



Federal Budget 2023-24 to be presented today

The federal government is set to announce the federal budget for the next fiscal year today with total volume exceeding Rs 13,800 billion. Sources regarding the budget's framework revealed that an estimated Rs 9,200 billion may be generated from tax revenue, while non-tax revenue may reach Rs 2,800 billion, while the Rs 1,300 billion could be allocated for subsidies.



Pervez Khattak mulls forming 'new political party'

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) senior leader Pervez Khattak, who recently resigned from the president of the party's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter over the May 9 violent protest, has decided to form a new political party. Khattak has claimed that more than 50 former members of parliamentarians (MPs) are in contact with him and would join his new political set-up, say sources.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

TAPI joint implementation plan

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses the signing ceremony of TPI Joint Implementation Plan between Turkmenistan and Pakistan on Thursday.



Photo: PID

Asif Zardari knows 'how to manage economy': Amjad Khan

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Secretary Information PPP and former provincial minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Amjad Khan Afridi on Thursday said former President Asif Ali Zardari knows how to manage the economy.



18th Constitutional Amendment was the manifestation of the people-friendliness and Pakistan-likeness of the pro-democratic forces of Pakistan.

In a statement, the former provincial minister said that the PPP leadership had presented the Charter of Economy under the slogan of 'Pakistan Khapppy'. He said that the achievements made by the PPP government were today proving to be the backbone of the economy. He said the country requires the charter of democracy and long-term economic policies.

He said that the PPP would come in power soon and it has already prepared a master plan for the country. Under this plan, Pakistan will achieve prosperity and development by providing basic facilities to the residents of cities, villages and towns of the country, he added.

The PPP leader said that the

TAPI gas pipeline project to usher in region's prosperity: PM

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The second day of the visit, the delegation of Turkmenistan headed by Mr. Maksat Babayev, State Minister - Chairman of State Concern "Turkmengas", called on Honorable Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. During the meeting, the Turkmen side briefed the Prime Minister on the progress in the implementation of large-scale

joint projects between Turkmenistan and Pakistan. The Prime Minister of Pakistan reiterated the support of the Government of Pakistan for the early completion of the Turkmenistan - Afghanistan - Pakistan - India (TAPI) Gas Pipeline Project and Turkmenistan - Afghanistan - Pakistan (TAP) Power Transmission Line Project that will play an important role in satisfying the energy needs of Pakistan. Following the meeting, in

participation of Prime Minister of Pakistan, the signing ceremony of the Joint Implementation Plan for the Expedited Implementation of the TAPI Gas Pipeline Project was held in the Prime Minister's Residence. While speaking at the signing ceremony, Prime minister noted that TAPI is very important project for regional prosperity and TAPI will bring an era of regional cooperation. Prime Minister emphasized that "We will do everything to expedite

implementation on TAPI". The signing of this Joint Implementation Plan is a significant step towards progressing the implementation of the TAPI Gas Pipeline, a project of historic significance for every participating country and the region as a whole. On the same day, Turkmenistan delegation headed by Mr. Maksat Babayev, State Minister - Chairman of State Concern "Turkmengas" had a meeting with Chief of Army Staff of Paki-

stan General Asim Munir. Turkmen side updated on implementation of TAPI gas pipeline and TAP power line projects. Acknowledging the importance of these Joint Major Projects, Pakistan side reassured their full support in this regard. During the visit of the Turkmenistan Delegation to Pakistan, productive meetings were held on a technical level on TAPI gas pipeline and TAP power transmission line projects.

Govt unveils Pakistan Economic Survey 2022-23

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Ishaq Dar Thursday launched the pre-budget document, Pakistan Economic Survey 2022-23 during a press conference in Islamabad. While unveiling the Pakistan Economic Survey 2022-23 in a press conference along with Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, the finance minister highlighted the performance of different sectors of the economy during the outgoing fiscal year. The finance minister said that the present coalition government is taking measures to steer the economy through various crises. At the start of the presser, Dar



reminded the journalists of 2013 when Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) came into power and there was loadshedding of 18 hours, and terrorism was on the rise. While talking about the outgoing fiscal year 2022-2023, the minister said Pakistan achieved Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

growth of 0.29 percent for the outgoing fiscal year, missing the target of 5pc by a wide margin. She said he was not pursuing a political agenda rather he was "toeing the line of his foreign masters who wanted to see Pakistan as a failed state". He was hatching conspiracies against the country under a well-planned strategy by brainwashing the youth with the help artificial intelligence using foreign funds.

trillion (US\$ 15.2 billion), and Rs. 3.5 trillion (US\$16.3 billion)," he said. Ishaq Dar said that Pakistan registered inflation of 29.2pc in the 11-month period from July 2022 to May 2023, against 11.3pc in the same period last year. The government had targeted inflation at 11.5pc for FY2023, missing its target significantly because of a sharp depreciation of the rupee and global supply shocks resulting in pricey imports. "Government is taking administrative actions, policy reforms and relief measures to control the prices of essential items," he said, adding that coalition government is committed to maintain the strategic reserves of wheat,

sugar and pulses. District price control committees are also monitoring the prices of essential items to ensure their availability at reasonable prices, Dar added. He said that Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) tax collection grew 16.1pc to Rs6,210bn from July to May, compared to Rs5,348.2bn in the year-ago period. According to the document, Pakistan's exports declined by 9.9pc during July to March to \$ 21bn compared to \$23bn in the same period last year. The document showed that the current account balanced improved by 74.1pc, recording a deficit of \$3.4bn during Jul-Mar FY2023, against a deficit of \$13bn in the year-ago period.

NAB found more evidence in Al-Qadir Trust case: Irfan Qadir

City Desk

ISLAMABAD :Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Accountability Irfan Qadir on Thursday said the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) had found more evidence in connection with the Al-Qadir Trust corruption case.



Addressing a press conference, the SAPM said the accountability watchdog had traced transactions worth Rs 4.50 billion from the accounts of Farhat Shehzadi, the friend of former prime minister's wife, and efforts were underway to bring her and her husband back from abroad for further investigation. The NAB Ordinance stressed for across the board accountability and there was no sacred cow "when it comes to accountability", he added. SAPM Irfan Qadir said the matters of superior court judges could be referred to NAB if they had "criminal overtones or an element of corruption". He viewed that the judicial system was being manipulated by certain people on the outside and that there were indications of an element of

corruption. The government while considering such matters exercised extreme caution regarding the formation of the commission to investigate the matter, he added. He said it was a fair opportunity provided to the judges to prove their innocence. If the commission's report had come out favourable then the matter would not have been referred to the Supreme Judicial Council or the NAB, he added. He said the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Act, 2023, empowered the Supreme Court and protected the chief judge from allegations but the "court formed a bench against the act. The government and the parliamentarians tried their best to protect the apex court from the allegations against its chief."

Federal govt cuts HEC budget for 1.5%

News Desk

ISLAMABAD : The federal government has decreased the Higher Education Commission's (HEC) budget by 1.5% for the fiscal year 2023-24.



The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has reduced the grant for federal-administered universities across the country by 1.5% for FY2023-24. The education authorities approved a cut in funding to federal-administered universities in all four provinces in FY2023-24, whereas, the approved grant for FY2022-23 was also disbursed in June with a 5% cut. The HEC deducted Rs100 million from the approved grant for the universities. Rs450 million was cut from the annual grant of the Urdu University. On the other hand, the provincial HEC recommended to increase grants for the Sindh universities. The high education sector is currently facing serious financial prob-

lems, therefore, the provincial government hiked the grant from Rs14 billion to Rs21 billion for FY2023-24. The HEC Sindh approved an increase in the grant to NED University from Rs690 million to Rs1.14 billion, Mehran University from Rs970 million to Rs1.45 billion, Dow Medical University from Rs550 million to Rs890 million, University of Karachi from Rs1.49 billion to Rs2.46 billion and Lyari University from Rs120 million to Rs180 million. The grant for Daud Engineering University was increased from Rs830 million to Rs1.11 billion and for Sindh University Jamshoro, the grant was hiked from Rs1.42 billion to Rs1.93 billion.

A 'foreign-funded' PTI chief stands exposed for 'treachery & enmity' towards Pakistan: Marriyum

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD : Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Wednesday said Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief now stood exposed for his "treachery and enmity towards Pakistan as he has been persistently pursuing anti-state agenda at the behest of his foreign masters". "He is least concerned



about the national interests, particularly the sensitivity of defence and economic issues," she said while addressing a news conference. The minister said the PTI chief was begging the United

States to lend military aid to Pakistan, which manifested his anti-state mindset. She said he was not pursuing a political agenda rather he was "toeing the line of his foreign masters who wanted to see Pakistan as a failed state". He was hatching conspiracies against the country under a well-planned strategy by brainwashing the youth with the help artificial intelligence using foreign funds.

Once the brainwashing of youth was completed, she said, his facilitators resorted to accomplish his anti-state missions by executing the conspiracies and the May 9 tragedy was a case study in that regard. The entire nation witnessed as how his facilitators had deputed the workers at sensitive installations to set them on fire just for accomplishing his mission, she added.

SBP reserves fall another \$178.2m to \$3.91b

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The foreign exchange reserves held by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has dropped to \$3.91 billion after a decrease of \$178.2 million on June 2. Overall, the liquid foreign currency reserves held by the country, including the net reserves held by banks other than the SBP, stood at \$9,33 billion till June 9. The net reserves held by commercial banks amounted to \$5.42 billion with an increase of \$0.3 billion. The central bank attributed the decrease in reserves to external debt repayments. Pakistan's economy is in turmoil amid financial woes and the delay in an agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that would release much-needed funding crucial to avoid the risk of default. Last week, SBP's foreign exchange reserves decreased by \$102 million.

Pak-US relations

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Health Abdul Qadir Patel and USAID Deputy Administrator Isobel Coleman with Pakistan US officials participating in Pak-US Health dialogue on Thursday.



Photo: PID

President urges universities to play role in preventing extremism, violence in society

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday called upon the universities to play an active role in preventing intolerance, extremism, and violence in society, particularly among students, and guide them towards a positive mindset.

The universities, he said, should arrange regular capacity-building training sessions for their management and faculty members to inculcate in students the ability to address extremism.

Addressing the National Vice Chancellors' Peace Conference, the president said banning the students' unions in universities was not a solution and stressed that there was a need to change their mindset through proper teaching methodologies.

He said such measures would ensure the reformation of students to help them



contribute towards the country's better future, sustainable peace and prosperity.

The president emphasized the need for research-based learning and said equal opportunities should be given to students and women in the field of education.

Keeping in view the rapid development of modern technology in every sector, he said usage of modern technology was inevitable in current scenario, which he said was vital to meet the advancement of the contemporary world.

He said promoting good values and morality in the society was need of the hour.

He also pointed out the phenomenon of the "invasion of fake news" across the globe, which he said needed to be addressed on priority.

Dr Arif Alvi said highly educated IT graduates should be prepared to meet the growing needs of current and future requirements.

Expressing gratitude over the participation of large number of women in the conference, the president said

women's role was significant in educating and training the future generations.

He urged sensitizing the society on creating opportunities for educated women to help them work according to their abilities.

President Alvi stressed the need for promoting ethics, morality, empathy, forgiveness, and tolerance among students and society.

He asked the students not to indulge in activities that caused stress among them.

The president hoped that the challenging times would pass soon and the country would witness exponential growth within five to seven years. The country would stand on a strong footing again, he said.

The two-day conference was jointly organized by Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan, National Counter-Terrorism Authority (NACTA), and Shaor Founda-

tion for Education and Awareness (SFEA).

The conference themed "Academic Discourse on Countering Extremism - The Way Forward" is a significant milestone in the implementation of the Peace, Advocacy, and Community Engagement through Transformation (PACT) for Tolerance project, which is built on a foundation of collaboration and cooperation between SFEA, HEC Pakistan, NACTA, and other policy-level stakeholders.

Chairman HEC Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, sharing his thoughts on the issues within society, said that conflict permeated various sectors of society including families, and deserved a collaborative and coordinated response.

Apart from teaching, he said, as a beacon of knowledge and enlightenment, the universities had the responsibility to foster responsible citizenship and produce good human beings.

PM approves 'revolutionary program' for uplift of youth, farmers, women in budget 2023-24

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday approved the inclusion of a "revolutionary program" in the upcoming budget 2023-24 for the uplift of youth, women and farmers.

As per the prime minister's directives, the funds have been allocated in the upcoming budget for projects on welfare of youth and women as well as for agriculture tube wells.

According to a PM Office statement, in the next fiscal year, the youth would be provided interest free loans

and endowment fund would be established for education and sports.

The prime minister approved the establishment of Pakistan Endowment Fund for Education on the pattern of Punjab Endowment Fund.

Under the Fund, the intelligent but poor students from across the country would be given educational scholarships.

The funds have been allocated for Prime Minister Youth Program to extend small loans to the youth.

The government has also specified funds to impart skill training to the



youth, including in the information technology.

The upcoming budget would also have funds for distribution of 100,000

laptops among youth besides extending financial support to the IT startups.

The government has made budgetary allocations for promotion of sports activities among the youth and to encourage their participation.

The upcoming budget will also feature the funds allocations for a program to achieve the economic empowerment of women.

The prime minister also approved a program for the solarisation of agriculture tube wells which would be implemented in the second phase of PM's Kissan Package.

China-Pakistan-Iran trilateral meeting successful step to enhance regional security: Wang Wenbin

News Desk

BELJING: Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said on Thursday that the first meeting of China-Pakistan-Iran trilateral consultation on counter-terrorism and security was a successful step taken by the three countries to enhance regional security and stability.

"On June 7, Director-General Bai Tian of the Department of External Security of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs held in Beijing the first meeting of the China-Pakistan-Iran trilateral consultation on counter-terrorism and security at director generals level," he said during his regular briefing while sharing more information about the meeting.

He informed that Seyed Rasoul Mosa-



vi, Assistant to the Foreign Minister and Director General of South Asia of Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Abdul Hameed, Director General on Counter Terrorism of Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs attended the meeting.

China's Assistant Foreign Minister Nong Rong met with the Pakistani and Iranian heads of delegation, he added.

The spokesperson informed that the three sides held in-depth exchange of

views on the regional counter-terrorism situation and joint efforts to tackle the cross-border movement of terrorists, among other issues, and decided to institutionalize the trilateral consultation on counter-terrorism and security.

"The meeting was a successful step taken by the three countries to act on the Global Security Initiative and enhance regional security and stability," he added.

He said that terrorism is a common enemy of humanity and said that China firmly opposes and strongly condemns terrorism in all its manifestations.

"We stand ready to work in close collaboration with Pakistan, Iran and other regional countries to resolutely crack down on terrorist forces that endanger the interests of the three countries and regional security," he added.

Pakistan wins a seat on UN Economic & Social Council as UNGA votes for new members

News Desk

UNITED NATIONS, JUN 08 (APP): Pakistan was on Thursday elected to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the economic arm of the United Nations, for a three-year term, beginning January 1, 2024, with Ambassador Munir Akram saying that the success was a recognition of "our positive role in international diplomacy".

In balloting in the 193-member General Assembly, Pakistan received 129 votes.

Pakistan was contesting one of three Asian seats - also being contested by Iraq, Japan, Nepal and Tajikistan.

A two-third majority - 124 votes - was required for election.

PPP, PML-N and PTI made false promises to the people of South Punjab: Siraj-ul-Haq

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Amir Jamaat-e-Islami Siraj-ul-Haq has said that South Punjab is occupied by a few families who themselves have earned well but deprived the people. In spite of agriculturally gold-bearing lands, the Kisan area is deprived and disturbed, the educated youth of the country, is running outside, women are forced to do labor themselves to feed their children, the basic facilities of education and health are missing in the area, apart from agriculture, the livestock sector is also devastated, Bahawalpur was abused. People's Party, PML-N, Tehreek-e-Insaf made false promises to the people of South Punjab. People give authority to Jamaat-e-Islami, we will beautify South Punjab. He expressed these views while addressing the election convention in Multan. Ameer Jamaat warned the Sindh government that if the majority of Jamaat-e-Islami in Karachi is turned into a minority, the provincial government will be responsible for the situation. Jamaat-e-Islami won the majority in Karachi, the mayor of the city should be the same.

Deputy Amir of Jamaat-e-Islami Liaquat Baloch, Amir of Jamaat-e-Islami Punjab South Rao Zafar, District Amir Multan Dr. Safdar Hashmi also addressed the convention. Talking about the overall political situation of the country, Sirajul Haque said that putting old eggs in a new basket will not bring stability. He said that the oppressive landlords, vassals and corrupt capitalists imposed on the country are loyal to the United States, if Russia had come to Pakistan, they would have sat on its tanks.

He said that there is seven billion corruption in the country every day. Only in the construction of a part of the highway, embezzlement of six billion has come to light. Instead of stopping corruption, the rulers



depend on external loans. Every government looks to the IMF, 23 programs have been signed so far from the World Financial Institution, the country has gone backward instead of forward. Today Bangladesh's growth rate is higher than ours, Saudi Arabia is building a super computer, United Arab Emirates is sending missions into space, Qatar Airlines is the best air service in the world, earlier PIA was a name in the world, today it is Billions in losses. He said that Turkey, Malaysia, Indonesia are all ahead of us, Pakistan's currency is bankrupt.

We will bring the Quran system in the courts. He said that it is a blessing to serve Jamaat-e-Islami country, Pakistan is like a mother's lap for us, we want to make the Pakistan that Iqbal dreamed of. Let the nation support us for a bright, corruption-free, clean, green Pakistan. Jamaat-e-Islami served South Punjab in floods, we are with the people in every difficult time.

Naib Amir Jamaat-e-Islami Liaquat Baloch has said that the assemblies of Sindh and Balochistan are completing their scheduled time in August, escaping from the period given by the constitution and not holding the election will be poison for the national security and the constitution of Pakistan. Organizing is the need of the hour. Jamaat-e-Islami will participate strongly in the elections on its sign. Punjab is the largest province of the country and has nearly half of the population.

Visit of the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs to Sweden



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: On the invitation to participate in the Annual Meeting of the European Council for Foreign Relations in Stockholm, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Hina Rabbani Khar, visited Sweden on 6-8 June 2023. In addition to the ECFR meeting, the MOS held bilateral meetings with the Swedish Minister for International Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade and the First Deputy Speaker of the Swedish Parliament. During the visit, she also held meetings with CEOs of leading businesses, and interacted with media and Swedish TV and Radio.

The Minister of State conveyed felicitations to the Swedish Minister for International Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade, Johan Forsell, on the Swedish National Day. She shared Pakistan's commitment to strengthen bilateral cooperation, especially in the fields of renewable energy, sustainable technologies, waste management, ICT, export of skilled labour and R&D. She urged Swedish companies to take advantage of business-friendly environment in Pakistan. Expressing gratitude to Sweden for its assistance to Pakistan in the aftermath of devastating floods, the MOS invited the Swedish Minister to visit Pakistan, possibly along with a business delegation to strengthen commercial and trade ties between the two countries.

The Minister of State conveyed felicitations to the Swedish Minister

for International Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade, Johan Forsell, on the Swedish National Day. She shared Pakistan's commitment to strengthen bilateral cooperation, especially in the fields of renewable energy, sustainable technologies, waste management, ICT, export of skilled labour and R&D. She urged Swedish companies to take advantage of business-friendly environment in Pakistan. Expressing gratitude to Sweden for its assistance to Pakistan in the aftermath of devastating floods, the MOS invited the Swedish Minister to visit Pakistan, possibly along with a business delegation to strengthen commercial and trade ties between the two countries.

The Minister of State also held a meeting with First Deputy Speaker of the Swedish Parliament (Riksdag), Kenneth G Forslund. In the meeting bilateral parliamentary relations, as well as regional and global issues of mutual interest, were discussed. Acknowledging the burgeoning bilateral ties based on mutual respect, MOS noted that Pakistan and Sweden will celebrate 75 years of establishment of diplomatic relations in 2024. She expressed Pakistan's desire to enhance engagement and cooperation with the Swedish parliament.

Government of Punjab started skills education program in 30 districts: Ehsan Bhutta

Asim Tanveer

DERA GHAZI KHAN: Secretary Industries, Government of Punjab, Ehsan Bhutta has said that for the first time in the history of Punjab, free technical training courses and skills education programs for children of private educational institutions and religious madrasas have been started in 30 districts during summer vacations. Which will prepare skilled youth and help in reducing unemployment. He expressed these views during a meeting at the Commissioner's Office on the occasion of his visit to Dera Ghazi Khan and during the inspection of classes at Mir Chakar Khan Rand University. Secretary Industries Ehsan Bhutta also planted a sapling in the lawn of the University.



Secretary Industries inspected the computer application, autocad, civil, mechanical, electrical and other classes in Mir Chakar Khan Rand University, met the students and

teachers and reviewed the educational activities. On this occasion, Vice Chancellor Mir Chakar Khan Rand Prof. Dr. Mahmood Saleem informed about the various technical education

programs going on in the institution, transport and other facilities for the students. Resident Director Tavta, CEO Education and other officers were also present on this occasion.

Meanwhile, while addressing the meeting at the Commissioner's Office, Secretary Industries Ehsan Bhutta said that for the first time, technical education short courses are being conducted free of cost in government schools and colleges during the summer vacations. Mehmood Bashir informed about biometric attendance of employees of municipal committees, vehicle tracking system, easy access open court complaint management system and other issues in DG Khan Division. Deputy Commissioner Mehr Shahid Zaman Lak and other officers were present.



Mr. Asif Malik (CEO) Real Investment Marketing Signing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for sole Marketing rights with Mr. Hammad Hassan Mustafa (Director) AS Group of their New Project ROCKERY5 Murree.

RPO Dera Div has restored Dera's Main CP Chondah

Adam Khan Wazir

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Regional Police Officer Dera Ismail Khan Abdul Ghafoor Afridi today restored Dera's important and main check post Chonda which was decommissioned in view of the recent terror situation and keeping in view the terror situation, the building of Chanda Check Post has been reconstructed and made better than before, which was formally inaugurated by RPO Dera.

DPO Dera Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani, DSP Headquarters and DSP City also accompanied him on this occasion and RPO Dera said that security of life and property of police personnel and strong vigilance is the need of the hour, so on this basis we are working on strengthening all the check posts in the range.

On this occasion, he reviewed the security arrangements of the check post in detail while checking the presence of personnel, weapons and ammunition and the cameras at the check post, he instructed the police officers about the current situation, security and checking mechanisms that while on duty always use bullet proof jacket and helmet to be alert at all times and keep a close watch on suspicious persons.

Dera Police has always played its full role against terrorists by being on the front line in difficult situations, the RPO said that our morale is high and ready to face all kinds of situations.

SOS Village Multan team left for Rawalpindi: Hamad Hassan Mirza



Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Under the direction of Divisional Superintendent Railway Multan Hammad Hasan Mirza, Divisional Commercial Officer Railway Multan Adnan Marwat sent the SOS team from Multan to Rawalpindi from Multan. But the train compartment was decorated with balloons and lights which made the children ecstatic.

On this occasion, SOS Village management and children expressed their special thanks to DS Railway Multan Hamad Hasan Mirza and DCO Adnan Marwat, adding that all the arrangements in the train are very good along with cleanliness, DCO Railway Multan. Adnan Marwat said that there can be no happiness more than the happiness of children.

PPP South Punjab President Makhdoom Ahmed nominated new leadership

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: On the instructions of Pakistan People's Party South Punjab President Makhdoom Ahmed Mehmood, People's Party Culture Wing South Punjab President Ashol Lal appointed Qaiser Abbas Siddiqui as Multan District President. General Secretary Asif Mehmood Bhatti and Syed Nadeem Kazmi were nominated as Information Secretary.

In consultation with Pakistan People's Party South Punjab President Makhdoom Ahmed Mehmood, Dr. Ashol Lal has nominated Jayale leaders Qaiser Abbas Siddiqui Secretary General Asif Bhatti and Jayale leader Syed Nadeem Kazmi and directed that Multan City Tehsil Shujaabad and Jalalpur City.

Press Conference

LAHORE: Senior politician Jahangir Tareen announces his new political party "Istehkaam-e-Pakistan Movement Party" during press conference along with others politicians at a local hotel in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

World Food Safety Day 2023: Promoting Safe Food Practices

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: World Food Safety Day (WFSD) was commemorated on June 7, focusing on raising awareness about the significance of food safety and ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all. FAO Pakistan organized a series of activities in alignment with the theme "Food standards save lives," with a special emphasis on addressing antimicrobial resistance (AMR) through collaborative efforts.

The primary objective of these activities was to enhance knowledge about food safety and raise awareness regarding workplace, community, and governmental actions that can effectively promote safe food practices.

Notable among the initiatives was an awareness walk conducted in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), Fleming Fund, and



Islamabad Food Authority. This joint effort united key stakeholders in highlighting the importance of food safety and addressing AMR. Participants carried banners adorned with messages promoting safe and nutritious food as well as raising awareness about AMR. Dignitaries and officials shared their

insights and underscored the significance of combating foodborne AMR while encouraging the adoption of safe food habits.

To further advance the cause, two awareness seminars were organized in partnership with Fleming Fund, Islamabad Food Authority, the World

Health Organization, and the Institute of Food and Nutritional Sciences. The seminars, held respectively at Rawalpindi Women's University and ARID Agriculture University, served as platforms for in-depth discussions on food safety and foodborne AMR.

Dr. M. Afzal, FMD Management Specialist participated in Radio Pakistan's live program "Zarkhaiz Pakistan" where he emphasized the significance of food safety for all.

FAO Pakistan, together with its esteemed partners, remains dedicated to the pursuit of safe and nutritious food for all, safeguarding public health, and fostering sustainable development. Through these diverse activities, FAO Pakistan aims to significantly increase awareness about food safety, encourage proactive measures to prevent foodborne illness, and promote best practices in food handling, storage, and preparations.

India is involved in serious violations of human rights in occupied Kashmir: PM AJK

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: The Prime Minister of the state of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar Haq has said that the Kashmiri Azadi movement is a great example of determination, perseverance, struggle and bravery. India is involved in serious violations of human rights in occupied Kashmir and is a threat to the peace and stability of the region. Giving an open exemption is tantamount to justifying the worst atrocities against humanity in Occupied Kashmir. Lasting peace in the world can be established only if Kashmiris are given the right to vote according to the resolutions of the United Nations.

The government of Azad Kashmir is actively working to raise the standard of living of the common man and provide basic facilities including health and education to the people. The process of preparing the budget is going on. He expressed these views



while talking to the public delegations at the Prime Minister's Secretariat, Muzaffarabad.

Azad Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar Haq said that the freedom movement of Kashmir is the first priority of my government. India has crossed all limits of oppression and oppression in Occupied Kashmir.

India wants to turn the Muslim majority into a minority by erasing the

identity of Kashmir through the worst oppression in human history, a sinister attempt has been made to reduce the role of the Muslims in the political decision-making of Occupied Kashmir through bogus constituencies. The Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir said that he salutes the determination of the people of Occupied Kashmir and their eternal struggle. In very difficult situations, the people of Occupied Kash-

mir have kept the knowledge of freedom high.

The Prime Minister said that India has always tried to spread dust in the eyes of the world regarding the situation in Occupied Kashmir, but the determination and sacrifices of Kashmiris have always exposed India's hypocrisy. He said that nine lakh occupation forces of India have made occupied Kashmir a military cantonment, Kashmiri properties and property are being destroyed, targeting youths and desecration of women is the norm of the occupation forces so that Kashmiris get freedom. The trip can be reduced.

He said that the human rights organizations and institutions are turning a blind eye to the situation in Occupied Kashmir. He said that the Indian army has spread the shadow of fear in the occupied valley, but the spirit of Kashmiris has not decreased like straw. They show their devotion to Pakistan by burying them in the green crescent flag.

Newly appointed DPO Upper SW Niaz Muhammad Khan took charge

Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: Newly appointed District Police Officer District Upper South Waziristan Niaz Muhammad Yousafzai has taken charge, on reaching the police line DSP Circle Engineer Sherullah Mehsud DSP Headquarters Noor Khan Mehsud Line Officer Abdul Qadir Khan Accountant Adnan Khan Mehsud Reader to DPO Abid Raza PA to DPO Obaidullah along with senior police officers gave a warm welcome.

The newly appointed DPO was given a traditional tribal turban after being saluted by troop of Waziristan Police.

Speaking on this occasion, the newly appointed DPO said that the rule of law and justice and the welfare of the police force and community policing are among our top priorities, the police job is a sacred profession and wearing the police uniform puts a heavy responsibility on the shoulders of the youth.

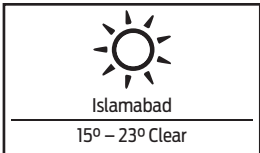
That they move forward as a team to uproot the crimes and serve the people of Waziristan, the entire Pakhtunkhwa Police, including the Upper South Waziristan Police, have performed their duties by remaining steadfast in difficult situations and giving testimonies.



The entire nation appreciates the sacrifices of the police and we will not let the blood of the martyrs go in vain.

Addressing the police youths, they asked them to play their role in changing the traditional culture by showing good manners with people and making dedication their motto and create convenience for the public and do not let patience slip at any time, no negligence in providing services to the public will be tolerated.

Waziristan Police is a force consisting of brave police officers and personnel, Inshallah we will make it the best force that will be an example, all police officials and officers should consider themselves as servants and protectors of the people and should not be negligent in protecting the life and property of the people.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:14 am
Zohr 12:07 pm
Asr 5:06 pm
Maghrib 7:17 pm
Isha 9:00 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
DHO 5556311-4
RGH 9290301-7
Holy Family 9290322-7
PIMS 9261170-79
Polyclinic 9218300-09
Shifa International 4603666

Total PARCO organizes University Day at GCU Lahore



Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Total PARCO Pakistan Limited, one of the largest multinational energy company in Pakistan, recently organized an event titled "Transforming Lives with Positive Action in New Reality" at Government College University (GCU) in Lahore. The event featured Mr. Mehmet Celepoglu, Chief Executive Officer of Total PARCO Pakistan Limited (TPPL), who delivered an inspiring speech to the young students and enthusiastic audience from various walks of life.

During the event we witnessed Mr. Mehmet Celepoglu engaging with the audience, both in-person at a packed auditorium and digitally, with thousands of participants including students, business partners, customers, media personnel, brand ambassadors, and his own teams. It provided a platform for all the youth to learn from such an inspiring leader as him from his vast knowledge and experiences. He shared insights into his unique leadership and management style, which has successfully guided TPPL through the challenges of the last three years.

Labor class urgently calls for minimum wage increase as inflation takes toll

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a heartfelt letter addressed to Prime Minister Shabaz Shareef, Sajid Turi, the Federal Minister, highlights the devastating impact of skyrocketing prices and prevailing inflation on the labor class in recent years. The employed and unemployed laborers have found themselves more vulnerable than ever before due to the continuous rise in prices and the fragile state of the economy. While the provincial governments have taken measures to support the labor class, the current wages remain insufficient to meet the basic needs of the common people. Consequently, urgent government initiatives to increase labor wages are necessary to alleviate these challenges.

The last increase in minimum wages occurred in 2022, and since then, no further relief has been announced by the government, despite increases in pay and allowances for other provincial



and federal government employees. It is important to note that labor affairs have been devolved to the provinces, making it the prerogative of the respective governments to decide on wage adjustments.

Considering the gravity of the situation, Sajid Turi appeals to Prime Minister Shabaz Shareef to direct the Finance Division to increase the minimum wages by at least 50% of the current rate, following consultations with all stakeholders at the federal and provincial levels.

and federal government employees. It is important to note that labor affairs have been devolved to the provinces, making it the prerogative of the respective governments to decide on wage adjustments.

Launching ceremony

ISLAMABAD: Minister of Finance Ishaq Dar presents Economic Survey of Pakistan to media during press conference at Finance Division, in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

Pakistan's most loved SUV-Changan Oshan X7-drops a mysterious message

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Since the arrival of new entrants in the automotive landscape, many products have launched and generated varied responses. Among all new entrants, Master Changan has emerged as the #1 within a period of just 5 years and is now driving new standards for the Pakistan auto industry. With its diverse and attractive product range, Master Changan has won the hearts of the Pakistani consumer. In a recent Pakwheels online survey more than 100,000 people selected Changan's products as the most loved in each of their respective categories, Changan Karvaan MPV won 79% votes in the van category, Changan Alsvin won 51% of votes in the sedan category and Changan Oshan X7 won 46% of votes in the CSUV category.



The Changan Karvaan MPV celebrates friendship, family and togetherness in a heart-touching manner, Alsvin with Pakistan's only Effie Gold winning automobile campaign - "Drive Your Dreams". As the brand matured, the company fittingly launched a follow-up communication - "A world beyond dreams". Last year, Master Changan launched its most disruptive product so far-Changan Oshan X7 with a daring tagline-"Watch me move".

As the leading disruptor of Pakistan's automotive industry, Master Changan has set social media abuzz once again after unveiling a mysterious teaser picture on their official Facebook page. The enigmatic image, released on 1st June, has left fans and followers eagerly speculating about what the brand has in store for them.

The teaser picture, accompanied by an in-picture text that reads, "Ray of light is calling you. Stay tuned 09.06.2023" has captivated the attention of over 300,000 followers on Facebook. The image showcases a mysterious visual, filled with intrigue, and embodies the essence of Changan's commitment to pushing boundaries and delighting their loyal customer base.

The teaser was followed by more posts that have sparked thought provoking discussions amongst the Pakistani auto experts and consumers.

The first teaser highlights the deeper underlying issue of Pakistan's auto industry: outdated models with old technology consistently being launched in Pakistan. Is a new model really a new product? Most of the time the so-called "new" models available in Pakistan have been phased out internationally.

PEW applauds Govt decision to close markets by 8 o'clock

T Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW), on Thursday appreciated the decision of the federal government to close markets by 8 p.m.

The move will save billions of dollars and improve the habits of consumers, he said.

"Implementation of the directive is linked with cooperation from the provinces; therefore, the provincial government should also react responsibly," he added.

Even in rich countries, markets open at 9 a.m. or earlier and close at 5 p.m. or 6 p.m., while many developed countries also observe the closure of shops on Sundays and, in most cases, on Saturday as well, said Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President of PEW.

In a statement issued here today, he said that there are no fixed timings for markets opening and closing in Pakistan, which is draining the country's resources at a time when it is on the brink of default.

"Our country cannot afford to keep shops open for 14 to 15 hours for the additional profits of shopkeepers who would never pay their employees according to the minimum wage announced by the government," he observed.

He said that the shopping habits of consumers must be changed through strict administrative measures, as in many cities the actual sales start after sunset and continue till midnight.

Every citizen can get what they want from shops even if market timings are shortened, as is being practised all over the world, but bringing shopkeepers into discipline requires political will.

Shopkeepers have always resisted efforts to bring them into discipline, document their business, or pay tax, but now the time has come to bring all the shopkeepers into the tax net as the country's survival is at stake.



Sectors collaborate to promote employment opportunities in KP



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Carrying forward the vision of sustainable development of communities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and providing them with economic opportunities, Hashoo Foundation has joined hands with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Board of Investment and Trade (KP-BOIT).

In this regard, a MoU was signed between Mati Ullah Khan, CEO KPBOIT / Secretary IC&TE KP, and Ayesha Khan, Country Director Hashoo Foundation to ensure their common goal of socio-economic development of KP.

Ayesha Khan, Country Director Hashoo Foundation shared that with this partnership we aim to enable people to become resilient through customised trainings, job placements and entrepreneurship promotion with the Hashoo ETHIC program.

She said that HF is committed to carry forward its values in synergy with KP-BOIT to facilitate skilled trainees for job placements, apprenticeships, and hands-on training thus ensuring their economic mobility, and financial independence.

Mati Ullah Khan, CEO KPBOIT / Secretary IC&TE KP appreciated this partnership and said KP-BOIT looks forward to working with HF and effectively acting as a bridge to mobilize economic opportunities for the people of KP. Career aspiring youth will be engaged so that they can optimally utilize all resources to sustainably enhance the local economic growth.

Metro Pakistan Marks the 'World Environment Day'

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: METRO, the leading international wholesale company, marked the 'World Environment Day' in continuation of its 'Clean & Green Pakistan' vision, with a tree plantation activity in collaboration with Indus Hospital & Health Network (IHNN) at the newly constructed 600 bedded Indus Hospital Jubilee Town Lahore. The plantation drive ceremony was attended by senior management of both the organizations, and over 200 tree saplings were planted at the site.

Expressing his joy, Mr. Marek Minkiewicz, Managing Director, METRO Pakistan stated, that: "This plantation drive is part of METRO's 'Clean & Green Pakistan' initiative that has become an annual event to mark the World Environment Day. We are happy to partner for this with the Indus Hospital, a state of the art health facility that provides cashless services to everyone. This initiative of planting trees is our contribution towards making this hospital an environment friendly place."

In addition to the annual plantation drives, METRO was among the first big organisations to make use of the solar energy by installing solar panels at all its 10 stores across Pakistan, from Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad to Faisalabad & Multan, and has been instrumental in reducing the carbon footprint by over 2,600 tons per year. It is also leading the initiative against use of plastic bags and has introduced non-woven recyclable bags all under its 'Clean & Green Pakistan'.

KEC & AdPulse hosted a grand reception in honor of new Consul General of China

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Karachi Editors' Club in collaboration with AdPulse hosted a grand reception at a 5-star hotel to welcome H.E. Yang Yundong, the newly appointed Consul General of the People's Republic of China in Karachi. The event was attended by the Consul General of Russia, Consul General of Korea, Consul General of Indonesia, Diplomats of Iran and the US, dignitaries, businessmen including dignitaries from different walks of life, and others.

Addressing the ceremony, the Consul General of the People's Republic of China in Karachi, H.E. Yang Yundong, said that diplomatic relations between Pakistan and China were established in 1951 and since then two nations have consistently displayed a

mutual understanding, trust, respect, and support for each other. Leaders of both countries have come to a consensus for the development of bilateral relations. China supports Pakistan's sovereignty and national integrity. Massive vaccine supplies from China to Pakistan took place during Covid 19.

Administrator Karachi, Dr. Saif ur Rehman said that the strategic location of Karachi is ideal for logistics and supply chain. China has consistently supported Pakistan in regional matters. The enduring relationship between the two nations is marked by strong ties and a shared commitment to enhancing the alliance across all domains.

Wishing Pak-China relations grow stronger and more stable in the future, the Chairman of HMR Group, Haji

Muhammad Rafique Pardesi, said that the new Consul General marks a significant milestone in further strengthening the bond between China and Pakistan. Hard and dedicated work is the key to the country's growth and development.

CEO of Diners Group, Sohail Moten, said that it seems that relations between Pakistan and China are spreading over centuries. Gawadar is a big project and many more projects are about to be launched. He quoted a hadeeth "Seek knowledge even if you have to go as far as China".

President of Karachi Editors Club (KEC), Mubashir Mir, said that China always supported Pakistan in strategic issues at all forums, national and international. CPEC is the best example of a Pak-China brotherhood.



Secretary General of Karachi Editors Club (KEC), Manzar Naqvi,

said that the relationship between Pakistan and China is deeply rooted in a longstanding history of friendship and cooperation. KEC wholeheartedly believes that this enduring friendship and cordial relations between Pakistan and China will continue to flourish in the future.

Presenting a vote of thanks, CEO of AdPulse IMC, Khurran Jaffrani, said that despite facing regional and global challenges, the Pak-China friendship has remained strong and vibrant, evolving into an All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership. H.E. Yang Yundong is an exceptional and dedicated diplomat, and his great leadership skills promise to contribute significantly to the advancement of China-Pakistan relations, reaching new heights of glory.

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

Disappointed by Hamid Mir and Wusatullah Khan - II

So when we have an opinion about them than who you are sitting with a strip of Kashmir, sorry to say you are not a problem you are an industry. The livelihood of the Kashmir Committee, Farooq Abdullah, Mehbooba Mufti, and all political classes of Kashmir is linked with this industry. So why would I end my livelihood to bring some out-of-the-box solution to this issue," he said. He lamented that the Centre was explaining the Kashmir issue to people in Bradford, UK. This comment led to sloganeering from people at the back of the hall. Khan further spoke about the "prescribed" Kashmir policy and wondered if the people who raised slogans knew about the Khurshid Hasan Khurshid, who thought about bringing out of box solution to resolve the long-standing dispute. Khan paid homage to former Azad Jammu and Kashmir president Khurshid Hasan Khurshid, saying that he was the best leader this region has ever had.

Readers, I was much disappointed to hear such conversation from two very senior journalists of Pakistan. First of all, they should not have shown and spoken only negative aspects. Senior intellectual should give innovative ideas, positive picture, solutions and hopes. They didn't tell the audience what Pakistan,

Establishment and Media done in past, what they are doing currently and what they will do for them in future. They only highlighted the negative and out of context sides. Hamid Mir's negative remarks already charged and provided oxygen to a group of few students and Wusatullah Khan further burdened the fire by his negative words. They should also have mentioned the role of Pakistani People from Tribal Areas in liberation of AJK. Then it would be good if they would mention the role of Pak Army to provide defense to AJK. Pakistan has fought three wars with India on Kashmir and Pakistan raised the issue in UN and International Forums on several occasions. Then it is the media of Pakistan due to which the issue is still alive and we are getting the current updates. But unfortunately they ignored all remarkable services and just focused on negative points.

I mean, you came here to give some good thing rather than to deliver disappointment and anger. And they should have remembered that they are saying it in a public place where there might be the people with different minds and approaches. They considered that it is

just a talk show on some channel where only they are sitting and sharing their views.

Its irony that our intellectuals and celebrities use negative stuff for their rating and getting popularity. This thing should be monitored and people with positive and innovative based approach should be encouraged to talk in such events.

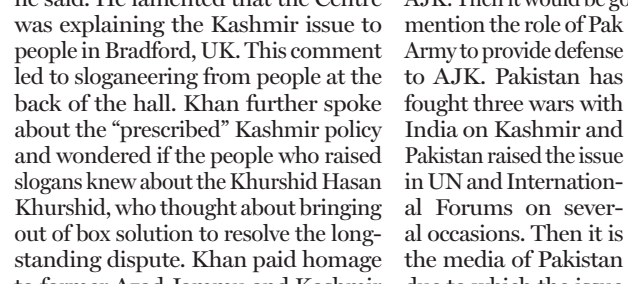
Then come to another point at which I don't agree with Hamid Mir is his stance about missing persons. I, mean how a law enforcement agency or an authority can catch you if you have done nothing. They never ever catch the innocent people. And I have already given the comparison between our civil and military

judicial systems in my previous articles. Everyone knows about the flaws in our civil justice system where it takes years to conclude the cases. No country allows the anti state elements to continue their activities against the State. I don't justify that all missing persons are culprits and it should be continued. But at least a room for fair investigation and trial should be allowed to monitor and catch the anti state elements. Not all missing

persons are culprits but to come to this conclusion an investigation is needed. Very simple, if you are innocent then you will be freed but it will be decided only by an investigation. I know that lot of missing persons had reach to their homes as well. So innocence will never let you to be punished. Our appeal to the law enforcement agencies should be to catch only those suspects whose anti-state activities have been fully verified by credible agencies and give everyone the fair right to trial and appeal. I am not at all favor in catching the innocents but only investigation is the key to differentiate between innocence and crime. Hamid Mir should also keep in mind the loss of precious lives of civilian and military people in terrorist attacks. They are the real innocent people of Pakistan and they also need justice which can be ensured just by punishing the culprits.

Readers, the things mentioned above needs to be re-thinking by personalities of our mainstream media. They should focus on spreading truth and positive picture. Also the event planners should prefer to invite the personalities having positive thinking and approach. Our media should also encourage the positive stances instead of providing the platform to spread disappointment and frustration.

Concluded



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

ICCBS-UoK establishes HCTRS for Halal testing

The International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS), University of Karachi, has established the Halal Certification, Testing and Research Services (HCTRS) in its premises.

The HCTRS, situated in the Prof. Wolfgang Voelter Laboratories Complex, provides Sustainable Solutions to the regulatory authorities, industries, academia, and consumers.

Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Director of the International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences, and COMSTECH Coordinator General, expressed these views while presiding over a meeting held at the H.E.J. Research Institute of Chemistry, University of Karachi, on Wednesday.

He said that the HCTRS had already started its services. The HCTRS offers Halal Certification Services in various fields, while some major areas included food of animal origin (slaughtering, meat, and meat products), food of plant origin, beverages, all processed foods, food services and facilities, export, import, distribution, retail, transport with associated packaging and storage, and auxiliary services, etc.

The large Halal testing laboratories exist only in non-Muslim countries, which shows that current Halal testing services are dominated by non-Muslims, who have little understanding and appreciation, as well as the sensitivity of the concept, he stated.

Products imported from non-Muslim countries may contain components or passed through a method of manufacturing that is contrary to Islamic law, he said, adding that critical components of religious nature in food and non-food products are Alcohol, Najis materials (dead, insects, urine, substances), ingredients of animal origin.

Talking about Halal product testing services, Prof. Choudhary said, "Fruits, vegetables, and seafood analysis, analysis of trace elements, analysis of residual pesticide and residual solvents, and pharmaceutical raw material analysis, etc are some important areas where the HCTRS is offering a variety of Halal product testing services.

He said that HCTRS was the only facility for Halal services in the public sector research institution, adding that there are some salient features of the HCTRS, which included one window Halal industry service provider, including Halal certification, accredited Halal testing, training, sharia and scientific research, in-house and well-equipped, accredited Halal testing facility, and well trained highly qualified staff with in-depth sharia and scientific knowledge.



Amjad Rasmi

The Situation of an Economy with Inflation

Amna Khan / Shoaib Aijaz

Inflation is the rate at which the general price level of goods and services in an economy rises over time. Inflation reduces the purchasing power of money, which means that it takes more units of currency to purchase the same amount of goods and services.

In Pakistan's economy, inflation has been a continuous challenge, with the country facing significant inflation rates in recent years. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is commonly used to calculate the inflation rate in Pakistan.

In recent years, the Pakistani economy has faced substantial inflation issues, hurting millions of people's lives. Inflation has remained stubbornly high despite measures such as a large fiscal deficit, a weak currency, and low productivity levels. The COVID-19 pandemic has also had a substantial impact on the country, with inflation growing as a result of supply chain disruptions and increased global commodity costs. The government has granted subsidies on vital commodities and implemented initiatives to enhance the food supply to address this situation.

Inflation is a common economic challenge faced by many Asian countries, including Pakistan. Pakistan has experienced double-digit inflation rates in recent years. Other Asian countries have also been struggling with inflation, such as India and Indonesia. To address inflation, many Asian countries have implemented measures such as increasing interest rates, price controls, and providing subsidies on essential commodities. However, the effectiveness of these measures varies across countries, and sustained efforts are needed to address the root causes of inflation.

Pakistan's inflation rate has been higher than many of its neighboring countries in recent years, in 2021 India's inflation rate

was 5.59% compared to Pakistan's 8.93%. Afghanistan's inflation rate has been higher than Pakistan's in recent years, with an inflation rate of 12.3% in 2020 compared to Pakistan's 9.1%. Iran has also been facing high inflation rates, with an inflation rate of 36.5% in 2020. China has experienced relatively low inflation rates in recent years, with an inflation rate of 0.5% in 2020. Bangladesh has a smaller economy than Pakistan and has experienced a lower inflation rate than Pakistan in recent years.

Inflation in Pakistan has been caused by a variety of factors, such as high food and fuel prices, currency devaluation, high fiscal deficit, poor economic management, supply-side constraints, and the COVID-19 pandemic. These factors have had a cascading effect on the prices of goods and services across the economy.

According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), the annual average inflation rate in Pakistan for the fiscal year 2020-2021 was 8.9%. This was greater than the 10.7% inflation rate in the preceding fiscal year.

According to a report of economic focus of March 2023, inflation reached a nearly 50-year high of 35.4% (February: 31.5%), owing to rising food and transportation prices. Although inflation is expected to fall this year due to lower domestic demand and commodity prices, the recent lifting of currency controls and fuel subsidies will keep it high.

According to the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, Prices are important! the owner of a business making judgments about input purchases, sales, and inventories, or a regular household making decisions about house construction, etc. Inflation indicates how much more costly goods and services have grown during a given time period, which is usually a year. Policymakers also attempt to forecast projected price increases and make adjustments as needed to stabilize any undesirable scenario.

However, forecast trustworthiness and estimation details are critical in public acceptance of these projections. In the analytic series, PIDE's inflation forecasting models predict inflation of 11.5 percent for the first half of FY2023. Compared to other institutions, PIDE's forecast is significantly higher and is in line with the results of the Survey of Industry experts, who expect inflation to remain in double digits for the next two fiscal years and will only be back in the single-digit in FY2024. GDP growth is also expected to remain between 4.0 to 4.7 percent for the next several years.

To reduce inflation in Pakistan, a multi-pronged approach that addresses the core causes of inflation is required. These strategies include monetary policy tightening, fiscal discipline, price restrictions, increased productivity, currency rate management, and import substitution. Tightening monetary policy entails raising interest rates and tightening lending restrictions to reduce money supply growth and control inflation. Fiscal discipline is raising tax revenue, cutting wasteful spending, and enacting structural reforms to enhance economic growth and lessen inflationary pressures. Price restrictions entail controlling the cost of vital items to keep them low and relieve customers.

Improving productivity through investments in infrastructure, education, and technology may enhance the supply of products and services, lowering inflationary pressures. Exchange rate management entails controlling the exchange rate to limit volatility and avoid unexpected devaluations. Import substitution is the practice of encouraging domestic production of products and services to lower inflation.

(Author Amna Khan: MPhil scholar in Economics and Finance in (PIDE) & Co-Author Shoaib Aijaz: MPhil scholar and Research Assistant (PIDE)).

BS in Balochistan

BS (Bachelor of Studies) is a four-year-semester-wise educational programme sought after in universities for decades. BS has been successfully in government boys and girls degree colleges since the last five years. Only regular students are eligible for the programme.

The abolition of BA/BSc and the introduction of BS in government degree colleges may have disappointed private students and damaged the economy of the University of Balochistan, but the initiative has given poor students an opportunity to get quality and affordable education at their doorsteps. Although, it is a Herculean task for the provincial government and the department concerned to make the programme more effective and fruitful in limited financial resources, the programme has increased the importance and greatness of government colleges and professors manifold. Generally, poor students with low marks in matriculation get admission in government colleges. On the other hand, rich and intelligent students with high marks in matriculation prefer to study in Cadet, Residential and such other expensive semi-governmental or private colleges.

In public, there is a wrong impression that state-run colleges are unproductive and government professors are incompetent, but reality is the other way round. Indeed, college lecturers and professors are recruited through Balochistan Public Service Commission (BPSC); while, semi-governmental and private colleges recruit their academic staff on their own without sailing through BPSC. However, the infrastructure and study environment of Cadet, Residential and private colleges are far better and satisfactory than that of government colleges: these colleges are free from political interference, student unions and have the power of hire and fire. Political interference has put the attendance, studies and morality of college students in danger, and damaged construction works, transparency and accountability in government colleges to irreparable extent. Due to political interference, the principals of government colleges cannot take action against absent students, lazy professors and faint-hearted clerks.

In government colleges, the attendance of intermediate students is alarmingly disappointing. Apart from poverty, parents' negligence and collective social nonsense are also the main causes behind this alarming plight.

Contrary to the intermediate, the question papers, exams, paper-marking and result of the BS programme are conducted by the colleges and professors concerned. In BS programme, colleges and professors are all in all. BS students are bound to attend classes and submit assignments regularly. BS programme enhances the writing power, creativity, critical thinking and confidence of students. The programme makes students master not only of one subject, but prepares them well for competitive and administrative exams too. BS programme produces quality rather than quantity.

The programme is thoroughly free from cheating culture, absenteeism and rote-learning system. The programme also compels professors to enhance their studies, skills and teaching methods. The programme makes government colleges and professors independent. Government colleges in Balochistan need more and more buildings, funding and professors to keep the programme afloat. In order to eradicate cheating culture, absenteeism and rote-learning system from government colleges, the intermediate (FA/FSc & ICS) needs to be shaped in line with BS programme. College professors are competent, regular and honest. If college professors can work well under the auspice of Balochistan Board of Intermediate & Secondary Education (BBISE) and University of Balochistan (UOB), then how they cannot do the same under the leadership of worthy college principals?

Balochistan is the most backward and illiterate province of the country. The province needs independent colleges and decision-making professors. So, Believe in college professors. Balochistani students cannot afford expensive private education. BS programme in the government degree colleges of Balochistan is not less than a blessing.

(Prof. Fazal Tanha Gharshin teaches at Govt Boys Degree College Pishin.)

Analysis

Prof. Fazal Tanha Gharshin

Africa Day 2023 Round Table on African Continental Free Trade Area

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The African Missions in Pakistan, in collaboration with the Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East & Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies (ISSI), organized a Round Table Discussion on African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The Speakers included: Dean of African Group/Ambassador of Morocco, H.E. Mohammad Karmoune; Additional Secretary (Africa) MoFA, Mr. Javed Ahmad Umerani; H.E. Wankele Mene, Secretary General of African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) in Accra, Ghana (through Zoom); Director General ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood; Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BoG ISSI; and Director CAMEA, Ms. Amina Khan.

The Heads of African Missions in Pakistan and Heads of Pakistan Missions in Africa also spoke on the occasion. Senior Officers from the Foreign Office and Ministry of Commerce, academics, area specialists, and members of the business community and students participated in the event.

In his keynote address, Ambassador Mohammed Karmoune, said that Africa has a significant role to play in driving inclusive growth and sustain-

able development globally. AfCFTA is the common will of the 54 African countries to build a common market for goods and services, unlock the potential for the development of the Continent, and increase the inter-state trade among African countries.

Director General ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, in his welcome remarks, stated that for several years now, Pakistan's engagement with Africa continues to grow steadily. In this regard, the "Engage Africa" policy being pursued by Pakistan seeks to expand its diplomatic footprint in Africa and forge a robust economic partnership with the Continent. The Ministry of Commerce's "Look Africa" initiative has been instrumental in the convening of three Trade and Investment Conferences in key economic centers in Africa and has led to an increase in two-way trade. He added that as the process of integration and economic development accelerates in Africa, there are vast opportunities to be tapped for both African nations and their international partners including Pakistan.

Director CAMEA Amina Khan, while giving her views, said that AfCFTA represents significant growth potential for the African economy, as it establishes a structure for fostering regional economic integration, growth, and progress throughout the Continent.

The agreement has the potential to offer Pakistan fresh avenues to enhance its trade and investment connections with African nations, thus generating economic relations.

Mr. Javed Ahmad Umerani, Additional Secretary (Africa) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, underlined how AfCFTA represents a historic milestone, uniting the African nations under a single market, and creating a platform for economic growth, job creation, and sustainable development.

While expressing his views H.E. Wankele Mene, Secretary General AfCFTA Secretariat, stated that AfCFTA is an incredible tool for the implementation of the vision of an integrated Africa as articulated by the founding fathers of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). He went on to say that since the inception of the AfCFTA, significant progress has been made as forty-seven countries have ratified their agreements establishing the AfCFTA and implementation is in full swing.

During his vote of thanks, Ambassador of Mauritius H.E. Rashidally Sobadar said that Africa holds a substantial reservoir of young people, possessing about 30 percent of the world's mineral resources and agricultural land which offers a lot of opportunities for Pakistan.



In his concluding remarks, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BoG ISSI highlighted the need to understand how Pakistan can benefit from the opportunities emerging through

AfCFTA and stressed the importance of Pakistan's deeper engagement with the African Continent through its 'Engage Africa' Policy.

The event was part of the commem-

oration of Africa Day 2023 in Pakistan as well as continuous efforts to realize the full potential of Pakistan-Africa economic relations in the context of pivot to geo-economics as well.

Graduation ceremony Inspire Pakistan held

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The first graduation ceremony for the year 2023 was held at the Urban Cohesion Hub in Rawalpindi, where 132 Afghan and Pakistani students received certificates on completion of different courses including computers, English language, beautician training, tailoring and culinary arts.

With the participation of Italy, the United States of American and UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, graduates expressed their gratitude for the support to the center as well as their teachers for providing illuminating knowledge for a brighter future. Participants also received a livelihoods kit to jumpstart their careers, including sewing machines for tailors and stove tops and a set of pots and utensils for budding chefs.

The chief guest, UNHCR Senior Protection Officer, Ms. Nikola Errington, emphasized that dreams can be achieved with the right direction and pat. She added that the livelihood train-



ings conducted at the Urban Cohesion Hub with the generous support of Italy, promote social cohesion by bringing refugees together with their host communities in Pakistan.

The guest of honour, Mr. Arif Oryakhail, representing the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), underscored that the hard work of graduates from the hub courses will contribute for a better future for themselves as well as their communi-

ties. He added that teachers' motivation toward their students throughout the course has also encouraged learners to reach their potential.

On this Graduation Ceremony Day, Co-founder and CEO Inspire Pakistan Mr. Qaiser Siddiqui, mentioned the patrons encouraged graduates to find and boldly pursue their passions constantly. He further added that not only education but learning and knowledge brings wisdom. He said that to

provide solid foundation to kids at joyful space, there is hard work and efforts of the teachers behind these kids good upbringing.

In closing, Ms. Zahra Khalid, Project Manager paid her gratitude to the donor UNHCR for making such strides day-in and day-out endeavor's and efforts. She further thanked CEO Inspire Pakistan and entire team for enabling students to become competitive and productive.

Inspire Pakistan with the support of UNHCR, established the Urban Cohesion Hub at Rawalpindi where it provides need-based services to Afghan refugees and host communities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad in health, education, vocational skills, legal support, protection and recreational activities for peaceful co-existence and social cohesion. Inspire Pakistan and UNHCR have been working together to serve refugees and host communities by empowering their youth through education in protecting their right to education and also through provision of protection services.

Spiritual zikr mahfil held



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: A spiritual zikr mahfil was held at the residence of Idris Selman and Shamriz Selman, a prominent religious figure of Oldham. Nadeem Iqbal-Khalifa Zahid Azhar and other young people were included. On this occasion, the chief guest Sahibzade Pir Faizul Hassan Sarwari Qadri said that whether there is terrorism, floods, earthquakes or any other problems in Pakistan, our forces of Pakistan are the first to advance. We sleep peacefully because of the sacrifices of our army. The role of our army is important for the security of the country. Expressing full solidarity, I appeal to overseas Pakistanis to strengthen Pakistan by sending foreign exchange. Finally, Sahibzade Pir Faizul Hassan Sarwari Qadri offered a special prayer for Pakistan's security, stability and development and for the martyrs of Pakistan.

Uzbekistan-Italy: reaching a new level of multifaceted Partnership

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: On June 7-9, 2023, it will take place the official visit of the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev to Italy.

This visit will be a key event in the history of Uzbek-Italian relations that were established on March 24, 1992. Over the past 31 years, a solid foundation for mutually beneficial and prospective cooperation has been laid, a trusting political dialogue has been established—four high-level visits took place—two to Italy and two to Uzbekistan.

Uzbekistan and Italy successfully interact within the framework of international organizations such as the UN, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and others, as well as at the inter-regional level in the "Central Asia-Italy" formats.

Inter-parliamentary ties are consistently developing. Since 2011, parliamentary groups of the Legislative Chamber and the Senate have been operating in the Oliy Majlis (Parliament) for cooperation with the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of the Italian Parliament. The Italy-Central Asia Friendship Group operates in the Italian Parliament.

Exchanges at the level of ministries and agencies are acquiring a new dynamic. On the



basis of plans and "road maps" of the partnership, interdepartmental interaction is carried out.

An effective mechanism has been established for regular political consultations between the foreign ministries of the two countries.

Bilateral trade and economic relations have visibly intensified in recent years. As is well known, Italy occupies a leading position in the world in the fields of technology, engineering and industry and other sectors, and therefore is of considerable interest to Uzbekistan. In turn, our

country today is becoming an increasingly promising economic partner thanks to ongoing reforms to liberalize the economy, create favorable conditions for doing business and investment cooperation. Repeatedly held Uzbek-Italian business forums also demonstrated a high mutual interest in expanding industrial cooperation and trade relations. Today, there are all the necessary legal and institutional foundations for this: the bilateral legal framework includes several important agreements in the economic sphere. In addition, new documents are being developed.

The Uzbek-Italian Intergovernmental Working Group on Trade, Economic and Industrial Cooperation and Export Credits and the Italian-Uzbek Chamber of Commerce are successfully functioning. In October 2020, a branch of the Association of Italian Industry "Confindustria" was opened in our country, productive relations were established with such organizations as "SACE", "SIMEST", "Cassa di Depositi e Prestiti", "ICE", "AICE", "Unioncamere" and

other industry and regional associations.

In 2022, the volume of mutual trade with Italy amounted to \$381 million. In January-April this year, this figure exceeded \$155 million.

54 Italian companies are successfully operating in our country. Among them are Danileli, with which the production facilities of a metallurgical plant in Tashkent were modernized, Pietro Fiorentini and Terranova, which is implementing a project for the production of smart gas meters, Opera Srl is a partner in the production of saffron and others.

Currently, a package of new projects is being worked out with Italy in the fields of energy, metallurgy, building materials, horticulture, healthcare, hygiene and others.

"Uzbekistan will become an increasingly important reference point for Europe due to the growth of its geopolitical position in Central Asia. As one of the first countries to establish ties with Uzbekistan, Italy should capitalize on the significant progress made in the



region, which will soon open up new opportunities thanks to the announced privatization of strategic enterprises and the development of Uzbekistan's rich mineral base. Italy should take advantage of Uzbekistan's openness to the world and pay close attention to the country's emerging commercial opportunities for foreign investors. Their implementation will require assistance from the authorities and local investors, since private partnerships are also a priority form of attracting transnational investments. This process, in turn, will help to maintain and increase the Italian presence in this strategically important region, which is rapidly renewing, while maintaining its beauty of the Silk Road heritage," notes Federico Grandesso, a well-known expert in Italy.

A special place in Uzbek-Italian relations is occupied by cultural and humanitarian cooperation, which has deep historical roots. Our aspirations are based on a long and close historical interconnectedness. For example, through the beautiful city of Samarkand in the heart

of the Great Silk Road, sung as the "Rome of the East", for many centuries the roads leading to Rome passed.

The legendary Venetian traveler Marco Polo in his "Book of the Diversity of the World" (XIII century) called the no less famous Bukhara—"the majestic and best city" of the region. Today, the intercultural dialogue between Uzbekistan and Italy is developing much more intensively. Cooperation has been established in the fields of science and sports, art and education.

To date, branches of the Turin Polytechnic University and the University of Pisa are successfully operating in Tashkent. Uzbekistan and Italy are making concerted efforts to support innovation and youth entrepreneurship, and are considering launching a joint program to support youth startups in Uzbekistan.

It is worth mentioning separately the cooperation in the healthcare sector. According to experts, Italy has rich experience in the field of medical tourism, and Uzbekistan has the neces-

sary potential to play a leading role in medicine in Central Asia.

Uzbek culture and art are well known in Italy. In 2018, at the XIX International Film Festival of Asian Films "Asiatica" in Rome, the film "Tohir and Zuhra" was awarded a special diploma for its contribution to the development of world cinema and the promotion of universal values. In 2014, the National Association of the traditional Uzbek type of wrestling—Kurash was established in Italy.

In turn, representatives of Italy are traditional participants in the Sharq Taronalari International Music Festival in Samarkand, where they won the Grand Prix (2007), 2nd and 3rd places (2005 and 2009), as well as a special prize (2019).

Thus, Uzbekistan and Italy have rich experience and solid foundations for further building up mutually beneficial cooperation and productive dialogue. In this context, the upcoming visit of the head of our state to Italy will be an important step in bringing a reliable multifaceted partnership to a new, higher level.



Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
41,686.46	42,142.71	
Day's High	Day's Low:	
42,307.11	41,648.83	
Index Value	Change	
4,809,918,735	-456.25	
Percentage	Time	
-1.08%	8 Jun, 2023 5:00 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
7,599.74	-24.60	
Percentage	Time	
-0.32%	8 Jun, 4:35 pm GMT+1	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
33,773.60	+108.58	
Percentage	Time	
+0.32%	8 Jun, 12:22 pm GMT-4	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
31,641.27	-272.47	
Percentage	Time	
-0.85%	8 Jun, 3:15 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	202	204
Bahrain Dinar	762.38	770.38
Canadian Dollar	227	230
China Yuan	40.28	40.68
Danish Krone	41.09	41.49
Euro	319	322
Hong Kong Dollar	36.55	36.9
Indian Rupee	3.46	3.57
Japanese Yen	1.98	2.06
Kuwaiti Dinar	931.55	940.55
Malaysian Ringgit	62.19	62.79
New Zealand \$	174.18	176.18
Norwegians Krone	25.88	26.18
Omani Riyal	744.53	752.53
Qatari Riyal	78.72	79.42
Saudi Riyal	79.5	80.3
Singapore Dollar	220	222
Swedish Korona	26.36	26.66
Swiss Franc	315.34	317.84
Thai Bhat	8.23	8.38
U.A.E Dirham	82.6	83.7
UK Pound Sterling	371	375
US Dollar	300	303

Government should determine the working hours of the markets in consultation: President ICCI

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that the government should consult with the business community to determine the working hours of the markets. Imposing a unilateral policy in difficult business conditions will not be beneficial. The business community supports the measures taken to save energy, but without consultation, the measures will harm the country's economy. Construction and repair works have been started in the markets of Islamabad. With the efforts of Islamabad Chamber, CDA has decided to carry out development work, Market Committees should cooperate with Chamber and CDA to make the project successful.

He expressed these views on Thursday while addressing a function organized in honor of Abdul Ghaffar Chaudhry, former Vice President Chamber and General Secretary of Trade Welfare Association G81. On this occasion, construction works in markets, problems faced by traders were also discussed.

The President of Islamabad Chamber said that as the President of Islamabad Chamber, solving the problems of the businessmen of



Islamabad is my first priority. He said that with the efforts of the Chamber, our long-standing demand for development works in the markets of Islamabad has been fulfilled. The work has started to solve all the problems that we mentioned to the Chairman CDA.

He said that it is our misfortune that out of 24 crore people, only 34 lakh are taxpayers, can they bear the burden of such a large popula-

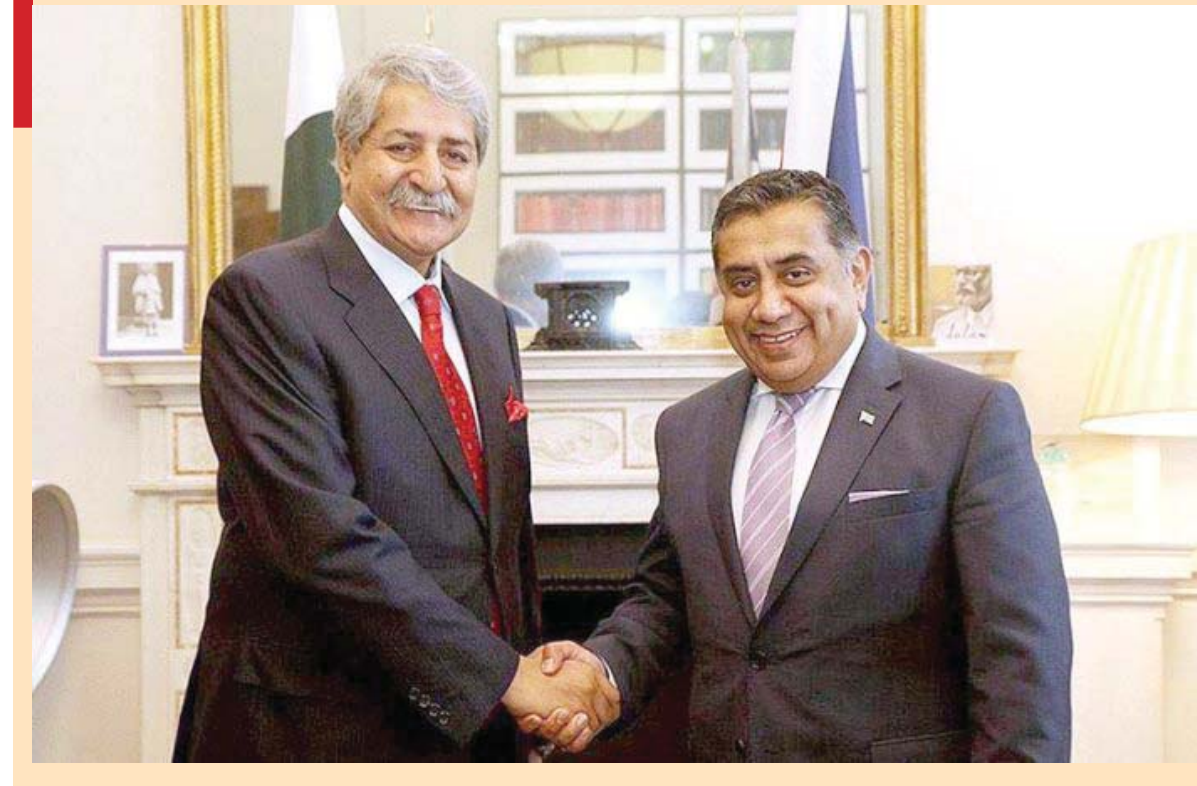
tion, the government needs to take steps in this regard. This is what I demanded in my meeting with the Finance Minister that instead of putting more tax burden on the people included in the tax net in the upcoming budget, the tax net should be increased. The Finance Minister assured us that he would seriously consider our budget proposals. He said that the business community needs unity in difficult

situations. He said that under the energy saving policy, the government should consult the business community on the closure of shops at 8 o'clock. If the office hours are changed to 7 to 3 instead of 8 to 5, then there will be no need to force anyone to close the shop at 8 o'clock. Our policies should be designed to facilitate, not influence, the business community.

Speaking on this occasion, former Vice President Chamber and General Secretary of Trade Welfare Association G81, Abdul Ghaffar Chaudhry, while appreciating the 7 months of work of President Islamabad Chamber, said that representation in CDA Board is an important step. Projects like construction of hospital, school and expo center by the chamber are of historical importance. President Trade Welfare Association G81 Nasir Chaudhry said that I am grateful to the President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce on behalf of the entire business community that the way he has made efforts to solve our problems is unprecedented. Former ICCI President Zafar Bakhtawari, Khalid Chaudhry, Babar Chaudhry, Imtiaz Abbasi, Nisar Mirza, Zarif Ahmed Khan, Shujaat Ali Sha, Saeed Bhatti, Muhammad Hussain and others also participated in the meeting.

Productive meeting

LONDON: Minister of State Foreign Commonwealth & Development Affairs UK, Lord Tariq Ahmad and Federal Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar hold a productive meeting in London to discuss the current political and economic situation in Pakistan as well as trade and investment opportunities between both countries.



ACCA proposes budget measures for tax year 2023-24

Bureau Report

LAHORE: ACCA (the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) has unveiled its budget proposals for the fiscal year 2023-24, highlighting the need for significant shifts in Pakistan's economic policies to tackle pressing challenges. The proposals aim to address issues such as population growth, climate change, agricultural disincentives, and food security concerns. ACCA emphasizes that to keep policies and their implementation consistent, the government, political parties, and business groups should sign a 'charter of the economy' for the next 10-15 years. This long-term commitment will provide stability and foster sustainable economic growth.

The budget proposals suggest a multi-faceted approach to improving the balance of payments, reducing imports, boosting local consumption, lowering inflation, and increasing exports. ACCA underscores the importance of consistent economic policies, leveraging indigenous resources and talent, and embracing a new economic model.

In line with these objectives, ACCA recommends sustainable reduction of non-essential imports and identifying import substitutes to lower the import bill. Efforts to promote eco-friendly energy sources, implement daylight savings, and reduce business hours and working days can help decrease reliance on oil and gas imports.

FPCCI stresses looking into alternatives and cut in policy rate for containing inflation



Spokesman Report

KARACHI: The Policy Advisory Board of FPCCI strongly urges that inflation is cost-pushed and policy rates have proved to be an ineffective tool to control inflation. In any case, the core inflation is still lower than the policy rates and a 100 basis points (bps) reduction in the policy rate is proposed in the upcoming monetary policy committee meeting.

Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheik, President FPCCI, said that the central bank's policy of tackling inflation through policy rates is playing havoc with industrial and business activities. SBP needs to classify the inflation into cost-pushed and demand-pulled parts; and, decide in favour of the overall benefit to the economy rather than keep pursuing a failing strategy.

The recent Consumer Price Index (CPI) data for May 2023 reveals general inflation has touched concerning 38% while core inflation stood at 20%. Pakistan has been facing a persistent challenge of high inflation due to supply-side bottlenecks, rupee depreciation and multiple rounds of surge energy prices in line with IMF conditionalities. Despite the cumulative rate hike of 1,125 bps from 9.75% to 21% between March 2022 and April 2023, the price growth momentum remains high during the said period. Raising the policy rate has proven to be ineffective in curbing the persistent inflationary pressure while exacerbating unemployment.

Telecom industry is the key to the nation's prosperity

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Azfar Ahsan, Founder & CEO Nutshell Group; former Minister of State & Chairman Board of Investment (BoI); opined on the urgency of acknowledging the crucial and integral role that the Telecommunications/Cellular industry plays as an enabler for the growth of Pakistan's economy.

Reiterating the need to highlight the pivotal role of Telecom, especially just before the announcement of the budget, he said; "If Pakistan wishes to benefit the information technology expert market needs to provide growth environment telecommunications industry which is the basics infrastructure of the IT industry. But due to being heavily taxed in the world with GST at 19.5%, additional withholding tax at 15%, and corporate tax at 34%, we have not only hindered the rise of the Telecommunications industry. Which adversely impacted the entire trajectory of the digitization of the economy and



IT-related exports. It is important to bring this issue to light and have the stakeholders deliberate on the sheer importance of what needs to be done and how?"

Azfar elaborated on how heavy taxation is hampering growth not only for the Telecom sector but also for Digital, IT, and other related industries. "The future job market is in technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML), and the Telecom sector provides the most effective infrastructure."

After the US, UK, and Brazil, Pakistan is

the 4th largest nation in the world contributing to the IT freelancing segment with an encouraging USD 2 billion in the exporter's club, and Telecom is the vehicle for the route to the membership of billion dollar exporters club.

"Pakistan has about 60% of its population in the 15-29 age group, representing enormous human and knowledge capital. With more than 2,000 IT companies and call centers, 300,000 English-speaking IT professionals with expertise in current and emerging IT products and technologies, 13 Software Technology Parks, and around 20,000 annual IT graduates and engineers, the country's statistics beg the question: why, pray tell, a meager USD 2 billion of IT exports?"

The former Chairman BoI concluded on a rather somber note, that Telecommunications is an integrated and enabling industry, and its decline or collapse will not be an isolated event. It will create a domino effect that may sink many others.

PAFLA calls for support for freelancers in upcoming budget

News Desk

KARACHI: As a representative of more than three million freelancers working in the country, the Pakistan Freelancers Association (PAFLA) is all set to host a conference titled "The Future of Work (FoW): Collaborating with Freelancers, Influencers, and Entrepreneurs for Success in the Digital Age" in Karachi on June 17, 2023. The event, which is the first of its kind to take place in the country, aims to highlight the contributions of the local freelancer community to the national exchequer

and the economy while calling for more conducive policies in the upcoming budget.

Besides speeches from esteemed personalities from various industries, the event will also feature presentations, panel discussions, fire-side chats, and networking sessions for attendees. Some of the most prominent invitees include the youngest MOS and CCNA professional sisters Ayesha and Areesh Fatima along with Salman Noman, the first YouTuber from Pakistan to receive the Diamond Play button, and multimedia visu-

al tech artist Ayesha Mubarak Ali who was recently featured on the prestigious Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia list.

Speaking on the development, Ibrahim Amin, Chairman & Co-Founder, PAFLA stated; "Pakistan's freelancer community continues to actively tackle substantial challenges and elevate the nation's standing as a global power hub for technology-based exports. We are proud to offer these aspiring professionals the platform and the resources they need to progress and achieve unprecedented success in times to come."

Adding her thoughts, Ayesha Mubarak Ali, Pakistan's most recent feature on the Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia list noted; "Pakistan has no shortage of talented individuals who can deliver high-quality products and services even with limited resources at their disposal. For Tufail Ahmed Khan, the CEO and his team at PAFLA to highlight these achievements and raise a prudent voice for this community through the Future of Work conference is an initiative that needs to be lauded for what it is trying to accomplish."

A delegation of RECA DHA met Ayesha Ghos Pasha



Asad Hashmi

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of RECA DHA met the Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Dr. Ayesha Ghos Pasha on yesterday and discussed their reservations on the proposed tax on the real estate industry in the upcoming budget. Did the RECA delegation further inform the Minister of State for Finance of their

concerns On this occasion, Minister of State for Finance Ayesha Ghos Pasha assured the full cooperation of the government and said that chartered off demand of the real estate industry will be considered.

On this occasion, RECA General Secretary Adil Nawaz Bhatti presented a commemorative shield to the Minister of State and thanked him.

PPL funds library renovation at JPMC, Karachi



Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL), one of the leading National E&P Companies and largest corporate donors, has recently funded the repair and renovation of a 66-year-old library at Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC). This support aims to improve teaching and

training facilities at JPMC. JPMC is a public sector hospital in Karachi established in its current form in 1963, providing much needed healthcare for the under privileged and poor citizens. The institution also provides higher medical education, training and research for enhancing the capacity and skills of the doctors.

Steve Smith, Pat Cummins star as Australia dominate WTC final

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Steve Smith scored his 31st Test century before Australia captain Pat Cummins sparked India's collapse in the World Test Championship (WTC) final on Thursday.

Smith, 95 not out overnight, followed team-mate Travis Head in going to three figures with 121 in a first-innings total of 469 at The Oval.

Fast bowler Pat Cummins, in his 50th Test, then removed opposing skipper Rohit Sharma to initiate India's second-day slump.

Ajinkya Rahane (29 not out), struck some painful blows on the glove, held firm with Ravindra Jadeja (48) after India had been reduced to 71-4.

But India were 151-5 at stumps, a huge deficit of 318 runs.

Rohit was plumb lbw for 15 to a full-length ball from Cummins, who had close figures of 1-36 in nine overs.

Four balls later, India were 30-2 when Shubman Gill (13) was bowled playing no shot to Scott Boland after being deceived by a sharp off-cutter.

England's Stuart Broad tried to rile Australia before the WTC Final by saying he hoped Cheteshwar Pujara and Virat Kohli kept Cummins's men in the field for a long time ahead of next week's first Ashes Test at Edgbaston.



But both senior India batsmen fell for 14 on Thursday.

Pujara was bowled leaving a delivery from all-rounder Cameron Green and Kohli was undone by a spiteful, lifting ball from Mitchell Starc that took the shoulder of the bat, with Smith holding an excellent leaping catch above his head at second slip.

Left-hander Jadeja defied Australia in an aggressive 51-ball knock featuring seven fours and a six.

But he succumbed to off-spinner Nathan Lyon, edging a well-flighted

and turning delivery to slip in a tame end to a stand of 71 with Rahane.

"We are in a really good spot so hopefully we can get a few more wickets in the morning," Boland told Sky Sports.

"The pitch is going a little bit up and down so it should be harder for the India batters tomorrow (Friday)."

India were facing a potentially huge Australian first-innings total with Smith and Head (163) at the crease.

But their pacemen struck as Australia lost four wickets for 41 runs, including Head and Smit, to slip from 361-3

to 402-7.

India bowled out Australia after lunch, fast bowler Mohammed Siraj taking 4-108 from 28.3 overs.

Smith reached three figures in the opening over on Thursday, joining compatriot Steve Waugh on seven Test hundreds in England.

Among non-England batters, only Australia great Don Bradman, with 11 centuries, has scored more.

Smith's 31st Test century left him 12th on the all-time list.

Head extended his first overseas Test century to 150 but a short ball proved his undoing when he tried to whip Siraj legside and gloved a catch to wicket-keeper Srikrish Bharat.

Head's dismissal ended an impressive stand of 285 runs with Smith after they had come together with Australia in trouble at 76-3.

Shardul Thakur then captured the prized wicket of Smit, who inside-edged an outswinger into his stumps to the delight of the large India contingent in a crowd of over 23,000.

The WTC is the only major men's cricket trophy Australia have yet to win.

India are appearing in their second WTC final, having lost to New Zealand in the inaugural 2021 showpiece match in Southampton.

Pakistan Sports Journalists Federation restored

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Pakistan Sports Journalists Federation (PSJF) on Wednesday has been restored to protect the rights of sports journalists and to raise their voice at every forum.

Senior sports journalists Iqbal Harper (INI, Weekly Tasawwar), M Babar (Nawa-i-Waqt Digital) and Abdul Qayyum (Daily Ausaf) have been appointed as president, secretary and finance secretary respectively for a four-year term from 2023 to 2026.

Newly-appointed President Iqbal Harper said that the officials and bodies for Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh and Balochistan will be announced in phases during the next few weeks. The country-wide membership campaign of PSJF will start from June 15, he added.

Disqualified Japanese player Miyu Kato becomes French Open champion



Sports Desk

LAHORE: Japan's Miyu Kato became a French Open champion on Thursday, four days after she was controversially disqualified from the women's doubles for accidentally hitting a ball girl.

Miyu Kato and her German partner Tim Puetz defeated Bianca Andreescu and Michael Venus 4-6, 6-4, 10-6 in the mixed doubles final at French Open.

"It has been challenging mentally in the last few days after my unjust disqualification from the women's doubles," Kato told the Court Philippe Chatrier crowd, reading from a prepared statement.

"Thanks to all the players for their heartfelt messages of support. I used that positive energy on court here today."

"I am now looking for a positive result to my appeal so I can reclaim my prize money, points and my reputation."

Puetz said he hoped the title would help Miyu Kato after the drama of the default.

"I hope this is redemption for you after what happened. The support you received was well deserved."

The 28-year-old Kato and her Indonesian teammate Aldila Sutjiadi were defaulted on Sunday after a gentle lob from the Japanese player left a ballgirl in tears and shaking.

The drama happened when the Japanese player Miyu Kato and her Indonesian partner were leading 3-1 in the second set after opponents Marie Bouzkova and Sara Sorribes Tormo had claimed the opener.

Standing at the net, Miyu Kato gently backhanded a ball in the direction of the ballgirl standing at the opposite end of Court 14 in an apparent effort to help the flow of the match.

Instead, it hit the youngster on the back of the head.

Miyu Kato, 28, immediately apologised to the girl who was crying and shaking.

Initially, the pair were handed only a warning by the chair umpire but their opponents Marie Bouzkova and Sara Sorribes Tormo protested and urged the tournament supervisor to look again at the incident.

Kato and Sutjiadi were then disqualified. Miyu Kato also had to forfeit her prize money.

"I hope the ballgirl is OK and I hope we get to play Marie and Sara again," said Kato.

Footballer Amina Hanif opens up about wearing hijab on pitch

Pakistan midfielder Amina Hanif who is currently representing Chesham United has opened up about her experience playing football while wearing a hijab (a headscarf).

"I used to think I stand out so badly wearing a hijab, and that lowered my confidence and distracted me from my game," Amina told The Guardian.

She shared, initially, it was difficult for her to play with the hijab but things got better with time.

"After a while, something just clicked and I stopped caring about pretty much everything. It feels really good when nothing affects you," she said.

Amina, who recently made her debut for Pakistan, wants to be an inspiration for young girls playing football.

"I like being different – the hijab means I stand out on the pitch more. The only challenge I have nowadays is readjusting my headscarf after heading the ball or hiding my pins from the referee before the game. I've been offered a Nike hijab, but I'm counting on my own becoming iconic," she said.



Anoosha Nasir all set for ACC Women's Emerging Teams Asia Cup

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: 17-year-old Anoosha Nasir is making waves with her exceptional skills and stellar performances. Her recent achievements in the ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup 2023 in South Africa have gathered attention and established her as a promising talent in the sport. With an impressive tally of 10 wickets from five matches, Anoosha has proved her mettle on the international stage. As she gears up for the ACC Women's Emerging Teams Asia Cup in Hong Kong later this month, her presence in the team adds depth and diversity to Pakistan's lineup.

Hailing from Karachi, Anoosha started her cricketing journey from Skills 2 Shine U18 T20 Women Cricket Championship 2019-20, which was held in Lahore. Playing for Northern Renegades, Anoosha finished at the top spot in the bowling charts with six wickets from four wickets and led her side to the final of the tournament.

Representing PCB Challengers in the Pakistan Cup Women's One-Day Cup 2021-22 held in Karachi from 9 to

21 September 2021, Anoosha bagged 14 wickets from seven matches which included one five-wicket haul. This was the only five-fer in the tournament and she finished on second place in the bowling charts.

In order to choose the squad for the first-ever ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup, the PCB arranged a Women's U19 T20 Tournament in August 2022. The tournament, involving six teams, took place from August 13 to 22 in Muridke and Sheikhpura. Anoosha, playing for the Sindh Women U19 team as a right-handed batter, scored 65 runs from three innings. Her impressive performance included eight boundaries, and she also took three wickets.

Three months later, Anoosha represented PCB Challengers in phase two of the T20 Women's Cricket Tournament, where she took five wickets from three outings. She registered her best figures of four for 24 in the match against Dynamites on 6 December at the LCCA Ground.

Anoosha then turned out for Strikers in the T20 phase of the Pakistan Cup Women's Cricket Tournament 2022-23,



where she bagged five wickets from two outings in the first phase held in Karachi.

Talking to PCB Digital on the sidelines of the camp for the ACC Women's Emerging Teams Asia Cup 2023 in Karachi, Anoosha narrated her journey and said, "My family has been a great support to me, specially my father who stays with me whenever I am practicing. This gives me a lot of encouragement to play this game and perform."

I had this feeling inside me from the beginning that I have to play cricket, but it was Sana Mir who inspired me to take this game.

Wicketkeeper tricks Haider Ali to dismiss him in comical fashion

A Sports

LONDON: Pakistan batter Haider Ali was stumped out in a bizarre manner, thanks to the shrewdness of the wicketkeeper, during the Vitality Blast match between Derbyshire Falcons and Birmingham Bears on Wednesday.

The dismissal happened in the 11th over of Derbyshire's chase when Haider Ali was batting at 48 from 33 balls. The right-hander failed to connect with Danny Briggs' overpitched delivery. While Birmingham's wicketkeeper Alex Davies failed to grab the ball initially, Haider Ali tried to snatch a quick single



assuming that the wicketkeeper was not in possession of the ball. But to his dismay, Davies dislodged the bails as soon as

he was out of his crease.

Later, Derbyshire won the match by six wickets thanks to a match-winning knock by

captain Leus du Plooy, who scored 66 from 25 balls.

Notwithstanding the comical fashion in which he departed, Haider Ali, otherwise, played a handsome knock and gave a superb start to Derbyshire's chase of massive 204 runs.

He stitched a 95-run opening stand with Luis Reece, who scored 57 from 38 balls.

It is pertinent to mention that the 22-year-old has scored 499 runs in 33 T20s for Pakistan at an average of 18.48. He struggled with his form in the recent Pakistan Super League season 8, playing for Karachi Kings.

Haider Ali was also a part of the Pakistan side which finished

as runners-up in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2022.

The youngster joined Mickey Arthur's Derbyshire County Cricket Club in April for the County Championship 2023 and Vitality Blast.

"I'm very excited, it's my first time playing county cricket and I love the coaching of Mickey Arthur," said Haider Ali at the time of his deal with the club.

"I think it's difficult for anyone to play all formats, but I'm lucky to have the opportunity and I'm so excited to get started. It has been a dream of mine to play under Mickey, as soon as he called I said 'I'm ready to play county cricket for Derbyshire.'"

Barcelona react to Lionel Messi's move to Inter Miami

A Sports

LAHORE: FC Barcelona on Thursday, issued a statement after star footballer Lionel Messi reportedly joined Major League Soccer (MLS) side Inter Miami despite receiving a "proposal" to return to his former club.

In the latest release, the current La Liga champions wished Lionel Messi good luck in his future endeavours in a league with fewer demands.

"On Monday, June 5, Jorge Messi, the player's father and representative, informed Club President Joan Laporta of the player's decision to join Inter Miami, despite having been presented with a proposal from Barça, in consideration of the desire of both FC Barcelona and Lionel Messi for him to once again wear Blaugrana," the state-

ment read.

"President Laporta understood and respected Messi's decision to want to compete in a league with fewer demands, further away from the spotlight and the pressure he has been subject to in recent years.

"Both Joan Laporta and Jorge Messi also agreed to work together to promote a proper tribute from Barca fans to honor a footballer who has been, is, and always will be beloved by Barca."

Meanwhile, Lionel Messi, who was in link with Saudi Arabia and Barcelona for his potential move, admitted that he wanted to return to his former club but did not want to experience what he experienced in the past.

"I really wanted to return, I was very excited to be able to return, but, on the other hand, after having experienced what I

experienced when I left, I didn't want to be in the same situation again. I didn't want to leave my future in someone else's hands," Messi told Spanish media on Wednesday.

"Although I heard that it was said that La Liga had accepted everything and that everything was fine for me to return, there were still many other things that had to happen."

"I wanted to make my own decision and that's why I didn't return to Barca. Although I would have loved it, it couldn't be. "Hopefully one day I can contribute something to the club and help because Barca is a club that I love as I always said."

It is worth mentioning here Lionel Messi parted ways with Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) after their last Ligue 1 2022/23 fixture against Clermont Foot.

