

# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ

سالم بن عبد اللہ نے بیان کیا انہوں نے اپنے والد عبد اللہ بن عمر رضی اللہ عنہما سے کہی کہ تم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا کہ میں نے دیکھا ہے ایک سیلو مورس پر آگ لگی ہے اور میں نے اسے بجھا دیا ہے۔ میں نے اس کی تعجبی سے کہہ دیا کہ یہ آگ تھی یا اس کی بی بی تھی۔ (صحیح بخاری، حدیث نمبر 7038)

Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited

RAWALPINDI



## China supports Pakistan in playing bigger role in int'l, regional affairs: Nong Rong

China's Assistant Foreign Minister Nong Rong has said that China supports Pakistan in playing a bigger role in international and regional affairs. In a meeting with the Director General, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ilyas Mehmood Nizami who came to China to hold consultation ... (Details on Page 8)



## China offers deep condolences over train accident in Pakistan: Zhao Lijian

China has offered deep condolences for those who died in the train accident in Pakistan and offered condolences to the victims' families as well as sympathy to the injured. "We extend our deep condolences for the victims and sympathies to their families and those who have been injured," a Chinese foreign ministry's spokesperson said in a statement issued here. A passenger train derailed near Nawabshah district in Sindh province

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Muharramul Haram 23, Friday, August 11, 2023

www.dailyspokesman.net

@daily\_spokesman



Daily Spokesman Vol: 16, Issue: 122 Price Rs. 25.00 Pages 8

## Consultation process

ISLAMABAD: Leader of the Opposition Raja Riaz Ahmad calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif as part of the consultation process for selection of the caretaker Prime Minister on Thursday.



Photo: PID

# PM lauds bureaucracy for cooperation, guidance during 16-month stint

### Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday expressed his gratitude to the bureaucracy for their support and guidance throughout the 16-month tenure, enabling the coalition government to sail through tough circumstances.

The prime minister, in his farewell interaction with the federal secretaries, said despite being hugely diverse, the 13-party coalition government ran the affairs smoothly with utmost cooperation and prudence, also setting an example of the practicability of the coalition government.

He said during the 16 months, the bureaucracy also faced some difficult scenarios but the will to do something productive for the people of Pakistan paved the way.

The prime minister lamented

the past practice of unnecessarily criticizing and victimising the competent officers which adversely impacted public service. Just like the politicians, the officers were also victimised and their families harassed.

He said the civil service faced a severe blow during the devolution as due to the very reason, some of the youngsters also opted to join other services.

Mentioning systemic delays in the execution of 10,000MW solar energy project, Prime Minister Shehbaz called for establishing robust systems to ensure the smooth execution of projects.

He said the incumbent government ensured the completion of various public welfare projects which had been halted by the previous government.

Recounting the achievements of his government, the prime



minister said the signing of the IMF (International Monetary Fund) agreement was a great success, otherwise, the situation could have been disastrous for the country.

He said the credit for all the successes achieved by the government also went to the

previous government through the "worst strategy". He said the previous government even hurled baseless allegations of corruption in the CPEC projects.

He said the projects being funded by foreign grants were also impeded by the previous government as they never wanted the respective government to claim the credit.

The prime minister appreciated his Special Assistants Tariq Fatemi, Ahad Cheema and Jahanzeb Khan for their hard work and cooperation.

Regarding his Press Secretary Abdul Akbar, the prime minister said he was very committed officer with a great personality.

He also appreciated his Speech Writer Arshad Malik and Public Relations Officer Umar Faran as well as the official media team and expressed good wishes for them.

## PM, opposition leader to meet again to reach consensus on caretaker PM's selection

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Leader of the Opposition in National Assembly Raja Riaz met with Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday as part of the consultation process for the selection of the caretaker prime minister.

After detailed deliberation, the two leaders decided to meet again tomorrow (Friday) to reach a consensus on selecting a name for the caretaker prime minister.

As per the constitution, the prime minister had invited the opposition leader to a meeting regarding the appointment of the caretaker prime minister.

The meeting to consult the name of the caretaker prime minister was held in a cordial environment, said a press release issued by the Prime Minister Office.

## Outgoing NA concludes remarkable term, passing 235 bills and overseeing key transitions

### Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The 15th National Assembly of Pakistan, which came to a close on August 9, 2023, left behind a legacy of legislative productivity, executive oversight and transformative leadership changes.

With an array of accomplishments, the outgoing assembly's tenure underscored its commitment to democratic governance and national progress. During its tenure, the 15th National Assembly achieved an impressive feat by passing a total of 235 bills.

The assembly, comprising 342 members, skillfully discharged its duty of executive oversight, ensuring the effective functioning of the government. Lawmakers displayed unwavering dedication by submitting thousands of questions across various ministries, probing into critical matters affecting the nation.

Furthermore, the assembly

took proactive steps towards addressing key concerns by introducing and adopting resolutions. A total of 107 resolutions were adopted, reflecting the assembly's endeavor to provide solutions to a broad spectrum of issues mainly related to governance, education, foreign affairs, health and energy.



According to the National Assembly's official website, the house witnessed the introduction of 181 government bills and 360 private member bills. This comprehensive legislative approach highlighted the assembly's commitment to inclusivity and addressing multifaceted challenges. Notably, 12 bills were referred to the joint sitting of Parliament,

demonstrating the assembly's collaborative approach to lawmaking.

The tenure of the outgoing 15th National Assembly was characterized by significant leadership shifts and milestones. The assembly played a pivotal role in the ousting of former Prime Minister Imran Khan through a motion of no-confidence passed on April 9, 2022. Subsequently, Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif secured a vote of confidence, heralding a new era of leadership.

A total of 126 bills were passed during the period from August 13, 2018 to April 9, 2022, underpinning the legislative achievements of the assembly's early years. The remaining 109 bills were endorsed during the tenure of the PML-N-led government, spanning from April 10, 2022, to August 9, 2023, affirming the assembly's enduring commitment to governance.

## SBP to issue Rs100 coin to commemorate 10 years of CPEC

### Commerce Desk

KARACHI: To mark the 10th anniversary of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) to issue Rs 100 commemorative coin on Friday.

The coin shall be issued through the exchange counters of SBP Banking Services Corporation from August 11, 2023, said a statement issued here on Thursday.

The government of Pakistan has decided to issue a commemorative coin of Rs.100 in recognition of the significant contribution of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor to country's infrastructure and economic development since its decade of inception in 2013.

The coin is in round shape milled with serrations on the edge, diameter of 30.00 mm, weight 13.5 grams and has Cupro-Nickel metal contents, the statement read.



## President Alvi stresses AI importance for healthcare sector



### Bureau Report

LAHORE: President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday emphasised the importance of artificial intelligence (AI) in the health sector to provide better facilities to people.

Addressing the Instacare Future Health Forum 2023 at a local hotel, he said the AI was a great hope in the health and medicine sectors, and in future, a medical graduate could utilise it for treatment of patients.

The president said now a doctor did not need to save information in his own memory as more data could be saved and accessed through his mobile phone and computer.

He cited an example of the COVID-19 pandemic period in which Pakistan successfully used available data and saved several lives. He said that the number of deaths taking place due to COVID-19 was less in the country than in other countries of the region.

He said Pakistan had a good collection of data; however, learning right question through the AI for right answer was important. He added that knowledge was free for everyone now and control over it by anyone had become almost impossible.

He said that Islam stresses the state to work for welfare and betterment of the community. The president said science had brought about an ease in lives of the community, so the AI should also be used for facilitating human beings.

Earlier, the president gave away awards to individuals and institutions, who contributed technology and AI to the healthcare sector.

Punjab Minister for Health and Social Welfare Dr Javed Akram also addressed the participants.

First Lady Begum Samina Alvi and a good number of healthcare professionals attended the forum.

## Mariyum urges journalists for implementation of PEMRA Amendment Bill 2023



### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Information Secretary of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and former Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb on Thursday urged the journalists and media workers to remain united and ensure implementation of PEMRA Amendment Bill 2023, which would replace the 2002 PEMRA Ordinance, a black law introduced by Pervez Musharraf.

She thanked all the media organizations including All Pakistan Newspaper Society (APNS), Pakistan Broadcast-

ers Association (PBA), Parliamentary Reporters Association (PRA), Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE) for their guidance and support in the preparation of the PEMRA Amendment Bill 2023.

During her visit to National Press Club here, she said that for the past over 12 months, consultations were held with all stakeholders for the preparation of the Bill.

She said that the rights of working journalists and media workers have been protected in the Bill as the issuance of government advertisements has been linked to payment of salaries and dues of the journalists and media workers. Moreover, the rule of minimum wages would now be applicable for media organizations, she added. The former minister said that the outgoing government had introduced Health Insurance Card scheme for journalists and media workers and had created a fund for payment of Rs 4 million to the families of those who die in the line of duty.

## Two more professors suspended in Ghazi University rape scandal

### Mushtaq Gummani

DERA GHAZI KHAN:

Two more professors have been suspended in connection with Ghazi University rape scandal.

As per details, 17 people who were on the honorary posts have also resigned after a female student of the Ghazi University in Dera Ghazi Khan, Punjab, accused two teachers of sexual harassment.

The scandal was unveiled after a video statement of the rape victim student went viral

on social media platforms. The student alleged Dr. Zafar Wazir raped her after intoxicating her.

Following the viral statement of the girl, a case under section 376 was registered at Gadai police station in Dera Ghazi Khan against two professors and a teacher.

According to the FIR, Dr. Zafar Wazir raped the student, who was lured by her colleague. The FIR further stated that Professor Khalid Khattak also 'threatened' her for 'illicit relations' with him. The police after registering the case had launched the hunt for the arrest of the teachers and the student.

## Group photo

ISLAMABAD: Former Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is posing for a group photo graph along with Parliamentarians after attending the last session of National Assembly in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

# China supports Pakistan in playing bigger role in int'l, regional affairs: Nong Rong

## Spokesman Report

**BELJING:** China's Assistant Foreign Minister Nong Rong has said that China supports Pakistan in playing a bigger role in international and regional affairs.

In a meeting with the Director General, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ilyas Mehmood Nizami who came to China to hold the third China-Pakistan consultation on South Asian affairs, he said that China is ready to work with Pakistan to consolidate and deepen China-Pakistan all-weather strategic cooperative partnership, and accelerate the building of a closer China-Paki-

stan community with a shared future in the new era, according to Chinese ministry of foreign affairs.

Nong Rong said that the China-Pakistan friendship is higher than mountains, deeper than oceans and sweeter than honey. The friendly relations between the two countries have shown strong momentum of development, with close high-level exchanges between the two sides and constantly strengthening cooperation in various fields.

"No matter how the international landscape may change, China will, as always, firmly support Pakistan in safeguarding national independ-



ence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, support Pakistan in maintaining unity and stability and realizing prosperity and revitalization, and

support Pakistan in playing a bigger role in international and regional affairs," he added. Nong Rong extended his wishes for a complete success of the third

China-Pakistan consultation on South Asian affairs.

Ilyas Mehmood Nizami spoke highly of Pakistan-China relations, highly praised China's development achievements, and sincerely thanked China for providing Pakistan with long-term valuable support and assistance in its national development.

Ilyas Mehmood Nizami said that Pakistan hopes to strengthen high-level exchanges and pair-up consultations with China, continue to firmly support each other, maintain close cooperation on South Asian affairs, jointly respond to challenges, and safeguard the common interests of both sides.

# Afghan supreme leader deems attacks on Pakistan forbidden

## News Desk

**RAWALPINDI:** Sheikh Hibatullah Akhunzada, the supreme leader of Afghanistan's ruling Taliban has labeled cross-border attacks, including those on Pakistan, as forbidden under Islam.

The Pakistani side urged the Taliban to make the diktat public to help deter TTP and its Afghan supporters from conducting activities that undermine relations between the two countries.

According to Sheikh Hibatullah's diktats, all groups have been asked to pledge allegiance to him as attacking Pakistan is declared haram (unforbidden). The Afghan nation-



als have been barred from crossing the border for militancy, the Afghan supreme leader said and added those who get killed in Pakistan, will not be called martyrs.

No official of the Afghan government will attend the funerals of the militants

involved in cross-border terrorism, Akhunzada said in his directions.

The official Afghan television station aired audio of a speech Saturday by Taliban Defense Minister Muhammad Yaqoob, in which he revealed for

the first time a few details about Hibatullah's order regarding cross-border violence.

Yaqoob said, without naming any country, that the Taliban supreme leader had terminated the jihad or holy war, and "obedience" to his decree is mandatory for all. Yaqoob was speaking to a gathering of Taliban commanders and security forces.

"If someone still leaves Afghanistan intending to wage jihad abroad, it cannot be considered jihad anymore. If Mujahideen [Taliban forces] continue to fight despite orders from the emir to stop, it is not jihad but rather hostility," Yaqoob said, using Hibatullah's official title.

## At least two injured in Quetta Moti Ram Road blast

**QUETTA:** At least two people were injured after an explosion took place on Quetta's Moti Ram Road, police and rescue officials said on Thursday.

Firefighters were called in as fire erupted in a shop situated in the area following the explosion, rescue officials said.

Police said the nature of the blast is being ascertained.

According to the police, the roofs of two shops were caved in while an inferno erupted due to the blast in another shop had been doused.

Arsalan, a shopkeeper and his helper Nazir Ahmed were injured in the blast and were shifted to the trauma centre of the Civil Hospital of Quetta.

One of the injured is said to be in critical condition.

The bomb disposal squad launched an investigation to ascertain the nature of the blast.

# ECP bans transfers, postings on federal level

## City Desk

**ISLAMABAD:** The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has banned the transfers, postings on federal level after the dissolution of National Assembly and federal cabinet, ARY News reported.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) directed to the Secretary Establishment in a letter that National Assembly and federal cabinet are dissolved hence the transfers and posting should be stopped till the constitution of caretaker government.

The letter stated that after the formation of caretaker setup transfers and posting can be made. The authorities should abide the ECP decision and stop the transfers and postings.

The National Assembly (NA) was dissolved after President Dr Arif Alvi signed the summary sent by Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif for disbanding the legislative.

"The president dissolved the National Assembly on the advice

of the prime minister under Article



58-1 of the Constitution," read an official statement issued by the President's Office on X, formerly known as Twitter.

With the dissolution of the lower house of parliament, the tenure of current government – which came into power after former prime minister and PTI chief Imran Khan was ousted through a vote of no-confidence – ended prematurely.

It is pertinent to mention here that on July 31, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had asked the caretaker Chief Minister (CM) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) to remove ministers who are involved in politics. The ECP had sought the removal of caretaker ministers, advisors and assistants over 'political associations'.

# KP caretaker cabinet: 20 ministers tender resignations



## Bureau Report

**PESHAWAR:** 20 ministers from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) caretaker cabinet have tendered their resignations following the directives of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

20 KP ministers have sent their resignations to the caretaker chief minister (CM) following the ECP's directives.

The ministers who stepped down from their positions include Masood Shah, Abdul Haleem Qasuriya, Irshad Qaiser, Muhammad Ali Shah, Hidayatullah, Salma Begum, Riaz Anwar, Pir Haroon Shah, Sheraz Akram, Malik Meher Elahi, Hamid Shah, Bakht Nawaz, Haji Ghuffran, Fazal Elahi, Taj Muhammad, Himayatullah, Zafar Mahmood and Rehmat Salam Khattak.

The election commission had

directed the ministers to submit their resignations after disclosure of their political affiliations with different parties.

On July 31, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had asked the caretaker Chief Minister (CM) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) to remove ministers who are involved in politics.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) Secretary wrote a letter to the caretaker CM of KP and took notice of the political involvement of caretaker ministers, secretaries and assistants.

The ECP had sought the removal of caretaker ministers, advisors and assistants over 'political associations'.

The letter stated ECP has come to know about the appointments of caretaker ministers based on political affiliations and former caretaker minister Shahid Khattak is proof of political appointment.

# PM Modi govt defeats no-confidence motion in Lok Sabha

Following a walkout by the opposition parties during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speech in the Indian parliament, Lok Sabha, the opposition lawmakers' no-confidence motion was defeated by the government on Thursday. Along with launching into a diatribe against the opposition parties, PM Modi promised to bring peace to the northeastern state of Manipur as soon as possible during his more than two-hour speech.

"The federal and state governments

are working round-the-clock to prosecute those responsible and restore peace to the state. The entire nation is behind the people of Manipur, I want to reassure them," Modi remarked.

Additionally, Modi criticised those who walked out, saying: "Those who don't trust democracy are always ready to make a comment but don't have the patience to hear (the rebuttal)," adding that they would "speak ill and run away, throw garbage and run away, spread lies and run away."

# US set to crackdown on real estate money laundering

## Reuters

The U. S. Treasury Department will soon propose a rule that would effectively end anonymous luxury-home purchases, closing a loophole that the agency says allows corrupt oligarchs, terrorists and other criminals to hide ill-gotten gains.

The long-awaited rule is expected to require that real estate professionals such as title insurers report the identities of the beneficial owners of companies buying real estate in cash to the Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN).

FinCEN is slated to propose the rule sometime this month, according to its regulatory agenda, though the timeline could slip, said two people briefed on the developments. Anti-corruption

advocates and lawmakers have been pushing for the rule, which will replace the current patchwork reporting system.

Criminals have for decades anonymously hidden ill-gotten gains in real estate, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said in March, adding that as much as \$2.3 billion was laundered through U. S. real estate between 2015 and 2020.

"That's why FinCEN is taking this important step to put something official on the books that would root out money laundering through the sector once and for all," said Erica Hanichak, government affairs director of advocacy group the FACT Coalition.

Some advocates say FinCEN, which declined to comment on the timing of the proposal, has moved too slowly. Officials first

said in 2021 that they planned to implement the rule.

FinCEN has been struggling to complete a related rule that would unmask shell company owners. A bipartisan group of lawmakers has pressed FinCEN to tighten up that proposal, according to an April public letter. That debate has slowed down FinCEN's work on the real estate reporting rule, one of the sources said.

The American Land Title Association, which represents title insurers, says it welcomes the new rule but that FinCEN should delay it until the shell company rule is completed.

The proposed rule will be open to public and industry feedback.

While banks have long been required to understand the source of customer funds and report suspicious transactions, no such rules exist nationwide for the real estate industry.



Instead, FinCEN has operated real estate purchase disclosure rules, known as geographic targeting orders (GTOs), in just a handful of cities including New York, Miami and Los Angeles. The new rule is expected to effectively expand GTOs nationwide.

FinCEN implemented GTOs in 2016 after the New York Times revealed that nearly half of luxury real estate was bought by anonymous shell companies.

But the orders are easy to skirt by simply buying property outside the targeted areas, said Jodi Vittori, an expert on illicit finance at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Transparency advocates pushing for a nationwide rule point to the example of Guo Wengui, an exiled Chinese businessman who, according to prosecutors, used an anonymous shell company to channel illicit profit from a fraud scheme into the \$26 million purchase of a

50,000-square-foot New Jersey mansion in December 2021.

Had Guo bought property across the Hudson River in Manhattan, it would have been subject to a GTO and likely flagged immediately to law enforcement.

Guo, a onetime business partner of former Donald Trump adviser Steve Bannon, has pleaded not guilty to fraud charges. His lawyers did not respond to a request for comment.

A FinCEN spokesperson said GTO reports provide valuable data.

Howard Master, a formal federal prosecutor, said law enforcement uses them to generate leads, but mainly to learn more about assets owned by individuals already under investigation.

"It'll identify an asset that is

beneficially owned by someone that you might not otherwise have known about," said Master, now a partner at investigations firm Nardello & Co.

A 2020 report by the Government Accountability Office, Congress' investigative arm, found that nearly 7% of GTO reports identified individuals or entities connected to ongoing FBI cases. But the same report highlighted concerns about the ability of FinCEN, which has complained of chronic underfunding, to police the program.

For the new rule to be effective, FinCEN will need more enforcement resources, said David Szakonyi, a political science professor at George Washington University.

"FinCEN needs more people and more computers to process the information."

# Shaheed-e-Kashmir Shaikh Aziz remembered on his martyrdom anniversary

**Spokesman Report**

MIRPUR AJK: The chairman Jammu and Kashmir National Front (JKNF) Nayeem Ahmed Khan, while paying rich tributes to Shaheed-e-Kashmir Sheikh Abdul Aziz on his martyrdom anniversary, said that the martyred leader was a great freedom fighter who served the cause of Kashmir with diligence and devotion.

In a message from Infamous Tihar Jail on Thursday, the National Front leader said, "The supreme sacrifices rendered by the martyred leader will be remembered for a long time in the annals of Kashmir history".



Terming him as a man of great honesty and integrity, Khan said that Sheikh Aziz was a staunch and committed freedom fighter who rendered his services for the cause while working on different fronts.

"Rationality, resilience and compassion were the hallmarks of his simple but sober personality", he said, adding that the martyrdom of Sheikh Aziz and other liberation leaders who laid their precious lives for the noble cause, would continue to inspire the next generation of Kashmiri's who believe in freedom and justice.

Meanwhile, in a separate state-

ment, the Vice Chairman of JKNF, Altaf Hussain Wani said that Shaheed Sheikh Abdul Aziz was one of the pioneers of the ongoing freedom movement who died for the cause he promoted throughout his life.

The target killing of frontline Kashmiri resistance leaders, he said, has been a part of India's nefarious game plan to render the ongoing freedom movement leaderless.

Paying his tribute to the martyred leader, Wani said, every drop of blood being spilt on the streets of Kashmir cements the resolve of the Kashmiri nation.

## DS Railway Multan Division Hamad Hasan Mirza Promoted in Grade 20

**Kiran Asim**

MULTAN: On the promotion of Divisional Superintendent Railway Multan Hamad Hasan Mirza from Grade 19 to Grade 20, DS Railway Multan distributed sweets to the Divisional Officers, Assistant Officers as well as all employees of DS Office. He said that the reason for this success is due to the hardworking employees and officers of Multan Division—because of which I got the promotion, he thanked all the people on this occasion.



All the officers and employees congratulated DS Railway Hamad Hasan Mirza on this special occasion. President of Al-Khidmat Foundation Multan Ahmed Chaghatai also came to DS office and congratulated DS Railway Multan. President of Al-Khidmat Foundation Multan, Ahmed Chaghatai, railway officers and railway employees said that DS Railway is an officer who cares for the poor and serving employees and after the arrival of DS Multan Hamad Hasan Mirza, the work done in Railway Division Multan. It has never happened before in any era.

## WAPDA Hydro Union United under the leadership of Central Secretary Khurshid Khan



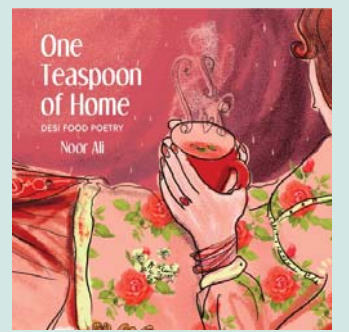
**Asim Tanveer**

MULTAN: In the election of Zonal Secretary and Zonal Vice Chairman of Pakistan WAPDA Hydro Workers Union, Chaudhary Khalid Group won both the seats with a huge majority. The candidate of Zonal Secretary Malik Tanveer got 87 votes while his opponent Rana Khizr Hayat got 35 votes. Chairman candidate Ilyas Sindhu got 86 votes, competitor Zubair Manzoor got 41 votes, the total votes were 128, all of which were cast.

And asked to pay attention to the work of the workers and to increase the good name of Hydro Union and to be united under the leadership of Central Secretary Khurshid Khan. Chaudhry Ishrat Alvi Mukhtiar Ahmed Farooq Shah Usman Wahab Rana Zeeshan and others also addressed and distributed sweets.

## "One Teaspoon of Home" By Noor Ali

LAHORE: Three-time Gourmand Award winner, and Pakistan's first and only independent publishing house Markings Publishing, helmed by Kiran Aman, proudly announces the launch of its latest title, "One Teaspoon of Home" authored by Noor Ali on 14th August 2023. This unique book is a captivating poetic journey that explores the flavors, traditions, and memories of the subcontinent.



Markings Publishing's first ever desi food poetry book, "One Teaspoon of Home" is inspired by the vibrant culinary traditions of Pakistan, comprising of 24 short poems, where each word is a hug from the desi past. From family favorites to the bold tastes of resistance, this collection dishes out nostalgia, tradition, and a sprinkle of rebellion. This book is an attempt to synthesize the real colours and flavours of traditional Pakistani cuisines by dint of words to enable the readers to attain a mouth-watering, hands-on experience.

Noor Ali, an assistant professor of education at Northeastern University, is an avid nature aficionado, a devoted lover of tea, and a fierce advocate for social justice issues. Her writings have appeared in various publications, where she explores topics such as leadership and critical race theory. She currently resides in the suburbs of Boston with her husband and three children.

"We are thrilled to launch the latest publication, a poetry collection "One Teaspoon of Home" by Noor Ali, that eloquently celebrates the vibrant culinary traditions of Pakistan. This unique book goes beyond mere verses, capturing the shared experiences, cultural heritage, and the essence of our local community. It serves as a heartfelt reflection on life in Pakistan, identity, and resilience, resonating with the very Ideology that Markings was built on and our vision for documenting our homeland," said Markings' CEO, Kiran Aman.

Compiled, edited and published by Markings Publishing, with illustrations by Umme Aimen Kazmi, "One Teaspoon of Home" by Noor Ali is now available for PKR 2,000 at Markings (Email: info@markings.com.pk Instagram DM: @markingspublishing), Polly and Other Stories across Pakistan, online at www.kitabain.com and internationally at Amazon.com.

## Importance of Pak-China Friendship

**Khuwaja Ashfaque, Beijing**

Pakistan-China friendship is thriving! A religious delegation from Pakistan, consisting of ten members and led by Chairman of the Islamic Ideological Council, Qibla Ayaz, and Head of International Religious Affairs, Muhammad Israr, visited the historical mosques of Chinese Muslims in the city of Guilin, Guangxi Province. The two nations, connected by mountains and rivers, share a profound emotional and spiritual bond, and have always maintained close cooperation and harmony. During their visit, Qibla Ayaz and his delegation explored various aspects of Chinese culture, including the preservation and heritage of cultural sites, environmental development, rural tourism support, calligraphy and painting exhibitions, and the processing and sale of local crafts in Kiangjiang Village and Yangshan County.

They were delighted to observe rural women engaged in making tofu and farmers practicing painting, and even took group photos to commemorate this everlasting friendship. At the Chongshan Mosque in Guilin, after participating in the Friday congregation prayer with the Chinese and Pakistani teams, the members engaged in pleasant and friendly discussions. They also took the opportunity to recount the story of Pakistan's President Zia ul Haq, who had visited the Chongshan Mosque on October 22, 1982, and presented the Holy Quran and offered four prostrations.

The Pakistani delegation expressed their commitment to strengthening our "time-tested friendship" through exchange, mutual trust, learning, and cooperation. They hope that these endeavors will further fortify the bond between our nations.

## Celebration

FAISALABAD: A view of the National Flags waving proudly on the top of the Red Crescent Hospital, in connection with the celebrations of 14 August in City.



Photo: Online

## Divisional Administration Started Celebrate the 76th Independence Day: Amir Khattak

**Asim Tanveer**

MULTAN: The divisional administration has started the steps to celebrate the 76th Independence Day celebrations in a grand manner. A high-level meeting of the administration and police was held about the Independence Day celebrations under the chairmanship of Commissioner Multan Division Engineer Aamir Khattak. Giving the task of organizing the ceremonies to the departments, he said that on August 13, at 12 o'clock in the night, Independence celebration fireworks will be done across the division, while a spectacular display of fireworks will be held at Damdama in Multan.



On August 14, the flag will be hoisted at Ghantaghar Chowk, while the main event will be held at Ghantaghar Chowk, Stadium. On August 14, at 8 pm, a wonderful musical program will be conducted across the division. He said that the competition will be organized All the departments will hoist the national flag on their offic-

es while government and important private buildings will be decorated with electric lamps. Speech contests, cultural stalls should also be set up. Aamir Khattak said that all the main highways of the division should have green crescent flag

Commissioner Aamir Khattak directed the traffic police to manage the traffic, on which CPO Multan

Mansoorul Haque Rana said that crackdown on one-wheelers, motorcyclists without silencer should be done on Independence Day. Diffusion will not be allowed. Additional Commissioner Sarfraz Ahmed, Director Local Government Zahoor Hussain, VC Nishtar University Professor Dr. Rana Altaf, heads of various departments were present.

## Robberies spark protest against Attock police

**Raza Naqvi**

ATTOCK: The residents of Burhan area in tehsil Hassanabdal and adjacent areas among them victims and their family members blocked GT road to register their protest against the growing incidents of robberies, mugging and snatching in the area, and apathetic attitude of the Attock police.

The traffic was put out of gear on Rawalpindi-Peshawar GT road near Burhan bridge for hours as furious protesters chanted slogans against the police and blocked both tracks of the GT road, causing an hour-long traffic jam on the main highway causing trouble for the commuters especially travelling in public transport due to humid and hot weather. Raising slogans, the protesters condemned the inaction by the police and government and demanded for immediate resolution of their grievances.

"We are fed up of robbers and there has been no action from the police. In the past month, incidents of snatching and robberies have increased manifold," a protester named Saqib Muneer said, adding that it appears that the police are backing criminals.

The protesters lamented that armed robbers even loot women and deprived people from chash, mobile valuables even during daytime just few yards away from Burhan Police post. "There is hardly any response when the incident is reported to the police. Cars and motorcyclists are mugged irrespective of the time, be it morning or night," another protester Kamran Rafeeq said, adding that the police has not deployed any force despite being aware of the prevalent crime rate in the area.

The police assured the demonstrators that their demands will be acted upon.

The protesters soon dispersed on their own, warning that they will return to the GT road if action against the culprits is not taken within three days. Due to the blockage, commuters faced great inconvenience as a result of an hour-long traffic jam.

## Newly constructed DPO office Wana temporarily made functional & recitation of Quran was held

**Adam Khan Wazir**

WANA: Newly constructed DPO office Wana in South Waziristan Lower District has been temporarily made functional.

The released report said that after a few days, top officials of the police and other security officials will formally inaugurate the newly constructed office of the DPO office.

In this regard, the police spokesperson said that before starting the temporary work in the office, the



recitation Holy Quran was arranged, in which DPO South Waziristan Farman Ullah (PPM), DC Lower South Waziristan Nasir

Khan, AC Wana Yasir Salman Kundi and tribal elders took special part, after reciting the Holy Quran, a special prayer was made for

the safety of the nation and the country.

On this occasion, DC Nasir Khan congratulated the DPO for making the new office temporarily functional and hoped that the Lower Waziristan Police would work better than before under the leadership of the DPO.

The DPO said that it is my personal effort to make a professional force out of the police so that the problems and issues of the common people can be solved at their doorsteps.



Islamabad

15° - 23° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr	3:53 am
Zohr	12:13 pm
Asr	5:02 pm
Maghrib	7:00 pm
Isha	8:32 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

*Shaheed Sheikh Abdul Aziz was a man of honesty and integrity: Saghar*



Abdul Majeed Tahir

ISLAMABAD: Convenor All Parties Hurriyat Conference Mehmood Ahmed Saghar has paid glowing tributes to Shaheed Sheikh Abdul Aziz on his martyrdom anniversary.

In a statement issued here on today, Saghar said, "The struggle and sacrifices of Shaheed-e-Azeemat Sheikh Abdul Aziz is an unforgettable and glowing chapter of our history". The martyred leader's mission and his proud legacy, he said, would continue to inspire the coming generations who believe in freedom and justice.

Highlighting the sacrifices of the martyred leader, the APHC leader said, "Sheikh Sahib was a man of honesty and integrity, he always remained ready to sacrifice even his life for the sacred cause. He proved this by facing the bullets while leading a historic march towards Muzzafarabad 11th of August 2008".

He said that the best way to pay tributes to Kashmiri leader was to remain steadfast in our resolve and take the ongoing movement to its logical end.

# Extreme Indian oppression is generating extreme patriotic reaction among Kashmiris: Sardar Attique

**Bureau Report**

MIRPUR: Azad Jammu Kashmir's (AJK) Ex-Prime Minister and Muslim Conference chief Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan has said "fast increased Indian oppression against innocent Kashmiris in IIOJK generating extreme patriotic reaction among Kashmiris."

Speaking on unabated Indian atrocities in occupied Kashmir in his party workers meeting at Mujahid Manzil yesterday night he said that oppression and non-reaction cannot co-exist.

India, the illegal occupier of Kashmir



staged a peak of oppression against Kashmiris on August 5, 2019, by bifurcating and annexing Kashmir which cannot be

responded to by 15 million Kashmiris.

"Their homes, hearths, markets, businesses, schools, plains, even animal stables stand illegally annexed", he added.

He elaborated further, that it is an act of socio-demographic aggression India committed on August 5, 2019, in Jammu and Kashmir State in her forced and unlawful occupation.

Attique said "August 5 stays as a day of protest against India's unilateral geophysical changes in occupied Kashmir and its observance as a Day of Protest has become part of our ongoing struggle", he remarked, recalling that in AJK and by

Kashmiris abroad in various continents of the globe Kashmiris were vociferous against Indian occupation of Kashmir by means of stealth and aggression.

He said that the spirit of Mujahid Awwal Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan initiated the practical phase of the Kashmir liberation movement on August 23, 1947, from the Neela Butt Heights is keeping the whole struggle fully loaded with irreducible public resolve to vacate Indian aggression from Kashmir.

He said that Indian moves of August 5, 2019, were violating UN Kashmir resolutions and even against the Simla

accord. Therefore those unilateral changes cannot stay any longer, he assured.

He informed that the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir is the global liability of the UN. Therefore UN representatives must visit this UN liability region sooner.

The unresolved Kashmir dispute is a direct threat to world peace and security; it calls for prompt international response to the worst Indian wrought situation today in Kashmir, he stressed.

Speakers vowed to continue the forceful struggle to undo the entire geophysical saga India had staged on August 5, 2019, at gunpoint.

## Fallen down

ISLAMABAD: Motorists facing difficulties due to fallen tree on a road at Sector G-7 Road due to heavy rain in Federal Capital.

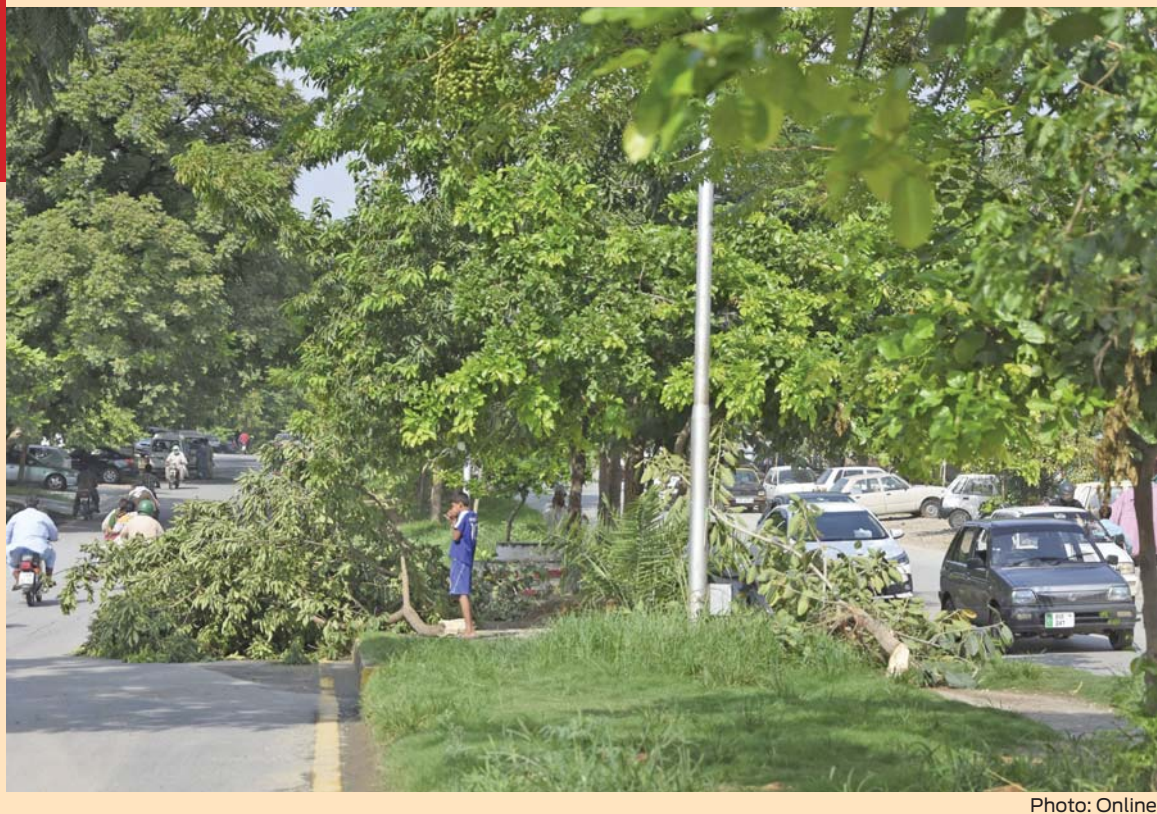


Photo: Online

## Five-day training workshop concluded at AIOU

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: A five-day training workshop for the professional development of teachers of basic education community schools successfully concluded at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) yesterday. Vice Chancellor AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood was the chief guest of the closing ceremony while former Parliamentary Secretary of Federal Education, Zeb Jafar was the guest of honour. Director General, Basic Education Community Schools, Hameed Khan Niazi, Dean, Faculty of Education AIOU, Prof. Dr. Tanzila Nabeel and Chairman, Department of Secondary Teacher Education, Prof. Dr. Fazlur Rehman were also present.

Speaking on occasion, VC AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood congratulated the teachers and administrators



on the completion of the five-day training workshop and said that training workshops polish professional skills. He added that competent and trained teachers are the guarantor of quality education and the most powerful person in the world is the teacher. Children always believe their teachers even before listening to them because they think that the teacher is always right. Dr. Nasir Mahmood urged the trainee teachers to consider

the ideas and abilities of the child to boost his confidence. Today I am here because of my teachers, and I always remember them in my prayers.

Zeb Jaffar said that teachers are role models, they are the leaders who have adopted the profession of prophets. She congratulated the Director General of Basic Education Community Schools, Hameed Khan Niazi, for achieving the goal of enrolling out-of-school children in Islama-

bad. Hameed Khan Niazi said that in a short time, we have achieved the target, we have enrolled 12,700 out-of-school children in Islamabad and now I can say with certainty that there is not a single out-of-school child in Islamabad. He thanked the Vice Chancellor AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood for providing logistic, professional, and technical support. Dr. Tanzila Nabeel and Prof. Dr. Fazlur Rehman also addressed the ceremony.

## Innovation Challenge Futuremakers celebrates milestone Demo Day of its First Cohort

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The groundbreaking Innovation Challenge Futuremakers (ICF), Pakistan's pioneering fast-track acceleration program tailored for individuals with disabilities, celebrated a momentous Demo Day of their First Cohort. The event served as a platform for the program's eight exceptional startups to unveil their unique ideas and innovative solutions, highlighting the immense potential of persons with disabilities in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

ICF, a visionary collaboration between DeafLawk, (a trailblazing Pakistani startup dedicated to enhancing the lives of deaf individuals), and Sightsavers, (a globally recognized organization devoted to preventing avoidable blindness and promoting equal opportunities for people with

disabilities) is funded by the Standard Chartered Foundation.

The Demo Day provided an avenue for the first cohort chosen through a meticulous screening process. The young entrepreneurs with disabilities' startups representing all four provin-



ces of Pakistan got an opportunity to showcase their innovative ideas and solutions across diverse industries such as automotive, art, food and hospitality, fashion, and education. The event drew distinguished attendees from the

startup ecosystem, government, corporate sector, and development agencies, further highlighting the importance of fostering an inclusive environment that nurtures the talents of all individuals.

Ali Shabbar, CEO of DeafLawk, while addressing the guests shared, "We at DeafLawk have first-hand experience of how founders with disabilities face obstacles while initiating and scaling their businesses. I am delighted to have partnered with Sightsavers for this remarkable initiative and together we have provided a strong platform for young entrepreneurs with disabilities to uplift their ideas and solutions."

Munazza Gillani, Country Director of Sightsavers Pakistan, extended her congratulations to DeafLawk for spearheading this program and other partners for their support stating, "We commend DeafLawk for their role in

making this initiative successful and anticipate that our partnership will help create a movement where entrepreneurs with disabilities not only thrive but also serve as beacons of inspiration for countless others.

Asim Shahryar Husain - CEO, Ignite - National Technology Fund shared, "I believe that initiatives like these are crucial for nurturing an inclusive startup ecosystem in Pakistan. My optimism rests on the potential of these social entrepreneurs to not only make a strong social and economic impact but also to serve as catalysts for lasting change."

Tasneem Mirza-Head, Community Impact and Engagement, Corporate Affairs and Brand & Marketing Standard Chartered Bank also participated in the event and appreciated these brilliant young entrepreneurs with disabilities.

## Colonel Shaukat Ali reviews progress on 76th Independence Day



Abdul Majeed Tahir

MIRPUR: Commissioner Mirpur Division Chaudhry Shaukat Ali visited the district headquarters Kotli on Thursday and held a meeting with the district and tehsil officers at the Deputy Commissioner's office and reviewed the preparations for celebrating the 76th Independence Day of Pakistan. In addition, instructions were issued to all the departments. The Commissioner Mirpur Division also reviewed the performance of the departments in the meeting and especially addressed the meeting to address the public complaints related to health, water and electronics department. Ali said that doctors and other medical staff should adhere to office hours and behave better with patients. He said that the provision of medical facilities is the responsibility of the health department in which there is no room for negligence. Chaudhry Shaukat Ali directed SE Electronics to share electricity load shedding schedule with consumers and address complaints of citizens regarding bills. The commissioner was briefed by Axion Public Health regarding water shortage and improvement of supply in the city. Commissioner Mirpur also directed to solve water problems. The Commissioner reviewed the matter regarding the signing of MoU by an NGO regarding the establishment of a center at Chidhoi and expansion of facilities at Nakiyal, Tatta Pani and Sahansa for free dialysis facility for kidney patients. And issued instructions to the health department in this regard. Deputy Commissioner Chaudhry Haq Nawaz, SE Electronics Mubasher Sarfraz, Assistant Commissioner Chaudhry Naeem Akhtar, Axion Public Health Chaudhry Zaheer Ahmed, Assistant Commissioner Fateh Porth Keyala Ift Azam, Information Officer Shaukat Ali Malik, Tehsil Dar Khairta Aftab Ahmed, Naib Tehsildar Naveedasadmi, Dr. Tahir Mahmood and others also participated in the meeting.

## Youth engagement Program in Poonch highlights creativity of Azad Kashmir students

**Bureau Report**

RAWALKOT: On the special instructions of Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar Haq, competitions on various topics were organized in Rawalkot under the "Youth Engagement Program" organized by the Department of Sports, Youth and Culture of Azad Kashmir and in collaboration with the University of Poonch Rawalakot University of Poonch Rawalkot 150 students participated in the one-day competition, there were competitions in 12 different departments, including the competition of Hasan recitation, recitation of the Holy Quran, Naat Pak, Urdu English speech competitions, poetry, photography, painting competition, interesting competitions of videography. Among the participants in the competitions, the chief guest of the shield distribution ceremony was Registrar Poonch University Dr. Abdul Rauf, while Director Youth and Culture of Azad Kashmir Amjad Mughal, Dr. Rukhsana Khan Cher Person, Department of Art and Design, Azad Kashmir University specially organized the program. The purpose of the Youth Engagement Program was to highlight the creativity of the youth through the competition. A large number of students from various departments were present there.

The event was jointly hosted by Deputy Director of Sports Youth Culture Poonch Luqman Farooq and Focal Person of University of Poonch Dr. Faraz. In the event, three youths from Azad Kashmir who recently passed the CSS exam namely Hamza Bisharat Assistant Commissioner Customs, Bushra Aziz Chaudhry Police Service of Pakistan and Shoab Mujtabi joined the Mughal Management Group. Participated in the program to encourage and also addressed the youth.

The honored guests appreciated the efforts of the Sports Youth Culture Department for the excellent arrangements. The students who won the first, second and third positions in the competitions were applauded by the participants.

## Government urged to reduce the consumption of Sugary Drinks and Ultra processed foods

**Hussna Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: Increasing consumption of sugary drinks and ultra-processed products posing serious threats to public health in Pakistan. The ischemic heart diseases, stroke and diabetes have become the top killer of Pakistanis. The civil society activists urged government to adopts an evidence based package of policies to reduce consumption of sugary drinks and ultra-processed products. This was said in the meeting of civil society coalition organized by Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH) at a local hotel in Islamabad.

"Unhealthy diet is among the top risk factors of non-communicable diseases and killing thousands of Pakistanis every day. The evidence shows that reducing consumption of sugary drinks and ultra-processed products can reduce deaths and diseases and save lives of several Pakistanis" said by Munawar Hussain, Country Coordinator at Global Health Advocacy Incubator in Pakistan. The ultra-processed products are high either in one or more nutrients of concern like sodium, sugar, trans fats and saturated fats.

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almas Ayoub Sabir**  
 Vice Chairman: **Asim Nazir Ahmad**  
 Managing Editor: **Naveed Ahmad Khan**  
 Head Editorial Advisory Board: **Amjad Mehmood**  
 Bureau Chief Karachi: **Saleem Zaman Khan.** (mszk786@gmail.com)  
 Bureau Chief Lahore: **Syed Afraz Ali Nazish** (afrazalishah@gmail.com)  
 Islamabad Office: Rose Plaza, 1-8 Markaz.  
 Karachi office: Flat No.C.3.A.One Comfort, Block No 11. Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Main Rashid Minhas Road.  
 Lahore Office: 7-E,Samanberg, Johar Town.  
 Email: spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com  
 Whatsapp: 0346-5008408

# Our startups, our great hope - I

**H**ow can a country not have hopes and dreams for a better future if its startups have the grit, tenacity, and determination to successfully produce jet engines, energy-efficient air conditioners, bioplastic, 3D high-tech computers, and drones?

I learned this while watching dinner-time television beginning at 8:00 p.m., where high-profile, lucid, and professional anchors with fat salaries dig up one issue after another, or if there is no issue, they create one and create a molehill to spread as much despair as possible.

My resistance gave up, and my fingers on the remote shifted away from doomsday scenarios and towards prime time entertainment channels for some relief. PTV home made me pause when I saw a young man in his twenties presenting his start-up proposal to a jury lead by none other than the planning minister himself in a reality show.

The joy on his face, his confidence in himself, and his command of his subject gave my mind what it craved: "hope." My impulse to change stations lost way, and I found myself glued to the TV. The young man was presenting his pilot project, an indigenously designed air conditioner that does not use gas for cooling and thus is more environmentally friendly, consuming 80% less energy than standard air conditioners, resulting in lower electricity bills and less environmental degradation without sacrificing cooling quality.

All parts and design were made from locally available materials with the assistance of Pakistani technicians and exper-

tise, and an outdated Russian technology that was available copyright free was used as a base, and the product was further improved, upgraded, and state-of-the-art features were added with indigenous research and development in a garage. The prototype was evaluated and authorised by a sector expert.

The four-tonne AC, priced at Rs. 400,000, was initially intended for commercial use, and the newly founded company hoped to patent it not only in Pakistan, but also in the United States. They asked Rs. 20 million in seed funding from the Prime Minister's Kamyab Jawan Programme to scale up the project, which was immediately granted.

I was now hooked to the screen, eagerly awaiting the next candidate. A young lady in her late twenties entered the room, filling it with her cool and composed demeanour, confident and daring appearance, and modest dress. She surprised the jury by stating that she had successfully created a jet engine using indigenous and locally made parts to power heavy duty drones capable of transporting heavy cargo from one location to another in a safe and secure manner, which the battery-powered drone cannot do. She claims to be a daredevil pilot herself, and being the daughter of scientists and researchers, she believes that making flying objects was in her blood.

She claimed that this locally made jet engine will revolutionize drone manu-

facturing in the country and solve most of the country's logistic and transportation issues by transporting heavy cargo to remote areas that are difficult or expensive to reach by other means. It can deliver medical supplies to people in disaster areas and to bring food to people in remote villages. They are ideal to monitor infrastructure, such as power lines and pipelines, for damage or defects and locate missing people or objects in difficult-to-reach areas.

The prototype of the engine has successfully been tested by sector experts and is ready to start commercial production soon after her request for finance is approved. The jury was spellbound. The Minister said that she was a role model for our young entrepreneurs, especially women. The jury with the sparks in their eyes and full of admiration approved the project.

She claims that this domestically manufactured jet engine will revolutionize drone production in the country and address the majority of the country's logistic and transportation problems by transporting heavy items to remote places that are impossible or expensive to reach by other methods. It may transport medical supplies to disaster zones as well as food to rural settlements. They are great for detecting damage or flaws in infrastructure such as electrical lines and pipelines, as well as locating missing individuals or things in difficult-to-reach regions.

The engine prototype has been

successfully tested by industry specialists and is ready to begin commercial manufacturing as soon as her request for financing is approved. The jury was transfixed. The Minister described her as a role model for our young entrepreneurs, particularly women. The project was approved by the jury, who were filled with admiration and had sparkles in their eyes.

My typical tense and jittery state of mind was almost cheering, as I waited in excitement for the next candidate. They were two young ladies who claimed to have invented a plastic out of indigenous plant wastes that has a shelf life of over six months, is biodegradable, and can be transformed into manure after decomposition. They claimed that this would eliminate our long-standing problem of littering in our villages, towns, cities, ponds, rivers, and oceans. They proudly stated that their product is unique because no ingredients are imported, the manufacturing unit is created locally with parts that are fully manufactured in Pakistan, and they are in contact with hypermarkets, large markets, and sales outlets that have expressed an interest in purchasing user-friendly and environmentally friendly plastic bags.

All they needed to do now was scale up their production facility to manufacture enough biodegradable plastics for a range of items. Since the concept made a lot of sense, the jury happily approved it, and the two young ladies departed the platform with a brilliant glow on their faces and a mighty spark of hope for themselves and their country in their eyes.

*To be continued*



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

## Legislative business in 15th National Assembly witnesses 45% increase

**L**egislative activity in the 15th National Assembly, which was dissolved on Thursday, witnessed an increase of 45% over 192 laws passed by the 14th National Assembly, according to an analysis by the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT).

The biggest show of confidence in the 15th National Assembly came from its own membership in terms of their attendance. The Prime Minister, as Leader of the House, set that trend.

According to the PILDAT analysis, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reflected a much better figure of 17% attendance of the Assembly sittings as against former prime minister Imran Khan who showed a dismal 11% attendance.

Average attendance of members of the National Assembly (MNAs) in five years stands at 61% though it stood at 67% before the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) decision to quit the NA.

The 15th National Assembly witnessed two governments: the first from August 18, 2018 to April 10, 2022 with PTI Chairman Imran Khan as PM, while the second was formed by a coalition of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) and the Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) with Shehbaz Sharif as PM which lasted from April 11, 2022 to August 09, 2023.

The PTI government relied heavily on ordinances for the purpose of legislation. Out of 75 ordinances laid in the National Assembly in five years, only three were promulgated by the coalition government while 72 were promulgated by the PTI government.

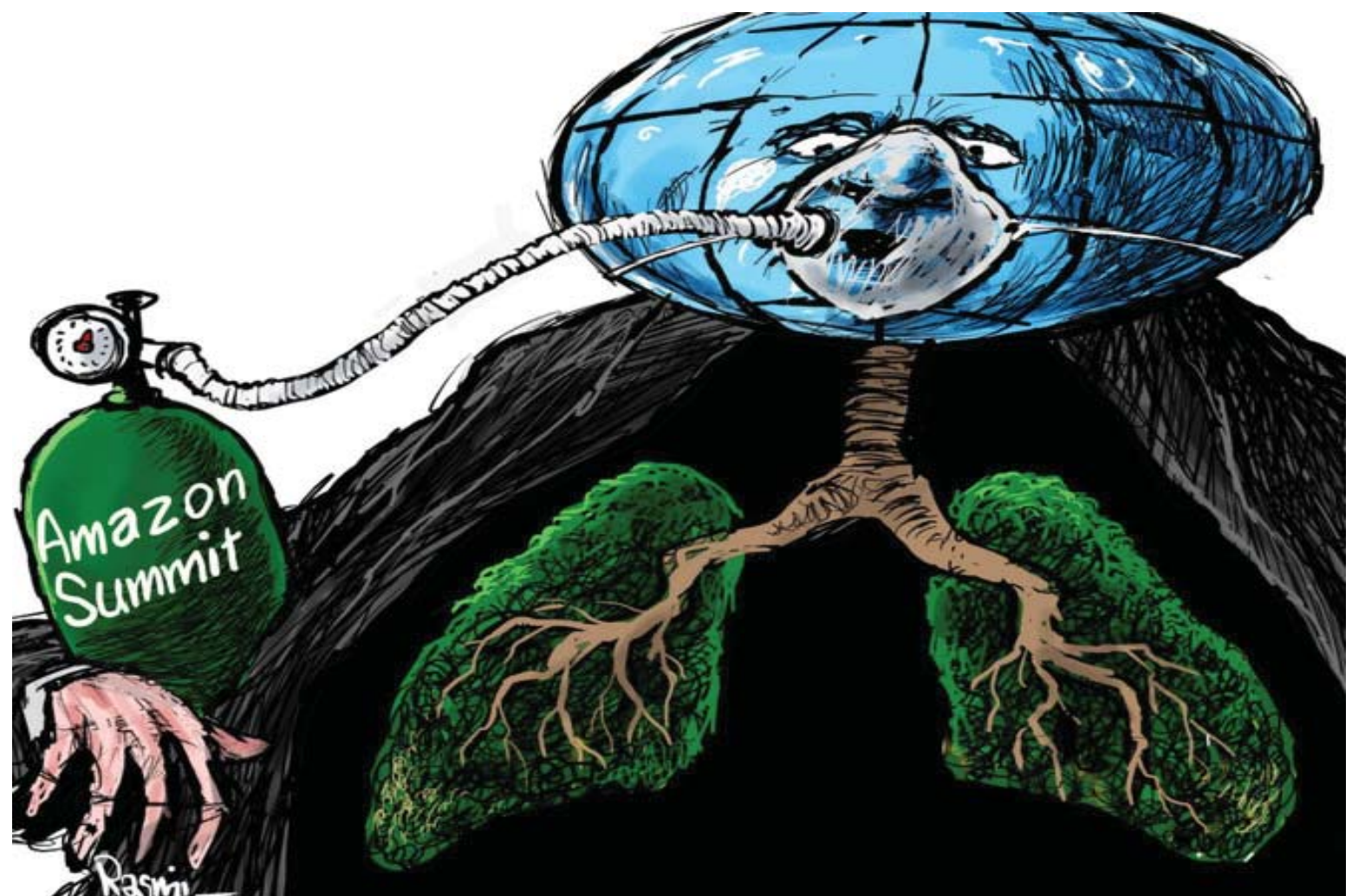
Compared to the term of the 14th National Assembly when only 38 ordinances were promulgated, a 97% increase was witnessed in the number of ordinances passed by the 15th National Assembly.

The 15th National Assembly also passed the largest number of laws as compared to the previous three assemblies starting from 2002. Just during the last three weeks of the 15th National Assembly, 73 bills were passed.

In its 5-year term, the 15th National Assembly was convened for 452 sittings or average 90 sittings per year as against the previous (14th) National Assembly, which was convened for 495 sittings or on average 99 sittings per year.

The 15th National Assembly has also had the unique experience of the first-ever successful passage of Vote of No-Confidence in Pakistan's parliamentary history against a prime minister. Even though two previous prime ministers had faced votes of no confidence against them but those had remained unsuccessful.

Among 15 legislatures, the 15th National Assembly was the 4th one to be able to complete its term. Earlier assemblies which completed their 5-years term were elected in 2002, 2008 and 2013.



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmī. (Courtesy of Asharq Al-Awsat)

## Revival Plan or Campaign Candies?

Wajeaha Ashfaq

**A**n Economic Revival Plan was devised last month by the mutual collaboration of the sitting government and army. The plan seems to provide a single platform solution to all problems that Pakistan is currently drowning in. The biggest challenge that Pakistan has encountered is its crippled economic state. Pakistan's external debt increased from \$31 billion in 2021 to \$38 billion in 2022 and is expected to exacerbate to \$40 billion in 2023. This is a frightening situation which needs to be overcome until it's too late. To tackle the circumstances, the plan from 2023-2035 has been presented which aims to transform Pakistan's economy to trillion dollars within these years. A joint meeting of government officials and army was held which claimed that the project is going to be a bigger one than CPEC, if implemented rightly. The project/plan aims to increase foreign direct investments, especially from Gulf countries; increase exports of the country while declining the rate of imports. The idea aims to increase foreign investments 100 billion dollars and domestically, provide employment opportunities to 75-100 million young people, empowering them for the betterment. Furthermore, a Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) was being established to "act as a single window interface for potential investors, as well as to adopt a unified approach" to speed project execution.

A major point of focus in the plan has been the collaboration of federal and provincial governments to achieve the aimed results but to which extent is this possible, keeping in mind the political polarization of the state. Different parties ruling in different provinces will definitely lead to chaos and inability to agree on similar points and it will pose a great challenge to the political leadership who need to put aside their political rivalries and join hands for empowering the economy of the state which is a dire need of hour. Secondly, the army's role has been recognized in the plan and the Chief of Army Staff has ensured full backing of the army for the implementation of this plan, wherever needed. This may help to increase trust for external investments as there is a strong relation between security and economics. Pakistan's security conditions are a major obstacle for while military involvement ensures such stability which will encourage foreign investment. In addition, the army will help to provide management and technical skills for the execution of this plan. Now the question arises: "Whether this move will practically prove to be successful in driving investments into the country or not?". Only time can prove the potency of this plan on a practical level.

Can mere designing of plan and setting high goals help in its accomplishment too? No doubt the economy is the most concerning problem of the country right now but the ways in which it is encountered seem to be imaginary rather than real and pragmatic. Besides the economy, Pakistan's structural imbalance is one of the major

issues (even responsible for economic turmoil). For instance, if we assume that the government will succeed in providing employment as it promises; Will it be able to ensure the provision of these on the basis of merit? Meritocracy has been the factor least concerning Pakistan's politics which must be focused upon for actual development. Secondly, the fulfilment of the agenda set requires the checks and balances of concerned institutions and promoting democratic ideals in true sense. As long as each of the departments is made to do its actual work in true sense, no plan can be executed no matter how fruitful the impacts seem to be. Thus, major structural changes must be a step prior for any government before planning to take steps further.

Actual economic revival plan or campaign candies? The government seems involved in a hustle to take immediate actions, ensuring its success in the upcoming elections. This makes the situation uncertain and these plans dubious as the question of their execution arises. Whether the plan will be implemented as it is portrayed after the tenure of this government ends or not? The record of political promises in the wake of election campaigns seems to be quite foggy making every move before elections suspicious. All that we can do is hope for a better tomorrow and the negation of all the suspicions that people have in mind regarding the plan. May the plan be rightfully enacted in the future as per the actual plan and the nation may prosper from it, as claimed.

Writer is student of BS Political

## Flawed Railway System of Pakistan

**C**hopped arms and legs, clothes soaked in blood and weeping women and men carried away by stretchers to shift them in their respective hospitals. As deadly train accidents occurred at Sarhari railway station near Nawabshah on 6 August, Saturday around 1:30 pm. The Hazara Express left Karachi being destined to reach Rawalpindi but it met its fate as many of its bogies derailed near Nawabshah. In this horrific tragedy 30 people bite the dust leaving 70 plus injured.

The day before this accident Allama Iqbal Express, fortunately, escaped the same incident as two of its bogies derailed, no casualties occurred. These are just tip of the iceberg as many deadly incidents occurred in the history of Pakistan Railway. From inception till now, no serious implications have been shown for this sector which as a result has become outdated. Additionally, it is stated in Dawn that during the last two decades 30 plus major incidents occurred which caused hundreds of people to die leaving thousands injured. In another incident occurred in June 2021 near Daharki, Sindh 66 casualties were reported while 150 injured.

According to the report 80 million people travel through trains each year in Pakistan, one can see the amount of risk being posed to lives keeping such incidents in mind. Historically passengers' lives remained at stake due to the negligence shown towards the railway sector. After winning War of Independence 1857, Britishers established railway system to further expand their resource extraction process from the subcontinent. Firstly railway system was established between Karachi and Kotri in 1861. After inception of Pakistan on 14 August, 1947 the railway system was inherited by both countries. Due to multifaceted issues faced by the newly made country, little attention paid to the advancement and modernization of the railway system.

Likewise countries like Japan, Hong Kong, Switzerland, Singapore, Netherland and China have some of the world's advanced railway systems. India alone has 4th largest, after US, Russia and China, the railway system in the world. India has successfully transformed to electric trains omitting environmental hazards. But Pakistan due to many reasons is lagging behind. Let us discuss few reasons why Pakistan railway system

is a complete failure: From the very inception of Pakistan little attention paid to this sector in result the budget attributed each year to the railway was insufficient to embark it on the way of modernization. Only a few railway stations that were initially built by Britishers were available, so connectivity remained a major problem. Outdated technology and the signaling system have hampered its proper functioning. Lack of incentives among labour has made the sectors condition deplorable.

Each government comes up with new policy as remedy to the sector ignoring policies of the previous government so political instability is also a major headache. Instead of outlining solutions to the problems being faced by the sector, each government is halting its growth. Hence Pakistan Railway requires urgent solutions to embark it on the way of modern, environment friendly institution. There is no rocket science if one asks what could be the remedies to the problems faced by the sector. Answers would be just following the countries like Japan, China, and India. Do things that these countries are doing to keep their railway system atop of order. Attribute required budget to root out the losses being faced by the sector and to pave it on the way of advancement. Invest

more on its infrastructure, build new routes connecting populous cities, introduce technological innovations, hire professional employees to root out corruption and nepotism. Make policies that are holistic and inclusive which will result in better commuting channel. Overall it is need of the hour to root out causes which are hindering the railway system of Pakistan. Governments need to design policies inclusively to avert loss of human lives. Astonishing numbers of casualties occurred each year as a result of the flawed railway system. Political elites busy in palace intrigue and power game need to address the issue with strong commitment. Pakistan needs to take countries like Japan, China and US as a benchmark to advance its railway system. All in all accidents like yesterday will continue, until and unless multifaceted approaches implemented otherwise institutional malfunctioning will be the result.

Writer is BS Sociology @ Quaid Azam University Islamabad He Can be reached at usmanaslam352000@gmail.com



Analysis

Muhammad Usman

# OIP: Speaker analyzes Indonesian regional economic integration as a development strategy

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Online Internship Program on the Contemporary Dynamic of Indonesia which is a collaboration between Indonesian Embassy and Bahria University, Islamabad, held its Session-8 on August 10, 2023. At the session Dr. Poppy Winanti, Faculty of Political Science, University of Gajah Mada Yogyakarta, Indonesia, delivered a lecture on the topic of "Indonesia and Regional Economic Integration".



Dr. Poppy Winanti, Faculty of Political Science, University of Gajah Mada Yogyakarta, Indonesia, delivered a lecture on the topic of "Indonesia and Regional Economic Integration".

"ASEAN makes South East Asia even more appealing for commerce and investment for countries outside the region by creating an integrated market of 623 million people" Dr. Winanti underlined while examining the Indonesian regional economic integration as a development strategy.

The speaker examined the proliferation of Free Trade Agreements in the region and the scope how ASEAN members could benefit from the recently adopted Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which

in addition to ASEAN member countries also included China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Australia, and New Zealand.

"Indonesia was 16th in terms of GDP, 27th in total exports and 30th in total imports economy in the world" the speaker said while highlighting Indonesia's economic features.

In her presentation, she also shared statistics on the top exports of Indonesia that include Coal Briquettes \$28.4 B, Palm Oil \$27.3B, Petroleum Gas \$8. B, Ferroalloys \$7B and Large Flat-Rolled Stainless Steel \$6.6B.

Regarding Indonesian imports, She informed that the top imports of Indonesia included Refined Petroleum \$14.5B, Crude Petroleum \$6.3B, Petroleum Gas \$4.2B, Vaccines, Blood, Antisera, Toxins and Culture \$3.4B and Motor Vehicle

parts and accessories \$3.19B.

Dr. Winanti continued that Indonesia's top export destinations were China \$54.5B, United States \$26.5B, Japan \$18B, India \$14.5 and Singapore \$13B. About the Indonesia's top import origin she mentioned that it was led by China with \$60.4B and followed by Singapore \$18.4, Japan \$13.2B, Malaysia \$9.5B and United States \$ 9.6B.

Enlightening the participants, the guest speaker went into details and stated that RTA have more flexibilities as compare to large multilateral trade negotiations as it allowed like-minded countries or interested countries to decide to establish among themselves a common set of rights and obligations to deal with a particular subject matter or sector.

"A deeper integration is much easier at the regional level than it is at the multilateral level and RTAs are deemed as the better place to achieve consensus for sets of rules that cannot be accomplished within the WTO framework" Dr. Winanti observed.

Regarding the strategies to gain the

benefits of RTA, the speaker said they were two pronged namely offensive and defensive. Offensive strategy is about to have market access while ensuring safeguard measures in place to maintain domestic competitiveness and regional supply chain, she added.

"Indonesian market was huge and growing which makes the local producers to seek market access in other countries less attractive" She explained while discussing Indonesian offensive strategy. However, on the other hand, Palm oil and other producers who seek international market access to expand their businesses have non-tariff barriers to deal with such as regulations, subsidies and standards, she added.

The Online Internship Program brings eminent scholars and experts to share their insights with participants on the various developments that Indonesia is going through as an emerging economy and Middle Power. The next session will spotlight the topic of "RCEP and Trade Connectivity for Indonesia" to be held with Dr. Kiki Verico as the speaker on August 15, 2023.

## Stakeholders offer individual pledges to tackle global climate issues ahead of COP28

Shaukat Ali

ISLAMABAD: Through the support of the United States Government, the Pakistan-U. S. Alumni Network (PUAN), in partnership with the World Wide Fund for Nature Pakistan (WWF-Pakistan) and the United States Educational Foundation in Pakistan (USEFP) organized a two-day national conference on "The Climate Change Emergency: Pakistan in the 21st Century and the Road to COP-28" in Islamabad. With more than two hundred attendees representing alumni from various U. S. government exchange programs, climate experts, government leaders, and activists, participants examined solutions and offered individual pledges to tackle global climate issues ahead of COP28.

The U. S. Ambassador to Pakistan, Donald Blome, noted, "PUAN represents diversity of thought and experience. You represent scientists, government, academia, journalists, activists, artists, educators, and much more. You have redefined how we think about climate change, informed policy, and taken your work and ideas to the United States and back."

The U. S.-Pakistan "Green Alliance" framework is a transformative initiative between the United States and Pakistan to address today's most pressing environmental challenges, especially around water management, climate-smart agriculture, and renewable energy.

Hammad Naqi Khan, Director General WWF-Pakistan added, "WWF-Pakistan is proud to collaborate with PUAN and the U. S. Mission in Pakistan to host this much needed national conference which serves as a unique platform for action-oriented discussions and engagement among key stakeholders to address the devastating impacts of climate change on Pakistan. Hopefully, the bright ideas discussed here will make their way into policies and legislation very soon which will create a positive impact on our environment and communities."

Conference panelists stressed the urgency and need for innovation and financing in the climate change space. The event included interactive working group sessions with participants and experts, formulating national and regional climate solutions. With the support of the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board, participants also engaged in an outdoor activity at Trail 5 of the Margalla Hills National Park, which focused on conservation and environmental rehabilitation. The event also provided a platform for local organizations and start-ups to exhibit their work in tackling climate change issues in Pakistan.

The conference was fully funded by the U. S. Mission in Pakistan as a signature PUAN event and part of the U. S.-Pakistan "Green Alliance" framework.

The U. S. government invests more than \$40 million annually on exchange programs for Pakistani citizens to visit and study in the United States. Over 1,000 Pakistanis participate each year in high school, undergraduate, graduate, and professional U. S.-sponsored exchanges. Since the alumni network began in 2008, Americans have provided more than 18,000 college scholarships for Pakistani students.

PUAN organizes events across Pakistan through 14 regional chapters, including community service projects, leadership training, roundtable discussions, and entrepreneurship activities

## Indonesia has nurtured the habit of dialogue among ASEAN Countries

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prof. Dinna Prapto Raharja, a senior public policy advisor and Associate Professor in international relations at Bina Nusantara University, Indonesia, speaking at the 7th session of the OIP titled as "Indonesia and ASEAN" at the Bahria University, Islamabad, discussed the history and evolution of ASEAN and highlighted the objectives and scope of ASEAN partnerships that it maintains and promotes through various frameworks.

"The Bangkok Declaration of 1967 focuses on economic growth, social progress, cultural development, and regional peace through equality and partnership", Dr. Dinna informed the participants.

While sharing the economic profile of the member states, she mentioned that ASEAN remains a major recipient of foreign direct investment (FDI) in the developing world. The speaker said that ASEAN is the fastest-growing regional bloc globally, with members ranging from Island nation and trade hub of Singapore with population of 5.4 million to the World's largest archipelagic and a fast-growing trillion-dollar economy of Indonesia with 273 million population.

Discussing ASEAN-Pakistan relations, the speaker said that Pakistan has ASEAN Sectoral Dialogue Status since 1993, focusing on commerce, industry, investment, environment, science and technology, narcotics control, tourism, and human resource development. In 2004, Pakistan ratified the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation and became the 24th participant in the ASEAN Regional Forum, in 2005, Pakistan signed the Terrorism Declaration and conducted a Joint Feasibility Study for an ASEAN-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement, but the study was halted in 2011.

The guest speaker from Indonesia explained that ASEAN's approach to partnerships is diverse, dynamic, and variable, with interests remaining central in engagements without fixed mechanisms for cooperation and problem resolution. She briefed the participants on ASEAN's policy and decision-making processes, stating that "as an inter-governmental organization founded on equality it prioritizes consensus building above majority vote".

She stated that Indonesia has a history of significant contribution to ASEAN and is recognized for its inspirational ideas to build consensus to move forward. She said that Indonesia developed the concept of an ASEAN Community not only to achieve economic growth but also to close gaps in economic development among the member countries.



Prof. Dinna Prapto Raharja, a senior public policy advisor and Associate Professor in international relations at Bina Nusantara University, Indonesia, speaking at the 7th session of the OIP titled as "Indonesia and ASEAN" at the Bahria University, Islamabad.

## CPEC Anniverssary

ISLAMABAD: Her Excellency Pang Chunxue, the Charge D' Affairs of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan, along with KP Caretake Minister of Local Government Advocate Sawal Nazir and Secretary PCFA Syed Ali9 Nawaz Gillani to celebrate 10th anniversary of BRI/CPEC at KP House on Thursday.



## IBCC & One Link Join hands to revolutionize attestation

Raja Furqan Ahmed

ISLAMABAD: The Inter Boards Coordination Commission (IBCC) has taken a significant step towards enhancing accessibility and transparency in the education sector by forging a strategic partnership with One Link, a pioneering mobile banking app. This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aims to simplify the fee payment process for attestation and equivalence of documents for students across Pakistan and overseas, eliminating the need for physical bank visits and ensuring a transparent transaction



Prof. Dr. Ghulam Ali Mallah, Executive Director of IBCC, expressed his enthusiasm regarding this transformative partnership.

With this collaboration, students from all corners of Pakistan and overseas can now conveniently pay their attestation and equivalence fees through the One Link Bill option available in all banking apps, ATM machines, etc. This revolutionary move will alleviate the inconvenience of traveling long distances to visit banks for fee submission.

Prof. Dr. Ghulam Ali Mallah, Executive Director of IBCC, expressed his enthusiasm regarding this transformative partnership: "We are excited about the possibilities that this collaboration with One Link brings.

It aligns perfectly with our vision to make essential services more accessible to the general public, especially students. Through this digital initiative, we aim to simplify the fee payment process and contribute to a more streamlined and efficient education system."

One Bill of One Link will provide a secure and user-friendly platform for students to initiate fee payments with a multiple payment option. This innovative approach not only simplifies the process but also ensures financial security and reduces the chances of errors that might occur during manual transactions.

## Hawaii: Maui wildfires death toll rises to 36

Officials in Hawaii's Maui County said Thursday at least 36 lives have been claimed as deadly wildfires sweep across the area, forcing authorities to start evacuating people.

"As the firefighting efforts continue, 36 total fatalities have been discovered today amid the active Lahaina fire," the Maui county government said in a statement.

Maui County said more than 100 firefighters at any one time are battling the active wildfires on the island, where winds were finally abating Wednesday night, Hawaii News Now reported.

There are no further details about the 36 deceased people but residents are turning to social media to look at their loved ones.

Authorities have opened five evacuation shelters on Maui. Officials earlier said they were "overrun" with people. The island is a popular tourist destination and visitors have been urged to stay away.

Hawaii Lt Governor Sylvia Luke told reporters: "This is not a safe place to be. We have resources that are being taxed."

"We just had the worst disaster I've ever seen. All of Lahaina is burnt to a crisp. It's like an apocalypse," resident Mason Jarvi told Reuters.

On Wednesday, At least six people died and scores of others left Maui County after wind-fueled wildfires destroyed hundreds of buildings in the historical town of Lahaina.

"We are still in a search and rescue mode, and so I don't know what will happen to that number," Maui Mayor Richard Bissen said Wednesday.

Lt Governor Luke said it could take months to assess the full scope of the damage from the fires.

"This is the entire state coming together to assist our family on Maui," she said Wednesday.

"We never anticipated a hurricane that did not make impact would cause this type of wildfires. Wildfires that wiped out communities. Wildfires that wiped out businesses."

The wildfire was widespread in Lahaina, a tourist town with a population of 12,000 on the northwestern tip of Maui.

# Conference on climate emergency and urban transportation

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The concerned world community assembling at the United Nations Climate Change Conference-2023 (COP-28) to be held in Dubai later this year is sure to provide special financial assistance to Pakistan keeping in view its serious vulnerability due to extreme weather conditions.

The assurance to this effect was given by the Consul General of the UAE, Bakheet Ateeq Al Remeithi while speaking as the chief guest at the conference on "Adapting urban transportation to climate change" organized by the National Forum for Environment and Health (NFEH).

The UAE diplomat told the audience that he had been personally a witness to the massive impact of the phenomenon of climate change on Pakistan during his years-long stay in the country.

He said the heads of state, senior relevant authorities, and environmental experts belonging

to various countries soon gathering in Dubai for COP-28 had no option other than taking into account Pakistan's serious vulnerability due to climate change.

Remeithi said the concerned world community would surely provide a sizable portion of the global budget meant for tackling the climate emergency in Pakistan owing to the massive destruction caused by events like floods, heavy rains, and heat waves.

He assured the audience that the UAE rulers would fully support Pakistan's case in this regard as they had always come to the support of the suffering and underprivileged Pakistani brethren after every disastrous event.

Speaking as the guest honour, the CEO of Indus Hospital, Dr Abdul Bari Khan, said that environmental degradation in the last few years had massively affected the physical and mental health of Pakistanis.

Former Sindh government's Environment and Forests Secre-

tary, Shamsul Haq Memon, hoped that modern mass transit facilities being developed in large cities of Pakistan including Karachi in the form of bus rapid transit system (BRTS) and urban rail service would be highly helpful in tackling the environmental emergency.

Noted businessman, Mian Zahid Hussain, assured on behalf of the industrialists in the city that they would do their best to adhere to the environmental safety protocols for tackling the prevailing climate emergency in Pakistan.

Abdul Aziz, BRTS General Manager in Karachi, told the audience that funding requirement was a major challenge for the government in building modern mass transportation facilities in large cities.

Environmentalist, Syed Omar Arif, said that mass transit systems should be expeditiously built in cities like Karachi as harmful vehicular emissions massively degenerated the envi-



Shahabina Faraz, an environmental journalist, emphasized that the planning for modern transportation systems should take into account the daily commuting requirements of woman workforce and students.

Ashar Lodhi, a senior engineering consultant, said the BRTS fully functional in Karachi would provide massive relief

to Karachiites by mitigating the traffic and pollution problems of the city.

Shahabina Faraz, an environmental journalist, emphasized

that the planning for modern transportation systems should take into account the daily commuting requirements of woman workforce and students.

Sindh Government's Energy Secretary, Abu Bakar Madni, praised NFEH for regularly holding conferences on environmental issues.

NFEH President, Naeem Qureshi, thanked the UAE Consul General for attending the event and reaffirming the commitment of the brotherly Islamic country to provide the fullest assistance for tackling the climate emergency in Pakistan.

He said the NFEH would continue to hold more such conferences to dwell upon the climate emergency and environmental challenges of Pakistan.

NFEH Secretary-General Ruqiyah Naem in her vote of thanks said that her NGO would further accelerate its tree plantation drive in Karachi and other cities by involving concerned stakeholders in increasing green cover in the country.

On this occasion Dr. Kasier Waheed, Engr. Nadeem Ashraf, Engr. Irfan Ahmad, Bilawal Suhag and others also addressed.

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

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
47,808.34	48,227.60
Day's High	Day's Low:
48,622.90	47,626.74
Index Value	Change
10,978,330,350	-419.26
Percentage	Time
-0.87%	10 Aug, 2023 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,618.60	+31.30
Percentage	Time
+0.41%	10 Aug, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
35,186.41	+63.05
Percentage	Time
+0.18%	10 Aug, 1:26 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
32,473.65	+269.32
Percentage	Time
+0.84%	10 Aug, 3:15 pm GMT+9

**Open Market Forex Rates**

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	198.5	200.5
Bahrain Dinar	763.86	771.86
Canadian Dollar	222.8	225
China Yuan	39.85	40.25
Danish Krone	42.3	42.7
Euro	321.5	324
Hong Kong Dollar	36.73	37.08
Indian Rupee	3.47	3.58
Japanese Yen	1.94	2
Kuwaiti Dinar	933.45	942.45
Malaysian Ringgit	62.84	63.44
New Zealand \$	173.68	175.68
Norwegians Krone	28.09	28.39
Omani Riyal	746.03	754.03
Qatari Riyal	78.9	79.6
Saudi Riyal	77.7	78.5
Singapore Dollar	211	213
Swedish Korona	26.85	27.15
Swiss Franc	327.47	329.97
Thai Bhat	8.19	8.34
U.A.E Dirham	81.3	82.1
UK Pound Sterling	372.8	376.5
US Dollar	293.6	296.5

# Business community asked to cooperate in controlling use of polythene bags

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: Ms. Farzana Altaf Shah, Director General, Pakistan Environment Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) said that the polythene shopping bags pose serious threats to human health and the environment besides causing blockage of streams, nullahs and sewerage lines, therefore, the business community should cooperate in controlling their use in the federal capital to promote a healthy environment. She said this while addressing the members of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry during her visit to ICCI.

Farzana Altaf Shah said that PAK-EPA needs the cooperation of ICCI and the Market Associations for proper implementation of plastic shopping bags laws and regulations to make Islamabad a plastic free city.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry assured that the business community would cooperate in controlling the plastic shopping bags in Islamabad in order to make Islamabad a clean & green and envi-



ronmentally friendly city. However, he said that the government should ensure the easy availability of the alternatives of plastic shopping bags and adopt a gradual approach for the implementation of a ban on their use to save the business community from unnecessary problems.

Ahsan Bakhtawari said that the rising heat-

waves, droughts, floods and heavy rains are the outcome of changing climate and stressed that the government should take urgent measures to promote a healthy environment to save the country from more natural tragedies. He said that a national drive should be launched to promote tree plantation, green energy, recycling plans and waste management systems to save

the environment from further deterioration.

Khalid Iqbal Malik, ICCI Group Leader and emissions of various hazardous smokes in Islamabad and stressed that PAK-EPA should take strong actions to control them.

Zafar Bakhtawari, former President ICCI and Secretary General UBG said that the government should give awards to those businesses who fully comply with the environmental laws and contribute to promote a healthy environment. It would motivate others to implement such laws. He said that ICCI is ready to give award the Ms. Farzana Altaf Shah in recognition of her efforts to promote a healthy environment in the Capital. He said that reward and punishment is part of every society.

Asad Aziz, Raja Hassan Akhtar, Zahid Qureshi, Akhlaq Abbasi, Khalid Chaudhry, Sardar Shabbir Abbasi, Abdul Rehman Siddiqui, Akhtar Abbasi, Shahid Gondal, Faseeh ullah Khan, Dr. Zaigham, Jamil Ahmed Qureshi, Malik Shabbir, Shah Anwar and others were present on the occasion.

## Preparation of Independence day

LAHORE: A vendor is displaying 14 August celebrations-related printed shirts at his road side setup to attract customers and earn daily wages in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

## Lucky Cement Awarded 20th Annual Environment Excellence Award 2023

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Lucky Cement Limited (psx: LUCK) won the Environment Excellence Award at the 20th Annual Environment Excellence Awards 2023, organized by The National Forum of Environment and Health (NFEH).

Lucky Cement received the award in recognition to its commitment towards sustainable development and contribution towards protecting the overall environment for a greener Pakistan. The Annual Environment Excellence Awards are the benchmark for environmental standards in Pakistan.

Speaking of the occasion, Mr. Amin Ganny, Chief Operating Officer, Lucky Cement Limited, said, "We at Lucky

Cement believe in environment-friendly practices and are committed towards conserving the environment."

He further added that "Implementation of sustainability into our core business operations has always been one of our main objectives. We follow a comprehensive Environmental Management and Monitoring Plan. The management strongly believes in preserving the ecosystem through the management of gaseous emissions, particulate matter, noise levels, effluents (sewage) and solid waste."

Sustainable development forms a significant part of Lucky Cement's business strategies and is one of the key factors that have led the company towards progress and growth.

## Bank Alfalah continues its growth momentum

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: The Board of Directors of Bank Alfalah Limited (BAFL), in its meeting held on August 10, 2023, approved the Bank's financial results for the half year ended June 30, 2023.

Pakistan weathered economic stress during the first half of 2023. However, the Bank has delivered sound financial results, posting profit before tax of Rs. 35.865 billion. The profit after tax stands at Rs. 18.620 billion, representing a growth of 113.9% over last year, even after absorbing super tax imposed by the Federal Government. The Earning Per Share (EPS) for the half year stands at Rs. 11.81 (Jun '22: Rs. 4.90). The Board has declared an interim cash dividend of Rs. 3.00 (Jun '22: Rs.



2.50) per share. Bank Alfalah's deposit base increased by 34.6% year-on-year (YoY), closing at Rs. 1.776 trillion as at June 30, 2023. The Bank also improved its market share in deposits. CA and CASA ratios stood at 42.8% and 71.3% respectively. The Bank's advances closed

at Rs. 798.096 billion, while maintaining a strong credit discipline amid challenging market fundamentals. The Bank has sufficient coverage of its non-performing loans by over 102% (including general provision). The Bank remains adequately capitalised with

CAR well above the regulatory requirement.

The Bank continues to be well-positioned for sustainable growth and the creation of long-term shareholder value, despite macroeconomic challenges.

The primary objective is to further strengthen the Banks market share, and, in addition, we are committed to enhancing our domestic presence, delivering unmatched services to our customers, and reaching a broader audience. The Bank continued to expand its network and also opened Pakistan's first Digital Lifestyle branch during the quarter.

Through strategic vision, customer-centric approach, and commitment to innovation, Bank Alfalah is poised to embrace the future and achieve sustainable success.

## The Bank of Punjab secures top rank in SBP's Agri credit scoring Model for FY 2023

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) introduced a comprehensive Scoring Model to gauge the agriculture credit performance of the banks. Based on this scoring model, banks are ranked according to their sizes. The Bank of Punjab (BOP) has been ranked at 1st Position in the Mid-Size Banks for the FY 2023. It is pertinent to mention here that on an overall basis, BOP's score is the second highest among all commercial banks regardless of their Tier Size.

This score has weightage of outstanding borrowers, regional / geographical disbursements, outstanding portfolio and overall disbursement with regards

to Agriculture sector and includes both Farmland Non-Farm Sectors. BOP has not only increased its agriculture customer base but also booked one of the largest Collateral Free Loans portfolios of Agriculture customers whereby loans are extended for Poultry, Dairy and Animal Fattening against personal guarantee of the borrowers.

Introduction of Customer Centric proposition is the heart of bank's strategy. Bank has dedicated branches to cater to Agriculture Sector needs, equipped with well-trained Agriculture Relationship Managers. BOP offers extensive products under the Kissan Dost Umbrella which ranges from Lucrative everyday Banking accounts to Need Specific Loan Products.

## Unilever Pakistan and HANDS Pakistan partner to develop model village in Thatta

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: Unilever Pakistan and HANDS Pakistan have rehabilitated the village of Essa Rajero, Thatta, which was devastated by the floods of 2022.

Following the catastrophic floods, Unilever Pakistan had announced an "Adopt a Village" project to create model communities in flood-affected areas. As part of this effort, Unilever Pakistan adopted villages in Thatta and D. G. Khan. In partnership with HANDS Pakistan, this initiative has developed resilient communities with sustainable houses and basic infrastructure, providing WASH services, access to clean water energy, and

education.

The program also focuses on equipping flood-affected individuals with skills and resources necessary to diversify their livelihood options. With this vision, Unilever and HANDS have established a Community-Based Organization (CBO) comprising local community members, which assumes a pivotal role in both decision-making processes and the village's reconstruction efforts.

The organization has successfully built 90 houses in the village that has helped the communities rebuild their lives. The development work is complete, and people have been made self-reliant and resilient in the face of future challenges.

Amir Paracha, Chairman and CEO, Unilever Pakistan, highlighted, "The aftermath of such disasters often leaves families grappling with the loss of their homes and livelihoods. In response to these challenges, 'Unilever for Pakistan' stands as a multi-faceted effort to rebuild lives. With profound responsibility to contribute to relief and rehabilitation of the flood affectees, our focus remains climate preparedness and climate resilience."

Additionally, according to Dr. Shaikh Tanveer Ahmed, CE of HANDS Pakistan, "People frequently find themselves struggling with the catastrophic loss of their homes and livelihoods after significant calamities such as floods. 'HANDS Pakistan' arises as

a comprehensive project dedicated to rebuilding destroyed lives and rehabilitation in response to these daunting problems. HANDS Pakistan has a firm commitment to helping people impacted by the floods."

In 2022, Unilever Pakistan's response to the floods included emergency relief with provision of ration packs, cooked meals, hygiene kits, and medical camps. The organization's brands also actively participated, with Lifebuoy setting up floating medical clinics to provide easy access to doctors and medicines and Surf Excel launching a 'clothes donation drive' to provide clean clothes.

Pakistan is anticipated to face severe climate-related incidents,



which underscores the concept of constructing model villages. The purpose behind this endeavor is to equip at-risk communities, enhancing their capacity to withstand and respond effectively to such events in the coming years. Building resilient

communities involves fostering a sense of togetherness and collaboration. Unilever stays committed to encouraging active community building and fostering a supportive environment for individuals to regain their footing and rebuild their lives.

# Shahid Afridi & Jahangir Khan, in US to raise funds for under-privileged, visit Pakistani embassy

Sports Desk

WASHINGTON: Pakistan's sporting greats — Shahid Afridi and Jahangir Khan — held a meeting with the Pakistani community leaders and activists on Wednesday during which they underscored the need for improving the conditions of the country's under-privileged communities, hit hard by the economic crisis.

Boom Boom Afridi and Khan, the six times world squash champion, are in the United States to raise funds for the Shahid Afridi Foundation (SAF), which is working to uplift the poor and down-trodden strata of society.

"Pakistan is the most philanthropic and giving nation on the face of the earth, and Pakistani-Americans are no exception," Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Masood Khan, said while welcoming the two heroes at the Pakistani embassy.

"I saw him (Afridi) distributing food in Azad Kashmir during the pandemic; his selfless services saved hundreds from starvation during the most challenging time."

He said Afridi was the driving force



behind the Kashmir Premier League, which faced heavy odds but is now a "success story."

Paying tribute to legendary Jahangir Khan, the Pakistani envoy said that he was a source of inspiration for the nation. "Children are named after Jahangir Khan," he pointed out.

"From sporting heroes, Shahid Afridi and Jahangir Khan have become humanitarian heroes with their selfless services to the people. We salute them."

Shahid Afridi said that he started his humanitarian activities in 2011 with the establishment of a hospital in his village. The organization has so far established five mobile health hospitals to provide healthcare services to the people of far-flung area.

"Pakistan has given me what I cannot even imagine — so I am trying to do my bit for my people," he said.

Afridi especially lauded the role of Pakistan Army for facilitating him in

reaching out to the people living in difficult terrains.

Jahangir Khan said that serving the under-privileged in the motherland was a unique honour.

He highlighted that the Shahid Afridi Foundation — with its registered chapters in USA, UK, Australia, & South Africa — was serving underserved communities of Pakistan in critical areas of education, health, clean drinking water, sports rehabilitation and emergency relief response.

He appreciated the generous contributions of Pakistani diaspora enabling the foundation to expand the scope of its activities.

Dr. Attique Samdani, a partner and Co-Owner of Virginia Cancer Institute, Richmond and Chair of SAF US chapter, said that the Foundation's services were being provided to the deserving people in a completely transparent manner.

He said that over 20,000 families were currently benefitting from the water filtration plants installed by the foundation, and fourteen girls schools were functioning. Besides provision of education, the families were being provided rations and other necessities of life as an incentive to ensure education of their children.

## PCB rebrands grade-II four-day event as Hanif Mohammad Trophy

Sports Desk

LAHORE: In a tribute to one of the pioneers of the early era of Pakistan cricket, the Pakistan Cricket Board has named the grade-II four-day tournament as Hanif Mohammad Trophy, which will be contested by 10 regional teams from the 2023-24 domestic season.

This is another step by the PCB to honour and recognise the services of the legends of the game, and ensure that their efforts continue to be remembered.

PCB Management Committee Chairperson Zaka Ashraf: "This step is a homage to a true cricket legend whose grace, dedi-

cation, and timeless contributions to the sport have left an indelible mark on the hearts of cricket enthusiasts in Pakistan and around the world.

"It is of utmost importance that we remember our greats and take steps that keep their memories alive."

Son of Hanif Mohammad and former Pakistan Test cricketer, Shoaib Mohammad: "My family and I are thankful to Zaka Ashraf and the Pakistan Cricket Board for honouring my father's contributions to the game of cricket."

"It is an amazing feeling to know that the board continues to remember the sacrifices and hard work of

cricketers of the early days who played a pivotal role to put Pakistan on the world map. I hope our young domestic cricketers get inspiration from his career and go on to serve Pakistan."

Known as 'Little Master', Hanif Mohammad was one of the most outstanding batting talents in the early years of Pakistan cricket. As a teenager, he opened the innings for Pakistan in the inaugural Test in 1952, played against India at Delhi and went on to score 3,915 runs, which includes 12 centuries and 15 half-centuries, at an average of 43.98 in 55 Tests.

He played the longest Test innings at Bridgetown

in 1958 when he batted for 970 minutes for his 337 — still the highest score for a Pakistani in the format — against the West Indies.

He also captained Pakistan in 11 Tests from 1964 till 1967 before retiring in 1969.

His first-class score of 499 for Karachi against Bahawalpur in 1959 is still the highest for a Pakistani and the second best overall behind Brian Lara's 501 not out for Warwickshire against Durham in 1994. He amassed 17,059 runs at 52.32 in his first-class cricket and scored 55 centuries and 66 half-centuries in 238-match career that spanned from 1951 till 1976.

## Arshad Nadeem recovers from injury ahead of World Athletics Championship



A Sports

LAHORE: Commonwealth Games (CWG) Gold medalist Arshad Nadeem was declared fully fit by the medical panel ahead of the upcoming World Athletics Championship, in Budapest, Hungary.

Arshad Nadeem, after recovering from an injury to his left knee, is all set to participate in the upcoming event and is currently busy training under the supervision of his coach Salman Butt.

The medical board presented Arshad's reports to Major General (Rtd) Muhammad Akram Sahi, President of the Athletics Federation of Pakistan (AFP).

Akram Sahi expressed his pleasure at the fact that the star javelin thrower is fit from his knee injury and is ready to represent Pakistan again at the highest level.

Sahi is hopeful that Arshad will perform at his best in the World Athletics Championship and also appreciated AFP's efforts in the athlete's rehabilitation.

"After getting fully fit, Arshad Nadeem will give his best in the World Athletics Championship," he said. "The federation has taken all necessary steps to help Arshad Nadeem restore full fitness," added Sahi.

Sahi also held WAPDA accountable for Arshad Nadeem's injury and alleged that the department forced him to participate in the recently-held National Games where he returned with a gold medal.

It is worth mentioning here that Pakistan's Commonwealth Games hero Arshad Nadeem outperformed his opponents in the National Games to get his hands on the gold medal in the 34th edition of the tournament.

Arshad showcased his potential and proved his mettle once again as he recorded the longest throw of 78.02m in his third attempt. His attempt was unmatched by any of his competitors and consequently clinched the gold medal.

## Group photo

Karachi: A group photo of Pakistan Sepaktakraw Federation officials Naushad Ahmed, Dr. Arif Hafeez, Shabbir Ahmed with Saudi Arabia Sepaktakraw Federation President Ms. Al Jawharah Fallatah and CEO Mr. Mohammad at the end of the 36th King's Cup World Sepaktakraw Championship in Korat.



## PCB takes Regional Presidents into confidence before new domestic structure

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: In a significant development for Pakistan cricket, the Domestic Regional Presidents met Pakistan Cricket Board Management Committee Chairperson Mr. Zaka Ashraf to discuss the upcoming domestic structure. The meeting, which was held in a cordial manner at the PCB's headquarters on Wednesday highlighted the collaboration and shared commitment of all stakeholders to enhance the domestic cricket landscape in the country.

The regional presidents, representing various cricketing regions across Pakistan, expressed their utmost confidence in the proposed changes to the domestic structure that the PCB is set

to implement and will announce later today. The meeting provided a platform for open dialogue and comprehensive discussions on the workings of the new domestic framework, focusing on its potential to nurture and elevate cricket talent at the grassroots level.

Separately, the recently appointed Cricket Technical Committee (CTC), led by former captain Misbah-ul-Haq and Mohammad Hafeez as member presented an in-depth briefing to the regional presidents at the National Cricket Academy in Lahore. Junaid Zia, Acting Director — Domestic Cricket Operations, and also the ex-officio member of the CTC briefed the members on the key components and features of the new domestic

structure, emphasising its intent to streamline and refine the player development pathway.

Zaka Ashraf: I firmly believe that the heart and soul of cricket in Pakistan lies within our regions. These regions serve as the nurturing grounds for our domestic cricket, where young talents blossom and refine their skills. For a considerable span of time, there existed a void, a pause in the proper functioning of our regional setups. However, I am pleased to share that these regions are back in action, and it's a significant leap forward for the sport in our nation.

I express my gratitude for the support and enthusiasm demonstrated by the Domestic Regional Presidents and highlighted

their integral role in driving the transformation of Pakistan cricket. Together, we will witness the rise of cricketing stars who will carry the legacy of Pakistan cricket forward with pride and honour.

Misbah-ul-Haq addressing the regional presidents said: "I am confident that we can craft a cricketing structure that not only benefits our cricketers but also upholds the interests of all stakeholders involved. Your unwavering support is the foundation upon which this structure will succeed. If we work together, we will build a future that honours the game and the aspirations of countless budding cricketers."

Mohammad Hafeez addressing the participants said: "Merit is the cornerstone of our approach,

ensuring that cricketers and the support staff are recognised and rewarded based on their skills and dedication. This structure is a testament to our collective commitment to provide opportunities for people associated with the game. With your support, we look forward to a brighter and more competitive future for the players. During the meeting, the domestic regional presidents extended their gratitude to the PCB for its unwavering commitment to advancing the game within the country. They extended their unconditional support to the PCB. The invitation for the meeting was sent to all regional presidents, while some of the regional presidents couldn't join the meeting.

## Fifth All Pakistan Veteran Football tournament



Sports Desk

LAHORE: The 5th All Pakistan Veteran Football tournament will be played from 12th to 14th at Jallo Park Football Ground, Lahore. This was announced by Mian Abbas Patron Pakistan International Football Veterans Association along with Sardar Naveed Hyder Khan, Mr. Sarwar and Mr. Arshad international football players at local restaurant, Lahore. Mian Abbas said that out standing arrangements will be made to successful this football event.

He said that 9 teams will take part in this 3 days mela and the Semi Finals and Final will be played on 14th August and the Chief Guest of the final ceremony will be Wahab Riaz Advisor to the Chief Minister Punjab Sports and Youth Affairs will be Chief Guest. He said From Karachi, Quetta, Bahawalpur, Chitral, Rawalpindi, Bahawalpur and Faisalabad teams will take part in the tournament.

## Asian hockey champion trophy 2023 India



Najeeb Nd Khattak

Asian hockey champion trophy going on in the city of India Chennai where yesterday match was played between Arch rivals Pakistan and India where India beat Pakistan by 4-0 some bad decision of umpires cost Pakistan hockey team although they deliver best in the tournament they out from the semi finals on bad luck as Japan Korea Pakistan all three teams get 5.5 points but goal average Pakistan's out from the semi final. This event is not meaningful for Pakistan as they have Asian games which are major events for Pakistan and then the junior world cup.

Pakistan team which lead by maximum of youth consist of Hanan Shahid emerging player of Asia Abdullah Sufyan Khan Akhtiaham Aslam Murtaqa Yaqoob and Aqeel Ahmad which is dangerous for the others teams in future of world hockey as they growing as emerging players from Pakistan and it will help for the junior world cup later on this year's in Malaysia this young side will get experience in seniors team will get advantages in junior world cup.

The national teams need more facilitation of the international tour's financial stability, permanent jobs, proper diets and trainings one day Pakistan hockey glory will be back inshallah. Pakistan zindabad.

Regard Najeeb Nd Khattak sports sciences scholar and Ex National hockey player

## Aayat Asmi Bronze Medal Board 2



Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Showing extraordinary performance Pakistan's Aayat Asmi clinched bronze medal in U-12 Board-2 competition of World School Team Chess Championship at Aktau, Kazakhstan.

Asmi demonstrated impressive performance and secured bronze medal on the 2nd board with 6.5 points out of 8. Pent-sko Stanislav of Ukraine and Narimarov Yhlas of Turkmenistan won the gold and silver medals respectively in this category.

Asmi left behind talented players from several top chess playing countries such as India, Belgium, Poland, Canada, Netherlands, Germany and Bulgaria in this competition.

President Chess Federation of Pakistan Hanif Qureshi and Secretary Chess Association of Punjab Raja Gauhar Iqbal congratulated Asmi for winning bronze medal in the 26-nation grand chess event. They expressed hope that Pakistan chess stars will continue their medal-winning performance in their next international chess events.