



**Economic stability plays vital role to face challenges: Kundi**

Special Assistant to Prime Minister Faisal Karim Kundi Sunday said the economic stability of a country plays a vital role to face any challenge as the governments make efforts to make the economic condition more sound. Commenting on the role of the coalition government, he said that the coalition government had to face many challenges due to a weak economy.



**Bilawal Bhutto is the next Prime Minister: Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani**

Former PM and Senator Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani addressed the press conference in Jhelum. He said we are not being trusted for violating the IMF agreement. They no longer trust us after the previous govt accepted IMF conditions and violating them. Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani further added, PPP's position to hold elections on time is unwavering. We are allies in the government, so we have to take a decision with consensus. (Details on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

**Oath taking ceremony**

MUZZAFFERABAD: President of Azad Kashmir Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry taking oath from newly elected Ministers, in the Capital of AJK.



Photo: Online

**Former rulers who ruined economy were crying over possibility of restoration of IMF programme: Marriyum**



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Sunday that it was strange that those who ruined the national economy were crying over signs of restoration of agreement signed by themselves with International Monetary Fund (IMF).

In a statement, the minister said that on May 9, they burned the country, attacked military and private properties, desecrated the memorials of martyrs and now they

were preparing to damage the economic interests of the country again.

"Arsonists, conspirators and enemies of the country have started crying again as they heard the news that the agreement with the IMF is being restored", she maintained.

Marriyum said that the previous regime signed the IMF agreement on strict terms, violated it and then suspended the agreement, then hatched conspiracies against the country and the agreement.

The minister said that questions should be asked to those who were crying over the agreement and why did they sign the agreement with the IMF. She said it was ironic that those who were shouting about the agreement, themselves had signed the agreement with the IMF.

**NA passes Finance Bill 2023 with certain amendments**

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly on Sunday passed the Finance Bill 2023-2024, giving the go-ahead to the budgetary proposals for the upcoming financial year. The bill with a total outlay of Rs14,480 billion was moved by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar in the house.

The House passed the federal budget with the revised targets to appease the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the revival of the stalled loan programme. According to the amendments, the target for tax collection has been revised to Rs 9,415 billion from 9,200 billion.

Rupees Rs801 billion have been allocated for the payments of pension against the earlier allocation of Rs761 billion.

According to the Finance Bill, the provinces will get Rs5,390 billion under National Finance Commission (NFC) Award.

Addressing the National Assembly on Saturday, Federal Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said that the petroleum development levy was increased from Rs50 to Rs60 per litre, claiming that the limit of the levy will not cross Rs60.

For the fiscal year starting next



month, the federal government will raise a further Rs215 billion in new tax and cut Rs85 billion in spending, as well as several other measures to shrink the fiscal deficit, he said.

Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf put all the amendments proposed by lawmakers Maulana Abdul Akbar Chitrali, Saira Bano, Nisar Cheema, Zahra Wadood Fatimi, Nawab Sher Waseer, Asiya Azeem, which were with a majority vote; except for Maulana Abdul Akbar Chitrali's amendment, which was included in the bill for the Assembly's approval. Consequently, the amendment proposed by MQM member Salahuddin was also rejected by the House. In the light of the Senate recommen-

dations, the National Assembly also approved the amendments proposed in the Finance Bill 2023-24 by the Finance Minister.

The bill, presented in the House on June 9 by the finance minister for consideration, got the approval of the National Assembly with certain changes in the figures related to revenue targets and other matters in the budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

Accordingly, the revenue target of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) had increased from Rs9.2 trillion to Rs 9.415 trillion, provincial revenue from Rs 5.276 trillion to Rs5.39 trillion, federal government expenditures from Rs 14.46 trillion to Rs 14.48 trillion, the pension volume from Rs 761 billion to Rs 801 billion, the sub-

**NA amends election law, abolishes lawmakers' lifetime disqualification**

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly on Sunday passed an amendment bill in the Election Act 2017, abolishing lifetime disqualification of lawmakers under Article 62 (1) (f). The passage of the legislation in the lower house set aside the obstacle of lifetime disqualification for former prime minister and PML-N supreme Nawaz Sharif, who could contest election for public office again after the bill will be signed by the president into a law.

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar tabled the Election Act Amendment Bill 2023 as supplementary agenda in the assembly, which was passed with majority vote.

The Senate has already passed the amendment in the Election Act 2017, abolishing lifetime disqualification of lawmakers under Article 62 (1) (f).

According to the amendment, maximum disqualification period of a lawmaker will be considered for 5 years where the term of the

punishment is not specified in the constitution.

According to Article 62-1F, the disqualification of a lawmaker will be for five years, and the individual will be eligible to contest elections and become a member of the Parliament or provincial assemblies after completion of the term, the amendment in the Election Act suggests.

The Election Act Amendment Bill also empowered the Election Commission of Pakistan to announce the schedule for general elections. The electoral body will also be entitled to make any change in it.

The amended bill could likely to become an act of the law soon in absence of President Alvi, who has left today for Saudi Arabia to perform Hujj.

Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani on Sunday assumed the charge of acting president. He is expected to sign the election law amendment bill into a law soon.

dy volume would stand at Rs1.064 trillion, and the grants volume at Rs. 1.405 trillion.

As a result of all these measures,

improvements would be seen in the budget's deficit, and the fiscal deficit would decrease by Rs 300 billion.

**Only Imran responsible for all May 9 tragic incidents: Kh Asif**

Faisal Butt

SLALKOT: Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif has said that the mastermind, planner and inventor of the May-9 incident was only Imran Khan.

Addressing a dinner reception, given in his honour by members of the Cantt Board Sialkot, he regretted that it was former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman who challenged the state writ and the state institutions. He said the state is like a mother to its citizens, but this person ended that relationship in lust for power.

He said the lesson he (Imran Khan) imparted to his party activists, and the planning he done, resulted in attacks on memorials of martyrs and military installations and the defense assets, saying that political workers were incited by their leader to attack the state and its institutions.

KhAsif said what happened



on May 9, no one should doubt that its mastermind, planner and its creator was the PTI chairman alone. He said that during the last 14 months, this person (Imran Khan) did not even once ask to meet or sit down with politicians to solve the national problems. He only expressed his desire to talk to the military leadership.

The defence minister said Pakistan Army is the guarantor of country's defence and integrity. He said that power was taken away from politicians many times in the past; power was taken away from Nawaz Sharif three times, while Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto was hanged, but no one challenged the state writ. Rather, they waited for elections for years and came to power with the power of vote, he added.

**Allied parties role, Opposition's suggestion during budget session commendable**

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Murtaza Javed Abbasi on Sunday expressed his satisfaction and appreciation for the approval of the budget for the fiscal year 2023-24.

He hailed the government's recognition of the agendas put forth by allied parties and the constructive suggestions offered by the opposition.

The minister commended the fruitful discussion and active participation of both government and opposition representatives during the 13-day session in the National Assembly.

**Development works halted by PTI in KP restarted by PML-N govt: Amir Muqam**

News Desk

SWAT: Adviser to the Prime Minister, Engr Amir Muqam here on Sunday said that Pakistan Muslim League (N) strongly believed in the country's uniform development process and had restarted work on projects in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including Swat after it was halted by the PTI government.

Addressing a public gathering after the inauguration of the Passport Office at Khwazakhela in Upper Swat, Engr Amir Muqam said that the work on the gas projects was started by PMLN Govt in 2017 at Swat which had been halted by the previous PTI government, thus making great injustice with people.

He said the PML-N has restarted work on all halted gas projects in Swat to provide the much-needed



relief to the people.

During the government of former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, he said that passport offices were established in all districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He said that establishing five new passport offices at Pathan Lower Kohistan, Chakdara Lower Dir, Sheringal Upper Dir, Shergarh-Mardan and Khawzakhela Swat was another gift of PML-N government for the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Engr Amir Muqam said that political opponents could not mislead the people of Swat anymore as these elements were completely failed to address their problems during nine years long rule of PTI.

He said that Khwazakhela road, gas projects at Charbagh, Manglwar and Nawaz Sharif Kidney Hospital Swat were completed by the PML-N govt benefiting millions of people.

Engr Amir Muqam said that feasibility studies for Bisham-Khwazakhela expressway had been completed, adding that after completion, it would change the destiny of the people of Malakand division including Swat and Shangla. He said this mega project was approved by the Nawaz Sharif government and the present government has restarted work on its feasibility.

**Asad Mehmood calls for review of FATA merger**

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Communication, Asad Mehmood, on Sunday urged the government to thoroughly review the merger of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in light of the ongoing challenges faced by the region.

Speaking on the floor of the National Assembly, the minister emphasized the need to ascertain the desires of the people of FATA through a referendum.

Minister Mehmood highlighted that although progress has been observed in the FATA areas, it is crucial to obtain firsthand information about the issues faced by the local population.

**Pre-monsoon rains likely to reduce current extreme heatwave: Sherry Rehman**

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman on Sunday said the pre-monsoon rains were likely to reduce the current extreme heatwave.

In a series of tweets, the federal minister said according to the advisory of the Pakistan Meteorological Department, pre-monsoon rains were predicted across the country from June 25 to June 30.

Senator Rehman said between June 25 and 30, strong winds, thunderstorms, and heavy rain were expected in various cities of Punjab, including Islamabad and Rawalpindi, Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Under the influence of this system, wind, thunder and heavy rains were likely to occur in various cities of Balochistan, South Punjab and Sindh between June 26



and June 29, she added. In case of heavy rains, she said there was a risk of urban flooding in urban areas while floods and landslides were feared in hilly areas.

All concerned and local bodies have been instructed to be alert and tourists to be cautious, she added.

The Minister urged that citizens were requested to stay away from weak infrastructure, electric poles, and rivers during strong winds and rains to avoid any untoward incident.



## Heavy rain

ISLAMABAD: Vehicles on their way during heavy rain that experienced the city during night time on Sunday.



Photo: APP

## Military courts case: Farogh Naseem to represent PM Shehbaz Sharif

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has appointed senior lawyer Farogh Naseem as his lawyer in the military courts' case being heard by the Supreme Court (SC).

PM Shehbaz Sharif has appointed senior lawyer and former law minister Farogh Naseem as his lawyer in the case. Irfan Qadir will represent Defence Minister Khawaja Asif and Shah Khawar will represent Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah in the case.

On Friday, it was learnt that the top



court is likely to announce verdict on pleas challenging trials of civilians in military courts on Tuesday.

A seven-member bench — comprising Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Ijazul Ahsan, Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Muneeb Akhtar, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice

Ayesha Malik, and Justice Mazahir Ali Naqvi, is hearing a set of petitions against military trials after a nine-member bench was dissolved as Justice Qazi Faez Isa and Justice Tariq Masood recused themselves from the hearing.

We desire to get the results by Tuesday, CJP was quoted as saying while hearing the case. The apex court also directed to avoid harassing lawyers and journalists. "Don't want to pass judicial order on the issue."

During the hearing, CJP Bandial remarked that the army can request the anti-terrorism courts (ATCs) to get

the custody of civilians for their trial under military laws.

"It's common sense that crimes under the Official Secrets Act are to be determined by the army itself and it can request anti-terrorism courts seeking the custody of civilians for trials under army laws," the top judge remarked.

However, he noted that there was no solid reasoning provided by the military. "We will ask this from Attorney General Mansoor Usman Awan."

The further hearing on the case has been adjourned until Monday at 9:30 in the morning.

## The IMF rejected the budget: Shah Mehmood Qureshi demands for Ishaq Dar's resignation

## Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Vice Chairman Makhdoom Shah Mehmood Qureshi while addressing a press conference in Multan said that the IMF has rejected the budget, IMF has no confidence in the government, hence the resignation of Finance Minister Ishaq Dar. It should be given. This government has put an additional burden of 1500 billion on Pakistanis, yesterday the nation was promised more taxes of 215 billion, yet the IMF is not satisfied with the revenue target. He said that currently the country's industry is in crisis.

Textile mills are currently closed, 40 percent of textile and other industries have closed or

are about to close. More than 25 lakh people have become unemployed. He said that the country's economy depends on agriculture. Unnecessary taxes have also been imposed on agriculture, the backbone of the economy, 5% excise duty has been imposed on fertilizers. Only the agriculture sector can give growth to the Pakistani economy, but the farmers are worried about unnecessary taxes, farmers say that relief has been given to agriculture, but 5% duty has been imposed on agricultural medicines. This budget was rejected by the entire nation, including traders, farmers and the IMF.

He said that load shedding has been increased in cities, while load shedding is being done for more than 12 hours in villages. The amnesty scheme



was announced that bringing up to 1 lakh dollars will not be questioned. He has also raised an objection to the scheme of bringing. He said that he was very sorry as a former foreign minister after reading the news regarding the meeting between

President Joe Biden and India in Washington. Only a woman from the Foreign Office has spoken but it is the responsibility of the government to give a concrete response to it. The sacrifices made by our security agencies to deal with terror-

ism is not even mentioned anywhere.

The atrocities of Kashmir are not even mentioned. It is surprising that our Prime Minister is talking about mangoes in France. Someone tell him that Mr. Prime Minister should also discuss the joint commission with mangoes. He said that the future of PTI belongs to the people. The reason is bright. In response to a question regarding taking back the post of Vice Chairman of Tehreek-e-Insaf, he said, "I am over the politics of tickets and positions, the flag of justice is in my hands since 2011 and everything is Imran Khan." Some people keep doing mischief and spreading rumours, but Shah Mehmood Qureshi will never leave Tehreek-e-Insaf.

## UAE inaugurates pavilion at SCO Expo in Qingdao, China



## News Desk

BELJING: The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has set up a pavilion at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) International Investment and Trade Fair held in Qingdao, East China's Shandong Province.

UAE Ambassador to China Hussain bin Ibrahim Al Hammadi and Zhang Xinzhu, a member of the Standing Committee of the CPC Qingdao Municipal

Committee and head of the SCO Model Zone, jointly opened the UAE Pavilion.

Zhang congratulated the launch of the UAE national pavilion and said that the SCO Model Zone is based on economic and trade cooperation and seeks to promote platforms and demonstration models in this area, an effort that has been unanimously recognized by both sides.

For its next step, the SCO Model Zone will strengthen connections with UAE enterprises to help them expand into the Chinese market.

Hammadi said that as the UAE joins the SCO family, UAE will work with China and other member states to achieve peace and prosperity, promote regional development and contribute to global peace and development, Global Times reported.

## NLC launches cargo service to China

## Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: National Logistics Cell (NLC) launches regular cargo service for China, connecting Islamabad and Karachi to Kashgar and Shanghai.

In a bid to promote bilateral trade and activate the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project, the National Logistics Cell (NLC) has commenced regular cargo service from Islamabad and Karachi to Kashgar and Shanghai.

The launch of this cargo service will help pave the way for the implementation of the Quadrilateral Transit Trade Agreement between China, Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan and the International Road Transport (TIR) Convention in the future.

These agreements will establish clear roadmaps for region-

al trade development, ensuring overall economic progress in the region.

To mark the departure of trucks heading towards China, NLC organized a ceremony at the Silk Route Dry Port in Sost.

After completing the



required customs and immigration procedures, the trucks ventured on their journey to Kashgar, eventually entering the border city of China through the Khunjerab Pass.

Upon their return, these trucks will carry imported cargo

to various cities across Pakistan, strengthening the two-way nature of the Silk road as historic trade route.

The launch of cross-border cargo service for China has been welcomed by all stakeholders, expressing optimism that this facility will significantly boost bilateral trade between the two friendly nations.

Prior to this development, NLC has taken several measures to enhance Pakistan's imports through land routes.

With remarkable success, NLC has established trade routes to Turkey and Azerbaijan via Iran and facilitated the transportation of commercial goods to Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan through Afghanistan.

The introduction of new transit terminals under the TIR Convention in these countries has resulted in noticeable time and cost reductions for traders.

## Khawaja Asif opposes Chairman Senate Salaries, Allowance, Privileges Bill

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Sunday urged the House not to support the Chairman Senate Salaries, Allowance and Privileges Bill passed by the Senate recently as the country could not afford such incentives in the prevailing economic situation.

Speaking in the National Assembly after passage of federal budget for fiscal year 2023-24, the minister said, he has great respect for senators and the Senate as he had started his political career from the Senate. However, the people and business community are in immense difficulties due to the prevailing financial crisis, he said.

He said the salary of MNA stood

at Rs 168,000 per month which was lower than a federal secretary.

He said such privilege in the current financial circumstance could not be afforded. Lauding the Finance Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar and his entire finance teams, he said that a balanced budget was presented despite of critical situation.

He expressed the hope that a new era of economic stability would start soon.

The minister also clarified that neither the government was bearing expenditure nor giving any special facility for members of the National Assembly for performing Hajj. Even ordinary people were also part of the special flight to carry pilgrims to Saudi Arabia, he added.

## Putin says he deals with special military op issues from morning till night

## TASS

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin said that he keeps the situation of the special operation under control around the clock.

"Of course, I pay priority attention [to the special military operation]," he told journalist Pavel Zarubin. "This is how the day begins and this is how it ends," Putin pointed out during an interview with the "Moscow. Kremlin. Putin" TV program, recorded on June 21.

When asked if he can get a report on important issues at 3 a.m., for



example, the president shared that he "has been staying up quite late lately."

"Of course, I always have to be in touch. That's the way it goes. Always, I'm always in touch. Close by," he concluded.

## Bilawal Bhutto is The Next Prime Minister: Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani

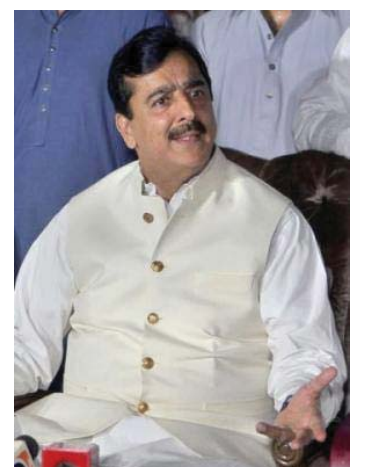
## Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Former Prime Minister and Senator Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani addressed the press conference in Jhelum. He said We are not being trusted for violating the IMF agreement. They no longer trust us after the previous government accepted IMF conditions and violating them.

Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani further added: PPP's position to hold elections on time is unwavering. We are allies in the government, so we have to take a decision with consensus and we made it clear that Pakistan People's Party is part of the government coalition and will decide the elections together.

He declared the talk of electoral alliance with the PMLN as premature. The decision of the electoral alliance will be decided with mutual consultation with the PMLN. The talk of seat adjustment with PMLN is premature because Pakistan People's Party has its own manifesto and they have their own program. Yes, we will carry our manifesto. We do not have an election alliance with the PMLN, but there is definitely a government alliance.

In Jhelum after attending shrine, he said that the perpetrators of May 9 should be severely punished in any case. If there is an attack on military installations, GHQ, Jinnah House, Corps Commander House Lahore,



Yadgar Shahada and other military areas, then it will be considered an attack on the state.

Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said on the floor of the House yesterday that the military installations that have been attacked cannot be called as civil cases. Their laws are already in place and the matter is still in court.

Former Pakistani Prime Minister and Senator Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani Received a warm and grand reception in Jhelum at the residence of Ameer Hamza Kirmani.

He held a significant press conference alongside esteemed individuals Nadeem Afzal Chan, Pir Ameer Hamza Kirmani and Nazar Hussain Gondal.

## Limiting disqualification bill: Leaders, workers contact Jahangir Tareen

## Bureau Report

LAHORE: The leaders and workers of Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party, extend heartfelt congratulations to the party's patron-in-chief Jahangir Tareen, following the bill passed in National Assembly.

According to the details, the National Assembly passed an amendment bill in the Election Act 2017, abolishing lifetime disqualification of lawmakers under Article 62 (1) (f), after which all the disqualified politicians will be eligible to participate in election after serving their sentences.

Sources revealed that the patron-in-chief of Istehkam-e-Pakistan party expressed gratitude over the

well-wishes from party leaders and workers.

As per the sources, Jahangir Tareen currently in London with family for his medical treatment and will return Pakistan after Eid-ul-Adha.

Earlier in the day, the National Assembly passed an amendment bill in the Election Act 2017, abolishing lifetime disqualification of lawmakers under Article 62 (1) (f).

The passage of the legislation in the lower house set aside the obstacle of lifetime disqualification for former prime minister and PML-N supreme Nawaz Sharif, who could contest election for public office again after the bill will be signed by the president into a law.



# GPP with due success in improving governance in Balochistan: World Bank

Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: QUETTA: Governance and Policy Project Balochistan with due Success in Improving Governance and Public Service Delivery of Government of Balochistan are going in full swing.

The World Bank's Country Director while congratulating Government of Balochistan on successful completion of the GPP, said that the Governance and Policy Project Balochistan GPP has achieved significant success in improving governance and public service delivery in Balochistan. He expressed his view on the Project Closure Workshop of Governance and Policy Project & Balochistan which was organized here at Marriot Hotel Islamabad.

World Bank Country Director Najay Bin Hussain expressed his satisfaction over the successful execution of Governance and Reforms project, he expressed his gratitude for the Government of Balochistan, the project implementing agencies, and the project team for



organizing this event – which is not only showcasing the achievements, but also discussing future reforms. He pointed out that he is also grateful to the development partners for their financial contributions in this multi donor trust fund. Project Coordinator Governance and

Policy Project Balochistan, Mr. Rashid Razzaq stated that under the leadership of the Government of Balochistan, GPP has made remarkable strides towards achieving its goals. The project aimed to improve governance and public service delivery in Balochistan through various

initiatives and collaborations with key stakeholders.

The success of GPP can be attributed to its well-designed and well-implemented approach. The project has been implemented with active participation from government officials, civil society organizations, and the private sector, ensuring a comprehensive and inclusive approach. GPP's progress has been closely monitored and evaluated to ensure the project's effectiveness in achieving its objectives.

The achievements of GPP underscore the commitment of the Government of Balochistan to improving governance and public service delivery in the region. The project has laid a strong foundation for a more prosperous and equitable Balochistan.

Mr. Tobias Lead Economist World Bank expressed his satisfaction with the success of GPP, stating, "GPP was a flagship project of Government of Balochistan. It is remarkable that the project was able to achieve honor.

## July 13 Last date for voter registration



Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: District Election Commissioner (DEC) South Waziristan Upper and Lower Muhammad Bilal issued a press release warning the voters of both districts, that they get their vote registered, transferred and validated by July 13, if anyone wants to know about their vote, they should send an SMS to 8300.

If there is any mistake regarding the registration, transfer and correctness of your vote, correct it by attending the District Election Commissioner Office South Waziristan Political Compound Tank with your identity card, or by contacting 0963.512196, and the relevant form 21.22.23 also get, form 21 for entry, Form 22 for withdrawal and Form 23 for validation will be provided.

The Election Commission has said, make sure to register for Election 2023, no application will be accepted after July 13.

## Countering Disinformation about VC UAJK: Dr. Atiq ur Rehman

Bureau Report



MUZAFFARABAD: In the face of an ongoing negative propaganda campaign against the Vice Chancellor of Azad Kashmir University, Dr. Kaleem Abbasi, it is imperative to shed light on the facts and defend the institution's integrity. As a faculty member within the university, I acknowledge that voicing support for the Vice Chancellor may be perceived as flattery. However, there are certain undeniable truths that no fair-minded individual can overlook.

Dr. Kaleem Abbasi is accused of plagiarism in a single paper, despite having a profile that boasts over 120 research papers. Why would someone with such an extensive body of work resort to plagiarism for a mere line on their CV? It is understandable if an individual lacking a sufficient number of papers, necessary for a professorship, faces accusations of academic plagiarism. However, Dr. Kaleem Abbasi stands as one of the most prolific researchers not only in Azad Kashmir but in all of Pakistan. Thus, it is unfounded to accuse him of academic plagiarism.

In universities, it is common for MPhil and PhD students to include their supervisor's name as an author on research papers. Even after completing their formal education, students often seek guidance from their supervisors, leading to the inclusion of their names on subsequent research. If any evidence of such inclusion is found in one among more than a hundred works, it would be prudent to conduct further research instead of hastily making accusations that tarnish both the individual and the institution's reputation.

## PHMA, Customs hold joint session on new Export Facilitation Scheme



Commerce Desk

LAHORE: The Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PHMA), in collaboration with the Pakistan Customs, organized a seminar on new Export Facilitation Scheme to facilitate the exporters to enhance value-added textile exports, contributing in the economic uplift of the country.

A large number of knitwear exporters participated in the EFS awareness seminar at PHMA zonal office. Customs Collector Nayyar Shafique along with his team members briefed the exporters about the salient features and registration process of Export Facilitation Scheme 2023.

PHMA north zone chairman Naseer Butt welcomed the Customs officials this orientation seminar to enlighten the exporters about the main features of EFS. The Customs Collector Sambarial Nayyar Shafique, accompanied by Deputy Collector Sidra Munawar, assured the PHMA members of removing the glitches in Export Facilitation Scheme to make it business friendly with a view to improve the inflows of foreign exchange in the country.

He appreciated that PHMA, saying the FBR believed in facilitating the exporters to contribute in the economic prosperity of the country, as the government and the PHMA were working closer like hands in gloves to facilitate the taxpayers and exporters.

Collector Customs made a detailed presentation on the scheme, highlighting the accomplishments made by the department so far. He also pointed out that the department had set up help desks to facilitate exporters under the EFS. He said that all steps were being taken to promote the EFS, adding the prime objective of the Scheme was to streamline the exports in order to earn precious foreign exchange for the country, ensuring all measures to make the EFS user friendly for the exporters' community.

## Inauguration the English Language classes

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: CEO Islamabad Career Colleges Private Limited Javed Intizar said that Career Spoken English Language will prove to be a professional institution in Bhara Kaho. There is no restriction of age and education to learn English language. Usman Abbasi has been nominated as Director Career Spoken English Language. Basic & Advance classes will start from 1st July. He was addressing the inaugural function held at ICC College Section Kayani Road bhara kahu. Earlier, Director General Career Group of Institutions Prof. Muhammad Aamir prayed for the success of spoken English language and said that expert and experienced educators have been hired to teach English language. In the opening ceremony, Deputy Director Directorate of ICC Professor Salim Al Azam, Principal Career Academy Simly Dam Road Campus Muhammad Adnan Abbasi, Principal ICC Matriculation Section Kayani Road Fazal ur Rehman Khattak, Admission Incharge Score Entry test and HOD Biology Mati Ullah Achakzai, Administrator School Section Kayani Road Muhammad Shabbir Khan and other educationists participated. Director Career Spoken English Language Usman Abbasi thanked the participants of the opening ceremony.

## Protest

KARACHI: Activists of Christen Protection Council holds protest in favor of their demands outside Press Club in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

# In Faisalabad, sacrificial animal market empty as no traders available to sell animals

Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: Buyers are visiting to buy but traders (Sale persons) are not available to sale sacrificial animals.

The economic crisis left the people with crises of despair and the cattle market set up for sacrificial animals on Satyana Road could not attract the attention of the animal traders, said Ameer Mushtaq Ahmed.

According to the details, the arrangements are complete and Eid al-Adha is a few days away, but no animal could reach the market because the the animal sale point established at Chak Nimr 423/ GB stop but the market could not get the attention



of the traders. Despite the passage of several days, not a single animal could reach the market. A few days left for Eid al-Adha, but the market is empty of animals. Ameer Mushtaq

further informed that, since June 18, arrangements have been made in the temporary sale point for the animals, in which the Municipal Committee medical aid, veterinary and Rescue

staff have started reaching out for the traders. The citizens say that they have come to buy animals and are disappointed that there is not a single animal in this sacrificial animal market?

Ameer elaborated that, As the market is far away from the city, buyers shy away to come here & Traders are transporting animals to large markets.

Anjuman Tajran registered Tandlianwala has appealed to the caretaker chief minister & concerned authorities to shift the market back to the urban cattle market and also to deliver the animals so that the citizens can perform their duties on Eid-ul-Adha.

# VC IUB Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob visited the flood-affected Village

Correspondent

BAHAWALPUR: Vice Chancellor Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob today visited the flood-affected village Patyat on the outskirts of Fazilpur town of Rajanpur district and distributed Eid package ration to more than 250 people. On this occasion, Vice Chancellor Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob said that the Islamia University of Bahawalpur Flood Relief Cell was established on the instructions of the Governor of the Punjab and Chancellor, Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman and under this cell, more than 3 crores worth of relief materials have been distributed to the affected areas of Rajanpur, Rahim Yar Khan,



and on the occasion of Eid, an aid package worth 2 million was distributed simultaneously in Rajanpur and Dera Ghazi

Khan districts. In addition, medicines were also distributed to the flood victims. On this occasion, Focal Person

of Flood Relief Cell Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Prof. Dr. Asif Naveed Ranjha said that the Islamia University

of Bahawalpur worked for the relief of flood affected people.

He informed the Vice Chancellor in the briefing that Rajanpur A welfare organization Helping Hand is also building 204 housing units in the suburbs. Apart from this, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur also provided veterinary and medical facilities in these areas and provided psychological support to the affected people. On this occasion, Tehsildar Rajanpur, Rai Hassan Nawaz, Director Press Media and Publications, Mr. Shahzad Ahmed Khalid, Senior Producer Mr. Athar Lashari among the faculty members, Mr. Sabtain Raza, Mr. Ahmed Nawaz, Executive Secretary to Vice Chancellor, Mr. Muhammad Khalid Sheikh and others were also present.





Islamabad  
15° - 23° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 3:15 am  
Zohr ..... 12:10 pm  
Asr ..... 5:11 pm  
Maghrib ..... 7:22 pm  
Isha ..... 9:06 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

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

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

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

**DEPARTMENTS**

CDA ..... 9221334-43  
CDA ..... 9208301-04  
Met Office ..... 9250360-6  
RDA ..... 5555864  
TMA ..... 5770886  
Cantonment Board ..... 9270151-3  
Islamabad Metropolitan  
Corporation ..... 9209224  
Potohar Town ..... 9209224

*Times Higher Education Ranks Riphah International University among Asia's Top 200 Universities*

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Riphah International University is delighted to announce its exceptional achievement in securing the 196th position in the prestigious Asia University Ranking (AUR) released by the Times Higher Education (THE). The Asia University Ranking evaluates universities based on five critical factors that encompass various aspects of institutional performance. These factors include Teaching, Research, Citations, International Outlook, and Industry Income. Riphah International University's remarkable progress in the Asia University Ranking is a testament to its unwavering dedication to providing quality education and contributing to the advancement of knowledge. By ensuring education is accessible to all and incorporating the latest technological advancements, the university continues to empower individuals and make a positive impact on society.

*Govt should arrest the smuggler groups involved in human trafficking: Ali Haider Gilani*

Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: Former Provincial Minister of Punjab Syed Ali Haider Gilani attended the prayer ceremony at District Bar Room Multan. The whole nation and the world are deeply saddened by the Greek boat accident. Ali Haider Gilani The government of Pakistan should make arrangements to immediately transfer the dead bodies of those who died in the Greece boat accident to Pakistan. The government should indiscriminately arrest the groups involved in human trafficking. People's Party in power will provide employment and business opportunities to the youth. The families of those who died in the Greece boat accident are in a very sad and miserable condition.

# PRCS distributes ration packs among coastal storm affected families in Thatta

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari says PRCS is committed to serving and aiding distressed humanity as its duty, says the initiative will expand to benefit more affected individuals in Badin and Sajawal and PRCS will assist the remaining 3,000 distressed households in Thatta

Islamabad: Under the auspices of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), one thousand families affected by the coastal storm in Keti Bandar have been provided with ration packages. According to the details, the affected households in Keti Bandar were registered systematically. A total of 3,000 families will benefit from this initiative. In the first phase, one thousand affected individuals received

ration supplies. Speaking on this occasion, Chairman PRCS, Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari said that during the relocation of affected families, PRCS provided relief items to 200 households and continuing in the same spirit, Red Crescent has distributed ration packages to one thousand families, and in the coming days, this initiative will expand to benefit more affected individuals in

Badin and Sajawal. He said that PRCS would assist the remaining 3,000 distressed households in Thatta.

Sardar Shahid Ahmed said that Red Crescent is always in the frontline to provide humanitarian assistance during disasters and emergencies. He said unbiased, indiscriminate service and aid to humanity are the trademarks of the Red Crescent. He said the people living along



coastal areas are facing challenges and hardships and we have been playing our part in mitigating those adversities.

Chairman PRCS stated that volunteers played an excellent role in rescue and relief operation, as well as in the safe relocation of people to secure locations.

PRCS Secretary General Muhammad Abidullah Khan, Secretary PRCS Sindh Branch, Kanwar Waseem, Assistant Commissioner Keti Bandar, Usman Aarif, Nadim Abbas from Norwegian Red Cross-Pakistan, PRCS staff and volunteers were also present on this occasion.

## Waiting for customers

ISLAMABAD: A view of the temporary sacrificial animal market along the Lehtar Road as people are arriving and taking interest in animals, but due to extremely high prices, yet the live stock traders didn't get their expected business in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

# Pakistan needs to make a coherent labor policy: Mian Akram Farid

Commece Desk

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Skill Development Council Islamabad M. Akram Farid, while expressing his views during the meeting, said that Pakistan needs to make a coherent labor policy, otherwise incidents like the sinking of illegal immigrants' boats continued to happen. And thousands of people lose their lives in it. Fortunately, Pakistan is among the 15 countries in the world where more than half of the population consists of youth. Here, 68 percent of the total population is below thirty years of age, while 32 percent of them are between fifteen and twenty years of age. But unfortunately, the youth of Pakistan today are very worried and disappointed about their future, because the youth in the kingdom of Khudadad are facing more problems and difficulties than



facilities to move forward and progress.

Without solving the problems of the youth, neither the development nor the best society can be formed in the country. More than 7 million of our people are working in other countries. Of course, countries that focus on making technical education a part of their general education have higher economic growth rates and

an investment of 24 billion per year in skilling the youth. 40 billion can be done annually and the young generation can be trained and seeded abroad. Due to the lack of technical skills in the young generation, there are no job opportunities. Yes, the young generation goes abroad illegally due to lack of employment, due to which hundreds of youths are missing. He added that the industry has played an important role in providing employment and their lab and other equipment. Students are benefiting from the use of. For the production of goods and its increase, we have to use the skills of our youth so that they run the technical and production sectors on the right lines and the country is on the path of development. What are the real opportunities for Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries that are trying to migrate to local manpower

due to the gradual decline in job opportunities in these countries, most Pakistanis are taking the risk of illegal travel through these boats. This is why a Information campaigns are needed to inform people not only of the dangers of traveling on these boats, but also of the life that awaits them upon arrival in Europe.

Government, technical training and skills training. There is neither a proper system nor passion, there is no demand in the market for traditional education and in pursuit of their economic dreams, the majority of Nokhastas start dreaming of going to other countries from an early age. Inside Punjab, Sindh, The young generation of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa want to try their luck abroad by some means instead of suffering the punishment of beroozgari and minhgai.

# National Horticulture Society in Islamabad 'victims of personal interests'

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The National Horticulture Society of Pakistan, which came into existence for the purpose of decorating the capital Islamabad with colorful flowers under the management of Islamabad administration, has become a victim of personal interests. Despite the passage of more than 35 years, the management of the institution was destroyed by the occupants of the same facility.

It is reported that instead of improving the institution, the funds of crores of rupees collected from the income of the plaza are used to meet personal expenses.

Which raised questions on the transparency of the institution. On the other hand, the benevolent members of the organization approached the Supreme Court against the elements who misused the powers for the wider interests of the organization. But



even after 2 years, the institution could not get justice.

According to sources, the National Horticulture Society of Pakistan is a registered institution of Islamabad administration. The issue of not having a personal building of the institution was resolved during the tenure of former President Zia-ul-Haq. A building in the Blue Area of Islamabad has been allotted to the National Horti-

culture Society of Pakistan. Where Chaudhry Hameed remained as Finance Secretary for 35 years. Chaudhry Hameed did not allow anyone else to get the seat of Secretary Finance contrary to the rules and regulations. Instead of elections, they would elect their favorite elements uncontested.

For 35 years, Chaudhry Hameed dominated the institution and continued to bene-

fit from the privileges of the institution.

He died four years ago. But the story does not end here. His close associates Tahir Nadeem and Iftikhar Awan joined the organization after retiring from CDA. Even after the death of Chaudhry Hameed, they were associated with late Chaudhry Hameed's son Yasir, and his three brothers in law Ikramul Haque, Iftikhar and Zia.

## World falling behind on disability rights: Munazza Gillani

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: In order to demand equal rights and opportunities for people with disabilities, Sightsavers is launching 'Equal World campaign' which calls for action to protect global disability rights ahead of a high-level UN summit on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September 2023.

Sightsavers' country director Munazza Gillani said, "As the world is coming to the halfway point of the 2030 deadline, progress on the SDGs has derailed - they are completely off-track. The promise to leave no-one behind is in peril. The Government of Pakistan has taken some major initiatives to ensure the implementation of SDGs, which we welcome, however the disability inclusion in SDGs is yet to be achieved".

Gillani further added, "As the UN Secretary-General's report shows, people with disabilities are being hit hardest by the lack of progress on poverty and inequality. Globally, up to twice as many people with disabilities live under the poverty line than people without disabilities.

Abia Akram, CEO of the National Forum of Women with Disabilities in Pakistan, and Sightsavers' global campaign ambassador, has also commented, saying, "In order to bring about sustainable change, achieve the SDGs and create a more equal world, global decision-makers cannot continue to ignore the 16% of the global population who have disabilities. With less than 100 days to go until the SDG Summit in September, we must act now to rescue the SDGs and truly leave no one behind."

## AIOU unveils admission action plan for autumn 2023

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has issued an action plan for the admissions of Autumn Semester 2023 for the convenience and guidance of students as per the direction of the Vice Chancellor AIOU, Prof Dr. Nasir Mahmood. Information Counters will be set up to provide information related to admissions to students in all regional offices including the main campus of the university, Facilitation Centers are also being activated in regional offices to guide students. AIOU will also set up Prospectus sale points across the country to facilitate the students at the nearest places to their residences.

Admissions for the first phase of Semester Autumn 2023 will commence from July 15, while the admissions for the second phase will start from September 1 across the country. The programs offered in the first phase include Matric (General), Matric (Dars e Nizami), Matric (Open Courses), FA (General), FA (Dars e Nizami), FA (Open Courses), I. Com, middle tech, certificate courses BS, MBA, MPhil/MS and PhD programs. It is pertinent to mention here that BS, MBA, MPhil/MS and PhD are face-to-face and merit-based programs.

Prospectuses and admission application forms for all the programs will be available online on the university website (www.aiou.edu.pk) on July 15, 2023. Admission in BS (face to face), MS/MPhil and PhD programs can only be applied via online system whereas admission application forms for matriculation, intermediate and I Com can be submitted manually as well as via online mode. In case of online submission of admission application form, the candidates are not required to dispatch printed application form to the university.

## RedMarker Systems' EdTech Conference Sparks a Revolution in Education Transformation

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: RedMarker Systems, a trailblazing force in education technology, has successfully concluded its groundbreaking EdTech Conference, themed "Tech-Driven Education Transformation for Impactful Learning Outcomes." This exclusive, invite-only event brought together an illustrious gathering of industry leaders, visionaries, and professionals who shared a collective vision of shaping the future of education. With an array of innovative ideas and transformative solutions, the conference showcased how cutting-edge technologies such as those developed by RedMarker Systems, can revolutionize education and propel it toward new horizons of improved learning outcomes for students, targeted teachers' training programs, and overall effective management of the education sector.

Under the visionary leadership of founder and CEO, Ms. Gull Zeba, RedMarker Systems has consistently advocated for a comprehensive, inclusive approach to education facilitated by innovative technological advancements in the field.

Mr. Yusuf Hussain, a renowned venture capitalist, and startup/ecosystem expert said, "The conference has been a remarkable platform that highlights the intersection of education and technology in Pakistan. It's inspiring to witness the collective effort of educators, policymakers, and industry leaders in embracing innovation to transform the education landscape.

Addressing the panel on the topic of "Inclusion of innovative technology in education: challenges and impact" Mr. Murtaza Zaidi said, "As the Founder and CEO of Cyber Vision International, I strongly believe that creating an enabling environment for EdTech startups is pivotal for the growth and advancement of the education sector in Pakistan."

Mr. Zazar Hasham Khan, Chief Business Services Officer, PTCL, also talked about the need to foster meaningful partnerships between the private and the public sector. Addressing the panel, he said, "we recognize the power of meaningful partnerships and collaborations to drive innovation and growth. We are committed to providing an enabling environment for startups and private companies, particularly in the EdTech sector."

Mr. Zulfiqar Ali Qazilbash, senior tech entrepreneur and advisor to the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, shared his enthusiasm for the conference, stating, "It is highly commendable to see education leaders recognizing the need to digitalize assessments across the country to improve standards, bring parity across different regions and areas and greatly improve student learning outcomes through EdTech solutions."



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# Hindutva and Proposed Anti Minorities Legislation

**R**eaders, India is firmly following the ideology of Hindutva. Hindutva is the predominant form of Hindu nationalism in India. The term was formulated as a political ideology by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar in 1923. It is used by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and other organizations, collectively called the Sangh Parivar. The Hindutva movement has been described as a variant of right-wing extremism, and as "almost fascist in the classical sense", adhering to a concept of homogenized majority and cultural hegemony. Modi is follower of the Hindutva ideology which is based on the supremacy of India and Hindus. They are going ahead with same mentality of bypassing the human right issues regarding minorities. They want to keep their hold on minorities of India and on the neighboring countries under Ideology of Hindutva.

controversial among Muslims. These statements, when examined through a Muslim lens, raise questions about his stance towards religious pluralism and the rights of minority communities. Furthermore, Savarkar's views on mosques have also drawn attention. His position on the demolition and reconstruction of mosques has been a subject of debate and concern, particularly for the Muslim community. "Muslims can either adopt Hindu culture and language, or they can live in this country wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation claiming nothing, deserving no privileges, far less any preferential treatment, not even citizen's rights."—This statement reflects Savarkar's view that Muslims in India should assimilate into Hindu culture or accept a subservient position within the Hindu nation.

Shah Bano controversy in 1985 (Shah Bano demanded alimony after divorce from husband as she was unable to find herself; the court ruled in her favour citing the need for UCC under article 44). The case was significant as the Indian Supreme Court ruling overturned Muslim claims that the husband has no responsibility to the divorced wife after the iddat period is over. Ever since the Shah Bano case became a nationwide political issue in India and a widely debated controversy. The BJP was the first party to promise UCC if elected into power. The Uniform Civil Code (UCC) is a proposed common law for India that applies to all religious communities in matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, and adoption. On 14 June 2023, Indian 22nd Law Commission has sought suggestions on UCC Under article 44 of Indian Constitution. For the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), it has been a priority agenda item in Parliament since 2016.

recognizes the differences in the culture of different religions and aims to protect the same under Right to religion. According to BBC, This UCC law would mean that all personal religious laws would be kept at bay and a uniform personal law governing areas of marriage, divorce, inheritance etc. would be formulated. The Uniform Civil Code would essentially replace personal laws based on religion with a common set of laws for all citizens, which could potentially lead to the erosion of minority rights and cultural diversity. This seems like yet another ploy by the BJP to target minority communities and further their Hindutva agenda. BJP proactively advocating UCC is the same party which is leading the call to construct Ayodhya Temple and abrogation of article 370 of Indian constitution. It is under BJP Government that: Genocide watch of USA has declared India on an advance level of genocide against Muslims. More than 2000 annual cases of violence are recorded against Christians. Most recently more than 98 people lost their lives and 37,000 have been dislocated Manipur ethnic violence incidents. State persecution of Sikhs has led to the call for independent Khalistan. Hate crimes including violence against Dalits and Adivasis were committed with impunity. More than 50,000 suspected crimes against members of Scheduled Castes and more than 9,000 crimes against Adivasi people were reported annually. The abysmal track record of minority rights under BJP led govern-



Abdul Basit Alvi

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, a prominent figure in the BJP, left a significant impact on Indian politics and society. In his pamphlet "Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?" published in 1923, he outlined his vision of Hindutva as a political and cultural idea that shapes a HinduRashtra (nation). Savarkar's interpretation of Hinduism drew inspiration from right-wing political movements like fascism and Nazism in Europe. In 1923, Savarkar made statements that have been

in matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, and adoption. On 14 June 2023, Indian 22nd Law Commission has sought suggestions on UCC Under article 44 of Indian Constitution. For the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), it has been a priority agenda item in Parliament since 2016. According to him, Article 44 of the Constitution of India talks about the implementation of a Uniform Civil Code throughout the territory of India. However, India is a diverse country with 80% Hindus, 13.4% Muslim, 2.3% Christians, 1.9% Sikhs, 0.8% Buddhists, and 0.4% Jains. The Indian Constitution also

## Hajj 2023 expected to feature historic capacity of pilgrims

**T**he last daunting three years had witnessed a sharp reduction in the scale of annual pilgrimage amid the Covid-19 pandemic but Hajj this year is featuring a historic capacity of pilgrims, gathering in and around the Holy City to begin their lifetime spiritual journey.

More than 2.5 million pilgrims from 160 countries around the world and locals are expected to converge on Islam's holiest mosque in Makkah.

Officials from several Islamic countries have confirmed the restoration of their Hajj quota this year to the same level as it was before the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

Accordingly, the number of pilgrims from abroad for this year's Hajj have crossed almost two million from 57 Islamic countries and more than 100 other countries with Muslim populations in all parts of the globe.

The newspapers and web portals on Sunday quoted Deputy Minister of Hajj and Umrah, Dr. Abdel-Fattah Mashat, saying that the relevant ministry was following the same mechanism that was in force before the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, in determining the quota of pilgrims from each country.

He stressed that the current season is unique, and all services are ready in place at the holy sites.

He revealed that the concerned authorities in the Kingdom have received applications from many countries to join the Makkah Road initiative, and these applications are under study by the Ministry of Interior.

Regarding the classification of the Hajj service-providing companies and establishments, the deputy minister said these companies will be reclassified after Hajj based on the satisfaction level of the pilgrims in accordance with data from relevant evaluation forms that were posted on a major pilgrims' platform.

"A number of leading hospitality companies were provided with the opportunity to present their competitive services. The defaulting companies will be held accountable, and there are mechanisms to compensate the pilgrims for any shortcomings they are exposed to," he said.

Mashat said this year's Hajj season is unique. All the preparations are well in place beforehand for all services, and there have been integration, coordination and harmony among all parties participating in the Hajj operation, he said, adding that there is joint work between the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah and all the competent authorities.

There is also cooperation in developing a coordinated operational plan for all, conducted through the Business Follow-up Office while the Central Hajj Committee does continuous follow-up of all works that take place at the operational level.

Mashat said the most important feature of this year's Hajj is the total restoration of the pilgrims' quota to pre-pandemic levels. He noted that the numbers will be the same that were approved before the pandemic. Similar is the case with the mechanism that the ministry followed in deciding the quota of pilgrims for each country.

According to the figures revealed by the General Authority for Statistics, the number of pilgrims who performed Hajj in 1440 (2019) exceeded 2.4 million. At the same time, the number of domestic pilgrims was estimated at about 634,000 male and female pilgrims, including 211,000 Saudis and 423,000 expatriates.



## Allah loves the act of Sacrifice

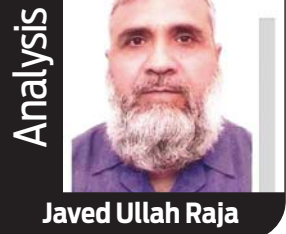
**E**id-al-Adha is an important Islamic festival. It is celebrated by Muslims in Islamic countries around the world. This festival commemorates the obedience of Hazrat Ibrahim (as). When Hazrat Ibrahim (as) prepared to sacrifice his son Hazrat Ismail (as) in the way of Allah. This festival is celebrated every year on the 10th of the month of Dhul-Hijjah in the Islamic calendar. The main concept of Eid-al-Adha is related to the Qur'anic biography of the Prophet (s) when Hazrat Ibrahim (as) received an order from Allah to prepare his son Hazrat Ismail (A. S) for sacrifice.

only wasted, but the opposite will happen. Regarding sacrifice, it is very important to take care of some things. Sacrifice is obligatory on every able-bodied man and woman and is a very important religious duty. Eid-al-Adha teaches us to sacrifice our dearest thing in the way of Allah. Just as Hazrat Ibrahim (as) sacrificed his beloved son Hazrat Ismail (as) in the way of Allah. Intended to do it is a great lesson for a father to sacrifice his son on the command of Allah and for the son to obey his father's command. Dr. Allama Iqbal (ra) said: *ye faizan e nazr tha ya kay maqtub ki kiramat thi sekhay kis nay, Ismail ko aada-bay farzandi* Allah liked Hazrat Ibrahim (as) and Hazrat Ismail (as) to obey the order and their sacrifices so much that Allah ordered to continue this sacrifice until the generations of future Prophets and the living world. Many Muslims around the world travel to the Holy Hijaz to perform Hajj. With the study of the Holy Qur'an, an important lesson from all the situations and events in the life of Hazrat Ibrahim (as) is to be ready at all times and at every moment to sacrifice his dearest thing to the will of Allah. "No day is more glorious in the sight of Allah than these ten days, nor is the action of any day more beloved to Allah than the action of ten days, so during these ten days you should recite Tahleel (La ilaha illallah) and Takbeer" Allahu Akbar) and say the preamble (Alhamdulillah)" (Musnad Ahmad).

The duty of sacrifice once a year is the command of Allah upon the able-bodied Muslims. Therefore, we should fulfill this blessed Sunnah and important duty of Hazrat Ibrahim (as) and Hazrat Muhammad (peace be upon him) with good manners, enthusiasm and passion. Animal skins, to Madrasahs and religious publishing houses are religious rewards. Every action should be fully organized, so that where the sacrifice is a source of goodness and forgiveness of sins for the pleasure of Allah, every hair of an animal, and then there is also the happiness of our dear relatives and the poor, widows, needy and orphans. Those who cannot afford to sacrifice should

be taken care of and they should also be included in the joy of this day. It increases love and friendship among each other and also provides an opportunity to help the poor and needy, an atmosphere of brotherhood is established. More than all of them, Allah is pleased. If Allah is pleased, then what else do we need? So every year it has been seen that piles of dirt due to animal entrails, droppings and other remains are seen outside every house due to our slight negligence. Every year Pakistan Air Force the message is given that the entrails, dung and other remains of sacrificial animals thrown at unspecified places on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha attract large birds like cheel and vultures. Crashing into a high-speed airplane, causing destruction like a bullet or missile, causing the loss of lives of airplanes, pilots and people. Many diseases are born. If we individually do our part in cleaning and cooperate with the municipal corporations and various societies in the streets of the city, we can save humanity from many ailments, diseases and losses.

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Javed Ullah Raja

## Pakistan gears up to improve cotton production after low yield last year - II

Iftikhar Ahmad

Saqib Ali Ateel said Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi had promised that there would be no dearth of resources for any investment in enhancing cotton production in Punjab, adding the CM was appreciative of his suggestion that the mechanized cotton boll picker machine developed by Central Cotton Research Institute (CCRI) Multan was the best option to eliminate pink bollworm incidence from cotton fields.

He said, this programme if launched would cost around Rs 1 billion, adding the investment was worth the cost as pink bollworm could cause 16 per cent production losses which would translate into 1.5 million bales lost, if, for example, the Punjab cotton fields had a potential of 8 million bales, Saqib Ateel said.

Pesticides application in Punjab usually gulp a whopping Rs 22-24 billion every year on cotton crop, Saqib said, adding "So, we have recommended farmers to rely mostly on biopesticides and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programme like pheromone traps and resort to chemical pesticides only as last option when it becomes unavoidable."

This would not only reduce cost but also keep friendly pests alive that crop usually lose in case of pesticides application, he mentioned.

He said, on the chief minister's orders, administrative secretaries of south Punjab had been assigned districts to monitor the cotton crop management to ensure that pests and diseases were properly tackled and any large-scale incidence of pests could be countered timely through a coordinated effort.

To further augment the on-field advisories to small farmers, agriculture department had

planned to hire 2000 agriculture interns from different universities, of which so far the services of 1750 interns had been secured, Saqib said.

Director Research Pakistan Central Cotton Committee (PCCC), Dr. Tasawur Hussain Malik, an eminent scientist, who also holds additional charge as secretary PCCC, and director marketing, and economic research of country's ace research body, told APP that Pakistan's scientists had contributed a lot so far in cotton with some very good varieties but the research system needed to be improved further.

He underlined the need for bringing some multinational companies to Pakistan to set research and development system on modern lines.

Dr. Tasawur who also holds additional charge as Director Pakistan Institute of Cotton Research and Technology (PICRT), and Director of Pakistan Cotton Standardization Institute (PCSI) said liberal funding on research and development was the need of the hour.

Sajid Mahmood, Director Technology Transfer CCRI Multan quoting International Cotton Assessment Committee (ICAC) report for the year 2022-23, said Pakistan's per hectare production was above 700 kilograms, which, however, he added, had started declining a few years back due to different factors related to climate change like extreme heat, torrential rains and slipped to 472 kilogram per hectare in 2022-23.

He said, Pakistan has a production potential of 18-20 million bales of cotton per annum and according to APTMA the textile sector requirement was over 15 million bales.

He added that APTMA would no more need to spend 2-3 billion dollars on importing cotton if Pakistan achieves cotton production as per its potential.



# Xiplomacy: Chinese president corresponds with Belgian zookeeper over pandas, friendship

Xinhua

BRUSSELS: The lush magnolia tree in the Chinese Garden of Pairi Daiza Zoo in Belgium symbolizes the friendship between China and Belgium. In front of the tree flourishing in the midsummer sunshine, Eric Domb received a reply letter from Chinese President Xi Jinping earlier this week via the Chinese Embassy in Belgium.

Xi said in the letter to Domb, chairman and founder of Pairi Daiza Zoo, that he is confident Domb and other friendly personages will continue to sow the seeds of friendship, attract more people, not least those of the younger generation, to actively participate in the cause of friendship so as to make new contributions to advancing China-Belgium and China-Europe relations.

Domb wrote to Xi in early June, recalling the moment of Xi's visit to the zoo in 2014 and briefing Xi the latest development of the zoo.

"I did not expect to get Xi's reply at all," Domb told Xinhua. "Your president is one of the busiest men in the world. It is really a mark of special feeling to answer in such a short period of time.

It is nearly as important as the contents of this letter."

In March 2014 during his state visit to Belgium, Xi and Belgian King Philippe along with their spouses inaugurated the Panda House in the zoo. They planted the purple flowering magnolia tree. Xi said in his reply letter that he is glad to learn that the tree has blossomed and the two giant pandas, as China's "friendship envoys," are also growing up.

The magnolia tree stands in the center of the Chinese Garden of the zoo, about 200 meters away from the Panda House. Looking from the hill of the Chinese Garden — which covers an area of 4.5 hectares — a curved bridge comes into view, full of greenery and chirping birds.

Domb invited craftsmen to create a landscape design featuring a small waterfall. On the stone road leading down the mountain to the Panda House stands an archway, engraved on which are three Chinese characters "Zhong Guo Meng" — the Chinese Dream.

Domb recalled that when visiting here in 2014, the Chinese president

shared much knowledge of Chinese gardens, from which Domb learned tremendously. Domb visited China more than 20 times and was amazed by its great landscapes and exquisite garden art.

Xi's letter has strengthened his confidence to constantly improve this garden, and he will continue to introduce the Chinese cultural concepts of "harmony between man and nature" and "harmony and symbiosis" to visitors of the zoo.

Domb wrote to Xi on the seventh birthday of the giant panda Tian Bao. He told Xi that China's giant pandas have been well taken care of in Belgium and have given birth to their offspring.

Giant pandas Xing Hui, translated as "Shining Star," and Hao Hao, translated as "The Kind One," came to Belgium in February 2014 and have lived in the zoo's Panda House. In June 2016, Hao Hao gave birth to a male cub Tian Bao, whose name means "Treasure of Heaven," and in August 2019 gave birth to twins Bao Di and Bao Mei, translated as "Little Brother of Tian Bao" and "Little Sister of Tian Bao." Now the Pairi Daiza Zoo has five giant pandas.



Xi said in his letter to Domb that China is actively promoting Chinese modernization that features harmonious coexistence between man and nature and carrying out major biodiversity conservation projects. A large number of endangered species have been under effective protection with giant pandas thereby having been downgraded from endangered species

to vulnerable ones. People continue to invest in the conservation of rare species and the living environment they depend on, which has improved the entire ecosystem and indirectly protects more species. "It is a work benefiting the future of mankind."

"Friendship is something you have to work on all the time. It's not one shot," Domb expressed in his letter his fidelity to friendship not only with China but also with the Chinese people.

Xi said in his letter that the development of China-Belgium relations cannot be achieved without the long-term efforts and selfless dedication of friendly personages from all walks of life in both countries.

When Domb began to build a Chinese Garden 17 years ago, he invited some craftsmen from China in a bid to display the genuine Chinese culture, and they became Domb's good friends.

"Encouraging normal people like me and other people to (forge) friendships is, I think, one of the solutions for a peaceful world working together to make the world greener and more hospitable for all kinds of life," said Domb.

## Pak-Kazakh BPC in Astana to review entire spectrum of bilateral relations

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Second Round of Bilateral Political Consultations (BPC) between Pakistan and Kazakhstan will be held in Astana, Kazakhstan on June 26 in which the two sides would review the entire spectrum of bilateral relations.

Additional Secretary (Afghanistan & West Asia) Syed Ahsan Raza Shah will lead Pakistan side while Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kanat Tumyst will lead the Kazakh side, Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release on Sunday.



"During consultations both sides will review the entire spectrum of bilateral relations in political, trade, economic, connectivity, science & technology, cultural and people to people relations to strengthen the deep-rooted fraternal ties between Pakistan and Kazakhstan with a view to foster closer cooperation for the mutual benefit of their people," the spokesperson added.

The inaugural session of the BPC between Pakistan and Kazakhstan was held on February 28, 2020 in Islamabad.

## Taliban taking measures to ensure 'comfortable, prosperous life' for women: supreme leader



The Afghan Taliban supreme leader has said that steps were being taken to protect the country's women from "traditional oppressions" and added that their status as "free and dignified human beings" had been restored.

Hibatullah Akhundzada — who rarely appears in public and rules by decree from the Taliban's birthplace in Kandahar — issued a statement on Sunday to mark the beginning of Eid ul Adha holidays.

He said the country's interim government led by Taliban were taking measures to provide women with a "comfortable and prosperous life according to Islamic Sharia".

The United Nations expressed "deep concern" last week that women were being deprived of their rights under Afghanistan's Taliban government and warned of systematic gender apartheid.

Since returning to power in August 2021, Taliban authorities have stopped girls and women from attending high school or university, banned them from parks, gyms and public baths, and ordered them to cover up when leaving home.

They have also barred them from working for the UN or NGOs, while most female government employees have been dismissed from their jobs or are being paid to stay at home.

However, Akhundzada said "necessary steps have been taken for the betterment of women as half of the society".

"All institutions have been obliged to help women in securing marriage, inheritance and other rights," his statement read.

Akhundzada said a six-point decree issued in December 2021 guaranteed women their rights.

## US National Security Advisor expresses deep concern over recent Israeli settler attacks against Palestinian civilians



Wafa

WASHINGTON: US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan spoke with Israeli National Security Advisor Izachi Hanegbi and expressed deep concern over the recent extremist settler attacks against Palestinian civilians and the destruction of their property in the West Bank.

The US National Security Advisor reiterated during a telephone call made on June 23 the importance of holding accountable those responsible for such acts of violence.

Sullivan encouraged additional steps to restore calm and de-escalate tensions and called on all parties to refrain from unilateral actions, including settlement activity, that further inflame tensions.

Sullivan conveyed the United States' hope that the parties build on the commitments made during talks at Aqaba, Jordan, and Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, and reconvene soon.

## Pakistan, Japan to hold 13th round of political consultations on Tuesday

Hinza Asif

ISLAMABAD: The thirteenth round of Bilateral Political Consultations between Pakistan and Japan will be held on Tuesday in Tokyo, Japan.

The twelfth round of these consultations between the two countries was held in 2020 in Islamabad.

The Pakistan side will be led by Foreign Secretary Dr. Asad Majeed Khan; while, Shigeo Yamada, Senior Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan will lead the Japanese side.

During consultations both sides will review the entire spectrum of bilateral relations, including political, trade, economic, connectivity, science & technology, cultural and people-to-people relations — in order to strengthen the deep-rooted ties between Pakistan and Japan.

These consultations will foster closer cooperation for the mutual benefit of the people of Pakistan and Japan.

## Registered retail stores reject markets closure at 8pm from July

Commerce desk

LAHORE: The chain stores in the country have opposed the government's decision of early closure of markets till 8pm from July 01, besides proposing the authorities to simplify the Sales Tax and Income Tax regimes for retailers of all sizes, as the decision will badly affect business activities and thwart all efforts to improve the economic situation in the country.

Through letters sent to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Finance Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, the largest trade body of tax-compliant retailers, Chainstore Association of Pakistan (CAP) stated that both decisions will badly affect business activities and thwart all efforts to improve the economic situation in the country.



CAP Chairman, informed that the heavily lop-sided taxation regime and excessive restrictions on retail last year have forced many tax-compliant Tier-1 Retailers to shut down dozens of their retail outlets across the country in the past year. This pattern indicates that the viability and market share

of formal businesses in this sector is drastically reducing thus setting off alarm bells in the industry.

He said that the major shopping malls and prominent markets will be forced to close extra early, and this will inevitably reduce retail store employees by half, while smaller markets

and neighbourhood stores will find ways to stay open, as was experienced during repetitive lockdowns during the Covid-19 pandemic. We have proposed a balanced solution for retail to close at 10pm instead of unlimited timings, which has already been enforced in Lahore since last Dec 2022.

## An Insight into Marriage and Language in Pakistan

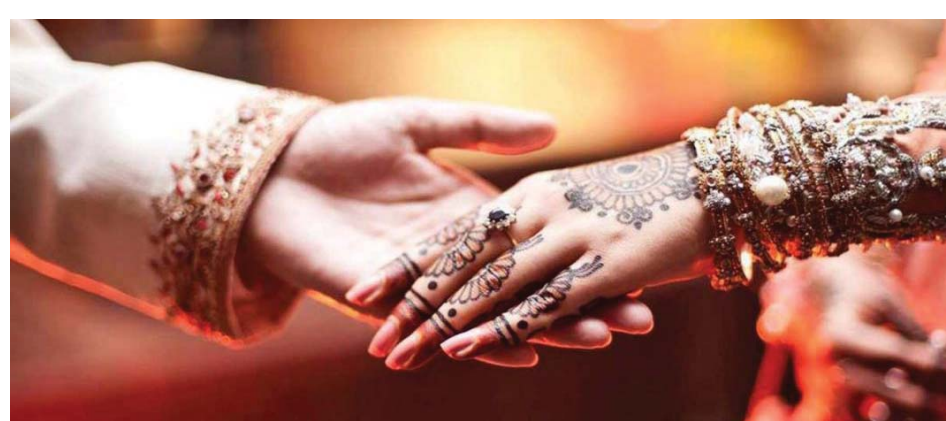
Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: PIDE new research highlighted the significance of inter-ethnic marriages in Pakistan, a country with a diverse ethnic spectrum. The research findings from the PIDE BASICS 1 survey indicate that such marriages play a crucial role in promoting assimilation, social cohesion, and stability, thereby blurring tensions arising from ethnic differences. Language, closely tied to ethnic background, has a profound impact on personal identities, which can sometimes be divisive and undermine unity within the larger identity. The survey employed a new approach to measure ethnic exogamy and homogamy by asking respondents three questions related to the ethnic backgrounds of their parents and the language spoken

in their everyday lives. The results revealed that only a small proportion (1.5%) of marriages in Pakistan are ethnically exogamous, indicating a strong trend of intra-ethnic marriages. However, slight variations exist among different languages, with Urdu, Potohari, Brahui, and Brushaski showing slightly higher rates of exogamy. Additionally, gender differences were observed in languages such as Urdu, Shina, and Kashmiri. The study also examined the language preferences of children in families with different ethnic backgrounds and found that when parents share the same ethnicity, 92.3% of children spoke the same language as their parents. However, children of exogamous parents exhibited a mixed pattern, with some languages influenced more by the mother's language and

others by the father's language. These findings shed light on the role of inter-ethnic marriages and language dynamics in Pakistan's social fabric.

According to a press release issued from the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Pro Vice-Chancellor Dr. Durre Nayab said while describing the details of the PIDE BASICS Notes 8 that the latest research findings revealed that to capture the prevalence of ethnic exogamy, or homogamy, in Pakistan, the PIDE BASICS 1 survey asked questions in a new way to give a better insight into the issue. In most surveys, language is captured by asking the respondents about the language they speak, and the response to this question is taken as representing their ethnic background. This is misleading, and the results of



the BASICS survey confirm this distortion in interpretation.

According to the latest research by the PIDE, Dr. Nayab added that by asking the three questions mentioned earlier, we see that only a small proportion of cross-ethnic marriages occur in Pakistan, as both spouses have

the same mother tongue. A huge 98.5% of the respondents had parents who were linguistically homogeneous.

PIDE Pro VC said while talking about do individuals tend to speak the language spoken by their parents?, the research revealed that in case of ethnic differences

between spouses, do their children speak the language spoken by the mother or the father, or do they opt for a third language? The PIDE BASICS survey asked these questions, the results of which can be seen in the findings that in the case of individuals having ethnically similar parents, 92.3%

spoke the same language as their parents.; Among the major provincial languages, children of homogamous Punjabi parents had the lowest rate of speaking their parents' language (86.4%), as against Sindhi (98.4%), Pash-tu (98%), and Balochi (95.5%). Among other main languages, children of homogamous Potohari (68.4%), Pahari (76%), and Hindko (82.3%) speaking parents were found to have lower rates of speaking the same language. While children of ethnically exogamous parents exhibit a mixed pattern across languages. For some languages, the mother's language seems to have a stronger influence, like for Potohari and Pahari, while for others, the father's language is more dominant among the offspring, like Brushaski, Hindko, Balochi, and Seraiki.



## IMF promoting poverty and inequality in the world

Commerce Desk

Former President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt said on Sunday that the IMF, World Bank and other such institutions are promoting poverty and inequality in the world. Their aim is to increase the wealth and influence of Western countries by robbing the poor countries of their resources, he added.

Shahid Rasheed Butt said in a statement issued here today that because of the tactics of these institutions, five percent of the world's population has occupied eighty percent of the resources.

The majority of the richest people in the world belong to a Western power, and the IMF is adopting every legal and illegal tactic to increase their wealth, he observed.

The business leader said that at present more than seventy countries, including Pakistan, are unable to pay their debts.

Self-interested elites who can sell the country's assets but cannot reduce spending control most of these countries.

Shahid Rashid Butt said that dozens of countries have been ruined by the IMF's policies and have been forced to abandon national integrity and interests.

The ability of such countries to compete in the international market is lost, the economy falls, inflation increases and people's lives become more difficult.

In these situations, rich transfer their resources while intelligent people leave their countries and go to Western countries to increase speed of their development, which is a serious brain drain issue.

IMF has never stopped any country from corruption and spending spree, but has always victimized the common people.

This institution has never brought any country out of crisis, but has worsened their situation, so the sooner the country gets rid of it, the better it is.

## PIAF asks govt to resolve traders' issues with consultations

Commerce Desk



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) Chairman Fahimur Rehman Saigol, along with PIAF EC members Mudassar Masood, Malik Khalid, Chaudhary Wajid, Zeeshan Sohail, Sheikh Sajjad, Azhar Khan, Secretary PIAF Abdul Saboor and other market representatives visited several city's several markets and major commercial hubs, including Baden Road, Cooper Road and adjacent markets and met officials of organizations there. During this visit, Fahimur Rahman also inaugurated Light Makers, a shop owned by Nadim Saeed and Mian Shehbaz on Biden Road and prayed for the development of their business.

During the door-to-door meeting with businessmen, Chairman PIAF said that the manifesto of PIAF is to solve the problems of the business community on a priority basis. The business community is facing problems like unannounced load shedding, parking, overbilling, departmental proceedings and expensive electricity and gas in the markets. The government should solve the above problems on a priority basis in consultation with the traders. PIAF's mission is to create a stable economy and prosperous business community.

He said that business community was facing tough challenges because of limited business. In this context, he sought attention of the government for formulation of regional, provincial and central level task force, and formulation of sector wise regional policies which would help the government address the problems confronted by exporters.

# World's third largest economy Japan, is very important for Pakistan, says Ahsan Bakhtawari

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that Japan, the world's third largest economy with a GDP of \$4,940.9 billion, is a country of great importance for Pakistan economically, commercially and diplomatically. The relationship between Pakistan and Japan has a history. There are many possibilities for further improvement of trade relations between the two countries. Japan has one of the oldest population in the world. Pakistan can provide health workers especially nurses to Japan. There are vast opportunities for Japanese investors to invest in dry milk and automobile sector in Pakistan. The role of the embassy is very important in this regard.

He expressed these views yesterday while talking to Pakistan's economic minister designated for Japan, Dr. Irfan Abbas Shah, who met him during his visit to the chamber. President Islamabad Chamber said that Japan is in dire



need of skilled workers from all over the world. Pakistan and Japan have an agreement in this regard which needs to be implemented immediately. The government should take SMEDA and other related institutions into confidence and form a comprehensive policy in this regard,

courses should be conducted for Pakistani youth to learn Japanese language.

Speaking on this occasion, Economic Minister Dr. Irfan Shah said that Japan is in dire need of skilled workers due to lack of youth, and Pakistanis can take advantage of this. The volume

of Pakistani exports to Japan is four hundred to five hundred million dollars, which can be increased many times. In the past, Japan has set up three plants in the automobile sector in Pakistan, but these plants could not go into manufacturing after assembling, due to several reasons. They will convince Japanese investors to invest in Special Economic Zones in Pakistan. There is scope for increasing the volume of bilateral trade in all sectors in both countries. I assure the Islamabad Chamber that I will be in constant contact with the business community and will play every possible role in bringing the business community of both countries closer.

Speaking on this occasion, Vice President Chamber Engineer Azhar ul Islam said that the Pakistani Embassy should conduct a market survey in Japan, in which apriority list of some items should be made that can be exported from Pakistan to Japan. There should be awareness of the quality so that the local industry pays attention to it.

## Waiting for the buyer

ISLAMABAD: A shopkeeper is waiting for customers at his pavilion in weekly Sunday Market to sell spices and earn daily wages, as BBQ stuff demand is increased due to the Eid-ul-Adha.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## New taxes will put enormous strain on the nation's poor people

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Hanif Mughal, Senior Vice President of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) said on Sunday that the recently announced tax measures will bring untold pressure on the poor masses facing unprecedented inflation and unemployment since last few years.

The government has made several changes to next fiscal year's budget, including fiscal tightening measures in a last-ditch effort to secure critical funding, but it will also hit the masses badly, he said.

The government now aims to generate another Rs215 billion in taxes and cut spending by Rs85 billion without reducing the federal development budget or the salaries and pensions of government employees, which will be difficult, he added.

In a statement issued here today, Dr. Hanif Mughal the IMF orders will revise the revenue collection target to Rs9.415 trillion; put total spending at Rs14.48 trillion



and the share of provinces would be increased to Rs5.39 trillion from Rs5.28 trillion.

The government will collect Rs70 billion from fertiliser duty, Rs45 billion from hike in tax on buying, selling property, and Rs30 billion from increased tax on people earning above Rs200,000 per month.

Govt has claimed to cut spending by Rs85 billion, raise Petroleum Development Levy from Rs50 to Rs60 per litre and introduce a scheme worth Rs80bn to boost remittances. The allocation for the Benazir Income Support Programme was also revised from Rs450 billion to Rs466 billion.

## Benazir Income Support Programme has become an agent of change in Pakistan

Shazia Marri

ISLAMABAD: Ms. Shazia Marri, Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety and Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme while talking to a delegation of Yemen's Social Fund for Development today, said that in Pakistan Benazir Income Support Programme has become an agent of change.

A 23-member delegation of Yemen's Social Fund for Development was on 5-days visit in Pakistan to gain insights into the successful Social Protection Model of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP). This visit was planned and organized with the cooperation of the World Bank. The WB representatives also accompanied the delegation.

Ms. Marri welcomed the delegation of Yemen in Pakistan and appreciated the WB for organizing this visit hoping that in future more such visits will be planned so that maximum benefit can be reaped by exchange of ideas and learning from the experiences of each other. She reiterated that Pakistan and Yemen are two brotherly



countries and have always stood with each other in the hours of need.

The Deputy Managing Director of Yemen's Fund for Social Development, Mr. Wasem Qaid said that this was a unique opportunity to visit Pakistan and study for 5-days such a successful model of social protection and found Benazir Income Support Programme a fantastic model

for helping low-income groups. He noted that when he discussed the idea of studying social welfare model of some developing countries, the instant response of the WB was that the Benazir Income Support Programme is the best model for such study. Mr. Qaid said that he hoped that this study visit will help a great deal in developing a similar model in Yemen as well.

## Severe power breakdowns hit trade, industry as shortfall reaches 6,500MW

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) on Sunday called for formulating a reform strategy on an emergency basis, taking urgent measures as severe power suspension has been hitting the trade and industry due to electricity shortfall of around 6,500MW, as demand has reached almost 30,500 MW whereas supply was just over 24,000MW.

FPCCI former president and BMP Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar observed that the government's inability, ill planning and financial woes

have multiplied the miseries of the trade and industry who are facing unscheduled power loadshedding across the country, in addition to higher electricity bills, as they are paying heavy electricity bills of up to Rs50 per unit including surcharges and other taxes.

Mian Anjum Nisar asked the authorities to take quick action, taking notice of forced loadshedding in the industry because of non-availability of fuel, technical faults, failure in purchasing of fuel and maintenance of the power plants, leading to crunch of thousands of megawatts across the country.

## Govt to provide 200,000 olive plants to selected farmers in Punjab

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Barani Agriculture Research Institute's Senior Agricultural Scientist and Farm Manager Dr Azhar while talking to our scribe has said that the federal government would provide 200,000 free olive plants to selected farmers in Attock, Chakwal, Khushab, Jhelum, and other districts. Responding different questions, he said the government had devised a five-year plan to turn the Potohar region into an 'Olive Valley' He said that the project would tap the potential of olive industry in the country, adding the continued growth of olive industry would help contribute significantly to the national economy and promote socioeconomic development, reduce poverty and create employment opportunities in the country. He appreciated the Punjab government for encouraging oil-producing compo-

nents. The government is providing a heavy subsidy and farmers are being directed towards cultivation of oil-producing components, he said.

The government has shown a clear trajectory of progress in olive cultivation in the country. He stressed the need for disseminating information about new varieties and production technology among farmers to ensure that the country would become self-sufficient in edible oil production. It may be recalled here that domestic olive oil production during the last season was estimated at 70 million tons as compared to the output of over 100 tons of the corresponding period of last year, whereas the availability of olive fruit for value-added products was recorded at over 100 tons. During the period under review, the local output of olive oil reduced by 30 per cent as it was badly influenced due to climate change, rising temperatures

during the flowering stage, and torrential rains, the local output remained less than last year's production. However, the government, in collaboration with the Italian government, embarked upon a programme to train olive farmers in the country to revive and develop local production of oil and reduce the reliance on the costly imported commodity.

The government was also working on promotion of olive farming and prepared a programme to convert wild olives into productive olive plants to increase the farm income of farmers in marginalized areas of the country. It may be mentioned here that the third meeting of the steering committee on 'Olive Culture' was chaired by Italian Ambassador in Pakistan Andreas Ferraresse and the Secretary, MFPSR. A large number of stakeholders, representatives from several ministries, provinces and the Italian cooperation attended

the meeting. The committee reviewed a strategic proposal plan and policy's recommendations for a holistic development of the Pakistani olive value chain. The committee also appraised the 'Olive Cultures' outstanding achievements, work plan and budget for remaining period from June 2023 to March 2024. The project 'Olive Culture-Holistic and Multi-professional Mechanism for a Pakistani Olive Value Chain', is funded by the Italian government and implemented by CIHEAM Bari with MFPSR.

Olive plantation is being carried out over 8,900 acres across the country, besides conducting a campaign on wild olive grafting across four provinces and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) to attain oil for local consumption, added the sources.

Dr. Hassan Tariq, National Project Director Olive Cultivation Programme, told APP that the government was striv-



ing to bring specific regions in the country under olive cultivation and earlier, over 5 million sapling have been planted across the country. "We have a large area of land suitable for growing olive trees, and Pakistan has been producing olive oil since 2010 with the help of countries such as Spain and Italy. Currently, we are producing around 1,500 tons of olive oil and 830 tons of table olives per year, all of which are consumed domestically," he added. Olive Project Manag-

er Khaity Technologies Pakistan Azeem Tariq told APP that with the cooperation of all stakeholders, the government had launched a massive drive to complete plantation of over 1.2 million olive saplings, which has been started since last spring tree plantation season, and is continuing across country. The drive would help strengthen efforts to produce edible oil to meet needs for domestic consumption, he added while replying to a query.



# Sri Lanka crush Ireland's CWC Qualifier hopes as Scotland, Oman through

**A Sports**

HARARE: Dominant Sri Lanka crushed Ireland's hopes of making it to the Super Sixes of the CWC Qualifier by handing a thumping 133-run defeat and paved the way for Scotland and Oman to progress.

In the 15th match of the CWC Qualifier, tournament favourites Sri Lanka registered a dominating 133-run triumph over Ireland at the back of a brilliant century by Dimuth Karunaratne and a five-for by Wanindu Hasaranga.

Put into bat first, the Sri Lanka piled up a massive total of 325 in 50 overs with Karunaratne and Sadeera Samarawickrama leading the batting charge.

Having lost Pathum Nissanka (20) and Kusal Mendis (0) on two successive deliveries, Sri Lanka slipped to 48/2 in the ninth over.

Following back-to-back blows, the pair of Karunaratne and Samarawickrama anchored the innings with an astounding 168-run partnership for the third wicket.

The pair appeared to have settled down and both were eyeing centuries until Gareth Delany got rid of Samarawickrama, who fell just 18 short of his century.

He struck four boundaries on his way to an 86-ball 82.



Karunaratne followed Samarawickrama's footsteps as he also walked back in the span of two overs after top scoring for Sri Lanka.

He smashed eight boundaries on his way to a run-a-ball 103.

Brisk and valuable knocks by Charith Asalanka (38) and Dhananjaya de Silva (42) afterward made sure Sri Lanka amassed the 300-run mark.

Mark Adair was the pick of the bowlers for Ireland as he returned brilliant figures of 4/46 followed by Barry McCa-

rthy's 3/56 and Gareth Delany's 2/52.

Set to chase a mammoth 326, the Irish batting lineup faltered and could only accumulate 192 before being bowled out in 31 overs.

In-form Harry Tector (33) and Curtis Campher (39) offered brief retaliation against spin-backed Sri Lankan bowling attack while the rest seemed clueless.

Wanindu Hasaranga claimed his second consecutive five-wicket haul and played a pivotal role in his team's triumph while Maheesh Theekshana

made two scalps.

Meanwhile, in another CWC Qualifier fixture, Scotland outclassed Oman by 76 runs after both sides qualified for the Super Sixes, courtesy of Sri Lanka's victory.

Batting first, Scotland raised 320 runs before bundling out on the final delivery thanks to a magnificent century by Brandon McMullen.

McMullen top-scored for Scotland with a 121-ball 136 which featured 14 boundaries and three sixes.

He received significant support from his captain Richie Berrington, who scored 60 off 62 deliveries.

Bilal Khan claimed a five-wicket haul for Oman but it could not bar Scotland from piling a big total on the scoreboard.

The huge total got on the nerves of Oman batters, who could only score 244/9 in response and thus handed a massive 76-run victory to Scotland.

Wicketkeeper batter Naseem Khushi was the top-scorer for Oman in their dismal show with the bat.

He hit seven boundaries and three sixes on his way to a 53-ball 69 but fell well short of steering his side to glory.

Chris Greaves led the bowling attack for Scotland with a five-wicket haul and conceded just 53 runs in his quota of 10 overs.

## Dragon Boat Cup

Members of Team Vienna Pink Dragons & Friends compete during the 2023 Vienna Danube Dragon Boat Cup in Vienna, Austria.



Photo by (Xinhua/He Canling)

## Argentina Primera Division: Lanus move back into top four

**Xinhua**

BUENOS AIRES: Lanus recovered from a goal down to return to the Argentine Primera Division's top four on Saturday with a 2-1 home win over Talleres Cordoba.

Diego Valoyes opened the scoring for the visitors with a close-range finish after combining with Michael Santos on the counterattack.

The hosts equalized after the hour through Leandro Diaz, who latched onto Matias Esquivel's cross to head home into the bottom left corner.

Esquivel was again the provider four minutes later as his precise delivery from a set piece set up Cristian Lema to head into the bottom right corner.

Lanus are now fourth in the 28-team standings with 37 points from 21 outings, 13 points behind leaders River Plate. Talleres remain second with 40 points.

In Saturday's only other Argentine Primera Division fixture, Union Santa Fe cruised to a 3-0 home win over Independiente.

# Pakistan Cyclists secure 4 Gold, 4 Silver, and 3 Bronze Medals in Cycling at Special Olympic Games

**Tahir Amin Malik**

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cycling Federation is thrilled to announce the remarkable achievements of Pakistani cyclists at the Special Olympic Games held in Berlin, Germany. With great pride, they have secured an impressive tally of 4 gold medals, 4 silver medals, and 3 bronze medals.

President Syed Azhar Ali Shah and Secretary General Moazzam Khan Klair extend their heartfelt appreciation to the athletes who have brought immense honour to Pakistan on this global platform. Their

unwavering dedication, perseverance, and exceptional performances have showcased the immense talent within Pakistan's cycling community.

A special acknowledgment is deservedly bestowed upon the national coach, Miss Maham Malik, whose unwavering commitment, guidance, and expertise have been instrumental in shaping these victorious athletes. Her remarkable support has played a pivotal role in their outstanding achievements.

The Pakistan Cycling Federation calls upon the government, sports authorities, and all sports



enthusiasts to come together and celebrate these deserving cyclists and their coach. Their achievements serve as a testament to

their determination and an inspiration to aspiring athletes across the nation. Recognizing and applauding their accomplishments will not only foster their continued growth but also enhance Pakistan's reputation in international cycling.

The Pakistan Cycling Federation takes immense pride in these accomplishments and expresses gratitude to the athletes, coach, and all those involved in their training and support. Together, we can create an environment that nurtures and celebrates the immense potential of our cycling community.

# Bagnaia wins attritional Dutch MotoGP, heartache for Binder

**Sports Desk**

ASSEN: Francesco Bagnaia took another step towards defending his world MotoGP title, winning the Dutch MotoGP at Assen on Sunday to extend his lead in the championship.

Pole-sitter Marco Bezzecchi took second with Brad Binder in third only for KTM's South African rider to pick up a penalty for exceeding track limits that knocked him off the podium.

Demoted to fourth Aleix Espargaro was the beneficiary of Binder's misfortune with the hapless South African suffering exactly the same fate in Saturday's sprint.

Bagnaia takes a 35-point lead over Jorge Martin into the summer break, with racing resuming in early August at the British Grand Prix in Silverstone, with Bezzecchi a further point

behind.

"It's fantastic! It wasn't easy, they were pushing a lot behind," said the Ducati factory race winner.

"I was on the limit. "I love this track, this crowd—Assen, you are fantastic!"

Bagnaia became the first back-to-back winner of the Dutch MotoGP since his Italian compatriot and mentor, Valentino Rossi, in 2004-2005.

Bezzecchi bemoaned a poor getaway.

"I lost time at the start, then it took me a while to pass Brad, but overall I'm really happy," he said.

A full house with 105,000 fans at a sweltering hot 'Cathedral of Speed'—one of the jewels in MotoGP's crown—watched Binder get a blistering start.

The KTM rider surged into the lead at turn one past a trio of

Ducatis—Bezzecchi, world champion Bagnaia and Luca Marini.

Binder's teammate Jack Miller made an early exit, the Australian crashing out at the end of the opening lap.

He was quickly followed by a crash between French duo Johann Zarco and Fabio Quartararo, as up front Bagnaia nicked the lead off Binder.

The race lost a fourth rider with only three laps completed when Maverick Vinales parted company with his Aprilia.

Binder was keeping close tabs on Bagnaia, with Bezzecchi in hot pursuit as Enea Bastianini slipped out of contention.

As the midway point of the 26-lap race approached Miguel Oliveira was forced to retire his Aprilia.

Bezzecchi moved up to second 10 laps out, to go in hot pursuit of

Bagnaia, over one second further up the road.

But hard as he pressed Bezzecchi, winner of Saturday's sprint, couldn't conjure up the speed to deny Bagnaia his fourth win out of eight this season.

In all eight of the 22-man grid failed to finish.

One man who didn't even get to line up was Honda star Marc Marquez who was forced to pull out of hours before Sunday's eighth round of the season due to injury.

The six-time former world champion missed last weekend's race in Germany in similar fashion.

The Spaniard is enduring a troubled season, hitting the deck twice at Assen following no fewer than five falls at Sachsenring.

That left him nursing numerous injuries including a rib frac-



ture which he aggravated this weekend.

"After (Saturday's) sprint the pain became worse and worse," Marquez reported.

"This morning I went to the

## Ten-man Fluminense beat Bahia, rise to third

**Xinhua**

RIO DE JANEIRO: Lele and Gabriel Pirani struck second-half goals as Fluminense came from behind to secure a 2-1 home victory over Bahia in Brazil's Serie A championship on Sunday.

Vinicius Mingotti gave the visitors the lead just before the half hour as he combined with Kayky Chagas before slotting a shot past goalkeeper Danilo Fernandes on the counterattack.

Fluminense's fortunes went from bad to worse when center-back Marcilio Mota was shown a straight red card for bringing down Mingotti in the 34th minute.

But the hosts emerged from the halftime interval with renewed verve and Lele equalized by sending a looping header into an unguarded net after some chaotic Bahia defending.

Pirani completed the turnaround shortly after with a low finish past goalkeeper Fabio Maciel following Keno's pass.

The result at the Maracana stadium leaves Fluminense with 21 points from 12 games, six points behind leaders Botafogo. Bahia are 14th in the 20-team standings, nine points further back.

In other Brazilian Serie A fixtures on Sunday, Atletico Paranaense won 1-0 at home to Corinthians, Fortaleza edged to a 2-1 home win over Atletico Mineiro and Cruzeiro secured a 1-0 home victory over Sao Paulo.

## Alcaraz wins Queen's, returns to world number one

**Sports Desk**



LONDON: Carlos Alcaraz will return to world number one after beating Alex de Minaur 6-4, 6-4 on Sunday to win his first title on grass at Queen's Club.

The Spaniard's fifth title of the season moves him back ahead of 23-time Grand Slam champion Novak Djokovic at the top of the rankings.

"It means a lot to have my name on the trophy," said Alcaraz after joining the likes of Rafael Nadal, Pete Sampras and John McEnroe as former winners at Queen's.

"It's special for me to play here. So many legends have won here so to see my name on the trophy surrounded by the great champions for me is amazing."

Alcaraz was playing on the grass for just the third tournament of his career.

The 20-year-old has failed to get past the fourth round in two previous attempts at Wimbledon, but his impressive showing suggests he will be the biggest threat to Djokovic securing an eighth title at the All England Club next month.

Despite Djokovic's Wimbledon record, Alcaraz will now be the top seed for the third Grand Slam of the season.

"It helps a lot to come into Wimbledon as number one, the top seed. It's amazing but once again it wouldn't be possible without the support of all the people through the whole week," added Alcaraz.

After battling past French lucky loser Arthur Rinderknech in the first round, the US Open champion did not drop a set in his final four matches at Queen's.

De Minaur had dumped out Andy Murray and world number six Holger Rune on his route to the final.

But the Australian was left to rue Alcaraz's ability to win the big points in a tight contest.

"It's been a great week for me," said De Minaur. "We were close but weren't able to get it done today. Too good by Carlos."

De Minaur had two break points for the chance to serve for the first set when he led 4-3.

Alcaraz responded, though, to hold serve and immediately break the world number 18 in the next game before serving out for the set.

He then needed lengthy treatment as he had strapping applied to his right quad.

However, Alcaraz's movement did not seem affected as he again pounced with his only break point to move ahead 3-2 in the second set.

Two rare errors gave De Minaur some hope in the final game as Alcaraz found himself 0-30 down.

But his booming serve dug him out of trouble as four straight points secured the title and a return to world number one.

## Ogier edges Rovnanpera as Toyota dominate Safari Rally

**Sports Desk**

NAIVASHA: France's eight-time former world champion Sebastien Ogier patched up his rear tailgate with a bin liner en route to edging Toyota teammate Kalle Rovnanpera to win the Safari Rally in Kenya on Sunday.

Ogier, who isn't driving a full season, came home just 6.7 seconds ahead of the 22-year-old Finn as Toyota claimed the first four places with Elfyn Evans rounding out the podium and Takamoto Katsuta finishing in fourth.

It was the 39-year-old Ogier's third victory from just five starts so far this season, his second in Kenya after 2021 and his 58th career win in the World Rally Championship.

Rovnanpera's second place saw him consolidate his place atop the drivers' standings, 37 points clear of Belgium's Thierry Neuville (Hyundai), who finished in eighth in Kenya, after round seven of 13.

Victory was far from a given, however, as Ogier clipped a tree and ripped off his car's entire rear tailgate. He patched the gap using a bin liner to keep dust at bay.