



**PM directs FBR to stop illegal sale of tobacco products**

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**US Deputy Chief of Mission engages stakeholders on trade, climate, green shipping**

US Deputy Chief of Mission Andrew Schofer participated in a stakeholder consultation on trade, climate, and green shipping in Pakistan organized by the US Agency for International Development (USAID). (Details on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

**Meeting**

KARACHI: President Dr. Arif Alvi chairing meeting with the Association for Retarded children Karachi on Thursday.



Photo: PID

**Interview with BBC, true reflection of Imran's duplicitous character: Marriyum**

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb Thursday said that Imran Khan's interview with BBC correspondent was "a true reflection and mirror of the real face of a duplicitous and false character."

In a tweet while commenting on Imran's contradictory claims in the interview, she said in one sentence he said if he was jailed, there would be reaction while in the next sentence he blamed the party's workers and leaders for May 9 mayhem. This was a lesson for all those who had fallen victim to the misguidance and deception of the misguided Imran Khan, she remarked. She said Imran Khan himself always indulged in wrongdoings, but whenever he was caught, he blamed others. "From 'one page' to 'I was powerless', from 'United States brought down my government' to 'Mohsin Naqvi brought down my government', the liar has now finally put the debris of May 9 on his party workers and leaders. She maintained that the PTI workers burnt Pakistan at the instigation of Imran Khan and damaged national dignity and desecrated martyrs memorials. Marriyum Aurangzeb said that Imran Khan had the habit of blaming others for his own faults. She said he blamed the party's leaders for illegal foreign funding and failure to provide ten million jobs, failure in building 5 million houses, cipher issue and the unprecedented corruption committed during the PTI regime.



**PM Shehbaz Sharif to attend Erdogan's inauguration ceremony**

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will attend the inauguration ceremony of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Ankara on June 3, confirmed Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch on Thursday.

The prime minister is paying the visit at the invitation of President Erdogan, who was re-elected to his office on May 28.

"The prime minister's visit will be a reaffirmation of the deep-rooted fraternal ties between Pakistan and Türkiye," Mumtaz Zahra Baloch at a weekly press briefing.

The FO spokesperson said the prime minister would convey warm felicitations on behalf of the government and people of Pakistan to President Erdogan.

The prime minister would also extend an invitation to President Erdogan to attend the 7th Meeting of the High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSCC) in Islamabad, she said.

Meanwhile, FO spokesperson Baloch said that Minister of State (MoS) for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar will undertake official visits to Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Belgium from June 5-13.

"The MoS will hold meetings at the ministerial level to discuss political engagement and cooperation in development, trade and climate change," she said.

She will also meet lawmakers and local entrepreneurs. In Belgium, she will hold meetings with Members of the European Parliament and senior officials of the Euro-



pean Commission.

In Sweden, the Minister of State will attend the annual meeting of the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) as a keynote speaker. She will present Pakistan's perspective on issues of regional and global importance and interact with leading European decision-makers, experts, think tanks, and influencers for debates on foreign policy priorities and challenges.

The FO spokesperson said Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari was currently in Jordan to attend the wedding of Crown Prince Hussein at the invitation

of the Royal family of Jordan. From Jordan, FM Bilawal will travel to Iraq from the 5th to 7th of June at the invitation of the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Dr. Fuad Hussein. This is Foreign Minister's first visit to Iraq.

"During the visit, the Foreign Minister will meet the Iraqi leadership. In his meeting with his counterpart, the two sides will discuss a range of issues of common interest and explore avenues of bilateral cooperation," she said.

Furthermore, the FO spokesperson said Pakistan was deeply concerned over India's

latest move seeking the death penalty for prominent Kashmiri leader, Yasin Malik.

Last year, Yasin Malik was awarded a life sentence in a contrived case, marked by fabricated charges and denial of fair trial. He is being held in inhumane conditions in the notorious Tihar jail despite his deteriorating health.

She urged the Indian authorities to bring an end to the "farce of a trial" of Yasin Malik and provide him with quality health treatment and allowed him to live freely among his family.

"India's latest move is another instance of political vendetta aimed at silencing the Kashmiri leadership and intimidating the Kashmiri people," she said. She urged the Indian authorities to bring an end to the "farce of a trial" of Yasin Malik and provide him with quality health treatment and allowed him to live freely among his family.

Replying to a question, the FO spokesperson said the National Security Committee's statement had clearly spelt out the factual situation around the May 9 events.

To another question, Mumtaz Baloch said Pakistan had its consistent position that all states should abide by their international legal obligations and non-proliferation commitments, and avoid steps inconsistent with such commitments. The issue of stationing nuclear weapons on territories of NPT non-nuclear weapon states, at present as well as in the past, needed to be carefully examined by all parties to the Treaty as it had serious repercussions for global peace and security.

**Govt to review law clipping CJP's powers, AGP tells SC**

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial on Thursday adjourned the hearing on petitions against the Supreme Court (Practice & Procedure) Act, 2023 — a law that aims to curtail the suo moto powers of the CJP — till next week.

An eight-member larger bench of the apex court — headed by CJP Umar Ata Bandial and comprising Justice Ijazul Ahsan, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Sayyed Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Ayesha A Malik, Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Shahid Waheed — heard the petitions.

At the outset of hearing, the top court judge said that the government should consult the Supreme Court regarding the legislation related to the judiciary. To which, the Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Usman Awan said the federal government had decided to review the legislation by taking apex court into consideration. Here, CJP welcomed the govt's move, adding "We are happy that the government and Parliament are bringing amendments to overlapping laws."



The hearing was then adjourned till next week.

**Pakistan Zindabad Rally held in support of armed forces in Balochistan**

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pashtun tribesmen on Thursday held Pakistan Zindabad rally in support of armed forces in Tehsil Muslim Bagh, district Killa Saif Ullah in Balochistan.

The tribesmen led by Chief of Muttahida Qabail Malik Aman Ullah Maktharzi organized the rally which started from Kan Mahterzai and ended in Muslim Bagh.

Four thousand people took part in the rally in 300 vehicles and 400 motorcycles.

**Charge'd Affairs Chinese Embassy called on Ishaq Dar**



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: H.E. Ms. Bao Zhong, Acting Charge'd Affairs, Embassy of the People's Republic of China called on Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar at Finance Division, today.

Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar highlighted the deep-rooted, long-standing bilateral ties between Pakistan and China, and appreciated the Chinese support to Pakistan on multiple fronts. He also apprised

the envoy of economic situation of the country and the progress in the on-going IMF Programme.

Ms. Bao Zhong reciprocated the sentiments about the strong bilateral ties between the two countries. She also assured of constant support of Chinese Government to the people of Pakistan in economic and political terms.

In conclusion, Finance Minister Mr. Ishaq Dar thanked Ms. Bao Zhong for the support and cooperation of China to Pakistan.

**Asad Qaiser, Pervoz Khattak 'arrested from Islamabad': sources**

News Desk

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) central leaders Asad Qaiser and Pervoz Khattak have reportedly been arrested from Islamabad, citing sources ARY News reported on Thursday.

Sources told ARY News that Asad Qaiser and Pervoz Khattak were arrested from the federal capital today. They added that the PTI leaders were shifted to an undisclosed location.

The reports came after the arrest of PTI President Pervaiz Elahi from outside his residence in Lahore.

**3rd Round of Pakistan-Azerbaijan Bilateral Political Consultations**

News Desk

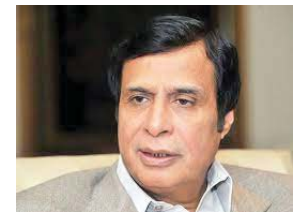
BAKU: The 3rd Round of Pakistan-Azerbaijan Bilateral Political Consultations was held in Baku on 31 May 2023. The Pakistan side was led by Foreign Secretary Dr. Asad Majeed Khan and Deputy Foreign Minister Elnur Mammadov headed the Azerbaijani delegation. Ambassador Bilal Hayee also attended the meeting.

The two sides held wide ranging discussions to review the state of play of the multifaceted and historic bilateral relations and agreed to further deepen and expand the fraternal relationship. It was agreed to enhance and diversify bilateral trade and expand cooperation in energy, information technology, labour mobility, agriculture, transport connectivity and education.

The two sides expressed satisfaction on mutual cooperation at the international fora especially at the United Nations and the OIC.



**Pervaiz Elahi arrested from his residence in Lahore**



Bureau Report

LAHORE: PTI President Pervaiz Elahi has been arrested by the Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) officials and a police team from his residence, Zahoora Palace, in Lahore.

He was shifted to an undisclosed location by the police and ACE teams. The PTI president was booked in corruption cases in Mandi Bahauddin and Gujranwala.

The senior politician was not appearing before the court despite the cancellation of bail. The PTI president's residence was raided by ACE and police officials multiple times since the cancellation of his bail. Caretaker Information Minister Punjab Amir Mir said that resistance was made during Pervaiz Elahi's arrest today and he was not opening the door of his bulletproof vehicle.

**Expertise in AI to redefine Pakistan's future economy: Ahsan Iqbal**

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Thursday highlighted the importance of getting expertise in Artificial Intelligence (AI) to compete in the world markets and achieve the goals of national development.

"The AI is a new driver or paradigm which will redefine the (country's) future economy. Today in the world, AI is bringing a revolutionary impact in every sector," he said while addressing a ceremony here.

During 2017-18, he said the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government had done a strategic intervention for putting the country in the 4th industrial revolution by setting up national centers for AI, Cyber Security, Automation & Robotic, Big Data & Cloud Computing, Applied Mathematics, GIS Technology, and Genomics.

## Call on

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Toyota Indus Motors led by President Toyota Asia Mr Yoshiki Konishi and CEO Indus Motors Ali Asghar Jamali calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday. Japanese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E Mitsuhiro Wada, Federal Ministers Ishaq Dar, Makhdoom Mutaza Mehmood, SAPMs Jahanzeb Khan and Tariq Bajwa were also present in the meeting.



Photo: PID

## PM directs FBR to stop illegal sale of tobacco products



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Thursday directed the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) chairman to completely stop the illegal sale of cigarettes and tobacco products.

While talking to a delegation of

Pakistan Tobacco Company here, the PM said steps should be taken on emergency basis against the illegal sale of cigarettes and tobacco products.

He also ordered that installation of track and trace system in all the cigarette factories in the country should be ensured by July 15.

He said the smuggling of cigarettes should be stopped, adding nobody would be allowed to cause loss to the national exchequer.

He said strict action should be taken against those involved in selling of smuggled cigarettes and tobacco or those products on which taxes were evaded.

Minister for Finance Ishaq Dar, Advisor to the PM Ahad Cheema, FBR chairman and high ranking officials attended the meeting.

## Sanjrani, Thai Envoy discuss matters of mutual interest

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani and Ambassador of Thailand to Pakistan Chakkradit Krachaiwong here on Thursday discussed matters of mutual interest, focusing on further enhancing the close and cordial relations between the two countries.

Acknowledging the long-standing bond between the two countries, the Chairman expressed his appreciation for the monuments preserved in Pakistan, which have played a pivotal role in fostering a lasting and robust relationship between the nations.

The ambassador highlighted the significant role played by thousands of Pakistanis residing in Thailand, acting as a bridge to connect both nations said a news release.



During the meeting, both parties emphasized the need to strengthen bilateral relations across various sectors, including investment, education, science, and technology. The Thai Ambassador expressed a warm welcome to the continuous development

of bilateral relations between Pakistan and Thailand.

Furthermore, there was a shared recognition of the importance of initiating joint investment projects to further solidify economic ties.

Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani accentuated the significance of inflating relations between the two countries at both the public and business levels.

He further stated that enhanced connectivity would lead to a considerable increase in trade volume, benefiting both nations.

The Chairman also highlighted the favorable investment environment in Pakistan, encouraging Thai businessmen to seize the numerous investment opportunities available in the country.

The meeting emphasized the exchange of delegations between the business communities of Pakistan and Thailand.

The step would aim to foster closer collaboration, strengthen business ties, and explore new avenues of cooperation. Moreover, Chairman Senate

Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani highlighted the establishment of Special Economic Zones in Pakistan, which aspire to facilitate foreign investors and create a favourable investment atmosphere.

Thai Ambassador Chakkradit Krachaiwong conveyed his admiration for the hospitality and rich culture of Pakistan. He expressed the willingness of Thai companies to invest in agricultural and food products, showcasing their confidence in the potential of the Pakistani market.

Both agreed to actively strengthen mutual relations and explore new areas of cooperation. Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani extended his best wishes to the Ambassador of Thailand, emphasizing the commitment to deepening the friendship between the two countries.

## US Deputy Chief of Mission engages stakeholders on trade, climate, green shipping

## News Desk

ISLAMABAD: US Deputy Chief of Mission Andrew Schofer participated in a stakeholder consultation on trade, climate, and green shipping in Pakistan organized by the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

During the discussion, policy makers and private-sector leaders identified existing issues and challenges related to climate change, with a specific focus on promoting green and sustainable shipping practices in Pakistan, said a news release. The participants developed actionable recommendations and a common vision for a path forward.

"Through the US-Pakistan 'Green Alliance' framework, our two countries are jointly preparing to meet the environmental and economic challenges of the future, especially climate change, while spurring sustainable and inclusive economic growth," DCM Schofer said.

He said, "Through events like the one today, we are encouraging bilateral dialogue on climate action, and exploring innovative solutions to build Pakistan's climate resilience."

In his keynote address, Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Syed Faisal Ali Subzwari highlighted the importance of addressing climate



change and promoting sustainable

shipping practices in Pakistan.

USAID presented findings from their gap-analysis study on international and domestic regulations for green shipping operations in Pakistan.

The study aimed to explore the state of compliance in Pakistan with international, regional, and domestic conventions, regulations, and standards aimed at managing and monitoring marine and air pollutants from shipping operations.

The study identified regulatory and institutional gaps that could steer shipping operations in Pakistan toward meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement.

## Muhammad Asim appointed Managing Director APP



ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Thursday appointed Muhammad Asim, a BS-20 officer of the Information Group as Managing Director (MD) of the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) with the immediate effect.

Muhammad Asim was earlier serving as Director General of the Cyber Wing, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Earlier, he was given additional responsibilities of the Managing Director of the premier news agency APP.

## TIKA equips classrooms, library with new-generation educational materials at NUML

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) has carried out renovation works in the Turkish Department at the National University of Modern Languages (NUML) and equipped the classrooms, and library with new-generation educational materials and equipped with Turkish cultural elements.

The opening ceremony was attended by the Turkish Ambassador to Islamabad Prof. Dr. Mehmet Paçacı, University Director General Nadir Ali, Islamabad Program Coordinator Muhsin Balci, Faculty Dean, Head of the Turkish Department and



teachers, Turkish Institution Representatives operating in Pakistan and students of Turkish Department, said a news release issued here on Thursday.

On the occasion, the ambassador said that TIKA carried

out projects around the world and including Pakistan.

"Projects implemented in Pakistan had made a great contribution to Turkey-Pakistan relations" he added.

Director General Nadir Ali thanked TIKA for the proj-

ects it had carried out within the university and said that the Turkish Department was an example to other departments with its modern infrastructure.

Coordinator Balci said that nearly 650 projects and activities had been carried out throughout Pakistan since 2010.

Approximately 18,000 students studying in 5 faculties of the National University of Modern Languages (NUML).

In the Turkish Department of the University, a total of 61 students are studying Turkish Language and Literature and Turkish Translation at various levels with undergraduate education.

## Bureau Report

KARACHI: Pakistan Navy Ship (PNS) SAIF while carrying out routine patrolling in the Arabian Sea, expeditiously responded to a distress call by a stranded Fishing Vessel AL ZUBAIR and saved the valuable lives of six fishermen.

The fishing vessel had suffered engine failure and subsequent flooding due to rough sea conditions, a Pakistan Navy news release said.

PNS SAIF swiftly responded to the distress call at night and safely recovered six stranded fishermen.

Medical assistance was provided onboard and the fishermen were subsequently shifted to Gwadar. The



fishermen's community has lauded the efforts of the Pakistan Navy in saving precious lives at sea.

Pakistan Navy, besides ensuring combat readiness at all times, remains vigilant to contribute to ensuring the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) through sustained presence and monitoring of activities within the Maritime Zones of Pakistan.

## China-Arab countries' trade exceeded US\$430 billion last year: Mao Ning

## News Desk

BEIJING: Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson, Mao Ning said on Thursday that China had been Arab countries' largest trading partners and the trade between China and Arab countries exceeded US\$ 430 billion last year.

"China and Arab countries enjoy a long tradition of friendship," she said during her regular briefing in response to a question about visits of Chinese business delegations visiting Arab countries these days.

Mao Ning said that China had long been Arab countries' largest trading partner, adding, "Last year, trade between China and Arab countries exceeded US\$ 430 billion." She said that under the Belt and Road framework, the two sides had robust cooperation, which boosted respective development and rejuvenation.

## Tragedies of May 09 are Shocking and Against the National Dignity: Liaqat Baloch

## Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Deputy Amir of Jamaat-e-Islami, Secretary General National Unity Council Liaqat Baloch while addressing the central consultative meeting said that religious leadership and parties should overcome power politics to solve the political, moral, cultural, social and economic crisis in the country. Religious and national roles have to be played. All human, moral and democratic values are being trampled in the cycle of getting power and chair. The central leaders of the National Unity Council will make a plan of action in the Majlis-e-Ameela meeting

Punjab South, North, Central; The organization of Milli Solidarity Council in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Sindh, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan should play a role for communal harmony.

# Chairman of Pakistan Ulama Council warns against trampling on martyrs' pictures on May 9

Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: Whether they are women or men, punishments are given for crimes, but it is important to protect women's honor and dignity during their trial with transparent mode of investigation. The nation held a referendum on Martyrs' Day. It is that the paths of this nation and terrorists are different. Now it is the turn of the traitors of the country to cry because the nation & the army is determined to trace conspiracy behind the losses of May 9.

The current judicial system is neither Islamic nor humane. These views were expressed by Chairman Pakistan Ulama Council Hafiz Tahir Ashrafi during the press conference.

According to the details, Chairman of Pakistan Ulama Council Hafiz Tahir Ashrafi, while addressing the Media conference of Pakistan Ulama and Mashaikh at the center of Jamia Osmania, Razaabad, said that what happened on May 9, 2023, that did not



happen in the country's 75-year history.

He said that there will be better justice in the courts established under the Army Act. Hafiz Tahir Ashrafi said that if Imran Khan does not cherish the sanctity of martyrs, then we also do not sanctify anyone. You did not even go to Jinnah House and express

your condemnation. He asked to tell me why you did not celebrate Martyrs' Day. Mothers are crying outside the courts and leaders are missing. Those who are innocent should be released, he further said and added.

Deputy Secretary General of Pakistan Ulama Council Allama Tahirul

Hasan, Mufti Nasrullah Aziz, Qari Hanif Bhatti, Allama Ghulam Akbar Saqi, Qari Muhammad Arif Sialvi, Idris Yazdani, Sahibzada Hamza Tahirul Hasan, Allama Izharul Haq, Maulana Khalid Haq Nawaz Khalid, Maulana Amin. Haq Ashrafi, Qari Ismatullah Muawiyah, GM Ansari Advocate, Muhammad Yasin Butt, Maulana Ubaidullah Gormani, and other schools of thought scholars and mashaikhs, political, religious, businessmen and artists were also present. While on June 11, the stability of Pakistan Ulama and mashaikh conference will be held in Lahore.

In response to a journalist's question on the treatment of women who were imprisoned during the May 9 protest, Maulana Ashrafi said that in Islam, men or women are punished for crimes, but women are respected for their dignity and honour.

He pointed out that women cannot be harmed at any cost. Islam has given woman the position that others do not give in other societies.

## Chief Election Commissioner called on President Azad Jammu and Kashmir



Abdul Majeed Tahir

ISLAMABAD: Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Justice Retired Abdul Rasheed Sulharia called on President Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry here on Thursday.

On this occasion, the CEC, while presenting the annual report of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Election Commission 2022 to the President, briefed him on the recently held local body elections in Azad Kashmir.

Speaking on the occasion, Barrister Chaudhry congratulated the CEC for the peaceful conduct of local body elections, which were after a gap of 32 years.

The president also praised the positive role of the AJK Supreme Court and expressed the hope that the newly elected local body members would serve the state to the best of their ability.

Senior member election commission Raja Mohammad Farooq Niaz and Secretary Election Commission Sardar Ghazanfar Khan were also present in the meeting.

## Assessment of damage caused by hailstorm in various tehsils of LSW is in progress

Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: In most tehsils and most areas of South Waziristan Lower district, standing crops, vegetables and fruit orchards have been completely destroyed due to heavy hailstorm, rain and stormy winds.

On the other hand, Additional Deputy Commissioner District Lower South Waziristan Finance and Planning Kashmir Khan said while talking to the media that all the staff of the district administration are collecting information about the damages caused by hailstorm in different areas and are engaged in conducting assessment and have started full efforts to repair the damages with the support of the provincial government.

He said that all the staff of the district administration have been alerted to deal with such an emergency situation so that the damages caused by natural calamities/disaster can be redressed in time.

Local elders have demanded NDMA and PDMA along with federal and provincial governments that all the places affected by hail in South Waziristan should be surveyed and the area should be declared disaster, and the farmers should be financially supported because here vegetables and orchards are cash crops for farmers and landlords, which have been completely destroyed.

However, at the same time, wheat harvesting, which was in progress, has also been badly affected on which the government should assess the damages through survey and provide relief to the affected farmers. So that the stopped wheel of life can run.



## MEPCO, country's largest power distribution company: Mehrullah

Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: Chief Executive Officer MEPCO Engineer Mehrullah Yar Bharwana has said that providing training to new engineers in various companies/institutions by Pakistan Engineering Council is a revolutionary initiative. You will also benefit from the experience gained. He was addressing a function organized at MEPCO headquarters to give internship to newly graduated engineers. He said that with the positive initiative of PEC, young engineers will get experience and PEC will also give them 30 thousand rupees as an honorarium for 6 months.

Where damaged and burnt distribution transformers are being remanufactured under modern methods. 4 workshops in South Punjab are successfully manufacturing thousands of transformers every month to high quality standards and supplying them to field formations. Laboratories are doing excellent work to retrieve data of faulty meters through modern methods including data retrieval of faulty and burning meters. is being done. Vice-Chancellor MNS University of Engineering Multan/Member Governing Body PEC Dr. Muhammad Kamran while addressing the event said that providing training to new engineers in the market is the vision of Pakistan Engineering Council. The experience gained in the 6 months internship of new engineers will make it easier during employment. PEC has also provided such an opportunity for the first time and also fixed a stipend/honorarium of Rs.30 thousand per month for new engineers. No country can develop without engineers. Mepco is taking the vision of PEC forward.

## Alertness

RAWALPINDI: Recues workers stand alert at bridge in Gawalmandi area to counter any unexpected situation during heavy rain fall, in City.



Photo: Online

# Azad Kashmir department reviews arrears of advertisements, progress of development programs

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: A departmental review meeting was held on Thursday under the chairmanship of Information Secretary of Azad Kashmir Mr Ansar Yaqub Khan.

In the meeting, the arrears of advertisements and the progress of the targets of the annual development program were reviewed. Director General Information Raja Azhar Iqbal, Director Information Raja Amjad Hussain Minhas, Assistant Director Advertisement Syed Asif Hussain Naqvi, Information Officer Muzaffarabad Raja Sohail Khan, Section Officer Information Syed Aftab Hussain Jafri,



Program Officer Shamim Anjum Aziz and Supervisor Information Raja Bilal Ahmed were present in the meeting.

In the meeting, Assistant Director of Advertisement Syed Asif Hussain Naqvi briefed the Information Secretary regarding the arrears of advertisements

against the Development Budget and Normal Budget, while Raja Sohail Khan briefed the Information Secretary regarding the progress of the goals of development projects. Speaking on the occasion, Information Secretary Ansar Yaqub Khan said that the process of payment of arrears of

newspaper advertisements should be expedited and all payments should be ensured by the end of the financial year.

With reference to arrears of development budget advertisements, the concerned departments should be again urged to ensure the achievement of their respective departmental arrears targets before the end of the financial year.

Development projects should be completed in a transparent manner and no compromise should be made on quality. The tendering process should be completed by fulfilling all legal requirements. No tender process should be done without following the Pipera Rules.

# Zakaria Express Train Restored from Multan to Karachi. Hamad Hasan Mirza

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Inauguration of Zakaria Express by Khawaja Jalaluddin Rumi and DS Railway Hamad Hasan Mirza. The revival of Zakaria Express fulfilled the long-standing demand of the business community. Khawaja Jalaluddin Rumi Zakaria Express has been restored on the instructions of Federal Minister of Railways Khawaja Saad Rafiq. Hamad Hasan Mirza

Multan Zakaria Express train was restored from Multan to Karachi. Well-known industrialist Khawaja Jalaluddin Rumi and DS Railway Multan Division Hamad Hasan Mirza inaugurated, the train was also dispatched from Karachi to Multan.

DS Railway Multan Division Hamad Hasan Mirza and well-known industrialist Jalaluddin Rumi along with railway officers and Chamber of Commerce President Mian Rashid Iqbal, former president Sheikh Fazal Elahi, Naveed Ahmed Chaghtai,



Sohail Tufail, Ahmed Chaghtai and others participated in the opening ceremony.

On this occasion, DS Railway Multan Division Hamad Hasan Mirza said that the restoration of Zakaria Express train has been done on the instructions of Federal Minister of Railways Khawaja Saad Rafiq. The Zakaria Express train will stop

at Shujaabad, Gelewala, Lodhran, Bahawalpur, Suma Satta, Dera Nawab Sahib, Liaquatpur, Khanpur while going from Multan to Karachi.

Zakaria Express train has 11 economy, 2 business, 3 standard, one dining car, one brake van and one power plant coaches. 912 passengers departed from Multan in Shalimar Express train while advance booking of passengers

from other stations has also been done.

After the inauguration, DS Railway Multan Hamad Hasan Mirza specially inspected the economy, business, and dining cars of Zakaria Express train. He further said that the best travel facilities will be available to the passengers in Zakaria Express train. On the other hand, there was a wave of happiness among the passengers on the occasion of the restoration of Zakaria Express train.

He thanked the government and said that the railway system should be upgraded and the cargo sector should also be given attention. Meanwhile, DMO Railway Multan Dr. Seema also checked the dining car of Bahawalddin Zakaria Express. Later, Divisional Commercial Officer Railway Multan Adnan Marwat along with his team checked the tickets as well as the dining car from the passengers in Zakaria Express train from Multan to Khanpur. Passengers in Zakaria Express train from Multan to Khanpur.

# Ufone 4G connects pilgrims through its industry-best Hajj Data Roaming Offer

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani telecom operator, Ufone 4G is providing seamless data connectivity through its industry-best and most competitive 'Hajj Data Roaming Offer' to its prepaid customers travelling to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) for Hajj. The exceptionally affordable offer comes with generous allocations of data volume and allows exclusive access to WhatsApp calls for unrestricted communication with friends and family back home.

The offer has been designed to provide a worry-free user experience to Ufone 4G customers during the pilgrimage. The large volume of data allows for easy exchange of photos,

videos and video calls from the Holy land so the pilgrims can virtually include their friends and family in the blessed experience. Customers may choose from three data buckets of varying volume depending upon their budget and need. Each of these bundles has a validity of 30 days.

Apart from KSA, Ufone 4G also provides roaming services in Iraq, Qatar, UAE, Turkiye and the United Kingdom to help its users stay connected at all times during their travel to these countries. Ufone 4G's constant innovation and promptness to introduce new range of products, and services now and then speaks volumes of its unflinching focus on bringing the best user experience to its customers.



Islamabad  
15° - 23° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 3:17 am  
Zohr ..... 12:06 pm  
Asr ..... 5:04 pm  
Maghrib ..... 7:13 pm  
Isha ..... 8:54 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

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

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

CMH ..... 561111  
MH ..... 561116  
MH ..... 561116  
Cantt Hospital ..... 9270907-11  
DHQ ..... 5556311-4  
RGH ..... 9290301-7  
Holy Family ..... 9290322-7  
PIMS ..... 9261170-79  
Polyclinic ..... 9218300-09  
Shifa International ..... 4603666

**DEPARTMENTS**

CDA ..... 9221334-43  
CDA ..... 9208301-04  
Met Office ..... 9250360-6  
RDA ..... 5555864  
TMA ..... 5770886

**Rajanpur Kacha Area Operation entered on the 54th Day**

**Kiran Asim**

DERA GHAZI KHAN: Under the direction of IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar, Rajanpur Kacha operation entered on the 54th day. Continuous advance of police and targeted operation in Rajanpur Katcha Area, spokesman Punjab Police forces under the command of Regional Police Officer Dera Ghazi Khan advanced towards Mauza Mandhri and Chak Kadia.

Complete encirclement of Mandhri and Chak Kadia with stiff resistance from front-line bandits. The area of Mandhri and Chak Kadia is considered to be the stronghold of dacoits, criminals. They will eliminate terrorists and bandits from the area and establish the rule of law. The police search operation and clearance in the raw material peninsula is still going on.

The ongoing operation in Rajanpur Kutch has entered its final stages, Regional Police Officer Dera Ghazi Khan Captain Retired Sajjad Hasan Khan. Devote all your energies and resources to making Kucha completely peaceful. Instruction of IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar Make the operation a complete success by eliminating the hidden bandits in the rough areas 07 bandits have been killed in Rajanpur Kutchha operation, 43 bandits including 25 surrenderers have been arrested, 9 hostages have been rescued. Spokesman Punjab Police.

**PRCS Chairman calls on Ambassador of Qatar**

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari held a meeting with Qatar's Ambassador, Sheikh Saud Abdul Rehman Al Thani here on Thursday. H.E. Sheikh Saud Abdul Rahman Al Thani warmly welcomed Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari to the Qatar Embassy. Both the dignitaries engaged in discussions covering a range of topics, including bilateral relations and the importance of enhancing cooperation for the betterment of humanity.

Sheikh Saud Abdul Rehman Al Thani expressed his belief that the relations between Pakistan and Qatar are exemplary, with mutual respect between the peoples of both nations. He highlighted the consistent efforts made by both sides to strengthen their brotherly bond. Furthermore, Sheikh Saud Abdul Rehman emphasized the significant role played by Qatar Charity in supporting humanitarian organizations worldwide, with Pakistan holding a special place as their most important brotherly country.

During the meeting, Sardar Shahid



Ahmed Laghari provided a comprehensive overview of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society's initiatives in rescue, relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction following the recent floods in Pakistan. Sheikh Saud Abdul Rahman commended the PRCS for their exceptional services during natural disasters and emergencies, particularly acknowledging their recent humanitarian assistance to families affected by the floods. He assured that cooperation

with the Red Crescent would be further enhanced to ensure uninterrupted service to humanity. He also indicated on collaboration with PRCS in the rehabilitation and recovery phase, specifically providing support to thousands of families affected by the floods.

On this occasion, Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari also presented a commemorative shield from PRCS to Ambassador Sheikh Saud Abdul Rahman Al Thani.

**Rainy Day**

ISLAMABAD: Motorists are on their way at Jinnah Avenue during heavy rain fall in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

**'AIOU strives to promote national harmony through language, literature' Dr. Nasir**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: "Vice Chancellor, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood is of the vision to bring the young generation closer to each other through the literature, civilization, and history of Pakistan to promote national unity and harmony in the country," said Dean, Prof. Dr. Abdul Aziz Sahir while presiding the Faculty board meeting of Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities AIOU yesterday.

Prof. Dr. Abdul Aziz Sahir said that on the special instructions of the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, the Department of Pakistani Languages has developed four new courses for the promotion of Pashto, Punjabi, Sindhi, and Balochi language and

literature. These courses are being included in all BS programs of the University as compulsory courses. The board also approved the inclusion of courses on Seerat study and mandatory in all programs as per the instructions of the Government of Pakistan.

Different schemes of studies of BS, MS, MPhil, and PhD programs of various departments as well as other teaching and academic matters were discussed and approved in the meeting. The members emphasized to maintain and align the quality of courses and credit hours of all programs with the policy of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and the University. All the faculty members participated in the meeting.

**RCCI BUILD Expo 2023 kick off today**

**Commerce Desk**

RAWALPINDI: The third property expo BUILD 2023 organized by the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry will be held at Topi Rakh Complex of Ayub Park. Chairman Expo Sardar Tanveer Sarwar has said that the three-day Expo will be held from June 2 to 4.

He said that this is the first time that more than sixty stalls of industries related to the construction sector such as property, engineering, machinery, interior, architecture i.e. architecture and renovation and ceramics are being set up on the occasion of the expo.

Chairman Sardar Tanveer said there will also be conferences on the side-



lines of the expo and added that a food court for families and a musical evening will also be organized in the evening.

The chairman said that the purpose of organizing the expo is to find investment opportunities in the construction sector, real estate and property-related industries and to inform investors about new trends.

**Razzaq Ahmed Nadeem visited Government Vocational Training Institute Muzaffarabad**

**Bureau Report**



MUZAFFARABAD: Chairman Azad Jammu and Kashmir Technical Education and Vocational Authority Razzaq Ahmed Nadeem visited Government Vocational Training Institute Muzaffarabad, the chairman inspected the HVACR department in the institution, on this occasion Amjad Hussain Awan, instructor of the department, gave a briefing to the chairman and the guests who came with him. And the Chairman also asked the trainees questions related to HVACR and for giving satisfactory answers, the Chairman appreciated the efficiency of the department. On the occasion, Mr. Amjad Hussain Awan Jr. Instructor HVACR introduced a potable refrigerator model with the aim of creating a gas storage refrigerator in the market which is not available in the market till date and this is the biggest achievement of the HVACR trainees. Due to its introduction, the sector can develop further in the coming time. Its specialty is that no company has introduced a gas storage system in the refrigerator sold in the market, so we are the first refrigerator due to successful experience.

The financial affairs of the building built on 5 kanal on the college map on GT Road in Gujarat city have been settled after mutual consultation and negotiation. An agreement will be reached on tenancy and other issues. Chairman Career Group of Institutions Javed Intizar and Director General Career Group of Institutions Professor Muhammad Aamir will finalize the agreement with the building owners under the legal guidelines. Javed Intizar said that after the success in Islamabad, the establishment of career college in Gujarat city. Professor Muhammad Aamir said Establishing a college in Gujarat will be a major step towards opening branches across the country. Punjab will get top positions in the board like in Islamabad. June 2 after Friday prayers in the city of KPK province covering seven kanals of the college building. They will go to see the land. Two models are being introduced to open hundred branches across the country. One model will be sleeping share holding and the other model will give franchise. People are getting involved in both models.

**Hazrat Imam Ali Raza Conference at Punjab Arts Council**



**City Desk**

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Arts Council in collaboration with Central Imam Hussain Council organized Hazrat Imam Ali Raza conference on the 1296th birth anniversary of Hazrat Imam Ali Raza. The conference was presided over by prominent religious scholar Dr. Ghazanfar Mehdi.

Former Director General Punjab Arts Council Chaudhry Muhammad Asif Pervez participated in the conference as a special guest. Muhammad Suleman performed the duties of host in the conference. Dr. Ghazanfar Mehdi said in his address that Hazrat Imam Ali Raza was bridge between scientific sciences and Islamic sciences. World famous scientists and great scholars and Mashaikhs were his students. Chief guest Chaudhry Asif Parvez said that Hazrat Imam Ali Raza is a symbol of the unity of the Ummah. Terrorism and sectarianism can be eradicated by following his teachings. Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmad said that the birthday of Hazrat Imam Ali Reza is celebrated as a national day in Iran and is a national holiday. Hazrat Maruf Karkhi was the personal servant of Hazrat Imam Ali Raza, the mentor of the great spiritual leader Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh. Khanum Madiha Hussain said that all the saints received grace from Hazrat Imam Ali Raza. Ehsan Kabaria said that the teachings of Hazrat Imam Ali Raza have been composed by poets from all over the world. Aliha Johari said that Hazrat Imam Ali Raza gave rights to women in the society. Sahibzada Farooq Gul Badshaha Mohra Sharif passed the resolution for the end of terrorism and sectarianism and prayed for the martyrs of various services to be honored.

**Today fall as Multan observes Black Day: Rafia Malik**

**Asim Tanveer**

MULTAN: June 2 falls as Multan observes Black Day. The sacrifices of Nawab Muzaffar Khan Shaheed for Multan are unforgettable. The day of the fall of Multan is the day of loyalty to its soil, the acquisition of its identity as Sarai province and the renewal of the fundamental right to get rid of the throne of Lahore. These thoughts were expressed by the central president of the Saraiki Democratic Party Women's Wing Rafia Malik, She Said on the occasion of Multan Fall Day. Women's will participate in large numbers in the Multan Fall Day event organized by the Saraiki Democratic Party. He said that the fall reminds of the eternal sacrifices of Multan Nawab Muzaffar Khan Shaheed



The Saraiki nation celebrates this day as a reminder of the great sacrifice. Seminars, rallies, meetings, processions are organized by SDP in the entire Saraiki region and the speakers pay tribute to Nawab Muzaffar Khan Shaheed for his great eternal sacrifice and the cruelty and brutality of Ranjit Singh. Condemn.

Nawab Muzaffar Khan Shaheed raised the head of Muslims proudly in the world of Islam by defending the land of saints. Rafia Malik said that it is our duty to inform the new generation about the correct history. Future generations will not forgive us if we neglect to fulfill this duty. Nawab Muzaffar Khan Saduzai Shaheed sacrificed his life and that of his family members in the cause of Allah against oppression and proved that in the war of truth and injustice, one does not bow down while supporting the truth, but stands firm against the enemy.

**What's on**

**2nd European Film Festival (EUFF) 2023**

ISLAMABAD: 1st June 2023: Film enthusiasts from the twin cities and four other cities across Pakistan will get a unique opportunity to discover European cinema at the second European Film Festival, commencing on 2nd June 2023 at the Pakistan National Council of Arts in Islamabad.

**Public Schools in Rural Islamabad are Underfunded, Understaffed and Overcrowded**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Youth Change Advocates (PYCA) in partnership with the Pakistan Coalition for Education (PCE) recently held a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with parents, teachers, and local media representatives to understand the issues faced by public schools in rural pockets of Islamabad capital Territory. The FGD participants shared a plethora of issues that were impacting both children's access to formal learning and the quality of education being imparted in the classrooms. "With 80 or sometimes more students in one class, it is not humanly possible to ensure quality. The schools in rural Islamabad urgently need more classrooms and more teachers to ensure that every student receives the teacher's due attention," shared one of the



teachers participating in the discussion.

Teachers and parents also emphasized the need to include their input in the budget-making process so that the

needs identified at the grass-root level factor into the federal education budget. They also demanded a substantial increase in the school education budget

to ensure adequate resources for quality education. They stressed that education should be a priority in the national budget to bridge the educational gap and enhance learning outcomes.

"Of the total education budget in FY 2022-23, 88% of the development expenditure was allocated for higher education while less than 1% was allocated for school education. This is simply insufficient to meet the needs of a growing population of children of school-going age," read a statement attributed to Areebah Shahid, Executive Director of PYCA. "Without a sizable increase in public investment at the primary and secondary levels, there is little hope to resolve education access and quality-related issues that are rapidly contributing to the population of out-of-school children across the federal capital."

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almas Ayoub Sabir**  
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 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

# Black Day vandalism of 9th May: Unparalleled in country's history

**E**very democratic society provides its citizens the right to associate with others and gather together for a common purpose. Protests, marches and demonstrations, counter-demonstrations, press conferences, public and private meetings are a part of the democratic process, but this freedom of assembly certainly does not justify deliberately violent protests. Pakistan's past is replete with protests, marches and demonstrations, and counter demonstrations, some gargantuan and some relatively smaller in expanse. But the shameful episode of May 9, 2023, to speak the truth, has no parallel in the country's 75-year-old history. To term this day a "Black Day" couldn't be more fitting. Needless to say, the unparalleled anti-state rebellion that engulfed the entire country on May 9 has abominably marred Pakistan's image in the comity of civilized world nations.

It wouldn't be incorrect to say that on this profoundly sad day all bounds of civility and sanity were brazenly and outrageously breached by elements who could out-and-out be called anti-state elements. The insurrection of these utterly anti-state elements against the state and strategic state institutions left every peace-loving citizen of this country in a state of complete shock and awe. These elements, at the behest of their mentors, ruthlessly vandalized strategic state institutions, monuments of profound national significance, and umpteen public and private properties and vehicles. Their brazen looting and arson at the places they vandalized, portrayed a horrible sight for those who remained glued, throughout the day, to the mainstream media and the social media not only across Pakistan but the entire world.

It is indeed very unfortunate that key state institutions such as the Pakistan Army and the Election Commission of Pakistan, including the vital pillars of the state – the executive, the legislature, the judiciary, and their heads, are being fiercely castigated and defamed by a particular political force. Their audacity to engage in this contemptuous vituperation against strategic importance actually got a fillip due to lack of adequate and appropriate response on the part of the powers that be. It wouldn't be impertinent to conclude that the dreadful incident of May 9, 2023 occurred due to the undue liberty that this group has enjoyed, and continues to enjoy, to say or do whatever it wants to and get away with it.

The detractors of the armed forces of Pakistan somehow tend to forget the respect that the country's armed forces command both within the country and abroad. According to Global Firepower, the Pakistan defense forces are ranked as the "9th most powerful military" in the world. No one can doubt the unparalleled professionalism and capability of the Pakistan Army. Pakistan Army has remained the most well-managed, disciplined and responsive institution of the country. In fact, it is the singular unifying power that, after religion, has so far kept this nation together. Our critics across the border also openly acknowledge this fact.

It is known to everyone, the role that Pakistan Army continues to play in securing the borders of the country, and courageously dealing with the menace of terrorism is pivotal. Needless to say, the valiant Pakistan Army has always come to the

rescue of its citizens in times of natural disasters and calamities, and played a significant role in aiding the civil administration to maintain law and order in case of civil unrest. It is deemed unnecessary to discuss the role of the Army in country's politics, in the past, as it has now been cogently stated by the military leadership that the military has decided to stay away from politics. With that, one expects, the outpouring of negativity and scathing criticism towards the valorous military of the country should cease forthwith. Unambiguously, in a democracy every citizen has the right to freedom of speech and expression. But one shouldn't forget that this freedom is subject to any reasonable restrictions imposed by law, in the interest of the glory of Islam or the integrity, security or defense of Pakistan.

Reverting to the core issue, one has to admit that the reign of terror that was unleashed across the country, on May 9, by the anti-state elements thoroughly mentored by their leaders has hung the heads of this nation in shame. Words can't express how deeply shattered and ashamed the entire nation felt on that sad day, when monuments of its national heroes, the country's strategic institutions, and public / private properties and vehicles were being mindlessly vandalized and burnt by the belligerent arsonists. Indeed, the 9th of May 2023 would be penned in the annals of Pakistan history as a 'Black Day'.

The question is, should this utterly brazen and heart-wrenching happening be confined to condemnation only? No, certainly not. Those directly involved in

the Black Day vandalism, and the masterminds behind it, must, regardless of their stature, be apprehended, exposed, tried according to law, and, if found guilty of the heinous offence they committed, must be given exemplary punishment. The National Security Committee (NSC) too in its meeting on Tues-day, May 16, 2023 vowed "zero tolerance" against violence and miscreancy in the country. The referenced meeting that was presided by the Prime Minister of Pakistan, and attended by feder-al ministers, Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, three ser-vices chiefs, heads of the security institutions and senior officers also endorsed the decision of booking and trying the miscreants, planners, instigators and facilitators as per the Constitution and relevant laws, including the Pakistan Army Act and the Official Secret Act.

While entirely concurring with the unanimous decision of the NSC regarding the issue in question, may it be suggested that every endeavor should be made to ensure that the trial of all these barbaric elements is incontrovertible and fair. If this is ensured, the possibility of concocted or speculative stories vis-a-vis the trials, expected to be generated by vested interests, will tail off. Of course, the main stream media, the social media, and human rights organizations across Pakistan, and across the globe, would be very closely monitoring these trials. Under no circumstances they should be provided an opportunity to speculate. And, this objective can be accomplished by providing them regular updates on the proceedings of these trials.

—The writer is a columnist and analyst based in Islamabad-Pakistan and can be reached at [geniousfazal@hotmail.com](mailto:geniousfazal@hotmail.com)

## Analysis



M Fazal Elahi

## Pakistani handicrafts shine at cultural, tourism event in China

A throng of Chinese customers gathered around Humayon's stall, asking for information about the Pakistani handicrafts, including wooden chairs and desks, bronze kettles, bronze animal figurines and hand-made soaps, at a cultural and tourism exhibition held in early May in China's northeast city of Harbin.

Humayon's company is one of the four Pakistani enterprises to participate in the exhibition. The remaining three also showcase handicrafts such as carpets, blankets and jades.

"We run a physical store in Kashgar which specialises in a wide range of Pakistani wooden and copper artifacts," Humayon told China Economic Net (CEN).

"The expertise behind these meticulously carved bottles, pots, and plates highlights the stunning intricacy of the designs and patterns, and the uniqueness of Pakistani craftsmanship," he added.

Having resided in China's westmost city of Kashgar for over a decade, Humayon had brought Pakistani handicrafts to various exhibitions across China, where he received widespread hospitality, the Pakistan exhibitor revealed to CEN.

Humayon noted that preparing for exhibitions often "presents challenges and incurs huge costs as it requires a careful coordination of elements, including transportation of products, accommodation, and local travel".

"For this exhibition, the local government exempted booth fees and accommodation charges for foreign enterprises," he said excitedly, "and this creates an outstanding platform for promoting our sales".

As Humayon packs a rooster figurine for his customer, he informed of his forthcoming exhibition in China's southern coastal province of Fujian. "Without a doubt," he concluded, "cultural and tourism exchanges have really put some serious muscle behind the cooperation between China and Pakistan, and I would like to be a significant catalyst for this endeavour."

## Textile sector's revival to boost export oriented activities

**A**midst ongoing economic recession and population hovering around 230 million, the country direly needs to promote revenue-earning sectors like agriculture and textile industry.

As Pakistan was in urgent need of foreign exchange to stabilize its economy, textile promotion and subsequently enhancing exports of agriculture and textile item can help a lot in employment generation as well as socio-economic uplift of the people.

Once known as the backbone of the national economy, the textile sector of Pakistan in recent decades declined due to multiple reasons including global and domestic inflation, rise in cost coupled with the inability of industrialists to upgrade their units and produce innovative products.

There was a time when Pakistan was the second most dependent country on textile with respect to exports after Bangladesh due to high global demand and availability of raw material in abundance but these exports witnessed a prominent decline in recent years. The share of textile exports also declined to 45 percent of the total exports of the country from 65 percent.

Industrialists are most of the time making their industrial products "Cheap, not Unique", thus creating a vacuum where unique and quality products of other countries are making way to the international market. Lack of innovation, product diversification, value addition, low productivity and high cost are also some of the main reasons for

the collapse of the textile industry.

"Our industrialists lack innovations and in most cases, small power loom owners were using the looms manufactured in 2000," said Engineer Dr Yasir Nawab, Dean Faculty of School of Engineering and Technology, National Textile University Faisalabad.

"Exporters here have replenished machinery and started producing and exporting value-added products with some working as vendor for globally known textile brands," he added.

He informed that National Textile University Faisalabad (NTUF) had launched a project to facilitate Pakistani industrialists switch over to the knowledge-based textile industry for sustainable enhancement of exports.

He said the local industry which was a mainstay for a vast number of population was struggling hard to survive due to reasons like the use of obsolete technology, increase in cotton rate, thread price and labor cost.

The role of the textile sector is deep-rooted in Pakistan's economy since 1958 when multiple hydel power projects were completed and cheap electricity was available to this sector to explore textile-oriented agricultural products potential of southern Punjab and Sindh – the areas most suitable areas for cotton cultivation.

NIAB-78 revolutionized the

cotton yield and this variety developed by Nuclear Institute for Agriculture and Biology (NIAB) dominated the cotton varieties for more than two decades till the outbreak of Cotton Leaf Curl Virus (CLVC).

An official of NIAB said that NIAB-78 alone had returned Pakistan what was spent on NIAB since its inception.

"No doubt the yield of NIAB-78 was almost tripled and Pakistan harvested a record bumper crop of 14 million bales after which its decline started that still goes on with its production dwindling to only six million bales," he said.

He said that globally more than 200 textile products were exported from one country to another but our export was restricted to only 12 to 14 products. "As the volume of international textile exports in the global economy is around one trillion dollars, our share in this sector is quite negligible."

The spokesman said Pakistan's exports were mainly concentrated in the USA and European Union. "We are not tapping the markets like Japan, Russia, Korea, Mexico, Switzerland, etc. which are importing more than US\$100 billion of textiles and clothing. Therefore, we need to adopt an aggressive strategy to capture these markets."

According to a spokesman of Pakistan Textile Exporters Association (PTEA), the textile sector was

at the verge of collapse and both the government and industrialists were to be blamed for it.

He said Korea and Vietnam had entered into the high-tech textile but we were still beating about the bushes.

"Bangladesh is most efficient as it has utilized skills of our entrepreneurs and now this country is earning hundred billion dollars from textile exports despite the fact that it has to import 100 percent raw material from the other countries," he said.

According to Dr. Khurram Tariq, President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FCCI), the World Bank has reported that Pakistan's textile sector is fully competent to enhance its exports to \$ 50 billion if equal opportunities and a level playing field are provided.

"Both the government and the private sector must buttress efforts to fully utilize this potential to revive the national economy and put it on strong footing," he said.

He also pleaded to ensure political stability for strengthening the economy as the uncertain and volatile situation not only affects investment but also economic activity in the country.

"We need multi-pronged policies to promote export-oriented industry also ensuring quality seeds and cheaper inputs for agriculture and reducing the cost of production for textile and other exporting sectors," Dr Khurram said.

"Our measures must also focus on the provision of sufficient raw material for industrial revival paving the way for local employment generation as well as earning foreign exchange through exports," he remarked.



Amjad Rasmi

## Oil imports from Russia; a ray of hope for cheaper fuel

**Adnan Yousaf**

**F**luctuating global oil prices, devaluation of the currency, taxation on oil imports and very low local oil exploration put a heavy strain on the fragile economy of a country like Pakistan which heavily relies on oil import for power generation industrial production and transportation.

The soaring prices of petroleum products have a trickle-down effect on each and every segment of society from a daily wage to a farmer, and from a government servant to a businessman.

When petroleum prices are increased, the cost of transportation rises, taking the rates of daily-use items to a new height, thus affecting the buying power of consumers which has already gone down a lot in recent years.

Similarly, the majority being run on oil, the power plants generate high-cost electricity which ultimately put a burden not only on consumers but also affects industrial production costs bringing a new wave of inflation.

Recognizing the magnitude of this challenge, the incumbent government took some measures to alleviate the impact such as providing subsidies to public transportation and food producers. However, it was clear that these measures alone were insufficient to fully mitigate the effects of the price hike.

Then, in a game-changing move, the government struck a deal with one of the biggest oil exporters, Russia, not only to alleviate people's suffering but also to stimulate national economic growth and expansion. The deal aims at ensuring a continuous supply of crude oil from Russia at discounted rates.

"The first shipment of discounted oil from Russia is on its way and is expected to dock at the Karachi Port sometime in May," this encouraging news was shared by State Minister for Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik, during a press conference here on May 18.

also address the balance of payment crisis faced by the country.

He explained that energy imports constitute the majority of Pakistan's external payments, and importing Russian oil would help maintain the foreign exchange reserves, which had been depleting over the past few years.

According to Musadik Malik, Pakistan, "Under the signed deal with Moscow, will only purchase crude oil not refined fuel."

"If the initial transaction goes smoothly, imports are expected to reach 100,000 barrels per day," he added. When asked about the potential benefits of the oil deal with Russia, an official from the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) stated, "We are a net importer of oil and spend billions of dollars each year on oil imports. The discounted Russian oil can help us save money and reduce the trade deficit, which can boost the economy and create jobs."

He said importing Russian oil could help end Pakistan's energy crisis, adding by importing discounted oil from Russia, the oil supply in Pakistan would increase, leading to a reduction in the prices of petroleum products thus ultimately improving the lives of people and strengthening the national economy.

Despite the positive aspects of the Islamabad-Moscow oil deal, some analysts believed that there were risks involved especially regarding Pakistan's relations with the United States (US). However, these risks were dismissed by Ambassador to the US Masood Khan during a conference at the Wilson Center's South Asia Institute in Washington on April 27.

He made it clear, "We have placed the first order for Russian oil, and this decision has been made in consultation with the United States government. There is no misunderstanding between Washington and Islamabad regarding this matter."

It was a bold and tough decision to struck a deal with Russia at this critical moment when the Russia-Ukraine war was at its peak, but the courageous leadership of the government took the decision solely for the welfare of the masses and to take the country forward.

**IS No Wringing of Hands – Rethink!**

# 6th Edition of Leaders in Islamabad Business Summit Concludes in Capital

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD : Nutshell Conferences Group and Martin Dow Group, in strategic partnership with Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI), and Unity Foods Limited, concluded the 6th Edition of the LEADERS IN ISLAMABAD BUSINESS SUMMIT; this year's theme was "The BIG Rethink," with a pledge to revisit and rethink the way we work and the way we live.

The second day of the Summit saw 4 sessions, which comprised 11 addresses, 2 conversations and 2 panel discussions; topics varied from the digital future to the landscape of education, and from shaping narratives to climate change.

Senator Sherry Rehman, Federal Minister for Climate Change, spoke about going green for safety and survival. "Pakistan produces plastic trash equivalent to the might of two K2 mountains annually, and having signed the plastic treaty in Paris recently, I would request at least the big hotels to get rid of the plastic bottles that they're serving water in."

In a conversation with Mosharraf Zaidi, Founder, Tabadlab, Senator Rehman pushed the local pollution agenda as strongly as the international one, and she stated that Pakistan's adaptive capacity for compliance with United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is in question. Despite being a low emitter, Pakistan is a front-line state for climate change.

Gen Zubair Mahmood Hayat, N.I. (Rtd), Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (2016- 2019), spoke on the power of narratives and raised pertinent questions about how, as a nation, Pakistanis need to build a narrative for a better future. The way our Holy Prophet PBUH changed it, the way Martin Luther King changed it, and the way Nelson Mandela changed it. "We are required to think deeply around our political, social, and economic aspects."

"Imagineering - The Future of Education" proved to be an insightful dialogue. Eminent educationist Shafiqat Mahmood, Former Federal Minister for Education; joined online. Dr. Amjad Waheed, Chief Executive Officer, NBP



Funds and Purush Chaudhary, Founder & President, AGAHI, also shared their insights about the changing landscape of academia and the urgency around flipping the mode to student centered.

Shafiqat Mahmood stressed that the Government has to intervene; "Focus on both skill-based education and a unified national curriculum are important to reduce the divide between the haves and the have-nots, secure the future of this country by ensuring social mobility for all."

Dr. Amjad Waheed shared the worrisome statistics for the out-of-school children; "Out of the 53 million children, 23 million are out of school. Brick-and-mortar schools are not the solution with a shortage of teachers and funds." Mosharraf Zaidi summed up the conversation by asserting the fact that education cannot be a one-time discussion over a two-day summit; it needs to be the thread that connects all discussions.

"The Digital Future-Emerging Issues" had 6 illustrious speakers delivering individual addresses by Muhammad Salman Anjum, Founder & CEO, InvoiceMate, UAE; Jouni Keranen, Executive Chairman, Kuuhubb & Partner, swissOne Capital; Oscar Ramos, General Partner, SOSV, Managing Director, Orbit Startups; Jimmy Nguyen, CEO, Blockchain for All, and Michael Foley, Regional Director, Airtel Africa. The topics ranged from Metaverse to Blockchain, as well

as leadership and collaborative models. Zouhair Khaliq, Founder & General Partner, Teamup Ventures, summed up the learnings of the session in his speech.

Michael Foley spoke at length about the potential of the Metaverse and emphasized that Pakistan has immense untapped potential if it is fully explored. "Metaverse is the environment where users can immerse themselves and achieve greatness. People interact and can exchange ideas which shows the current trends of the emerging markets."

Muhammad Salman Anjum stressed on the need to build trust between banks, investors, and SMEs so they can conduct transactions with ease. "We use Blockchain and AI, not just because these are buzz words, but because they ensure efficiency of processes and effective fraud detection."

Jouni Keranen said; "The BIG Rethink means celebration of failures, because people miss out on successes when they refuse to take risks because they keep limiting themselves."

Oscar Ramos appreciated transformation and said that it does not happen in a vacuum. "In transformation, all aspects are impacted. The embedded financing influences health, education, sectors which are of sheer importance for all."

Jimmy Nguyen encouraged people to find new ways to learn and shared various experiences where countries learnt from disruption. "If we look at Vietnam, e-learning came around 2006/2007

but it accelerated greatly during and due to Covid-19, and as of now there are more than 100 start-ups in Ed-tech in the country."

Zouhair Khaliq shared his optimism. "There is no dearth of hardworking people in Pakistan, and it is encouraging to see start-ups participating in the rethink. The fountain of growth in Pakistan is not the academia and the think tanks; instead, it's the start-ups that are growing like mushrooms in this country."

Another sub-theme, "Imagineering the Future," saw an array of specialists addressing the audience, including Dr. Rehan Al Taji, Founder & CEO, PDX FZ LLC, UAE and Partner & Head of Projects, Gabriel Jobs, KSA; Kabeer Naqvi, President & CEO, U Microfinance Bank Limited; Ghazanfar Azzam, President & CEO, Mobilink Microfinance Bank Limited; Abdul Haseeb, Managing Director, TMC; and Farhan Hassan, Head of Easypaisa Wallet Business. The Dialogue was moderated by Usman Yousuf, Director, Nutshell Communications; Chairman, ProPakistani; Co-founder, K-Cap Ventures and CEO, Interactive UAE. The panelists agreed on the need for financial inclusion in Pakistan and changing rigid views around conventional modalities.

Kabeer Naqvi said that social inclusion is necessary to achieve financial inclusion. "We have faced situations where women were given less amount as a loan compared to their male counterparts, and I have intervened to address this issue."

Dr. Rehan Ali Taji felt that governments need to give ease to start-ups to foster a culture of innovation. "We need to educate and advocate for new technology because if we do not adopt, we will be left behind. Saudi Arabia has introduced tax exemption to encourage new businesses in technology to pave ways for investors to bring forward innovation."

Ghazanfar Azzam listed three factors that determine the level of development in any society as access to education, healthcare, and finance. "The areas we need to focus now revolve around providing credit facilities to our consumers, they should have various



options to choose from and they should be able to avail this facility from the ease of their homes and offices."

Farhan Hassan threw light on the structures of Fintech apps and said that there are many factors that affect success. "Essentially any Fintech app cannot work in isolation. We are bound to collaborate with other institutions to use our services and offer financial inclusion to the end users."

Abdul Haseeb said that, as Pakistanis, we really need to work towards producing talent. "Corporate organizations need to give opportunities to the youth, and the youth must also benefit from various software that do not necessarily need a state-of-the-art setup to earn for themselves."

The session titled "Emerging Issues" comprised individual addresses by Derek Hoogenkamp, CEO, Yalla Limited & Co-Founder, Ascended; Mark Linder, Founder Amöl Projects, Market Development, NEOM Design & Construction; and Ron Thomas, Managing Director, Strategy Focus Group, USA & UAE.

Derek Hoogenkamp insisted on Pakistanis realizing the rich resources that they have inherited and how each has a scope of becoming a good business on the virtual and actual platforms. "Pakistan's North has immense potential for tourism and people need to take it seriously."

Mark Linder spoke on TAKT - an assembly line formula that helped the build of giants like Toyota. "Pakistan is ripe for collaborative models that can bring in expedited progress at half the

cost." An interesting conversation on "The BIG Rethink" between Tauseef H. Farooqi, Chairman, NEPRA and Sajjeed Aslam, Regional Lead Public Affairs-Asia Pacific, ACCA, had the former talk about his journey at NEPRA and the measures he has taken to uplift the energy sector; "The power sector in Pakistan has gone through major transformation in terms of reducing the electrocution cases, increasing the number of women in the workforce, and expanding the customer base."

The vote of thanks was delivered by Air Chief Marshal Sohail Aman (Rtd.), Pakistan's Chief of Air Staff (2015-2018). He thanked the speakers, guests, sponsors, and the audience for their energetic engagement both days of the Summit. "Pakistan's potential is not in question; the willingness of people to make the change is. We all need to understand the threats of climate change and appreciate the efficiency of technology that can help us not only combat the danger but expand our footprint in the economic sphere. Rethink is in order."

LIIBS 2023 brought together more than 50 speakers from national and international organizations from a variety of sectors. This Summit is the largest and most sought-after corporate event of the country. At the end of the Summit, Muhammad Azfar Ahsan, Founder & CEO, Nutshell Group, announced the dates for the 7th Edition of LEADERS IN ISLAMABAD BUSINESS SUMMIT, as March 6 and 7, 2024.

## Indonesian Embassy and Lahore Museum to inaugurate 'A Night at Lahore Museum' on 17 June

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Indonesia in collaboration with Lahore Museum will inaugurate a week-long photo exhibition titled "A Night at Lahore Museum: Tracing the Confluence of Civilizations Between Indonesia and Pakistan", on Saturday 17th June 2023 at Lahore Museum.

Talking to the officials of Lahore Museum and journalists in Islamabad, the Ambassador of Indonesia Mr. Adam Tugio has warmly invited the Pakistani friends to the Exhibition and to celebrate the rich cultural heritage of the two Muslim brotherly countries. "Let's embrace the spirit of friendship and witness together the exciting display of cross-cultural connectivity and convergence of Indonesia-Pakistan civilization through past and present journeys".

Director of the Lahore Museum, Mr. Muhammad Usman appreciated the initiative of this joint collaboration by the Embassy to strengthen the two way historic religious cultural linkages and assured full cooperation from Lahore Museum to make



this event successful and attractive for all the visitors.

The exhibition will highlight the spread of Buddhist and Islamic civilization from ancient Gandhara to archipelago, the territories known as Indonesia today, initially in search for spices, the golden green at that time.

Through the display of selected photographs and art works, the Exhibition provides an excellent opportunity to the visitors and art lovers to witness the impact of cultural influences across continents. They manifested in the form of interesting similarities in art, traditions and architecture of the two great countries during the course of history.

Moreover, Indonesian Batik and Pakistani Ajrak art will also be displayed in the exhibition, which are not only colorful and attractive but also carry cultural and historical significance.

The week-long exhibition will be opened for general public from June 18-24, 2023, featuring a meticulously curated collection of photographs and videos to provide a fresh perspective on the cross-cultural connectivity between the two biggest Muslim populated countries from past to present time.

## Ambassador of UAE called on the Federal Minister for Finance



**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: H.E. Mr. Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salim Al-Zaabi, Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates called on the Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, today.

Finance Minister Senator Ishaq Dar and H.E. Mr. Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salim Al-Zaabi, Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates conversed about the deep rooted brotherly ties between both countries and discussed the various areas of common interest for further strengthening the trade and economic ties between the UAE and Pakistan.

Finance Minister Senator Ishaq Dar acknowledged that UAE has been a great partner of Pakistan in various fields including energy, refinery, petroleum and trade. The Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates also reciprocated the interest of the UAE government for expanding investment in various sectors of the economy of Pakistan. Finance Minister Senator Ishaq Dar appreciated and welcomed the investment proposals of the UAE in Pakistan and assured of complete support and cooperation by the government.

In conclusion, the Finance Minister shared sentiments of gratitude & good will with the Ambassador.

## Naz Shah MP condemns Indian move to convert Yasin Malik into death sentence

**Arif Chaudhary**

Bradford :Shadow Minister Naz Shah MP strongly condemned the efforts of India's National Investigation Agency, which works for counter-terrorism, to convert Kashmiri leader Yasin Malik's life sentence into death sentence and assured the Kashmiri leaders that she will raise the issue in the British Parliament next week and try to get the support of Friends of Kashmir and APPG on Kashmir in the British Parliament.

She has also condemned the human rights violations in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. And has demanded the British government to take concrete steps to protect the rights of Kashmiri leaders imprisoned in Indian jails. Speaking at the event, Naz Shah MP said

that this special event was organized in honor of Raja Najabat Hussain, chairman of Tehreek-e-Haq Khudaradeet, getting the Satara Pakistan award. He raised his voice for the Kashmir issue all his life and always kept the Kashmir flag aloft.

In the ceremony, former advisor to the government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Raja Shaikat Khaliq, Advocate, Patron of the Movement, Sardar Abdul Rehman Khan, Chairperson of the Self-Determination Movement of Greater Manchester, Rubina Khan, Neena Khan Raja Chairperson Cheshire, Former Bradford Lord Mayor Raja Ghazanfar Khaliq, Pakistan Peoples Party UK Vice President Sajid Qureshi, Conservative Muslim Forum Northwest Chairperson Samina Khan, Conserva-

tive Councilor Dave Atrat Ali, Yorkshire Literary Forum Chairperson Ghazal Ansari Khanwal Sheikh, Imtiaaz Ahmed Sheikh, Imran Ali, former councilor Mehboob Ahmed, Conservative Party representative Dr. Basit, Labor Councilor Bradford Abrar Hussain, Shamaila Khanum, Samia Gibran and others participated in the Jammu Kashmir Movement for Self-Determination.

International Chairman Raja Najabat Hussain thanked Zahid Mughal for organizing the reception in his honor. We will continue our struggle together; he said that our organization is contacting all like-minded people and organizations in the UK to organize a lobby program in the British Parliament as well as in different cities of the UK in the next few days.



**Bull & Bears**  
PSX 100-Share  
Index Fluctuation

| Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index |                        |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Current                       | Prev. Close            |
| 41,266.77                     | 41,330.56              |
| Day's High                    | Day's Low:             |
| 41,481.53                     | 41,226.94              |
| Index Value                   | Change                 |
| 2,379,379,037                 | -63.79                 |
| Percentage                    | Time                   |
| -0.15%                        | 1 Jun, 2023<br>5:00 pm |

| Europe: FTSE 100 Index |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Index Value            | Change                  |
| 7,490.27               | +44.13                  |
| Percentage             | Time                    |
| +0.59%                 | 1 Jun, 4:35 pm<br>GMT+1 |

| USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average |                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Index Value                       | Change                   |
| 33,124.48                         | +216.21                  |
| Percentage                        | Time                     |
| +0.66%                            | 1 Jun, 12:53 pm<br>GMT-4 |

| Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average |                         |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Index Value                         | Change                  |
| 31,148.01                           | +260.13                 |
| Percentage                          | Time                    |
| +0.84%                              | 1 Jun, 3:15 pm<br>GMT+9 |

| Open Market Forex Rates |        |         |
|-------------------------|--------|---------|
| Currency                | Buying | Selling |
| Australian Dollar       | 198    | 200     |
| Bahrain Dinar           | 758.25 | 766.25  |
| Canadian Dollar         | 226    | 228     |
| China Yuan              | 40.26  | 40.66   |
| Danish Krone            | 41.04  | 41.44   |
| Euro                    | 316    | 320.5   |
| Hong Kong Dollar        | 36.39  | 36.74   |
| Indian Rupee            | 3.45   | 3.56    |
| Japanese Yen            | 2.25   | 2.45    |
| Kuwaiti Dinar           | 927.17 | 936.17  |
| Malaysian Ringgit       | 61.94  | 62.54   |
| New Zealand \$          | 172.79 | 174.79  |
| Norwegians Krone        | 25.67  | 25.97   |
| Omani Riyal             | 740.96 | 748.96  |
| Qatari Riyal            | 78.37  | 79.07   |
| Saudi Riyal             | 78     | 79      |
| Singapore Dollar        | 220    | 222     |
| Swedish Korona          | 26.36  | 26.66   |
| Swiss Franc             | 315.04 | 317.54  |
| Thai Bhat               | 8.21   | 8.36    |
| U.A.E Dirham            | 80     | 81      |
| UK Pound Sterling       | 371    | 374     |
| US Dollar               | 297    | 300     |

# IIA delegation led by its President, Ahmed Waheed meets Finance Minister

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar held a meeting with delegation from Islamabad Industrial Association led by its President Mr. Mohammad Ahmed on Budget 2023-24 proposals at FBR (HQs), today.

SAPM on Finance Mr. Tariq Bajwa, SAPM on Revenue Mr. Tariq Mehmood Pasha, Chairman RRC Mr. Ashfaq Yousif Tola, Chairman FBR, and senior officers from FBR attended the meeting.

The delegation thanked the Finance Minister for inviting the budgetary proposals from business community. They discussed the current economic situation of the country with the Finance Minister and informed him about the issues being faced by them particularly related to taxation. The delegation also presented their proposals to address those issues through the upcoming budget 2023-24. They also guaranteed the Finance Minister of their continuous assistance to the Government for economic development.

Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar appreciated the budgetary proposals of the delegation and expressed the resolve



of the government in overcoming the issues being faced by the business community to ensure the economic growth of the country. He also assured the business leaders that Government will provide all possible assistance to the business community for the economic

stability and growth by bringing forward a business and people friendly budget for Fiscal Year 2023-24.

The delegation thanked the Finance Minister for considering their budget proposals. The delegation included President IIA,

Muhammad Ahmed Waheed, Mr. Usman Shaukat, Mr. Tariq Siddiq, Malik Sohail Hussain, Mian Akram Farid, Mr. Zakria A Zia, Mr. Atif Akram Shaikh, Mr. Waheed uddin, Shaikh Amir Waheed, Mr. Nasir Qureshi, Mian Shaukat Masud and other.

## Women's Chamber demands incentives in upcoming budget

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Women's Chamber of Commerce has demanded incentives for businesswomen in the upcoming budget.

The dream of national development can never become a reality by keeping the majority of the country's population away from economic activities, it said.

In its budget proposals, the IWCCI has demanded an increase in the taxable income limit for businesswomen, saying that it will encourage them to join the domestic economy.

The founder president of the Islamabad Women's Chamber Samina Fazil said in the budget proposals sent to Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, that reports of heavy taxation on various sectors are disturbing.

Enhanced taxes will hurt the weak economy and reduce revenue rather than increase it, she said.

Samina Fazil demanded that the obsta-



cles in the way of women's development

be removed, and they should be provided with a better environment for business so that they can play their positive role in the development of the country.

She further said that the taxable income limit of women should be increased from five hundred thousand to fifteen hundred thousand to encourage them to become part of the domestic economy.

In addition, women entrepreneurs should be given a 30% share in the fund allocated for the development of exports so that they can develop their businesses, she added.

She said that every year millions of girls complete their education, but there are fewer employment and business opportunities for them, which should be given attention for rapid national development.

Women entrepreneurs should be facilitated in business knowledge, affordable finance, skill development, and digital technology so that they can play their due role in economic development.

## New generation of CFOs driving broader view of business performance and purpose

**Commerce Report**

LAHORE : New research by ACCA (the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) and BDO, the international network of public accounting, tax and advisory firms, has revealed how the role of the CFO is growing to include driving business decisions and reporting on the non-financial areas of their operations.

Helen Brand, ACCA chief executive, noted: 'We already know that CFOs are increasingly acting as strategic leaders and advisers in their organisations. The CFO role is one that has moved significantly from the traditional view, while retaining the core responsibilities.'

Carly Bleathman, Partner - Business Services and Outsourcing at BDO UK said: 'Our research highlights the exceptional role that CFOs are playing in developing their organisations.'

Albert Lopez, Global Head of Business Services and Outsourcing, BDO Global said: 'There are many CFOs from across the world who are embracing this wider concept of value and our research highlights many positive stories.'

Author Clive Webb, Head of Business Management at ACCA said: 'Creating sustainable organisations is a key priority for all organisations and CFOs have a fundamental role to play in delivering this.'

## Hard work

FAISALABAD: A vendor is preparing school bags at his workplace at Katchery Bazar.



Photo: Online

## Huge potential to expand trade & investments with Vietnam

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI : Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI, has said that there is a huge, but untapped, potential to expand bilateral trade & investments exists between Pakistan and Vietnam. He reiterated that what Pakistan needs in international relations is cooperation with industrially-advanced nations; so that, the dream of rapid industrialization, import substitution and value-added exports can be materialized.

It is pertinent to note that a high-profile Pakistani trade delegation visited Hanoi, Vietnam; along with the President of Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce & Industry (CACCI), Mr. Peter Mc Mullin - and, Pakistan was represented by Mr. Khurram Tariq Sayeed, Vice President, Confedera-

tion of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce & Industry (CACCI) & a former VP FPCCI.

In order to study the Vietnamese market & gain access for country's exports, Pakistani delegation held important meetings and discussions with Mr. Tran Quoc Phuong, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Planning & Investment; Mr. Tran Thanh Nam, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development; Mr. Pham Tan Cong, Chairman & President, Vietnam Chamber of Commerce & Industry; Mr. Vu Ba Phu, Director General, Vietnam Trade Promotion Agency of Ministry of Industry & Trade, H.E. Samina Mehtab, Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary, Islamic Republic of Pakistan and H.E. Andrew Golezdzinski, Ambassador of Australia in Vietnam.

# Chaudhry Abdul Majeed announced to give free plots to the martyrs of the Pakistan Army and Police

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD : prominent businessman Chaudhry Abdul Majeed has announced to give free plots to the martyrs of the Pakistan Army and Police, saying that the martyrs of Pakistan are our pride. The desecration of the memorials of the martyrs in the events of 9may is condemnable, the nation will never forgive these miscreants. Those who have been found involved in arson should not be exempted. He expressed these views yesterday while talking to a delegation led by Islamabad Chamber of Commerce President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari.

Bakhtawari congratulated him on the success of his group in the private housing society elections. Chaudhry Abdul Majeed thanked him and said that Islamabad Chamber is our second home. It is an honor for us to have President Hasan Bakhtawari come to our office along with a delegation. He said that the Martyrs' Day celebrations across the country are a proof of how much the nation loves our forces and martyrs.

He said that I will build a separate housing society for the martyrs of Pakistan Army and Police. In which free plots will be provided to the heirs of martyrs. This initiative of mine is to pay homage to the martyrs and acknowledge their sacrifices. He said



that he has a long-standing relationship with the Bakhtawari family. Zafar Bakhtawari is also my neighbor, he has rendered valuable services for the construction and development of Islamabad city.

Speaking on this occasion, President Chamber Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that more than 56 industries are associated with the construction sector. The recovery of this sector drives the economy. The proposals given to the government in the budget include a special package for

housing societies and builders. Speaking on this occasion, Zafar Bakhtawari said that Chaudhry Abdul Majeed is a role model in Islamabad, who has achieved this position due to his hard work, integrity and good name. His name has become a brand in the housing and construction sector.

On this occasion, Ijaz Abbasi said that investors like Chaudhry Abdul Majeed have played an important role in ending unemployment in the country. Hundreds of people are employed in their projects. Sardar Tahir Mehmood, Zahid Rafiq, Tahir Abbasi, Ashfaq Chatta, Khalid Chaudhry and others are also present in the delegation.

## 2nd International Solar Energy moot kickoff

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: 2nd International Solar Energy Meet (ISEM) & IEEE IREM Expo (Pakistan's Premium Electronics and Electrical Exhibition) will start from Friday (June 02) today here at Expo Center Lahore which will be attended by the local and international energy & power sector experts, primarily working in renewable power with focus on solar power generation.

According to the details, the expo will be held June 02-04 from the platform of White Paper Summits.

Besides the expo, WPS (White Paper Summits) in a strategic partnership with IEEE (The Institution of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Pakistan) will also organize a conference with 11 expert speakers as one of the main events of the three days in which these speakers will share their Case Studies, Technical Presentation and Latest Insights on the problems and solutions addressing the Power and Renewable Energy Sector of Pakistan.

More than 150 stalls are booked including over 30 by the international exhibitors after the government of Pakistan's favoring policies towards solar power generation which attracts the foreign investors to come to Pakistan. Besides, over 120 local exhibitors will also be displaying their products during the three days Solar show.

The organizers are expecting over 8000 attendees during the three days event and including the top international and local exhibitors, acclaimed technical expert speakers. The event will provide unlimited business networking opportunities, besides B2B deals.

IEEE IREM Expo will focus on Power Transformers, Power Technology, Capacitors, Batteries, Heavy Duty Cables, Power Distribution Equipment, Wind Energy, Hydropower, Bioenergy, Bio Gas, BioFuel, Hydrogen, GeoThermal Energy, Solar Energy and more.

The Premium events are organized by White Paper Summits, one of the leading business Event Organizers (Summits, Exhibitions and Trainings) in the Middle East region with its headquarters based in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman. The regional office of White Paper Summits is established in Karachi, Pakistan.

# ICC Chairman and Chief Executive conclude two-day Lahore visit

✉ Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The Chair of the International Cricket Council, Mr Greg Barclay, and Mr Geoff Allardice, the ICC Chief Executive, visited the Pakistan cricket headquarters in Lahore on Tuesday and Wednesday. This was Mr Barclay's first tour of Pakistan.

During the pre-arranged two-day visit, Mr Barclay and Mr Allardice met with the Chair of the PCB Management Committee, Mr Najam Sethi, and other PCB officials, and discussed wide-ranging matters of mutual interest around cricket, including promotion, growth and development. Outside the PCB headquarters, Mr Barclay and Mr Allardice visited the National Cricket Academy, Lahore Fort, Lahore Museum, Safe City

Project and Minar-e-Pakistan.

Greg Barclay: It has been great to be here. My approach has been to visit all the Member countries and see how cricket and cricket administration operates in their respective jurisdiction as every country and Member is different in terms of size, scale, economy and where they might sit in the cricketing hierarchy.

The cricket facilities in Pakistan and the cricket programmes are great and now, that international cricket has returned to Pakistan and the PCB is able to successfully deliver bilateral arrangements at home, I think we'll see Pakistan cricket reach another level for both men and women, and that will also have a positive impact in terms of commercial upside.

I enjoyed the briefing on the men's and



women's cricket development plans and programmes at an administrative level and the progress that is being made. I think the future for Pakistan in terms of female participation and international successes is going to be huge in terms

of potential.

From the ICC's view, given that we have a strategy to grow the game globally, to see where the PCB fits in is also very pleasing. I am going to leave here well impressed with what I have seen.

Najam Sethi, who is also an ICC Director: "I want to thank Greg and Geoff for undertaking this tour to Lahore, which provided both the ICC and the PCB with an opportunity to exchange views and ideas on the globally cricket ecosystem.

The PCB looks forward to continuing our discussions and working closely with the ICC to put together global strategies and plans that are not only in the best interest of all its Members but also achieve the common objective of growing and developing the game by attracting new audiences."

# Rising swimming stars Hareem, Meher illuminate Sindh sports horizon

✉ Sports Desk

KARACHI: Though the curtain has fallen on the National Games in Quetta, the performance of our stunning athletes is going to be remembered forever. Every province had its share of medals and performances, but for Sindh, the brilliant performance of rising swimming star Hareem Malik made us proud as she won the most number of gold medals from the Sindh Contingent.

Hareem won as many three gold medals in the Games' swimming discipline while her other compatriot Meher Maqbool of Sindh also won a gold medal to take the tally to four gold medals for their province in the swimming events of the just-concluded 34th National Games held in Quetta.

The 14-year-old Hareem Malik won gold medals in 50m, 100m, and 200m breaststroke contests while



13-year-old Meher Maqbool bagged a gold medal in the 800-meter freestyle swimming held at the Punjab International Swimming Complex in Lahore.

Hareem Malik clinched top honours in the 100m breaststroke, clocking just one minute and 23.21 seconds.

Both the talented teenagers have attributed their success

to their hard work and the efforts of their coaches and the support of their families, particularly their parents, who made sure that they are provided the best environment and training necessary for success on the sports front.

"My mother personally accompanies me to the training sessions and her support has been vital for me", Hareem said. The same is the

case with Meher Maqbool, who says that her mother is very supportive and makes sure that she attends every training session and gain in confidence.

Both the dashing swimmers said that their coaches worked very professionally and extra hard on them besides ensuring that their training does not coincide with their studies.

# India edge Pakistan to win Junior Hockey Asia Cup 2023

✉ A Sports

SALALAH: Arch-rivals India edged Pakistan by the scoreline of 2-1 to lift the Junior Hockey Asia Cup 2023 title, which is their fourth overall.

Singh Angad Bir opened the scoring for India in the 12th minute via a brilliant field goal and gave his side an upper hand in the first quarter.

Hundal Arajiyet Singh then doubled India's lead just four minutes into the second quarter as Pakistan spilt a couple of opportunities to fire an equalizer.

The third quarter turned out to be a fortune changer for the green shirts as they finally registered a goal on the scoreboard, courtesy of a calculated field goal by Ali Basharat in the 37th minute.

Basharat's goal forced India to be more defensive and they cordoned off their post to deny Pakistan any chance to fire the equalizer.

Pakistan made several attempts to



breach India's defences by dribbling past their defenders and awarded penalty corners but failed to fire the ball into the nets and thus India ran away with

the victory.

Heading into the blockbuster final, both India and Pakistan were unbeaten in the continental event.

The arch-rivals have so far come face to face in four Junior Hockey Asia Cup finals with India winning on three occasions - 2004, 08 and 23 - while the green shirts emerged victorious once in 1996.

Furthermore, before this year's tournament both Pakistan were level as the joint-most title-winning sides (3) but India's latest title victory propelled them to the record title holder of the Asian event.

Notably, the arch-rivals also came face to face in the group stage but the enthralling contest failed to conclude a result as they settled for a 1-1 stalemate.

Playing at the Salalah Sports Complex, the Pakistan team defended the Indian attack quite brilliantly in the first quarter which ended without a goal despite men in blue enjoying the bulk of possession.

India took the lead via a penalty corner with Sharad Nand Tiwari flicking the ball in the net to help his team go 1-0 before halftime.

# Rashid Khan ruled out of first two Sri Lanka ODIs

✉ A Sports

ISLAMABAD: Star Afghanistan spinner Rashid Khan has been ruled out of the first two ODIs of the three-match series against Afghanistan.

According to the details, Rashid Khan, who represented Indian Premier League (IPL) season runners-up Gujarat Titans, will miss the opening two matches due to back pain.

The Afghanistan team's medical panel advised complete rest to Rashid Khan for the first two ODIs. Whereas, his appearance in the third ODI will depend on his fitness.

Notably, Rashid Khan enjoyed a sensational tournament in the recently-concluded IPL as he led the Gujarat Titans bowling lineup from the front; taking 27 wickets

in 17 matches.

He also accumulated 130 runs with the bat in as many matches.

It is worth mentioning here that Sri Lanka will host Afghanistan for the three-match home ODI series ahead of the Cricket World Cup Qualifiers.

For the crucial white-ball series, both Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) and Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) have unveiled their squads.

Afghanistan, under the leadership of Hashmatullah Shahidi, will have the services of their star spin trio - Rashid Khan, Mohammad Nabi and Mujeeb Ur Rahman.

The trio will be further assisted by fast-rising spinner Noor Ahmad in the upcoming ODI series which is slated to play a crucial role in the team's prepara-

tions for the ICC Men's ODI World Cup 2023.

The squad also features 21-year-old uncapped pacer Abdul Rahman, who had a promising domestic season recently.

Furthermore, former skipper Gulbadin Naib, who led the side in the previous Men's ODI World Cup 2019 in England, is among the four reserves for the away series.

Whereas, Sri Lanka named a strong squad with the likes of both senior and junior players with pace prodigy Matheesha Pathirana, nicknamed 'Baby Malinga', who impressed with his brilliance in a title-winning IPL campaign for Chennai Super Kings, is likely to make his ODI debut.

Afghanistan Squad: Hashmatullah Shahidi (captain), Rahmat

Shah, Rahmanullah Gurbaz, Ibrahim Zadran, Riaz Hassan, Najibullah Zadran, Mohammad Nabi, Ikram Alikhil, Azmatullah Omarzai, Rashid Khan, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Noor Ahmad, Abdul Rahman, Fazalhaq Farooqi, Farid Ahmad Malik.

Sri Lanka Squad: Dasun Shanaka (c), Kusal Mendis, Pathum Nissanka, Dimuth Karunaratne, Sadeera Samarawickrama, Angelo Mathews, Dhananjaya De Silva, Charith Asalanka, Wanindu Hasaranga, Maheesh Theekshana, Dushan Hemantha, Chamika Karunaratne, Dushmantha Chameera, Matheesha Pathirana, Lahiru Kumara, Kasun Rajitha.

Series Itinerary:  
2nd June - First ODI at Mahinda Rajapaksa International Cricket Stadium



4th June - Second ODI at Mahinda Rajapaksa International Cricket Stadium  
7th June - Third ODI at Mahinda Rajapaksa International Cricket Stadium.

# Jabbar Bhatti gearing up to attempt Nanga Parbat on Saturday



✉ Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Renowned Pakistani mountaineer Lt Col (R) Dr Jabbar Bhatti on Saturday will embark on the expedition to conquer 8,126-metre Nanga Parbat, the world's ninth highest peak, located in Diaper, Gilgit-Baltistan.

"I along with other four members of my outfit will depart from Islamabad to attempt the peak," Jabbar told APP on Thursday.

The other four members of Jabbar's team include Asif Bhatti, Dr Naveed, Saad Muhammad and Faheem Pasha.

With a death probability of 21%, Nanga Parbat continues to claim its place in the top five most dangerous mountains in the world. Till now 85 of the climbers have died while attempting it.

"I'm well aware of the challenges. The temperature may drop from -35C to -40 C, while the wind can blow at a speed above 300 kph. But I feel myself well in shape and fully prepared for the task. This is what a mountaineer should always be ready to face," he added.

Jabbar's batchmates from Faisalabad Medical College remember him nurturing his urge to climb mountains but not at the expense of his education. He surprised his fellow batchmates in 1981, when he as a final year student opted for a two-week climbing course through Alpine Club of Pakistan, yet ended up achieving The Best Graduate Award in MBBS.

The next few years were to define his future. In 1982 he joined the Pakistan Army and in 1983 he attended a climbing course at the celebrated French National School of Mountaineering (ENSA). In 1984 all of a sudden, he ended up filling a vacant slot of military liaison officer with an expedition.

This very expedition, Gasherbrum-I & II, was led by the world's renowned Reinhold Andreas Messner. After having been baptized by nobody less than Messner he achieved his first climb of 8,000 meters in 1985 when he climbed Broad Peak (8,050m) and emerged as achieving the unthinkable.

In the mountaineering world, he stunned everyone by scaling his first 8,000 meters peak in alpine style i.e. with no help of porters and advanced dumping of supplies. And in Pakistan, he became the youngest Pakistani to climb an 8,000 meters peak.

The Government of Pakistan acknowledged that by granting him the President's Award for Pride of Performance.

Meanwhile, he volunteered to join the Special Services Group (SSG) and also mastered the art of paragliding. From there on his life alternated between mountain climbing in military expeditions, service with SSG, serving in AMC (Army Medical Corps) as a doctor and perfecting all disciplines of gliding. He honourably retired from the Army in 2007 as Lieutenant Colonel.

# Austrian female Olympian arrives in Pakistan on Friday to attempt K2

✉ Tooba Khan

ISLAMABAD: Four-time Austrian female Olympic judoka Sabrina Filzmoser is arriving in Pakistan on Friday to attempt K2 (8,611-metre) the world's second highest peak, a Pakistan Judo Federation (PJF) official said on Thursday.



"She intends to ride on bicycle on Sunday from Islamabad to K2 Base Camp via Skardu before climbing K2," Masood Ahmed, the vice president of PJF told to media.

The 43-year-old Austrian, who owns two world bronze medals and as many European titles in judo in her division (-57kg), did a similar project in May last year on Mount Everest by successfully reaching atop the world's highest peak.

She is also the Chair of World Judo Athletes Commission and Climate Ambassador of IJF.

"En route from Islamabad to K2, she will be meeting various judo clubs as part of her campaign to promote this sport.

"While on her return (from K2) she has consented to impart training to female judokas in Islamabad," Masood added.

According to Masood, it would be for the first time that a judo personality of this stature is visiting Pakistan and will be training female judokas after completion of her expedition.

"She has been world number one, claiming two medals from the world championships besides lifting European champion title twice. Our promising athletes will learn the skills and get valuable tips from her," he said.

As an IJF Climate Ambassador, Sabrina and has made it her mission to live true to that role. Through her activities she is contributing to educate people about the serious issue of climate change.