



**Imran Khan lacks courage to face masses: Marriyum**

Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb has said Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan would never face masses as he knew it was his government tenure which rendered 6 million people jobless and pushed 20 million below the poverty line. In a tweet, she said that Imran Khan addressed from the car while using canister for his security.



**President of Uzbekistan visits referendum precinct No 59 in Tashkent**

On 30 April, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, together with family members visited the referendum precinct No 59 in Tashkent's Mirzo Ulugbek district and voted in the referendum. A draft Constitutional Law "On the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan" has been submitted to a referendum. This process was preceded by a one-and-a-half-year preparatory process. (Details on Page 5)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

**Diplomacy**

DOHA: Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar Monday holds meeting with Foreign Minister of Indonesia Retno Marsudi and discussed matters of bilateral and regional interest. During the interaction that took place on the sidelines of the meeting of Special Representatives on Afghanistan, matters of bilateral interest and the regional situation were reviewed. Hina Khar underlined the importance for the international community to take credible steps in support of the people of Afghanistan.



Photo: Online

**PM for making labour force shareholder in global economy**

ISLAMABAD: Paying tributes to the working class on the occasion of International Labour Day, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday stressed the need to fulfil workers' rights by making them shareholders in the system of the global economy. "While we pay rich tributes to the working classes & celebrate their contributions today, the fact is that the disruption in global markets has led to a severe cost of living crisis," he said in a tweet. The prime minister said, with an increase in commodity prices, the working people found themselves under tremendous stress.



The edifice of material development that stands on the foundation of hard work will crumble if those who made it possible are excluded from its benefits, he added. PM Shehbaz said fulfilling labour rights and making people shareholders in the system remained a fundamental challenge for the global economy. APP

**Ready for elections if assemblies dissolved before May 14: IK**

Imran Khan comes down hard on govt ahead of "final" poll talks

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan has said that he is ready for simultaneous elections if the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) dissolves all assemblies before May 14 — the date Supreme Court has set for Punjab's polls. Khan's comments came on Monday as the PTI and the ruling alliance are set to hold a "final round" of talks today (Tuesday) over the election date on the instructions of the apex court, but top leaders from both sides have cast aspersions over the fruitfulness of the negotiations. The apex court has asked both sides to sit down and evolve a consensus for holding elections across the country simultaneously.



ly after the government refused to follow the top court's orders on releasing funds for the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). The government — as two sessions were held last week between the PTI and the PDM delegations — said that the polls cannot be held right after the budget, which is presented in

June, and proposed that they take place later. But the PTI was insistent on early elections. "They [government] want to hold elections when they believe I will be out of their way. Their only aim is to take me out of the way," Khan — who was ousted as the prime minister in April last year — said during an address to a rally in Lahore on Monday. The PTI chief said the government is making "excuses" that it has to present the budget and that "they think that they can trap us in their ill-intentioned-plan". Khan added that if the government thinks that it can stall and the PTI will wait, then they are wrong. "We will move the court and demand elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP)"

The PTI chief said his party would put forth only one proposal in the meeting tomorrow: dissolve all assemblies — Sindh, Balochistan, and national — and head for polls before May 14. Since Khan's ouster, he has been on the streets protesting against the government for what he calls "injustice" as he blames the PDM for hatching a "conspiracy" to remove him from office. In an unusual move, Khan had Punjab and KP assemblies dissolved in January this year to force the government into holding elections across the country, but the PDM did not cave in, which led to further political turmoil, resulting in damage to the already fragile economy. Agencies

**Imran's return is being facilitated, Javed Latif claims**

Minister says party admits its mistakes from the past

LAHORE: Federal minister Javed Latif Monday claimed facilitation is being done to bring Imran Khan back as the prime minister. "Revelations were made at the lawyer's convention by President Supreme Court Bar Amanullah," the minister said while addressing a press conference in Lahore. Latif, who is from the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), questioned why former Inter-Services Intelligence chief Faiz Hamid and ex-Supreme Court chief justice Asif Saeed Khosa do not respond to the allegations being made against them. "Have state institutions become so weak or the people sitting in them have been compromised?" he asked during the presser. Sharing his views on



the ongoing negotiations between the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), the senior politician maintained that negotiations aren't conducted with terrorists' wings. "Talks are never held with those who throw petrol bombs nor with those who are instruments of world powers. Negotiations are not held with those who talk about Mir Jaffer, Mir Sadiq," Latif said.

**PM discusses PTI demands in meeting with federal ministers**

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday held a meeting with federal ministers and discussed the third round of negotiations with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and their demands. During the meeting, matters pertaining to ongoing political situation also came under discussion. Khawaja Saad Rafiq, Azam Nazeer Tarar, Malik Ahmed Khan and Ata Tarar attended the meeting. The federal ministers gave a detailed briefing to the Prime Minister on the ongoing negotiations with PTI. In the meeting, the future course of action regarding negotiations with PTI will be decided. It is worth noting that two rounds of talks have already taken place between the government team and the PTI leadership regarding the upcoming general elections in the country. However, both parties have failed to reach a consensus on immediate elections in Punjab or simultaneous elections throughout the country. Agencies

**Maryam says SC will have to accept parliament's decision**

Maryam accuses ex-CJP Nisar of making efforts for Imran's return to power

LAHORE: Amid an impasse between the judiciary and the executive over the matter of early polls in Punjab, Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Chief Organiser Maryam Nawaz asserted Monday that the Supreme Court will have to accept parliament's decision on the matter. Addressing a workers' convention in Lahore to mark International Labour Day, Maryam, while referring to the Supreme Court's three-member bench hearing the Punjab polls delay case, said the nation is eagerly awaiting the top court's verdict. "You will have to accept the decision of the Parliament. If the Constitution of the country is supreme then parliament is also supreme," she remarked. Maryam was referring to the parliament's move to reject a money bill seeking funds for the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to hold elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, despite the top court's order. During the last hearing of the polls delay case, a three-member bench led by Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial and



comprising Justice Munib Akhtar and Justice Ijazul Ahsan urged the ruling alliance and the opposition party Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to sit together for talks on elections for the sake of the Constitution. "Please for the sake of the Constitution sit with each other," remarked CJP Bandial while wrapping up the election delay case's hearing on April 27. Commenting on the case proceedings, Maryam said an honourable judge of the apex court raised questions over the PTI's move to dissolve the assemblies of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. She quoted the judge as saying that the reason for dissolving assem-

blies needed to be sorted out before deciding the case. "The senior judges of the Supreme Court raised their voice against the conspiracy," Maryam added. The ruling party leader said PTI wanted the elections in the country soon "otherwise, there will be no one to help them win the elections". Maryam said the PTI chief himself admitted that he dissolved the provincial legislatures on the advice of former army chief General (retd) Qamar Javed Bajwa. In the same address, Maryam also took a swipe at former chief justice (retd) Saqib Nisar, accusing him of using influence to bring Imran back in power. She also referred to the latest audio leak of former top judge's son, Najam Saqib, wherein he could be purportedly heard demanding a bribe from a PTI aspirant in return for an election ticket. Addressing the former top judge, Maryam asked him to tell how much money he took for convicting her father, former PM Nawaz Sharif, in the Panama Papers case. "Tell me if Rs12 million for a ticket, then how much was it for Panama?" she remarked. Agencies

**Govt., PTI negotiations rescheduled: Sanjrani**

ISLAMABAD: The negotiations between the government and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in Senate Secretariat have been rescheduled from 11 am to 9 pm on Tuesday, as agreed upon by both parties, Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani said. Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani said that the change was made due to the busy schedules of the members of the negotiation committees from both sides. The new negotiation timings are expected to help facilitate the discussions between the government and PTI to address pressing issues in the country. APP

**Hina to attend meeting of Special Envoys on Afghanistan**

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Hina Rabbani Khar would attend the meeting of Special Envoys on Afghanistan being held from May 01 to 02, 2023 in Doha Qatar. The meeting is being held under the auspices of the United Nations, said a press release issued by the ministry of foreign affairs on Monday. Besides attending the meeting, the Minister of State would also hold bilateral meetings with leaders of other participating countries. Chaired by the United Nations Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, the meeting brings together major international and regional countries to discuss the ongoing situation in Afghanistan with a view towards constructive engagement. The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs would present Pakistan's perspective vis-à-vis Afghanistan and work on building a consensus regarding the way forward with international and regional partners. Pakistan would continue to support all efforts to advance the shared objectives of a peaceful, stable, sovereign, prosperous and connected Afghanistan.



## Labour Day

KARACHI: A large number of Home Based Women Workers Federation (HBWWF) participating on the rally at Fawara Chowk to mark international labor day, in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

# All Pakistanis will be evacuated from Sudan in next 48 hours: FO

FO working to repatriate Pakistanis stranded in war-hit Sudan

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office said on Monday that nearly all 1,000 Pakistanis would be evacuated from the conflict-hit Sudan within the next 24 to 48 hours.

A brief statement issued by the FO stated that 93 more Pakistanis stranded in Sudan had reached the country in the fourth batch of evacuees. It said that the latest batch arrived at Islamabad airport on Monday via flight no PK754.

As per the statement, a total of 636 stranded Pakistanis had returned home as they landed in Karachi via Jeddah separately on five special PAF flights to date.

With the latest batch of



evacuees, as many as 729 Pakistanis have been repatriated to the country so far.

The FO has been working to repatriate Pakistanis stranded in the war zone ever since the conflict began earlier this month.

The Pakistanis in Sudan are first evacuated to Port Sudan and then transferred

to Jeddah where the PAF is bringing them back home.

Earlier today, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs — responding to a statement by the Saudi foreign ministry — took to Twitter to thank Saudi Arabia for their support and assistance to distressed Pakistanis in a difficult time.

"We are grateful to the

brotherly country of Saudi Arabia for their support and assistance to Pakistanis in distress in this difficult time," the tweet read.

The Saudi foreign ministry had shared an update on the arrival of Pakistani in Jeddah a day earlier.

"A transport plane belonging to the Royal Saudi Air Force arrived in Jeddah today with 45 Saudi citizens and 36 people of Pakistani nationality, and the ship of H M S 'Al-Diryah' arrived in Jeddah, with 52 nationals of brotherly and friendly countries on board," the Kingdom's ministry wrote in its tweet.

Fighting broke out in Sudan on April 15 between forces loyal to army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan

and his deputy-turned-rival Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, who commands the powerful paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

More than 500 people have been killed in the clashes so far.

Daglo's RSF emerged from the Janjaweed fighters whom former strongman Omar al-Bashir unleashed in the Darfur region, where they were accused of war crimes including genocide.

The military toppled Bashir in April 2019 following mass citizen protests.

The two generals seized power in a 2021 coup, but later fell out in a bitter power struggle, most recently centred on the planned integration of the RSF into the regular army.

# Pakistan, UAE discuss food security initiatives

Our Correspondent

KARACHI: Minister of State and Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Public Communication and Digital Platforms, Fahd Haroon, met with H.E. Bakheet Al Romaiti, United Arab Emirates Consul General in Karachi. They both discussed the importance of public communication in raising awareness about food security and the impacts of climate change. The meeting centered around the UAE food program for Pakistan, initiated by His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

During the meeting, Mr. Haroon also informed a visiting media delegation from the UAE about the initiatives taken by Pakistan, particularly in the Sindh province, to combat food insecurity. The Consul General expressed satisfaction with the cooperation between the

government of Sindh and UAE on the 'Emirates Humanitarian' medical campaign in Pakistan's southern Sindh province to provide health facilities to the poor.

Pakistan and UAE have a long history of friendly relations, with the UAE serving as a trusted ally for Pakistan. The UAE Pakistan Assistance Programme (UAE-PAP) reflects His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan's love for the people of Pakistan. The program has provided assistance in various social and humanitarian fields, including health, poverty alleviation, education, and disaster relief.

According to the latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Acute Malnutrition analysis, acute malnutrition is at a Critical level in eight districts in Sindh and at a Serious level in one district. The UAE's food assistance



KARACHI: Minister of State and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Public Communication and Digital Platforms, Fahd Haroon, meets with UAE Consul General in Karachi, H.E. Bakheet Al Romaiti to discuss the importance of public communication and UAE's food program for Pakistan.

program aims to address this pressing issue. As per the data, the overall malnutrition prevalence in Pakistan is 38.3%, with 17.7 million stunted and

9.7 million wasted children under five years of age.

In the past, UAE has executed several humanitarian assistance programs in Pakistan,

including the UAE Polio Vaccination Campaign, which vaccinated over 86 million Pakistani children under the age of five between 2014 and December 2020. UAE's assistance in the healthcare sector has helped Pakistan combat various diseases and increase life expectancy.

Pakistan and the UAE share a strong trade relationship with a significant Pakistani population residing in the UAE. According to the State Bank of Pakistan, Pakistan received \$531.4 million in remittances from the UAE in 2022. The UAE is Pakistan's biggest trading partner in the Middle East and North Africa region, with exports from the UAE to Pakistan amounting to \$7.13 billion in 2021. The main products exported from the UAE to Pakistan were refined petroleum, crude petroleum, and scrap iron. During the last 18 years, exports of the UAE to Pakistan

## PM congratulates Turkish President

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has congratulated Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on roll out of new fighter planes and helicopters.

Re-tweeting a tweet of Turkish President today, the prime minister congratulated the President over roll-out of TF-X, Hürjet, Atak-2 Helicopter, Anka-3 UCAV and Gokbey Helicopter. He said this speaks of high level of indigenization achieved by brotherly Türkiye.

He said this success is primarily on account of excellent leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

# UN holds Afghanistan crisis talks in Qatar, without Taliban

No country has established formal ties with the Taliban administration

DOHA: The Taliban will be absent from UN-led talks that open Monday in Qatar on how to handle Afghanistan's rulers and press them to ease a ban on women working and girls going to school.

Envoy from the United States, China and Russia as well as major European aid donors and key neighbors such as Pakistan are among representatives from about 25 countries and groups called to the two days of talks by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

The Taliban government has not been invited, however, and ahead of the meeting the ques-

tion of recognition of the administration has loomed large.

A small group of Afghan women staged a weekend protest march in Kabul to oppose any moves to recognize the rulers who returned to power in August 2021.

In an open letter to the Doha meeting released Sunday, a coalition of Afghan women's groups said they were "outraged" that any country would consider formal ties because of the record of the government that says its handling of women's rights is "an internal social issue."

The United Nations and United States have insisted that

recognition is not on the agenda.

Rights' groups fears have been fueled by UN deputy secretary-general Amina Mohammed, who said last month that the Doha meeting could find "baby steps" that lead to a "principled recognition" of the Taliban government.

The UN said the comments were misinterpreted. No country has established formal ties with the Taliban administration and UN membership can only be decided by the UN General Assembly.

Ahead of his arrival in Doha, Guterres' office said the meeting "is intended to achieve a

common understanding within the international community on how to engage with the Taliban" on women's and girls' rights, inclusive governance, countering terrorism and drug trafficking.

"Any kind of recognition of the Taliban is completely off the table," US State Department spokesman Vedant Patel said last week.

Since ousting a foreign-backed government in 2021, the Taliban authorities have imposed an austere version of sharia law that the United Nations has labelled "gender-based apartheid." AFP

# Pakistan showcasing its rich tourism potential at ATM 2023



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: A 25-members' delegation of Pakistan under the leadership of Awan Chaudhry, Advisor To Prime Minister on Tourism and Sports is participating in ATM Dubai 2023 from 1st to 4th May to showcase the rich tourism potential of the country.

Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) has put a nice pavilion along with partner organizations such as TDAP, Pearl Continental Hotels, Hashoo Group, Legend Hotels and Resorts, Comfi Trav Tourism, Meezab Group, Waljis Travels, Zeb Travels, Eventica, Black Glacier Tours and College of Tourism and Hotel Management.

Mr. Awn Chaudhry, Advisor to Prime Minister on Tourism and Sports and Mr. Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, Ambassador of Pakistan in UAE jointly inaugurated Pakistan's Pavilion at ATM 2023, Dubai.

Speaking on the occasion, Advisor to Prime Minister on Tourism and Sports—Awn Chaudhry applauded the efforts of PTDC for the promotion of tourism in Pakistan and he encouraged the participation of private sector in ATM Dubai 2023 to enhance business to business linkages with the counterpart of Middle East and other countries increase the flow of foreign tourists and investors to Pakistan. He also appreciated the support Pakistan Embassy in UAE and Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) for providing support to Pakistani exhibitors to participate in ATM 2023.

Ambassador of Pakistan to UAE—Faisal Niaz Tirmizi at the inauguration ceremony stated that participa-

tion of Pakistan in Arabian Travel Market ATM after a long gap is very significant and it will help to promote inbound tourism in Pakistan and also create soft image of Pakistan at global level. It will provide more business-related opportunities for the private sector stakeholders and bring in foreign investment in Pakistan from the Middle East.

Aftab Rana, Managing Director of PTDC informed that Pakistan is blessed with breath-taking natural beauty, rich culture and heritage and great diversity of landscape offering an un-matched tourism potential. He said, Government of Pakistan is committed to promote tourism for the socio-economic developing and employment generation in the country. The participation of Pakistan in Arabian Travel Mart will certainly enhance the influx of foreign tourists to explore the rich touristic potential of the country.

One first day, the Pakistan Pavilion attracted large number trade visitors, exhibitors, tour operators, social media influencers and media persons to exchange contacts with Pakistani Exhibitors and get information about Pakistan's rich tourism potential and tour packages.

Arabian Travel Market (ATM) is the leading global event for the inbound and outbound travel industry in the Middle East. For the last twenty-eight years, this annual event has connected tourism service providers from around the globe with buyers and travel trade visitors at the Dubai World Trade Centre. More than 160 countries and 2,000+ exhibitors from around the world are participating in this year edition of ATM at Dubai.

# Govt to provide all possible facilities to pilgrims: Talha

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Religious Affairs Muhammad Talha Mehmood says all possible facilities will be provided to Pakistani pilgrims during this year's Hajj and no compromise will be made on the quality of services.

In a statement on Monday, the Minister said he is personally supervising all aspects of the Hajj arrangements and emphasized that the Ministry is working tirelessly to ensure a comfortable and hassle-free experience.

He confirmed that the best accommodation and quality food arrangements are already underway and the travel facility for intending pilgrims would be top-notch.

About the rumors regarding the collection of additional charges related to Zam'zam water, the Minister clarified that no extra amount is being collected from the pilgrims.

He confirmed that the Zam'zam water dues have been included in the Hajj package since 2017, and no pilgrim would be asked to pay any extra amount for the same.

# PML-N striving to improve working conditions: Bilal

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to PM on Economy and Energy Bilal Azhar Kayani says Labour Day is an opportunity to collectively take a moment to celebrate the achievements and contributions of labourers and the working classes.

In a tweet on Monday, he said it is also a day to acknowledge the labour movement and to emphasize the importance of labour rights, especially in difficult economic conditions globally today.

Bilal Azhar Kayani said PMLN, under the guidance of Nawaz Sharif, has always strived to protect labour



rights and improve the working conditions and compensation of the working classes, and will continue to do so in the future.

He said there is a lot that remains to be done on this front. He said we can only progress as a nation if we can ensure that the working classes are rewarded fairly for their hard work and treated respectfully.

# TTP top commander killed in DI Khan operation

Raja Furqan Ahmed

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Security forces have successfully carried out an operation in the Daraban area of Dera Ismail Khan, resulting in the killing of a prominent commander of the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Jabar Shah, while two of his associates were injured.

According to the details, Jabar Shah was one of the main commanders of TTP and was involved in multiple attacks on law enforce-

ment agencies and polio teams. He was also found to be active in extorting money on behalf of the terrorist group. This marks the second consecutive success for the security forces in the area, following a similar operation that resulted in the killing of two other terrorists just a day prior.

Sources said that the elimination of Jabar Shah and his associates is a significant blow to the TTP's operations in the area and will likely disrupt their activities in the region.

# AJK PM terms working class as backbone of any society

*AJK government was committed to the welfare of working people*

MIRPUR: Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq while terming the working class of the people as the backbone of any society, has said that in Islam, work has been given a special importance to the extent that it is considered an act of worship in itself. In his message on International Labour Day, falling on May 1st,

Monday, the PM said, "Labourers and hard-working people, who play an important role in society, have been declared as the friends of, the Almighty". Our religion Islam has given special emphasis on working and Muslims have been urged to work persistently, whenever and wherever it is available, he said, adding

that this was the reason that begging has been discouraged and strictly prohibited. Extending his heartfelt greetings to all the workers around the globe, the PM said that Islam fully acknowledges the rights of the Labour class. The PM said that it is narrated in a Hadith that a labourer should be

given his wages even before the sweat on his body dries up. He said the saying of the Prophet (PBUH) speaks volumes about the importance given to the labour class in Islam. The PM said that the AJK government was committed to the welfare of working people besides providing them with their inalienable rights.

## Protest

LAHORE: Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) and other organizations are protesting in front of the Press Club to salute the martyrs of Chicago on International Workers' Day.



Photo: Online

## Stagnating IT Exports

# Pakistan should look towards Asia-Pacific alliance: Chairman P@SHA

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Zohaib Khan, Chairman of Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA), has apprised that the stagnation in IT exports—and a possible contraction on the cards—has created profound concerns & apprehensions in the IT industry as IT & ITeS industry's export remittances shrunk by 0.5 percent to \$1.94 billion in Q1-Q3 FY23 as opposed to 47 percent average growth IT & ITeS posted for 2 consecutive years, i.e. FY21 and FY22. Muhammad Zohaib Khan, however, added that the Pakistani IT industry has forged

partnerships with the 16 economies ICT alliance of Asia-Pacific Information & Communication Technologies (APICTA) for the tangible promotion of IT & IT-enabled Services (ITeS) exports. He was speaking on the occasion of 79th Executive Committee meeting of APICTA at Perth, Australia; where he led the Pakistani delegation which also comprised Jamil Goheer & Dr. Shoab Khan, CEC members of P@SHA. It is pertinent to note that the combined GDP of APICTA countries runs in

upwards of \$30 trillion and these countries are potentially huge IT export markets for Pakistan in Asia-Pacific region & other allied countries; like China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Australia, Japan, etc.

**P@SHA** "One can well-imagine, if a region & its IT-alliance has a combined GDP of \$30 trillion, what it can mean to a developing country like Pakistan with a population of 230.1 million and 64 percent under the age of 35" Muhammad Zohaib Khan, Chairman P@SHA

Mr. Khan pointed out that FBR, SBP, SECP, TDAP and PSEB should work in tandem and P@SHA is all willing to assist them in aligning foreign exchange, taxation, companies' regulations, export and investments policies with international best practices. This year Pakistani IT exports are expected to be in the range of \$2.5-\$2.6 billion; which can easily be jacked up to the psychological mark of \$5 billion in a quick succession of 2 years—provided policies of the government institutions turn business-friendly and focus on ease of doing business (EODB) parameters—on which Pakistan ranks abysmally low at 108th number, he added.

## Attack based labour organizations vow to protect rights of working class

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Attock based labour organizations have pledged to continue their struggles for protecting the fundamental rights of the working class besides paying glowing tributes to the martyrs of Chicago on the International Labor Day here on Monday with great enthusiasm and devotion in line with other parts of the world. The workers' different labour unions include PWD, Pakistan Hydro Power, Clerks Associations, National Bank, led by their leaders have also taken over rallies from Chowk Fowara leading to district court chowk Attock. They were holding play cards inscribing with their demands for regularization of contractual employees, increase in their salary matching with the recent inflation and other incentives. Speaking on the occasion, Mufti Abu Tayab Rafiqat Haqani of Markaz Islam Jamia Haqania Zahir u Alum Attock Cantt has highlighted the importance of worker with the advice to honour the labour class earning Rizq e Hilal being a closed friend of Allah instead of whispers. He demanded of the government to control over the historic price rocketing, load shedding of power, gas and announced further relief the poor and middle class segment of society besides installation of solar system free of cost.

The gathering was also attended by Sahibzada Mohammad Saeed Qadri, Mohammad Shafiq Chisti, Mohammad Muneeb with the collective pray to Allah for the socio-development of the country through implementation of Islamic Shariya in its true letter and spirits. Earlier, large number of labours also paid rich tributes to the martyrs of Chicago who laid down supreme sacrifices of their lives this day 137 years ago in 1886 in the United State's ancient city. The observance of the international labor day in a simple manner was aimed at to pay rich tributes to those workers and laborers who laid down their lives for the achievement of their rights this day 137 years ago in Chicago city of the United States of America. The laborers observed May 1st to commemorate the supreme sacrifices of the laborers who laid down

## Modernizing city infrastructure

# CBD Punjab introduces "Blue Road" concept



Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Punjab Central Business District Development Authority (PCBDDA) commonly known as Central Business District Punjab (CBD Punjab), is proud to announce the introduction of the "Blue Road" concept in Lahore. The concept aims to modernize the city's infrastructure and improve the quality of life for its residents.

CBD Punjab has introduced the Blue Road concept to Lahore, marking the first city in Pakistan and Asia, to adopt this innovative technology. Blue Roads are designed to offer a sustainable alternative to traditional asphalt roads, incorporating heat observation and energy-conserving features to reduce pollution and promote a healthier environment. These innovative roads utilize a specialized coating that reflects sunlight, reducing the amount of heat absorbed by the road surface. In addition, the reflective coating improves visibility for drivers at night, improving road safety.

Under the leadership of Imran Amin, CEO of CBD Punjab, the construction work is being personally monitored to ensure the timeline given by the caretaker Chief Minister of Punjab, Mohsin Raza Naqvi during his last visit is met.

While expressing his views CEO CBD Punjab Imran Amin said, "We are excited to introduce the Blue Road concept in Pakistan, which has already been implemented successfully in several European and Middle Eastern countries like Netherlands, France and Qatar. This project will not only bring environmental benefits, such as heat observation, energy conservation, and reduced pollution, but also contribute to our vision of creating a modern, sustainable, and inclusive society in Punjab."

CBD Punjab is committed to delivering projects that enhance the standard of living for its residents. The introduction of the "Blue Road" concept is just one of many initiatives that the authority is undertaking to modernize the city's infrastructure and improve the quality of life for its citizens.

## Lal Suhanra Park

# Measures taken for preservation of Flora, Fauna: Capt (R) Saqib Zafar



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Measures have been started for the preservation of flora and fauna in Lal Suhanra National Park, which is considered as one of the major parks of South Asia, and steps are being taken to create ecosystem and to maintain biodiversity.

The Additional Chief Secretary South Punjab Capt.(Retd) Saqib Zafar has issued instructions for erecting 65 km long fencing km around Lal Suhanra Park to fill Patisar Lake with water which is spread over an area of 4700 acres of land. These instructions were issued by him on Monday on the occasion of his visit to Lal Suhanra Park.

Deputy Commissioner Bahawalpur Zaheer Anwer Juppa and Divisional Forest Officer Fazal Shah were also accompanied with him. Additional Chief Secretary South Punjab Capt.(Retd) Saqib Zafar, while talking, said the protection of endangered animals, birds and plants is our responsibility and for this purpose, ecosystem of Lal Suhanra Park will be maintained. He said fence will be erected around the Lal Suhanra Park in a phased manner while the Patisar lake will be filled with water from the desert canal. Patisar lake will be made a habitat for local and visiting birds and Lal Suhanra Park will be made a tourist attraction, he added.

While giving a briefing, Divisional Forest Officer Fazal Shah said Lal Suhanra Park is spread over an area of 162 thousand acres of land and the fencing around the park will help in controlling illegal hunting of wild life. He further brief that the surplus water of Desert Canal will be released in Patisar Lake in current season to maintain the ecosystem.

## Provincial Ministers visit Veteri Research Institute

Our Correspondent

LAHORE: Provincial Minister of Industries, Trade & Energy, SM Tanveer, and Provincial Excise Minister Bilal Afzal inspected various sections of the Veterinary Research Institute in Lahore on Monday and planted saplings.

They attended a briefing where they were informed about the departmental activities aimed at supporting the livestock sector in the province. The ministers were also briefed about a roadmap for vaccination, disease control, animal nutrition, and breed improvement. Both ministers expressed their appreciation for the department's performance and acknowledged that the 1192 virtual governance and disease reporting & surveillance systems serve as practical evidence of the department's innovation and management skills.

During their visit, the ministers emphasized the importance of positive progress at the departmental level to enhance milk and meat production. They urged the department to adhere to the comprehensive roadmap while assuring that the government would provide the necessary support.

Provincial Minister SM Tanveer emphasized that the livestock sector is a government priority in terms of fostering economic prosperity and reducing poverty. He highlighted the need to increase local production of raw materials to stabilize poultry product prices. Furthermore, he mentioned that implementing a corporate model in the livestock sector, as part of the long-term action plan, would be a game-changer.

Provincial Minister Bilal Afzal stated that the trust placed by cattle-men in the livestock department is a testament to its success. He added that the Livestock Department's service delivery model surpasses that of other departments.

# IPS study lays out governance and policy reforms for power sector

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The power sector of Pakistan is a mess and requires comprehensive and swift governance and policy reforms. Some of these include development of business models to boost renewable energy; liberalization of the energy market through deregulation and privatization, renegotiations of generation tariffs for independent power producers, segregation and deregulation of the administrative and operational activities of the distribution companies leading towards public-private partnership, and implementation of accelerated reforms for modernization. These and several other viable policy options and practical solutions for the sustainable development of the sector were put forward in a wide-ranging study, titled 'Pitfalls in Power Sector of Pakistan: Accumulation of Circular Debt - Causes, Consequences, and Way Forward', conducted

by Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) recently published on its website: <https://www.ips.org.pk/pitfalls-in-power-sector-of-pakistan-accumulation-of-circular-debt-causes-consequences-and-way-forward/>.

The research report on the constraints and shortcomings of the power sector is particularly focused on identifying the factors contributing to the exponential increase in circular debt, which has now reached Rs4 trillion, and providing doable solutions. The power sector has long been stifled by numerous issues that hamper not only sustainable development but also the efficient progression and strategic growth of this vital sector. As a result, Pakistan has been severely affected by the energy crisis, resulting in a negative impact on the overall economy.

Among the factors contributing to the rise in circular debt are dependence on expensive imported fuels, high generation costs from thermal sources, unfavorable

rupee-to-dollar parity, poor governance and policy lapses, regulatory issues, inadequate recovery of distribution companies' revenues, financial sustainability issues, capacity charges, aging infrastructure, and line losses. The rise in circular debt requires regular tariff hikes to maintain proper cash flow for public and private entities and this affects the energy affordability of the consumers. Additionally, the vertically integrated market of Pakistan's power sector is partially monopolized, where state institutions play a dominant role. This structure results in non-existent competition between the entities. Currently, 78 IPPs are operating in Pakistan and are majorly based on imported fuel. The country's total installed capacity is 40,813 MW, excluding K-Electric. The peak demand witnessed in the system during FY2021-22 was 28,253 MW. However, the transmission capacity of the electricity infrastruc-

ture has remained stagnant at 23,000 MW. On the other hand, transmission and distribution losses of the state-owned distribution companies in FY2021-22 amounted to over 17 percent as against the 13 percent target determined by NEPRA. So even with surplus electricity, the consumers face load shedding despite paying higher electricity rates because of obsolete and deficient transmission and distribution system. In this scenario, public-private partnership is the way forward to extricate the power sector from this quagmire. This also requires new investments in the transmission and distribution system and shift to the latest technology to reduce line losses. A major reason for the burden on consumers is the obsolete and less efficient power transmission system; therefore, power transmission must be made an investment priority area, along with energy transition and digitization.



Islamabad

15° - 23° Clear

## SERVICES

## Namaz Timings

Fajr	3:48 am
Zohr	12:05 pm
Asr	4:53 pm
Maghrib	6:51 pm
Isha	8:22 pm

## EMERGENCY

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

## Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

## ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance	115
PIA Flight Info	114

*Sports activities play positive role to build mental and physical health of youth: Isphanyar Bhandara*



Staff Reporter

RAWALPINDI: Chief Executive Murree Brewery Company Isphanyar Bhandara says that sports always help to maintain a healthy lifestyle of the youth. In addition to developing physical health, these kinds of activities also help to build their character.

These activities teach the lessons of courage, passion, confidence, and tolerance which can help us to develop our inner selves.

He also added that youth with good health can also play a pivotal role in the country's development.

While talking at the event, he also said that our players are assets of the nation, and they can help us in promoting sports for the formation of a healthy society. He was talking to the reporters after the distribution of prizes at the 119th M.P. Bhandara Memorial Polo Cup Final in Rawalpindi.

The tournament was played between three teams. The final match was played between (ASC and Security2000). In the end, Team ASC scored eight goals, and Security2000 scored two goals. The event was graced by the presence of the Ambassadors of eight different countries. The dignitaries appreciated the efforts of Murree Brewery in promoting sports activities and developing the sports culture in the region. M.P. Bhandara Memorial Polo tournament was held in 1904 and continues to be a prominent sports event.

# ICCI to organize marathon race in Capital to promote health awareness

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) said that the Chamber wants to organize a marathon race in the Capital in collaboration with ICT Administration, DHO Islamabad and other organizations to create better health awareness among the youth in order to promote a healthy society. He said that the diplomatic community, retired persons and high government officials will also be invited in the marathon race to better highlight the importance of healthy activities for the society. He said this while addressing the inauguration of the Run & Ride bicycle event at F-9 Park, which was organized by DHO Islamabad in cooperation with ICT Administration, ICCI, UNICEF, WHO and others to create better awareness among the citizens about the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Pakistan Pediatric Association Islamabad Head Prof. Ijaz A. Khan, UNICEF Representative in Pakistan Abdullah A. Fazil, SSP Traffic Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanveer, Representative of WHO and others were also present on the occasion.

Ahsan Bakhtawari said that today's youth have become almost addicted to mobile phones and social media, due to which they are moving away from healthy activities. Resultantly, diabetes, blood pressure, heart and other diseases are on the rise in the society. He said that in order to get rid of these diseases and to promote a healthy society, healthy activities including walking, bicycle culture, sports & running activities should be promoted in



society to protect people from diseases and enable them to play an active role in the development of the economy. He said that nowadays the rush of patients in hospitals is increasing and due to the increase in population, it is becoming difficult for the government to establish more hospitals in cities and villages. Therefore, the best solution to all these problems is to encourage people towards a healthy lifestyle, which will reduce the number of patients and also reduce the burden on the country's resources. He also appreciated the role of the health workers who rendered valuable services to the public during the coronavirus and hoped that they will continue to serve the public with the same spirit in the future.

Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon in his address paid tribute to the efforts of DHO Islamabad Dr. Zaem Zia for organizing the run & ride event in collaboration with ICCI and other institutions because such activities are necessary for a healthy society.

He also appreciated the proposal of ICCI to organize a marathon race in Islamabad and assured that the ICT administration would cooperate with the Chamber in this event.

DHO Islamabad Dr. Zaem Zia in his address informed the participants about the aims and objectives of organizing the run & ride event and thanked ICCI, UNICEF, WHO and other partners for making the event successful. He also thanked Islamabad Police, Traffic Police and other participants for joining the event.

Abdullah A. Fazil, Representative UNICEF Pakistan said that Pakistan did a great job with the Covid vaccines and we should replicate that effort with routine immunization as well.

ICCI Senior Vice President Faad Waheed, former President & Secretary General UBG Zafar Bakhtawari, Babar Chaudhry, Nisar Mirza, Mohsin Malik and others were also present on the occasion.

## Govt urged to increase 50 % FED on all sweetened drinks

62 million Pakistanis will be diabetic by 2045

Staff Reporter

MURREE: The increased consumption of sweetened drinks has put this country into a diabetic emergency where every third Pakistani adult is living with type 2 diabetes. In addition, more than 10 million people are pre diabetic. If no immediate policy actions taken by the government, the number of people living with diabetes in Pakistan will increase to 62 million by 2045. This was said by speakers during a workshop organized by Pakistan National Heart Association at a local hotel in Murree. A large number of senior journalists, reporters and civil society representatives from Rawalpindi, Islamabad and Murree attended the session. Mr. Sana Ullah Ghuman General Secretary PANAHA hosted the workshop and welcomed all participants.

Mr. Munawar Hussain, Consultant Food Policy Program at Global Health Advocacy Incubator said that



Pakistan's economy is facing serious challenges where debt and liabilities are skyrocketing. In this situation Ministry of Finance should consider strategic interventions like increasing tax on sugary drinks to reduce the hospital expenditure and generate revenue to meet the shortfall. While referring to the study by World Bank, he said "If FED is increased to 50% on all sugary drinks, it shall help generate annual economic value of health impact of 8.9 million US dollars and achieve health gain of 8500 Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYS)".

He added "the WB study shows that the average annual tax revenue shall increase to 810 million US dollars for next 10 years".

An increase of Excise Duty on all sugary drinks to minimum of 50% in 2023-24 budget can help prevent diabetes, heart diseases, stroke and cancer in thousands of Pakistanis. Increasing tax on sugary drinks can help government in bringing some relief to the low income population through social safety nets.

Mr. Sanaullah Ghuman, General Secretary at Paki-

stan National Heart Association said that sugary drinks are not necessary of the life and its increased cost will not impact common population. However, increasing cost of the fuels, energy and agriculture commodities will directly impact everyone. Ministry of Finance should prioritize public health over the corporate interest and increase tax on all sweetened drinks including sodas, energy drinks, juices including fruit juices, flavored milk, iced tea, squashes, syrups and sweetened powders used to make drinks.

Increasing tax on sugary drinks is a triple win for the government, as the policy intervention does not cost anything to government, help reduce disease burden and hospital expenditure, and increase revenue. He said that unsweetened milk and bottled water are healthier alternative to sweetened beverages and should not be taxed to keep them affordable.

## Militant attacks again on the rise: PICSS database

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: There was a slight increase in the number of terror incidents in Pakistan, according to the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS) database. There were 48 militant attacks, resulting in 68 deaths and 55 injuries. The previous month, March 2023, saw 39 militant attacks resulting in 58 deaths and 73 injuries. There was a 23 percent increase in militant attacks, a 17 percent increase in deaths, and a 25 percent decrease in the number of injured people. The security forces' human losses also saw a 35 percent increase during April 2023, as reported by PICSS.

The Pakistani security forces have responded by increasing their operations against militant groups. During April 2023, they killed at least 41 militants and arrested 40 others. The security forces focused their efforts mainly on the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, where they killed 30 militants and arrested 14 others.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa remained the most affected province, with 49 percent of the total attacks reported during the month. In KP, the militants carried out 33 attacks resulting in 45 deaths, including 23 security forces personnel, 17 militants, and five civilians. Thirty-two people were injured, including 17 security forces personnel and ten civilians. Within KP, 19 militant attacks were reported from the mainland province, while 14 were reported from tribal districts of KP (former FATA). The tribal districts saw a 100 percent rise in militant attacks. In March, PICSS recorded seven attacks, while in April, the number increased to 14.

Balochistan witnessed 13 attacks resulting in 21 deaths, including 11 security forces personnel and nine civilians. Twenty-three people were injured, including 21 civilians and two security forces personnel. Punjab and Sindh witnessed only one attack each during April 2023.

According to the Director General of the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the security forces conducted approximately 70 intelligence-based operations daily. During the first four months of the year, they arrested around 1400 suspected militants and killed more than 188.

## Pakistan, Russia commemorate 75th anniversary of diplomatic ties

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the Russian Federation are commemorating the 75th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations, today. To mark this milestone occasion, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and the Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov exchanged letters of felicitations.

Pakistan and Russia enjoy close, multidimensional relations based on mutual goodwill and trust. Bilateral ties are marked by cooperation in diverse areas, including economic, energy and security. The two countries also consult at various multilateral fora on regional and global issues of mutual interest.

Diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Russia were established on 1st May 1948.

## Mortein donates Mosquito Repellent Products to Ziauddin Hospital

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: In the wake of the devastating Dengue outbreak that hit Pakistan in 2022, Mortein, a leading pest control brand of Reckitt, has been taking several measures to help in preventing dengue and other vector-borne diseases by partnering up with various hospitals, NGOs, and federal agencies around the country over the past few years to reduce the spread and effect of dengue outbreaks.

Mortein has announced the donation of one year's worth of their mosquito repellent products to Ziauddin Hospital to protect against dengue and other vector-borne diseases. The donation includes LED Complete with Refills, and Aerosol Sprays for each functional room at the hospital. This initiative brings us one step closer to achieving a dengue-free Pakistan.

As part of the initiative, an interactive storytelling session was held in the children's ward to spread awareness about dengue protection and prevention. Additionally, product samples and informational booklets were provided to the public at an experience booth/kiosk set up on the hospital premises, to raise public awareness on the detrimental effects of Dengue and how to combat them effectively.

Faisal Waheed, CEO Reckitt Pakistan, while talking about the initiative said, "Patients admitted in the hospitals are the most vulnerable due to low immunity. To combat this, we are proud to collaborate with Ziauddin Hospital to provide one year's worth of Mortein products to ensure a full year of protection against vector-borne diseases. At Reckitt, we are committed to protecting people's health and hygiene, and this initiative is an extension of our commitment to making a difference in the communities we serve."



## International Workers Day

# What is the historical perspective of labor struggle and why do we celebrate it?

In 1886 May Day also called International Workers Day is celebrated every year in memory of the labor leaders who were martyred in the American city of Chicago. These workers were demanding 8 hours of daily work.

Even after 137 years of this incident, today in most countries including Pakistan, workers have to work for more than 8 hours to live a decent life and in most countries the working class is forced to do more than one job, so that they are so Earn money so that his family does not have to sleep hungry. Thus, the tasks are yet to be completed today.

Today, the working class of Pakistan is suffering from historical inflation. The present government has accepted every anti-people condition of the IMF to please them. Gas, electricity, petrol, the prices of all consumer goods have been increased enormously. Continuous retrenchment of workers is going on. The textile sector is in dire straits and more than half of the factories have been closed. After the end of a government of Imran Khan, the people are facing an even worse anti-labour problems.

A large number of laborers are unemployed and are not even paid the minimum monthly salary of Rs 25,000 fixed by the government. They have to work for more than eight hours.

In this background it is all the more important to celebrate the day with enthusiasm and to present the demands of the workers with full force. May Day is not just a name to celebrate a historical

day. This renewal provides an opportunity for us to organize our ranks against the capitalist class on a class basis and try to get our demands met.

Let's take a look at the history of Workers Day

By the middle of the 18th century the situation was that the laborers struggled for eight hours a day of work. This was the period when the ideas of socialism were rapidly gaining popularity among the common workers. Different types of socialist organizations were emerging and these organizations and movements sought to organize the working classes into trade unions.

One such American trade union federation, which was called the Federation of Organized Trade and Labor Unions, which was later called the American Federation of Labor, decided through a resolution passed in one of its conventions in 1884 that from May 1886 a day's work for laborers will consist of only eight hours and this will be their legal day.

They also decided that strikes and demonstrations will be used to achieve this goal from May 1, 1886. Just one year earlier, in 1885, more than 250,000 workers in Chicago and other American cities joined the struggle to demand an eight-hour workday.

May 1st was now emerging as a day for American workers to legalize the eight-hour workday. On May 1, 1886, 300,000 American workers, belonging to 13,000 industrial establishments, participated in demonstrations. The

demand was the same "work eight hours a day" no more. In 1856, in Melbourne, Australia, before the United States, there was a movement of eight-eight-eight, that is, the 24 hours of the day were divided into three parts.

Construction masons and laborers participated in this movement and made it a success. Even today, Melbourne has a statue in the center of the city commemorating the Eight Hour Work. It is also known as Eight Hour Chowk. More than 40,000 workers went on strike in the American city of Chicago on May Day 1886. On that day, the revolutionary speeches heated up the atmosphere.

Speeches by labor leaders Albert Parsons, Johann Most, August Spies and Louise Ling made them popular. Everyone started to know them. The number of demonstrators increased to more than one lakh. On May Day, this procession ended by circling the entire city.

Two days later, on May 3, the riots started, the workers held massive demonstrations in favor of the demands. The police resorted to violence and on May 3 a lathi charge killed two striking workers and injured countless others.

Against this incident, on May 4, the workers announced a rally at Hay Market. It was raining heavily that day, some 3,000 workers arrived there,

including children and women, and the mayor of Chicago also participated in the meeting. Labor leader August Spies was a powerful orator and was incendiary when the police stormed in.

Meanwhile, to fuel the agitation, an unknown person threw a bomb at the police van, killing one police officer, while 7 laborers were also martyred and 40 injured due to police firing. During this firing, the workers dyed their white shirts with red blood and thus the red color became the symbol of struggle, sacrifice and determination and the red flag became the symbol of the workers.

Terrorism was carried out by the police but the responsibility of the labor leaders was declared and the police arrested 8 labor leaders and all of them were charged with the murder of a police officer. Among these labor leaders were Albert Parsons, August Spies, Samuel Fielden, Oscar Neeby, Michael Sukhob, George Engels, Adolph Musher and Louis Ling. Although only three of these labor leaders were present in the market that day. These workers were sentenced to death.

On November 11, 1887, 4 labor leaders Parsons, Spies, Angle and Fisher were hanged despite demonstrations and protests from workers across the country, while Louise Ling took his own life a day before the execution.



Analysis

Kiran Asim

These were the martyrs of the eight-hour movement. The other three were sentenced to six years in prison. These sentences were given to him for leading the movement for eight hours. But the excuse was bomb blast.

The labor leaders who climbed the gallows boldly uttered the historic phrases as they walked towards the ghat. Their reverberations are heard even today. "You can eliminate us physically but you cannot suppress our voice."

This incident of executions caused a wave of outrage around the world and later the demand for working hours to be set at eight hours per day became stronger around the world. Under the same pressure, the working hours were officially set at eight hours in the United States in 1887. As a result of this historic struggle of American workers, workers around the world won the eight-hour working day.

It was as a tribute to the martyrs of Chicago that the International Socialist Conference of the Second International (World Party of Labor Organizations) held in 1889 decided to celebrate May Day as International Workers' Day.

This meeting was chaired by the great Marxist teacher Friedrich Engels. Since 1889, the 1st of May is celebrated as International Workers' Day around the world and on this day, workers vow to continue their struggle until the end of the capitalist system.

Currently, May Day is a public holiday in 66 countries of the world. It is a day of reaffirmation that the working class

will not forget its world heroes who laid down their lives for the working class. This day also pays tribute to all the workers of the world, who have adopted the path of struggle and sacrifices for the labor classes till date.

Today, the working hours of workers are officially 8 hours, but to live a decent life, one has to work two, three, three or 12/14 hours, then one has to go and spend. Today, the working classes of Pakistan are facing severe difficulties due to Corona.

Poverty and inequality are on the rise and living is becoming more and more difficult. In this background, the importance of global labor solidarity increases. Although a new government in the country has announced a minimum wage of Rs 25,000 per month, labor inspections in factories are still banned.

If no inspection is done inside the factories, how will it be known that the labor laws are being followed there? If more than eight hours of work is being done there, the government cannot take notice of it. One of our urgent demands is to lift the ban on labor inspection and enforce labor laws. Work should in no case exceed eight hours per day.

We demand that the minimum salary of workers should be set at 50,000 and the pension fund should be increased from 8,500 to 25,000. Let us renew our commitment on May Day 2023 that along with sacrifices, struggle and unity, the struggle will continue for the end of this capitalist and feudal system and the construction of a socialist society.

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

# Innovating against injustice in healthcare

**Yvonne Greenstreet**

**M**edical innovation has progressed exponentially over the past half-century. And yet, the persistence of health inequality limits the potential benefits of scientific and technological advances that could save or improve lives.

The debate over the allocation of vaccines and therapeutics during the COVID-19 pandemic is a vivid example of this inequality. In September 2022, World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus stressed yet again that ending the pandemic requires equitable access to vaccines: at the time, only 19 percent of the population in low-income countries were inoculated, compared to 75 percent in high-income countries.

Despite this imbalance, richer countries suffered greater losses of life years per capita than poorer countries — a paradox highlighting how health inequality exists at many levels. In the United States, for example, cumulative data show that people of color experienced higher rates of COVID-19 infection and death than white people. The disparity can be traced to social determinants of health, the non-medical factors that play a critical role in clinical outcomes. Suffering from institutional and structural discrimination, reduced health literacy, or cultural and language barriers makes it difficult

to live the longest, healthiest life possible.

Reducing health inequality and helping underserved populations requires innovators to focus on these issues. There are still many diseases for which suitable therapeutic interventions are limited or do not exist. This is particularly true for rare genetic disorders, but also for more common ailments: impediments to patients' adherence to the existing treatment regimens for hypertension, for example, can adversely affect outcomes.

The biotech industry needs to allocate sufficient funding for research and development related to diseases that disproportionately affect specific ethnic communities. While we frequently say that communicable diseases know no borders, genetic and non-communicable diseases unfortunately do discriminate. In today's age of medical innovation, groundbreaking advances that could help these patients are within our grasp.

In a similar vein, we must rethink how we conduct clinical trials. We need to include diverse communities that are representative of the disease condition. Studies should take into consideration participants' socioeconomic and insurance status, and they should be designed to recruit people from underrepresented groups. Developing culturally appropriate and relevant recruitment materials, minimizing travel time to trial sites, reducing the frequency and number of assessments, allowing for telehealth visits where appropriate, and introducing creative ways to target, gather, and disseminate

information are all steps in the right direction.

Moreover, regulators and health-care authorities can do more to encourage innovation that helps to address societal challenges. As advances in precision and genetic medicines and technologies continue, public and private organizations must work collaboratively to ensure that these breakthrough treatments are available to all who need them. Creative pricing and reimbursement strategies could enable equitable and sustainable access for patients and health systems. For example, the Value-Based Negotiation Framework, which my company supports, aims to address some of the challenges related to reimbursement in Europe. The framework lays the foundation for quicker negotiations between payers and manufacturers with a view toward increasing patient access to innovative products.

Finally, biotech companies can and should be responsible corporate citizens. That means investing in organizations working to address the social determinants of health — the stark disparities in income, education, transportation, exposure to violence, and more — and to provide equitable access to diagnostics and therapies. The global nonprofit Acumen, for example, uses its patient capital model to invest in enterprises focusing on meeting the needs of low-income consumers, from housing to alternative energy and water.

Merck has been advancing this work

for over a decade through their Merck for Mothers program, which aims to promote safe and high-quality maternity care around the world. Sanofi Global Health, a nonprofit unit that Sanofi established in 2021, also supports underserved communities by selling medicines at affordable prices in 40 lower-income countries.

The biotech industry must continue to expand compassionate-use programs and collaborate with nonprofit organizations that provide access to essential treatments. There are enough successful industry programs from which to gain insights and identify best practices, such as Gilead's partnerships with generic manufacturers to produce high-quality, low-cost medicines, or Merck's agreement with the Medicines Patent Pool to diversify the supply of prescription drugs for low- and middle-income countries.

We must approach health inequality with the same passion, determination, and innovation that we apply to the development of medicines. Today's yawning gaps in access and outcomes are all the more unfair for being avoidable. And, as we saw during the pandemic, they are a problem for everyone. Collective action to improve health-care equity, including by addressing its social determinants, can extend and improve the lives of millions of people. That is the goal that all health-care companies should strive to achieve. (Courtesy: China Daily)

*The author is CEO of Anylam Pharmaceuticals.*

## Int'l Labour Day renewed commitment to protect workers' rights

**I**nternational Labour Day was observed across the world, including Pakistan on Monday with a renewed pledge to protect the rights of workers. The government had declared a public holiday, resulting in the closure of all government and non-government organizations, factories, and educational institutions. However, various public and private organizations held events such as conventions, seminars, rallies, walks, and webinars to commemorate the supreme sacrifices of the lives of labourers in Chicago on this day. To mark the occasion, the government issued a notification for the appointment of eight members of the National Industrial Relations Commission (NIRC) as a gift from Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to labourers.

The PM reiterated that the government was committed to ensuring the benefits of economic progress translated into prosperity for all sections of the population, particularly the labourers and workers. Paying tributes to the working classes for their contributions to the development of the country, he called upon all the stakeholders to renew their pledges both at the individual and collective levels to ensure the welfare of the working classes by investing in their socio-economic and social well-being. President Dr Arif Alvi said we are celebrating Labour Day with the resolve to reaffirm commitment to the dignity of labour and pay tribute to the valiant and heroic struggle of the workers for their fundamental rights.

Moreover, Minister for Human Rights Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada paid tribute to the historic and heroic struggle of labourers, saying that labourers struggling with inflation and difficult economic conditions deserve our special attention. Federal Minister of Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazir Tarar said that the Labour Day was not only a symbol of the sanctity and dignity of labourers, but it was also an acknowledgement of the importance of workers as they were central to the economic development of the country.

Prime Minister's Adviser on Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan Qamar Zaman reiterated the government's commitment to take all possible measures, including strengthening the existing labour laws, for enhancing the welfare and living standards of workers and their families. Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman, while addressing a ceremony held in connection with the International Labour Day, said that the working class was playing a key role in the economy and development of the country so today was the day to recognize their role and contribution.

International Labour Day was observed in memory of the massacre of labourers when the Chicago Police Department shot and killed ten unarmed demonstrators in Chicago, on May 30, 1937. The incident took place during the Little Steel strike in the United States.

BRANCO ComicallyIncorrect.com  
©2023 Creators.com

HEY ELON! THEY STILL THERE?



## Education in modern age

# Is budding use of technology in academia fading the learning objectives?

**T**echnological revolutions have reshaped the landscape of education sector likewise other segments of life in the 21st century. The role of modern ICT tools and Artificial Intelligence (AI) based applications is significantly increased in modern-day education. Educationists worldwide have expressed divergent opinions about the use of technology and AI tools in classrooms and research.

The COVID-19 pandemic had forced students, teachers, researchers, and academic institutions to embrace the use of technology to continue educational activities in the most challenging times. However, there was a continuous debate on the responsible use of technology in learning process so that younger generation does not lose interest in individually motivated knowledge gain. The use of technology in education was supported at large by the academicians by adopting a constructive and positive approach to pedagogy.

Artificial Intelligence Text Generators (AITGs) are the most recent technological evolution and a real-time challenge for academia. Earlier this year people heard about ChatGPT which generates text by asking questions in seconds like a chatbot but actually this AI tool is more than a chatbot. It can generate articles, summaries, essays, and even codes in a few seconds. Students and researchers can easily use ChatGPT for their assignments, online evaluations, and education-related other tasks. Unethical use of this technology by the students has full capacity to diminish the learning process and objectives. Considering its implications in education, the big question is 'Do we

adopt or resist this technology?'

Before learning more about ChatGPT, a brief introduction to this amazing tool would provide insight to readers. Initially, OpenAI launched ChatGPT in 2019, and then in late November 2022 an updated version of this conversational chatbot was released by using Reinforcement Learning with Human Feedback (RLHF). It works with algorithms and is trained to generate human-like text. It gives answers to users' questions, provides information, and engages in discussions in natural language. Customer service chatbots, virtual assistance, conversational interfaces for web and mobile apps, content generation for social media, and chatbot scripting for marketing or entertainment purposes are the values of this AI tool. The unique characteristics of ChatGPT include record keeping of previous conversations, provision of follow-up corrections, and declining of inappropriate requests, while the limitations of the tool include occasional generation of incorrect information, chances of producing harmful instructions or biased content, and very limited knowledge of events occurred after the year 2021.

The ever-growing trend of ChatGPT use in academia has triggered a debate about its pros and cons. The academicians are required to think creatively to introduce changes in content and skills they intend to give to their students. They can embrace the AITGs including ChatGPT as a facilitating tool to optimize the students' learning processes. The educators would also be required to learn how to deal with the use of ChatGPT in a classroom without compromising the traditional teaching methods. Centuries ago,

the Gutenberg printing press, then Google did some years before, and now AITGs are disrupting the human mind in the cognition process. The future of ChatGPT in academia is yet to be decided; however, the viewpoints of seasoned educators and researchers can shed some light on the topic.

Professor Alexis Weedon, Director of the Research Institute for Media Arts and Performance at the University of Bedfordshire, United Kingdom. She is the author, co-author of several books, and a huge log of research articles in worldwide renowned journals is on her credit. Her research domains include cross-media publishing, new media, and related areas such as new media writing, gaming, and publishing.

While sharing her views about the use of ChatGPT in academics, she said "As academics, we help students learn and that includes learning to use technology appropriately. AI has such potential in the world to help development. There is a concern that it can be misused and we all need to take responsibility for our use and application of new technology. Using ChatGPT to do your learning assignments is cheating as it is not assessing your own progress. However, using AI to solve a problem, critically evaluating its strengths and weaknesses as a solution is using the technology effectively. ChatGPT produces readable text from existing sources, but it is not creative or innovative. It is not personal and does not reflect your own unique experience".

To prevent the dominance or misuse of ChatGPT in education and research, she said, "Universities are training staff in new modes of assessment to prevent cheating. This may mean more exams or time-based assessments in invigilated spaces. A lot of learning now is not about the recall, it's about applying knowledge, critical and creative thinking." She added there will be greater emphasis on unique and creative solutions not the written essay in the future and this triggers a question too. Is it the end of the essay? Further

explaining her qualm, she added "It's a new frontier and will lead to new ways of assessing learning. We may get more visual, verbal, and creative ways of demonstrating learning. There are technologies which will assess the extent of plagiarism by text matching. I think we will see an increased reliance on these but we will also see the return of the invigilated examination in a room."

Mr. Muhstaq Bilal is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Southern Denmark's Hans Christian Andersen Center. He holds a Ph.D. in comparative literature from Binghamton University. His research work has appeared in academic journals of world literature & comparative literature studies, The Washington Post, and LA Times. He is very active on Twitter and shares tips on how to use AI apps for academic purposes. On Twitter, he provided complete guidelines on limitations of ChatGPT and shared the details of several other powerful

AI apps which generate more authentic and reliable text. He believes due to a hyper use of ChatGPT, there are hundreds of AI apps being released every week and few of them are purely for academic purposes including Jenni AI, Paperpal, Casper, ChatPDF, Audiopen, SciSpace, etc.,

Sharing his views about the use of ChatGPT for academic purposes, he believes that proper use can save a lot of time and effort. At the same time, he admonishes the students and researchers about merely academic use of ChatGPT as the app is not designed for academic purposes and frequently generates fake citations. He opined that "ChatGPT is a powerful tool but not without limitations. It can do many things but it can't think for you." He suggested that students and researchers should educate themselves about the limitations of app for the optimum use of its capabilities to take appropriate advantages. He pointed out a few dumb ways of using ChatGPT in academics which include, asking to write content for essays, articles, dissertations, etc., asking for citations and references, outsourcing self-thinking to ChatGPT, not taking ChatGPT prompts seriously and over-relying on ChatGPT.

Understandably, educators have shown concerns about the risks of this technology in teaching and evaluating students. Plagiarism or unethical use of technology in academic tasks, biased or inaccurate information on certain topics to perpetuate stereotypes, dwindling problem-solving ability, and critical thinking in students due to over-reliance on ChatGPT are vital apprehensions. While at the same time, it offers intriguing opportunities for education if used sensibly. The emergence

of new technologies is a daylight fact and academia would essentially require a transition into new spheres for the development of competencies, unique experience, and technical agility. The bigger benefit of technology in education is knowledge acquisition which has democratized access to information. Threats are obvious but the opportunities have equally considerable worth. ChatGPT can improve students' familiarity with AI and its adequate use. It can be used in training to boost communication techniques in a more effective manner. It has the ability to reshape the online learning process. It



can also assist academicians in providing an additional and more engaging resource to students for a better learning experience.

There are people who advocate the unidirectional approach in education by restricting it to typical classroom boundaries and have previously shown their opposition to the use of laptops, mobile phones, and other similar technologies in education. A significant willingness also exists to welcome emerging technologies and their use in education to step into the future. Educators and institutions should analyze both angles of opportunities and risks by keeping a focus on learning objectives as it is high time to decide whether to resist or adopt this technology in education.

UN warns of breaking point

# Sudan conflict shows no sign of easing

Fighting could be heard in Khartoum despite a supposed ceasefire extension

KHARTOUM: Fighting could be heard in Khartoum early on Monday despite a supposed ceasefire extension and the United Nations warned of a humanitarian "breaking point" as clashes between rival military forces entered a third week.

Hundreds of people have been killed and thousands wounded since long-simmering tension between the Sudanese army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) erupted into conflict on April 15.

Both sides agreed on Sunday to extend a much-violated humanitarian ceasefire that had been due to expire at midnight for a further 72 hours, in a move the RSF said was "in response to international, regional and local calls".

The army said it hoped what it called the "rebels" would abide by the deal but it believed they had intended to keep up attacks. On Monday morning, the sound of artillery, airstrikes and anti-aircraft fire was audible in

the capital Khartoum.

Many fear for their lives as Sudan's two most powerful men prosecute war in a country that has faced civil wars, coups and economic hardship for decades.

"I have to keep working, especially in these circumstances. Everything is more expensive," said Abdelbagi, a barber in the capital Khartoum. "I show up to work for two or three hours then I close up because it's not safe."

Violence has paralysed the city and risks reawakening war in the vast Western region of Darfur scarred by a two-decade old conflict, despite numerous ceasefire pledges.

Together, the army and RSF toppled a civilian government in an October 2021 coup but their power struggle has derailed an internationally-backed transition to democracy and is threatening to destabilise a volatile region.

At least 528 people have been killed and 4,599 wounded, the health

ministry said. The United Nations has reported a similar number of dead but believes the real toll is much higher.

The fighting has pitched Sudan towards a civil war and sent tens of thousands of people fleeing into neighbouring countries.

It has deepened the humanitarian crisis in Sudan, where a third of the people already depended on some form of assistance, said Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator at the United Nations.

"The scale and speed of what is unfolding in Sudan is unprecedented. We are extremely concerned by the immediate as well as long-term impact on all people in Sudan and the broader region," he said.

Victoria, one of the tea sellers that used to dot Khartoum's streets before the fighting began, said her children are struggling to understand what is



happening.

"So I risk my life to try to work and if God helps me I'll get them some food and if he doesn't I'll keep trying. But just sitting useless doesn't help and being scared doesn't help," she said.

The United Nations' World Food Programme said on Monday it will immediately lift the suspension of

its operations in Sudan that was put in place after the deaths of its team members.

"WFP is rapidly resuming our programs to provide the life-saving assistance that many so desperately need right now," WFP executive director Cindy McCain wrote on Twitter. The WFP said on April 16 it had

temporarily halted all operations in Sudan after three of its employees were killed in clashes between the Sudanese army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) a day earlier.

Burhan and Hemedti are digging in for what could be a protracted battle.

Army leader General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan has said he would never sit down with RSF chief General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, also known as Hemedti, who in turn said he would talk only after the army ceased hostilities.

In Khartoum, the army has been battling RSF forces entrenched in residential areas. Fighting has so far seen the more agile RSF forces fan out across the city as the better equipped army tries to target them largely by using air strikes from drones and fighter jets.

Foreign governments have scrambled to evacuate their nationals amid warnings the country could disintegrate. Reuters

## China, US energy coop

HOUSTON: Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner delivers remarks at the 9th "China-US Energy Enterprise Cooperation Forum" in Houston, Texas, the United States.



Photo: Xinhua

## Japan, Egypt reaffirm relations and seek to boost coop

CAIRO: Japan's Prime Minister Kishida Fumio and Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi met in Cairo to discuss the two countries' cooperation.

The trip is Kishida's first visit to Africa since he assumed office as PM.

According to a statement by Japan's foreign ministry, Kishida said: "Egypt plays an extremely important role for peace and stability in the Middle East and African regions, and that Japan attaches importance to its partnership with Egypt."

El-Sisi expressed his appreciation for Japan's support of Egypt, including the signing of a loan for the Greater Cairo Metro Line No. 4 Phase 1 Project (III) and the launch of a study aimed at providing a safety vessel on the Suez Canal.

He also praised cooperation on food security, and the acceptance of 150 mainly doctoral students at the Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology.

El-Sisi also thanked Japan for its input on the Grand Egyptian Museum project.

The statement said that Kishida also congratulated Egypt on its successful hosting of COP27 and noted the support by Nippon Export and Investment Insurance for the issuance of Samurai bonds, which are yen-denominated bonds issued in Tokyo by non-Japanese companies, subject to Japanese regulations.

The Japanese PM added that he plans to encourage more Japanese companies to expand and invest in Egypt, which he said was an increasingly attractive investment destination.

The two leaders agreed that Japan would further strengthen its contribution to the Multinational Forces and Observers, an international peacekeeping force overseeing the terms of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel. El-Sisi expressed his appreciation to Japan for its contribution to stability in the region.

The two leaders also discussed regional affairs such as the Middle East peace plan and Sudan. The two leaders shared grave concerns about the current high tensions between Israel and Palestine.

According to the statement, Kishida praised the five-party talks between Egypt, Jordan, US, Israel and Palestine for their efforts to ease tensions.

## Russia missile attack on Ukraine injures 34, damages homes



KYIV: Russia launched its second large salvo of missiles at Ukraine in recent days early Monday, damaging buildings and wounding at least 34 people in the eastern city of Pavlohrad but failing to hit Kyiv, officials said.

Air raid sirens began blaring across the capital at about 3:45 a.m., followed by the sounds of explosions as missiles were intercepted by Ukrainian defense systems.

Eighteen cruise missiles were fired in total from the Murmansk region and the Caspian region, and 15 of them were intercepted, said Ukrainian Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief Valerii Zaluzhnyi.

The head of Kyiv's city administration, Serhii Popko, said all missiles fired at the city were shot down, as well as some drones. He didn't provide further details, but said more information would be available later.

The attack follows Friday's launch of more than 20 cruise missiles and two explosive drones at Ukraine, which was the first to target Kyiv in nearly two months.

In that attack, Russian missiles hit an apartment building in Uman, a city about 215 kilometers south of Kyiv, killing 21 people including three children.

In Monday's attack, missiles hit Pavlohrad, in the eastern Dnipropetrovsk region, wounding 34 people, including five children, according to Serhii Lysak the region's top official.

Seven missiles shot at the city and "some were intercepted" but others hit an industrial facility, sparking a fire, and a residential neighborhood where 19 apartment buildings, 25 homes, six schools and five shops were damaged, he said.

Missiles also hit three other areas in the region, damaging residential buildings and a school, he said.

Moscow has frequently launched long-range missile attacks during the 14-month war, often indiscriminately hitting civilian areas.

Ukraine has recently taken delivery of American-made Patriot missiles, providing improved anti-missile defenses, but it was not clear whether any of them were employed in trying to stop Monday morning's attack.

Ukraine has also been building up its mechanized brigades with armor supplied by its Western allies, who have also been training Ukrainian troops and sending ammunition, as Kyiv prepares for an expected counteroffensive this spring.

On Saturday, two Ukrainian drones hit a Russian oil depot in Crimea in the latest attack on the annexed peninsula as Ukraine gears up for its counteroffensive.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said in an interview last week that his country would seek to reclaim the peninsula annexed by Russia in 2014 in the upcoming counteroffensive. AP

## Police still searching for Texas man accused of killing five neighbors

TEXAS: Over 200 law enforcement officers in Texas searched on Sunday for a man accused of shooting to death five neighbors after being asked to stop firing a semiautomatic rifle in Cleveland, Texas.

Francisco Oropeza, 38, is accused of opening fire on neighbors after being asked to stop shooting an AR-15-style rifle late Friday because it was keeping a baby awake. The victims include an 8-year-old boy.

"Right now, we have zero leads," FBI Houston Special Agent in Charge James Smith told reporters on Sunday.

San Jacinto County Sheriff Greg Capers said over 200 law enforcement personnel were going door-to-door looking for the suspect or any tips on how to find him. Officials are offering an \$80,000 reward for information that will lead to the suspect's apprehension.

Oropeza's name had been spelled "Oropeza" in early communications from law enforcement but was changed "to better reflect his identity in law enforcement systems," the FBI said on Sunday. It gave no further detail. Officials received a call from the home in Cleveland, about 45 miles (72 km) north of Houston, at 11:31 p.m. Friday.

Capers said on Saturday that the suspect stepped out of his house on Friday night and started shooting off rounds in his yard, which is when some of the victims stepped out to ask him to stop.

"The man walked over to the fence, said 'Hey, we're trying to keep the baby asleep in here,'" Capers said.

Both parties then went back to their houses. Oropeza "topped off his magazine and walked down his driveway" onto the street then "into the people's house and started shooting," Capers said.

Capers had said most of the victims had been shot in the head, "almost execution-style." Police said all five were from Honduras.

Police had been called to the suspect's house on a couple of previous occasions over complaints about noise from gunfire in his yard, Capers said. Reuters

## President of Uzbekistan visits referendum precinct No 59 in Tashkent

TASHKENT: On 30 April, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, together with family members visited the referendum precinct No 59 in Tashkent's Mirzo Ulugbek district and voted in the referendum.

A draft Constitutional Law "On the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan" has been submitted to a referendum. This process was preceded by a one-and-a-half-year preparatory process. The draft Constitutional Law was published in the media and people's opinion was studied. More than 220 thousand proposals have been received from the public, of which every fourth is included in the draft Constitutional Law.

Based on these proposals, the number of articles in the renewed Constitution has increased from 128 to 155, the number of norms - from 275 to 434. At the same time, the international experience was taken into account, and leading specialists and experts from



various fields were involved.

The Constitution is the legal basis for the stable development and future of Uzbekistan, ensuring human interests. Citizens, deeply aware of this, are actively participating in the referendum.

This event is directly observed by 383 international observers from 45 countries and 14 reputable international organizations. In an atmosphere of openness and transparency, the referendum is widely covered by local and foreign media.

## Paraguay's conservatives score big election win

ASUNCION: Paraguay's ruling candidate Santiago Pena, 44, scored a big win in the country's presidential election on Sunday, tightening the conservative Colorado Party's political grip in the country and defusing fears about the end of diplomatic ties with Taiwan.

Pena, who has pledged to maintain Paraguay's long-standing Taiwan relations, had 42.7 percent of the vote with over 99 percent of ballots counted, a more than 15-point lead over center-left rival Efraim Alegre, who has argued for switching allegiance to China.

"Thank you for this Colorado victory, thank you for this Paraguayan victory," Pena said in a speech. Alegre acknowledged the result. Current President Mario Abdo congratulated Pena as "president-elect," as did the leaders of Brazil and Argentina. Colorado and right-wing party candidates also performed

strongly in congressional elections and governor races, with some provinces recording a historic Colorado majority over opposition rivals.

The election result leaves Pena facing a challenge to rev up Paraguay's farm-driven economy, shrink a major fiscal deficit and navigate rising pressures from soy and beef producers to ditch Taiwan in favor of China and its huge markets.

"We have a lot to do, after the last 75 years of economic stagnation, of fiscal deficit, the task that awaits us is not for a single person or for a party," Pena said in his victory speech, calling for "unity and consensus."

It also underscores the dominance of the Colorado Party, which has ruled for all but five of the last 75 years and has a fierce campaign machine, despite rising discontent from some voters over the slowing economy and corruption allegations. "Once a Colorado always a

Colorado," said Eugenio Senturion, 65, as he voted on Sunday at his local polling station in the area of Jara, Asuncion.

Dry weather helped voter turnout, analysts said, with queues to cast ballots long after polling stations were formally meant to close at 4 p.m. (2000 GMT).

"All day we've observed high levels of participation," an observer for the Organization of American States (OAS) electoral mission said.

Not all voters were happy, however, reflected in a larger-than-expected share for populist Paraguayo Cubas who had almost 23 percent of the vote in third place, reflecting wider support for anti-establishment candidates around Latin America.

"I'm worried about crime. All the candidates are the same for me," said 34-year-old mother of three, Maria Jose Rodas, as a busload of voters arrived at



the inner-city polling station. "Nothing will change."

At the Mariscal Francisco Solano López school in the capital Asuncion, Ramona Oddone was one of the first in line to cast her ballot and was hopeful for a new direction.

"Look at all the young people taking part - that shows people want change," the 79-year-old retired schoolteacher told Reuters. "They need jobs and I need a better pension."

The Colorado Party has dominated politics in the landlocked South American country since the 1950s. But its popularity has been hit by a slowing economy and graft allegations. The build-up to the election has been dominated by the economy, corruption allegations and the candidates' views on Taiwan. Paraguay is one of only 13 nations to maintain formal diplomatic ties with the democratically governed island

**MEPCO approves purchase of 80 insulated bucket mounted cranes: MEPCO Chief**

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Multan Electric Power Company (MEPCO) Board of Directors has approved the purchase of 80 insulated bucket mounted cranes with the financial support of the World Bank and various measures to ensure the safety of the precious lives of the line staff while performing their duties in the field. The 199th meeting of directors was held at Mepco headquarters under the chairmanship of Chairman Sardar Mohammad Jamal Khan Laghari.



In which Chief Executive Officer Mepco Engineer Mehruallah Yar Bharwana presented various agenda items which were unanimously approved. Board Director Engineer Fazlullah Durrani, Mian Shahid Iqbal, Sheikh Imaduddin, Rana Yasir Rauf, Jam Muhammad Jabarlad, Nawaz Ali Pirzada, Khurram Mushtaq and Javed Iqbal participated in the meeting. The Chief Executive Officer Mepco has asked the company to recruit a Chief Health Safety Environment (HSE) Officer, Lease the Mepco-owned PC pole plant to Lodhran for three years, purchase electricity bill forms on an emergency basis.

Establishment of posts in 5 new grid stations managed by GSO Multan and Sahiwal circles, increasing the stipend of the players of different teams of MEPCO, hiring one player on the basis of monthly stipend, Assistant Manager Information Technology MEPCO Computer Center Multan Muhammad Approval of Irfan Zafar Awan's application for extension of tenure, punishment and penalty policy for MEPCO employees and increase in messing allowance for training employees were approved.

Finance Director Mian Ansar Mehmood, Director General HR & Admin Chaudhry Khalid Mehmood, General Manager Operations Nasir Ayaz Garmani, Chief Engineer/Customer Services Director Jam Gul Mohammad Zahid, Director HRM Waqas Masood Chaghtai, Company Secretary Sajid Yaqoob and other officers were also present on this occasion.

**ADB Board of Governors' four-day annual moot starts today**

SEOUL: The Asian Development Bank (ADB), one of the top international financial lenders, is all set to hold the Board of Governors' 56th annual meeting at South Korean city Incheon, bordering the capital of Seoul, from May 2 to 5.

The theme for this year's conference is "Rebounding Asia: Recover Reconnect, and Reform," wherein relevant issues will be discussed with members and development partners in working toward an inclusive, resilient, and prosperous Asia and the Pacific.

The forum would be taking up a wide range of issues including food security, climate change, and dealing with external shocks such as the Russian invasion of Ukraine, paving the way for sustainability and progress of the region with robust economic policies.

Besides, it would deliberate on various reforms that the ADB is undertaking to introduce innovative climate financing, expand its lending capacity, and restructure to better meet the needs of its developing member countries.

The meeting is being held at a time when Pakistan had recently witnessed massive floods caused by torrential rains, inflicting losses of over \$30 billion to the national economy and created issues of food security, damaged infrastructure, washed away livestock and collapsed houses. There is a forecast of another spell of heavy downpours in parts of the country this season again that could lead to further devastation of the already calamity-hit nation.

According to a media report, the rains and flooding-2022 submerged a third of Pakistan and killed more than 1,191 people, including 399 children as the United Nations appealed for aid for what it described as an "unprecedented climate catastrophe."

Pakistan received nearly twice as much rain than the 30-year average in the quarter through August last year, totaling 390.7 millimeters (15.38 inches). Sindh province, with a population of 50 million, was hardest hit, getting 471% more rain than the 30-year average.

It's all about climate change for which Pakistan in no way is responsible but a 'most vulnerable country' to all the negative impacts of the changing weather patterns. So it is natural that Pakistan would be expecting the ADB to look into the miseries faced by its people and extend the much-required financial assistance to cope with this challenge.

Although the ADB in its annual report for the year 2022 said funding to Pakistan reached a high level as it financed projects amounting to \$31.8 billion in Asia, and Pakistan was the recipient of projects worth \$5.5 billion. Concessional loans of \$2 billion and \$60 million were also granted to Pakistan. APP

**Report on the collapse of Pakistan in 2024 worrying**

Report should be an eye-opener for politicians, says 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 Monday said the report of the reputed British publication The Economist that Pakistan will go bankrupt at the beginning of 2024 is very worrying.

This report sheds light on the state of affairs in Pakistan and the perception of Islamabad in the West, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the analysis of The Economist is considered very important globally. The organization has published a 43-page report on Pakistan which is enough to open the eyes of everyone including politicians, judiciary and elites.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that the report states that



protests over inflation and scarcity of basic necessities of life will continue while political instability will also last. The report also states that the

intervention in the policy-making process will continue while the government will continue its efforts to obtain loans from various sources.

The government will also increase the price of gas and electricity to increase its revenue. The income of the government will be low and the deficit will be high, while it will also have to spend heavily on the rehabilitation of the flood victims, he said.

According to The Economist, inflation will not go away, and the central bank will have to hike interest rates at least twice, which will break all previous records. The economic and strategic partnership between China and Pakistan will continue, but the loans from China will decrease. China will also ask Pakistan to start a new IMF program to avoid financial insolvency. The tension between Pakistan and India will continue while relations with the US will not improve because Pakistan's stand on the Ukraine

war is not what the US wants.

Similarly, problems will continue to arise in relations with Afghanistan. The report states that Pakistan will try improved relations with Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates so that it can take loans to overcome the problems and shore up its foreign exchange reserves. Mian Zahid Hussain added that this report shows that further delay in economic reforms in Pakistan could prove to be extremely dangerous. The world is not ready to give more loans to Pakistan.

In order to survive, privatization of failed government institutions, elimination of losses in the electricity and gas sector, finding alternatives to imports, agricultural reforms and an increase in exports have become inevitable for Pakistan. If political anarchism is not eradicated, the people will have to suffer and we will have to regret inaction forever.

**Bank Alfalah partners with TPL**

To offer tailor-made complementary insurance solutions to its Employee Banking Customers

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Bank Alfalah has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with TPL Life and TPL Insurance to provide customized insurance solutions for its Employee Banking Customers. This partnership aims to offer free telehealth, accidental death coverage, and financial security to Bank Alfalah's Employee Banking customers.

These customized insurance solutions offered by TPL Life & TPL Insurance will cover a range of areas including health, life, and cash withdrawal insurance. These solutions are designed to safeguard the financial future of Bank Alfalah's employee banking customers and protect them against any unforeseen circumstances that may arise.

Speaking at the occasion, Mr. Ali Jameel, CEO of TPL Corp said, "This collaboration is a testament to our commitment to supporting banking institutions in delivering dynamic value propositions to their customers. This is the first step to building a long-term partnership between Bank Alfalah and TPL Group and we look forward to expanding our efforts into various other consumer segments and creating further avenues for sustainable busi-



ness growth." In addition, Mr. Atif Bajwa, Bank Alfalah's President, and CEO said, "We are excited to partner with TPL Life and TPL Insurance to offer our Employee Banking

Customers customized insurance solutions that cater to their unique needs. This partnership reflects our commitment to providing innovative solutions that add value to our customer's lives."

**EZ Wage, Rizq partner to offer Nano-Loans**

LAHORE: RIZQ, a true financial wellness app designed for salaried professionals and freelancers, has announced a collaboration with EZ Wage, a prominent regional financial wellness platform. This partnership represents a significant milestone in the efforts to make loans more accessible and convenient for working individuals.

This collaboration will enable Salaried Professionals and Freelancers to digitally access easy loans and build successful credit history. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed by EZ Wage and RIZQ, solidifying their joint efforts to extend financial support to salaried professionals in managing unexpected expenses and cash-flow gaps.

While speaking about the collaboration, CEO RIZQ and Rozee.pk, S. H. Kazi said, "RIZQ aims to address the low penetration of financial products and services for the 20 million employed professionals by providing innovative embedded solutions. Our collaboration with EZ Wage will allow RIZQ users to borrow seamlessly and responsibly."

Speaking about the partnership, Fatima Batool, CEO and Founder of EZ Wage, also said, "We are excited to partner with RIZQ. Our platform will empower RIZQ's users to manage their finances more efficiently, providing them with an instant cash advance when they need it the most."



**'Dengue-Free Pakistan'**

**Mortein partners with Pandamart**



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Last Year Pakistan was hit with devastating floods, economic uncertainties, and a severe dengue outbreak, with over 76,000 recorded cases affecting millions of people. Given the lack of a dengue vaccine, protection and prevention measures are crucial to combating the disease.

Mortein, a leading brand of Reckitt, has taken on the mission of making Pakistan dengue-free. To achieve this goal, Mortein partnered with Pandamart to create a plan for protecting citizens from vector-borne diseases. Fumigation drives were conducted in areas of Karachi that were particularly vulnerable to dengue-carrying mosquitoes. Educational literature was distributed to over thousands of families to raise awareness of the disease and its prevention measures.

People living in slums and underprivileged areas are more vulnerable to these vector-borne diseases due to bad living conditions and not following preventative measures. Thus, Mortein wishes to protect these areas from mosquitoes, allowing the residents to live a life without the fear of fatal diseases. Additionally, standees were also placed in hotspots to further educate the public on prevention.

Talking about the collaboration, Faisal Waheed, CEO, Reckitt Pakistan said, "Dengue is a life-threatening mosquito borne disease, which puts millions of lives at risk in Pakistan every year. We are very grateful to announce that Mortein has partnered with Pandamart to ensure that our communities are safe, by carrying out fumigation drives at several different locations in the city. Mortein has been at the forefront of the fight against dengue with

our mission called 'Dengue Ab Nah!' for the past few years by partnering with various hospitals, NGOs, and federal agencies around the country to reduce the spread and effect of dengue outbreaks. It is vital that we unify and combine forces to prevent Dengue spread."

The partners understand the importance of spreading awareness of dengue and its preventive measures among the masses. They believe that their efforts are the first steps toward achieving the goal of a dengue-free Pakistan.

Mortein and its partners are committed to continuing fumigation drives and educational campaigns in partnership with local organizations to combat the disease and promote public health. They remain optimistic that they can create a safer, and healthier environment for the people of Karachi and the country as a whole.

**648254.3 metric tons of wheat distributed in Multan Division: Amir Khattak**



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Wheat procurement campaign is going on in full swing in the division. At the centers where the target has been achieved, wheat procurement should be continued. Every possible effort should be made to purchase wheat beyond the target. These views were expressed by Commissioner Multan Division Engineer Aamir Khattak while talking about wheat procurement campaign. He said to check the Naqan declared stock. Action should be taken against hoarding of wheat, high prices.

On this occasion, Deputy Director of Food Department Shahid Khokhar said that he is personally monitoring the wheat procurement campaign at all centers by visiting all the districts. So far, 648254.3 metric tons of wheat has been distributed in the division. So far 4 lakh 55 thousand 148 tons of wheat has been purchased in the division. More than 70 percent of the target has been achieved. In one day, 3 vehicles were caught while taking action against guncham smuggling, which is a total of 241 vehicles.

**ATM 2023**

**German National Tourist Board to focus on sustainable inbound tourism**

Spokesman Report

DUBAI: The German National Tourist Board (GNTB) presented a campaign update today (Monday 1st May), for their vision of 'Making Tourism More Sustainable' to GCC travel professionals at Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2023.

Under the slogan, Germany, simply inspiring, GNTB is focusing on the sustainable related aspects across a number of tourism segments, which include:

Embrace German Nature, highlighting natural landscapes and activ-

ity holidays; Historic Modern Germany, promoting cultural heritage and 51 UNESCO World Heritage sites, with a spotlight on traditions and customs of rural regions. And thirdly, their Feel Good-Sustainable Travel in Germany campaign, emphasising how to enjoy an environmentally friendly holiday in Germany.

"We aim to make a meaningful contribution towards climate change mitigation, supporting Germany's commitment to net zero, as well as driving increasing numbers of environmentally aware, inbound GCC



tourists," said Yamina Sofó, Director at the German National Tourist Board (GNTB).

"We want to present Germany as an

all-year-round destination, that is not only sustainable, but diverse, accessible, inclusive, resilient and viable for the future," she added.

The GCC region is now Germany's top performing inbound source market in Asia and Australasia, with 404,707 GCC guests generating almost 1.13 overnight stays during 2022, representing an increase of 117.6%, compared with the same period in 2021.

"These figures confirm that Germany continues to be a preferred tourism destination for GCC visitors and

unspoilt nature and careful use of resources are clearly becoming increasingly important to them. We also want to encourage longer stays in order to reduce the carbon footprint per travel day," said Sofó.

Germany boasts more than 350 spa and health resorts and the GNTB is focusing on the sustainability-related aspects of health tourism. These include the preservation of traditional treatment methods, location-specific treatments and remedies as drivers of regional prosperity, and examples of sustainable energy management.

# Rizwan 'not happy' batting at number 5

Rizwan was sent to bat at number five during the ongoing home series against New Zealand

KARACHI: Mohammad Rizwan, Pakistan's wicket-keeper-batter, Monday shared his concerns over playing at number five position in the one-day international (ODI) format.

Rizwan was sent to bat at number five during the ongoing home series against New Zealand. His batting number remained a topic of discussion despite the latter scored 96 runs in two matches so far.

Multiple former cricketers including Rashid Latif suggested Pakistan team management to play Rizwan at the number four position.

Meanwhile, Rizwan also spoke on this matter during the press conference in Karachi today ahead of the third match of the five-match series, scheduled on May 3.

"Personally, I am not happy with batting at number five. I wish to play



at number four but my wish doesn't matter. The final call is of the captain and the coach and we have to accept it," he said.

"I haven't complained about it to

anyone. It is not compulsory that player gets what he wants," he added.

Rizwan, while batting at number four in ODIs, has scored 742 runs at an average of 43.85 in 20 innings.

The experienced batter alongside Babar Azam often remains under massive criticism for their batting approach, especially in T20s. The two batters are considered one of the most successful opening pairs of Pakistan in recent times.

"Salute to critics. If they think about Pakistan, it is good because constructive criticism will take our game forward," he highlighted.

"We are going to World Cup this year. The World Cup isn't for 20 players, it involves everyone including the media. International cricket is all about pressure and we are used to handling it," the cricketer said.

Pakistan team took a 2-0 lead in the ODI series after winning the first two matches in Rawalpindi. The last three ODIs will be played in Karachi on May 3, 5 and 7. Agencies

## Shahzaib Khan's century puts Pakistan U19 in commanding position



Spokesman Report

CHATTOGRAM: Shahzaib Khan's century gave Pakistan a valuable 215-run first innings lead over Bangladesh U19 with three wickets in hand at the close of day two of the solitary four-day match at the Zahir Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram on Monday.

Resuming their first innings at the overnight score of 76 for no loss with Shahzaib (39 not out) and Azan Awaiz (36 not out), the opening pair added 18 runs to the total before Azan was dismissed for 40 off 104 balls, hitting seven fours.

Shahzaib was joined by another left-hander in Shamyul Hussain and the duo added 78 runs for the second wicket. Shamyul was next to return back to the hut, scoring a 58-ball 38, striking five fours and two sixes. At that moment of the match, Bangladesh bowlers struck back and sent both captain Saad Baig (2, 14b) and Wahaj Riaz (17, 24b, 4x4s) to the pavilion with Pakistan U19 at 207 for four in 65.4 overs.

Shahzaib and Obaid Shahid then added 131 runs for the fifth wicket. During the partnership, left-handed Shahzaib completed his century in the 67th over, which came off 200 balls and included 18 fours and one six. He was finally dismissed for 174 off 323 deliveries, smashing 25 fours and four sixes.

At the close of play, Pakistan were 364 for seven in 116 overs, with right-handed Obaid returning undefeated on 62 off 140 balls, hitting seven fours and Ali Asfand on three off 14 balls.

For Bangladesh U19, Wasi Siddiquee took four wickets for 64, while Iqbal Hussain bagged two wickets for 68.

Scores in brief:

Bangladesh U19 149 all out, 59 overs (Sheikh Parvaiz Jibon 56, Sharear Sakib 48; Amir Hassan 4-29, Mohammad Ismail 3-41, Ali Asfand 2-37)

Pakistan U19 364-7, 116 overs (Shahzaib Khan 174, Obaid Shahid 62 not out, Azan Awaiz 40, Shamyul Hussain 38; Wasi Siddiquee 4-64, Iqbal Hussain Emon 2-68)

## Karachi Sports Foundation, Syed Foundation host Eid Milan gathering



Our Correspondent

KARACHI: Karachi Sports Foundation in collaboration with Syed Foundation organized an Eid Milin Party at Darul Sukoon Head Office in honour of special athletes and children. DAM Enterprises CEO Amin Merchant, Fruit Nation's Faisal Khan, Darul Sukoon CEO Savio Perera, Manager Corporate Bonny Bornshin, Pakistan Olympic Environment Commission Member Tehmina Asif, Karachi Sports Foundation President Waseem Hashmi, Karachi Tax Bar Former Secretary Shahab Ahmad and a large number of special children participated in the event. The guests of the event mingled with the special children and took pictures with them and distributed gifts among them. The children danced while enjoying the music.

Speaking on the occasion, Amin Merchant said that Pakistani players, regardless of whether they represent the country in any sport, are a source of pride for us. The special players who have won awards and laurels for the country are role models for the current normal players. Today, I feel very happy to participate in the joy of Eid with these special children. Such events create more motivation in these children, he said and added that special children are also an important part of our society. Allah Almighty has also hidden immense potential in them. These children have made the name of Pakistan bright all over the world by showing the essence of their ability in education and especially in sports fields.

Karachi Sports Foundation President Syed Waseem Hashmi said that without a doubt, the performance of Darul Sukoon, an institution for children with mental and physical disabilities, is an example at the national level. Sports Day is also celebrated by them and the services of sports equipment and coaches for special players are also available. In the future, the scope of welfare work will be expanded in Darul Sukoon, he added.

Fruit Nation's Faisal Khan said that the special players have proved by their performance that their abilities are in no way less than others. The officials and volunteers of Darul Sukoon are engaged day and night in the service of special children in the spirit of serving humanity. I salute their spirit. Our institution KSF in collaboration with Darul-Sukoon will create a sports corner for special children.

## Sports Diplomacy

# Serena Hotels hosts its annual polo cup 2023

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels believes in supporting sports activities through sponsorships and by providing platform to players and teams under its Sports Diplomacy initiative. The most awaited match of the prestigious Serena Hotels Polo Cup 2023 was held at the Islamabad Club Polo Ground on 30th April, the final match was attended by diplomats, government officials, the corporate community and Polo enthusiasts from all walks of life to laud the Game of Kings.

The final match was played between Bretta Asean and Sante Polo Team, who made it to the finals after putting up a



great performance in the preliminary matches. The match was intense, with both teams showcasing their skills and teamwork. Sante Polo Team emerged as the champion, winning the Serena Hotels Polo Cup 2023.

During the prize distribution ceremony, Mr. Aziz Boolani CEO Serena Hotels, South and Central

Asia congratulated both teams on their excellent performance, sportsmanship and comradery. Mrs. Samina Arif Alvi graced the occasion with her presence and presented the winning trophy along with 'Best Pony' award to Venom and 'Best Player' award to Ahmed Ali Tiwana. The 'Best Emerging Player' award was received by Mais-

am Baloch. Sante Polo Team held the trophy in the air for Serena Hotels Polo Cup 2023, amidst cheers and applause from the audience.

The Serena Hotels Polo Cup is an annual event organised by the Serena Hotels under the Hotel's very active Sports Diplomacy initiative, which aims to promote sports and sportsmanship in Pakistan.

## Celebration

ROTTERDAM: Members of PSV celebrate victory after the final match of KNVB Cup between Ajax and PSV in Rotterdam, the Netherlands.



Photo: Xinhua

# PGF backed Smart City 62nd National Amateur Golf Championship of Pakistan concludes

Tahir Amin

LAHORE: The Pakistan Golf Federation backed Smart City 62nd National Amateur Golf Championship of Pakistan concluded at the historic Lahore Gymkhana Golf Course yesterday after four days of enervating golf which fetched M. Shoaib a reassuring reward. Completely an unassuming youngster, M. Shoaib, belonging to a humble background took up golf as a career a few years back and devoted hours and hours of effort year after year to fine tune his golfing capabilities mentored by his coach Malik Shahbaz. The endeavour was filled with a yearning for success and that finally came his way yesterday as he emerged triumphant by winning the national golf title of Pakistan.

In this championship of

amateur champions, out of the aspiring golf playing amateurs, some of the contenders were heralded and rated highly and predictions, assessments and statistics seemed to favour them. However the Championship became a model one for young M. Shoaib. He was unquestionably the player of the Championship and certainly a formidable one. From the very word go, there was no doubt about his win at Lahore Gymkhana. He led every round and though strong ones like Salman Jehangir, Qasim Ali Khan, three leading players from Sri Lanka and one from Egypt were there to challenge him, he made steady progress over each of the four rounds to surface as the victor and national amateur title holder.

His success is attributable to four rounds scores of 71,73,77 and 73 and an aggregate of 294

, six over par. In between his shot making was excellent and was backed by an impressive short game.

Runner up of this national event was Salman Jehangir, a national golf player of prowess and dexterity and he lost to M. Shoaib by a margin of two strokes. During the four rounds Salman Jehangir had splendid scores. First round score was 72, followed by 75,74 and final days 75. Aggregate score for the Championship was 296 as against 294 by M. Shoaib.

Third position was achieved by Ahmed Zafar Hayat of Islamabad Golf Club. Ahmed Zafar is a player of merit and did manage to cause a scare amongst his adversaries by playing to perfection. In the end however, a few missed putts took him towards the third position. His score was 299.

Other performers were Sameer

Iftikhar, 300, Qasim Ali Khan 301, Hussain Hamid 302, Deann Naime (Egypt) 302, Noman Asghar 303, Nouman Ilyas 304 and Sri Lankas Chalitha Pushpika 304.

Net category winner is Sameer Iftikhar with a net score of 280, second net is Noman Asghar, 283 and third net is Ghulam Qadir, 290.

The proud winner of the Ladies title is Parkha Ijaz (Defence Raya) with scores of 77,76 and 76 and a total of 229. Runners up is Aania Farooq Syed of Airmen Golf Club. Her aggregate score is 242. Third gross was won by Rimsha Ijaz. Her score was 247. Net section ladies winner is Humna Amjad (PAF) with a net score of 227. Second net went to Bushra Fatima (Garrison) and third net to Amina Tiwana (Royal Palm).

Best senior amateur was Sard-



ar Murad and best senior in net section was Rashid Akbar.

Pakistan Team won the J.R. Jaywardene Trophy and the International Team Trophy.

Pakistan Ladies Team also won the International Team Match against Qatar.

The Inter Provincial Match was won by Punjab (Salman, Hussain, Qasim, Damil)

followed by Federal Golf Team (Umair, Ahmad Zafar, Umair Khokher, Abbas Naqvi). Seniors Inter Association was won by Punjab (Sardar Murad, Asif Mehdi, Tariq Mehmood, Tariq Usman) and runner up was Sind Golf (M.A. Mannan, Khalid Jameel, Azhar Abbas, Khurram Khan)

At the conclusion of the Smart

City 62nd National Amateur Golf Championship the prizes were awarded to winners by Governor Punjab, Mohammed Balighurrehman in the presence of Salman Siddique, Chairman Lahore Gymkhana, Shaukat Javed, Convenor Golf, Brig Sohail of PGF, Malik Kamran (PGF), Khurram Khan of Sind Golf, golf champions and golf members.