year, the Government of Pakistan did not waver in its resolve to eradicate polio. We remain committed to the cause and the

stan has made in polio eradication and pledged their support to keep Pakistan on track to interrupt the transmission of wild poliovirus this year, as envisioned in the global eradication strategy. Most of Pakistan has remained polio free for nearly two years. Wild poliovirus remains in circulation in seven districts of southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where it continues to pose a threat to children with low immunity and poor nutrition.

The PEI, with support from its partners, has intensified vaccination schedules in these districts and continues to implement innovative strategies, such as innovative of nomadic children and transit vaccinations, to reach every last child with the life-saving vaccine.

Midsize US Banks Ask Government to Protect All Deposits: Report

News Desk

SAN FRANCISCO: A coalition of midsize US banks has asked federal regulators to guarantee all of their customers' deposits for two years, even above the usual \$250,000 limit, to avoid contagion after Silicon Valley Bank's collapse, Bloomberg reported.

The measure would "immediately halt the exodus of deposits from smaller banks, stabilize the banking sector and greatly reduce chances of more bank failures," the Mid-Size Bank Coalition of America (MBCA) argued in a letter to authorities, according to the report.

The recent failures of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) and Signature Bank have caused a crisis of confidence in the industry.

Loss-making state entities borrowed Rs142.3bn in FY23

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Loss-making public sector enterprises (PSEs) have borrowed a record Rs142.3 billion from banks in the ongoing fiscal year so far, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) data shows.

The borrowings increased despite credit to public sector enterprises during the same period a year ago was just Rs2.3 billion and the Shahbaz-led government announced austerity measures earlier this year to cut its spending.

The coalition regime has yet to devise any plan to get rid of the losses of the loss-making PSEs. The debts and liabilities of loss-making public entities reached 1,972 trillion by the end of December 2022, an increase of Rs187bn during a year.

The debts of the PSEs alone increased by Rs194.9bn to Rs1471.3bn during the first half of the current fiscal year.

The central bank's first half-yearly report shows that Pakistan International Airline (PIA) was the biggest borrower with Rs186.6bn until the end of December.

The cost of bank borrowing is too expensive, particularly for the PSEs like PIA, which adds billions of rupees each year as losses to its outstanding debts. No data is available about foreign borrowing made by PIA. The second-biggest outstanding debt was of the Water and Power Development Authority (Wapda), which rose to Rs171.9bn. Pakistan Steel owes Rs41.9bn in debt.

The government has borrowed 1,961 billion for banks for budgetary support from July to March of this fiscal year.

The borrowed amount in SMFY23 is almost three times Rs678.7bn, the amount it borrowed during the same period a year ago, the SBP data reveals.

Sindh millers slash flour prices by Rs10 per kg ahead of Ramadan

City Desk

KARACHI: Flour millers have announced Rs10 cut in per kilogram price of various varieties of flour ahead of Ramadan, passing on some respite to the consumers after the recent price crisis.

The Pakistan Flour Mills Association (Sindh Zone) has reduced the price of 50kg bag of flour No. 2.5 to Rs67,400 (Rs1298 per kg) from Rs68,900 and fine flour and maida to Rs67,500 per 50 kg bag (Rs130 per kg) from Rs70,000.

The announcement came after a successful meeting between the PFMA delegation and the Sindh Food Department officials in which it was assured to growers and millers that the wheat-loaded trucks arriving from the interior head-Karachi would not be seized.

Millers have complained that the food department officials forcibly impounded trucks and unloaded wheat at government godowns in Landhi to achieve wheat procurement targets.

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) has said that the 20 percent benchmark interest rate in Pakistan is highest in the Asia, which is a major hurdle in promoting trade and industrial activities in the country and urged that the SBP should make significant cut in interest rate to revive the businesses and economy. He said that the interest rate in China is 3.65%, Bangladesh 6%, India 6.5% but in Pakistan it is 20%. He wondered how the Pakistani businesses could compete with regional competitors for exports with the highest interest rate. He said this while addressing a dinner reception hosted in honor of Sardar Thahir Mahmood, President, Islamabad Estate Agents Association.

Ahsan Bakhtawari said that the historic hike in interest rate has made the credit cost unaffordable for the private sector due to which business and investment activities are badly suffering. He stressed that the government should address the concerns of the business community on high interest rate and high taxes on the construction sector to ease their problems.

Auto show

ISLAMABAD: Participants looks cars and bikes during auto show at F-9 park, in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

PIAF seeks serious measures as Pakistan exports continue to drop

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Raising grave concern over the continued falling trend of Pakistan exports to the Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) on Saturday said that the country's textile exports dipped for the fifth consecutive month as shipments dropped by almost 30% year-on-year to \$1.20 billion in Feb 2023, indicating that the government has failed to win the confidence of the business community due to continued price depreciation and uncertainty.

PIAF Chairman Faezan ur Rehman Saigol, quoting the latest figures, stated that the overall exports during July-February, 2022-23 totalled \$18,678 billion against \$20.57 billion during the corresponding period of last year, showing a decrease of 9.21 percent while the exports in Feb 2023 were \$2.19 billion compared to \$2.24 billion of Jan 2023 showing a decrease of 2.36 percent and by 232.69 percent respectively.

The PIAF Chairman pointed out that administrative measures to curb imports, leading to raw material shortage for the industry and resultant lower production, were the main reason for the plunge



while the slowdown in global demand amid monetary tightening was another reason, he said.

Faezan Saigol said that Pakistan has remained a potential market for foreign investors, who still have plans to make fresh investment in the country, but they have continued to wait for the return of economic stability. He highlighted uncertainty in the rupee-dollar parity as one of the major concerns of foreign investors. He said a slowdown in the economy had badly impacted business confidence. It is must for the authorities concerned to

Spokesman Report

the activity of Sialkot-based garment exporters and over all PRGMEA participation in economic growth from Lahore and Karachi members.

Syed Naveed Qamar said that he would convene a meeting with the officials of Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to resolve this issue on urgent basis. The Minister of Commerce said that the government was committed to providing a level-playing field and reducing the cost of doing business for export-oriented sectors including textile value chain.

Naveed Qamar stated that the Ministry of Commerce had formulated the Textiles and Apparel Policy 2020-2025, which will address matters including value addition, prod-

imports are banned and said that the best option for Pakistan to improve forex reserves is to boost exports on an urgent basis. He said that for this purpose, it is essential that the government should promote ease of doing business by reducing the cost of doing business.

Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, former President ICCI said that the government's policy of increasing interest rate to control inflation has failed miserably. He said that instead of controlling inflation, high interest rate would

lead to rapid de-industrialization causing more slowdown in GDP growth. He urged that the SBP should reconsider its monetary policy and reduce interest rate to make it affordable for businesses.

Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi former President atad Estate Agents Association, Ch.Masood, Ch. Nadeem ul Din, Tahir Abbasi, Abid Khan, Muhammad Naveed Malik, Sai fur Rehman Khan, Baber Chaudhry and others also spoke at the occasion.

100 MW additional electricity project for Gwadar completes

Bureau Report

with Iran for the supply of 100 megawatts of additional electricity. A project launched to supply an additional 100 MW of electricity from Iran to meet the current and future electricity needs of Gwadar has been completed, the CM Secretariat said.

A handout issued here on Sunday said that the current electricity requirement of Gwadar is 130 megawatt which could not be met with the existing resources. An agreement, in this connection, was signed

with Iran for the supply of 100 megawatts of additional electricity. To implement the project, a 138 km long transmission line was laid from Iran border to Gwadar.

Handout further read that FWO ensured installation of 58 km transmission line from Iran border to Jiwani grid station and 80 km from Jiwani to Gwadar grid station in record time.

This important project will ensure an uninterrupted power supply to the domestic and industrial consumers of Gwadar.

First 100% plant-based meat factory in Middle East opens in Dubai

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The IFFCO Group, one of the UAE's largest food and water security and diversify our food sources. By fostering such robust research and development focused on producing innovative food products, we seek to raise the UAE's ability to move up the global food industry value chain and achieve first place on the Global Food Security Index by 2051. The new factory represents a significant contribution to sustainable in the food supply chain."

Head, CEO of the Dubai Economic Development Corporation at Dubai's Department of Economy and Tourism said: "The opening of this factory, which will pave the way for a dynamic new industry that will boost trade across the region, is a reflection of the UAE's commitment to pioneer the use of innovative technologies to provide sustainable solutions to real world problems. It contributes to Dubai's economic diversification journey in line with the goal of the Dubai Economic Agenda D33 to consolidate the emirate's status as one of the top three global cities.

Saeed Hareb Almhaidi, UAE Minister of Climate Change and Environment, said: "The new 100% plant-based meat factory supports the UAE's Food Security Strategy and our mandate to mitigate the impact of climate change. The opening of this innovative new facility also supports our efforts to protect the country's



the main value-added stakeholder of apparel sector in Pakistan with its presence in Karachi, Lahore and Sialkot. Apparel industry is playing pivotal role as it's a major foreign revenue earner, largest employment generator and the highest tax payer segment of our economy.

Jiaz Khokhar, requested the Ministry of Commerce to implement the Textile & Apparel Policy 2020-25, calling for conducting quarterly review to achieve the selected goals.

He said that currently Pakistan's product basket has only few articles, but due to lack of new fabrics we are unable to produce, as we are dependent on imports. So, we need to form soft import policies for re-export, as the policies available are not friendly for SMEs which are more than 90% of total exporters. At present, available EFS Scheme is not SMEs-friendly, he added.

Commerce Minister agrees to redress garment sector SMEs liquidity crisis

uct diversification, skill development, productivity and ease of doing business. We need to attract investment in the textile and apparel sector to enhance our manufacturing capacities and now it was seeking for the funds to build up the building with the funds of exporting own export development funds (EDF).

The Commerce Minister shown his consent and Khawaja Asif also supported this demand for the cause of the Sialkot industry's growth because currently there is ample of garment business available but due to shortage of skilled workers, they are not being materialized.

Jiaz Khokhar, on this occasion, committed with the ministers, committed with the minis-

He also requested him for the completion of Garment Technical Training Centre in Sialkot for which the PRGMEA has done the procurement of land and now it was seeking for the funds to build up the building with the funds of exporting own export development funds (EDF).

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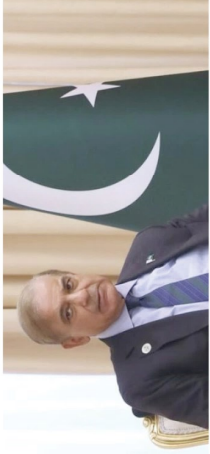
Jiaz Khokhar, on this occasion, committed with the minis-

PM lauds Chairman PCB, CMs, admin, teams for making PSL-8 a huge success

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday appreciated chairman Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), chief ministers of Sindh and Punjab, provincial administrations, police and the contesting teams for making the 8th edition of Pakistan Super League (PSL-8) a huge success.

On his Twitter handle, the prime minister referred to the final of the event and said that it was a nail-biting finish



to the 8th edition of the Pakistan Super League.

Spectators kept it animated with their energy and zeal, he further observed.

On Saturday, Lahore Qalandars defeated their title after defeating Multan Sultans in a packed-to-capacity stadium after the closing team fell short by one big hit on the final delivery.

Lahore Qalandars had set a target of 200 runs in 20 overs which was narrowly missed by Sultans with one run short on the last delivery.

AHC-PCB host Girls' Cricket Cup

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Australian High Commission (AHC) and the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) with the support of Serena Hotels hosted the 7th AHC-PCB Girls' Cricket Cup at Diamond Cricket Ground, Islamabad on Sunday.

Australia's High Commissioner to Pakistan, Neil Hawkins congratulated the girls and the schools on their participation and welcomed the continued support of the PCB and Serena Hotels for the annual AHC-PCB Girls' Cricket Cup.

"The Australian High Commission has been sponsoring girls' cricket in Pakistan since May 2016 to promote gender equality through sport. We began with a single annual tournament in Islamabad but have since expanded to Lahore and Karachi," Hawkins said.

"Our countries share a passion for cricket. It's more than just a game - it's a powerful tool for people-to-people connects, for social change. By supporting events like



the Girls' Cricket Cup, we're promoting equality, opportunity, and hope. Every time these girls hit a boundary or make a catch, they are taking a step towards greater empowerment," Mr. Hawkins added.

The girls attended an eight-day coaching clinic in the lead-up to the competition, conducted by PCB first class cricket coaches, led by head coach Wasim Yousufi.

Manager Game Development Ahsan Jaleel and Head of Pakistan Women's Cricket, Tania Malik.

Hawkins said that the Australian High Commis-

sion was pleased to support the initiative during the Pakistan Super League, in which Australian players, including Australian female cricketer star Jess Flintoff, was participating.

"It's an exciting time for cricket fans in both Australia and Pakistan. A shared love bonds that bring our countries together," he added.

Aziz Bookani, CEO Serena Hotels, said, "This is the seventh year for Serena Hotels to be a part of this tournament. Cricket is a passion in Pakistan for men as well as

women. We at Serena Hotels have been actively supporting and sponsoring all sports, including women's sports. We truly believe in gender empowerment, which can only be realised if opportunities are provided for women to explore their true potential."

The AHC-PCB Girls' Cup Islamabad involved teams from four schools: Mashal Model School, Bari Imam, SOS Children's Village, H-11, Islamabad Model School for Girls - I-6/1 and Islamabad Model School for Girls -9/1 Islamabad.

Thapar Kabaddi

NANKANA SAHIB: Wrestlers demonstrating their skills in Thapar Kabaddi match at Village Faredesabad.

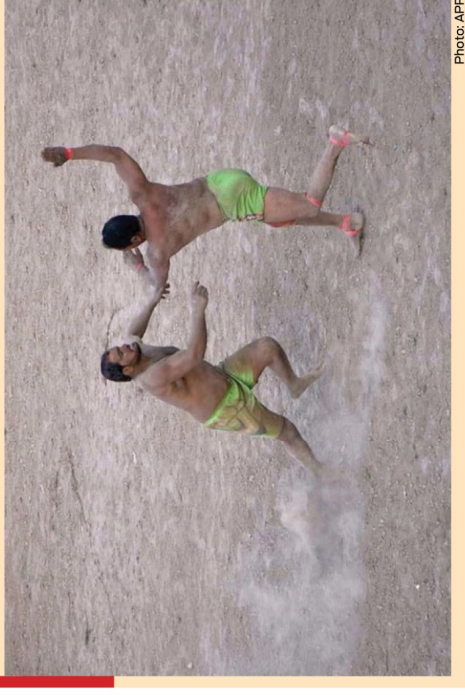


Photo: APP

Bureau Report

LAHORE: BN Polo defeated MASTER Paints/Newsage Cables by 12-6 in the Century Ventures National Open Polo Championship for Quaid-e-Azam Gold Cup 2023 main final played here at the crowded Lahore Polo Club on Sunday.

Hamza Manzoor Khan emerged as hero of the main final as he fired in the fabulous goals while he was ably supported by foreign players Tito Zito Guinazu and Elena Venok, who contributed with two and three goals respectively while Babar Nasseem converted one goal.

For Master Paints/Newsage Cables, Simon Prado hammered a hat-trick while Juan Cruz Gregorio banged in a brace and Rajee Temur Nadeem scored one goal.

BN Polo were off to flying start in the grand finale as they thrashed in three goals - two by Hamza and one by Tito Ruiz - to reduce the deficit to 6-1. In the fifth and decisive chukker, BN Polo struck the only goal through Elena Venok to win the historic event by 12-6.

Team FC in the Subsidiary DNS Polo by 10-6. For FC, Polo, Juan Anzures emerged as top scorer with a contribution of five goals while Abbas Mukhtar struck a hat-trick and Ramiro Zavarata Javer Guerrero thrashed in three goals while Hussain Ali Hyder scored two and Bilal Elye hit one goal.

The chief guest of the final was Chairman Pakistan Polo Association Lt Gen Khalid Zia while Club President Umar Siddiq, Directors of Century Ventures Pvt. Ltd. Ayaz Lakhani, Kamran Afzal, Wasim Mazhar, Nazia Wasim, Secretary of PPA Lt Col

Wastim, Secretary of PPA Lt Col

BN Polo players with the chief guest, sponsors, LPC high-ups and winning trophy

BN Polo players with the chief guest, sponsors, LPC high-ups and winning trophy



Ayaz Mahmood, LPC, executive committee members, players, their families and a large number of spectators were also present on the occasion.

In the end, the chief guest

Wasim Akram hopes to see cricket 'evolve' in Saudi Arabia



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Wasim Akram, former Pakistan captain and a legendary pacer, has said that Saudi Arabia could form its professional cricket team as the Kingdom regularly hosted tournaments, adding he wishes to see the game 'evolve' in the Gulf nation.

Akram made his first-ever trip to the Saudi capital of Riyadh in February this year, where he held a meeting with the chairman of the Saudi Arabia Cricket Federation (SACF), Prince Saud bin Mishal, to discuss the future of the sport in the Kingdom.

In an interview with Arab News, Akram spoke about the emerging cricket talent in Saudi Arabia, saying though he did not get a chance to witness Saudi cricketers, he would like to visit the Kingdom again.

"I would love to go and see the talent, and I am sure, they can form a proper cricket team, where they can actually beat the associate countries," the former pacer said.

"But for that, they have got to have domestic regular leagues, and that too, like I said earlier, on turf pitches. That's very important for Saudi cricket to evolve."

Akram's visit followed the recent strengthening of cricket ties between the two countries. In January, the chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), Najam Sethi, said his country was prepared to share its expertise in the sport with Saudi Arabia where cricket is increasingly growing in popularity.

The same month, Javed Afridi, who owns the Pakistan Super League franchise, Peshawar Zalmi, announced that his team was going to play exhibition matches in the Kingdom, Arab News reported.

"I met with the chairman of the Saudi Arabia Cricket Federation, who is a very keen and avid fan of cricket," Akram said.

"And of course, there are a lot of expats: Pakistanis, Australians, Indians, Bangladeshis, Sri Lankans. They all are there, and they love one sport, that's cricket. The [Kingdom] has about 10 districts, and they do put up regular tournaments, [but] I think what they need is a proper cricket ground and turfs, that's where Saudi cricket will evolve."

Akram added he went to Riyadh for the first time and was amazed to see the city.

"The weather was unbelievable," he said. "It was cold actually. It was about 11 to 12 degrees. And in general, the traffic was all over the place. But apart from that, the country is evolving. It has evolved so much."

Since its establishment in 2020, the SACF has launched a series of major initiatives, including a national cricket championship, a corporate cricket tournament, a league for expatriate workers, and social programs in several cities.

It oversees 15 official associations representing the sport in nine regions and has announced plans to set up additional associations in the remaining regions to ensure that cricket activities are held across the Kingdom.

PSL 2023: Shahid Afridi lauds Lahore Qalandars for stunning win against Multan Sultans

KARACHI: Former Pakistan skipper Shahid Afridi congratulated Lahore Qalandars on their incredible victory against Multan Sultans in the eighth edition of the Pakistan Super League (PSL).

Lahore became the first team to successfully defend their title and take the trophy home Saturday after beating Multan by one run at the city's Gaddafi Stadium.

Chasing a daunting target of 201 runs, the Sultans came very close to achieving the target but lost by one run.

"Taking to Twitter, the cricket great extended felicitations to Lahore on their nerve-wracking win and becoming the PSL champions."

"Congratulations to Lahore Qalandars on becoming PSL champions and the way they played throughout the tournament," wrote Afridi.

Praising the PSL management, the former interim chief selector of the PCB also said: "Congrats to @thePSL20 management on putting an amazing tournament and where the matches were nail biting till the end on most part."

On Saturday, the Lahore Qalandars became the first team to successfully defend the PSL title.

During the run-chase, David Wise provided the breakthrough in the fourth over of the innings after dismissing opener Usman Khan. The right-hander scored 118 runs in 12 balls.

Despite the early loss, Multan ensured that they kept up with the required run-rate as Iftikhar Hussain and Mohammad Rizwan stitched an impressive partnership of 64 runs in 14.2 balls.

However, Kossouwu was cleaned up by Kasim Khan just when the batter threatened to take the game away from the Qalandars.

The South African scored 52 runs in 32 balls.

distributed prizes among the winners, runners-up and top performers and also honoured the organizers and club staff (Faisal Mahmood, Muhammad Imran, Muhammad Irfan, Munawar Iqbal, Ali Ahmed and Muhammad Khalid). Ibrahim Sultan was awarded in -2 to 0 category, Basel Faisal Khokhar in 0-2 category and Agha Musa Ali Khan in 2+ to category.

The most valuable Pakistani player of the season award was handed over to Hamza Mirwaz Khan and the best foreign player of the tournament to Tito Ruiz Guinazu. Simon Prado of Master Paints scored the most goals in the tournament. The best Pakistani member of the tournament was awarded to Rajee Temur Nadeem mare 11-481. The Syd Waheed Ali Shah trophy was awarded to Kamila, a foreign mare owned by Babar Nasseem.

Groundbreaking ceremony

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev, First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva and their daughter Arzu Aliyeva have participated in the groundbreaking ceremony for the residential area in the Sugovushan settlement.



US 'confident' Pakistan's nuclear assets are secure

News Desk

WASHINGTON: The United States (US) on Sunday expressed confidence into Pakistan's security system for its nuclear programme despite the 'political and economic instability', ARY News reported.

The confidence was expressed by General Michael Corella, the commander of the US Central Command (CENTCOM), during a hearing with the Senate Armed Services Committee.

General Michael Corella was asked about security of Pakistan's nuclear programme in view of the country's current economic and political situation.

Responding to the query, the US commander said that he was confident of Pakistan's security system for its nuclear programme. "The country was currently facing political instability, economic crisis and budget issues," he noted.

The US commander also pointed out that the country was also facing challenge of terrorism, saying that terror activities have increased after a ceasefire with Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) ended. He maintained that the overseas military relations with Pakistan, adding that he has 'excellent relations' with Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir.

It is pertinent to mention here that Rafiqul Mariano Grossi termed safety International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General (DG) Rafiq-



el Mariano Grossi visited Pakistan in February to discuss matters related to the Pakistan-IAEA collaboration. This was Grossi's maiden visit to Pakistan after assuming office in 2019.

During his stay, IAEA chief Grossi called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, wherein cooperation in several areas — health, agriculture, industry, nuclear medicine and power generation — was discussed.

Addressing a seminar, Rafiqul Mariano Grossi lauded Pakistan's nuclear power plants safety, terming the safety measures as world-class.

"The IAEA chief said Pakistan's capacity in establishing new nuclear power plants indicates a promising future for nuclear energy and achieving Sustainable Development Goals," Rafiqul Mariano Grossi acknowledged.

Pakistan's technical and engineering capacity for new nuclear power plants including Small Modular Reactors, including Small Modular Reactors, was also highlighted.

PML-Z chief Ijaz-ul-Haq joins PTI



News Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League Zia (PML-Z) chief Ijaz-ul-Haq formally joined Imran Khan-led Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

The son of former military chief Zia-ul-Haq and PML-Z chief Ijaz-ul-Haq met Imran Khan today, after the meeting, Haq announced to formally join Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf.

Earlier in February, former Punjab chief (CM) Chandrababu Prasadu Elahiri and ten other ex-Pakistan Muslim League Qaid (PML-Q) MPAs had joined Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

Gandhara art exhibition to promote Pak-China shared heritage: Fareena Mazhar



Spokesman Report

Pakistan will be carried out, which will contribute more to the friendship between the two countries.

To a question about the exchange of scholars from both countries, she informed that Chinese scholars can visit sites in Pakistan and scholars from Pakistan can come and visit China.

"The Chinese side has also offered us to train our experts and they want us to send our boys and girls for getting this expertise," she added.

Fareena Mazhar noted that maybe they can have some time in the Palace Museum to see all the beautiful things that they have heard and learn more advanced techniques to preserve relics.

The exhibition displays 2038 artifacts, of which 173 come from seven museums in Pakistan and 90 from the Palace Museum. The exhibits fully demonstrate the artistic charm of Gandhara culture and its far-reaching influence in China and East Asia.

As early as 100 BC, China opened up the Silk Road, which promoted the prosperity of Chinese culture and also built a deep friendship between the two ancient civilizations of China and Pakistan. Wang Xudong, director of the Palace Museum, said at the opening ceremony of the exhibition.

Candhara is the ancient name of a region in northwest Pakistan. Archaeological sites for this culture mainly dot across the southern end of Hindukush and Karakoram.

Huge cache of arms, ammunition recovered during Chaman IBO: ISPR

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Security forces recovered the huge cache of arms and ammunition during the Chaman intelligence-based operation (IBO) on Sunday, ARY News quoted ISPR.

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement that an IBO was carried out in general area Rehman Kahal, Chaman to clear a suspected hideout of terrorists linked with recent terrorist incidents including planting of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in Chaman and surrounding areas.

"As a result of continuous technical surveillance and



reconnaissance of the area, a location of the terrorist force identified and security forces were employed to check it. Extensive search and sanitization was carried out in the

stan Army, in step with nation, remains determined to thwart attempts at sabotaging peace, stability and progress of Balochistan."

Yesterday, security forces gunned down three terrorists in a gun battle during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) conducted after tracking their hideout in the general area South of Awaran, Balochistan.

According to the military's media wing, an intelligence based operation was initiated from March 15th onwards to intercept a terrorist group operating in the general area South of Awaran.

The terrorists were linked with firing and improvised

explosive devices incidents along Turbat, Awaran Road and surrounding areas.

The ISPR noted that the forces based on credible information had laid multi-route ambushes along different routes in the area frequented by the terrorists for last three days.

Resultantly, a party of three terrorists was intercepted while moving towards their hideout and on being blocked, opened fire on the security forces.

"During the ensuing heavy exchange of fire, all three terrorists were killed, while a cache of arms and ammunition was recovered," the military's media wing added.

Who wants 'rule of law' at the cost of ruining law?

Arjad Mehmood

ISLAMABAD: During last week, the lives of Lahore and Islamabad citizens in particular, and the rest of Pakistan, in general, remained under siege amid the melodramas of courts' decisions, police actions, and political manoeuvres. The situation developed after issuance of non-bailable arrest warrants of former prime minister and PTI Chairman Imran Ahmed Khan Niazi in Islamabad on Tuesday. Additional District and Sessions Judge, Zafar Iqbal in Islamabad.

In August 2022, Speaker National Assembly Mr. Raja Pervaiz Ashraf sent a reference to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) under articles 62A, 63A, and 223 for seeking the disqualification of former Prime Minister Imran Khan in Toshakhana case. In October 2022, ECP declared Mr. Khan guilty of submitting false statements and incorrect declarations in his nomination papers. In November 2022, the ECP requested the court to initiate proceedings against Imran Khan under criminal law for allegedly concealing facts about the gifts he received from foreign dignitaries during his tenure as prime minister. A trial started in Islamabad court against Mr. Khan for allegedly indulging in corrupt practices and the court sent a notice to him as well. Mr. Khan never appeared before the court to advance the proceedings despite several notices and his arrest warrant.

After issuance of Mr. Khan's arrest warrant, a never-ending turmoil situation developed followed by social and political unrest within the country. Media hype made it



reached Khan's house with a search warrant and launched an operation to remove the encroachment in the area. The visuals received from both venues were not revealing. Despite the use of force, tear gas, water cannon, rubber bullets, throwing of glass balls, stones, petrol bombs, abusive slogans, burning assets, and blood on faces; PTI and Police were chanting the mantra of rule of law.

This 'overwhelming romance' with rule of law in Pakistan from political parties, law enforcement agencies, courts, and media is too pricey for the poor nation. Continuous unrest is becoming part of the mandate in Pakistan, especially when people suffer from hardships of economic turbulence. Where is the country heading? Who is responsible for all these circumstances, who will make all wrongs correct, and when? These are questions nowadays in the mind of every ordinary Pakistani but answers are nonexistent.

There is a clear majority in Pakistan who supports the democratic style of governance however, all advocates of democracy would have never imagined the contemporary version being witnessed in the country. The new trends being set by the courts through their shabby decisions, the police

through their use of power, and the political parties through their lust for power, by all means, are counter-productive and capable enough to drag the country into a swamp of misery.

Media is highly polarized and miserably failed to play a socially responsible role in developing a national consensus on issues with fair reporting and intellectual honesty; rather personalities are in a rating race and allegedly minting money from political sponsors. The influx of disinformation has the capacity to mold audience's minds in a targeted direction and this job becomes easier in a country like Pakistan where literacy rate and political cognition are very marginal. There are worshippers in Pakistan who blindly follow the political leaders putting aside their sense and self-reckoning.

Before putting the responsibility on the military establishment and political parties for the present-day situation in Pakistan, everyone should realize the pivotal role of the judiciary. Without discussing the non-transparent mode of appointment of judges in high court and in Pakistan, there are hundreds of examples on record, when Pakistani courts preferred to compromise at the cost of the supremacy of justice. Conventionally, courts' decisions are discussed in public and no one knows the name of the judges. While the customs in Pakistan are altogether opposite as everyone knows the names of judges and possible decisions before filing a case in their courts. This impulsiveness in the name of the law is actually running the law in Pakistan.

Imran Khan is undoubtedly enjoying massive public and economic collapse.