

Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
رسول اللہ ﷺ نے یہ دوسرا روزہ منع کیا تھا۔ امت پر رحمت و شفقت کے خیال سے، صحابہ نے عرض کی کہ آپ ﷺ تو جو سال کرتے ہیں؟ آپ ﷺ نے فرمایا میں تمہاری طرح نہیں ہوں مجھے میرا رب کھانا اور پلانا تا ہے۔ عثمان نے (پنی روایت میں) اس پر رحمت و شفقت کے خیال سے کے الفاظ ذکر نہیں کیے ہیں۔ (صحیح بخاری: حدیث نمبر 1964)

Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited



Economic, law and order situations don't allow immediate elections: PM Shehbaz

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday declared that the current economic and law and order situations in the country are not worth conducting immediate elections. (Details on Page 8)



'Paying respect to constitution of country compulsory for everyone': Kaira

Advisor to Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira on Sunday said that our party always respect the constitution of the country as rule of law maintain the stability and help to uplift the country matters. Talking to a private news channel, he said taking gifts from Toshakhana was not a crime, but selling gifts received as Head of the State was not morally correct.

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Solidarity

LAHORE: Workers of Imamia Students Organization hold rally to express solidarity with Palestinian people, outside Press Club in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Who leaked the personal data of Pak Army Chief Gen Asim Munir?

Web Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a major development in inquiry identifying those behind a data leak, the National Database Registration Authority (NADRA) finalized high-level investigation involving the current Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir and his family.

A report published in The News said NADRA finalized the inquiry into the matter on the order of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, which involved "illegally-accessed information" that was reportedly used in an "attempt to block the appointment of the current army chief last November".

It said a junior data entry operator at NADRA allegedly accessed the data of a female family member of Gen Asim Munir Shah and collected the family's details and identity card numbers.

The sensitive data was later reportedly used in the Integrat-



ed Border Management System (IBMS) of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to "track the international travel destinations of the family".

It further maintained that a junior executive, deputy director, assistant director, deputy assistant director, assistant superintendents, and deputy assistant director were suspended by Chairman NADRA Tariq Malik.

The report reveals that the inquiry was initially supervised by Brigadier (R) Khalid Latif, who was later found to be a close aide of former DG-ISI, Lt Gen Faiz Hameed, one of the accused contenders. Latif was subsequently replaced by senior officer Ali Javaid due to a conflict of interest.

PM summons meeting of parliamentary parties

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif summoned a meeting of the parliamentary parties on Monday (today).

According to the sources, PM Shehbaz Sharif summoned a meeting of parliamentary parties, which will be held at 1: 00 pm tomorrow in parliament house. The coalition parties will be briefed on the cases being heard by the Supreme Court (SC).

In the meeting, the prime minister will discuss the political situation and the case under hearing in the Supreme Court with the parliamentarians.

Shehbaz Sharif instructed all the Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N) leaders to ensure their attendance at the meeting, adding that the country's future is critical.

Moreover, he said that this meeting would be a decisive stage



for the democratic future.

It is pertinent to mention here that Prime Minister (PM) Sheh-

baz Sharif met with coalition parties on Saturday (yesterday).

According to the sources, PM

Shehbaz Sharif summoned a meeting of coalition parties in

Lahore at 1: 00 pm tomorrow.

The coalition parties were briefed on the cases being heard by the Supreme Court (SC).

The coalition parties expressed their "lack of confidence" in the three-member bench of the Supreme Court (SC) of Pakistan hearing a Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) petition against the delay in elections of the Punjab Assembly, ARY News reported.

The decision was taken during a high-level meeting of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) parties, chaired by Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif to discuss the "overall political situation of the country", according to a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

The coalition parties expressed a lack of confidence in the Supreme Court bench — comprising Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Ijazul Ahsan and Justice Muneeb Akhtar.

Govt committed to provide low cost housing units to masses: Minister

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Housing and Works Maulana Abdul Wasay on Sunday said the government is fully committed to provide low cost housing units and shelter to the poor and vulnerable segments of society, despite the economic crisis.

While inaugurating the newly constructed 2.5km long footpath by Pak-PWD at Bani Gala, he expressed his satisfaction with the completion of the project and highlighted the government's commitment to improving the country's infrastructure.

Federal Secretary Ministry of Housing and Works Iftikhar Ali Shallwani was also present on the occasion.

JI Chief to contact parliamentary parties for 'consensus on polls'

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Jamat-e-Islami (JI) Amir Sirajul Haq has announced to contact parliamentary parties for 'consensus on general elections' amid deepening political crisis in the country.

In a statement, JI chief invited all political stakeholders to start negotiations from the platform of Mansoorah - head office of Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan. Sirajul Haq maintained that the elections in two provinces - Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) - will not solve the prevailing crises. He noted that elections across the country should be held on the same day.

"The differences between Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM)



have created a constitutional crisis in the country", he said, urging the political parties to work for positive developments.

"Institutions are becoming controversial", Sirajul Haq said, adding that political issues will not be resolved in the courts. He further said that martial law, technocrat government or presidential system will not resolve the issues.

Earlier this week, the coalition parties expressed "lack of confidence" in three-member bench of Supreme Court (SC) of Pakistan hearing a Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) petition against the delay in polls of the Punjab Assembly.

The decision was taken during a high-level meeting of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) parties,

chaired by Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif to discuss the "overall political situation of the country".

The coalition parties expressed lack of confidence in the Supreme Court bench — comprising Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Ijazul Ahsan and Justice Muneeb Akhtar.

The meeting was summoned after the Supreme Court rejected the ruling alliance's plea for a full court bench in the polls delay case. The apex court itself witnessed high drama, with two judges recusing themselves from the remaining three-member bench. Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail withdrew from the bench a day after Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan rescued himself from hearing the case.

Maiden Russian crude oil shipment due next month: Musadik Malik

Commerce Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik said that the country will receive its first consignment of crude oil from Russia next month.

The state minister made these remarks while talking to a private news channel.

Malik said that the incumbent government had finalised talks with Russia, adding that the first shipment will reach Pakistan next month through a cargo. He assured that the government would sell cheap oil after receiving this shipment.

"People will get relief from the [petrol] price hike after the arrival of oil from Moscow," Musadik Malik added.

Mariyum deplors PTI's propagandist free flour scheme

City Desk



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb on Saturday fired a broadside at the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for unleashing a targeted social media campaign against the free flour scheme launched by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to provide relief to the masses in the holy

month of Ramzan. "Ironically, those who have looted the people's flour, bread and sugar for four years are trying to make the prime minister's free flour scheme controversial," she said while referring to the previous government's tenure.

The minister, in a news statement, said the PTI leadership which had a "dirty mindset" did not even spare people-centric projects, politicizing them just to achieve their ulterior motives.

Mariyum urged the media to refrain from publishing false and anti-public news which reflected such "filthy mindset".

Senate, NA to meet on Monday

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly and Senate will resume their proceedings on Monday after the two-day break to discuss the current

economic and political situation in the country.

The Senate will resume its session at Parliament House on Monday at 11 am while National Assembly will meet on the same day at 2 pm.

Imran Khan says ready for negotiations on elections

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman Imran Khan has said he is ready to hold talks on elections.

"I have no contacts with anyone, but ready for talks on elections," Imran Khan was quoted as saying in an interview.

The former premier said talks will only be held on elections. "No need for talks if elections are not held," Imran Khan reiterated his resolve that he will not negotiate with the 'corrupts' and 'thieves'.

How will I negotiate with those who are 'corrupts' and 'thieves', Khan said. If elections are not held now, the chances for polls in October are less. The former prime minister also alleged that PTI seats were deliberately decreased in the

2018 general elections.

Lashing out at Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif for making undue statements against the Supreme Court bench hearing the election delay case, the PTI chief claimed it is his hobby to divide Supreme Court for his personal gains.

The whole nation stands firmly united with the Supreme Court, he maintained.

Earlier, former premier and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan appealed to the nation to stand united for the supremacy of the Constitution in the country.

While addressing PTI workers and supporters via video link today, Imran Khan warned that the country would not be able to survive if the nation does not stand for the supremacy of the Constitution.

Protest (2)

KARACHI: Workers of Jamat-e-Islami hold placards and shouting slogans during protest for peace in different cities of Sindh, outside Press Club in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Economic, law and order situations don't allow immediate elections: PM Shehbaz

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday declared that the current economic and law and order situations in the country are not worth conducting immediate elections.

Such a statement emerged after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chaired a meeting in which the current political



and constitutional situation of the country was discussed. Legal experts, Federal Law Minister Nazir Tarar, Malik Ahmed Khan and Mansoor Awan also participated in the meeting. A briefing was given regarding the hearing of the case in the Supreme Court.

The legal experts briefed PM Shehbaz on the legal and constitutional aspects of the

election case in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces. Meanwhile, it is also learnt that Shehbaz Sharif has also called a meeting of the parliamentary party of Pakistan Muslim League (N). There will be a consultation on political issues at the session. Prime Minister Shehbaz will brief the members on the political scenario.

PTI will continue its struggle for Constitution and democracy: Shah Mehmood Qureshi

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Vice Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf and former Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mehmood Qureshi has said that Muslim League-N and PDM parties have started attacking the Constitution. In the last 42 hours, PML-N has not been hiding from anyone on social media except TV and print media. They are being harassed to put pressure on the judges of the Supreme Court. Reference will be filed against PML-N. PPP prides itself on the 73 Constitution. Bhutto's grandsons have started attacking Bhutto's constitution. Today, People's Party and PDM consisting of 13 parties are going to attack this constitution. What will happen if Bhutto's grandson joins the opposition forces, this is a big journey from Bhutto to Zardari. He expressed these views while addressing a press



conference at Insaaf House. PTI Sindh President Ali Zaidi, former Sindh Governor Imran Ismail, Haleem Adil Sheikh, Mubeen Jatoi, Khurram Sher Zaman, Aftab Siddiqui, Arsalan Taj, Firdous Shamim

Naqvi, Sidra Imran, Mehmood Maulvi, Lal Malhi accompanied him on this occasion. Jay Prakash, Shahzad Qureshi, Shah Nawaz Jadoon and other leaders were also present. Shah Mehmood Qureshi further

said that Shahbaz Sharif invited on the floor of the Senate. Shahbaz says sit and talk to save Pakistan from political conflict. But now they say that they will not talk to Imran Khan. We are ready for new

elections, but their speaker is creating obstacles in the way. The test is for political parties.

It was planned to call the Finance Secretary and Defense Secretary on Monday. Our petition aims to hold elections within 90 days. The decision was accepted by the Election Commission when the schedule was given. People's Party and PML-N participated in the nomination. He further said that Nawaz Sharif and Bilawal should have had the courage not to submit the candidates' documents. Now Imran Khan is afraid of him. Every effort has been made to delay the election. Their excuses continue. Is there a need to amend the law for the law that they want to make? We understand that this is not possible without constitutional amendment. Trichotomy means that the Executive has its role and the Judiciary has its role. Pakistan's political parties have to decide.

LHC to hear contempt of court petition against Maryam Nawaz today

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Lahore High Court (LHC) was set to hear a contempt of court petition against Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Chief Organizer Maryam Nawaz today (Monday).

The hearing would be presided over by Justice Baqar Ali Najafi on a two-member bench on April 3.

The petition was filed by lawyer Shahid Rana against the decision of the single bench, which dismissed the contempt plea filed against Maryam Nawaz. The petitioner argues that Maryam Nawaz committed contempt of court during a media conference.

36 percent decline in militant attacks in March 2023: PICSS

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: A significant decline in militant attacks was observed during March 2023; however, resultant casualties remained almost the same as in February 2023. The security forces foiled many attacks during the month by eliminating at least 38 militants while arresting 35 others. According to statistics released by an Islamabad-based think tank Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS), March 2023 witnessed a 36 percent decline in militant attacks compared with February 2023. The think tank reported 37 militant attacks during March, in which 57 people were killed and 72 injured. February had witnessed 58 attacks, in which 59 people were killed and 134 wounded. PICSS also recorded a decline in suicide attacks in March, as

only one such attack was reported, while February witnessed three suicide bombings.

There was a fifty percent decline in the number of militant attacks in Balochistan, but resultant deaths slightly increased. The militants carried out 11 militant attacks in March, in which 28 people were killed and 35 injured. The lone suicide attack in March was also reported from the Bolan area of Balochistan, where ten people were killed. The attack was claimed by DAESH and a new group Tehreek-e-Jihad Pakistan separately.

The most significant improvement in the security situation was observed in the tribal districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Six militant attacks were recorded in March against 16 in February, while the deaths declined from 16 to five. However, the most high-profile attack

also occurred in the former FATA region, where ISI sector commander Brigadier Mustafa Kamal Barki was killed in South Waziristan.

Mainland KP witnessed a rise in militant attacks and resultant deaths during March 2023. The militants carried out 16 attacks in the province in which 21 people died while 30 were injured. In February, the province had witnessed 13 attacks in which six people were killed and eight were wounded.

No militant attack was reported from Punjab, while four attacks were reported from Sindh, where three people were killed. In February, ten people were killed and 18 injured in three reported militant attacks in Sindh. During March, no violent militant activity was reported from Punjab, Islamabad, Azad Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan. Pakistani security forces foiled

many attacks during the month. The most significant action was taken in the border town of Chaman, where on March 6, Pakistani security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation in Chaman and recovered arms and ammunition dumped in a compound. These included 10 suicide vests, 15 anti-tank mines, readymade IEDs, 10 detonators, 64 circuits, 140 anti-personnel landmines, seven mortar shells, 105 fuses, 230 electric detonators, and 18 remotes. In another IBO, the security forces gunned down a facilitator of the February 11 suicide bombing against Mari Petroleum in North Waziristan. The main focus of the security forces was on conducting intelligence-based operations. At least 25 such operations were reported in which 38 suspected militants were killed and 35 others were arrested.

Nawaz Sharif likely to celebrate Eidul Fitr in Saudi Arabia

News Desk

LONDON: Former prime minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif is expected to visit Saudi Arabia in the last Ashra of the Holy month of Ramadan.

Sources said that former premier would spend the last 10 days of Ramadan in Mecca and Medina. Furthermore, the PML-N leader is also expected to celebrate Eidul Fitr in Saudi Arabia.

It is pertinent to mention that

Nawaz Sharif is living in England's capital London due to health reasons.

Last year, it emerged that the doctors advised the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz against Umrah pilgrimage to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA).

The London doctors of Nawaz Sharif advised him not to visit the holy land owing to his health condition, sources said.

The former PM was intending to perform Umrah and pass the last 10 days of Ramadan in Madina, according to sources.

SC to hear PTI's plea on Punjab, KP elections tomorrow

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan would conduct a hearing on Monday, April 3, at the request of Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) regarding the elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

The hearing would be held at 11:30am in front of a three-member special bench consisting of Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Ijaz-ul-Ahsan, and Justice Muneeb Akhtar.

The court had previously called for a reply from the secretary of finance and the secretary of interior.

Justice Aminuddin Khan excused himself from the case on the fourth hearing, and Justice Jamal Mandokhail did the same on the fifth hearing, causing the bench to break up twice after both judges apologized.

At the last hearing, the Supreme Court rejected the request of the Attorney General to form a full court.

The arguments of Tehreek-e-Insaf lawyer Barrister Ali Zafar and election commission lawyer Sajeel Swati were



completed.

On Monday, the Attorney General, the Punjab caretaker government's lawyer, and the Governor of KP's lawyer would present their arguments.

During the previous hearing, Chief Justice Bandial said in his remarks that there would be important good news on Monday.

He also got emotional at one point and said that he, too, has a heart and emotions. He warned that anyone who talks about his judges would have to face him.

In the election case, the People's Party, Muslim League (N), and JUI have requested to be parties in the case and for the formation of a full court.

FO, ministry deny trade ties with Israel

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Amid reports of trade between Pakistan and Israel, the Foreign Office (FO) and Ministry of Trade and Commerce on Sunday denied any dealing with the Jewish state.

The American Jewish Congress (AJC) had claimed that a bilateral trade occurred with the offloading of the first shipment carrying Pakistani food products in Israel.

Issuing a clarification over the purported trade, Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch denied Pakistan having diplomatic or trade relations with Israel.

Spokesperson for the Ministry

of Commerce said that the Jewish Congress press release was wrongly attributed as it does not make any mention of Pakistan's official trade relations with Israel.

Terming the rumours of Pakistan-Israel trade "pure propaganda," the spokesperson said "we neither have nor do we intend to start trade relations with Israel."

Earlier, Commerce and Trade Secretary Sualah Ahmad Faruqi denied sending any export consignment to Israel, and "any claims suggesting otherwise are mere disinformation and politically motivated."

The customs officials at the Karachi Port also seconded the trade secretary's statement.

Water supply to Karachi suspended as pipeline bursts

News Desk

THATTA: The water supply to Karachi has been suspended after the 72-inch diameter pipeline at the Dhabeji pumping station burst on Sunday.

According to Karachi Water & Sewerage Board (KWSB), the 72-inch pipeline at Dhabeji burst following a power breakdown due to which four pumps were shut down and 530 million gallons of water supply to the port city was suspended. In a statement, Chief Engineer KWSB said that the pipeline maintenance work has been started on an emergency basis and the pipeline will be repaired within 24 hours. He said that the water supply to the metropolis is continuing through alternative lines.

The main sources of water for Karachi are Keenjhar Lake and Hub Dam from which water is pumped through three main bulk pumping stations located at Dhabeji, Gharo, and Hub.

Karachi gets 100 million gallons of water daily from the Dam.

The Hub Dam, located 56 km from Karachi with a total capacity of 339 feet, is extended to 24,300 acres with a gross storage capacity of 8,57,000 acre-feet water.

UN chief urges greater inclusion, marking World Autism Awareness Day

News Desk

UNITED NATIONS: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has called for greater support for people with autism, and celebrating their contributions.

"Today and every day, let us fully recognize the active and diverse contributions of persons with autism to our societies," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in his message to mark World Autism Awareness Day on Sunday, April 02.

"Let us work together with persons with autism to build an inclusive and accessible world for all."

Approximately one in 100 children has autism, which constitutes a diverse group of conditions related to development of the brain, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

Although characteristics may be detected in early childhood, autism is often not diagnosed until much later.

The abilities and needs of autistic people vary and can evolve over time, WHO said. While some can live independently, others have severe disabilities and require lifelong care and support.

PTI 'concerned' over Pervaiz Elahi's contact with MQM-P for dialogue

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Karachi chapter has expressed its concern over party president Pervaiz Elahi's move to contact Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) for dialogue.

According to details, PTI Karachi president Aftab Siddiqui chaired a meeting of members of national and provincial assemblies at Insaf House, wherein party's senior vice chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi was also present.

Sources told ARY News that the majority of party members opined against contacting MQM-P, apprising Shah Mehmood Qureshi of their concerns.

The participants said that Pervaiz Elahi should have taken Karachi lead-

ership into confidence before contacting the Khalid Maqbool-led party. "We cannot join hands with MQM-P as it is an ally of PDM [Pakistan Democratic Movement]," sources said, quoting the participants.

A day earlier, Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui claimed that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) President Pervaiz Elahi has contacted his MQM-P for dialogue.

Addressing a ceremony in Karachi, the MQM-P convener said that PTI's Pervaiz Elahi has contacted his party, with former Punjab chief minister saying that doors were always open for dialogue.

"We had left the previous government due to its non-seriousness," Khalid Maqbool said.

PTI Chairman Imran Khan - while talking to a delegation of journalists -

denied any role being played by President Arif Alvi between the establishment and his party.

The former premier stated that PTI leaders Shah Mehmood Qureshi and Pervaiz Elahi have been tasked to re-establish contacts with other political parties.

PTI mulls reference for cancellation of PML-N's membership as party Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Fawad Chaudhry said on Sunday that his party was considering to file a reference for cancellation of PML-N's membership as a party.

Taking to Twitter, Fawad said in sheer violation of Election Act a convicted fugitive was taking decisions of PML-N. He said the party (PML-N) had declared it would not accept Supreme Court's ruling, this

announcement itself was tantamount to an offence under Article 6 of the Constitution.

Earlier, during an interview, PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry had said that if court orders were not implemented, the Supreme Court could send packing another prime minister on Monday.

Fawad said the Supreme Court had already issued its verdict to hold general elections in two provinces. "Now this three-member bench is hearing a case relating to implementation on its order," he said.

He said if apex court's orders were not implemented, another prime minister could go home on Monday. Expressing his annoyance over delay in grant of bails to PTI activists, Fawad said such judges should resign from their positions and go home.

Police arrest two suspects in SP Farhat Abbas murder case

LAHORE: Police has made progress in investigation of the murder of former SP Farhat Abbas Shah, citing department sources, ARY News reported on Sunday.

Police has arrested two suspects in the murder, sources said. His brother's widow has been involved in the murder crime, police sources claimed. "The CIA team has arrested two accused in murder of Farhat Abbas Shah," SSP CIA said. "Police team will interrogate the arrested suspects," SSP said.

"His late brother's wife, Hira aka Sana, had made a thorough plan for murder of Farhat Abbas in collusion with her security guard," CIA officer said. "Widow of his late brother planned the crime over a property dispute," SSP said.

Funeral prayers of Farhat Abbas were offered in Patoki, attended by hundreds of people including police department officers and local notables. He was laid to rest at a graveyard in his native area Baharwal Kalan. Retired police officer was killed in a firing incident at Millat Park in Lahore on Saturday.

Motorbike riding gunmen targeted former police officer near his home, police said.

World Autism Day was celebrated in Islamia University



News Desk

BAHAWALPUR: World Autism Day was celebrated in the Department of Applied Psychology, Islamia University, Bahawalpur, and students were made aware of Autism Spectrum Disorder. In this event, Noreen Mukhtar Clinical Psychologist from Special Education College spoke about her real life experiences with autistic children and their rehabilitation projects. Dr. Ahmed Bilal, Assistant Professor, informed the participants about these remarkable people. Those who are autistic and achieve success in their lives. Prof. Dr. Muhammad Saleem, Chairman, Applied Psychology emphasized the need for diagnosis and timely identification of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Pakistan.

In the end, Prof. Dr. Rubina Bhatti, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences praised the efforts of faculty and students of the department of Applied Psychology for organizing awareness session on autism spectrum disorder and said that the Islamia University of Bahawalpur under the leadership of Engr Prof Dr Athar Mahboob is showing progress in every field including the social sciences and department of Applied Psychology is highlighting various issues relevant to psychological health of the society.

DC Lower SW visited various flour mills

Adam Khan Wazir



WANA: According to details, Deputy Commissioner Lower South Waziristan Muhammad Nasir Khan visited various flour mills in Wana yesterday along with DPO South Waziristan Shabir Hussain Marwat.

Where the government reviewed the distribution of free flour in Ramzan, DC and DPO listened to the problems of the people and issued orders to solve them immediately.

DC and DPO while giving instructions said that transparent and fair distribution of flour should be ensured in any case, no one's rights should be violated, complaints of any kind will not be tolerated in this regard, the police should treat the public with courtesy, respect the elderly and help them in every possible way, there should be no malpractice during the distribution of flour, the DC and DPO said inshallah we will ensure that the bread reaches all the deserving people in a peaceful and fair manner.

While talking to the people, DC and DPO listened to their problems and suggestions and immediately issued orders to solve the problems and facilitate the distribution of flour.

Taking rest

KARACHI: Laborers are taking rest on green belt under the shadow of tress at Sadr area during the holy month of Ramazan in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Punjab police operations cleanup 62000 criminals arrested in Punjab

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Punjab Police released the report of police operations in Punjab and arrests Advertising criminals. During the Cleanup Crime Operations in last 70 days, 21332 Thousands advertising including 3300 advertisers involved in murder, robbery, kidnapping for ransom and other serious crimes were arrested. IG Punjab Police Dr Usman Anwar Said Punjab Police teams arrested 965 dacoit gangs across the province and recovered more than Rs 72 crore worth of stolen property. Different crimes from criminals

118 vehicles and 1682 motorcycles stolen and looted



ed from criminals in various incidents were recovered. 7197 cases against drugs were registered across the province and 7344 accused were arrested while more than 3200 kg of drugs were recovered. CTD teams arrested 69 terrorists and miscreants in 301 intelligence-based operations. 4 dangerous terrorists met

their logical end in the firing incidents at CTD Bandits and anti-social elements fired at the police 139 times in response to which 61 bandits were killed.

In the above incidents, 80 dangerous robbers, bandits and anti-social elements were brought to the hospital with injuries. One policeman was martyred and 21 policemen were injured in the mobbing incidents by the anti-social elements of the police. IG Punjab Usman Anwar Said The police teams arrested more than 62 thousand accused in various crimes across the province Punjab Police registered FIRs of 26,989 incidents, including 121 FIRs of robbery, 10,289 FIRs of robbery and

16,579 FIRs of motor vehicle theft. 2.2 billion rupees were spent under various categories for the priority measures for the welfare of the force.

IG Punjab Usman Anwar sanction 662 million for medical expenses, 286 million as wedding gift and 253 million for educational scholarships were given to police employees. 30 million was given from the police welfare fund for the equipment and burial of the employees, 133 million for vehicle maintenance allowance and 85 million for the last basic pay. IG Punjab ordered to speed up the crackdown against anti-social elements to eradicate crimes, Spokesman Punjab Police said.

A person who came to get free flour died



Bureau Report

FAISALABAD: A person who came to get free flour on Millat road Center died. According to the sources, 50-year-old Asghar Ali lost his life while waiting for free flour.

The deceased person had a heart attack due to which he could not survive. The rescue team handed over the body to the heirs.

Mount Sulaiman landslide affect large part of Balochistan-KP highways

ISLAMABAD: Heavy landslides have occurred in the Mount Sulaiman range, due to recent rains in the border hilly areas of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Spokesperson of National Highway Authority (NHA) on Sunday told, a large part of the Balochistan-Khyber Pakhtunkhwa highway has been affected by the landslide at Dhana Sar on the National Highway (N-50) after which traffic has been suspended.

On the instructions of Federal Minister for Communication Maulana Asad Mehmood, the field staff and machinery of NHA have been mobilized to remove the landslide debris from the road.

Meanwhile, Secretary Communications and Chairman NHA Captain (R) Muhammad Khurram Agha were in constant contact with NHA field



officers in Balochistan-Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Member Balochistan Shahid Ehsanullah was himself supervising the restoration work and has expressed

hope for complete opening of traffic soon.

At present, the NHA staff and machinery were active to remove landslide debris from the road while

more heavy machinery has been called from Zhob and Quetta.

However, the NHA has opened road for light traffic while the affected road would be completely restored for all types of traffic within 24 to 30 hrs.

Agha Inayatullah, General Manager Balochistan-North, has requested the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner to stop the traffic in Zhob and Saifullah,

However, passengers coming from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa can use the alternative route (N-70) Loralai-DG Khan Highway.

The NHA has appealed the passengers heading in the affected direction to be aware of the weather conditions before traveling.

The NHA is always ready to deal with all kinds of emergencies and is committed to provide the best road services to the nation.

21-hour load shedding in Lower Waziristan has become a headache for people



Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: 21 hours of illegal load-shedding of electricity in the tribal district of Lower South Waziristan, Wana, has disrupted the lives of the residents of the area.

In this regard, local political leaders, and farmers demanded the federal government and the TESCO chief to immediately end load shedding for the sake of this blessed month of Ramazan.

In this regard, Awami National Party senior leader Ayaz Wazir, PPP District Secretary General Imran Mukhlis and Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Asad Ullah Wazir said while talking to the media.

That unfortunately the TESCO authorities have extended the period of brutal loadshedding for 21 hours

at our district headquarter Wana which is not only regrettable to us but shameful,

due to the ongoing illegal load shedding in Wana, the wheel of life has come to a standstill, business has been badly affected.

Political leaders further said that clean water is not available for drinking in people's homes.

Water is not available for ablution in mosques, which is a very sad place and a place of shame for the rulers.

On the other hand, TESCO officials say that we are a subordinate organization of the federal government and the order has been issued from there

It becomes our legal and constitutional obligation to follow it. Working on an electricity schedule under this.



Islamabad
15° - 23° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	4:30 am
Zohr	12:12 pm
Asr	4:41 pm
Maghrib	6:29 pm
Isha	7:53 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

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Rawalpindi	9270601-20

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MH	561116
MH	561116
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DHQ	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7
PIMS	9261170-79
Polyclinic	9218300-09
Shifa International	4603666

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CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864

Rain-wind thunderstorm expected in West, North parts of country

ABC

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Meteorological Department on Sunday predicted another westerly wave to enter western parts of the country from Sunday night likely to intensify in upper parts on Monday.

Under the influence of this weather system rain-wind/thunderstorm with isolated heavy falls and hailstorm is expected in Kashmir (Neelum valley, Muzaffarabad, Poonch, Hattian, Bagh, Haveli, Sudhanoti, Kotli, Bhimber, Mirpur), Gilgit-Baltistan (Diamir, Astore, Ghizer, Skardu, Hunza, Gilgit, Ghanche, Shigar), Peshawar, Charsadda, Nowshera, Swabi, Mardan, Bajaur, Kurram, Waziristan, Kohat, Karak, Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan, Chitral, Dir, Swat, Mansehra, Buner, Kohistan, Shangla, Haripur, Abbottabad, Islamabad, Murree, Galliat, Rawalpindi, Attock, Chakwal, Jhelum, Khushab, Mianwali, Sargodha, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Hafizabad, Mandi Bahaud-din, Sialkot, Narowal, Lahore, Faisalabad, Toba Tek Singh, Jhang, Kasur, Sheikhupura and Nankana Sahib from 02nd April (evening/night) to 04th April.

Similarly, isolated rain-wind/thunderstorm is expected in northeast Balochistan (Quetta, Zhob, Barkhan, Qila Saifulah, Qillah Abdullah) and south Punjab (Multan, D.G. Khan, Bahawalnagar and Sahiwal) from Sunday night to Monday night.

AJK govt determined to deliver quality medicare at people's doorstep: AJK PM

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MIRPUR: Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Tanveer Ilyas has said that his government was determined to ensure the delivery of quality medical facilities to the masses close to their doorstep across the AJK.

He was talking to a delegation of Mirpur Healthcare Community led by Dental Surgeon Dr. Adnan Marghoub Khan and Dr. Ijaz Raja who called on him here late Saturday.

They briefed the premier about the issues relating to the hospital and medical college. They also presented a charter of demands on behalf of the community.

The AJK Prime minister agreed upon all the demands and assured the visiting delegates that all their legitimate demands would be fulfilled and whatever problems faced by the community would be addressed on a priority basis. He also assured the delegation that during his next visit to the city, he would pay a detailed visit to Benzaifur Bhutto Shaheed Medical College.

The delegation included Dr. Ashfaq Ahmad Raja, Dr. Tahir Mehmood, Dr. Gohar Latif, Dr. Ahmed Naeem Kayani, Dr. Shoaib Khan, Dr. Majid Altaf, Sajid Ahmad Chaudhry and others, whereas Medical Superintendent Divisional Head-



quarters Teaching Hospital Mirpur Dr. Amir Aziz and Principal Benazir Bhutto Shaheed Medical College Professor Dr. Faisal Bashir was also present on the occasion.

Meanwhile, Central Chairman Zakat Council Chaudhry Muhammad Siddique also called on Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan. Speaking on the occasion, the PM directed the concerned authorities to ensure fair distribution of Zakat among the poor and needy in Azad Kashmir. The PM said that as per his announcement, an amount of 6000 and

12000 rupees should be paid as zakat and dowry funds to the needy.

The Chairman of Central Zakat Council, Chaudhry Muhammad Siddique, briefed the Prime Minister about the issues related to the Zakat Council.

The Prime Minister assured him that all the problems faced by the Council would be addressed on a priority basis.

On this occasion, the government ministers including Chaudhry Yasir Sultan, Chaudhry Ali Shan Soni, Chaudhry Maqbool Gujjar were also present.

Talal slams Imran Khan as watch thief, foreign agent



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Central leader of the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Talal Chaudhry on Sunday made scathing remarks against the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan, calling him a watch thief and foreign agent who will be disqualified.

Chaudhry's statement took aim at Khan's alleged failure to disclose his daughter's adoption status in his nomination papers, which he characterized as a grave insult to humanity.

Chaudhry further stated that Khan was making decisions as a "lying foreign agent" on behalf of a "terrorist and criminal" political party.

He called for the cancellation of party [PTI] registrations specifically for "terrorist foreign-funded parties."

In addition, he questioned the legality of those who committed violent acts, such as throwing petrol bombs at police, assaulting the court, threatening the judge, and breaking the court's gate, demanding to know under which legal article such actions should be categorized.

All Pakistan Private Schools and Colleges Association hails appointment of new PEIRA chairperson

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: All Pakistan Private Schools and Colleges Association, the leading organization of private educational institutions of the federal capital, welcomed the appointment of Dr. Syeda Zia Batul as the Chairperson of PEIRA and said that this appointment will prove to be an important development in the development and improvement of the private education sector.

Being well aware of the problems faced by private educational institutions, it is expected that there will be a positive change in federal educational institutions. This will help in the better mental cultivation of the new generation while there will be a pleasant change in the economic and social condition of the people related to the private sector of education.

The federal government has appointed renowned educationist Dr. Zia Batul as the chairperson of the Private Educational Institutions Regulatory Authority (PEIRA), who has performed the duties of this post well before. Regarding the appointment of Dr. Zia Batul, the central president of All Pakistan Private Schools and Colleges Association, an organization established in the federal capital, Malik Abrar Hussain said that Ms. Zia Batul's previous tenure has been a period of extreme development and improvement. In which the doors of the institution were opened for the private education sector, their words were listened to and genuine efforts to solve the problems have come forward. He expects that long-standing problems of the private sector will be resolved by maintaining this continuity.



Ahmed Ali Akbar set to return to TV with 'Idiot'



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Ahmed Ali Akbar, last seen on TV for how popular role in Parizaad, will now be seen playing the lead role in Idiot which will be premiered on Green Entertainment. Alongside Mansha Pasha, the Laal Kabootar duo is coming back together on the silver screen. Green Entertainment just released two OST's of this upcoming show.

Produced by Entanna Productions in association with Multiverse Entertainment, the upcoming drama is directed by Anjum Shahzad and written by Kifayat Rodani.

Green Entertainment officially released the the first official look and the trailer of Idiot which playfully shows Ahmed Ali Akbar in lead role, as an individual who has always grown "Idiot" is a story that is centred around an individual who is misfit, rebel, a thinker and someone who challenges the norms and questions the system from childhood, while fighting for a more just world.

"Haklata Kyun Hoon" is one of the first OSTs released this weekend which is sung and composed by Sahir Ali Bagga and the second OST, Farq Nai Painda is composed and sung by Majid Akhter Maan, while lyrics for both are written by Imran Raza. While the one song is peppy and has a unique music, the latter is more about giving hope in this society.

Secretary LG Punjab Incharge visits flour distribution points

Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: Secretary Local Government Punjab/Incharge Flour Distribution Centers Dr. Irshad Ahmed visited Faisalabad and went to various free flour points along with the Deputy Commissioner Ali Anan Qamar. He reviewed the process of getting flour. Secretary Local Government checked the separate counters for men and women and expressed his satisfaction on the process of scanning ID cards at the counters and the steps taken to create awareness among the public. He saw the printed slips provided to the eligible persons to get flour after scanning the cards in Co-operative College Sargodha Road and said that similar printed slips should be given at other points so that there is no possibility of fraud. He appreciated the orderly process of supply of flour at the centers. The secretary said that the district administration is ensuring the supply of flour in an orderly manner. He appreciated the proper seating arrangements for the citizens. He expressed satisfaction by inquiring about the arrangements and getting flour from the people present on the occasion. Deputy Commissioner Ali Anan Qamar informed about the arrangements at the centers.

Worships

ISLAMABAD: Parish Priest Fr Sylvester Joseph leads the Palm Sunday worships at Lady Fatima Church at Sector F-8 as it is a Christian moveable feast that falls on the Sunday before Easter.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Minimum Sadqa-e-Fitr fixed at Rs 320 per head

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Former Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee Chairman Mufti Muneeb ur Rehman has declared the minimum amount for Sadqa-e-Fitr at Rs 320 per person, which is an obligatory charitable donation that Muslims are required to pay during the holy month of Ramadan.

The rate is based on the prices of staple food such as flour, dates, raisins, cheese or barley, as per the Islamic Shariah.

The importance of Sadqa-e-Fitr lies in helping the poor and needy people in society, especially during the festive occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr. This act helps



the poor and needy during the upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr and is a way for Muslims to give back to their community and earn blessings from Allah Almighty.

According to Mufti Muneeb, the market price of 2.25 kilograms of flour, the amount for Fitrana is calculated as Rs 320 per head. The faithful who want to pay Fitrana equal to the price of barley, and dates should pay

minimum Rs 480 and Rs 2,800 per head respectively.

Similarly, the faithful wanted to pay Fitrana at the rate of raisin should pay Rs 6,400 per head for first class dates and Rs 4,800 per person for second class raisin.

A Muslim, who possesses food in excess of his needs, must pay Sadqa-e-Fitr before the Eid prayers. If the person is a breadwinner, he should also pay Sadqa-e-Fitr for his dependents, such as wife, children, dependent relatives or servants.

Mufti Muneeb also advised the people to pay the amount to the poor before Eid-ul-Fitr so that they could also celebrate the festival. The most deserving people for Sadqa-e-Fitr are close

relatives followed by neighbours and the poor.

Mufti Mumibur Rehman said real spirit of Fitr and Fidyah is two-time meal of a destitute person, so it is better to pay the meal cost of a hotel. However, those who are wealthier, they should try to pay more to extend assistance to the poor in this time of skyrocketing inflation.

If anyone had been unable to keep fast for the whole month of Ramadan, he or she should pay the whole month Friday as compensation worth Rs 9,600 in proportionate to flour price, Rs 14,400 for barley; Rs 84,000 for date, Rs 192,000 for raisin first class and Rs 144,000 for second class raisin.

Belgium values Pakistan's efforts for peace: Envoy

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium to Pakistan Charles Joseph M Delogne on Sunday said that Pakistan was an important country in the region and Belgium valued its efforts for bringing peace and stability.

The envoy made the remarks during a seminar titled "Pak-Belgium Relations: Past, Present and Future" which was organized by Policy Institute for Peace and Development (PIPD) and Bahria University, Islamabad.

"Pakistan and Belgium enjoy friendly and cooperative relations based upon common interests and shared values of democracy, pluralism and trust," he added.

The ambassador said that the bilateral diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Belgium were established soon



after Pakistan's independence in 1948.

He further said that both countries had strong trade and economic relations in the areas of Textile, Pharmaceutical products, machinery, medical equipment, iron, steel and chemicals.

Addressing the students, he highlighted the two types of academic scholarships; ARES and VLIR-IOUS that can

be acquired by HEC and Ministry of Education directly with the counterparts in Brussels.

President Policy Institute of Peace & Development Ms. Wadana Khattak stressed upon the crucial role of cultural diplomacy and people to people contact in bringing the nations closer.

"Culture, art, music and sports, two

countries can build a stronger and lasting relationship with each other," he added.

She expressed the dire need for cross-cultural collaboration between Pakistan and Belgium both at the government and public level to further enhance the ties and foster the already strong diplomatic relations.

Dean Department of Social Sciences Dr. Adam Saud presented a scholarly expose at the historical and current perspective of relations between Belgium and Pakistan while exploring the new domains of cooperation and strengthening of bilateral ties.

He said that there exist a number of areas in which Belgium and Pakistan can jointly work to benefit mutually from such as information technology, science, medical and industrial research and agricultural innovation.

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Could a common cleaning chemical cause the disease?

More than 8.5 million people worldwide have Parkinson's disease — a condition affecting the nervous system that causes movement issues, such as tremors, stiffened limbs, and cognitive problems.

Doctors still do not understand why Parkinson's occurs. However, the disease has been linked to low levels of dopamine and norepinephrine in the body. Additionally, people with certain risk factors, such as age and past traumatic brain injury, are more likely to develop the condition.

Additionally, researchers believe exposure to certain toxins, such as pesticides and air pollution.

Now researchers from the University of Rochester are adding additional evidence by finding a link between Parkinson's disease and a commonly-used chemical called trichloroethylene (TCE).

The study appears in the Journal of Parkinson's Disease. TCE is a colorless liquid chemical that does not occur in nature. It is known to have a chloroform-like odor.

This chemical may be found in a variety of products and industries, including:

- commercial dry cleaning
- metal degreasing
- cleaning wipes
- stain removers for clothing and carpeting
- lubricants
- spray adhesives

People can become exposed to TCE by using a product containing TCE or working in a factory where the chemical is present.

Additionally, TCE can leach into the water, air, and soil around where it is used or disposed of, contaminating what we breathe, eat, and drink.

Symptoms of exposure to high amounts of TCE include:

- dizziness
- headaches
- confusion
- nausea
- facial numbness

Previous studies link prolonged exposure to TCE to increased risk for kidney cancer, liver cancer, and non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

TCE and Parkinson's disease

Dr. Ray Dorsey, a professor of neurology at the University of Rochester and lead author of this study, said he and his team decided to research a link between TCE and Parkinson's disease while preparing to write his book, Ending Parkinson's Disease.

"TCE is a known carcinogen — it causes cancer. It is also linked to miscarriages, neural tube defects (including babies born without brains), congenital heart disease, and multiple other medical disorders. It also has been around for 100 years and its toxicity has been known for at least 90."

Evidence through case studies

For this study, Dr. Dorsey and his team conducted a literature review. They compiled seven case studies of individuals who developed Parkinson's disease after exposure to the chemical from either the workplace or the environment.

The case studies include NBA player Brian Grant who received a Parkinson's diagnosis at the age of 36. According to researchers, he was likely exposed to TCE as a child when his father was stationed at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina.

Answers to Modi-I

One of my close relative who is living abroad shared a video with me few days ago. It was speech of Indian Prime Minister Modi which he delivered to some public gathering. Modi put many baseless allegations against Pakistan and our army during the speech. My relative was also unhappy on his false statements. The poisonous words of his speech were full of lies so I decided to answer Modi in logical way. After looking into depth, I finally got the origin that the speech was delivered by Modi at BJP Council Meet in Kozhikode, Kerala in 2016. Though it's quite old speech but his mentality and approach is still same so the answers are still not too late to be given.

Before going to his speech it is important to have an overview of our past experiences with India and ideology of Hindutva.

Pakistan came into existence on the bases of a separate state for Muslims which had different faith, culture and traditions from Hindus. Muslims of Indian- subcontinent were unable to live work and move freely. Their lives and integrity were not safe. They were not treated equally and were unable to follow their religion independently. History has seen many incidents where Muslims faced discrimination and humiliated actions from the majority of Hindus. Muslim women in Bihar committed suicide by jumping into wells. In November 1946, Muslim women were subjected to stripping, nude processions and rape by Hindu mobs in the town of Garhmuktesh-

war. In Amritsar, Hindus and Sikhs paraded naked Muslim women, who were then publicly raped before being set fire to in the street. These are just few examples whereas sheets of history are full with such shameful incidents. The partition of the Indian subcontinent witnessed hundreds of thousands of Muslims killed during riots, ethnic cleansings, and cross-border migrations. Hindus looted the properties of Muslims, brutally killed them and raped the women.

After the independence of Pakistan, India never accepted us openheartedly. Division of assets and resources was not fair and Pakistan was compelled to move forward with limited and restricted resources.

India has always been involved in terrorism and spying activities in Pakistan. India's dirty and shameful role in separation of East Pakistan is not hiding to the world. India has been continuously involved in Human Rights violations in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. India is not giving the right of self determination to Kashmiris despite of UN resolutions. India has imposed three wars on Pakistan on this issue. The situation after abrogation of article 370 by the Modi regime has worsened. On August 5, 2019, the Modi-led BJP government abrogated the special status of Jammu and Kashmir by repealing articles 370 and 35-A. A lockdown was imposed in the occupied Kashmir and Indian forces perpetrated unspeakable crimes against the

Kashmiri people, with complete impunity. India has started the process of converting a majority into a minority in held-Kashmir. They have drawn inspiration from Israel's strategy of killing humanity. India is trying best to suppress the voice of Kashmiris by brutal actions but has totally failed in silencing them. India is continuously violating the rules of basic rights for Kashmiris. The media does not have free access and is unable to show the real picture of the disputed area.

India, the so-called largest democracy, is being governed by Hindu extremists who are in pursuit of dominating the region, thereby posing a serious threat to religious minorities in India, particularly the Indian Muslim minority and the people of Kashmir. The pursuit of Hindutva ideology is pushing the 200 million-strong Muslim minority in India towards trouble. Since the Modi-led BJP government came to power, there has been an intensification of communal and religious tensions in India. In recent years, there have been frequent human rights violations in India. On October 18, 2022, the Indian government approved the release of 11 men sentenced to life in prison for gang-raping Muslim women and murdering members of their families during the 2002 Gujarat riots, where nearly 2,000 people, mostly Muslims, were killed in religious violence when Modi was the

chief minister of the state. On October 19, 2022, UN chief Antonio Guterres, during his visit to India, expressed deep concerns regarding the continuous human rights violations in India.

Readers, India is firmly following the ideology of Hindutva. Hindutva is the predominant form of Hindu nationalism in India. The term was formulated as a political ideology by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar in 1923. It is used by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and other organizations, collectively called the Sangh Parivar. The Hindutva movement has been described as a variant of right-wing extremism, and as "almost fascist in the classical sense", adhering to a concept of homogenized majority and cultural hegemony. Modi is follower of the Hindutva ideology which is based on the supremacy of India and Hindus. They are going ahead with same mentality of bypassing the human right issues regarding minorities. They want to keep their hold in the region and on the neighboring countries under Ideology of Hindutva.

Now come to Modi's speech. He threatens Pakistan and our Army in his poisonous words. The clear answer from the whole nation is that we are united and strong enough to face any aggression. Our Army is world's seventh largest army and is fully equipped to tackle any evil attempt. India has seen the clear and solid answer from our nation and Army in 1965. So forget about any misadventure.

To be concluded



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi



Amjad Rasmi

Saraiki Literature: A peep into past, present

Jehangir Khan Tareen

Literature is the common heritage of human beings. It is just like a mirror through which history, culture, tradition, customs, sorrows and joys of people and thoughts of the era are reflected.

Known as a sweet language, the history of Saraiki dates back to approximately 45,000 years in the Indus Civilization. This region has been conquered a number of times by people from the West including the Aryans and the Greeks. Persian influenced the region for many centuries with the Saraikis as well as Persian art, poetry and architecture still form a part of their culture.

When the Muslims conquered the region, Islam spread and it became an important Islamic centre. Saraiki is one of the three dialects spoken in Sindh. Among the different ethnic groups in Pakistan, 8.38 percent are Saraikis.

The region is mainly home to sufism and has a number of shrines of saints including Hazrat Shah Rukn-i- Alam, Hazrat Bahauddin Zakariya, Hazrat Shah Shams, Hazrat Bibi Pak Mai etc. Other sufi saints such as Khawaja Ghulam Farid and Muhammad Suleman Taunsvi and especially the tomb of Sakhi Sarwar are very popular.

The Saraiki poetry has four phases and its story revolves around two poets including Luft Ali Khan and Khawaja Ghulam Farid. The magnificent poetry of Khawaja Ghulam Farid celebrates scenery of local desert with an abundance of purely parochial vocabulary and continues to be a major inspiration of modern Saraiki Literature. Dawaan-i- Farid is his famous collection.

Iqbal Sakri, a celebrated poet who has nine books to his credit, informed that he had started composing poetry in 1958 and had written Saraiki ghazal in 1961-62 adding that poems and dohra were already in vogue.

"I was bitterly opposed to writing ghazal in the beginning by the critics who believed that it had no place in Saraiki literature but later they were convinced that literature took time in its recognition," he disclosed.

He maintained that with the passage of time, culture changes with advancement of people internationally and regretted that some organizations working here for Saraiki language and culture even do not know what to do.

Mr Sokri reminisced that late journalist, Khan Rizwani, Mehar Abdul Haq, Umer Kamal Khan, Bashir Zami, Brig (rtd) Nazir Ali Shah, Nizamuddin Leghari worked a lot for Saraiki literature adding Alsam Rasoolpuri also did a lot of work on research but now no one was conducting research on it.

"Saraiki Literature does not have resistance. It is full of wailing and crying besides depiction of deprivations in it. Its singers not only cry but also make the audience and listeners cry with their singing," the acclaimed poet lamented.

Though ghazal is a difficult kind of literature, but a single ghazal offers six or seven subjects in it, he said and added that of his nine books seven are on ghazal and two consist of poems, kafi and dohra.

"Zameen Jagdi Hai, Hanjoun de Haar, Dohkh di Jang, Kaley Ru, Chiti Barf, Warqa, Warqa Zakhmi, Lee ru leer Pachawan, Uthwan Asmaan and Bey Unt" are his contributions to Saraiki Literature," he informed.

In performing art, Saraiki singers who have earned names at home and abroad included: Suraiya Multanikr, Abida Perveen, Atta Ullah Khan Essa Khilvi, Pathanay Khan, Ustad Muhammad Jumman, Mansoor Malangi, Shafa Ullah Khan Rokhri, Ahmed Nawaz Cheena etc.

In the world of broadcasting, Dr Nasrullah Khan Nasir, Pride of Performance Qaisar Naqvi, Dr Nazim Labar, Late Shamshir Haider Hashmi, Ali Tanha, Mohsin Gillani, Kausar Samreen,, Jaffar Baloch, Riaz Mail-si and Rizwana Tabassum are known figures

hailing from Saraiki region.

Living Legend Shakir Shujabadi, Late Arshad Multani, Ashiq Khan Buzdar, Dr Riffat Abbas, Dr Ashraf Shoua popularly known as Ashoo Lal, Aziz Shahid, Late Ahmed Khan Tariq, Jahangir Mughlis, Dr Najma Shaheen Khosa and Aman Ullah Arshad are some of the renowned poets who wrote on a variety of topics including commoners and their sufferings.

"Assan Qiadi Takht Lahore De" is a poem which made Ashiq Buzdar a household name which struck the hearts of Saraiki as well as other readers. He used to organize the annual Saraiki culture festival. He is a towering personality who has always voiced on Saraikis issues.

This year a two-day maiden South Punjab Literary and Culture Festival (SPLCF) was arranged in Multan featuring dialogues, mushaira, handicrafts and musical evening to promote Saraiki culture.

Acclaimed broadcaster and academician, Dr Nasrullah Khan Nasir noted that kafi, seh harfi, charkha nama, dhola, jogi nama, gharoli, chala, marsiha and ghazal are some of the main types of Saraiki poetry.

In the Indus Valley, Saraiki region is considered as its heart as great ancient cities Harappa and Mohenjo Daro existed in its right and left sides, he said and added that South Punjab is a land of enriched culture.

Ancient Multani, Brahmi, Devenagari writing styles are kinds of Saraiki writing patterns, Dr Nasir said, adding that Arabic and Persian writing systems also influenced it.

Songs sung at weddings, mehndi, Lollin by parents, seasonal songs, and boatmen songs, 'chaley, mahye and jhoomur songs are related to happy moments in Saraiki culture, the broadcaster concluded.

Saraiki Literature travelled from classic to modern trends, but the basic themes remained the same which are mainly based on folklore stories, romantic and tragic poetry, prose, deprivations and sobbing of public of the region.

Dialogue the best hope for Israeli-Palestinian de-escalation-I

Nickolay E. Mladenov

On March 19, senior political and security officials from Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Egypt, Jordan and the US met in the Egyptian city of Sharm El-Sheikh to address escalating violence across Israel and the West Bank. Three weeks earlier, a similar session, convened at the request of Jordan, took place in nearby Aqaba.

With nearly 90 Palestinians and 14 Israelis killed since the beginning of this year, the meetings were held amid fears that a convergence of Islamic, Jewish and Christian religious celebrations next month could provoke even greater violence.

As someone who has negotiated ceasefires between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, I can attest that de-escalation will be ineffective unless it is paired with plans to address the economic, social and political dimensions of the crisis. Legitimate concerns must be addressed within a shared narrative that encourages stepping back from the brink. Only then can meaningful de-escalation occur, creating the necessary space for political resolution.

In Aqaba, the intent was there. Both Israel and the Palestinian Authority agreed to abstain temporarily from unilateral actions that might exacerbate the situation. For Palestinians, this meant pausing their diplomatic efforts within UN bodies, while Israel committed to a four-month halt to discussions about new settlement units and a six-month pause on outpost authorizations.

The agreements reached in Sharm El-Sheikh expanded upon these initial measures and now not only include calls for de-escalation but also outline a framework for action. If implemented, the following three points from the Sharm El-Sheikh communique could serve as crucial

stepping stones for progress.

Firstly, the agreement to create a mechanism for strengthening the Palestinian economy must be followed by the swift implementation of several long-standing projects for which the US has consistently advocated. These initiatives include extending the operating hours of the Allenby crossing to promote Palestinian trade through Jordan, improving 4G mobile telecommunications services and electronic VAT receipts.

In the long term, both the Israeli and the Palestinian economies would benefit from updating and modernizing the economic agreements signed as part of the Oslo framework, known as the Paris Protocol. New trade arrangements that include crossings and customs areas would also need to be agreed upon. Removing non-customs restrictions and obstacles to the movement of Palestinian goods, and closing the many fiscal leakages that have emerged through the years, are just some of the important measures that could be taken.

Secondly, the communique's provision to "significantly enhance the fiscal situation" of the PA carries considerable importance. The authority has faced a relentless fiscal crisis due to a mix of domestic and external factors that have severely limited the government's capacity to borrow funds, invest in development and, ultimately, pay salaries.

While these reforms would address public payroll reductions, fiscal leakages, corruption and inefficiencies, the immediate priority is to prevent the financial collapse of the PA, which would lead to unemployment for tens of thousands of people and heighten tensions across the West Bank.

The first step on the path toward political resolution is for Israeli and Palestinian security officials to agree that without coordination, the current crisis will only worsen.

To be concluded

Coal power plant under CPEC boosts socio-economic development in Pakistan

Mazhar Ali Khan/ Xinhua

THARPARKAR: A 27-year-old mechanical engineer, works as an associate shift lead in a central control room at Thar Coal Block-I Coal Electricity Integration project, an energy cooperation project under the framework of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

At the plant located in the warm desert region in the southeastern part of Pakistan's southern Sindh province, Khan reports to a Chinese shift lead who gives him the commands which he further distributes to other Pakistani and Chinese engineers.

The young engineer from the under-developed Hyderabad city of Sindh, who had received Employee of the CPEC project and Best Model Employee of the Year awards in 2022, said the technology being used in this coal plant is very advanced and suitable for utilization of indigenous coal. "The Chinese staffs are always supportive and guide us because they have already



operated such plants in different overseas projects," he said.

Talking to Xinhua, Meng Donghai, CEO of the project, said that based on local coal from Thar, Pakistan is generating cost-effective electricity.

This would help the country in reducing its fuel imports, saving foreign exchange reserves, and enhancing national energy

security, he added.

Thar Coal Block-1 Power Generation Company Private Limited and Sino Sindh Resources Private Limited, as subsidiaries of Shanghai Electric, are managing the entire project and will keep the task for the next 30 years.

"We want to build this enterprise into an outstanding energy enterprise in Paki-

stan and we hope to become a benchmark in this industry in terms of production safety, leading technical indicators and corporate social responsibility (CSR)," said Meng.

Like other CPEC projects, Thar Coal Block-1 highlights CSR and has been involved in extensive CSR projects aimed at changing the lives of locals in Thar, eliminating

poverty, improving medical facilities, educating the locals and creating job opportunities. The project has provided more than 18,000 direct employment opportunities for the locals.

Li Jigen, CEO of the coal mine project of Thar Coal Block-1, told Xinhua that from the beginning of the construction in 2019 to the end of 2022, the project had invested about 1.3 million U.S. dollars in fulfilling its CSR.

The future course of CSR includes the Green Thar project focusing on tree plantation, increasing employment, and skills development, as well as contributing to the South Asian country in case of floods and other disasters during the 30-year operation, Li added.

Khan said that an electrostatic precipitator had been installed in the plant which traps potentially hazardous fly ash.

Additionally, an absorption tower has also been set up to reduce sulfur oxides emissions in order to safeguard the environment, he said.

UAE participates in Education Technology Exhibition in London

News Desk

DUBAI (WAM): The UAE took part in the education technology exhibition and conference – the British Educational Training and Technology Show – (BETT) held in London from 29th to 31st March. The UAE team highlighted the country's technological programmes and initiatives aimed at boosting the educational system and reviewed the latest cutting-edge educational technology (EdTech) solutions.

Dr. Ahmad Belhoul Al Falasi, Minister of Education, headed the UAE's delegation to Bett, which included Dr. Hassan Hassan Al-Muhairi, Assistant Undersecretary for the Curriculum Sector, along with senior officials in the education sector. The UAE pavilion included a number of the Ministry of Education's partners, namely the United Arab Emirates University, Khalifa University, University of Birmingham Dubai, Sharjah Private Education Authority, Higher Colleges of Technology, United Educational Publishing, the Mohamed bin Zayed Award for Best Teacher, Emirates Airlines, Emirates ICT Innovation Center, and Emirates Schools Establishment.

Dr. Al Falasi emphasised the significance of the event as a global platform to explore the future of EdTech and ways to benefit from its applications. "The Ministry of Education was keen to participate in this global event to get acquainted with the best pioneering global experiences in the field of education. We also aimed to highlight the UAE's efforts to elevate the education system and its leadership in the fields of technology and innovation. The UAE keeps pace with the latest technologies to prepare today's generation to lead tomorrow's development process to achieve the aspirations of the country and our wise leadership to attain sustainable development and build a knowledge-based economy."

On the sidelines of Bett 2023, Al Falasi held bilateral meetings with education experts and officials in the UK, and he visited key British educational institutions to discuss ways of enhancing cooperation in the educational field. He also met with a number of Emirati students enrolled in doctoral programmes and praised their efforts to obtain the knowledge necessary to pursue the country's development process and to convey the cultural image of the UAE to the world.

Saudi Arabia, OPEC+ Producers Announce Surprise Oil Output Cuts

News Desk

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia and other OPEC+ oil producers on Sunday announced voluntary cuts to their production amounting to around 1.15 million barrels per day in a surprise move they said was aimed at supporting market stability.



The group had been largely expected to stick to its already agreed 2 million bpd cuts when its ministerial panel, which includes Saudi Arabia and Russia, meets virtually on Monday.

Last October, OPEC+, which comprises the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and allies led by Russia, agreed output cuts of 2 million bpd from November until the end of the year, angering Washington as tighter supply boosts oil prices.

The United States has argued that the world needs lower prices to support economic growth and prevent Russian President Vladimir Putin from earning more revenue to fund the Ukraine war.

Sunday's unexpected voluntary cuts, which start from May, come in addition to the ones already agreed in October.

Riyadh said it would cut output by 500,000 bpd while Iraq will reduce its production by 211,000 bpd, according to official statements.

The UAE said it would cut production by 144,000 bpd, Kuwait announced a cut of 128,000 bpd while Oman announced a cut of 40,000 bpd and Algeria said it would cut its output by 48,000 bpd. Kazakhstan will also cut output by 78,000 bpd.

Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak also said on Sunday that Moscow would extend a voluntary cut of 500,000 bpd until the end of 2023. Moscow announced those cuts unilaterally in February following the introduction of Western price caps.

After Russia's unilateral reductions, U.S. officials said its alliance with other OPEC members was weakening, but Sunday's move shows the cooperation is still strong.

The Saudi energy ministry said in a statement that the kingdom's voluntary cut was a precautionary measure aimed at supporting the stability of the oil market.

Oil prices fell to 15-month lows earlier this month in response to the banking crisis that followed the collapse of two U.S. lenders and resulted in Credit Suisse being rescued by Switzerland's biggest bank UBS.

"OPEC is taking pre-emptive steps in case of any possible demand reduction," Amrita Sen, founder and director of Energy Aspects, said on Sunday.

Protest

KARACHI: Workers of Tehreek-e-Azadi Quds holds placards and shouting slogans during protest against Israel, outside press club in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Human Rights Council: An ideal place to an effective remedy of victims

Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai

As a President, I pledge to work impartially and inclusively to uphold, protect and promote all human rights," Ambassador Václav Bálek, President, Human Rights Council. The 52nd session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC) which began on February 27, 2023 and will end on April 4, 2023 has discussed the various thematic topics like, 'The protection of human rights defenders,' 'Freedom of religion or belief,' 'Protection and promotion of human rights while countering terrorism,' 'Exercising of the right of peoples to self-determination,' 'Interactive dialogue on arbitrary detention,' 'Discussion on the issue of unilateral coercive measures and human rights,' among others.

I would like to expound on effective functioning of human rights mechanisms of HRC that will make a difference in the life of every human being. We know that success is measured not only by objectives, but also by whether an alternate strategy would have been an improvement. Thus, as Churchill said of democracy, it is the worst form of government except for all others that have been conceived or attempted. Similarly, it might be said of the HRC that it is the worst human rights body for defending human

rights and human dignity, but for all the alternatives that have been attempted or contemplated.

It might be said that never have so many human rights been proclaimed yet been so routinely violated. Think of the ongoing human rights atrocities at present that are going unsanctioned. An independent international fact-finding mission of the United Nations claimed that the Myanmar government had "genocidal intent" against the Rohingya. And Genocide Watch testified before the United States Congress that Kashmir was at the brink of genocide. This grim recitation must cease as a concession to the shortness of life, but the point should be self-evident. Human rights enforcement mechanisms are falling short of hoped for deterrent effects and condign punishment of offenders.

It is said by some that the NATO military intervention in Ukraine to defend the human rights of Ukrainians marked a watershed in the protection of human rights. No longer would the world tolerate a nation's subjugation of its neighbors. But that sanguine observation, in my opinion, is vastly overstated. I believe that NATO intervention in Ukraine would not have been forthcoming if first, the Ukrainians were not Europeans (These people are Europeans, Bulgarian Prime Minister Kiril Petkov, March 1, 2022); and second, refugee problem had not spilled



over into the countries of the European Union. That conclusion is supported by the indifference of NATO, the United States, and the United Nations to massive human rights violations elsewhere in the world that do not seriously impact western democracies. Kashmir is the prime example of that insensitivity and negligence.

The good news is that the globalization of news as well as social media have brought human rights violations into the living rooms of more and more people, and most are horrified by the pictures. Only a handful of the

inveterately cruel celebrate over human rights violations. There would have been no support for the intervention in Ukraine by American and European public without television, and ditto for United Nations' intervention in early conflicts, like East Timor, Southern Sudan and else. That is why India fiercely resists broadcast transparency in Kashmir. New York based 'Committee to Protect Journalists' said that the news media in Kashmir has been pushed to the brink of extinction. Therefore, I believe that sunshine is the best disinfectant for human rights violations.

Human rights reports also bring human rights to the forefront of attention. The United Nations Thematic Special Rapporteurs, United States, Department, of State Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and other international NGO's deserve special acclaim on that score, despite occasional deficiencies.

Torture, disappearances, and summary executions, in my judgement, deserve special abhorrence and deterrents. They should all be made international crimes with no immunity for any government official implicated in

the villainies, even heads of state or government. CNN reported on May 16, 2014, that "in 2005, the United States denied Modi a visa because of his alleged role in anti-Muslim violence three years earlier in Gujarat state, where he was chief minister. When United States Federal Judge Analisa Torres asked American Justice Center on October 22, 2014, to respond to the question of immunity for Narendra Modi, the State Department requested that the case be "dismissed on the basis of his immunity from jurisdiction as a sitting foreign head of government." We believe that any head of state should also be criminally accountable for failing to exercise reasonable care in superintending subordinates who may be guilty of wrongdoing. There is no good reason for holding civilian officials to a lesser standard when the evils and moral responsibility are the same.

Whatever possible problems might be created by withdrawing customary head of state immunity for torture or summary executions, they would be vastly overshadowed by the countless lives and suffering deterred and the vindication of compelling claims of morality. We should applaud this civil and political rights development as a bright star in the human rights sky.

It might be said that these proposals are too strict or even draconian. But what about the victims of these unspeakable

crimes? From their vantage point, the sanctions are commensurate with the nature of the misconduct, and that view seems unanswerable. Who can defend torture, disappearances, or summary executions in this day and age? The genuine test of how much we care about such abuses is what we do about them, not just what we say about them. And the HRC seems an ideal place to begin with a serious plan of action.

India's international lawlessness has escaped United Nations and HRC's sanctions or even moral reproach for more than 76 years and 17 years respectively. Its human rights record is gruesome but hidden behind an iron curtain that keeps out the likes of CNN and BBC; but the commonplace Indian military atrocities extrajudicial killings, rape, torture, plunder, abduction, and arbitrary detentions without trial, are at least on a par with Slobodan Milosevic's savagery towards Kosovar Albanians, which provoked the intervention of NATO alliance.

Finally, I would respectfully suggest that the HRC consider establishing an advisory committee of experts, besides Thematic Special Rapporteurs to recommend stiffer civil enforcement mechanisms for incorporation into outstanding international human rights covenants. A right without a legal remedy is no more valuable than a munificent bequest in a pauper's will.

PLAF calls for careful policy as record inflation, high cost to hurt economy

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: As the Consumer Price Index (CPI) based inflation has reached the highest level of 35.4% since July 1965 the Pakistan Industrial & Traders Associations Front (PIAF) has warned the record inflation and high cost of doing business would hurt economic growth, demanding a careful policy to keep it in control.



PIAF Chairman Faheem ur Rehman Saigol said that the most serious threat to the economy in the current fiscal year would be inflation, as the government plan of approaching the International Monetary Fund for financial assistance has brought a fresh wave of price-hike, because inflation is already hitting due to continuous raise in oil prices and depreciation of local currency.

He predicted that inflation would remain high and may even increase further due to market frictions caused by relative demand and supply gap of essential items, exchange rate depreciation and recent upward adjustment of administered prices of petrol and diesel.

He said that due to the lagged effect of floods, production losses, especially of major agriculture crops, has not yet been fully recovered. Consequently, the shortage of essential items has emerged and persisted. Inflation may further jack up as a result of second round effect.

He said the IMF loan would have devastating effects on the economy, as with more taxes and increased rates of utilities, cost of production would further increase. This will render Pakistani exports uncompetitive in the global market.

Chinese lithium producers set price floor as demand evaporates, sources say



BELJING: China's top lithium producers agreed this week to set a floor price of 250,000 yuan (\$36,380) per tonne of lithium carbonate, six people familiar with the matter said, in an effort to slow a plunge in the price of the battery raw material.

The price was agreed on Tuesday by around 10 companies including Tianqi Lithium (002466.SZ) and Ganfeng Lithium (002460.SZ) that met on the sidelines of a conference in Nanchang in southern China, said one person who attended the meeting and five others briefed on the discussions.

The people declined to be named because of the sensitivity of the topic, which was discussed in a closed-door meeting.

Ganfeng said in a response to Reuters that no discussions on a floor price had taken place.

"Ganfeng always insists that product prices should be determined by the market, and will never take the initiative to control prices to influence the market," a company representative said in an email.

It added that no company in the industry has such capabilities.

Tianqi declined to comment. Zhiyun Lithium, one of the top lithium carbonate producers in China, was also represented at the meeting, said four of the people, but could not be reached for comment.

The move comes as lithium prices plunge on a significant slowdown in demand for electric vehicles (EV) in China, the world's largest EV market.

Spot prices have slumped by more than 60% since their peak in late November, with the decline picking up pace in recent weeks on a growing price war in China's auto market.

It is not clear how long the companies, which account for over half China's lithium carbonate output, will follow the floor price.

Spot prices dropped to 220,000 yuan a tonne on Friday, according to a weekly price assessment by Fastmarkets, down from 260,000 yuan a week earlier.

Offers as low as 150,000 yuan were also heard in the market this week as traders sought to offload mounting stocks, said a buyer for a battery manufacturer who did not attend the meeting of lithium producers.

"Setting a floor price should strengthen the market sentiment and hold the prices from falling further," said the person who attended the meeting.

However, some buyers were sceptical that producers would stick to the floor price, given the sluggish demand.

"If we don't buy, someone will eventually drop the price," said a lithium carbonate buyer briefed on the decision. Reuters

Pak-China bilateral trade

Khunjerab Pass opened for Pakistan-China trade after three years

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Khunjerab Pass, a major trade route between Pakistan and China was re-opened after a closure of almost three years in wake of coronavirus pandemic.

The pass that connects Gilgit-Baltistan with China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous region was closed in the year 2020 after the spread of Covid-19 outbreak.

According to official sources, the Chinese authorities have shared a letter with Pakistani officials regarding the reopening of the pass for trade.

The port authorities on the Chinese side of Khunjerab Pass have been instructed to take all necessary measures regarding Covid-19 before the start of the arrival of goods from Pakistan.

Similarly, Pakistani border authorities have also been instructed to take all measures regarding Covid-19, ensuring the containment of the disease.

Khunjerab Pass generally opens from April 1 to November 30 every year, and remains closed from December 1 to March 31 due to cold weather and lack of oxygen in the high altitude.

But to ensure the smooth customs clearance of Pakistan's urgently needed and other supplies, the port was temporarily opened twice



early this year. Though with difficulties including extremely cold weather, heavy snow and lack of oxygen, the local customs have worked around the clock to ensure the transportation of cargo.

This year, the last temporary opening was last for 12 days between January 30 and February 10 while the first port opening was between January 19 and 20 this year.

The two temporary openings facilitated 128

cross-border personnel visits, 328 transportation vehicles' passes, and more than 6,000 tons of goods exported, as per foreign affairs office of Kashgar prefecture.

The reopening of the border crossing is expected to boost economic activities between the two countries.

PM Shehbaz hails reopening of passage In a statement, PM Shehbaz Sharif expressed his pleasure over the reopening of Khunjerab

Pass and said that it would help increase bilateral trade between Pakistan and China.

The prime minister termed the occasion a welcome one for boosting trade with 'Iron brother China', PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

He said the reopening of the Pass removed a hurdle that would further expedite pace of work on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), adding restoration of the trade route between the two countries, after a span of three years, was a matter of huge rejoice.

The prime minister said that the journey which had started way back in November 2019, had recommenced in the year 2023 and expressed his resolve to move ahead on CPEC with dual speed in comparison to 2018.

He said "CPEC is a gift of progress and prosperity given by Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and the Chinese leadership for the region and the people."

The affection and cooperation from the Chinese leadership for the people of Pakistan were unforgettable, he added.

The prime minister said 'a foreign funded person' had committed a crime of creating controversy over CPEC. He also appreciated the relevant authorities of the two countries and the team members over the restoration of trade and travel facility

Malaysia, China ink partnership to stabilise palm oil supply chain

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Malaysia said on Sunday (Apr 2) it has signed a memorandum of understanding with a China government-backed trade association to enhance palm oil trade and cooperation.

The Malaysian Palm Oil Board said its partnership with the China Chamber of Commerce of Import and Export of Foodstuffs, Native Produce and Animal By-Products will help Malaysia regain market share in the world's most populous country.

Malaysia, the world's second-largest palm producer, and China, the world's second-largest buyer, will jointly promote the use of Malaysia's sustainable palm oil in China, as well as the design and implementation of new technologies such as artificial intelligence in oil palm plantations.



"China wishes to work with Malaysia in order to secure the palm oil supply to the country," the Malaysian board said in

a statement. The memorandum "will help gain China's confidence towards Malaysian palm oil".

High energy prices a threat to the masses, economy

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Former Vice President of FPCCI Atif Ikram Sheikh on Sunday said high electricity and fuel prices have become a threat to the masses and the country's economy.

The increasing price of energy is eating away purchasing power of the masses and hitting the productive sector, he said.

Atif Ikram Sheikh who has also served as Chairman PVMA said in a statement that the government is providing relief to the masses which is insufficient and marred with mismanagement.

He added that the government should expedite the exploration of oil and gas in the country by giving incentives to investors while focusing on the key sectors of nuclear energy and green energy so that people can get affordable energy.

At present an average of 10 billion units of electricity are being generated month-



ly, most of which is being generated from imported fuel therefore it is costly.

The shortage of gas has halved the supply of gas to the industrial sector and has also reduced the production of captive power plants, he informed.

Dependence on imported fuel is on the rise as dams are running low on water which has affected the production of electricity from cheap sources.

The production of electricity from furnace oil and diesel has increased a lot, which is causing huge financial losses to the government; he said adding that the demand for electricity is increasing which will also increase the losses and circular debt.

Atif Ikram said that clean and green energy is being given priority over all other sources of electricity generation in the world but the red tape in Pakistan has become a major obstacle in this regard.

Authorities have claimed to increase the use of solar energy but at the same time imposed heavy taxes on it which harmed the development of the sector and drastically reduced the trend of installing solar panels.

CPEC: Pakistan decides to go ahead

Second Phase Shifts Focus from Infra to Industrial Development

Faiz Ul Haq, Senior Economist

LAHORE: Renowned economic commentator, Faiz Ul Haq, has apprised that despite various international pressures, Pakistan has decided to proceed with the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC); which happens to be one of the most crucial strings of China's futuristic One Belt, One Road (OBOR) intra-regional & inter-continental initiative—extending from the Baltics in Europe to Southeast Asia and from China to Africa.

Faiz Ul Haq explained that the second phase of CPEC could be the real game-changer vis-a-vis socio-economic uplift; as it shifts focus from basic and prerequisite industrial & communication network provisioning to industrial development & collaborations; technology transfer; foreign direct investment (FDI); joint ventures and inviting other countries for the same—primar-



ily, the friendly & wealthy countries of Gulf Cooperation Organization (GCC); namely, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain.

It is pertinent to note that the federal cabinet of Pakistan has recently approved Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) to promote industrial cooperation with China; and, sending thousands of Pakistani engineers & technicians to China for training under rigorous, proven and world-class industrial standards of China. This will pave the way for technology transfer and setting up high-end industrial units; which will be the real deal

for ushering Pakistan into a new era of industrialization after the long-drawn-out stagnation since the 1960s & early 1970s.

Faiz Ul Haq highlighted that, if the right industrial policies are adopted & preserved, the second phase of CPEC has the potential to create 500,000 new jobs by 2025 and 2-3 million jobs by 2030—and, make no mistake, these jobs would be much higher-paying than the current average of Pakistani industrial workers.

Renowned economist Faiz Ul Haq also called upon Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA); Pakistan Software

Export Board (PSEB); Special Technology Zones Authority (STZA); Federal & Provincial Boards of Investment and Ministry of IT & Telecom (MoITT) to think local but act in a global context; and, come up with the proposals of mega projects in software & app development; artificial intelligence; digitalizing governance; IT-enabled Services; FinTech; EdTech; IT skills development; business process re-engineering (BPR) and business process outsourcing (BPO) to be integrally incorporated into the various gigantic industrial undertakings under CPEC.

Faiz Ul Haq pinned his hopes in the potentially synergistic leadership complementarities of P@SHA Chairman Zohaib Khan and Federal IT Minister Syed Amin Ul Haque to persuade FBR & SBP to fall in line with the facilitative and incentivizing vision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on digital economy, IT & ITeS.

Pak, Israel trade is sheer propaganda: Commerce Ministry

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: It has been reported on social media that the first export shipment of Pakistan food products reached Israel, sent by Pakistani-Jewish businessman Mr. Fishel BenKhalid recently as per the statement issued by the American Jewish Congress from its New York headquarters.

The deal was reportedly finalized in a trade exhibition held in UAE recently.

Pakistan does not have diplomatic ties with Israel and does not recognize it as a sovereign state and neither it trades with Israel nor has banking relations.

Pakistan Customs have confirmed that no shipment has been exported from Pakistan to Israel.

In case, if any goods or commodities of Pakistan origin are exported through a third country, it cannot be termed as Pakistan exports to any country including Israel.

As neither the shipment was exported directly to Israel, nor payment received in any Pakistani bank, terminating it trade between Pakistan and Israel is misleading and factually incorrect.

The Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Commerce clarifies that no trade has taken place between Pakistan and Israel.

Sindh Revenue Board tax collection increases 28% in March

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The Sindh Revenue Board (SRB) has claimed that it has increased its tax collection by 28 percent in the month of March 2023.

According to a statement, the provincial revenue body collected Rs19.03 billion in the month of March 2023 as compared with Rs14.89 billion in the same month of the last year, showing a growth of 28 percent.

"The revenue collection during first nine months (July - March) 2022-2023 stood at Rs128.21 billion as compared with the collection of Rs104.80 billion, showing a growth of 22 percent," it added.

Sindh Revenue Board

said it was determined to achieve the assigned revenue target of Rs180 billion for the current financial year 2022-23 "despite all adverse factors such as the recent devastating floods and the overall low economic growth".

The SRB is a semi-autonomous organization established by the Government of Sindh, Pakistan, under the Sindh Revenue Board Act, 2011.

The SRB is responsible for formulating and implementing tax policies in the province of Sindh and ensuring compliance with tax laws and regulations. It also works towards improving tax administration and providing efficient and effective services to taxpayers.

Norwegian wealth fund seeks Credit Suisse boardroom shake-up

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Norges Bank Investment Management will vote against the re-election of Credit Suisse CSIGN.S Chair Axel Lehmann and six other directors at the Swiss lender's annual general meeting on Tuesday, the Norwegian wealth fund said on its website.

Credit Suisse was acquired last month by rival UBS UBSS.S in a \$3.23 billion deal engineered by the Swiss government, central bank and market regulator to avoid its collapse and possible contagion across the global financial system.

"Shareholders should have the right to seek chang-



es to the board when it does not act in their best interest," the Norges wealth fund said ahead of the April 4 meeting.

In addition to Lehmann, Norges is also opposing re-election of Credit Suisse directors Iris Bohnet, Christian Gellerstad, Shan Li, Seraina Macia, Richard Meddings and Ana Pessoa.

Credit Suisse declined to comment and UBS did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

'It won't happen ever again' says Kohli on Pakistan-India T20 WC thriller

By A Sports

KARACHI: India star batter Virat Kohli recalled one of the most memorable knocks of his career when he single-handedly took India to a sensational win against Pakistan in the T20 World Cup match last year.

Speaking at a corporate event, Kohli was asked to explain his feelings during the blockbuster clash in Melbourne and he confessed that he was still in disbelief at what had truly unfolded that night.

"I still can't make any sense of it. That's a very honest admission. And a lot of people have tried to ask me what were you thinking, how did you plan and I have no answers. The fact of the matter is that I was so much under pressure that my mind had shut off completely by the 12th or 13th over," he said.

The right-hander made an unbeaten 82 from 53 in the nerve-racking game against arch-rivals which went down to the wires as India sealed a four-wick-



et win on the final ball in front of jam-packed MCG stadium.

Pakistan's brilliant pace attack had kept India at bay at the start as they were reduced to 31 for 4 in 6.1 overs

while chasing 160 before Kohli and Hardik Pandya gathered a match-winning 113-run stand.

Kohli struggled greatly early on, failing to find the gaps but as the game proceed-

ed, he showcased his temperament and outstanding prowess to snatch the victory from Pakistan's hands.

"At the 10th over mark, we were 31 for 4 and I had just ran Axar out. I was 12 off 25, or something. I remember in the break, Rahul bhai came to me and I don't remember what he said. I swear and I even told him this as well. I told him, 'I have no idea what you told me in that break because I was zoned out,'" he said.

"My mind was spinning so fast... I was like this is worse than it was before. I had spiralled down so far down that there is no comeback from here and that was my honest feeling at the halfway mark.

That is when my instinct took over. So when I stopped thinking and planning, whatever God-given talent I have that came to the surface and then I felt like something higher was guiding me," he added.

"What happened that night, I can never explain it and it won't happen ever again," he concluded.

Barcelona storm past rock-bottom Elche to move closer to LaLiga title

By A Sports -

ELCHE: Robert Lewandowski scored a brace as Barcelona wreaked havoc on bottom-placed Elche to win 4-0 and go 15 points clear of arch-rivals Real Madrid at the top of La Liga on Saturday.

The Catalan giants strengthen their position in the title race after this win while second-placed Real will look to keep their slim hopes alive with a win against Valladolid on Sunday.

League's top scorer Lewandowski ended his goal drought after three goalless games when he opened the scoring in the 20th minute with a close-range finish after Ronald Araujo headed the ball down to him in front of the goal.

Ansu Fati doubled the lead in the 55th minute by receiving a pass from Ferran Torres in his own half, moving towards the outside of the box, and hitting low



into the far corner for his first league goal since October.

Lewandowski scored his second of the night 10 minutes later after Gavi snatched the ball off Elche's defence and set up brilliantly for the Polish strike in the box.

Torres slotted the fourth goal of the visitors in the

70th minute to wrap up the game.

With the rout, Elche were pushed deep into the crisis with only 13 points from 27 games, 14 points away from the safety zone.

Earlier, Sevilla beat Cadiz 2-0 to go 13th in the standing on 31 points while the opponents were left stranded

on the brink of the relegation zone.

Meanwhile, 14th-placed Getafe held Athletic Club to a nil-nil draw at home.

Girona edged past Espanyol, thanks to a late penalty scored by Christian Stunai two minutes before time, to jump to 10th place with 34 points.

Man City condemn attack on Liverpool team bus

Sports Desk

MANCHESTER: Manchester City have condemned criminal damage to Liverpool's team bus following Saturday's clash between the Premier League rivals.

Greater Manchester Police confirmed they have opened an investigation over the incident which took place after City's 4-1 win at the Etihad Stadium.

No injuries were suffered and the Liverpool bus was able to continue its journey back to Merseyside.

"Manchester City FC has been made aware that Liverpool FC's coach sustained



damage on its return journey," City said in a statement.

"We understand an object was thrown towards the coach in a residential area.

"Incidents of this kind are totally unacceptable,

and we strongly condemn the actions of the individual(s) responsible."

City also said they were disappointed by chanting from the home fans that made reference to the Hill-

sborough disaster in 1989, which led to the death of 97 Liverpool fans.

"The club is disappointed to have heard inappropriate chants from home fans during the game," City added in a statement.

"We regret any offence these chants may have caused and will continue to work with supporter groups and officials from both clubs to eradicate hateful chanting from this fixture."

Clashes between City and Liverpool have become heated in recent years as they have consistently gone head-to-head for major honours.

Pak blind team to feature in World Games

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan blind cricket team would feature in the International Blind Sports Federation (IBSA) World Games after a gap of 16 years, scheduled to be held in Birmingham, UK from August 18 to 27.

"A 20-member Pakistan team will be sent in the extravaganza after full preparation and selection on merit," Pakistan Blind Cricket Council (PBCC) Chairman Syed Sultan Shah told APP. He said so far besides Pakistan, three other countries have confirmed participation in the cricket event of the World Games which includes Australia, England and India.

"Pakistan team will feature in the mega event after a gap of 16 years. Prior to it, Pakistan chipped in the event two times in 2002 and 2006. Pakistan team could not participate in the World Games after 2006 as some visa issues had popped up time and again," he said.

"But now we are in contact with IBSA and hopefully, our team will go in the World Games this year," he said. Sultan was of the view that a strong Pakistan blind cricket outfit would be sent to the Games, as we want to win the mega event and make the nation proud. "Pakistan team is very strong and has already won many laurels for the country. I'm hopeful that the Pakistan team will make the country proud in the extravaganza," he said.

The IBSA World Games were the largest high-level international event for athletes with visual impairments, with more than 1000 competitors from more than 70 nations. Staged every four years the World Games were the pinnacle of the international Calendar outside of the Paralympic Games. With three Paralympic and eight non-Paralympic sports, for some athletes, it is the highest level they can compete at.

Team Remington Pharma Stars win LPC Super League 2023



Sports Desk

LAHORE: Team Remington Pharma Stars won the LPC Super League 2023 after defeating FG/Din Polo Warriors by 9-4 in the final played here at the Lahore Polo Club on Sunday.

Hamza Mawaz Khan's outstanding performance helped team Remington Pharma Stars win the final by 9-4 against FG/Din Polo Warriors. Hamza, hero of the final, hammered six superb goals for Remington Stars while Ahmed Zubair Butt contributed with two goals and emerging young player Basel Faisal Khokhar struck one goal. Sheikh Muhammad Raffay scored three goals and Bilal Hayat Noon scored one goal for FG/Din Polo.

Speaking on the occasion, Basel Faisal Khokhar of Remington Pharma Stars said: "The 2022-23 season has been very good for Remington Pharma. I have won three eight-goal tournaments and an Under-19 event and now clinched the LPC Super League title. All this is the result of the prayers of my parents and the hard work of the team."

Earlier in the subsidiary final, Pebble Breakers defeated Master Paints/Diamond Paints by a narrow margin of 5-4. The Super League awards were also distributed during the prize distribution ceremony. The best mare of the match was awarded to Remington Pharma Director Dr. Faisal Khokhar's mare Ice. The most valuable player award was handed over to Hamza Mawaz Khan, who also earned the award for scoring the most goals in the tournament.

The amateur player of the league award was claimed by Basel Faisal Khokhar. The patron of the league award was given to Din Polo's Sheikh Muhammad Farhad while the fair play award was given to Ibrahim Sultan.

Former polo player Maj (Rtd) Javed Mawaz was the chief guest on this occasion and gave away winning trophy to team Remington Pharma Stars. Other notables present on the occasion were Lahore Polo Club President Umar Sadiq, executive committee members and a large number of polo players, who witnessed and enjoyed the enthralling final of the Super League.

Arslan Ash wins Tekken 7 competition at EVO Japan 2023



Ali Hassan -

LAHORE: Pakistan's professional e-gamer Arslan Ash claimed another EVO trophy after defeating Meo-IL in a one-sided Grand Final of the Tekken 7 tournament at EVO Japan 2023 on Sunday.

Arslan defeated his Koran counterpart 3-0 in the final to win the third trophy at the Evolution Championship Series (EVO).

With the victory, he also equalled Korea's Jae-Min "Knee" Bae's record for the most number of EVO Championship victories. Knee won the trophy in Tekken Tag Tournament 2 in 2013 and for Tekken 7 in 2018 and 2022.

Previously, the Pakistani gamer won the EVO Japan trophy in 2019.

It is pertinent to mention here EVO Japan is one of the popular fighting esports events of the year. The three-day competition took place between March 31 and April 2 with over 5,000 attendees.

Enaam Ahmed drives to success on race tracks around the world

LONDON: Proudly waving the flag of Pakistan across the world in the Formula racing circuit, Enaam Ahmed has become the first ever Pakistani to be a World Champion in Karting — beating the records of Formula One drivers Lewis Hamilton and Max Verstappen.

Not only that, but Enaam is also a British Formula 3 Champion — the first-ever high-level Formula Championship winner in the history of Pakistan — who broke the record of Ayrton

Senna by winning 13 races in one season.

Driving cars at an average 200 miles per hour, the 23-year-old is going places with his winning streaks on dangerous tracks, making sure that his car carries both British and Pakistani flags. Enaam is one of the brightest and most exciting young racing talents in motorsport. He has been winning Championships and breaking records from the age of 14. Enaam is also the most successful Pakistani heritage racing driver ever in

the history of motorsport because he is also known as the most successful British Formula 3 driver in history.

Enaam was born to Pakistani parents in London 23 years ago. It was at the age of eight that he started taking interest in racing. His parents started funding their son's passion by sending him to local Go-karting tracks for children but they had no idea that their son would become a European and world champion at the age of 14.

Sri Lanka seal dramatic Super Over win in first T20I against New Zealand

Sports Desk

AUCKLAND: Sri Lanka claimed a dramatic Super Over win in the opening match of their three-game Twenty20 series against New Zealand on Sunday to earn their first victory on tour.

The match went to a tie-break decider after both teams chalked up 196 runs in a high-scoring thriller at Auckland's Eden Park.

New Zealand only made 8-2 off a tight Super Over bowled by spinner Maheesh Theekshana before Charith Asalanka smashed a six off the second ball of Sri Lanka's response, then sealed victory with a four.

"That was a really nervous game and at the end, it's our day," said Asalanka.

"I tried to hit boundaries because I back myself.

"Momentum is most important for a team like us, a young team, and we're hoping to do well," he said ahead of the second T20 game in Dunedin on Wednesday before the three-game series concludes in Queenstown next Saturday.

The nail-biter in Auckland handed Sri Lanka their first win on a month-long tour of New Zealand after losing both the Test and one-day international series by the same 2-0 scoreline.

Black Caps tailender Ish Sodhi had earlier set up the Super Over finish when he tied the scores by calmly hoisting the last ball of their 50 overs for six off Sri Lanka captain Dasun Shanaka.

It completed a run chase that

always looked unlikely for the home side but came alive when Rachin Ravindra scored 26 off 13 balls to follow key knocks from Daryl Mitchell (66 off 44) and Mark Chapman (33 off 23).

It left New Zealand needing 13 to win off the final over, a task that became harder to achieve when Adam Milne fell to the first delivery bowled by Shanaka.

"To climb our way back in our innings was outstanding and I thought for 'Ish' to hit that six was quite dramatic but it wasn't meant to be," said New Zealand captain Tom Latham.

"Super Overs can go either way, but we fell on the wrong side today."

Theekshana was a key performer for Sri Lanka with the ball,

conceding 1-22 off four miserly overs, while fellow spinner Wanindu Hasaranga took 2-30 as New Zealand struggled for enough momentum through the early overs.

Left-hander Asalanka top-scored in Sri Lanka's 196-5, striking six sixes in a rapid 67 off 41 balls.

He put on 103 for the fourth wicket with Kusal Perera, who returned from a long-term shoulder injury in style.

The experienced Perera scored a controlled 53 not out off 45 balls in what was his first match for Sri Lanka in any format since the 2021 T20 World Cup, having spent nearly 18 months out.

Kusal Mendis started the run-fest by blasting 25 off just



nine deliveries, having lost opening partner Pathum Nissanka to the first ball of the match bowled

by Milne.

New Zealand struggled for timing in the Super Over, losing

the wickets of Jimmy Neesham and Mark Chapman, who struck a lone boundary.