



**Accountability must be held without discrimination: Irfan Qadir**

Advisor to the Prime Minister on Accountability Irfan Qadir has said that accountability should be held without any discrimination and no one is exempted from accountability. He expressed these views while addressing a press conference at the Governor's House, here on Saturday. (Details on Page 8)



**Siraj says people to hold politicians accountable for looting Pakistan**

Jamat-e-Islami Emir Sirj-ul-Haq said on Saturday all the politicians had looted Pakistan and now the people would hold them accountable. In a statement issued, he said that the test tube leaders had failed to resolve the issues of the people. "The rulers are wasting the hard-earned money of the poor people on their protocols. An increase in perks and privileges for the senators is a great injustice to the poor nation," Siraj-ul-Haq said.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

**Public address**

SWAT: Chairman Pakistan People's Party and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addresses a public gathering at Khwazakhela



**PPP ready for elections, peace in Afghanistan in interest of region: Bilawal Bhutto**

Amjad Ali Swati

SWAT: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman and Foreign Minister, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari here Saturday said that his party strongly believed in democracy and was ready for general election.

He also directed the party workers to start campaign for general election.

Addressing a public gathering here at Khwazakhela, he said that any political party that achieved people's mandate in free and transparent election would have all the right to form Government and address the country's problems.

He said that PPP has recently won by-election and its candidate was elected a Mayor of Karachi that was a big achievement.

Bilawal Bhutto said PPP has strong roots in masses that

would win the upcoming elections and complete the mission of former prime ministers Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto Shaheed.

Bilawal Bhutto underlined the need for allocation of funds for reconstruction of flood-hit areas in the budget 2023-24.

He said that PPP strongly believed in people's wellbeing and welfare.

He paid glowing tributes to the people of Swat, who stood against terrorism with bravery and steadfastness. He said PPP Government had fulfilled the promise of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto by hoisting the national flag in Swat.

Bilawal Bhutto said that democracy was the best revenge and former President Asif Ali Zardari had raised the slogan of Pakistan "Khapay" after Benazir Bhutto Shaheed was martyred

outside Liaquat Bagh on December 27, 2007.

He said that a selected Prime Minister was ousted from power through a successful no confidence motion under the Constitution.

He said the entire nation had seen the vandalism and barbaric mindsets of attackers involved on ransacking of defence installations on May 9 after a selected former Prime Minister was arrested in a NAB case.

Bilawal Bhutto underlined the need for strict action against elements involved in May 9 vandalism so that no one can dare to attack defence installations, public and government properties and ransacked statues of martyrs.

He said that Quaid-e-Awam ZAB and Benazir Bhutto Shaheed had given all rights to people including employment

and land ownership.

He said majority of the country's population was comprised on youth and demands of our skilled workforce in Middle East and Europe has increased, adding people knew that a selected prime minister had deprived youth of jobs.

Bilawal said country's problems could be addressed by strictly adhering to the PPP manifesto of Shaheed ZAB and Benazir Bhutto Shaheed.

He said that PPP has started the revolutionary Benazir Bhutto Income Support Program to eradicate poverty.

He said PPP's struggle is against hunger, poverty, unemployment and price hike and not against any political party.

Bilawal Bhutto said that Imran Khan's cypher drama has been badly exposed before masses.

He said the world was keen to work with Pakistan as evident of USD 10 billion pledges and commitment by the international community for an assistance of the flood victims of Pakistan.

He said peace in Afghanistan was vital for regional peace and development.

Bilawal Bhutto said that PPP has always given respect and honour to its workers while a selected Prime Minister deceived his workers in the name of change.

He thanked the party workers for the successful public meeting at Swat.

Minister of State Faisal Karim Kundi and others PPP KP leaders were present.

On this occasion, former member national assembly, Dr Haider Ali Khan along with his supporters announced joining of Pakistan People's Party.

**Previous govt intentionally targeted Lahore with vengeance: PM**



Bureau Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday regretted that during the previous government's dark period, Lahore was intentionally targeted with revenge and the international companies were unjustly harassed.

Moreover, with political inductions, the companies and institutes were destroyed. "The nation will not forget those who stalled the country's journey towards progress and development," the prime minister said while talking to a delegation of Albayrak Group, a renowned Turkish company, led by its President Ahmet Albayrak that called on him, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

During the meeting, the prime minister appreciated group's services in solid waste

management and public transport.

PM's adviser Ahad Cheema, PML-N senior leader Khawaja Hassan, board members of Albayrak Group and other relevant authorities were present on the occasion.

The prime minister said during their previous tenures, they had provided the residents of Lahore with international standard facilities. With global investment, they introduced the latest travelling, solid waste management facilities and created job opportunities.

The delegation expressed its deep interest in investment in different sectors of Pakistan.

During his recent visit to Turkey, the Group had apprised the prime minister of its keen interest to invest in different sectors of Pakistan and their upcoming visit.

**Presidency of two holy mosques distributes more than 10,000 umbrellas**



Spokesman Report

MAKKAH: The General Presidency of the Grand Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque affairs has distributed more than 10,000 umbrellas and 2,000 prayer mats to visitors of the Grand Mosque on late Friday.

According to Saudi Press Agency (SPA), the initiative

aims to provide the best services to the visitors of the grand mosque and ensure warm hospitality for the Hajj pilgrims at the grand mosque.

It is to mention here the General Presidency of the Grand Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque aims to facilitate the worshippers to perform religious worship and the rites in a secure and pure environment.

**Six international languages used to measure the satisfaction of Pilgrims at the Grand Mosque**

Spokesman Report

MAKKAH: The General Administration of Statistics at the General Presidency for the Affairs of the Grand Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque has intensified its work that gauges the satisfaction of visitors and pilgrims at the Grand Mosque by providing field services through 75 QR codes offered in six international languages distributed over five main stations, according to the journey of the pilgrims, it was reported on Saturday.

Director of the General Administration of Statistics Issa bin Safran Al-Hudhali said that the authority measures, besides the level of services, the beneficiaries' perception of services, as expressed on social networking sites.

Highlighting the efforts exerted by his administration, Al-Hudhali said that the administration analyzes data and numbers collected from several sources.

**Dar reaffirms resolve to make International payments on time**

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Saturday reaffirmed the firm resolve of the government to ensure international payments on time in order to fulfill all the commitments.

Addressing a press conference, he said that all the arrangements for due payment during the months of May and June were in place, which would also have no impact on foreign exchange reserves held with local commercial banks and State Bank of Pakistan.

The minister said that by the end of the current month (June), payments of two Chinese banks including \$1 billion of China Development Bank and \$300 million of Bank of China were due.

He said the adoption of



formal payment process usually takes time and sometimes, it takes months, adding that to simplify the formal procedures, the Ministry of Finance initiated negotiations with both the banks and ask them to make payments before last week.

Ishaq Dar further informed that the government has paid \$1 billion to China Development Bank and \$300 million to Bank of China without any extra charges.

The payment to China Development Bank was made on June 12, 2023 and under the understanding between both countries, the Chinese banks will payback this amount to Pakistan on Friday, he added.

The minister said that another payment amounting to \$300 million was also made on Friday, adding that this payment would also be received to Pakistan within next three to four days, he added.

The finance minister further said that all the arrangements for the payment of \$1 billion, which was state-to-state payments between both countries, were also finalized and matters were in order.

About the rumors regarding winding-up of business by Shell Company, the minister said that the Company was not closing its business from Pakistan.

**PML-N to win general elections with thumping majority: Maryam Nawaz**



Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Chief Organiser Maryam Nawaz has said that the party would win the upcoming general elections with thumping majority with the support of its committed workers and followers. She said that the party was fully prepared to go into the elections and would emerge as an effective parliamentary force in the general elections.

She said this during meetings with PML-N leaders including Punjab General Secretary Awaiz Leghari, MNANadeem Abbas, former MNA Abdul Majeed Khan and former provincial minister Naeem Khan Baba.

**Govt revives development journey, halted by PTI: Fazl**

Adam Khan Wazir

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Saturday said the government has revived the development journey in the country which was halted during PTI government.

He stated this while addressing a public gathering after inaugurating PESCO's 132-KV Grid Station in Abdulkhel area which was also attended by Federal Minister for Communication Maulana Asad Mahmood, Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO) Chief Arif Khan Sadozai, Project Director Sardar Aslam Khan Gandapur, JUI-F local leadership and other officers of PESCO were also present.

The Abdulkhel grid station was completed with a cost of Rs 95 million which would have



four feeders and 40-km long transmission lines.

This grid station, benefiting a huge population, would help reducing the load on Bandkora grid station besides removing the backwardness of the area. Besides, the electricity related issues including the low voltage would also be resolved through this new grid station. The foundation stone of this project was laid down by JUI-F Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman in 2018.

## Addressing Press

FAISALABAD: Federal Minister for Interior, Rana Sana Ullah Khan talking to the media persons on Saturday.



Photo: PID

## Arsonists of May 9 to be trialed under Military Act: Interior Minister

## Bureau Report

FAISALABAD: Federal Interior Minister Rana Sana Ullah Khan has said that arsonists of May 9 mayhem would be trialed under Military Act as they committed offence in the military areas.

Addressing a meeting of Yarn Merchants Association at Karkhana Bazaar here on Saturday, he said that under a calculated move, the activists of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) attacked sensitive military installations and vandalized corps commander house on 9th May 2023.

He said that PTI leadership created hate against Pak Army in the mind of young generation due to which they

attacked the military installations besides vandalizing monuments of army martyrs.

He added that PTI hatched this conspiracy only to bow down the government and for this purpose, PTI leadership also used to intimidate the state institutions constantly but the brave Pakistani nation foiled all nefarious designs of anti-state elements.

The minister said that he had repeatedly apprised to the nation that if Imran Khan was not bridled in-time, he might bring any mishap for this country, adding that Imran Khan promoted culture of hate and hatred in the country due to which 9th May mayhem occurred.

He said that the people of

Pakistan had posed confidence in Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) in 2013 when the country was facing rampant incidents of terrorism and long duration of load shedding.

However, PML-N government under dynamic leadership of Mian Nawaz Sharif overcame the menace of terrorism and load shedding and put the country on road to progress and prosperity within 4 years.

He said that the growth rate was 6.2 percent in Pakistan in 2018 when PML-N government was abolished. Prime Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif was disqualified on a flimsy allegation of 'not receiving salary from his own son' and Imran Khan was clamped on the nation but this incompetent

person bitterly failed to deliver to the nation despite enjoying power for 4 years.

Rana Sana Ullah Khan said that PML-N government always preferred public welfare programs. It initiated a number of development projects like construction of motorways and express ways in addition to establishment of hospitals, university campuses and metros.

"In Faisalabad, we also established Faisalabad Institute of Cardiology (FIC), Children Hospital, General Hospitals in Ghulam Muhammad Abad, Samanabad and Haseeb Shaheed Colony besides setting up university campuses", he added.

He also appealed them to

vote and support PML-N in general elections so that development pace could be resumed for materializing the dream of national progress and prosperity.

Chairman Pakistan Yarn Merchants Association (Guccha Group) Chaudhary Javaid Asghar Guicha, Vice Chairman Sheikh Owais Nasir, group leader Shahid Zeeshan Guicha, Hajji Abdul Jabbar, former MNA Mian Abdul Mannan, City President PML-N Sheikh Ejaz Ahmad, Chairman Board of Directors FESCO Malik Tahseen Javaid Awan, Vice President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) Muhammad Aslam Bhalli and others were also present in the meeting.

## President approves appointment of Rector of Hyderabad Institute for Technology

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has accorded his approval to the appointment of Saeeduddin Shaikh as Rector Hyderabad Institute for Technology and Management Sciences.

The appointment was granted under section 13 of Hyderabad Institute for Technology and Management Sciences Act, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release on Saturday.



The president approved the appointment after holding interviews of three candidates recommended for the post of rector by the search committee.

## 12 Pakistanis among survivors of Greece boat disaster: FO



## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A total of twelve Pakistanis were identified among the survivors of the capsized boat off the coast of Greece, but so far the number and identity of Pakistani nationals among the deceased was not yet verified.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesperson Muntaz Zahra Baloch, in a press statement on Saturday, said that the Pakistan Mission in Greece under the leadership of Ambassador Aamir Aftab remained in contact with the local authorities for identification and recovery of Pakistani nationals among the deceased and providing relief to the survivors.

"Our Mission also remains in contact with the Greek authorities in the identification process of the deceased and providing relief to the survivors.

DNA-matching with close family

members (parents and children only)," the spokesperson further said.

Families of likely passengers on board the ill-fated boat were requested to contact Pak Mission in Greece on the 24/7 helpline numbers for verification purposes.

They were also requested to share DNA reports from authenticated laboratories and the identity documents of the passenger at 'info@pakistanembassy.gr'

The UN Human Rights officials said that up to 500 people were still missing from a migrant boat that sank off Greece.

A large number of women and children were among those missing in the "horrific tragedy" that left 78 people dead.

The fishing boat was carrying up to 750 people that went down 50 nautical miles off Pylos in southern Greece, according to international media.

## Kashmiris, rights bodies to stage protest against Modi's US visit next week

## Spokesman Report

WASHINGTON: A prominent Kashmiri advocacy group Thursday announced that Kashmiris and their supporters will stage a protest rally near the White House on June 22 when Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets US President Joe Biden in Washington, amid India's escalating atrocities in occupied Kashmir.

The Secretary-General of the World Kashmir Awareness Forum (WKAF), Ghulam Nabi Fai, told APP that he was getting immense response from the community members as well as expressions of support from several other organizations in the effort to highlight India's brutal suppression of Kashmiri people.



He said that people from all over the United States and Canada were expected to come to Washington to join the demonstration that will serve as a reminder that the U. N.-pledged right of self-determination to the people of Kashmir has still not been implemented and that they continue to suffer under Indian occupation.

"I am confident that Kashmiris and their supporters will be there in full force," Fai said.

He also said that WKAF has also hired three digital trucks that will flash messages like "Fascist Modi does not belong to White House" as they pass by key buildings and landmarks in this capital city. Other digital messages include, "Trade with India not fine when human rights are on decline"; "Indian democracy: Dead in Kashmir"; "Kashmir at the brink of Genocide" and "Modi guilty of crimes against humanity in Kashmir."

Meanwhile, according to reports, U. S Human Rights groups are planning to hold similar protests against Modi's US visit over the "deteriorating human rights situation." The Indian American Muslim Council, Peace Action, Veterans for Peace and Bethesda African Cemetery Coalition are also set to gather near

the White House on June 22.

The report said the groups have also added flyers that read "Modi Not Welcome" and "Save India from Hindu Supremacy." The groups have also planned an event in New York featuring a show titled "Howdy Democracy", referring to 2019's "Howdy Modi!" rally in Texas featuring Modi and then-U. S. President Donald Trump.

This comes as two human rights groups decided to organize a screening of the controversial BBC documentary, 'India: The Modi Question'. As per reports, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have invited policymakers, journalists and analysts next week to a screening in Washington the BBC documentary, whose screening was banned in India.

## Russia positions nuclear bombs in Belarus

## Reuters

President Vladimir Putin said on Friday that his deployment of tactical nuclear weapons to Belarus, something he confirmed for the first time had already happened, was a reminder to the West that it could not inflict a strategic defeat on Russia.

Speaking at Russia's flagship economic forum in St Petersburg, Putin said Russian tactical nuclear warheads had already been delivered to close ally Belarus, but stressed he saw no need for Russia to resort to nuclear weapons for now.

"As you know we were negotiating with our ally, (Belarusian President Alexander) Lukashenko, that we would move a part of these tactical nuclear weapons to the territory of Belarus - this has happened," said Putin.

"The first nuclear warheads were delivered to the territory

of Belarus. But only the first ones, the first part. But we will do this job completely by the end of the summer or by the end of the year."

The move, Moscow's first deployment of such warheads - shorter-range nuclear weapons that could potentially be used on the battlefield - outside Russia since the fall of the Soviet Union was intended as a warning to the West about arming and supporting Ukraine, the Russian leader said.

"...It is precisely as an element of deterrence so that all those who are thinking about inflicting a strategic defeat on us are not oblivious to this circumstance," said Putin, using a diplomatic term for a defeat so severe that Russian power would be diminished on the world stage for decades.

Lukashenko, a staunch ally of Putin, said late on Tuesday his country had started



taking delivery of Russian tactical nuclear weapons that included some three times more powerful than the atomic bombs the U. S. dropped on Japan in 1945.

The Russian leader announced in March he had agreed to deploy tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus, pointing to the U. S. deployment of such weapons in a host of European countries over many decades.

The United States has criticised Putin's decision but has said it has no intention of altering its own stance on

strategic nuclear weapons and has not seen any signs that Russia is preparing to use a nuclear weapon.

The Russian step is nonetheless being watched closely by Washington and its allies as well as by China, which has repeatedly cautioned against the use of nuclear weapons in the war in Ukraine.

Putin said the West was doing everything it could to inflict a strategic defeat on Russia in Ukraine where Moscow is locked in the biggest land war in Europe since World War Two after

invading its neighbour last year in what it called "a special military operation."

But Russia had no need to resort to nuclear weapons for now, said Putin, signalling no change in Moscow's nuclear posture which only envisages such a move if the existence of the Russian state is threatened.

"Nuclear weapons have been made to ensure our security in the broadest sense of the word and the existence of the Russian state, but we... have no such need (to use them)," Putin said.

But he said talks with the West to reduce Russia's vast nuclear arsenal, the world's largest, were a non-starter.

"Just talking about this (the potential use of nuclear weapons) lowers the nuclear threshold. We have more than NATO countries and they want to reduce our numbers. Screw them," said Putin.

## Accountability must be held without discrimination: Irfan Qadir



## Bureau Report

LAHORE: Advisor to the Prime Minister on Accountability Irfan Qadir has said that accountability should be held without any discrimination and no one is exempted from accountability.

He expressed these views while addressing a press conference at the Governor's House, here on Saturday.

He said the government and parliament were standing with the judiciary and there was no ambi-

guity in the Constitution regarding accountability. He added that no one was above the Constitution and law, and everyone would be held accountable.

He said until all the institutions were brought under accountability with uniformity, supremacy of law could not be established in the country, adding that if any institution did not support, then it would be shared with the nation. He said their effort was aimed at ensuring that the rule of legal system remains stable in the country until the end of the current government's tenure.

"We have seen for some time that the Supreme Court has become very active for supremacy of the law and the constitution," he said. He appealed that judges should not get involved in political affairs of the country, but should take steps to ensure justice to people.

# Shah Mehmood Qureshi says I am not involved in 9 May incident

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Vice Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Makhdoom Shah Mehmood Qureshi has said that 21 cases have been registered against me. I remained firm despite solitary confinement and did not waver, which has removed all speculations and ambiguities. I was not present in Multan and I am not involved in any incident so I don't know why I have been involved. He expressed these views while talking to the media after his appearance in District Kachhari, Multan. They said 5 cases were registered against me regarding May 9, 13 provisions are the



cradle of lies

My wife was hospitalized, I was in Karachi, still cases were registered against me. My conscience is clear. I was jailed under 3 MPO. I did not violate section 144. There was a small boil and not. I ask the Deputy Commissioner, Rawalpindi, how a person sitting in

jail can be involved in any issue. The electricity was cut off in the jail and tap water was provided. In the heat of June, there was no electricity facility in the jail. They knew this. Even though I am not present in Multan, still cases were registered. I was on the run, visitors and employees were tortured in my office. Locked up in police stations. I was made to wait for five to five hours in the heat for an appointment, and was only given a 15, 20 minute appointment. They said the speculation and ambiguity was gone, I did not waver and remained steadfast. Even today innocent workers of Tehreek-e-Insaf are imprisoned in jails. They said that my

child was innocent but they also filed 2 cases against Makhdoomzada Zain Hussain Qureshi. My granddaughters are their father. I am grateful to the lawyers community who defended me. He said, by the grace of Allah, bails are being issued in the case, tomorrow I will attend all the shrines in Multan. I am grateful to the Additional Sessions Judge, who has granted interim bail. So far, a total of 21 FIRs have been filed against me. She said that I love every bit of Pakistan. As the foreign minister, I defended every institution of Pakistan abroad. I was not involved in any incident. He has kept his foot clean in politics for 40 years.

## Ultimatum to district officers and land record centers for collection of government revenue dues: Umar Jahangir



Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: Deputy Commissioner Umar Jahangir has issued an ultimatum to the district officers and land record centers for the collection of government revenue dues. Ads should be blocked and published. He expressed these views while presiding over a meeting of revenue officers and ADLRs. On this occasion, Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Noman Afzal gave a briefing on the collection of dues. Deputy Commissioner Umar Jahangir said that water taxes including property and death fees should be collected 100 percent in a week while FBR went out in the field to collect taxes. Reforms have been made to provide relief. Strict action will be taken against the officers who do not submit the revenue dues in the current month.

## Afforestation is inevitable to eliminate pollution improve the environment: Asif Rauf Khan

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Director General Parks and Horticulture Authority Multan Asif Rauf Khan inaugurated the plantation campaign by planting a sapling in a private college. Awareness will be given about the benefits. All the places where plantation is needed will be planted abundantly. Highlighting the importance of trees and plants is the need of the hour. Afforestation is inevitable to eliminate pollution and improve the environment



## Ministers laud Bahawalpur administration for 'More Cotton Cultivation'

Correspondent

BAHAWALPUR: Provincial Minister for Industry, Commerce, and Energy SM Tanveer and Minister for C&W and Excise Bilal Afzal presided over a meeting at the commissioner's office in Bahawalpur. During the meeting, Commissioner Dr Ihtesham Anwar provided an overview of the ongoing development projects, beautification efforts, and public welfare initiatives in the division. Speaking at the meeting, Provincial Minister SM Tanveer highlighted the importance of conducting visits to assess district performance and evaluate the facilities available to the general public, in line with the directives of the chief minister Punjab. He stressed the need to ensure that development projects are completed on time, adhering to high standards, and employing all possible means to provide relief to the public. Provincial Minister Bilal Afzal expressed that the government is undertaking comprehensive measures to enhance the economy. To ensure the success of the 'More Cotton Cultivation Campaign', necessary facilities will be provided to farmers. He further emphasized that concrete steps are being taken to ensure that the benefits of progress reach the public. The ministers commended the performance of the administration. The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Bahawalpur Zahir Anwar Jappa, Secretary (South Punjab) of the Transport Department, Director of Excise and Taxation in Bahawalpur, as well as officers from the divisional and district administrations.

## President and PM expressed profound grief over the Greece boat disaster

Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: President Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry has expressed his profound grief over the Greece boat disaster that left scores dead and hundreds missing. The president extended his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families of the people of Pakistan and Azad Kashmir who lost their loved ones in the tragic accident. President Azad Jammu and Kashmir also asked the officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Embassy of Pakistan in Greece to take effective measures to bring back the remains of the deceased. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has expressed his profound grief and sorrow over the loss of precious human lives in Greece boat disaster in Greece, in which dozens of Pakistani and Kashmiri citizens were reported to have died. The PM expressed his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed souls in eternal peace and grant fortitude and patience to the bereaved to bear this irreparable loss. He directed the Chief Secretary to appoint a special focal person who would coordinate with the Ministry of External Affairs on the matter. The PM also directed the concerned authorities to make proper arrangements so that dead bodies of the AJK citizens could be brought back in time.

## Successful negotiations, 24-day sit-in in Azamwarsak area of Wana ended

Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: People belonging to Azamwarsak in tehsil birmal of Lower South Waziristan district have ended the sit-in for the last 24 days in favor of their demands. The organizers of the sit-in say that they had 8 demands for which the sit-in was given, those 8 demands are also the basic right of every Pakistani citizen as a Pakistani citizen and the sit-in has been ended by the civil administration accepting all their demands. After the talks, DPO South Waziristan Lower Shabbir Hussain Marwat reached Azam Warsak to meet the sit-in participants and tehsildar Birmal Muhammad Jameel and SHO of Azam Warsak Alamgir Mehsud were with him on this occasion, DPO Shabbir Hussain Marwat was given a warm welcome by the participants on reaching the protest site in Azamwarsak. The sit-in organizers also stated their 8 demands before the DPO, after which the DPO said that all the legitimate demands of the protesters have been accepted.



## Kailash Range

ISLAMABAD: Artists are performing during cultural event entitled "Cultural Exhibition on Gandhara Civilization" at Pakistan National Council of Arts", in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

# Crackdown Against illegally Cross the Railway Line: Hamad Hasan Mirza

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Safe train operation, a safety seminar organized at Sama Satta railway station under the direction of Divisional Superintendent Railway Multan Hamad Hasan Mirza. A safety seminar was held at Sama Satta Railway Station on this occasion Assistant Transport Officer, Station Masters, Traffic Inspectors, Loco Foreman, TXR DTO Nabila Aslam, DMO Dr Syed Abdul Sami Shah, DCO Adnan Marwat and DM



were present. Fahim Zaman said that prevention of accidents is the most important thing and everyone has to work together for that. From the train driver to the gangman standing at the gate, the

signal staff, the engineering department and all the employees including the department of engineering and transport, if they perform their duties with full attention, the accidents can be adequately controlled.

Strict crackdown is on against those who illegally cross the railway line or walk on or around the railway line, is imposed, because thousands of precious lives are traveling together.

# Managing Director VASA chaired a meeting on collecting the dues

Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: Managing Director Vasa Chaudhry Muhammad Danish has said that the recovery department should intensify the crackdown against defaulters and tighten the circle around commercial defaulters and private housing colonies to get maximum recovery so that the employees can get their salaries and pensions before Eid. To ensure payment, he has also ordered to accelerate the speed of work on sewerage and water supply development



projects to completion and to ensure quality of work, transparency. While giving instructions to all the officers, he said that improving the basic facilities of water supply and drainage

to the citizens and immediate resolution of their complaints is the first priority. I have asked for a special duty roster plan to stay alert and regarding Eid. They expressed these views yesterday while reviewing the performance of ongoing projects

under the recovery, annual development program, Director Admin and Engineering Abdul Salam, Director Finance Muhammad Saeed Dogar. All Deputy Directors including

Director Recovery Mansoor Ahmed, Director Works Arif Abbas were present on the spot. Meanwhile, MD Vasa Chaudhry Muhammad Danish reviewed the performance of the recovery department and directed the recovery officers to do maximum recovery. He also ordered all the sewerage officers to ensure 100% presence of manhole covers in their respective limits, to speed up the desalination campaign regarding the monsoon season and to redress the complaints effectively.

# Punjab Province produce one crore cotton bales in 2023: SM Tanveer, Bilal Afzal

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Caretaker Provincial Minister for Industry, Trade and Energy SM Tanveer said that the current Caretaker Government has come for a short term and we are trying to do things that will be remembered for a long time are facing problems and all resources are being used to solve these problems. He expressed these things while addressing a meeting at the Chamber of Commerce

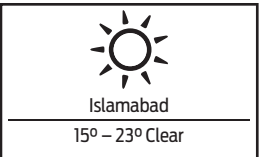


and Industry Multan. On this occasion, President Mian Rashid Iqbal Sr. Vice President Nadeem Ahmed Sheikh, Vice

President Sheikh Mohammad Asim Saeed, Provincial Minister Communication and Works Excise Taxation Bilal Afzal.

Former President FPCCI Mian Tanveer A Sheikh, Former President Senior Member House Khawaja Muhammad

Yusuf, Khawaja Muhammad Hussain, Khawaja Muhammad Younis Commissioner Multan Division Engineer Aamir Khatkhat, Rauf Mukhtar, Tariq Wali, Khawaja Muhammad Fazil, Khawaja Sohail Tufail, Naveed Iqbal Chaghtai, Sheikh Faisal Saeed, Adnan Chaghtai, Syed Saqib Ali, Zafra Iqbal Siddiqui, Saleha Hassan, Bakhtawar Tanveer Sheikh, Muhammad Shafiq, Sohail Mehmood Haral, Manzoor Malik, Ehteshamul Haque and others were present.



**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr	3:13 am
Zohr	12:09 pm
Asr	5:09 pm
Maghrib	7:20 pm
Isha	9:04 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

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**NCHD distributed Goods to 280 flood victims**

Adam Khan Wazir

TANK: NCHD continues to help flood victims, 280 flood victims have distributed goods, AC Tank Aminullah Khan was the chief guest of the event.

NCHD International Organization of Migration is continuing to help the families affected by last year's severe floods. Various items were distributed among 280 people belonging to different villages.

In this regard, a function was held at the NCHD office in which Assistant Commissioner Tank Aminullah Khan was the chief guest. With the support of USAID and International Organization of Migration, home repair and women's equipment were distributed. Assistant Commissioner Tank Aminullah Khan distributed these equipment.

Assistant Director NCHD Abdul Qadir, Zahid Khan, VCD Focal Person Alamsher Safdar and Field Officer were also present in this event. The flood victims said that they are extremely grateful to NCHD, thanks to which they are getting assistance.

# MNAs suggest radical reforms in key sectors to achieve sustainable economic growth

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Lawmakers in the National Assembly on Saturday continued debate on the federal budget for fiscal year 2023-24, suggesting measures to improve key sectors including communication, water reservoirs, agriculture and energy on modern lines to achieve the required goals of macroeconomic stability and growth trajectory.

Participating in the debate for budget 2023-24, Riaz-ul-Haq of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) said the allocated funds for NHA (National Highway Authority) and water resources including new reservoirs in the next fiscal year were insufficient. He said the construction of major dams would take around

10 to 15 years to complete with the existing ratio of funds allocation, highlighting the water scarcity being faced in the country.

The lawmaker also highlighted the ever-increasing energy needs, terming it a "crucial issue" for Pakistan, and recalled that during the last tenure of PML-N around 12,000 megawatts of electricity were added to the power system under the leadership of Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif.

However, in the past four years, he regretted that there had been no progress in this sector, which resulted in load shedding being witnessed in the country.

He emphasized the need to develop a comprehensive plan to eliminate circular debt in the energy sector.

He proposed reforms and

accountability for the institutions like the Pakistan International Airlines, Pakistan Steel Mills and Khushali Bank.

He voiced concern that while the textile sector had been given significant incentives, similar incentives should be given to the energy and other sectors.

Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians lawmaker Shagufata Jumani said the incumbent government presented the budget in difficult economic conditions as it inherited the sinking economy that had been stabilized to some extent and now putting on a consistent path of growth.

She voiced concern over the political temperature and the public frustration, adding had the democracy and politics been properly aligned, this situation would



have not emerged. "When genuine constitutional, democratic, and political parties are suppressed, such situations arise."

She regretted the May 9 incident and said political parties always loved their motherland and

respected sacrifices of martyrs, and never thought of indulging in the anti-state activities.

She said it was unfortunate that a political party misled the youth for achieving its nefarious designs, adding there should be a strategy

in the budget to bring them back on track and make them useful citizens of the society.

The political parties in the country that are in decline love their land and do not ignite the country. She said that the budget should allocate funds to set the misled generation back on the right track.

PML-N's Nisar Ahmed Cheema said provision of budget session special honorarium to the National Assembly staff should be ensured in a judicious manner and before the Eid-ul-Azha.

He expressed serious concerns over the May 9 vandalism of military installations and memorials of martyrs by workers of a political party, suggesting stern action against the elements in accordance with law and the Constitution.

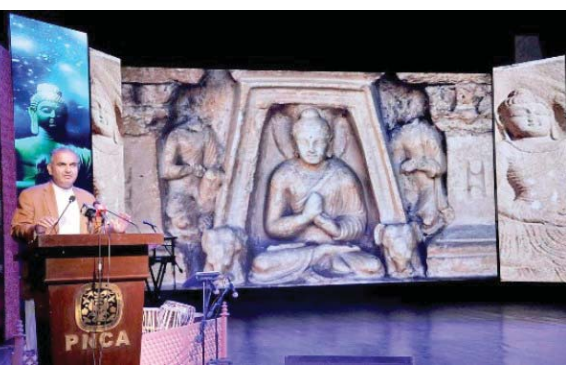
## Three-day int'l conference to be held on July 11 to promote tourism: Dr Ramesh

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State, Chairman for Prime Minister Task Force on Gandhara Tourism Dr. Ramesh Kumar Vankwani Saturday unveiled that three-day first ever international conference on tourism would be held from July 11 to 13 here to attract tourists from across the world to promote tourism in the country.

Addressing the participants at the Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA), the minister said international conference would not only project the tourism but also generate revenue as well.

He said, "We would welcome and highly appreciate the foreign dignitaries and facilitate them in every respect, including safety, security, visas, transportation, and accommodation in Pakistan." The conference would pave the ways to promote the soft image of the country at



international level, the chairman added.

He said it was his vision to bring 0.5 million international tourists from worldwide to generate billion of rupees, adding that the incumbent government was seriously focusing on tourism's promotion in the country.

He said Pakistan was rich with religious and cultural tourism and was home to a multitude of heritage sites, monuments and historic buildings,

which demonstrated the diverse layers of history of the region.

Visualizing the immense potential in tourism around Gandhara civilization, the Prime Minister Task Force was making all-out efforts to promote Gandhara tourism in the country, he maintained.

The chairman said that religious sites of Hinduism and Buddhism were existing in the federal capital and other parts of the country.

He stressed the need to

develop positive image of the country internationally as Pakistan is a peaceful and peace-loving country.

The minister said, "I have written columns in national newspapers in English, Urdu and Sindhi, besides taking part in talk shows on national and foreign media to inform the local and foreign dignitaries about rich potential of tourism in the country."

He said the Prime Minister Task Force had arranged a series of visits to various cultural and historical sites, including Shah Allah Ditta, Takht-i-Bahi, and Swat on every Wednesday within a month to promote sacred sites and monuments built during the Gandhara era.

In the end, Taxila odyssey cultural show, Kelash dance, Leva performance, mantra performance and folk performance by Jhangir Sagar had entertained the participants.

## Morocco, Pakistan to deepen economic ties: Ambassador

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Morocco to Pakistan, Mohammad Karmoune said on Wednesday that he enjoys long-standing commercial and diplomatic relations and that the government and people of his country have a special place in their hearts for Pakistanis.

The Pakistani business community can collaborate with the businessmen of his country to benefit from opportunities in Morocco and the African continent, which are playing a significant role in driving inclusive growth and sustainable development.

The Ambassador of Morocco Mohammad Karmoune said this while speaking to the members of the Islamabad Industrial Association (IIA).

President IIA Muhammad Ahmed, VP Usman Shoukat, Mian Akram Farid, Khalid Javed, Tariq Sadiq, Choudary Waheed Uddin, Zakaria Zia, Mian Shaukat Masood, Umair Khattak, Atif Ikram Sheikh,



Naeem Paracha, Malik Sohail Hussain and others were present at the occasion.

Both countries have excellent potential for further growth in trade and economic relations, he said, adding that Pakistan's engagement with Africa continues to grow as Islamabad expands its diplomatic footprint in Africa.

There are vast opportunities to be tapped for both brotherly countries and business communities, and potential investors on both sides should be fully aware of the opportunities.

fertiliser, and we are helping to reduce hunger globally," he said.

Earlier, President IIA Muhammad Ahmed and others apprised the Ambassador of the role of IIA and asked several questions about investment opportunities in Morocco. They said that we should increase trade with brotherly country for mutual benefit.

We are proud of the positive role of Morocco, and we would like to visit the brotherly country as soon as possible to explore opportunities," they said.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) represents significant growth potential for the African economy, as it establishes a structure for fostering regional economic integration, growth, and progress.

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

## Iqra university has won the 1st position with high margin of 380: Mohani

News Desk

KARACHI: Iqra university's teams conquered the playground. 20 educational institutions were on top in competition. This event was organized under supervision of Iqra university's Inter-university And College Table Tennis Tournament. Iqra university has won the 1st position with high margin of 380.

Director Sports, Iqra university, Director Shiraz ul Hasan Mohani said, "Today we can say proudly that the talented players of Iqra university who are the representatives of Table Tennis, Basketball, Cricket, Hockey, Golf, Sailing, Scrabble, and Football at national level; are indeed setting high standards for Iqra university. Boys Single were competing with IBA's Kaif Riyaz, who attained 1st position, Iqra



university's on second, once more, Iqra university's B. Raza Abbas secured the third position.

In Girls Single's category, Adeena Hasan on first, Laiba Yaseen from (ISS) on second, and Hafsa Tahir from (IBA)

achieved third position. In team event competition, Boys category's Furqan Patel, Raza Abbas and Saeed Haidar performed with great spirit. Iqra university secured the first position and IBA's Kaifay Raza, Ahmed Ali and

Muhammad Ali achieved the second position. In Girls' event competition, PECHS Girls School's, Fatima Danish and Sara Danish defeated Adeena Hussain And Kiran of Iqra University, attained the first position.

## Role of lawyers community is of central importance in the supremacy of law: Sardar Attique



Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan said that the role of lawyers community is of central importance in the supremacy of law and provision of justice in the country. The leadership of lawyers is an honor as well as a heavy responsibility. These views were expressed by Supreme Court Bar Azad Jammu and Kashmir General Secretary Maqsood Sulharia Advocate and Syed Yasar Naqvi Advocate, Mir Rizwanur Rahman Advocate and others during a meeting with them yesterday in Muzaffarabad. In the meeting, General Secretary Supreme Court Bar Maqsood Sulharia gave a briefing regarding the problems of lawyers. Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan assured them that he will play a full role for the problems of lawyers. He said that the supremacy of law and respect for law is necessary for any society. The role of lawyers committee is of fundamental importance in the governance of Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan said that Kashmir is a legal case, only by living on the legal basis of this case, we can achieve success on the diplomatic front in the world. He said that the Muslim Conference, as the protector of the rights of the people of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, as a pioneer and a state party, this party has an important role in the future as well. It is with the lawyers in upholding the law. On this occasion, the central chief of the Muslim Conference, Organizer Raja Saqib Majeed and former chairman of Neelam Development Board Khawaja Muhammad Shafiq were also present. On this occasion, Secretary General Supreme Court Bar Maqsood Sulharia thanked Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan and said that the credit of the institutions that have been established in Azad Kashmir goes to Mujaheed e Awal Sardar Muhammad Abdul Qayyum Khan who worked hard to manage Azad Kashmir And the constitutional structure was formed. Meanwhile, the Chief Organizer Raja Saqib Majeed called on President Muslim Conference Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan in Muzaffarabad. In the meeting, the current political situation of Azad Kashmir and party issues were discussed in detail.

## CTD Punjab arrested 6 terrorists

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Punjab arrested 9 alleged terrorists of banned outfits during operations in different areas of Punjab. According to the spokesman, the CTD Punjab conducted 55 intelligence based operations in different districts of the province to effectively deal with any untoward incident of terrorism, in which 50 suspected persons were interrogated and 6 alleged terrorists were arrested with weapons, explosives and other prohibited materials. Among the arrested terrorists three members of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, Liaquatullah, Nadeem Khan, Inayatullah, a member of Sepah Sahaba Pakistan, Muhammad Younis, a member of Daesh, Muhammad Ammar and a member of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Ijaz Ahmed are included, he said.

The spokesman said that 1358 grams of explosives, one hand grenade, 6.53 feet of Prima Card, one laptop, 82 pamphlets, 45 stickers, 2 flags, 6 receipt books and 18800 rupees cash of the banned organization were recovered from the possession of the terrorists. He said that the terrorists had planned to sabotage across the province and wanted to target important installations and other religious places. The police have registered 6 cases against the arrested alleged terrorists in Multan, Gujranwala and DG Khan and shifted them to an unknown location. The spokesman added that 227 combing operations were conducted during this week with the help of local police and security agencies, 11694 persons were checked, 24 suspects were arrested, 23 FIRs were registered and 16 recoveries were made.

## Lahore police have successfully apprehended 9,031 proclaimed offenders, 19,384 court offenders

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Lahore police have successfully apprehended a significant number of individuals involved in criminal activities, with a total of 9,031 proclaimed offenders, 19,384 court offenders, and 9,300 habitual criminals being taken into custody since the beginning of the year.

In a statement released today, Bilal Siddique Kamyana, the Capital City Police Officer Lahore, highlighted the notable achievements within various divisions. In the Cantt Division, 1,989 proclaimed offenders, 3,385 court offenders, and 2,169 habitual criminals have been apprehended. Similarly, in the Civil Lines Division, 825 proclaimed offenders, 1,534 court offenders, and 1,026 habitual criminals have been successfully arrested.

Likewise, within the City Division, an impressive number of individuals involved in criminal activities have been successfully apprehended, with a total of 1,837 proclaimed offenders, 4,519 court offenders, and 2,186 habitual criminals being taken into custody. The Iqbal Town Division has also witnessed significant progress, with the apprehension of 1,070 proclaimed offenders, 2,598 court offenders, and 1,321 habitual criminals. Similarly, in the Saddar Division, 1,710 proclaimed offenders, 3,400 court offenders, and 1,487 habitual criminals have been effectively held.

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almas Ayoub Sabir**  
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 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](mailto:spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com)  
 Whatsapp: 0346-5008408

# Adherence to Democratic Values and Demands

More than 194 countries of the world have democratic system. That is, the people's governments elected by the people's votes reach the houses of the country. The selected candidates are assigned the posts of the country's ministers, leader of the house and the country's President. Actually the sovereignty and source of strength belongs to Allah and the people are governed by his command. A Herodotus, a Greek thinker, while explaining the meaning of democracy, says: "Democracy is a government in which the sovereign powers of the state are legally vested in the whole society."

Dear country, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and its system also revolves around democracy. But the opposite is happening here. Decisions are based on idiom "Jis ki lathi us ki Bhanse". There is a democratic system in the country, but democracy has become a joke. Because the democratic requirements are not fulfilled, due to which problems are arising. From the past several decades, the country has been monopolized by a few families. Those who refuse to accept decisions against them. And leave no stone unturned to prove the results in their favor. Democracy has become a nominal thing because there is no respect for institutions or senior officials. Now, even big positions and institutions are also being targeted. If our leaders do not respect today, how will respect them? Servants are those who listen to people, solves their problems. Prioritizing national interests over personal interests, using institutions for one's own purposes and discrediting them and taking decisions of one's own will and interest do not fulfill

the requirements of democracy demands. It is a sign of our poor thinking that we are also facing difficulties in taking loans from international institutions.

A friend reminded a very beautiful incident. That is, Hazrat Umar bin Abdul Aziz (r.a), who is also called Umar II. During his time, the governor of Yemen is being sent. What message would he give to the people when governor arrived in Yemen? This is the current concern for our rulers today. "Just a sentence" is a slap in the face of all our democratic rulers. Hazrat Muhammad bin Arwa (r.a) entered the city as the governor of Yemen. People were standing in formation for the reception. People thought that the new governor would make a long speech. Hazrat Muhammad bin Arwa (r.a) said only one sentence and finished his speech! There is a lesson for democratic rulers. That sentence: "People, this is my ride, it is my property. If I return with more than that, then I will be considered a thief." This was the golden age of Hazrat Umar bin Abdul Aziz (r.a). Hazrat Muhammad bin Arwa (r.a) made Yemen the center of prosperity. On the day when he was returning after completing the months and years of his governorship, people were shedding tears on his parting, there was an outpouring of grief. It was expected that he would give a long speech. Hazrat Muhammad bin Arwa (r.a) said only one sentence and ended his speech! That sentence: Folks, this was my ride, my property. I am going back. I have nothing but that." Patriots! Compare the coming and going days

of your prime ministers, judges, politicians and government officials. One will understand well.

Even today, there are rulers in different countries of the world who put the country and the nation first over themselves. Studying the democratic systems of countries around the world shows how well reforms have been made. For example, Canada has free elections and a good democratic system with strong laws to protect people's rights. America is famous for its long historical democratic system. Elections, independence system, nature of institutions and a permanent and independent twin constitution are fully practiced in this country. Public opinion is respected and rights are protected. The level of transparency in Germany is very high. Apart from free and transparent elections, political rights and freedoms are guaranteed in this country. Government policies in Spain are based on justice. And respect. Here people's opinion is respected through elections. Similarly, there are better democratic systems in Japan and other countries of the world. The victory of Turkish President Erdoğan is a manifestation of the people's confidence. On the other hand, if we compare dear fellow countrymen, we have hardly allowed the elected governments to fulfill their appointed time under the guise of democracy. How can one pay attention to the country when the differences between them do not end. We have spent much of the last century fighting this battle. The precursor of which had to be seen many

times was the period of Martial law. Our political parties are constantly pushing this attitude towards the darkness of the country.

Political uncertainty can engulf the country's fertile democracy. Rulers and political elites stake everything for personal interests and survival in politics. So-called democracy and the cloak of democratic values are growing fast. Nations behind this evil game are only protecting power, authority and personal interests. Ending the monopoly in politics and making the poor people happy who are suffering from the infighting of politicians. The system is based on merit. It is a big dilemma that neither democracy is nurtured nor democratic values are protected. As in the democratic system of the country, there is only politics of personal interests.

To deal with such a situation, people should use their votes wisely, especially in elections. Because, this is the best opportunity to choose their honest, patriotic and qualified candidates. The importance of the vote and the influence of the people's vote reinforce the power of the system in all circumstances. If the situation is unfavorable for any reason, the people should have the right to demand that they expect the government to work to solve their problems. They should exercise their right to vote and choose the best government for them. The requirements of democracy can be fulfilled by electing honest candidates. Therefore, we should use this right to restore the country and the nation and the democratic system in the true sense.

(Writer is senior analyst and can be reached at [javedullahraja@gmail.com](mailto:javedullahraja@gmail.com))

Analysis



Javed Ullah Raja

## BRI provides tangible benefits to Pakistan through CPEC

Pakistan Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque said that the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) are providing tangible benefits to Pakistan through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is the flagship project of the BRI.

Addressing as a key speaker at the 13th China Overseas Investment Fair, the Ambassador mentioned that BRI holds great significance for Belt and Road Initiative's partner countries. This year, Pakistan is also celebrating 10th anniversary of CPEC, China Economic Net (CEN) reported.

"Over the past decade, 888 km of the road network has been laid, and over 8000 additional MWs of energy have been added to Pakistan's national grid with the commissioning of 13 new energy projects. A new 878-KM transmission line has been built to evacuate 4000MW electricity. An 820 km long cross-border optical fibre cable has been laid, and over 200,000 new jobs have been created. Various estimates have pointed out to an increase in 1-2% of the GDP of Pakistan", he added.

Ambassador Moin ul Haque said that BRI has been successful in bringing down the walls of suspicions and doubts among the members of the international community and instead connected them with bridges of trade, commerce and cultural cooperation on the principles of win-win cooperation and mutual benefit. It thus transcends the artificial divides of race, religion and nationality and rallies the international community around shared dreams and common ideals.

"China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was envisaged as a comprehensive and long-term project with key objectives to upgrade transport and communication infrastructure, enhance connectivity, ensure energy security, promote industrialization, modernize agriculture and thus contribute to national socio-economic development agenda".

He further stated that CPEC has transformed Pakistan's economic landscape providing a solid foundation for future growth and development. Various statistics are evidence of the concrete, substantive and tangible benefits of CPEC for Pakistan.

"CPEC has now entered its vital phase of facilitating the industrialization process in Pakistan. The Special Economic Zones under CPEC have the potential to be a game-changer not only for Pakistan but for the entire region. With attractive incentives, these SEZs will be the mainstay of FDI in Pakistan. Gwadar Port with its infrastructure upgrade and strategic location augments these SEZs, adding to Pakistan's stature as an attractive investment destination", the ambassador added.



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmi (Courtesy of Asharq Al-Awsat)

## Budget 2023-24

There are no signs of an impending rebound or even sustainable development, in Pakistan, the economic crisis in Pakistan is getting worse. The nation is experiencing severe economic strain, which can be seen by insufficient financial reserves, growing public debt, record-breaking inflation, and a rapidly fall in the value of a currency.

The federal administration unveiled the yearly budget for the fiscal year 2023-2024 on June 9, 2023, against the backdrop of this financial meltdown, political turmoil, and pending elections. The budget plans to release USD 2.5 billion from a USD 6.5 billion IMF bailout programme that is going to expire this month.

The government expects inflation to be around 21% during the fiscal year 2023-2024, with a total budget outlay of PKR 14.46 trillion. It aims to attain a GDP growth rate of 3.5% during this time. A target budget deficit of 6.54 percent of GDP has also been set by the current government, which would be only barely smaller than the revised forecast of 7 percent for the current year.

The whole budget is expected to be raised by 53% from the previous year. The minimum wage has raised from 25,000 to 30,000 Pakistani rupees. There has been a 25%-35% increase in federal salary and pensions. In the meantime, funds for the Benazir Income Support Programme

(BISP), a programme designed to combat poverty, has been boosted by 12.5%.

### Gains:

1. Boosting agricultural gains: Custom Duty Exemptions: By eliminating custom charges on the import of essential inputs, the government offers incentives to the agricultural industry. Imports of seeds, shrimp/prawn/juveniles, and roasted peanuts are all exempt from these restrictions.
2. Facilitating industrial growth: Reduction in Customs charges: By considerably lowering customs charges and additional customs levies on imports of intermediary/industrial inputs falling under 10 Pakistan Customs Tariff (PCT) codes, the budget promotes industrialization and investment.
3. Import Duty Exemptions for Essential Items: To encourage industrial output, the budget avoids enacting higher charges on necessary goods including agricultural seeds, fertiliser, and raw materials for manufacturing.
4. Promoting Energy Efficiency and Conservation: Duty Exemptions for Solar Equipment: The budget places a strong emphasis on energy efficiency by eliminating customs taxes on the import of machinery,

supplies, and other items used in solar panels and associated installations.

5. Boosting Information Technology (IT) Sector Tax Exemptions for IT Equipment Imports: The budget exempts taxes on imports of IT equipment by exporters in an effort to encourage the expansion of the IT industry and IT-enabled services.
6. Encouraging Remittances and Currency Stability: Exemption of foreign remittances: The budget exempts overseas remittances up to USD 100,000 from the FBR's questioning. By lowering administrative barriers and promoting the inflow of remittances, this

action will eventually stabilize the changing currency rate and promote economic stability. "By putting taxes on industries that have not been sufficiently taxed, such wholesale, retail, and real estate, the budget squandered the chance to enact crucial changes."

- Setbacks:
1. Impact on Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX): Imposition of Final Tax on Bonus Shares: The budget places a final tax of 10% on the issuance of bonus shares, which could deter businesses from engaging. This action could decrease

market trading activity and have a detrimental impact on the Pakistan Stock Exchange.

2. Implications for Non-Filers: Advance tax on cash withdrawals: On cash withdrawals over PKR 50,000, non-filers are subject to an advance tax of 0.6%.
3. Challenges faced by the Textile Sector: The budget proposes hiking the sales tax on retail point-of-sale (POS) sales of textile and leather products from 12 to 15 percent. This tax increase places a heavy burden on the textile industry and can make it more difficult for it to compete on the world market.

**Conclusion:**  
 •The budget does make an effort to enact policies that will generate finances and promote economic stability in specific sectors.  
 •Unemployment and inflation are expected to increase under this budget.  
 •Unattainable growth objective.  
 •Due to IMF constraints and debt servicing, the people are not receiving enough relief.  
 •There are no novel approaches to alleviating poverty.  
 •The time has come to seriously consider long overdue structural improvements.  
 •Poor people's condition is not given much thought. Because of its focus on the forthcoming general election, the government lacks the capacity or will to act in any way that would be effective.

Analysis



Kiran Asim

## Pakistan and its Religio-Nationalism

Dur-e-Najaf

Religion has asserted itself as a powerful social and political force transforming many aspects of national and global politics and shaping individual beliefs and political behaviours. When religious matters are brought up in politics, it can be a strong incentive to get involved. Religion-related demands and complaints provide a foundation for religious politicisation, which makes religion socially relevant for followers and causes them to consider political action. Significant numbers of people still identify as religious, even in the most secularised nations.

The revival of religion politics has been one of the main features of the post-cold war era. It can be seen in the emergence of fundamentalist movements and Islamist revolutions like in Iran. One explanation for the resurgence of religious politics can be the material context, that it is less about religion and more about issues like economic injustice, social fairness, and political grievances that are the root causes of the phenomenon. The issue, in short, is politics, not religion.

In the case of Pakistan, political and religious connection has continued throughout the country's history. In their effort to create a new nation and state, Pakistan's founders had simultaneously offered two visions of Pakistani nationalism. The first was what one historian, Faisal Devji, defines as 'Muslim Zion'—a land where the Muslim minority dispersed across a vast sub continent could escape the majority's persecution. The other vision for Pakistan is described by another historian, Venkat Dhulipala, as a 'New Medina'—the harbinger of Islam's renewal and rise in the twentieth century, the new leader and protector of the global community of Muslims. The Pakistan movement, which played a key role in the division of British India, politicized religion.

The decision-makers believed that formalising Islam by the state and basing public policy on Islamic principles in a variety of fields, including education, culture, and the

media, would foster unity among the nation's diverse people and undermine regional nationalism based on language or ethnic considerations. In each situation, the main objective of such instrumental manipulation is to connect personal political interests to larger national, moral, and religious goals. The ideological nationalism seems to be the only viable instrument to retain control in a system disintegrated by political and economic instability.

It is crucial to understand that the formation of political Islam in Pakistan was the product of cooperation between Islamist groups and the state rather than any hostility between them. Due to state's support of religious identity, fundamentalists have violated secular law and extremist groups have demanded a portion of the power. People who consider themselves to be the religious protectors decide how an accused person will be punished. Over seventy people have been killed for blasphemy in this country since the turn of the century. Due to the public's demonization of victims and celebration of killers as heroes as a result of the state-promoted viewpoint, the government finds it difficult to take action against those who resort to violence to preserve the very faith that defines and is continuously used to define Pakistan.

Along with the development of extremism, this has made it difficult for the government to execute policies that would contradict the established narrative. The growing despondency and resentment towards the state and the privileged is the result of state preoccupation with political and ideological matters rather than to consider the matters more important for the welfare of the country. Government uses religious allegiances to acquire support and divert attention away from its poor performance. Millions of possibly ignorant, unemployed, and unhappy young people make up today's massive youth population. To cope with the arising instability it is needed of the leaders to take the grievances of people more seriously so that they may not have to resort to violence and revolt.

(Writer is student of Political Science can be reached at [dur.e.najaf021@gmail.com](mailto:dur.e.najaf021@gmail.com))

# Uzbekistan's foreign policy: the principles of peace and equality

**Ravshanbek Alimov**

The renewed Constitution unites society around the idea of building a new Uzbekistan.

It states that Uzbekistan's foreign policy is based on the principles of sovereign equality, inviolability of borders, territorial integrity of states, non-use of force or threat of force, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, and other generally recognized principles and norms of international law. In addition, Uzbekistan pursues a peaceful foreign policy aimed at developing bilateral and multilateral relations with states and international organizations. Uzbekistan may form alliances, join and withdraw from commonwealths and other interstate entities in the interests of the State, the people and their welfare and security.

Global and regional cooperation processes have reached a new level. The appreciation of political reforms carried out in our country by the international community has become an acknowledgement of this work.

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev's international initiatives have received broad support from the international community. The foreign policy of the New Uzbekistan has led to fundamental changes in the political atmosphere in Central Asia and to the recognition

of close interconnectivity and interdependence at the sub-regional and global levels.

In order to strengthen good-neighbourly relations with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, the Government of Uzbekistan has adopted a comprehensive program of measures. It aims to bring bilateral and regional relations to a new level. As part of the program, practical work is being carried out to organize top-level and high-ranking reciprocal visits, develop trade and economic relations, and create favorable conditions for increasing trade turnover and strengthening cooperation. In this regard, it is also important to use public diplomacy mechanisms, develop the transit and logistics potential of the region, and modernize transport infrastructure.

In order to further strengthen relations with neighbouring countries in the Central and South Asian regions, which are important for the development of interconnectivity and cooperation in a spirit of friendship, good neighbourliness, strategic partnership and mutual trust, joint events on various topics have been successfully held with the

participation of high-level delegations from nearly 30 partner countries and international organizations, and experts from foreign think tanks representing more than 40 states.

The Parliament of Uzbekistan, whose importance and powers have been significantly enhanced and expanded in the new version of the Constitution, also actively participates in the development and implementation of a peaceful, open and pragmatic foreign policy aimed at mutually beneficial cooperation with all countries, both near and far. The Chambers of the OliyMajlis have established bilateral friendship and cooperation groups with the parliaments of 56 countries and an Inter-Parliamentary Committee for cooperation with the European Parliament to ensure active participation in foreign policy issues. The geography of interaction is wide and includes the countries of Central Asia, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the states of Asia and Europe, as well as the United States, Canada and Argentina.

The OliyMajlis is a member of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and participates in the activities of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the CIS Inter-Parliamentary Assembly. Parliamentarians in Uzbekistan promote the position of the people in discussions on peacekeeping, security, protection of human rights and freedoms, sustainable development, economic support, social development, environmental preservation and other topical issues of the present.

Special attention is paid to the promotion of Uzbekistan's international initiatives in the main vectors of regional and international development. The Parliament directs its efforts to supporting the establishment of peace and stability in Afghanistan, addressing the issues caused by the Aral Sea disaster, other environmental challenges and threats, implementation of promising projects needed to create a diversified transport and communications system and transit corridors, ensuring the reliability of trade and economic cooperation.

The renewed Constitution opens new horizons for bilateral and multilateral interaction and gives a strong impetus to the further development of interparliamentary dialogue in the interests of sustainable development and prosperous life of our citizens.

*The Writer is Chairman of the Senate Committee of the OliyMajlis on International Relations, Foreign Economic Ties, Foreign Investment and Tourism*



## MBE bestowed on British-Pakistani diplomat in King's Birthday Honours list



**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Fozia Younis, a British-Pakistani diplomat, made it to the first King's Birthday Honours List 2023 for her contributions to UK foreign policy.

Formerly, Younis worked as the head of communications at the British High Commission in Islamabad and is currently the first British-Muslim Consul General in Toronto.

Taking to Twitter, she said she was feeling "honoured" to be a part of the prestigious list filled with names of dignitaries and powerhouses from various sectors of British society.

"Can't quite believe I am tweeting this but honoured to be part of the King's Birthday Honours list & be awarded with an MBE for contributions to foreign policy," she tweeted.

She has been awarded an MBE—Member of the Order of the British Empire—in recognition of her services. An MBE is a British honour awarded to individuals by the King or Queen for their achievement in a certain capacity and field.

Ahead of the royal visit in 2019, she ensured a smooth process, repatriated British citizens during COVID-19 and extended her support during flood relief efforts last year and celebrated the return of the England Cricket team after 17 years.

**Budget 2023 – 24**

## Glaring anomalies need immediate attention of the government

KARACHI: Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI, has appraised the media that after in-depth analysis of the federal budget 2023 – 24, FPCCI has come up with many budget anomalies; which will prove to be counterproductive if not rectified before the passage of the final version of the Finance Bill by the parliament.

Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that the most important anomalies are related to the customs. For example, section 14-A should be revised as, at present, the business community is facing major problems related to Delay Detention Certificate on imported goods. The business community demands that shipping lines and shipping agents should not give importance to the Customs Delay Detention Certificate; which is the main reason for the legal deficiency in the relevant regulations.

## Italy PM Meloni in Paris next week to support Rome's Expo 2030 bid



**News Desk**

ROME: Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni will travel to France next week to show support for Rome's bid to host the Expo 2030, a government source said on Saturday.

Meloni will be in Paris when the International Bureau of Expositions (BIE), the organiser of the world fair, holds its general assembly in the French capital on June 20 and 21, the source said.

Rome launched its candidacy with the hope of revamping its economy as Milan did with the Expo 2015.

The Italian capital faces competition from Saudi Arabia's Riyadh, South Korea's Busan and Ukraine's Odesa.

Expos are global events that gather millions of visitors in their host cities. The host country for the 2030 edition is expected to be elected in November 2023 by a vote of the 171 member states of the BIE.

While in Paris, it is uncertain whether Meloni will meet with French President Emmanuel Macron.

The two leaders met last month during a Group of Seven nations summit in Japan, aiming to move past tensions arising from accusations by French officials of Rome's mishandling of an influx of migrants.

Italian authorities have also expressed disappointment with the Elysée's commitment to supporting Riyadh.

Italy aims to challenge Saudi Arabia's Expo bid by emphasizing the importance of human rights and labour conditions, underscoring their commitment to ethical considerations.

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who will take part in the kingdom's official reception of Riyadh's candidacy on Monday in Paris, met Macron on Friday to discuss the war in Ukraine and other matters, the French presidency said.

On Tuesday, the Italian Embassy in Paris will hold an event dedicated to the theme of the Rome Expo.

## World powers to weigh 'climate financing' for worst-hit poor nations

With increasing concerns about the global climate and economic crisis, world leaders have once again gathered to join hands and discuss appropriate measures to improve the global financial and environmental situation.

The first round of negotiations for a global financial agreement will start in Paris the following week to provide poor nations with access to funds to combat the climate crisis and build socially just and environmentally sustainable economies.

French President Emmanuel Macron, will discuss climate finance, green growth, the debt crisis, and how to access private sector sources of investment with a number of other world leaders on Thursday.

According to The Guardian, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has not yet confirmed whether he will attend, but other EU leaders like German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen will be present.

Macron criticises current development finance systems, including climate finance, for their ineffective results in reducing emissions and weather impacts.

# Plane leaves Yemen capital for Saudi, first since 2016

*The first commercial flight from Yemen's rebel-held capital to Saudi Arabia since 2016*

A Yemenia Airways plane carrying 277 travellers departed at around 8 pm (1700 GMT), an official told AFP, seven years after Sanaa's international airport was blockaded by the Saudi-led coalition fighting the Iran-backed Huthi rebels.

"Hopefully, the blockade will end and the airport will remain open. We are very happy and relieved, and I cannot describe the feeling," said Mohammad Askar, one of the travellers.

The flight is the first since Sanaa's airport was closed by the coalition blockade in August 2016, more than a year into the Saudi-led military campaign to dislodge the Huthis.

Air traffic was largely halted by the blockade, but there have been exemptions for aid flights that are a lifeline for the



population.

Hundreds of thousands of people have died in the fighting in Yemen or from indirect causes such as lack of food or water, in what the United Nations calls one of the world's biggest humanitarian crises.

But despite coalition bombing raids and ground clashes, the Huthis, who seized control of Sanaa in 2014, ousting the internationally recognised government, rule over large

swathes of the country.

Two more flights will depart on Monday and Tuesday, officials said. The Huthis' Works Minister Ghaleb Mutlaq said about 200 flights would be needed to accommodate the 24,000 people that he said wanted to travel.

"We consider what is happening today as a good gesture, so that airports, especially Sanaa airport, will be opened to Yemeni travellers," Najeeb Al-Aji, the Huthis' minister of guidance, hajj and umrah, told journalists.

"Uptick in rhetoric" Fighting in Yemen sharply declined after a UN-brokered truce came into effect in April last year, and full-scale hostilities did not resume even when the ceasefire lapsed in October. Among the terms of the truce was a resumption of international flights from Sanaa. The first commercial flight in six years took off for Jordan's capital Amman in May last year.

Peace efforts have accelerated since March when Saudi Arabia, seeking to calm the region as it tries to revamp its oil-reliant economy and attract investment, announced a surprise rapprochement with its powerful rival Iran, seven years after they broke off ties. After Iran reopened its

embassy in Riyadh earlier this month, on Saturday Saudi Arabia's foreign minister visited Tehran, where he held talks with his opposite number.

A Saudi delegation flew to Sanaa in April, the same week as a major prisoner swap that freed nearly 900 detainees in a confidence-building measure.

However, the Saudi and Huthi negotiators failed to agree on a new truce and later Saudi ambassador Mohammed al-Jaber, while stressing both sides were "serious" about the process, told AFP that the next steps were unclear.

"We are all aware that the road to peace is going to be long and difficult," UN special envoy Hans Grundberg said at a forum in The Hague this week, noting "an uptick in public rhetoric threatening large-scale escalation".

# Tang Pakistan orchestrates remarkable Dragon Boat Festival, fostering bilateral cultural integration

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Tang Pakistan, a distinguished ed-tech SAAS company rooted in China, proudly organized the Dragon Boat Festival that captivated attendees with its profound display of Chinese culture seamlessly interwoven with the spirit of friendship and compassion between Pakistan and China. This awe-inspiring event took place on 17th June 2023 in Islamabad, leaving an indelible mark on the hearts of those in attendance.

Gracing the occasion as the esteemed Chief Guest was Engineer Liaquat Ali Jamro, from Sindh TEVTA, whose presence served as a testament to the significance of this cultural exchange. Furthermore, the event was graced by the Director of the Nust China Study Center, Ms. Xiangyang, who delivered a succinct and enlightening



introduction to the historical origins of the Dragon Boat

Festival, offering attendees a glimpse into its rich heritage.

Adding an enchanting melodic charm to the festivities, Mr. Max Ma and Mr. Yasir Zoraiz delighted the audience with their stunning performances, showcasing beautiful songs in Chinese and Urdu. Their soulful renditions promoted friendship between Pakistan and China and embodied the harmonious symphony that arises when two cultures intertwine.

The talented ensemble from the Rang Music and Art School performed stirring Pakistani Classical music, illuminating Pakistani culture's profound depths to our esteemed Chinese friends.

The festival exemplified the power of cultural exchange, transcending bounda-

ries through a remarkable amalgamation of delectable cuisine, exquisite art, soul-stirring music, and inspiring speeches. Attendees were left with lasting memories, cherishing the beautiful camaraderie forged between the Pakistani and Chinese communities.

Tang Pakistan takes immense pride in fostering such a vibrant cultural exchange, creating awareness of the rich tapestry of Chinese heritage and facilitating a deep understanding between nations. This Dragon Boat Festival stood as a testament to the enduring spirit of friendship and compassion that binds Pakistan and China together.



**Commencement of Production from Wali (Bettani) Oil & Gas Field Early Product in Facility**



**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL), the operator of the Wali (Bettani) Exploration License with a 100% working interest, is delighted to announce commencement of production from the Wali (Bettani) Oil & Gas Field situated in District Lakki Marwat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province.

OGDCL has successfully completed the installation of all necessary production facilities, which include well flow lines, gathering network, separators, dehydration plant, membrane unit, crude oil storage tanks, and dispatch gantries. These facilities have been installed by OGDCL team utilizing in-house expertise and resources. The Development of early production facility did not involve any import or local procurement as equipment available at other facilities was refurbished, remodeled and upgraded for utilization at Wali (Bettani).

We are proud to declare that the Wali (Bettani) Gas Field has commenced production by injection of gas into SNGPL transmission system with following anticipated daily production rates:

- Gas Production (Qgas): 10 MMSCF/Day
  - Oil Production (Qoil): 1000 Bbls/Day
- Going forward OGDCL will drill two additional wells i.e. Wali Deep #1 and Wali #02 during the next few months. Upon completion of these wells production would enhance to 50 MMSCF/Day with 3000 bbl of oil. The production from Wali (Bettani) field will help in meeting energy requirement of the Country and mitigate reliance on imported energy. The initial production will help in saving US \$ 43 M foreign exchange annually and upon full production by the end of FY 2023-24 the savings would surpass US\$ 176 M. This is indeed a proud amount for the OGDCL family for contributing to the prosperity of Pakistan.

**PSW and Ministry of Maritime Affairs to Reinforce Trade Via Digital Integration**

**Spokesman Report**

KARACHI: Pakistan Single Window (PSW) in collaboration with the Ministry of Maritime Affairs has successfully integrated the Marine Fisheries Department (MFD) and Mercantile Marine Department (MMD) into its network of digitally connected entities. MFD regulates export of fish and fishery products in Pakistan while MMD is responsible for regulating export of second-hand/used passenger and cargo ships, oil tankers, liquid cargo carriers, and fishing trawlers. Further MMD also ensures stowage standards in the export of Dangerous Goods. The internal working of both the departments was manual and paper-based, which is prone to fraud and forgery besides time consuming.

Supply chain reliability, safety, and efficiency are key to attracting foreign buyers to a country's products and enhanced exports. Exports of Fish and fishery products play a vital role in the national economy of Pakistan and have the potential to earn millions in foreign exchange. Digitization of the cross-border trade related procedures is one significant step towards improving the supply chain efficiency and safety.

Speaking about the initiative the CEO of PSW said, "Integration of the Marine Fisheries and the Marine Mercantile Department with PSW is in our recognition of the importance of this sector for facilitation and enhancement of Pakistan's cross border trade particularly exports."

**Ishaq Dar exposes sinister intentions and political role of IMF**

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: Former Vice President of FPCCI Atif Ikram Sheikh said on Saturday that Finance Minister Ishaq Dar has explained the political role of the IMF in detail, which is highly laudable.

The finance minister has firmly said that geopolitics was behind the suspended programme as global institutions wanted Pakistan to default like Sri Lanka and then negotiate.

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar has exposed the IMF's unholy designs and proved that the stalled programme of the lender had more to do with politics than its tough conditions, he added.

Atif Ikram Sheikh who has also served as President ICCI and Chairman PVMA said in a statement issued here today that despite exposing the lender, the FM is still optimistic that



something concrete will emerge soon. Pakistan is still negotiating with the IMF, but the finance minister has said in categorical

terms that with or without the IMF, the country would meet its obligations and there would be no default, he said.

The business leader said that the Chinese are also aware of the problems of Pakistan and efforts to force it to take unfavourable sides; therefore, they have rolled over deposits and refinanced commercial loans to the relief of Islamabad.

The Fund is delaying the revival of the programme and wasting time without any valid reasons for delaying the 9th Review.

The IMF was demanding details of the budget for the next financial year, a demand that the minister resisted but then had to share after a telephonic conversation between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the Managing Director of the IMF.

The finance minister has taken a stand on concessions to different sectors and said that Pakistan being a sovereign country cannot

accept everything the IMF demands.

Pakistan's economy is facing internal and external pressures of unprecedented nature, and based on that, the government prepared budgetary proposals to stimulate the dormant economy and reduce dependence and heavy reliance on foreign loans.

It is mainly because of the IMF conditions that investors are pulling out of the country, citing the inflated cost of doing business and other problems.

Pakistan was left with no option but to offer incentives and subsidies to those sectors that could contribute meaningfully to bringing the economy back on track.

The exemptions to IT, agriculture, and SME sectors were needed to spur growth, which plummeted to 0.29 percent, he observed.

The business community stands behind the government in its efforts to make Pakistan stand on its own two feet.

**Presenting Souvenir**

FAISALABAD: Chairman Pakistan Yarn Merchants Association Qaiser Shamsi presents Souvenir to Interior Minister of Pakistan Rana Sanaullah during his visit to Pakistan Yarn Merchants Association in City.



Photo: Online

**The Star Marketing property Expo begin in different city of Pakistan**



**Tahir Amin Malik**

LAHORE: The Star Marketing property Expo begin simultaneously at Karachi, Hyderabad, Multan, Mir Pur, Peshawar, Quetta, Lahore, Faisalabad, Sialkot, Islamabad, and Rawalpindi. In a press Conference MD Star Marketing Akhlaq Ahmed, Ceo Star Marketing Expo, Mehmood Ahmed Khan Senior Regional Director Star Marketing, Hayat

Ahmed On this occasion Ali Habib Regional Director Star Marketing was also present.

Akhlaq Ahmed said that huge discount will be given on the Stalls for customers on Star Property Expo in all 11 cities. Mr. Mehmood Ahmed said that due to the Star marketing expo the economy will be better and hope this event will be helpful for stable our economy in the country.

**Agriculture is the lifeline of Pakistan's economy: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari**

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that the agricultural sector can play a very key role in increasing exports and reducing imports. In the last one year, the trade deficit has reduced from 17 billion dollars to 3 billion dollars because of measures taken by the government. In order to completely eliminate the deficit, attention should be paid to increasing the export of fruits, vegetables and other agricultural commodities. Promotion of research is necessary to increase the efficiency of the agricultural sector. Government should mobilize embassies to promote Pakistani products to new markets of the world.

He expressed these views yesterday while talking to the members of the Agro Committee of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce who met him under the chairmanship of the Convener Committee Chaudhry Sohail. President Islamabad Chamber said that being an agricultural country, agriculture is the lifeline for the Pakistani economy. Pakistan achieved a record production of 27.5 million tons of wheat this year despite the devastating floods. Similarly, Pakistan ranks fifth with 88.7 million tons of sugarcane, 10th with 9.3 million tons of rice, 20th with 10 million tons of maize, 5th with 2.3 million tons of mango and sixth with 2.1 million tons of onion production.

Pakistan should take steps to take its agricultural products to traditional as well as



non-traditional markets, focusing on Central Asian countries. For the agriculture sector, the results of the Prime Minister Kisan package given by the government have been seen this year in the form of record production of wheat, the government should not only extend this package but also increase the incentives.

He said that like other industries of the country, the fruit and vegetable industry is facing problems due to high production costs. Fruit orchards in Pakistan have become very old, which has affected the production on the one hand, and on the other hand, due to the decline in quality, there are problems in exports. Mangoes and Kinu have a major share in Pakistan's agricultural exports, but this year, mango exports have decreased by 20%, while Kinu exports have decreased from 220 million dollars to

110 million dollars, which is a big blow to the government's export promotion policy. The government should promote research and development in the agricultural sector.

Speaking on this occasion, Convener Agro Committee Chaudhry Sohail said that we want to take steps to increase the export of fruits and vegetables from this region through the platform of Islamabad Chamber.

The government should ensure the exhibitions of the agricultural sector at the local and international level. He said that this sector is facing a severe shortage of cold storage, cold storage warehouses should be built at all airports for the storage of Pakistani agricultural commodities. Chaudhry Bashir, Nasebullah Khan, Babar Chaudhry, Khalid Chaudhry and others were also present in the meeting.

**BISP to release 4th quarterly tranche of Rs. 9000 for FY-2022-23 from Monday**

ISLAMABAD: Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) is releasing the 4th quarterly tranche of Benazir Kafaalat cash assistance from June 19 (Monday).

The fourth quarterly tranche will be Rs. 9000/- after a 25 percent increase, which was announced by the federal government early this year. In addition to Benazir Kafaalat cash assistance, Benazir Taleemi Wazaif stipend's installment of January to March is also being disbursed to 6.7 Million school going students having at least 70% attendance in school who are registered under Benazir Taleemi Wazaif.

This time, disbursement will be made through 1559, especially arranged Camp sites established throughout the country.

The arrangement of disbursement of Stipends

through Campsites is to facilitate the beneficiaries and ensure transparency. Provision of payment through ATMs of HBL and Bank Alfalah would not be available, nor will any payment be made at the POS outside the campsite established by the BISP.

About Rs. 81 billion will be disbursed among 9 million beneficiaries' families of Benazir Kafaalat cash assistance, while another Rs 16 billion will be doled out to the 6.7 million beneficiaries of Taleemi Wazaif.

It is important to note that at primary level Rs. 2000/- is paid to a girl student while Rs.1500 is given to a boy student. At secondary level, a girl student and a boy student is paid Rs. 3000/- and Rs 2500/- respectively, while at higher secondary level the stipend is Rs. 4000/- and Rs. 3500/- for the female and male students, respectively

**EFP Skills Development Employers Recognition Award 2023**

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: The technological advancement and competitive environment has made the skilled workforce indispensable for industrial and sustainable economic development said by Gier Thomas Tomstool, Director, ILO Country Office Islamabad while addressing at the Award Distribution Ceremony of 'EFP Skills Development Employers Recognition Award 2023' organized by Employers' Federation of Pakistan (EFP).

Director, ILO Gier Thomas further said out of total youth population aged 15-29 years of 55.35 million, 19.33 million youth neither enrolled in any school nor have any training for employment which is making them more vulnerable. He added role of employers is significant in providing decent work opportunities to its workforce for enhancing skills through professional training and improving skills at the work-

place. He appreciated the EFP efforts and said introducing an Employers Recognition Award on skills development is a unique idea to support government initiatives on Skills Development.

Muhammad Feroz Alam, Board Director and Chairman, EFP-Sub Committee on TVET, Skills Development said the availability of educated and skilled workforce is important for productivity and enterprise competitiveness. He added the low level of skills in the Pakistani workforce is not only a major factor constraining the efforts of poverty reduction and employment creation but also limiting the opportunities of Pakistani industries to compete in the global economy for export of goods / services besides, attracting foreign investment.

Feroz added that equipping youth with right skills as per need of local and international labour market is the best way to address the socio-economic challenges faced

to the country. The EFP realizing the importance of skills development has developed EFP Skills Initiatives 2030. This Employers' Recognition Award on Skills Development and introduction of National Skills Passport are the important initiatives of EFP.

Syed Nazar Ali, Secretary General, EFP explained the process and criteria of evaluation and selection of winning companies. In Diamond Category, Master Changan Motors, Artistic Milliners, Masood Textile Mills, K-Electric, Harbin Electric International O&M, Descon Engineering, Tri-Pack Films, Dr. Essa Laboratory & Diagnostic Center and in Gold Category, Indus Motor Company, Pak Suzuki Motor, Master Motor, Artistic Denim Mills, US Apparel & Textiles, Lucky Textile Mills, FFBL Power Company, Forward Sports, Bestway Cement, Archroma Pakistan, Agriauto Industries, Pakistan Telecommunication Company, while in Silver Category, Siddiqsons, Tata Textile



Mills, Nergyico Pk, Procon Engineering, PCI Automotive, Shabbir Tiles & Ceramics, Movenpick Hotel Karachi and Chase Up won the awards.

# China's Hangzhou fully prepared to host 19th Asian Games

Spokesman Report

BEIJING: China's Hangzhou is fully prepared to host the 19th Asian Games as construction of all venues and facilities was completed in April.

The two-week sporting event which was postponed last year because of Covid-19, will be held from Sept 23 to Oct. 8 this year.

All the venues for the games have passed their acceptance inspection. Also, over 30 test events and rehearsals of the events have been completed, a group of international media was briefed during a press tour organized by Xinhua.

The member of media visited Hangzhou E-sports Center, LGD Club, Hangzhou Olympic Sports Center, Tennis Center and Swimming Center.

Hangzhou, the capital of Zhejiang Province and one of the seven ancient capitals of China will host the Asian Games with a focus on green and sustainable principles supported by high-tech, according to organizers.

Green energy sources, such as solar and wind power, have been widely implemented in all the Games venues.



Furthermore, online services, digital products, and state-of-the-art facilities have been put in place, eagerly anticipating the arrival of participants from across Asia in approximately 100 days. Hangzhou metro line 19, adorned with the emblem and slogan of the 19th Asian Games, connects the city's railway stations and international airport, providing significant convenience for

residents since its launch last year. The venues for the games are spread across six zones in the cities of Hangzhou, Ningbo, Wenzhou, Jinhua, Shaoxing, and Huzhou. More than 8 million people have already visited the competition and training venues. "The venues have become popular destinations for the public to engage in sports activities. A series of rehears-

al activities have been conducted to further enhance the operations, catering, medical, and transportation services. Currently, all the venues are fully prepared for the Games", a senior official said.

Currently, Hangzhou has completed a 516-kilometre rail transit and a 480-kilometre expressway network, ensuring smooth transportation during the Games and establishing a solid foundation for the long-term integrated development of the Yangtze River Delta.

To mark the 100-day countdown to the Hangzhou Asian Games, the Asiatic flame was lit in the archaeological ruins of Liangzhu ancient city in Zhejiang and the medal designs was released.

All 45 national and regional Olympic Committees in Asia have registered for the Hangzhou Asiatic, demonstrating immense enthusiasm for the event.

More than 900 Chinese athletes will be pursuing their dreams at the Hangzhou Asiatic.

Hangzhou will become the third city in China to host Asia's premier sports event, after Beijing in 1990 and Guangzhou, capital of South China's Guangdong Province, in 2010.

## Pak special athletes to compete for medals from June 18



News Desk

BERLIN (GERMANY): Special athletes of Pakistan will start their journey on June 18 to vie for the medals in the 16th Special Olympic World Games here.

In connection with the preparations for which, the Pak squad had training sessions on Saturday.

In the field hockey mixed event of the World Games, the Pakistan team will play its first match against Belgium and the second match against the Netherlands.

In the Swimming event of 25M-50M freestyle event, Hassan Patel of the national team, while Amina Momin will compete in the 25m freestyle and 50m backstroke, whereas Fatima Ali in the 25m freestyle and backstroke will be seen in action.

On June 19, Pakistan's women's and men's teams will participate in the 5\*5 basketball event.

Simran Mahesh, MahNoor, Farhan Aslam and Jamil ur Rahman will represent the national team in the single, double and team events of Bocci from June 20.

Starting from June 20 are the 50 meters, 100, 200, 400, 800, 1500 and 3000 meters races of the athletics events, and field events of the long jump, standing long jump, shot put and javelin competitions, in which our national athletes will feature.

The draws for the futsal event will be held on Monday, besides table tennis, powerlifting, badminton, cycling and tennis competitions will be held on June 20 and 21.

## Shuhad e Pakistan hockey tournament Rawalpindi 2023



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Shuhad e Pakistan hockey tournament Rawalpindi 2023 Islamabad tiger qualify for semi finals after beating Faisal hockey club 4-3 high intensity match...

Shuhad e Pakistan hockey tournament Rawalpindi 2023 is going in shehnaaz sheikh hockey stadium where a pool match was played between Faisal hockey club and Islamabad tiger hockey club where Islamabad tiger hockey club who is playing under the captaincy of Najeeb Khattak qualify for semi finals. Islamabad tigers captain Najeeb Nd Khattak played his team very well and qualify for semi finals..

## Scotland stun Norway with late comeback

Scotland stunned Norway 2-1 in Oslo on Saturday to take a massive step towards qualification for Euro 2024.

Erling Haaland gave the hosts the lead from the penalty spot in the 56th minute, but Scotland rallied in the final 13 minutes to score two goals in two minutes. Lyndon Dykes equalised in the 87th minute and Kenny McLean scored the winner in the 89th minute.

The win puts Scotland top of Group A with 10 points from three games. Spain is second with six points, while Norway is third with four points. The top two teams in each group qualify for Euro 2024.

Scotland's late comeback was a remarkable achievement, given that they had not won in Norway since 1992. The Scots were also without several key players, including Kieran Tierney, John McGinn, and Ryan Christie.

## Djibouti thrash Pakistan to win four-nation tournament

A Sports

ISLAMABAD: Djibouti had a flying start to their match against Pakistan as Douualeh M. Elabeh netted in the 10th minute.

Pakistan got a number of chances to fire the equaliser but faltered.

The two sides went into the break with Djibouti leading the scorecard with 1-0.

Djibouti put on an even more ruthless show in the second half and tested Pakistan's defence with the high press.

The side soon got the reward of their attacking approach when Gabriel Dadzie doubled their lead in the 73rd minute after a costly error by goalkeeper Saqib Hanif.

It was turning out to be



a one-sided affair in the favour of Djibouti until Hayat Mohammad Umar netted in the 84th minute to cut the opposition's lead to 2-1 and glimmered a ray of hope for the men in green. Pakistan's comeback was soon shortlived as Samuel Akinbinu struck a minute later to retain Djibouti's lead with the scoreboard reading 3-1.

193 respectively.

After concluding their campaign in the four-nation tournament, the Pakistan men's football team will mark their return to the SAFF Championship after missing the last two out of the 13 editions held since 1993.

The national team has been drawn with India alongside invitee Kuwait and Nepal in Group A while Group B features Bangladesh, Bhutan, Lebanon and Maldives.

The Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) could not send its men's team for the 2015 edition held in India due to the lack of funds.

The national side then missed the 2021 edition as they were serving a suspension from FIFA, which was lifted last year in June.

## Table Tennis Level-2 Coaches Training Course got underway

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Table Tennis Level-2 Coaches Training Course got underway under the supervision of International Table Tennis Federation trainer Mr Ramzi at NPSG Gymnasium Hall on Saturday.

Director General Sports Punjab Dr Asif Tufail inaugurated the course being organised under the auspices of Sports Board Punjab by cutting the ribbon.

The course will continue

till June 27 at Nishtar Park Sports Complex Gymnasium Hall.

Pakistan Table Tennis Federation President Ahmer Malik, Director Youth Affairs Syed Umair Hassan, Secretary Punjab Olympic Association Idris Haider Khawaja, Irfanullah Khan from Punjab Table Tennis Association and Administrator NPSG Gymnasium Hall Mustafa Shah were also present on this occasion.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony, Director General

Sports Punjab Dr. Asif Tufail informed that as many as 24 coaches from across the country are participating in the Level-2 course. "Level 2 Coaches Training Course will help a lot in the promotion of table tennis game".

Director General Sports Punjab Dr. Asif Tufail said that training of our coaches under the supervision of international quality coach is a welcome sign. "Sports Board Punjab is working for the development of all sports across the province".

Director General Sports Punjab Dr. Asif Tufail further said that with the training of coaches, the game of our players will definitely improve. "Mr Ramzi is a qualified coach from the International Table Tennis Federation".

International coach Mr Ramzi on this occasion said that Pakistani players have been blessed with a lot of talent. "The sports culture is developing rapidly in Pakistan," International coach Mr. Ramzi said.

## Shaheen Afridi returns to Test side for Sri Lanka tour

Asim Tanveer

ISLAMABAD: Batter Mohammad Huraire and all-rounder Aamir7 Jamal receive maiden calls

Fast bowler Shaheen Afridi returns to Pakistan's Test squad for the two-match away series against Sri Lanka next month. The men's national selection committee has also included uncapped batter Mohammad Huraire and all-rounder Aamir Jamal in the 16-strong squad for what will be Pakistan's first assignment in the third cycle of the ICC World Test Championship.

Pakistan squad Babar Azam (c), Mohammad Rizwan (vc & wk), Aamir Jamal, Abdullah Shafique, Abrar Ahmed, Hasan Ali, Imam-ul-Haq, Mohammad Huraire, Mohammad Nawaz, Naseem Shah, Noman Ali, Salman Ali Agha, Sarfaraz Ahmed (wk), Saud Shakeel, Shaheen Afridi and Shan Masood

The squad has been designed keeping in mind the conditions that the team will encounter in Sri Lanka. The team boasts four spinners, four fast bowlers, six

specialist batters and two keeper-batters.

Shaheen is one wicket away from reaching a century of Test wickets and no Pakistan bowler has picked up more wickets than him since the left-armer made his debut on 3 December 2018. Shaheen, 23, averages 24.86 and has an economy of 3.04.

Expressing his pleasure to be back in the Test side, Shaheen said: "I am very excited to be returning to the Pakistan Test side after a year. I dearly missed Test cricket and it was tough for me to be away from this format.

After missing our entire home season because of the injury I suffered in Sri Lanka, I am eager to make an impactful comeback in the same country and complete a century of wickets in Test cricket. I want to thank my fans who have provided me support in tough times and I am ready for the challenges ahead.

Huraire has played 24 first-class, 10 List A and six T20s and he has earned the spot after an impressive run. He was the leading run-scorer in the last two iterations of the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy. In the 2022-23

edition, the 21-year-old, who hails from Sialkot, was the only batter to breach the 1000-run mark, playing an integral role in helping Northern to maiden first-class title. In 11 matches, Huraire smashed four centuries and two half-centuries on his way to 1,024 runs at an average of 73.14.

He continued his first-class form on the tour of Zimbabwe last month scoring 178 and 64 against Zimbabwe A at Kwekwe and Mutare.

He holds the record for being the second youngest batter to score a first-class triple-century in Pakistan, behind legendary Javed Miandad. Huraire achieved the feat in the 2021-22 season, hitting 311 off 343 in Northern's thumping win of an innings and 170 runs over Balochistan at the State Bank Ground, Karachi.

Huraire will be joined by his Northern and Shaheens' teammate Aamir. The 27-year-old, who hails from Mianwali, topped the wicket-takers chart for the fast bowlers in Quaid-e-Azam Trophy 2022-23, taking 31 scalps at 29.71 and recorded two five-wicket hauls. He



was the leading wicket-taker in the recent six-match One-Day series between Zimbabwe Select and Pakistan Shaheens with 16 dismissals at an average of 21.

Aamir's career's highlight, however, was defending 15 runs in the last over against England's Moeen Ali on his Pakistan debut in September last year. Aamir's immaculate death bowling helped Pakistan to a thrilling six-run win over England in the fifth T20 International of the

seven-match series. Aamir has the experience of two T20Is, 23 first-class, 23 List A and 20 T20s.

Reflecting on the squad, Haroon Rashid, the national men's chief selector, said: "I want to congratulate all the players who have been selected in the side, especially Mohammad Huraire and Aamir Jamal who have pushed their case through impressive performances over a period of time.

The players who have missed

out on the selection should not get bogged down as they firmly remain part of our plans. We have an exciting and challenging season ahead of us and they should make the most of the opportunities in domestic cricket and Shaheens' tours to keep themselves ready."

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Cricket Board has also announced the appointment of Morne Morkel as the national side's bowling coach. The former

South Africa pacer has joined the national side on a six-month contract. Over the course of his 11-year-long international career, Morkel took 309 wickets in 86 Tests, 188 wickets in 117 ODIs and 47 scalps in 44 T20Is. His last international game was in Lahore for World XI against Pakistan in September 2017.

Player support personnel: Rehan-ul-Haq (team manager), Grant Bradburn (head coach), Andrew Puttick (batting coach), Morne Morkel (bowling coach), Aftab Khan (fielding coach), Abdul Rehman (assistant coach), Drikus Saaiman (strength and conditioning coach), Cliffe Deacon (physiotherapist), Ahsan Ifikhar Nagi (media and digital content manager), Lt Col Usman Anwari (Retd) (security manager), Talha Ejaz (analyst) and Malang Ali (masseur).

Pakistan will assemble in Karachi on 3 July for a camp ahead of their departure for Sri Lanka on 9 July. The itinerary of the tour will be announced by Sri Lanka Cricket in due course.

Pakistan and Sri Lanka last played a Test series in July 2022 that was drawn 1-1.