



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



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(بخاری، صفحہ نمبر 2151)
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Bilawal: No meeting with Indian counterpart

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari visit to Goa, India is taking place in the context of the Ministerial Meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. According to state-run media, no request for any bilateral meeting between Foreign Ministers of Pakistan and India has been made on this occasion.



Xi says dialogue only viable way out for Ukraine crisis

Chinese President Xi Jinping said on Wednesday that dialogue and negotiations are the only viable way out for the Ukraine crisis, and no one wins a nuclear war. He made the remarks while talking to his Ukrainian counterpart, Volodymyr Zelensky, over phone. The two sides exchanged views on China-Ukraine relations and the Ukraine crisis. (Details on Page 5)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Shawwal 6, Thursday, April 27, 2023

www.dailyspokesman.net

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Daily Spokesman Vol: 16, Issue: 21

Price Rs. 25.00 Pages 8

The Corridors of Power

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting of the heads of coalition parties held at PM House on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

Coalition Govt decides to hold elections simultaneously

The meeting reposed full confidence in leadership of PM Shehbaz Sharif

Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Leaders of coalition parties in the government have unanimously decided that elections will be held simultaneously across the country after completion of constitutional term of the incumbent government.

The decision was taken at a high-level consultative meeting of heads of all parties in the coalition government held in Islamabad on Wednesday with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in the chair.

Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) chief Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman, Chairman Pakistan People's Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and leaders of other parties attended the meeting.

The meeting discussed the overall situation of the country and especially the issues emanating from verdicts of Supreme Court's controversial benches regarding the holding of elections in the country.

The meeting reposed full confidence in the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. Maintaining that the authority to take all national decisions rests with the Prime Minister, the meeting reiterated the resolve to support all decisions by the Prime Minister.

The meeting clarified that the ruling parties have already started the process of political consultation within themselves regarding transparent, free and impartial elections in the country on a single day therefore Supreme Court's mediatory role in this purely political matter is inappropriate.

The meeting noted that the process of dialogue, consultation and consensus lies within the exclusive domain of political parties and they have been doing it successfully for years. It unanimously decided to keep the matter within the same ambit and brooded over the future strategy for taking the ongoing consultation process to the next stage.

Discussing the Supreme Court's verdict of 19th of this month, the meeting deplored that the apex court's order that federal government should release money without the approval of the Parliament ignores the basic scheme of Constitution.

The meeting also expressed strong resentment over the Court's observation that the Prime Minister has lost the confidence of the House and termed these observations as condemnable and tantamount to insult of the Parliament and office of the Prime Minister.

The meeting also strongly condemned the conversation in the audios regarding imposition of martial law in the country terming it an undemocratic mindset.

The meeting observed that the Supreme Court should respect the Parliament and opinion of the House which stands with the Prime Minister and has full confidence in him.

The meeting also discussed the audios of former Chief Justice of Supreme Court Saqib Nisar, lawyer Khawaja Tariq Rahim and his wife and strongly condemned the conversation. The meeting stated that these audios have strengthened the impression that the decisions are not being made according to the constitution but reek of personal grudges, likes and dislikes.

The meeting also strongly condemned the conversation in the audios regarding imposition of martial law in the country terming it an undemocratic mindset.

The meeting noted that former Chief Justice Saqib Nisar and Khawaja Tariq Rahim have already acknowledged the conversation revealed in the audio which leaves no doubt that the former Chief Justice is guilty of conspiring against an elected Prime Minister and a democratically elected coalition government.

It said removing an elected Prime Minister from office through a bogus, unconstitutional and illegal process of contempt of court is a grave and unpardonable crime.

The meeting declared that after these audios, the real factors behind the controversial verdicts of three and eight member benches Supreme Court have become clear. Therefore the resolutions of the Parliament in this regard should be implemented.

Pak, China reiterate need for maintaining peace in region

Spokesman Report



BEIJING: Pakistan and China have reiterated the need for maintaining peace and stability in the region and enhancing military to military cooperation.

This came at a meeting between Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir and the Commander of People's Liberation Army (PLA) China at the PLA Army Headquarters in Beijing. Earlier on arrival at the PLA Army Headquarters, the Army Chief was given a warm welcome and was presented with guard of honor.

The Army Chief witnessed a demonstration of the operational capabilities of the PLA Army troops. He praised the high standards of training and the professionalism displayed by the soldiers.

General Asim Munir will hold further meetings with military leaders in China to enhance the longstanding relations between the two militaries.

Lawmakers oppose to release funds for election in 2 provinces

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Lawmakers have opposed release of funds to hold general elections for the provincial assemblies of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Taking the floor, Law Minister Azam Nazir Tarar said that it is the sole prerogative of the National Assembly to take a final decision in releasing the amount from the Federal Consolidated Funds as per spirit of the Constitution. He said the House has already rejected this matter twice.

Speaking on the occasion, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said the Lower House has categorically stopped the release of any amount in this regard. He said the State Bank of Pakistan cannot disburse any amount without the approval of the National Assembly.

Speaking on the floor of the House, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said elections should be held on the expiry of the constitutional time limit of all the assemblies simultaneously on a single day. He said all the

political parties, except one party, are unanimous on this demand. He said political dialogue should be undertaken from the forum of the parliament and not from the courtrooms. He said a dialogue amongst the political parties will not only save the democracy and the federation, but also protect the honour and dignity of institutions. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari further said PPP strongly believes in the Constitution and it cannot ignore the parliament. He added that the Parliament is the custodian of the national purse and makers of laws. He said it is parliament's right to decide as to where and how national wealth will be spent. He said we are bound to comply with the directions of the Parliament instead of any other institution.

JUI-F leader Shahid Akhtar Ali said it is time to stand for the supremacy of the Parliament. She said we should take a final decision and then stand firmly behind it. She questioned as to why a suo-moto notice was not taken when two provincial assemblies were dissolved to satisfy the ego of an individual. She said we do not support release of funds on the dictates of anyone else.

Without naming Imran Khan, PPP leader Agha Rafiullah said that an individual has not only ruined the economy of Pakistan, but also destroyed the ethics of our youth and the society.

Awami National Party leader Amir Haider Khan Hoti said we will not interfere in the domain of any other institution, but we will also not allow others to interfere in Parliament's domain. He said releasing funds is the sole prerogative of the National Assembly. He urged the government to abide by the Constitution and not an individual.

PML-N leader Barjees Tahir said the National Assembly's standing committee on finance had strongly opposed the release of 21 billion rupees. He said we are political people and are not afraid of elections, but we will not undermine the House's powers. He said only the National Assembly, not anyone else is entitled to approve or reject release of funds and we will protect this right of the House.

Two soldiers martyred in Tirah valley

Two terrorists killed and 4 injured: ISPR



Martyred soldiers Sepoy Basit Ali (L) and Sepoy Waqas Ali Shah (R).

Adam Khan Wazir

KHYBER/ISLAMABAD: Two Pakistan Army soldiers embraced martyrdom during a fire exchange with the terrorists in the general area of Tirah, Khyber District, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said Wednesday.

According to ISPR, a fire exchange took place between its own troops and terrorists in the general area Tirah, Khyber District. Own troops effectively engaged the terrorists' location. Resultantly, 2 terrorists were killed and four terrorists were injured. Weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the killed terrorists.

However, during intense exchange of fire, Sepoy Waqas

Ali Shah (age 26 years, resident of District Charsadda) and Sepoy Basit Ali (age 24 years, resident of District Peshawar) having fought gallantly, embraced shahadat. Sanitization of the area is being carried out to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area.

Security Forces of Pakistan are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve.

Meanwhile, Speaker of the National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf and Deputy Speaker Zahid Akram Durraani have expressed their condolences over the loss of security personnel's lives during an operation in the Tirah valley, Khyber district.

Mariyum rejects IK's 'helplessness narrative'

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb on Wednesday rejected Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan's narrative of "helplessness" while being in the government for more than three years.

She also lashed out at him for blaming the former army chief for every blunder he made during his government tenure which was marred by corruption, loot, plunder and inefficiency.

"Bajwa made his (Imran) government in 2018 and it was again Bajwa who implemented conspiracy against the (PTI) government," the minister said in a series of tweets while expressing surprise over his (Imran Khan) changing statements.

She asked Imran Khan whether he also stole expensive watches from Toshakhana at the behest of Bajwa.

Mariyum said Imran Khan should explain whether his wife received lands and

diamonds from a businessman on the advice of Bajwa.

She asked the PTI chief whether he halted the work on China Pakistan Economic Corridor, destroyed the economy and violated an agreement with the International Monetary Fund at the behest of Bajwa.

The minister said Imran Khan should inform the nation whether he offered two times extensions to the former army chief on the advice of Bajwa. Whether it was Bajwa who asked Imran Khan to appoint Usman Buzdar and Chaudhary Pervez Elahi as chief executives of Punjab.

She said Imran Khan also asserted that he had dissolved assemblies in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa at the behest of Bajwa.

The minister asked the PTI chief what he was doing all the time during the tenure of his government. Whether he just travelled to his residence in Bani Gala by helicopter, which did cost Rs 55 per trip, on his own will.

PUBLIC NOTICE



We have been instructed by Mr Mohammad Ibrahim Khan, Project Director, Iqra University, H-9 Campus, Islamabad to inform the public at large that Muhammad Rizwan Bari son of Islam Bari, falsely claiming to be a Barrister, had maneuvered his appointment in Iqra University, through active fraud, misrepresentation and using four fake and fabricated academic qualifications from three reputable British Academic Institutions.

During his tenure, Mr Bari engaged in multiple illegal and unethical practices, including stealing of official documents, stationery and stamps of the University, and awarding supply/vendor contracts, at least three of which are fabricated, and employment contracts that are devoid of merit. Services of Bari have been terminated as of 10 March 2023.

A criminal case under sections 406, 420, 468 and 471 of the Pakistan Penal Code 1860 has been instituted by Police Station, Industrial Area, Islamabad and a warrant of arrest has been issued by the concerned Magistrate. On 20 April 2023, Mr Bari escaped from lawful custody pursuant to the said warrant of arrest.

Bari and his accomplices have launched a campaign of vilification and vendetta against the University by filing complaints and reaching out to governmental entities, educational institutions and media houses. The general public is cautioned and put on notice that Mr Bari has no connection with Iqra University, nor does he have any authority to enter into any transactions on its behalf. Any person dealing with him shall do so at his/her own risk and Our Client shall not entertain any claim arising out of or relating to any such transaction.

Barrister Farrukh Karim Qureshi
SAMDANI QURESHI AQLAAL
Advocate & Corporate Counselors
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Backbone of Economy

ATTOCK: Farmers are busy in harvesting the wheat crop as in Pakistan sowing of wheat takes place from October to December and harvesting during the month of March to May, and Punjab sowing months of wheat are November and December whereas harvesting period is April and May.



Photo: Online

Pakistan pushes for Palestinians' right to self-determination

The world cannot accept fait accompli Israel is seeking to impose to destroy Palestinian nationhood

Spokesman Report

NEW YORK: Pakistan has called on Israel to comply with its international obligation to respect the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, saying there will be no peace in the Middle East until the establishment of an independent State of Palestine.

"The international community cannot accept the fait accompli Israel is seeking to impose to destroy Palestinian nationhood," Ambassador Mumir Akram told the UN Security Council, which met under Russia's presidency.

"There will be no durable peace in the Holy land until the creation of an independent, viable and contiguous State of Palestine, established on the basis of pre-1967 borders with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital," the Pakistani envoy said in a debate on the situation in the

Middle East.

Underscoring Palestinians' inalienable rights, the Pakistani envoy said, "Given the erga omnes character of the right of self-determination, it is also incumbent on all States, in accordance with the UN Charter and international law, to ensure that any impediment to the exercise by the Palestinian people of its right to self-determination is immediately brought to an end."

In his remarks, he also condemned Israeli moves to seize Palestinian lands and build Jewish settlements on occupied territories in violation of international law.

Ambassador Akram highlighted the discriminatory laws that dispossess Palestinians under Israeli occupation of their lands. He cited a recent statement by the UN special rapporteurs on adequate housing and

the human rights of internally displaced persons, who said that such discrimination, along with the transfer of Israeli populations, represent "prima facie war crime".

Condemning Israel's brutal crackdown on innocent worshippers at the Al-Aqsa Mosque, Islam's third holiest site, during the month of Ramadan, he said that Israel's actions violate Council resolutions as well as the right to freedom of worship, enshrined in article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Welcoming the UN General Assembly resolution seeking the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the occupation, he added that the Council will have to adopt further measures once it receives that opinion.

Apart from Israel's illegal actions, he pointed out, the

Middle East has witnessed several positive developments recently.

Welcoming the normalization of relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran, Ambassador Akram commended the successful efforts of China to make this historic diplomatic breakthrough.

Also welcoming the diplomatic and political measures to restore peace in Syria and Yemen, he expressed hope that the countries of the Arab world will soon succeed in ending strife and restoring peace across the Islamic world.

Earlier, Tor Wennesland, UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, detailed a series of shocking incidents that began on 4 and 5 April, when Israeli security forces entered the al-Qibli prayer hall of Al-Aqsa Mosque and forcibly removed Palestini-

ans who were barricaded inside.

In retaliation, he said, militants in Gaza and Lebanon fired dozens of rockets towards Israel, causing one injury and damage to property, while Israeli troops carried out air strikes aiming at what they said were Hamas targets and damaging a children's hospital and health clinic in Gaza.

Urging Israelis, Palestinians, regional States and the broader international community to re-engage in the pursuit of peace with the aim of ending the occupation, Wennesland highlighted the need to pursue the vision of two States — Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, viable and sovereign Palestine, living side-by-side in peace and security within secure and recognized borders on the basis of the pre-1967 lines, with Jerusalem as the capital of both States.

'Resignation threat'

Govt agrees to address MQM-P's census reservations

Govt delegation agrees to resolve irregularities identified

KARACHI/ISLAMABAD: The federal government Wednesday agreed to address the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan's (MQM-P) reservations on the ongoing digital census — the seventh in the country's history — after reports surfaced that the party had asked its lawmakers to hand in their resignations.

According to MQM-P spokesperson, all aspects of the census were reviewed in a meeting held between the party and the government's delegation during which the former's delegation also presented findings of the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

The government's delegation, the spokesperson said, acknowledged MQM-P's concerns following the review. They also agreed to resolve the issues and stop the irregularities identified in the ongoing census.

The delegation — headed by the party's Convener Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui — that held a meeting with the ministers in Islamabad included Syed Mustafa Kamal, Farooq Sattar, Syed Amin Ul Haque and Javed Haneef.

The government's delegation comprised Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, Planning, Development and

Special Initiatives Minister Ahsan Iqbal, Railway Minister Khawaja Saad Rafique and Chief Commissioner for census Dr Naeem Uz Zafar.

The News reported that cracks have appeared in the ranks of MQM-P leaders over the issue of staying or leaving the coalition government amid reservations on the digital census.

As such, the party has issued two contradictory statements following a key session of its Coordination Committee. According to informed sources, various leaders of the party expressed serious reservations about the census.

They were of the view that the Jamaat-e-Islami and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf were gaining political strength over the issue of census, while the MQM-P, being a coalition partner, was finding it hard to build its narrative on the census while the elections were round the corner.

During the meeting, some lawmakers also presented their resignations to Dr Siddiqui, who chaired the meeting, which was attended by senior deputy conveners Kamal, Dr Sattar and Nasreen Jalil as well as deputy conveners Anis Kaimkhani, Abdul Waseem and others.

The initial statement issued by the party said the Coordination Committee discussed political and economic affairs of the country, census and other important issues. The party had approached various forums for rectification of the census process but they were not heard, the statement read.

However, the statement did not mention the submission of resignations by some members of the National Assembly to the party chief. It added that the party would soon announce its future course of action regarding the census and share it with the media.

Simultaneous elections in country, a constitutional obligation: Dar

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday categorically said that holding of elections simultaneously in all provinces and centre was a constitutional obligation adding the country could not afford elections in parts.

Speaking at the floor of the National Assembly, the minister said it was not for the first time that election was not being held within 90 days. In past, the election was delayed due to martyrdom of Benazir Bhutto in 2007 and due to natural calamity in 1988, he said.

He said the National Assembly has already rejected Rs 21 billion elections fund bill twice besides passing a resolution to reject a bill seeking Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

He sought the guidance of the members of the House, as the government could not release funds without approval of the National Assembly.

The minister said an amount of Rs 35 billion was being spent on the population census despite limited resources. Despite spending a hefty amount on the population census in 2017, two provinces expressed severe reservation and the then government had to convene a meeting of Council of Common Interests (CCI), he added.

He said the general elections of 2018 were held on the basis of old census due to reservations of two provinces after bringing necessary legislation.

He said the government had allocated Rs 5 billion for ECP in the fiscal

budget for the year 2022-23. The ECP had raised a demand of Rs 54 billion in the next fiscal year 2023-24 for holding general elections, he added.

However, he said the Finance Division decided to allocate Rs 47.4 billion to ECP for elections during next fiscal year 2023-24. Today, we would not face such a situation if Article 63 A was not rewritten, he said.

He said new interpretation of Article 63-A caused anomalies and it was an attempt to create anarchy in the country. The ECP sought Rs 21 billion for holding elections in Punjab and Khyber-Pakhtunkwa, he added.

He said Rs 14.4 billion additional would incur on holding separate elections in the provinces. The Finance Ministry could allocate fund for elections in the budget and without budget, allocation could only be done through supplementary grants.

The Finance Ministry mostly discouraged practice of supplementary grants in order to ensure financial discipline, he added.

He went on to say that the Finance Ministry always followed constitution and law for payment of funds. The State Bank of Pakistan (SPB) could only allocate fund but it could not released it, he added.

The Finance Division could not release funds without approval of the parliament, he added. Ishaq Dar said this august house has passed a resolution with regard to payment of funds to ECP for elections adding the Finance Ministry was bound not to pay the amount. APP

3150MW added to national grid in first year of govt

ISLAMABAD: Remaining true to its reputation of service delivery, the government of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in its first year added more than 3,000 megawatts of electricity to the national grid.

Since assuming office on April 11, 2022, the prime minister had taken major strides to fulfill his responsibility to put Pakistan on the path to energy independence. In a year, he inaugurated five important power projects, adding 3150 megawatts of energy to the national grid in an effort to meet the rising energy needs of the country.

Pakistan's energy needs surge substantially in summer and the demand and supply gap widens to thousands of megawatts.

According to figures of the Ministry of Energy, in August last year the demand for electricity peaked at 28,000 megawatts against the supply of 20,500 megawatts. The present government is focused on developing indigenous energy resources like coal to stave off the power crisis in the summer.

During his visits to Sindh in the past months, the prime minister inaugurated three 1980 megawatts coal-based power projects in Tharparkar. The projects were completed with Chinese cooperation under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project.

The projects included 330 megawatts power plant of Thar Energy, 330 megawatts Thal Nova power plant at Mithi, and 1320 megawatts Shanghai Electric Power Plant in Thar. The coal-fired power plants will generate about 15 billion units of low-cost electricity every year.

The government is keen to exploit Thar coal deposits of 175 billion tonnes, and according to energy experts if properly utilized these reserves will be sufficient to fulfill the country's electricity needs for the next 300 years. The government is considering to gradually shift the country's coal-based power

plants to Thar coal, in the process putting an end to dependence on costly imported coal. In February this year, the PM also inaugurated K-3 the third unit of the Karachi Nuclear Power Plant which will produce 1,100 megawatts of electricity.

Experts say Pakistan has an untapped hydroelectricity potential of 60,000 megawatts. Taking a step towards hydropower development, in December 2022, the prime minister launched the two refurbished units of Mangla power station. The units were upgraded with the financial assistance of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), adding 70 megawatts to the transmission system.

Pakistan has an annual energy import bill of \$ 27 billion and it urgently needed to develop its alternative domestic sources of energy including solar, wind, hydel, and nuclear to counter the issue of alarming current account deficits. Pakistan's energy sector at present heavily relied on oil and gas imports. The Shehbaz government has taken significant steps to reduce this dependency and move towards local clean energy sources.

First the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) in April signed with the government a US\$240 million loan agreement to support Pakistan's Mohmand Multipurpose Dam Project (MMDP). Then this month the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) also approved the Diamer Bhasha Hydro Power Generation Project (DBGP) at a cost of over Rs. 1.2 trillion. APP

The Sharif government has already secured the cooperation and investment of Chinese companies which are engaged in the construction of these two major hydro projects in Pakistan, to help it in overcoming power shortages with low-cost and sustainable energy.

Provision of Rs21 billion to ECP

Cabinet approves referring of finance ministry's summary to parliament

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday approved referring of the Finance Ministry's summary to the Parliament for provision of Rs 21 billion to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) for holding of general elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces.

The cabinet also approved financing facility for electric bikes and rickshaws for increasing their common use. A loan of Rs 500,000 would be available under the Prime Minister's Youth Business and Agriculture Loan Scheme at zero mark-up, which would help in saving significantly the country's

spending made on the import of costly fuel.

The meeting expressed its deep grief and sorrow over loss of precious lives in a blast in the Counter Terrorism Department Police Station, Kabal, Swat, and offered Feteiha for the martyrs and prayed for the early recovery of the injured, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

Provision of Rs21 bn to ECP; Cabinet approves referring of finance ministry's summary to parliament

The prime minister directed the Ministry of Interior for inclusion of a Federal Government representative in the investigation process of

the CTD Swat blast.

He also directed for grant of similar Shuhada package to the deceased in the blast as had been given to those of the Peshawar Police Lines.

The cabinet gave a nod to the legislation over Invest Pakistan initiative on the recommendation of the Board of Investment.

Under the legislation, an 'Investment Pakistan' office would be established under the BOI that would function under public-private partnership.

The proposed legislation would help ensure provision of investment-friendly services, it was added.

The meeting also sanctioned appointment of Syedain Raza Zaidi, a Grade 21 officer of Inland Revenue, on deputation as Karachi Port Trust chairman on the recommendation of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs.

Provision of Rs21 bn to ECP; Cabinet approves referring of finance ministry's summary to parliament

The cabinet approved guidelines for carrying out amendments under its earlier decision of 08-11-2017. Under the decision, it was made mandatory for all the ministries and divisions to carry out amendments in their relevant acts and rules by replacing



the words 'Federal Government' with 'appropriate authorities' for usage.

The meeting ratified the deci-

sions of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) on April 13. These decisions included declaration of Angor Adda Custom

Station in South Waziristan as 'Export Land Route' for Afghanistan and the Central Asian States. APP

Jl struggling for Islamic system in country: Siraj-ul-Haq

Aziz Ur Rehman Mujahid

KHARIAN: Amir Jamaat-e-Islami Siraj-ul-Haq has warned the politicians that if they miss the opportunity to agree on the date of the election, then maybe there will be municipal elections, not national or provincial assemblies. Convincing the allies for the election is a test of the Prime Minister's ability. The three-judge bench of the Supreme Court on the election date also has the option of a full-court session acceptable to all. Addressing a public meeting in Lala Musa, he expressed regret over the Swat blast and said that why was it careless to keep such a large amount of weapons near the school and among the population? Swat, a tourist destination thousand times more beautiful than Switzerland, has been marred by blood and fire.

Amir Jamaat said that 75 years have passed, from the governments of the generals to the so-called political



rulers, everyone has deceived the people. He showed a false dream, but everyone had the same agenda.

The rulers' fights are for personal interests; they want a milk feeder from the establishment and bow to the IMF. Should Kashmir be handed over to India or to Dr. Aafia, the policy of the ruling parties remains the same, there is no shortage of resources in the country, corruption, bad governance and unfair distribution of resources are the problem. I have been finance minister twice and based

on my experience, I say that Pakistan does not have external debt, it needs competent and honest leadership and this leadership can only be given by Jamaat-e-Islami. The delegation of overseas Pakistanis said that they can send 50 billion dollars instead of 31 billion annually.

Coming to power, Jamaat-e-Islami will restore the confidence of overseas Pakistanis and they will be issued Mohsin Pakistan Card. Only Jamaat-e-Islami can make the country debt and corruption free. If

the loans were the solution to the problems, the problems would have been solved with the money borrowed from the IMF 23 times, but the disease increased, at this time the total annual loss of the national institutions is 500 billion rupees, the whole problem is mismanagement and corruption, the 19th grade in the country. Crores have been recovered from the water tank of the officer.

Amir Jamaat said that Jamaat-e-Islami is struggling for Islamic system in the country, we want supremacy

of constitution and law. The nation should decide what kind of Pakistan to give to the future generations, this country is the blessing of Allah, despite being rich in resources, poverty is dancing here, at first it was difficult to live, now it has become difficult for the people to die. According to business organizations, 70% of Pakistanis did not buy new clothes on Eid, 85% of the population is deprived of clean drinking water, the nation should support Jamaat-e-Islami to change this corrupt system.

The Jalsa was attended by a large number of people belonging to different sects and ideologies to whom the Amir Jamaat congratulated them on Eid and expressed their best wishes. Amir Jamaat-e-Islami Punjab North Dr. Tariq Saleem, Chaudhry Ansar Mehmood, Hafiz Ajmal, Allama Naveed Iqbal, Malik Arslan Javed and others were also present on the occasion.

Wheat procurement campaign is going on at 48 centers in Multan division: Amir Khattak

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: The wheat procurement campaign is going on at 48 centers of the division. While presiding over the review meeting on the wheat procurement campaign, Commissioner Aamir Khattak said that 340661.6 tons have been purchased so far across the division. 478069.4 ton bardana has been released. Taking action against wheat hoarders, 10 FIRs were filed. Action was taken against 191 vehicles involved in wheat smuggling.



While taking action against wheat smuggling, 6771.1 metric tons of wheat was seized. He further said that strict action should be taken against the mafia involved in wheat smuggling. A target of 6 lakh 51 thousand metric tons of wheat procurement was fixed across the division. He said that The wheat procurement campaign should be speeded up. Officials of the relevant departments were present in the meeting.

Civil work Of Nishtar Hospital 2 Should Completed Before 30 May: Amir Khattak



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Commissioner Multan Division Engineer Aamir Khattak visited the under construction Nishtar 2 Hospital and ordered labor in 3 shifts and said that the civil work should be completed before 30 May. A report on work progress will be taken on Nishtar 2 on a daily basis. Sewage, dyeing, sealing work should be started soon. Aamir Khattak said that all the funds for the project are being provided by the Punjab government

Full support is being provided by the Commissioner's Office. Delay in project completion is unacceptable. Vice Chancellor Nishtar University Professor Dr. Rana Altaf, IDP, officials were also present on this occasion

Collision between Mazda and HIACE



Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: Collision between Mazda and HIACE on Gojra Pansera Road where gas cylinder burst in HIACE, 7 people were burnt, more than 20 were injured.

According to the details, a Mazda No. 4520 FDD was coming from Faisalabad to Gojra when it collided with the HIACE Wagon No. 4557 SAR going from Gojra to Faisalabad near Chak No. 278 /JB Dharamkot Gojra, Pansera Road area of the jurisdiction in Police Station of Nowan Lahore. It caught fire in the Mazda while the cylinder of the HIACE Wagon.

The explosion ignited a fire that quickly engulfed the entire vehicle and more than 25 people in the HIACE Wagon got burnt, out of which 6 people died on the spot while the driver of the Mazda Dala also died, making the number of dead seven. On receiving the information, the police and 1122 vehicles reached on the spot, who while carrying out rescue operations, shifted the seriously injured to different hospitals, police station Nawwan, Lahore police took the bodies of seven dead people into custody and transferred them to Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Gojra, two of them, Muhammad Akram and Dastgir, residents of Chaks have been identified from burnt out while other corpses are under the process of identification that is still going on. Both vehicles were badly damaged by police informations. Men, children and women are among the seriously injured.

As per informations, M. Afzal s/o Abdul Aziz Chak # 351 /GB M. Sabar S/o Nanah 24y Sadhar Adda Suleman S/o Mustafa 26y Chak# 275 /JB Babra Yasmeen D/o Ali Hassan 46y Chak# 367 /GB Basharat S/o Abdul Rasheed 35y Chak# 179 /GB Ifikhar S/o Nisar 50y Katcha Gojra Shahzad S/o Allah Rakha 40y Pansara found dead. Furthermore, 04 burnt bodies were pulled out from HIACE and while 01 burnt body was pulled out from Mini Mazda while 02 people died due to head injuries which were pulled out by local people, so total 7 people died while 13 injured persons were shifted to nearby hospital THQ Gojra, including 11 males, 03 women and 01 child are included while the burnt bodies could not be identified.

Police say driver involved in Thatta accident arrested

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The Karachi police on Wednesday arrested the driver of a truck involved in a road accident in Thatta, leading to the death of nine Karachi picnickers.

According to the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Adil Chandio, the driver Mohammad Raees had a learning driving license. He said that the accident occurred due to the negligence of the truck driver. SSP Chandio further shared that all nine people were friends belonging to the same locality of Karachi.

The truck driver involved in the incident had fled the scene after the accident.

At least nine picnickers were killed when a vehicle they were travelling in rammmed into a truck on Hyderabad-Thatta road near Chilya. According to rescue sources, the incident occurred near Thatta's Chilya area when a van collided with a truck, resulting in the death of nine people. Eight people died on the spot while another succumbed to his injuries at the hospital.

All of the passengers who lost their lives were residents of Karachi and were en route to the Kenjhar Lake for a picnic, said police.

Meanwhile, Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah took notice of the accident and ordered DC Thatta to ensure medical facilities to the injured.

Funeral prayer

DERA ALLAH YAR: People are offering the funeral prayer of martyred police personnel, which were killed by robbers, during operation, in City.



Photo: Online

Monkeypox in Pakistan:

Here is what you should know

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has detected its first two cases of Monkeypox or Mpx among people who came from abroad this week. Here is what you should know about the feared disease.

Monkeypox is an illness caused by the monkeypox virus. It is a viral zoonotic infection, meaning that it can spread from animals to humans. It can also spread from humans to other humans and from the environment to humans.

The monkeypox virus was discovered in Denmark (1958) in monkeys kept for research and the first reported human case of mpx was a nine-month-old boy in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC, 1970). Mpx can spread from person to person or occasionally from animals to people. Following eradication of smallpox in 1980 and the end of smallpox vaccination worldwide, mpx steadily emerged in central, east and west Africa. A global outbreak occurred in 2022-2023. The natural reservoir of the virus is unknown - various small mammals such as squirrels and monkeys are susceptible.

Symptoms

Monkeypox can cause a range of signs and symptoms. While some people have less severe symptoms, others may develop more serious illness and need care in a health facility. Those typically at higher risk include people who are pregnant, children and persons that are immunocompromised.

The most common symptoms of monkeypox identified during the 2022 outbreak include fever, headache, muscle aches, back pain, low energy and swollen lymph nodes, followed or accompanied by the development of a rash which may last for two to three weeks. The rash can affect the face, palms of the hands, soles of the feet, groin, genital and/or anal regions. It may also be found in the mouth, throat,

anus or vagina, or on the eyes. The number of sores can range from one to several thousand. Sores on the skin begin flat, then fill with liquid before they crust over, dry up and fall off, with a fresh layer of skin forming underneath.

There are ongoing studies to keep track of and better understand symptoms during this new outbreak, including what parts of the body can be affected and how long symptoms may last.

Anyone who has symptoms that could be monkeypox or who has been in contact with someone who has monkeypox should call or visit a health care provider and seek their advice.

Symptoms usually go away on their own or with supportive care, such as medication for pain or fever. People remain infectious until all of the sores have crusted over, the scabs have fallen off and a new layer of skin has formed underneath.

Can someone die from Monkeypox?

Complications from monkeypox include secondary skin infections, pneumonia, confusion, and eye problems. More recent complications include proctitis (sores and swelling inside the rectum that cause pain) and pain or difficulty when urinating. In the past, between 1% to 10% of people with monkeypox have died. It is important to note that death rates in different settings may differ due to a number of factors, such as access to health care. These figures may be an overestimate because surveillance for monkeypox has generally been limited in the past.

In the newly affected countries where the current outbreak is taking place, some deaths have been reported. This underscores the fact that monkeypox is a serious disease and that people should continue to do everything they can to protect themselves and others.

Who is at risk of catching monkeypox?

People who live with or have close

contact (including sexual contact) with someone who has monkeypox are most at risk. Anyone living with someone who has monkeypox should take steps to reduce the risk of becoming infected. A person who has a monkeypox infection should be assessed by a health care provider to determine if they are well enough to be cared for at home and if isolation can be safely managed at home. Health workers should follow infection prevention and control measures to protect themselves while caring for patients with monkeypox. Newborn infants, young children and people with underlying immune deficiencies may be at higher risk of more serious symptoms, and in rare cases, death from monkeypox. Preg-



nancy can also increase one's risk of adverse events such as miscarriage or stillbirth.

People who were vaccinated against smallpox may have some protection against monkeypox. However, younger people are unlikely to have been vaccinated against smallpox because smallpox vaccination stopped in most settings worldwide after the disease was eradicated in 1980. People who have been vaccinated against smallpox should continue to take precautions to protect themselves and others.

How does Monkeypox spread?

Monkeypox can spread to people when they come into physical contact with an infected animal such as a non-human primate, terrestrial rodent, antelope, gazelle, or tree squirrel - for example through bites or scratches, or during activities such as hunting, skinning, trapping, cooking, playing with

carcasses. The virus can also be caught through eating infected animals if they are not cooked thoroughly. The risk of catching monkeypox from animals can be reduced by avoiding unprotected contact with wild animals, especially those that are sick or dead (including their meat and blood). In countries where animals carry monkeypox, any foods containing animal parts or meat should be cooked thoroughly before eating.

What to do when you have Monkeypox?

People with monkeypox should avoid scratching their skin and take care of their rash by cleaning their hands before and after touching sores and keeping skin dry and uncovered (unless they are unavoidably in a room with someone else, in which case they should cover it with clothing or a bandage until they are able to isolate again). The rash can be kept clean with sterilised water or antiseptic. Saltwater rinses can be used for sores in the mouth, and warm baths with baking soda and Epsom salts can help with sores on the body. Paracetamol can be used to help manage the pain caused by sores, if needed. If stronger pain medicine is needed, advice should be sought from a health professional.

Many years of research on therapeutics for smallpox have led to development of products that may also be useful for treating monkeypox. An antiviral that was developed to treat smallpox (tecovirimat) was approved in January 2022 by the European Medicines Agency for the treatment of monkeypox under exceptional circumstances. Experience with these therapeutics in the context of an outbreak of monkeypox is limited. For this reason, their use is usually accompanied by enrolment in a clinical trial or expanded access protocol accompanied by collection of information that will improve knowledge on how best to use them in future.



Islamabad
15° - 23° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	3:55 am
Zohr	12:06 pm
Asr	4:51 pm
Maghrib	6:47 pm
Isha	8:17 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

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PIA Flight Info	114
PIA Cargo	9280979
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Railway Exchange	9270831-5
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CAA	9281092

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MH	561116
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital	9270907-11
DHQ	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7
PIMS	9261170-79
Polyclinic	9218300-09
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CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224
Rawal Town	5773343

COMPLAINTS

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

AIOU commences final exams today



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is commencing final examinations of different programs today (April 27) including Associate degree in Arts (B.A), Associate degree in commerce (B.Com), Associate degree in Education, Associate degree (Human Resource Management and Islamic Banking & Marketing), B.Ed, BBA, BS (Accounting and Finance) and BS (ODL) programs which were offered in autumn 2022 semester.

According to Controller Examinations, these exams were scheduled to be held on April 25 but due to Eid Holidays the exams of April 25 and 26 have been rescheduled and will be conducted on June 20 and 21. Roll number slips are uploaded to students' CMS portal and dispatched to the students at their addresses as well.

Caretaker CM Punjab instructs completion of Kalma Chowk remodelling

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi visited the Kalma Chowk Remodeling and CBD Punjab Boulevard project in Lahore today to review the development progress. This visit was in continuation of the recent visit by the Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif to the same site.

During the visit, CEO CBD Punjab, Mr. Imran Amin, briefed the Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab, on the progress of the project. He informed the CM that the project is nearing completion. The project is expected to bring a significant change to the area, with improved traffic flow and aesthetic appeal. Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab instructed to complete the project and open the Ali Zaib Road barrel for traffic by May 5, 2023, at any cost.

Caretaker Minister for Housing & Urban Development Barrister Syed Azfar Ali Nasir, Chief Secretary Punjab, Zahid Akhtar Zaman, Secretary Housing and Urban Development Punjab, Captain. (R) Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, Secretary Planning, Muhammad Sohail Anwar Choudhary, Commis-



sioner Lahore, Muhammad Ali Randhawa, Deputy Commissioner Lahore, Rafia Haider, CEO CBD Punjab, Mr. Imran Amin, COO CBD Punjab, Brigadier (R) Mansoor Janjua MD Wasa,

Ghufraan Chaudhry, Executive Director Commercial CBD Punjab, Muhammad Omer, Executive Director Technical CBD Punjab, Riaz Hussain, CCPO Lahore, SP Traffic Police Lahore, staff

members from CBD Punjab, NLC and NESPAK, accompanied the Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab, during his visit. The Chief Minister expressed his satisfaction with the progress made thus

far and emphasized the importance of completing the project on time.

The Kalma Chowk Remodeling and CBD Punjab Boulevard project is part of the government's efforts to improve infrastructure and development in the province.

The project aims to provide a modern and efficient transportation system while also improving the overall aesthetic of the area.

The Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab said that he has a firm belief that CBD Punjab will complete the project in the stipulated time and will work with the same passion on the Ali Zaib Road barrel as they have done on Kalma Chowk Underpass.

The media and the public have been eagerly following the progress of the project, and the Chief Minister's visit has further highlighted the government's commitment to improving infrastructure and development in the province.

The project is a testament to the government's vision for a modern and developed Punjab, and the Chief Minister's visit today has once again demonstrated the government's commitment to achieving this vision.

Summer drink

ISLAMABAD: Vendors is making and selling sugarcane juice during hot weather at his roadside setup at F-6 Markaz, in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

A high-level meeting was held under the chairmanship of PM AJK

Abdul Majeed Tahir

ISLAMABAD: A high-level meeting was held in Jammu and Kashmir House Islamabad under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister of the Azad State of Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar-ul-Haq. Most Senior Minister Colonel (Retd) Waqar Ahmad Noor, Government Minister Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, Principal Secretary/Additional Chief Secretary Development Fayyaz Ali Abbasi, Secretary Finance Ismatullah Shah, Secretary Planning and Development and officers of the Planning and Development Department attended the meeting. In the meeting, Secretary Planning and Development



gave a detailed briefing regarding the disbursement of funds and expenditure against the development budget of the current financial year.

Apart from this, he explained that till the end of the third quarter of the current financial year, 11 billion 21 crore rupees have been spent against a total of 16 billion 80 crore rupees. Thus, in view of the availability of less funds against the development projects, the completion of the projects is

being delayed and the development goals are being adversely affected. The Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir strictly directed that the timely and proper utilization of the funds spent against the projects should be ensured till May 15, 2023. Otherwise, such departments will not only be liable to impeachment, but after the due date the unused funds will be transferred to those departments which require additional funds to pay the arrears

so as to enable the provision of better services to the public. The Premier directed that the Departments should increase their capacity to utilize existing resources.

Laziness will not be tolerated. Each person will have to justify their presence. The Finance Secretary then gave a briefing with reference to the Funds. The Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir directed that the details of the additional funds given by the finance department in all the secretariats, including the Prime Minister's Secretariat, along with the relevant records and the process under which the funds were approved, should be submitted to the Prime Minister within 3 days.

Issued instructions to strategy launch e-registration system for property registry

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: The Additional Chief Secretary South Punjab Capt.(Retd) Saqib Zafar has issued instructions to prepare a strategy to launch e-registration system for property registry in all the districts of South Punjab and has said that e-registration system will bring transparency in the registry process. He said public complaints about corruption and fraud in the purchase and sale of property will be redressed by e-registration system.

He was addressing a meeting held regarding improving good governance and service delivery in different departments. All the administrative secretaries of South Punjab participated in the meeting. Additional Chief Secretary South Punjab said e-registration system will be linked with e-stamp, land record management system and NADRA. There will be no possibility of tax evasion and loss of documents of property in e-registration system, he added. Capt.(Retd) Saqib Zafar said e-registration will also help in streamlining the real estate business. He stressed to take all possible steps for training of revenue staff and also asked to utilize the experience of the ongoing e-registration pilot project in Sahiwal Division.

In the meeting, the wheat purchase campaign and the sale of sugar at the control rate were also reviewed. It was decided to take further steps to make the treatment facilities more effective at health centers in remote rural areas and to take strict action against absent doctors and paramedical staff.

In the meeting, it was also decided to further improve the facilities available in government schools, to plant trees beyond the target in South Punjab and to speed up the plantation campaign in parks, schools and colleges. Additional Chief Secretary South Punjab addressed the meeting via video link. The Secretary Housing and Urban Development Qaiser Saleem, Secretary Forests, Wildlife and Fisheries Sarfraz Magsi, Secretary Higher Education Altaf Baloch, Secretary Schools Education Rana Saleem, Secretary Primary Health Care Mehr Muhammad Hayat Lak and Secretary Specialized Health Care Afzal Nasir Khan participated in the meeting while

Secretary Local Government and Secretary Irrigation attended the meeting via video link from Bahawalpur. Additional Secretary South Punjab Muhammad Farooq Dogar, Deputy Secretary Abdul Saboor Thakur and Section Officer Muhammad Ahmad Khan were also present in the meeting.

Census teams will continue to launch verification of the data collected by the PBS field team

Raaza Naqvi

ATTOCK: The census teams will continue to launch verification of the data collected by the PBS field team from 11 cities including Attock Gujranwala, Sialkot, Jhelum, Gujrat, Sheikhupura, Chakwal, Peshawar, Dera Ismail Khan, Abbottabad and Tank in pursuance of the extended program 7th Population and Housing Census till April 30, 2023. Sources of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics told that the government on Tuesday announced a five-day extension in field work of the 7th Population and Housing Census till April 30 after the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) field teams observed 'negative growth' in 12 major urban areas and needed 'data verification' in 11 major cities of the country. The areas where the census timeline has been extended include Quetta, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Karachi Central, Karachi South, Karachi West, Karachi East, Malir, Kemari, Korangi, Hyderabad and Islamabad. PBS spokesman Muhammad Sarwar Gondal said in a press statement.

Similarly, he said, verification of the data collected by the PBS field team from 11 cities including Gujranwala, Sialkot, Jhelum, Gujrat, Sheikhupura, Attock, Chakwal, Peshawar, Dera Ismail Khan, Abbottabad and Tank was needed.

The spokesman said the extension in the census timeline (from April 26 to April 30) was aimed at "complete coverage and assurance of no leftover structure/houses in the selected districts/big cities where negative growth rate or very slow growth rate has been observed." He also asked the provincial governments of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to continue the physical verification process in 11 identified cities to ensure 'smooth coverage, sources added.

A man shot dead his father

Raaza Naqvi

ATTOCK: A man has shot dead his father over domestic dispute in village Tajik in the limits of Hazro Police station on Wednesday, Police sources said. Police while quoting the family of the victim has said that 22 years old Atif Usman who demands money from his parents on different pretexts demanded money from his father Muhammad Usman on Wednesday.

As he declined the demand, the man took out his 30 bore pistol and shot his father and fled away leaving his father in pool of blood who later succumbed to injuries. The accused managed to escape from the scene successfully.

Hazro Police handed over the body after autopsy at THQ hospital and launched hunt to arrest the accused after registration of a murder case against the accused.

Energy-efficient Ericsson radios win Red Dot Product Design Award

Commerce Report

KARACHI: Ericsson has once again shown that its industry design innovation is top-notch by winning this year's Red Dot Product Design Award for two energy-efficient 5G radios.

In addition to the previously won 14 Red Dot awards, Ericsson has clinched the Red Dot Product Design Award 2023 for its dual-band Radio 4490 and ultra-lightweight Massive MIMO Radio AIR 3268 from the Ericsson Radio System portfolio. The latest distinction shows that apart from the aesthetics, Ericsson is successfully carrying out a design strategy that has energy efficiency in mind.

David Hammarwall, Head of Product Area Networks, Ericsson, says: "The Red Dot Design Awards for Radio 4490 and AIR 3268 are solid evidence that the effort we put into the human-centered design of our portfolio really pays off. With reduced



weight and power consumption, we are not only making products that are easy to carry and install but also more energy-efficient compared to previous generations."

Dating back to 1955, the Red Dot Design Award is one of the biggest design competitions in the world,

with around 20,000 entries per year. The jury, comprising international experts, evaluates products based on various criteria, constantly adapting to new technical, social, economic, and ecological requirements.

Commenting on the awards, Dr. Peter Zec, Founder and CEO, Red Dot,

says: "Companies and design studios from all over the world faced the professional judgment of the Red Dot Jury, international experts who examined a remarkable number of products in the course of the competition. In an evaluation process lasting several days, the submissions were thoroughly reviewed and assessed according inter alia to their design quality and degree of innovation. The fact that you emerged victorious from such a strong group of participants is testimony to the extraordinary quality of your products - a wonderful achievement!"

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Demonising Muslim Emperor Aurangzeb is BJP Election Strategy to mobilise Hindu nationalist voters in India

In 1618 a child by the name of Muhi al-Din Muhammad was born to the Emperor Shah Jahan the son of Emperor Jahangir who formed part of the Mughal House. The child was later in his life referred to as Emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir who became the most feared and formidable leader of India belonging to the Timurid Dynasty. Emperor Aurangzeb ruled for forty-nine years over a population of 150 million people. I am not going to outline the piety of Emperor Aurangzeb as that is well documented in history that he was a very pious and fair person. This article will provide a different point of view to the recent political movement in India that looks to remove the identity and history surrounding the legacy of Emperor Aurangzeb from its history books.

History is an important part of understanding of past world events, as it provides a set of facts from a point of view from one or more individuals or parties. It is concerning when the world has lived with one set of facts about the accomplishments and achievements of a great ruler as Emperor Aurangzeb for hundreds of years, and now the Hindu nationalists having failed to win the academic argument surrounding the reign of Emperor Aurangzeb and failed to gather support academically, they have resorted to bullying and oppression by openly calling for the removal of Emperor Aurangzeb's identity from Indian history. This is a difficult task as benefits India enjoys today was a direct result of Emperor Aurangzeb's policies and laws during his forty-nine years reign as Emperor not to mention that Muslims ruled India for six centuries, and after the death of Emperor Aurangzeb, the British soon after colo-

nised India. Hindu nationalists wish to destroy the legacy of Emperor Aurangzeb and find any achievement of the dead Emperor as repulsive. Let us take an example. Under Emperor Aurangzeb's rulership, Emperor Aurangzeb had expanded the empire to the greatest extent which is enjoyed today by India. If the desecration of Emperor Aurangzeb's achievements and legacy is to be achieved, then is it not rightful that the land amassed under this reign be removed from the Indian territory. I believe the fundamentalist Hindus would object to that which then would become clear that the views harboured by the fundamentalist Hindus are politically and religiously motivated rather than looking to correct the wrongs of the past such as the removal of statues of slave owners in the West. It is quite clear that the motivation behind the destruction of Emperor Aurangzeb's achievements is for a greater plan that will lead to justifying the destruction of law-abiding Muslim homes, their way of life and beliefs. History is a great teacher and the fundamentalist Hindus in India need to be reminded that those that look to ethnically cleanse religious groups or harbour ambitions that outweigh their worth and strength have always failed.

Emperor Aurangzeb accomplishments to name a few were as follows: he had amassed an empire that covered what is modern India today. Throughout Indian history there were several kingdoms and territory, but Emperor Aurangzeb was able

to bring entire India under a single banner for the first time in human history. He had created an economy that contained 25% of the world's wealth. His economy was ten times greater than that of France. He was in constant war to defend Indian territory from outside forces and internal threats. He passed laws and policies to protect and maintain the shrines of worship. He invested heavily in military equipment and personnel. He maintained relationships with neighbouring nations. Emperor Aurangzeb's achievements are profited by the Indian leadership even today and for Prime Minister Modi to light a fuse to raise unsubstantiated religious sentiment with the view that trouble can occur which will lead the Indian leadership to enact laws which may restrict religious movement and practice in the name of protecting civil liberties and human rights. This idea has been plagiarised from some nations in the West which some fundamentalist Hindus failed to see that those certain Western nations failed in their plans to control and restrict religious beliefs.

Emperor Aurangzeb was the most successful Emperor in the history of India. Even today, with all the modern technology at the Indian government disposal, they have not been able to reach the economic and military standard of Emperor Aurangzeb. It appears that the Indian government and its fundamentalist supporters have accepted their failure to reach the heights of Emperor Aurangzeb so they have decided that it would allow them to sleep better

at night if Emperor Aurangzeb's legacy and name is removed from the history books. Although the Indian government may achieve the eradication of Emperor Aurangzeb identity and legacy, but there are those Hindus that are honest, fair and they will not accept a 'big chunk' of their history to be replaced with blank pages which will dilute their other rather accepted arguments of the colonial abuses of Indians under the British rule. Emperor Aurangzeb has achieved his achievements, and accomplished what he was set out to accomplish. It is rather premature for the Indian government to accept and action the removal of history from their past with a view that they can condition the public to believe that Emperor Aurangzeb was a tyrant on very thin evidence and that he is to be reviled but truth is his achievements creating the modern India which all Indians enjoy today. It seems that only after the death of Emperor Aurangzeb the British was able to colonise India. It seems he was feared by the enemies of India at that time and his presence protected the whole of India. I shall leave you with some words of wisdom: to create societal change does not always mean it is beneficial change, rather at times it means the person seeking the change, only he may be upset with order of things, and his upset will bring chaos to others who believe in his message but no to the lengths he is able to go to achieve his version of reality. Emperor Aurangzeb last words were 'Azma fasad baq!' which is said to mean 'After me, the chaos', and those words are true even today for India.

Jawaid Iqbal is former adviser to Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir.



Jawaid Iqbal

Unity key for the progress and prosperity

The success and progress of a nation is dependent on its ability to unify its citizens and work towards a common goal. A unified nation can overcome challenges, achieve goals, and promote the well-being of its people.

When a nation is divided, it can lead to conflicts, lack of cooperation, and the inability to make important decisions. Unity, on the other hand, promotes a sense of shared purpose and fosters collaboration among people from different backgrounds, beliefs, and opinions.

In order to achieve unity, it is important to promote respect for diversity, encourage open dialogue, and work towards finding common ground. A nation that embraces unity can harness the collective talents and strengths of its citizens, and channel them towards achieving greater prosperity and progress for all.

Like any other nation, Pakistan can benefit greatly from unity among its people. Pakistan is a diverse country with different ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups, and fostering unity among them is crucial for its progress and stability.

Unity can help Pakistan overcome the challenges it faces, such as poverty, corruption, terrorism, and political instability. It can also help in building a sense of national identity and pride, and promote a culture of inclusivity and respect for diversity.

To promote unity in Pakistan, it is important to address the root causes of division, such as discrimination, inequality, and marginalization. Encouraging dialogue, promoting education, and empowering marginalized communities can also help in fostering a sense of unity among Pakistanis.

Additionally, promoting a shared sense of purpose and working towards common goals can also help in promoting unity in Pakistan. This requires the cooperation of the government, civil society, and the private sector, along with the active participation of citizens.

Therefore, unity is essential for the progress and prosperity of Pakistan. By promoting inclusivity, respect for diversity, and a shared sense of purpose, Pakistan can overcome its challenges and build a brighter future for its people.



Pakistan Railways and Development Authorities

A good planning makes the foundation of projects strong in the development of the country. Railway lines were initially laid between the major cities of Pakistan during the British rule. The British started the construction of railway lines in the areas of Pakistan such as Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta, and Multan etc. Apart from these, they built railway lines from Bombay to Calcutta and from Madras to Calcutta.

The British started building railway lines in the areas of Pakistan 170 years ago during their rule. In 1853, it was started the first railway line at the entrance of the city of Karachi in Pakistan. After that, railway lines were built in different parts of Pakistan. During the time it was constructed the first railway line from Lahore to Wazirabad in 1858. This was followed by railways between Lahore and Amritsar in 1861, between Peshawar and London in 1885, between Lahore and Karachi in 1892, between Karachi and Quetta in 1898, and between Lahore and Delhi in 1900. Lines were built between in the early period; railway lines were built to settle cities like Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, Multan, Skardu, Wahari, Jhelum and Bahawalpur.

In my country, development authorities are present in every city but it seems that they do not work according to any future plan. It is a little example, everyone knows that

one day a road is repaired, and then in the next few days some organization digs away to lay wires and any other work etc. There are innumerable works that can be seen everywhere at all times in our cities. Major highways are widened again and again to handle the increased traffic. This is all because we did not plan at once with the future in mind. We don't do it, which also saves capital and time. The big projects of our country are still made during the era of the whites. Despite the passage of more than 170 years, we have not made any changes in them. And not have taken some measures to correct their condition. We are spending time by following the policy of "Dang Tapao". At the time we are walking on the same roads that were laid down by the centuries ago. The system that was one hundred and seventy years ago and it is still the same today. The railway stations that were then are still the same today. Especially in the category of railway lines, we have not done any sufficient work. During the past time, the railway lines were laid in terms of time and population. The residents were safe and far away from the railway lines. The population of the country is increasing day by day.

The population of our country Pakistan, which is said to be 3% of

the world's population. The population of our country has almost doubled in the last few years and is likely to increase many times in the coming time. According to an estimate, in 1987, the population of our country was about 101 million, while in 2015, according to a careful estimate, the population of this country was 192 million. According to a report, the population of our country was 208 million in 2018 and today it is more than 220 million. According to the report issued by the Statistical Institute, the population of Pakistan has exceeded 22 million, the country's population is estimated to be 224 million 25 thousand 254. Obviously, it is necessary to settle residential projects with the growing population.

Similarly, there are many complaints of citizens that railway tickets are not issued based on seat numbers, there are seat numbers in the compartments of the coaches, but no seats are being given according to that while issuing tickets. As a result if there is space for a thousand people in the cars, then the people are being humiliated by issuing multiple tickets. At this time, the same situation is also happening at the time of departure of the trains that men, women and old people have to stand for many hours to travel are forced to along

with this, tickets are also issued at the coming stations. When asked to the railway employees, they say that we are forced that people come many hours in advance and sit in the compartments without tickets. Verbal is an indication of another mistake because earlier platform tickets were also issued and no one was allowed to enter the stations without a ticket, now there is no restriction on entry. If the railway company wants to earn more profit, increase the number of bogies to facilitate the passengers. People should not be put in trouble by issuing tickets on tickets. After a period in the country, there is a need for reforms in the railway system to nationalize the travel facilities. The development of this institution cannot be highlighted by building museums by small and big railways.

Today, the two hundred years old railway system is a huge museum. If we have made progress in this system, it is that we have changed its name from Pakistan Western Railway to Pakistan Railway. It is the responsibility of the institutions to secure railway lines near and between settlements and societies on both sides. Or at least the concerned development authorities and concerned bodies should oblige the societies to make possible safety arrangements to save human lives on both sides of the railway lines passing through or near residential areas in different parts of the country.



Javed Ullah Raja

Sudan crisis: Stalemate in Khartoum is bad news for Al-Burhan

Osama Al-Sharif

As the conflict in Sudan entered its second week, punctuated by short-lived truces, the battle for control of the capital Khartoum was inconclusive, with both sides in the inter-ecine war claiming to have the upper hand. But as foreign missions are evacuated and doubts persist over diplomatic efforts to enforce a ceasefire, various possible outcomes are now unfolding and none are good for the future of the country.

As of Monday — before the latest attempt at a ceasefire came into effect overnight — battles between the Sudanese national army and the Rapid Support Forces were raging in and around key positions, including the military headquarters, the presidential palace and the international airport. The fact that fighting continued at these strategic locations indicated that neither side had been able to move beyond day one of the war. This is a worrying sign for the better-equipped and better-organized national army.

The RSF has been able to use its experience in urban warfare to entrench its fighters inside heavily populated neighborhoods of the capital and neighboring Omdurman, undermining the army's ability to use fighter jets and helicopters, as well as heavy armor. The most apt description of the situation in the capital — for now — is that there is a stalemate and, in strategic terms, this is better for the RSF.

And here is the dilemma for Al-Burhan. Almost all countries that have commented on the crisis appealed to both sides to cease fighting. None, at least publicly, have taken his side. This works well for Dagalo and undermines Al-Burhan's claim that he represents legitimacy.

There are several scenarios that will likely unfold in the coming days and weeks if the current stalemate lingers. One scenario, which is the most optimistic, is that the army will eventually retake most

of Khartoum, forcing the RSF to flee to the provinces, especially Darfur, which is Dagalo's tribal and military base. In the process, the army will extend its control over most of the country, engaging the RSF in other urban centers.

Only then might Al-Burhan yield to domestic and international pressure to accelerate a process of handing power to a civilian government, which in turn can negotiate with Dagalo about a peaceful settlement. It would be difficult for Dagalo to reject a civilian administration in Khartoum, since he supported the Framework Agreement and claimed that Al-Burhan was about to renege on his commitments.

Another scenario suggests that, as the fighting continues without a decisive conclusion, non-Sudanese players may step in to back either one or both parties, thus dragging the country into a never-ending proxy war. This is a dangerous possibility that could come true the longer the conflict continues.

And if the above scenario begins to take place, an even more sinister development could unfold. The Juba Agreement could fall apart and separatist groups could stir trouble in Darfur, the Blue Nile state, South Kordofan and the eastern provinces. With a weak central government and a distracted national army, the fear is that Sudan's territorial integrity will slowly unravel. The prospect of a civil war igniting as a result is distressing to say the least.

A weak and disintegrated Sudan is bad news for Egypt, but not so bad for other neighbors like Ethiopia, Eritrea and Chad. Certainly, the reverberations would be felt across Africa. And one should not forget about the dubious role that Israel might play in weakening Egypt's southern neighbor.

It is imperative that the battle for Khartoum is swiftly won by the national army, if the Framework Agreement has any chance of being implemented. The military stalemate is a bad omen for the country and its future. (Courtesy: Arab News)

Osama Al-Sharif is a journalist and political commentator based in Amman.

Xi says dialogue only viable way out for Ukraine crisis

China always stands on side of peace, and its core stance is to facilitate talks for peace: Chinese President

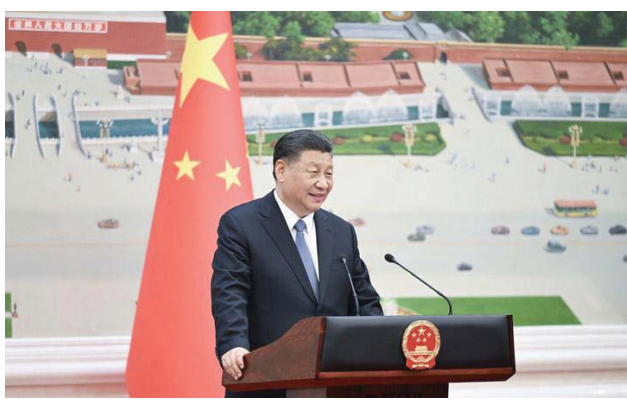
BEIJING/KEIV: Chinese President Xi Jinping said on Wednesday that dialogue and negotiations are the only viable way out for the Ukraine crisis, and no one wins a nuclear war.

He made the remarks while talking to his Ukrainian counterpart, Volodymyr Zelensky, over phone. The two sides exchanged views on China-Ukraine relations and the Ukraine crisis.

China will send a special representative of the Chinese government on Eurasian affairs to visit Ukraine and other countries to conduct in-depth communication with all parties on the political settlement of the crisis, he said.

President Xi pointed out that bilateral relations have gone through 31 years of development and reached the level of strategic partnership, which has boosted the respective development and revitalization of the two countries.

Xi said he appreciated President Zelensky's repeated expression of emphasis on the develop-



ment of China-Ukraine ties and cooperation with China, and thanked Ukraine for providing considerable assistance for the evacuation of Chinese citizens last year.

Mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, said Xi, is the political foundation of the bilateral ties.

He called on both sides to focus on the future, keep on working and making plans for bilateral relations from a long-term

perspective, and extend the tradition of mutual respect and treating each other with sincerity, so as to propel the development of the China-Ukraine strategic partnership.

China's willingness to develop its relations with Ukraine is consistent and clear, Xi said, adding that no matter how the international situation changes, China is willing to work with the country to push forward mutually beneficial cooperation between

the two countries.

Xi pointed out that the Ukraine crisis is evolving in complex ways with major impacts on the international landscape.

On the Ukraine crisis, China always stands on the side of peace, and its core stance is to facilitate talks for peace, he said.

Xi noted his proposals of four points about what must be done, four things the international community must do together and three observations, saying that on this basis, China released its Position on the Political Settlement of the Ukraine Crisis.

China did not create the Ukraine crisis, nor is it a party to the crisis, Xi said, adding that as a permanent member of the UN Security Council and a responsible major country, China would not sit idly by, nor would it add oil to the fire, still less exploit the situation for self gains.

Everything China does is aboveboard, said the Chinese president.

On the nuclear issue, all rele-



vant parties must stay calm and exercise restraint, truly act in the interests of their own future and that of humanity, and jointly manage the crisis, he said, adding that with rational thinking and voices now on the rise, it is important to seize the opportunity and build up favorable conditions for the political settlement of the crisis.

It is hoped that all parties would seriously reflect on the

Ukraine crisis and jointly explore ways to bring lasting peace and security to Europe through dialogue, Xi said.

China will continue to facilitate talks for peace and make its efforts for early ceasefire and restoration of peace, he added.

China has sent multiple batches of humanitarian assistance to Ukraine and will keep providing help to the best of its ability, Xi said.

For his part, Zelensky congratulated President Xi on his re-election, commended China for its remarkable achievements, and expressed confidence that under the leadership of President Xi, China will successfully address various challenges and continue to move forward.

China upholds the purposes and principles of the UN Charter in international affairs and has significant influence on the international stage, Zelensky said, adding that the Ukrainian side is committed to the one-China policy, and hopes to advance all-round cooperation with China, open up a new chapter in Ukraine-China relations, and jointly safeguard world peace and stability.

Zelensky shared his views on the current state of the Ukraine crisis, thanked China for providing humanitarian assistance to Ukraine, and welcomed China's important role in restoring peace and seeking a diplomatic solution to the crisis. Xinhua

Series of Online Activities Launched to Showcase Chinese Tea Culture in Pakistan

Tea for Harmony – Yaji Cultural Salon

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD/BELJING: In order to give tea a greater role to play in enhancing friendly dialogue and mutual learning between civilizations, the worldwide event "Tea for Harmony: Yaji Cultural Salon" will be held on and around May 21, 2023, the International Tea Day, by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China, in cooperation with international organizations and Chinese embassies, consulates and missions abroad, and by means of overseas China Cultural Centers and China National Tourist Offices.

In honour of the upcoming International Tea Day as well as our upcoming Tea Yaji event, China Cultural Center in Pakistan is happy to announce the release of our brand-new Chinese tea video series, Tea and Harmony – Yaji Cultural Salon.

These series of online activities include video and photography exhibitions such as "The Tea Road",



"Chinese tea culture", "Tea story of Fujian", "Tea culture of Hubei", "Tea Culture of Yunnan", "Tea • Pot" Jiangsu Tea Culture and Yixing Zisha Exhibition", "Technique of making Pu'er Tea", "Enshi Yulu Green Tea of Hubei", "Charm of Water, Charm of Jiangsu-Virtual Workshop Series–

Explore the Timeless Ritual of Tea Ceremony From Jiangsu", Grand documentary series on Chinese Tea and World and much more.

The centuries-old tea culture has attracted new interest worldwide with the addition of "the traditional tea processing techniques and associat-

ed social practices in China" to the Representative List of the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Since it was first consumed in China, tea serves as a bridge between China and the rest of the world as well as a symbol of the Chinese belief in the harmony between man and nature.

Tea has also played a significant role in connecting China to the rest of the world, serving as a bridge between cultures and a medium for sharing traditions and customs. Tea is more than just a beverage; it is also a symbol of the harmonious relationship between humans and nature that the Chinese have cherished for thousands of years.

This event not only aims to promote and spread China's bountiful tea culture in Pakistan and to the rest of the world, but will also help in implementing the rural revitalization strategy to upgrade the Chinese tea industry in thousands of counties, townships and villages.

Afghan refugees in UK to be evicted from hotels

Almost 8,000 people remain in government-sponsored accommodation 2 years after evacuation

LONDON: Afghan refugees who were evacuated to the UK in the wake of the Taliban takeover are set to be evicted from their hotels, The Independent reported on Wednesday.

Almost two years after arriving in Britain, almost 8,000 Afghans remain in hotels sponsored by the Home Office, with relocation schemes criticized over their failure to resettle refugees in properties.

But a new letter distributed by the Home Office warns Afghans who remain in hotels that existing payment support for their accommodation will end on May 2.

In March, the government announced its intentions



to end the accommodation support, but it was thought that all Afghan refugees would be offered a property to move to.

But now the scheme is only

pledging to find housing for some families, while providing guidance to others on finding private rentals.

Liberal Democrat home affairs spokesperson Alistair

Carmichael said: "Although it is right that Afghan families have access to permanent homes, the government must guarantee today that these refugees who have fled danger will not be made homeless."

The Home Office letter says: "We will provide as much support as we can to help you make your own accommodation arrangements."

"This includes support through the existing Find Your Own Accommodation scheme in the private rental sector.

"From May 2, the existing matching process will cease to exist... It is likely that most people will not receive an allocation through the new

process, and we encourage you to find your own accommodation wherever possible."

The move applies to those who arrived in the UK under the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme and the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy.

Enver Solomon, Refugee Council CEO, warned that it was "entirely unreasonable" to expect Afghan refugees to find affordable housing given the short notice of the letter.

He added: "We are deeply concerned about the approach taken by the Home Office, which is likely to lead to Afghans being left homeless and destitute on our streets."

Echo of Alash-Orda in XXI Century: Influence and Connection with Modernity

Today in Kazakhstan, one can observe a growing interest in the representatives of the 20th century intelligentsia (intellectual society), namely, in the figures of the government of Alash-Orda ("Alashordians"). They were the organizers of the cognominal autonomy, formed in 1917 in Semey and existed until 1920, being disbanded by the Soviet authorities. Later, most of the leaders of Alash-Orda have faced reprisals.

The decision to create the Alash national liberation movement was made in July 1917 at the First All-Kazakh Congress in Orenburg. The main goal of Alash was

the restoration of Kazakh statehood. The authors of the party program were state and political figure Alikhan Bokeikhanov (leader of the Alash party), educator and linguist Akhmet Baitursynov, writer and poet Mirzhakyp Dulatov.

The desire for self-determination is a quest for identity in the 21st century

One of the key values and ideas of the Alash-Orda figures was the right to self-determination of the steppe Kazakhs in the 20th century. In the context of an independent state, the right to one's own national identity is constitutional. Nevertheless, for today's youth, brought up in post-Soviet families, and after having caught the wave

of globalization, today it is important to form their own cultural code outside the state agenda and ideology.

It can be assumed that the interest in the biography and agenda of the Alashordians is nothing more than a desire to look for their national heroes. It is quite possible that today's youth is less and less willing to associate themselves with the Soviet past and needs a relevant national agenda suitable for today.

At this stage, value systems are being transformed, and representatives of the new generation are not afraid to write about the manufactured famine, repressions, and political prisoners. There is a certain demand for the revival

of one's own history through the prism of the same Alashordians, but in accordance with modern expectations and values.

Education as the main value of enlightening the people

As it is known, the leaders of the Alash-Orda were educated in Tsarist Russia, some at that time even had the opportunity to receive a European education. In addition to Kazakh and Russian, representatives of the intelligentsia of Alash-Orda spoke Arabic, French, German, and other foreign languages. Education was the goal of such Alash-Orda figures as Baitursynov, Zhumababev or Dulatov as a key to improve the quality of life in society.



The founders of the "Alash" movement: A. Baitursynov, A. Bokeikhanov, M. Dulatov

Alashordians as graduates of St. Petersburg, Imperial Kazan universities are

compared with graduates of the Bolashak program. Here, to some extent, there is a post-colo-

nia context, which, despite the goals to promote the national idea, Alashordians were a kind of natives of colonial educational institutions, they were "colonial intellectuals".

Despite the potential controversy in the post-colonial aspect, the parallel can be drawn not with certain graduates of foreign programs, but with education as a tool for enlightenment and social development. For example, the need for knowledge of the English language, the desire of citizens to receive a quality education, and in general, the growth in demand for higher education may reflect the influence of the values and ideas of Alashordians of the last century on today.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
41,099.58	41,007.82
Day's High	Day's Low:
41,363.89	41,007.82
Index Value	Change
4,694,261,513	+91.76
Percentage	Time
+0.22%	26 Apr, 2023 1:30 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,852.64	-38.49
Percentage	Time
-0.49%	26 Apr, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
33,515.28	-15.55
Percentage	Time
-0.046%	26 Apr, 12:26 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
28,416.47	-203.60
Percentage	Time
-0.71%	26 Apr, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	189	191
Bahrain Dinar	753.99	761.99
Canadian Dollar	210.5	212.5
China Yuan	40.9	41.3
Danish Krone	41.73	42.13
Euro	310	313.5
Hong Kong Dollar	36.24	36.59
Indian Rupee	3.47	3.58
Japanese Yen	2.15	2.2
Kuwaiti Dinar	925.58	934.58
Malaysian Ringgit	64.96	65.56
New Zealand \$	174.17	176.17
Norwegians Krone	27.93	28.23
Omani Riyal	736.27	744.27
Qatari Riyal	78.6	79.3
Saudi Riyal	75.7	76.4
Singapore Dollar	210.5	212.5
Swedish Korona	27.32	27.62
Swiss Franc	317.72	320.22
Thai Bhat	8.33	8.48
U.A.E Dirham	78	78.8
UK Pound Sterling	356	359
US Dollar	287.3	289.7

Banks to open on April 29, 30 to facilitate tax collection

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: All authorised branches of banks will open on April 29 and 30, 2023 (Saturday and Sunday) and observe extended working hours till 06:00 p.m. to facilitate the collection of taxes through ADC's Over-the-Counter (OTC) facility, quoting the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), in a statement issued here on Wednesday, informed that on the request of Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) it has been decided that all those branches of banks that remain open on Saturday including authorised branches of National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) and field offices of SBP Banking Services Corporation (SBP-BSC)



shall remain open on April 29 and 30 in order to facilitate the taxpayers in payment of Government duties and taxes. Such branches would also observe extended working hours till 06:00 p.m. to facilitate the collection of taxes through ADC's Over-the-Counter (OTC) facility, it added. For ensuring the same day clearing and settlement of payment instruments deposited at NBP's authorised branches for customs collection the SBP directed National Institutional Facilitation Technologies (NIFT) to arrange special clearings at 01:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 29 and at 06:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 30 as well. The central bank instructed all banks to keep their clearing-related branches open accordingly till such time that would be necessary to facilitate the special clearings by NIFT on April 29 and 30.

Our justice system is ranked 129th out of 140 countries: Mian Zahid Hussain

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Wednesday said the most important economic policies in Pakistan are made on the basis of desires, expectations and assumptions instead of ground realities.

Similarly, important decisions are not based on merit but on the basis of personal likes and dislikes which has entangled nation in the endless conflicts, he said.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that an important reason for the decline in foreign investment in Pakistan is the rusty justice system, which ranks 129th out of 140 countries in the global ranking.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that in our country only those policies are allowed to succeed that increase the wealth of the elite.

Due to poor governance, the selfishness of the



elite and the delaying of important decisions and necessary reforms, the economy could not develop according to its potential and Pakistan's external debt has exceeded 126 billion dollars, he added.

The business leader noted that instead of

reducing poverty policies governing the country are increasing the poverty and number of those who are disadvantaged.

The current economic crisis has reduced the number of the country's middle class from five crores to four crores and it is decreasing further, he observed.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the leading economists of the world and endless borrowing will also not improve the situation in Pakistan amid the deteriorating health of the people and a failing educational system.

In order to hide their incompetence and corruption, the rulers of power have always made people believe that the whole world is engaged in continuous conspiracies against Pakistan due to which this country is not able to develop.

These lame excuses are employed to divert the attention of the masses from the pressing problems to further promote the interests of the elite.

The importance of human resources in Pakistan has never been understood nor has any seri-

ous effort been made to develop it. In 1990, the per capita income of Pakistan and India was 370 dollars. Now the per capita income in Pakistan is 1505 dollars while in India it is 2277 dollars and the situation is getting worse for Pakistan.

He noted that a large number of the population in Pakistan does not pay taxes, according to international standards, we pay fewer taxes by 4000 billion rupees annually. And many politicians also consider it an insult to pay taxes while tax evasion is considered a right.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that an uninterrupted supply of electricity and gas should be ensured to businesses in order to compete in the international market.

If the prices of power are kept in line with India, China, Vietnam and Bangladesh, exports will increase.

He said that a reasonable increase is possible in the utility prices, but some people consider it their duty to challenge Pakistani industrialists and accuse Pakistani exporters of getting subsidies under various pretexts. These people need to change their mindset.

Philip Morris Pakistan Announces Financial Results for Quarter 1 2023

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Philip Morris (Pakistan) Limited (the Company) announced its financial results for the quarter ended March 31, 2023. During the quarter, the Company reported a Total Net Turnover of PKR 5,822 million reflecting an increase of 8.9% vs. the same period last year (SPLY) driven by tobacco exports of PKR 2,365 million, (US\$ 9.7 million), reflecting an increase of more than 100% due to delay in exports from last quarter of 2022. While the Company's domestic Net Turnover of PKR 3,456 million reflects a significant decrease of 23.1% vs. SPLY driven by the massive decline in volumes by 44% vs. Q1'22 due to an excise hike in Feb'23. The Company recorded a profit after tax of PKR 379 million for the quarter ended Mar 31, 2023, reflecting a huge decrease of 67.0% vs. SPLY driven by the impact of the decline in volumes as mentioned above. During the quarter ended Mar 31, 2023, the Company's

contribution to the National Exchequer in the form of excise duty, sales tax, and other Government levies, stood at PKR 5,990 million with a decrease of 16.4% vs. the prior period reflecting the impact of volume decline driven by Feb'23 excise driven price increase.

The Track & Trace System ("the System") was rolled out with a view to enhance tax revenue, reduce counterfeiting, and prevent the smuggling of illicit non-tax-paid goods through the implementation of robust, nationwide electronic monitoring. However, to date, Philip Morris (Pakistan) Limited (the Company) and two other companies have fully implemented the System whereas, the remaining tobacco manufacturers are still operating without the implementation of the System. The System could only be effective with its across-the-board implementation and robust monitoring. Without effective monitoring, the annual estimated loss of more than PKR 80 billion to the National Exchequer caused by the illicit non-tax

paid sector is expected to further increase.

"At Philip Morris Pakistan, we believe that a robust collaboration between tax-paid industry and the Government is critical to address the issue of the non-tax-paid (illicit) tobacco trade," said Mr. Roman Yazbeck Managing Director of Philip Morris Pakistan. "We urge the Government to ensure across-the-board implementation of the Track & Trace System for the tobacco industry and take immediate and effective enforcement action against the non-tax-paid illicit tobacco sector as it will help the Government to achieve its revenue targets and will also provide an even level playing field to the compliant tax paid tobacco sector. The excessive increase in FED is likely to lead to shortfalls in Government revenue as more adult smokers may shift from the tax-paid sector to the non-tax-paid sector. We remain committed to contributing to the growth of the national economy and are eager to continue collaborating with the Government on this important issue."

Jahangir Siddiqui Inaugurates JS Bank Branch



Commerce Desk

KARACHI: JS Bank, one of the fastest-growing banks in Pakistan, announced the inauguration of a newly renovated branch at Shahbaz Commercial in Karachi by Jahangir Siddiqui, Founder of JS Group, in the presence of Imran Shaikh, Chief Operating Officer, Atif Malik, Group Head, Retail Banking, Shahid Raza, Head of Branch Banking Operations, Zubina Sadick, Head of Human Resources and other leadership team members.

Mr. Jahangir Siddiqui stated that from a customer's point of view, the primary differentiator is service level and experience at the branch. He said the JS Bank team should focus on providing best-in-class services to attract and retain quality clients. Furthermore, the Bank should ensure that it offers a full suite of bank-

ing products and services to customers in order to compete in a continually evolving landscape. At the same time, staff members should continually build capacity and upskill to cater to customer needs.

"We are excited to start this new chapter of growth and look forward to providing our retail and corporate customers the exceptional banking experience they've come to expect from JS Bank," said Basir Shamsie, President & CEO. "This branch reaffirms our commitment towards offering customers Best in Class financial products and services."

Committed to its role as a catalyst toward Pakistan's prosperity, JS Bank aspires to continue its journey of impact by providing innovative conventional and digital financial solutions for customers in the years to come.

Construction

Lahore: Laborers busy in construction work of bridge at Ferozpur Road during a development project by government in the city.

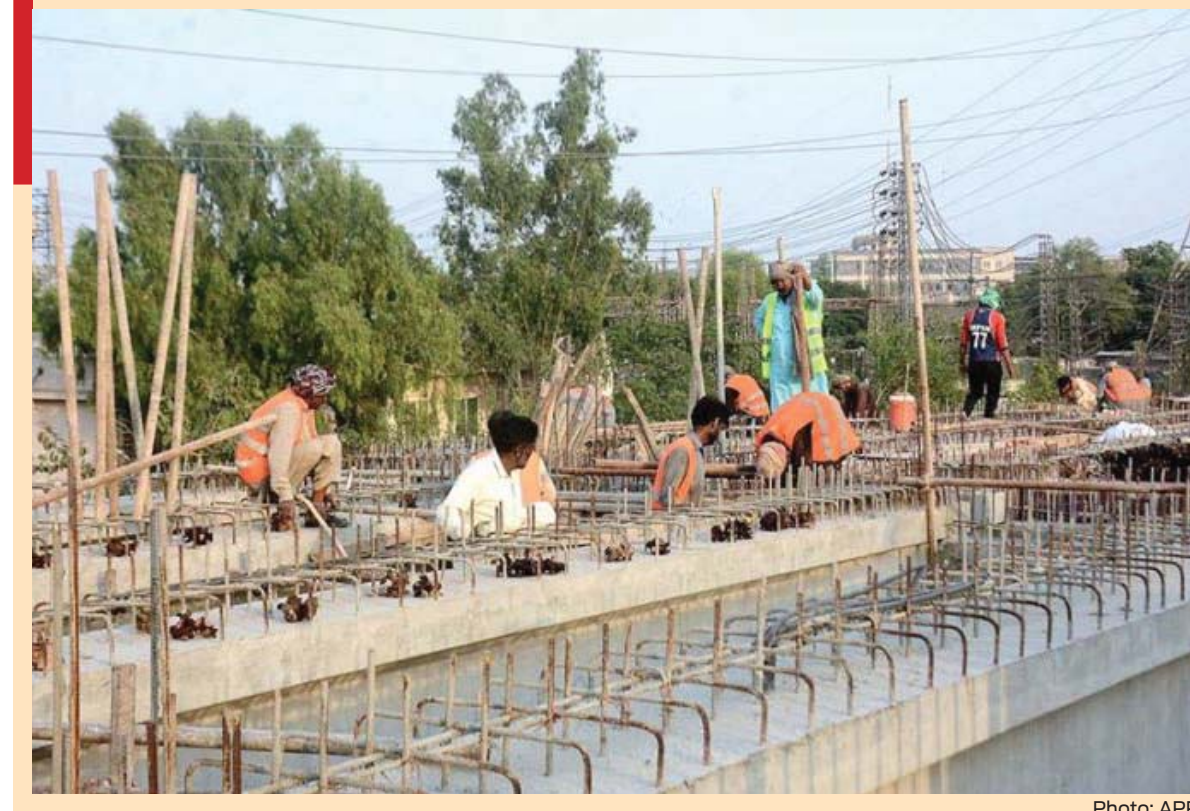


Photo: APP

Karandaaz Pakistan partners with foodpanda to increase digital payments in the country

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Karandaaz Pakistan and foodpanda Pakistan recently signed an agreement which aimed to increase financial inclusion in the country by facilitating the onboarding of customers, who are habitual users of the Cash on Delivery (COD) option while ordering through the foodpanda app, to digital payment options like mobile wallets, RAAST ID and debit or credit cards.

The Covid-19 pandemic sped up the move towards digitalisation, and countries with better digital payment systems did better during the crisis than those that were slower to adopt digital technologies. During and post lockdown, online plat-



forms, like foodpanda, experienced a hike in demand as they were able to provide day to day necessities to consumers and digital payments proved to be a lifeline to both them and users. Sharjeel Murtaza, Director Digital Financial Services (DFS) Karandaaz, discussed the program saying, "Karandaaz Digital is committed to promoting financial inclusion and enhancing the adoption of digital payments in Pakistan. We believe that partnering with non-financial institutions is critical for achieving this objective. The strategic partnership with foodpanda, an established player in the food and grocery delivery space, is a very exciting devel-

opment.

Talking about the significance of the plan being set in motion with the partnership, Waqas ul Hasan, CEO Karandaaz, said, "This partnership with foodpanda is an important step in Karandaaz's drive to pave the way for a digital tomorrow. A significant preference for cash on delivery (COD) has persisted in Pakistan for a variety of reasons.

CEO foodpanda, Muntaqa Peracha, said "We are excited to announce our partnership with Karandaaz to promote financial inclusion in Pakistan through online payments. At foodpanda, we are committed to bringing convenience to our customers, and increasing our online channels is a key part of this mission."

PPL funds Center of Excellence at UET, Lahore



Bureau Report

KARACHI: Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL), a leading E&P company since the early 1950s and one of the largest corporate donors in the country, has funded the establishment of Center of Excellence for Research, Development & Training (CERDT) at University of Engineering and Technology (UET), Lahore.

UET, Lahore, is one of the prestigious engineering universities in the country and was established in 1921. It has played a leading role in education, research and training of professionals over the years.

MD and CEO PPL Mr. Imran Abbasy presented the cheque for the first tranche of Rs. 21 million for the establishment of CERDT to Vice Chancellor, UET Lahore, Professor Dr. Syed Mansoor Sarwar at a simple ceremony held on April 26 at UET, Lahore. Mr. Abbasy also laid the Foundation stone and was briefed on the Project at site.

Officials from both organizations were present on the occasion.

As such, PPL has committed an overall grant of Rs. 51.1 million over the next three years which covers construction and completion of CERDT building along with procurement of furniture, equipment and simulation tools.

Speaking on the occasion Mr. Abbasy highlighted that as a major stakeholder in fulfilling the country's energy requirements, PPL remains committed to investing in human resource development and use of latest technology for the Exploration & Production sector through academia-industry partnership under its Corporate Social Responsibility programme.

The CERDT aims to be the first Center of its kind in the oil and gas sector in Pakistan for capacity building and training of technical personnel to fulfil not only local requirements but also export skilled professionals.

Pakistan U-19 cricket team departs for Bangladesh

Asim Tanveer

ISLAMABAD: Baig-led Pakistan U19 departed for Bangladesh in the wee hours of Wednesday to feature in a series consisting of a one-off four-day, five 50-over matches and a solitary T20. The series will be played from 30 April to 17 May in Chattogram and Rajshahi.

Karachi-born Saad Baig, also led Pakistan U19 against Bangladesh U19 last year when Bangladesh visited Pakistan for one four-day match, three one-dayers and two T20s in November in Multan.

The squad includes 17 players and three reserve players. Six players apart from the captain Saad and vice-captain Ali Asfand had featured in the previous series against Bangladesh U19. These

include Arafat Minhas, Mohammad Ibtisam, Mohammad Ismail, Mohammad Tayyab Arif, Shahzaib Khan and Wahaj Riaz.

Head Coach Sabih Azhar said: "We have prepared well for this tour, and our boys are eager to showcase their talent on the field. We have been working on strengths and weaknesses of the players, and we are confident that the players will put up a good fight against the Bangladesh team at their own backyard."

Captain Saad Baig also shared his thoughts ahead of the tour and said, "We are all very excited to represent our country. We have been training hard and are ready to take on the challenge. As a team, we are focused on playing our best cricket and competing well in every

match. We have set ourselves some goals for the series, and are determined to achieve them."

Pakistan U19: Saad Baig (captain) (Karachi), Ali Asfand (vice-captain) (Faisalabad), Ahmed Hussain (Peshawar), Aimal Khan (Peshawar), Amir Hussain (Rawalpindi), Arafat Minhas (Multan), Azan Awais (Sialkot), Hamza Nawaz (Lahore), Mohammad Ibtisam (Sargodha), Mohammad Ismail (Sahiwal), Mohammad Tahir (Fata), Mohammad Tayyab Arif (Sialkot), Obaid Shahid (Lahore), Sajjad Ali (Lahore), Shahzaib Khan (Mansehra), Shamil Hussain (Islamabad) and Wahaj Riaz (Karachi). Abidullah (Islamabad), Ikramullah Tareen (Quetta) and Muhammad Zulkifal (Charsadda) (all reserves)

Player Support Personnel – Tauseef

Ahmed (manager), Sabih Azhar (coach), Umar Rashid (assistant coach), Hafiz Naeem Ul Rasool (physiotherapist), Yasir Malik (trainer) and Shan Ullah (team analyst)

Tour Schedule:

30 April- 3 May – Four-day match; ZACS, Chattogram
6 May – 1st 50-over match; ZACS, Chattogram
8 May – 2nd 50-over match; ZACS, Chattogram
11 May – 3rd 50-over match; SKS, Rajshahi
13 May – 4th 50-over match; SKS, Rajshahi
15 May – 5th 50-over match; SKS, Rajshahi
17 May – Only T20 match; SKS, Rajshahi

Smart City 62nd National Amateur Golf Championship of Pakistan 2023



Sports Desk

LAHORE: The Smart City 62nd National Amateur Golf Championship of Pakistan 2023 being conducted by Pakistan Golf Federation is making stirring waves at the historic tree lined par 72, Lahore Gymkhana Golf Course. Seeking individual honors in this four rounds Smart City Nationally remarkable golf championship are over 60 capable and golfingly proficient golf amateurs including three champions from Sri Lanka and one from Egypt. Team Events at stake are International Team Match, J.R. Jaywardene Trophy Match and Inter Association Team Match between Senior Teams and Men Amateur Teams and Individual Championship for Men and Women.

And at the end of the first round 18 holes, the J.R. Jaywardene Team Match between Sri Lanka and Pakistan stands concluded with Pakistani Team comprising of Salman Jehangir and Qasim Ali Khan appearing as the Trophy winners as they combined well to aggregate a team score of gross 148 (72 by Salman and 76 by Qasim) as against the team score of 155 aggregated by Sri Lankans, R.A.U. Akash Priyamantha and M.H. Chalitha Pushpika with Akash scoring 79 and Pushpika scoring 76. Thus Pakistan won the J.R. Jaywardene Trophy by a margin of seven strokes.

Pakistan's preparations for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023

Sports Desk

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan's preparations for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 will begin on Thursday when they will take on New Zealand in the first of the five One-Day Internationals. The series will commence at the iconic Pindi Cricket Stadium, Rawalpindi, which will also host the second ODI on Saturday, before the two teams will fly south for the remaining three matches in Karachi.

The two sides will enter the series after an exciting five-match T20 International series that ended in a 2-2 draw on Monday. That well-fought series promises equally competitive and exciting five matches for which both the sides have added a player each. Pakistan have added wicketkeeper-batter Mohammad Harris and New Zealand has included Mark Chapman, whose extraordinary batting efforts in the T20Is earned him player of the series award.

In addition to this series and in the lead up to the World Cup, which will be held in October/November, Pakistan are also scheduled to play three ODIs against Afghanistan in August and September's ACC Men's Asia Cup. As such, this series comes with the vital opportunity to gather the momentum.

Both Pakistan and New Zealand have qualified directly for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 after finishing in the top-eight of the 13-team ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Super League. New Zealand topped the Super League with 16 wins in 24 matches, while Pakistan finished fifth with 13 wins in 21 matches. Pakistan's series against Afghanistan was mutually postponed after both the sides were assured of places in the event proper.

Trophy unveiled as PAK vs NZ ODI series begins on Thursday



A Sports

RAWALPINDI: The trophy for the five-game PAK vs NZ ODI series starting from April 27 has been revealed on Wednesday here at Pindi Cricket Stadium.

Following the conclusion of the five-game T20I series that ended in a 2-2 draw, Pakistan will take on New Zealand in as many One-Day international matches between April 27 to May 7 in Rawalpindi and Karachi.

A day ahead of the opening ODI, a trophy unveiling ceremony was held at the venue as the two captains, Babar Azam and Tom Latham, posed with the trophy.

With the ICC ODI World Cup scheduled this year in India, the series provide a launching pad for the two teams to begin their preparations for the megaevent. Babar Azam-led side, however, will also be looking to avenge the 2-1 ODI series loss against the visitors during their last trip to Pakistan in January.

Net Practice

RAWALPINDI: New Zealand's players take part in practice session ahead of first One-day International between Pakistan and New Zealand at Pindi Cricket stadium in City.



Photo: Online

Haris Sohail sustains injury ahead of PAK vs NZ ODI series

Sports Desk

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan's left-handed middle-order batter Haris Sohail sustained an untimely injury ahead of the PAK vs NZ ODI series, scheduled to begin on April 27.

According to the details, Haris Sohail, who returned to the international circuit in Pakistan's home ODI series against New Zealand in January this year after more than two years of absence, suffered a shoulder injury during the team's scheduled training session.

"Pakistan batter Haris Sohail landed awkwardly on his left shoulder during a fielding drill today," stated PCB in a statement.

"His initial scans at a local hospital were satisfactory. The medical team will assess him before the first One-Day International tomorrow to determine his participation



in the match," the statement added.

Pakistan held a full-strength training session ahead of the five-match PAK vs NZ ODI series against New Zealand. The ODI squad-bound players participated in rigorous batting, fielding and bowling drills to gear up for the home assignment.

With the ICC ODI World Cup scheduled this year in India, the series provide a launching pad for the two

teams to begin their preparations for the megaevent.

Babar Azam-led side, however, will also be looking to avenge the 1-2 ODI series loss against the visitors during their last trip to Pakistan in January.

Squads:
Pakistan: Babar Azam (captain), Shadab Khan (vice-captain), Abdullah Shafique, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Haris Sohail, Ihsanullah, Imam-ul-Haq, Mohammad Haris

(wk), Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Mohammad Wasim Jnr, Naseem Shah, Salman Ali Agha, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Shan Masood and Usama Mir

New Zealand: Tom Latham (captain), Adam Milne, Ben Lister, Blair Tickner, Chad Bowes, Cole McConechie, Daryl Mitchell, Henry Nicholls, Henry Shiple, Ish Sodhi, Jimmy Neesham, Mark Chapman, Matt Henry, Rachin Ravindra, Tom Blundell and Will Young

Series schedule (all matches begin at 3:30 pm)

27 Apr – First ODI, Rawalpindi

29 Apr – Second ODI, Rawalpindi

3 May – Third ODI, Karachi

5 May – Fourth ODI, Karachi

7 May – Fifth ODI, Karachi

Here's how you can live stream PAK vs NZ ODI series

A Sports

ISLAMABAD: Nearly three months after a 2-1 ODI series loss against New Zealand, Babar Azam-led Pakistan will be looking to avenge their earlier defeat at home when they face the BlackCaps in the PAK vs NZ five-game ODI series, starting from April 26.

Though the Kiwis are missing several crucial players like Kane Williamson, Fin Allen, Michael Bracewell, Devon Conway, Lockie Ferguson, Glenn Phillips and Mitchell Santner from their last visit to Pakistan, they will be eyeing to maintain their dominance over the home team in the 50-over matches.

On the other hand, Pakistan have strengthened their bowling attack with the addition of Shaheen Shah Afridi and Shadab Khan – who missed the previous ODI series due to injuries. Meanwhile, the inclusion of PSL sensation Ihsanullah will further jack up the Green Shirts' pace battery.

All in all, the five ODI matches will be nothing short of an enthralling contest between the two quality sides in the format.

PAK vs NZ ODI: Imam eyes clean sweep to claim top spot in team rankings

A Sports

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan's left-handed opener Imam-ul-Haq, shared his goals for the upcoming PAK vs NZ five-match ODI series and expressed his wish to propel his side to the top spot in team rankings by beating New Zealand 5-0.

Imam-ul-Haq, in the pre-series, press conference here on Wednesday, emphasized the significance of the team's triumphs over personal rankings before asserting that the left-handed opener was not aiming for individual milestones but wanted his team to top the ODI rankings.

"I do not have a plan for a personal record but as you know if we beat New Zealand 5-0 we will top the ODI rankings and I have always thought that it's a team game," said Imam.

Imam continued by employing an example from his and Babar Azam's individual rankings to argue that his rating is insignificant if his national team is not on the number one spot.

"I am on third in individual batting rankings and Babar is at number one, but our team is not on number one spot, which is not a good thing to me," Imam maintained.

The left-handed batter further weighed in on his goal by asserting that it would boost the team's confidence if they head into the upcoming ODI World Cup in India as the top-ranked side.

"If we win the series by 5-0, the collective confidence that we will get will be more important than personal records," he added.

Imam also termed the upcoming PAK vs NZ ODI series as an important step-

ping stone for the world cup preparation before lamenting the lack of time and matches ahead of the mega event.

"It is true that we only have seven matches to prepare for the world cup but since we are professionals so there should be no excuse," stated Imam.

"These five matches are very important for our finalized Playing XI and for our confidence. I think we should be ready for the Asia Cup by the end of this series as there won't be much time in World Cup after the Asia Cup," he concluded.

It is pertinent to mention that Pakistan will be eyeing to shrug off the T20I series heartbreak – which was ended in a 2-2 draw after Mark Chapman's heroics – before heading into the five-match ODI series against New Zealand, commencing on April 27.

Girona's Castellanos scores four as Real suffer major upset in LaLiga

A Sports

GIRONA: Valentin Castellanos scored four goals to shock defending champions Real Madrid as they lost 2-4 against Girona on Tuesday in a major setback to their fading LaLiga title hopes.

Castellanos became the first player to hit more than three goals in a LaLiga game against Real Madrid since Esteban Echavarria's five goals for Real Oviedo in December 1947.

With seven games left, Real title chances slipped further into dismay as they sit second on the table with 65 points, 11 behind leader Barcelona, who can stretch their lead on Wednesday when they play Rayo Vallecano.

Girona moved to ninth place with

41 points.

The hosts took Madrid by surprise with their all-out attack right from the start, scoring the opener just 12 minutes into the match when unmarked Castellanos headed in from close range on a cross from Miguel Gutierrez.

Girona doubled their lead 12 minutes later when the Argentinian grabbed on to a long ball, pushed his way into the box and blasted low underneath Madrid keeper Andriy Lunin.

Real's Vinicius Junior reduced the home side's advantage to 2-1 in the 34th minute, heading in Marco Asensio's cross.

Castellanos, however, regained the two-goal cushion for his side right after the break, netting home a right-footed half-volley after Real's defence gave him

room in the box.

The visitors repeated their mistake and left Castellanos alone inside the box when the 24-year-old headed in his fourth goal of the evening in the 62nd minute.

Madrid's Lucas Vazquez hit a consolation goal from close range in the 85th minute.

Madrid has had a difficult time facing Girona this season since the reverse fixture at the Santiago Bernabeu ended 1-1 in October.

In another LaLiga fixture on Tuesday, Osasuna beat Cadiz 1-0 thanks to Ruben Garcia Santos' winner in the 62nd minute.

Real Sociedad held Real Betis to a nil-nil draw at the latter's home after 90 minutes of high-voltage action.