



**Will step down if ECP holds elections tomorrow: information minister**

Newly appointed caretaker Information Minister Murtaza Solangi on Friday asserted that he will step down from his post if the ECP holds elections tomorrow. The caretaker minister made these remarks while briefing the media regarding



**Jalil Abbas Jilani assumes charge as caretaker Foreign Minister**

Caretaker Minister for Foreign Affairs Jalil Abbas Jilani took the charge of his office on Friday. Foreign Minister Jilani, who had taken oath along with other cabinet members on Thursday, has an extensive expertise of foreign affairs. He served as foreign secretary in 2012-13, besides Pakistan's ambassador to the United States, European Union, Belgium, Luxembourg and Australia. (Details on Page 8)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

**Meeting**

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs the first meeting of the federal cabinet on Friday.



Photo: PID

**Caretaker PM vows to implement former govt's commitments**

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar vowed on Friday to comply with the commitments made by the previous government on national and international levels with different forums, besides ensuring rule of law and financial discipline during the interim period. "We do not have perpetual mandate to serve the nation but during the given allocated time we will try to lay foundation where we have sense of continuation of national and international commitments that the previous government has made with different forums," he said while talking to the cabinet members here during the first cabinet meeting of the caretaker government.

With respect to a new initiative-Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), launched by former government, the prime minister said the caretaker government would fully



support it. He said SIFC was a dream comes true project as Pakistan was an agriculture country and rich with mineral resources. He said in fact SIFC was not a new idea but it was an old national dream that was going to be materialized now. "Day has arrived when with the support of all institutions including Pakistan military leadership, we support, facilitate, encourage, and realize this old national dream." He said this initiatives was not held by any institution but it was collectively owned by around 250 million

people of the country. "We all own it and we will contribute towards it."

During the meeting he individually acknowledged the services of all the cabinet members saying "I am very proud that we have got one of the best team". He hoped that the Almighty Allah would enable them to lead and steer this nation during the interim period. "With our utmost duty, may be it is a month, two or three, or three and a half, whatever the allocated time is, we will demonstrate through our actions not by our words," he added. With regard to the economic situation in the country, the prime minister said he was well aware of the huge economic challenges but with an able team, the government would ensure the financial discipline. "We have a sense of sanctity of tax payers' money. This money on which we are having today's meeting, using resources or traveling, is paid by the people of Pakistan." He said

either it was an ordinary vendor, shopkeeper, teacher, lawyer or any other person, all were contributing in this regard. PM Kakar said in this polarized environment, the government would try to differentiate between politics and law. He said the government would ensure that rule of order was not compromised in any way and the rule of order would lead us towards the rule of law. "We know the sanctity of the order that would be kept at any cost. Pakistan is owned and shared by all ethnicities, all creeds, and all religious background," he added. He highlighted that the rigidity, be it in any form in the society, would be strongly discouraged.

He said rigidity might come in the garb of religion or secularism or in any other form, these extreme attitude would be discouraged and would be controlled by the law. He said the minorities would stay protected in this country and any attempt to harm them from a section of

marginalized group of people would be responded strictly by the state and the society. He said the miscreants might be from us but we must have to divorce them and keep distant from them. He said Pakistan was created on noble principles and the country was the product of noble idea. Speaking about the incident of May 9, the prime minister explicitly expressed disappointment and discomfort over the sabotage activities happened on the day.

He said attack on the military installation was like the country's immune system was attacked which could lead towards fatality. "We do not just condemn it but we also will ensure that justice will be done and whosoever violated laws on those days will be treated according to law and there will not be any favor to anybody". On Kashmir issue, the prime minister said "It was the core issue which could not be ignored. "It lies in our soul, for us Kashmir is eternal."

**President Alvi dismisses NEPRA official for workplace harassment**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday dismissed an official of National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) from service over workplace harassment.

According to details, the president dismissed NEPRA's HR Management Director Ahmad Nadeem from service, enhancing the penalty for workplace harassment.

President Alvi held that sending text messages to a female colleague, asking her to stay in the office beyond office hours with an ulterior motive, making unwanted advances, and intimidating her to face dire consequences in case of her refusal to assent to his unethical demands constituted harassment, and warranted no leniency.

While deciding upon a



workplace harassment case, the President in his decision wrote that statements of the complainant, witnesses, CCTV footage, WhatsApp messages, and the email fully established the factum of harassment.

He said that the accused himself had also admitted his guilt by implication and his only grievance before the President was regarding the severity of punishment.

"The principle of reasonableness and proportionality demands that the penalty is modified to dismissal as it is commensurate with the gravity of the offence", he added.

**Caretaker PM vows to ensure protection of minorities in Pakistan**

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday expressed firm resolve to ensure that minorities in Pakistan stay protected and rule of law is established at any cost.

He was speaking during first meeting of the caretaker federal cabinet in Islamabad on Friday.

Strongly deploring the Jaranwala incident, the Prime Minister said Pakistan is owned and shared by multiple ethnicities and religions and any extreme attitude like the one exhibited in Jaranwala will be unwelcomed and dealt with iron hands.

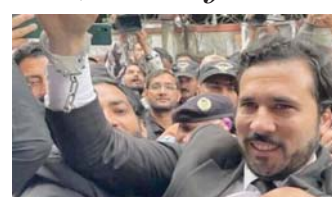
He said we strongly discourage rigidity either in the garb of

religion or secularism and no one will be allowed to create anarchy or chaos in the country.

Highlighting the key priorities of the caretaker government, the Prime Minister said in the current polarized environment, we will try to differentiate between politics and law and lay a solid foundation for continuity of the country's national and international commitments.

He added that in the same spirit of continuity we will move forward to work with the support of all state institutions on different development initiatives especially the Special Investment Facilitation Council which aims at realizing the full potential of country's natural resources.

**Hassaan Niazi handed over to military for May 9 trial, LHC informed**



**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Hassaan Niazi, the nephew and legal adviser to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief, has been turned over to a military court for trial, according to a police report provided to the Lahore High Court (LHC) on Friday.

It said Hassaan would undergo a military investigation and trial after being named the primary suspect in the case involving the Jinnah House attack in Lahore. He was taken into custody by police in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

However, at the commanding officer's request, he was then turned over to the Quetta police before being given to the military. Hassaan, who serves as the party chief's point person for legal matters, was previously turned over to the Quetta police on Aug 1, a day after his detention in Abbottabad.

**Justice Mansoor suggests full court to hear NAB amendments case**

**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Supreme Court Judge Justice Mansoor Ali Shah suggested Chief Justice (CJ) Umar Ata Bandial constitute a full court to hear Pakistan Tekreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) plea challenging amendments to the accountability laws.

Headed by CJP Bandial, a three-member bench, comprising Justice Mansoor and Justice Ijazul Ahsan heard the petitions. At the outset of the hearing, Justice Shah said that the case concerning the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) law, should have been heard by a full court.

"I would still request the CJ today that the NAB amendments matter should be heard by a full court," he added. CJP Bandial however remarked that the parties should give final arguments at the next hearing. "This case is pending since 2022. No one



has challenged the amendments made in the NAB law before us," he observed. "My retirement is fast-approaching and this is a very important case. I will have to give a decision come what may," he said.

Furthermore, the PTI chief's lawyer Khawaja Haris did not appear for today's hearing with his assistant, Yasir Aman, appearing on his behalf.

Later, the apex court postponed the hearing until August 28.

**NAB law amendment**

The NAB (Second Amendment) Bill 2021 states that NAB's deputy chairman, to

be appointed by the federal government, would become the acting chairman of the bureau following the completion of the tenure of the chairman.

The bill has also reduced the four-year term of the NAB chairman. After approval of the law, NAB will not be able to act on federal, provincial or local tax matters.

It has also set a three-year term for the judges of the accountability courts. Under the proposed law, it has been made binding upon NAB to ensure the availability of evidence against an accused prior to his or her arrest.

**PBC condemns ECP's decision to hold fresh delimitations**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Bar Council (PBC) on Friday condemned the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) decision to initiate fresh delimitations leading to the postponement of elections beyond stipulated 90-day limit.

On Aug 17, the ECP unveiled a schedule for delimitation concerning provincial and national constituencies, with the goal of completing this process by Dec 14. This decision, stemming from the recent approval of census results by the Council of Common Interests, effectively signifies that elections cannot take place in 2023.

In a press release, PBC Vice Chairman Haroon Rashid and Executive Committee chairman Hassan Raza Pasha expressed serious concerns regarding the ECP's decision. Timely election dream goes sour as ECP greenlights new delimitations.

They labelled the "delimitation schedule for redrawing constituencies issued by the commission" as a deliberate strategy to postpone the elections.

**Caretaker Health Minister receives briefing on national programmes**



**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Health Dr Nadeem Jan on Friday took charge of office and received a briefing on various national health programmes.

On reaching the ministry, Federal Health Secretary Iftikhar Ali Shallwani and other officials welcomed the minister. Dr. Nadeem Jan held an introductory meeting with Ministry of Health's officials and heads of various departments.

On the occasion, the minister said, "We will make efforts to meet the challenges in the health sector. We have to work round the clock for the welfare of the people of this country." "Health sector is our first priority and improving the health sector is my mission," Dr. Nadeem Jan added.

He assured that he would

try his level best to resolve the problems of the people in a short period of time on priority basis

He expressed his resolve to serve the country and the nation. Public welfare projects would have to be completed on fast track, Dr. Nadeem Jan said. "We will ensure effective measures to protect people from diseases and epidemics," he said.

He asked the ministry officials to work with full dedication to come up to expectations of the people. "We will endeavour to lay the foundation of revolutionary welfare projects of public interest in the health sector."

The meeting was attended besides Secretary Health Iftikhar Ali Shallwani, by Additional Secretary Kamran Rehman, Director General Health and other senior officials.

## Dua

KARACHI: Caretaker Chief Minister of Sindh Justice (R) Maqbool Baqir offers dua at Mazar-e-Quaid in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

## Will step down if ECP holds elections tomorrow: information minister

**Naveed Ahmad Khan**

ISLAMABAD: Newly appointed caretaker Information Minister Murtaza Solangi on Friday asserted that he will step down from his post if the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) holds elections tomorrow.

The caretaker minister made these remarks while briefing the media regarding the decisions taken during the first meeting of caretaker federal cabinet. "ECP is solely responsible for holding the elections. Whether they choose to conduct them in 90 days or in February, we will not prolong our stay even by a single minute," the information minister remarked.

Murtaza Solangi said that

the interim government was committed to providing "full cooperation" to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in order to guarantee impartial and transparent elections throughout the country.

The minister also confirmed that he met with Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja and affirmed the interim government's unwavering commitment to providing comprehensive cooperation.

The Minister further expressed resolve and determination of the caretakers to abide by their oath and discharge their responsibilities as per law and the Constitution. "Revamping economy is the top priority of the caretaker government," he added.



Condemning the Jaranwala incident, Murtaza Solangi said the state of Pakistan was standing by its minority communities as all citizens have equal rights as per law and the Constitution of the country.

Responding to a query regarding hike in petrol prices,

the information minister clarified that a programme Pakistan entered with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) entailed certain commitments, including reduced subsidies.

"Considering our foreign exchange reserves' status, it's unfeasible for a country like

ours to purchase costly oil and then sell it at a lower price," he added.

A day earlier, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) announced that general elections were impossible within 90 days.

As per details, the Election Commission of Pakistan decided to hold the upcoming general election on the census 2023.

The ECP stated that the commission is bound to carry out the delimitation process. The first publication will be on October 9 and the final on December 14.

The ECP meeting decided to seek assistance from the provincial governments and the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) in the delimitation process.

## All parties will move Supreme Court for elections in 90 days: Sheikh Rashid

**Waseem Khokhar**

RAWALPINDI: Awami Muslim League chief and former interior minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said on Friday the PPP had created a stir in politics by demanding that elections should be held within 90 days.

In his statement on social media website X (formerly Twitter), Rashid said a declaration of the two-hour long meeting between the chief election commissioner and the chief justice of the Supreme Court was not issued, but the Election Commission said the general election would not be held within 90 days and these would



be held next year.

He said the PPP had created a stir in politics by demanding elections within 90 days.

Rashid said it seemed that only the PML-N would favour delay in elections. All other

parties would unite to demand elections within 90 days and for that purpose, they would move the Supreme Court as well, he said.

The former federal minister said he did not know anyone,

except Sarfraz Bugti, in the caretaker cabinet and the caretakers were there only to oversee the elections. They had no mandate to make long-term policy decisions.

He said people had no money to buy flour and pay electricity bills. They were poisoning their children and committing suicide, he said.

The senior politician said the incident of Jaranwala had earned a lot of shame and disrepute to Pakistan in the world. The incident was condemnable in the strongest terms. The perpetrators should be severely punished. Churches were torched and police remained a silent spectator, he deplored.

"They (police) become proactive when they have to pick up political workers' families and servants from their homes. They violate the sanctity of the four walls of homes and torture people with ease," he said.

He said the ball was in the court of the Supreme Court. The apex court would have to take a decision whether to save the Constitution, law and the country or to let the country plunge into chaos and civil war. Only the Supreme Court would decide that.

The former minister was of the view that people were dejected. He prayed to Allah Almighty to be merciful on Pakistan and its people.

## Rizwana torture case: Police record statement of housemaid

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Police on Friday recorded the statement of 14-year-old housemaid Rizwana, who was subjected to 'brutal torture' by the wife of a civil judge in Islamabad.

Soumia is currently in jail after a local court in Islamabad rejected bail petition in the Rizwana torture case.

Describing her ordeal, Rizwana in her statement before the police said Soumia, the wife of civil judge, was subjecting her to vicious torture daily with sticks and iron rods. Rizwana further said her landlady smashed her head with the wall multiple times after getting angry. The family of the judge use to keep me locked inside a room for weeks, she added with teary eyes.

Rizwana said she was not allowed to meet her parents but was only allowed to talk with them on the phone with her landlady beside her.

The minor house help further in her statement to the Islamabad police said she was asked not to reveal the torture she is going through to her parents and even she was not being given medical treatment after physical torture.

## Karachi traders refuse to pay 'inflated' electricity bills

**Bureau Report**

KARACHI: The traders community in Karachi has announced not to pay 'inflated' electricity bills, issued by K-Electric (KE), rejecting the increase in power tariff.

According to details, Karachi traders staged a protest at Bolton market against 'inflated' electricity bills, issued by K-Electric (KE).

Speaking to journalists, President Karachi Electronic Dealers Association (KEDA), Mohammad Rizwan Irfan, said that the business community and the people are forced to starve due to the recent inflation.

"Unemployment and street crimes are on the rise," Rizwan Irfan said, warning of a nationwide strike if the government fails to meet their demands.

Sharjeel Goplani, Chairman of

All City Traders Union (ACTU), said that the electricity bills have been increased by 200 per cent, saying that they will not pay the inflated power bills.

Earlier in July, the National Electric Power Regulator-



Authority (Nepra) notified a massive increase in the base tariffs of electricity by up to Rs7.50 per unit at the request of the federal government.

In a notification, the power regulatory authority said the new tariffs would be effective from July 1, 2023.

The lifeline consumers will

be exempted from the recent power tariff hike. The protected consumers using 200 units in a month will not be affected from the base tariff hike.

The power tariff will be increased to Rs16.48 per unit after the hike of Rs3 for consumers using up to 100 units in a month.

According to the notification, for consuming 101 to 200 units, the tariff was increased by Rs4, taking it to Rs22.95 per unit. Similarly, the power tariff has been increased by Rs5 for users consuming 201 to 300 units, taking it to Rs27.14 per unit.

For consuming 301 to 400 units, the tariff was jacked up by Rs6.5, taking it to Rs32.03 per unit. For consuming 401 to 500 units, the power tariff will be increased by Rs7.5, taking it to Rs35.24 per unit

## PM meets delegations from Balochistan



**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar Friday held meetings with delegations from different parts of Balochistan.

The delegations felicitated him on assuming the office of prime minister and expressed their best wishes for him.

The notables of the delegations expressed the view that the appointment of caretaker prime minister from Balochistan strengthened the people's belief in the political system and democracy.

The delegations presented bouquets to the prime minister and some of the guests gave the gift of books according to his literary taste.

## Jalil Abbas Jilani assumes charge as Caretaker Foreign Minister

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Foreign Affairs Jalil Abbas Jilani took the charge of his office on Friday.

Foreign Minister Jilani, who had taken oath along with other cabinet members on Thursday, has an extensive expertise of foreign affairs. He served as foreign secretary in 2012-13, besides Pakistan's ambassador to the United States, European Union, Belgium, Luxembourg and Australia.

He said the caretaker cabinet would strive to serve the country's interest through national consensus and improve cordial ties with countries like China, the United States, the United Arab Emirates, Iran and South Asian states, among others.

He said Pakistan should further



strengthen its relationship with China being a strategic partner with great economic cooperation.

Similarly, he said, the success of the Afghan government was also essential that should play its role to eliminate terrorism.

## Sarfraz Bugti assumes charge as Caretaker Interior Minister

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Interior Senator Sarfraz Bugti formally assumed the charge of office on Friday.

Secretary Interior Syed Ali Murtaza along with officials welcomed the 47th Interior Minister on his arrival at the ministry. He was given a guard of honour and then introduced to the senior officers of the ministry.

Sarfraz Bugti was given a detailed briefing about the ministry, its functioning and the attached departments.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister said the protection of life and property of every citizen was the utmost responsibility of the State. The tragic Jaranwala incident was against the teachings of Islam and Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) and

extremely shameful, he said, adding no one would be allowed to take the law in their hands.

He said every citizen's free movement was protected under the law and Constitution and all stakeholders would have to work together to ensure that right.

The minister warned the officials that the corruption would not be tolerated at any level. He also imposed ban on the issuance of new arms licenses.



## Bushra Bibi demands B-Class facilities for PTI chief

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Bushra Bibi, wife of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan, has written a letter to Home Secretary Punjab, demanding 'B-Class facilities' for her husband under 'Pakistan Prison Rules'.

In the letter written to Home Secretary Punjab, Bushra Bibi noted that B-Class facilities are liable to be given to her husband, the PTI chief, as a matter of right for reasons, which include having served as Prime Minister of Pakistan.

She also pointed out that Imran Khan should be allowed to have home food as per the jail manual. "Personal physician should also be given access to visit and examine PTI chief," the letter added.

Bushra Bibi further said that the Islamabad court had directed the police to send her husband to Adiala Jail Rawalpindi, which "has not been complied with".

She urged the home secretary

to undertake an 'exhaustive legal inquiry' to elucidate the legality of his current detention within your jurisdiction.

Last week, the District and Sessions Court awarded three years jail term to the PTI chairman Imran Khan in Toshakhana criminal case.

The court also imposed Rs 100,000 fine on the convicted chief of the PTI. The court also declared the former prime minister ineligible to hold public office for five years.

The court in its verdict said that the accused has been found guilty of corrupt practices and handed the PTI chairman three years jail sentence.

"Imran Khan deliberately submitted fake details [of Toshakhana gifts] to the ECP and is found guilty of corrupt practices," he stated.

The court also declared the former prime minister ineligible to hold public office for five years.

Later, he was arrested from his Zaman Park residence in Lahore and shifted to Attock Jail.

# AJK president meets PM; invites to address Legislative Assembly

Abdul Majeed Tahir

ISLAMABAD: President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry on Friday called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar here.

The AJK president congratulated the prime minister on assuming the office and expressed good wishes for him.

He extended an invitation to the prime minister to visit Azad Kashmir and address the AJK Legislative Assembly.

Prime Minister Kakar assured the unconditional support of Pakistan to the Kashmir cause.

"We will continue to stand side by side with the people of Kashmir in their struggle for their right to self-determination," he remarked.

He said Pakistan would continue to extend diplomatic, political and moral support to the people of Kashmir until the issue was resolved through a plebiscite as per the United Nations Security Council resolutions and aspirations of the Kashmiri people.



President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry (left) and Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar (right) during their meeting.

## All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference approves 4 more central officials' nomination

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Approved the nomination of 4 more central officials of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference. According to the notification issued by the General Secretary of the Muslim Conference Ms. Maher Nisa, the President of the Muslim Conference, Sardar Attique Ahmad Khan, using the powers obtained under the constitution, appointed Sardar Usman Ali Khan as the Central Chairman Youth Wing for the period 2023-26, while Syed Saqlain Fida Kazmi Advocate has been appointed as Central Chairman Student Wing, Mirza Mohammad Sadiq Advocate as Central Liaison Secretary and Malik Zahid Awan as Central Secretary. Former President of Muslim Conference Mirza Muhammad Shafiq Jaral Advocate, Secretary General Ms. Mehrul Nasa, Raja Saqib Majeed, Sardar Altaf Khan, Shamim Ali Malik, Major (R) Nasrullah Khan, Samia Sajid Raja, Sardar Abid Razak, Sheikh Maqsood Ahmed, Sajjad Anwar Abbasi, Abida Munir Qureshi, Syed Yasir Naqvi, Maimoona Kayani Advocate, Kausar Parveen Advocate, Ameera Khanum, Chaudhry Khizr Hayat, Syed Fanwat Abbas Mousavi, Raja Muhammad Latif Hasrat, Raja Zareen Khan, Abdul Majeed Tahir, Nasreen Akhtar Raja, Jahandad Abbasi, Raja Tabarak Ali, Maryam Jahandad, Muneeb Ishaq Qureshi, Khawaja Aziz, Mansoor Alam Qureshi, Raja Bashir Khan, Mohsin Majeed Raja, Sikandar Habib, Saima Tariq Advocate, Shahida Abbasi, Haroon Azad, Sagar Azad Zulfiqar Siddiqui Advocate and others all Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference Youth. While congratulating all the newly elected office bearers including Wing Chairman Sardar Usman Ali Khan, he has expressed the expectation that they will play their full role in strengthening the party and activating the party at the grass root level.



While congratulating all the newly elected office bearers including Wing Chairman Sardar Usman Ali Khan, he has expressed the expectation that they will play their full role in strengthening the party and activating the party at the grass root level.

## Relief to the Businessmen and Citizens is the First Priority: Amir Khattak



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: A delegation of business representatives under the leadership of the central chairman of the central organization Tajran Pakistan, Khawaja Sulaiman Siddiqui, met Commissioner Multan Division Engineer Aamir Khattak. While talking, he said that the markets and streets of Multan city are suffering from encroachment and darkness. They want an end to encroachments and a clean environment in the city. They want relief from encroachments and polluted air.

Which should be completed soon and give the citizens a chance to breathe a sigh of relief. Talking to the delegation of business representatives, Commissioner Multan Division Engineer Aamir Khattak said that giving relief to the businessmen and citizens is the first priority for the elimination of encroachments, sanitation and environmental problems. The relevant departments are active for the solution, cooperate with the citizens and businessmen, street lights are also looking into the issues and will be provided wherever needed. Work is being done soon in Nawabpur Road, Khooni Bridge, Chongi No. 14, BCG Chowk Bahawalpur Road, Suraj Miani Road and other areas will be completed soon.

South Punjab President Sheikh Javed Akhtar, Multan President Khalid Mahmood Qureshi, South Punjab Senior Vice President Haji Nadeem Qureshi, Punjab Vice President Malik Imran Qayyum Bhatta, Old Vegetable Market Chowk Shaheedan President Rana Muhammad Owais Ali, Chowk Shaheedan Akbar Road President Sheikh Muhammad Shafiq was present

## Dr. Faisal Mushtaq has been inducted as Honorary Rotarian and Decorated as Ambassador of Rotary Pakistan



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: In recognition of his remarkable contributions and unwavering dedication to the education sector and community service, Founder & CEO Roots Millennium Education Group Dr. Faisal Mushtaq TI has been inducted as an Honorary Rotarian and decorated as the Ambassador of Rotary Pakistan. This prestigious recognition highlights his outstanding efforts in shaping the future of education and fostering positive change within the community.

Dr. Faisal Mushtaq TI, a visionary leader in the education field, has been instrumental in transforming the lives of countless individuals through his relentless commitment to providing quality education and empowering the underprivileged. His dedication aligns perfectly with Rotary's core values of service above self and humanitarian aid.

Furthermore, this landmark occasion saw the acknowledgement of Roots Millennium Education Group, Pakistan's largest high-profile education system encompassing Universities, Colleges, and Schools, as a Partner of Rotary Pakistan. This partnership aims to join forces in serving marginalized communities, fulfilling Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and nurturing future young leaders who will shape a better tomorrow. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed to formalize this alliance, with distinguished representatives from Rotary Pakistan. District Governor RID 3272, DG Masrur J. Scheik, along with IPDG Adnan Saboor, PDG Choudhary Saifullah Ejaz, and ARPIC Imran Ghaznavi, were present in the MOU signing ceremony.

Mr. Imran Ghaznavi, the ARPIC 3272 Zone IB, has been pivotal in facilitating and establishing this transformative partnership. He will continue to oversee and guide the collaboration across Pakistan, ensuring its success in positively impacting communities and fostering a brighter future for all.

## Lassi

KARACHI: A street vendor is selling traditional beverage "Lassi" along the road side at Orangi Town area in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

## Pink Bus Service started a separate for women's & students of Multan City: Umar Jahangir

Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: Deputy Commissioner Umar Jahangir has started a separate respectful transport bus service for women and students of the city of Saints.

Federal Woman Ombudsman Fauzia Waqar and Deputy Commissioner Umar Jahangir inaugurated the pink bus service during a solemn ceremony at Women's University. And Mehnaz Khakwani specially participated in the ceremony. Women University students and civil society women participated fully in the ceremony and appreciated this initiative. Speaking at the opening ceremony, Federal Female Ombudsman Fauzia Waqar said that women and students should And it is the responsibility of the state to give autonomy in the offices. The opening of pink service will give students and



women a sense of autonomy This initiative of the district administration will increase the determination and courage of women. Deputy Commissioner Umar Jahangir said that the pink bus service will run on two routes from August 21 when the educational institutions are opened.

Initially, buses from Vida and Metro bus service. Umar Jahangir said that the bus will run from Chowk Kumharwala to Zakariya University at 7:30 am and from Bahauddin Zakariya University to Chowk Kahamarwala at 1:30 pm. A bus will run from Abad Phatak to Chungi No. 9 at 5:10 PM

The Deputy Commissioner said that women's independence is the cause of social development of any nation, while women's access to decision-making and resources is also a requirement of the present time. Later, Vice Chancellor Women's University Dr. Kulsoom Paracha also addressed the event.

## Paper work for construction of Cadet College in Multan be completed soon

Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Additional Chief Secretary South Punjab Capt. (Rtd) Saqib Zafar has instructed District Administration to prepare mega plan for the protection of the cultural heritage of the historic city of Multan and to remove encroachment around Qasim Bagh Fort and restore to its original shape. He said the paper work for the construction of cadet college in Multan be completed soon.

Capt(Rtd) Saqib Zafar said an industrial zone comprising on 500 acres of land was being established in Tehsil Jalalpur Pirwala. He expressed these views while presiding over a meeting on the occasion of his visit to DC office Multan.

All Administrative Secretaries of South Punjab, Officers of District Administration and district heads of various departments participated in the meeting.

Deputy Commissioner Umar Jahangir gave a detailed briefing regarding the ongoing government initiatives in the district. Additional Chief Secretary South Punjab Captain (Rtd) Saqib Zafar said projects of Mother and Child Care Hospital and Nadirabad Flyover be completed on time. He said mangoes are the hallmark of Multan, so one city road be named Mango Road.

The Department of Agriculture South Punjab will provide mango plants for planting on this road, he added. Additional Chief Secretary said tehils and villages of all the districts

were in the focus of the Government and officers of the District Administration should play their best role to make "Ab Gaon Chamkein Ge" campaign, launched by the government, a success. He said peace was very important for the stability and development of any country and society, therefore the district peace committees be made more active and the services of scholars be got for the promotion of inter-faith harmony.

The Additional Chief Secretary said administrative officers should improve service delivery in their institutions and treat the visitors with a smile because the satisfaction of the citizens in the government offices is a reflection of the performance of the officers.

Deputy Commissioner Umar Jahangir while briefing the meeting, said work was going on dozens of mega projects in the District and Rs 9980 million rupees have been allocated for development projects in the annual budget.

He told that PCI for the construction of over head bridge at railway crossing Shujabad has been finalised and this project will cost Rs 1140 million. He informed that a scheme has been prepared for developing 19 parks in the city which will cost Rs 220 million.

A summary for the construction of parks has been approved Chief Minister, he added. Umar Jahangir said preparation of PCI for Cadet College was in progress, and cost of construction of this project was estimated as Rs 700 million.



Islamabad  
15° - 23° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 4:01 am  
Zohr ..... 12:12 pm  
Asr ..... 4:56 pm  
Maghrib ..... 6:51 pm  
Isha ..... 8:21 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

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

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

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

**DEPARTMENTS**

CDA ..... 9221334-43  
CDA ..... 9208301-04  
Met Office ..... 9250360-6  
RDA ..... 5555864  
TMA ..... 5770886  
Cantonment Board ..... 9270151-3  
Islamabad Metropolitan  
Corporation ..... 9209224  
Potohar Town ..... 9209224  
Rawal Town ..... 5773343

**Minister for Communication, Railways, says safety of passenger's top priority**

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: The Federal Minister for Communication, Railways & Maritime, Shahid Ashraf Tarar received briefing on rail-ways service delivery, operational, financial and administrative matters. Secretary / Chairman Railways, Syed Mazhar Ali Shah briefed the Federal Minister.

The Federal Minister said that safety of passengers is the top priority. Train operations should be safe for travelling passengers for which Pakistan Railways should take immediate steps to ensure safety of passengers. All train safety related departments are required to conduct safety audit and assessment immediately. A comprehensive report on identification of gaps, rectifications and recommendations should be submitted within 7 days.

The Federal Minister also said that ML-1 is an important and strategic project of CPEC which will be proactively moved forward for early implementation. Possibility of seeking investment for the Multan-Lahore section of the ML-1 through BOT basis would also be explored.

The Federal Minister also resolved that efforts would be made to focus on strategic initiatives to ensure safe and efficient service delivery besides improving financial health of Pakistan Railways.

**Solangi meets Marriyum Aurangzeb**

*Discusses matters related to Information Ministry*

**Spokesman Report**

RAWALPINDI: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Friday met with former information minister and Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) spokesperson Marriyum Aurangzeb.

During a visit to the residence of former Member National Assembly Tahira Aurangzeb in Rawalpindi, the caretaker information minister discussed with the former information minister the overall situation of the country and the issues related to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Marriyum Aurangzeb congratulated Murtaza Solangi on assuming charge as caretaker information minister.

She prayed for him to successfully perform national responsibility as caretaker information minister. The caretaker information minister Murtaza Solangi also met with the children and family members of Marriyum Aurangzeb.

Murtaza Solangi congratulated former Information Minister Maryam Aurangzeb for running the Information Ministry in the best possible manner during 16 months of the PDM tenure.

Earlier on the arrival, Marriyum Aurangzeb along with her mother Tahira Aurangzeb and other family members welcomed the Caretaker Information Minister Murtaza Solangi and also presented him with a bouquet of flowers.

Murtaza Solangi thanked Tahira Aurangzeb, Marriyum Aurangzeb, Hasan Aurangzeb and other family members for their good wishes and congratulations.



Appreciating Marriyum Aurangzeb, he said that the enactment of the PEMRA (Amendment) Bill 2023 was a manifestation of democratic credentials and consultation skills. Solangi said that he would try to continue the standard of performance that she had established.

Earlier on the arrival, Marriyum Aurangzeb along with her mother Tahira Aurangzeb and other family members welcomed the Caretaker Information Minister Murtaza Solangi and also presented him with a bouquet of flowers. Murtaza Solangi thanked Tahira Aurangzeb, Marriyum Aurangzeb, Hasan Aurangzeb and other family members for their good wishes and congratulations.

**Sugar mafia pushes the country into another crisis**

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) said on Friday that despite the unbearable inflation in the country, the sugar mafia has created a new sugar crisis in the country for the sake of profit.

The influential mafia has increased the price of sugar by ten rupees per kg. Now sugar is available at 160 rupees per kg in urban centres, while it is available for Rs 170 in villages, he said.

In a statement issued here today, Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that the caretaker government should control the sugar mafia from stealing undue profits from the masses, as it can lead to the bankruptcy of many businesses relying on sugar.

He said that the previous government raised a lot of slogans, but at the same time, the sugar mafia was given a free hand.

The present government should completely stop the export and smuggling of sugar so that the price of sugar will be reduced in the market and provide relief to the masses.

Dr. Mughal said that even after adding all the expenses and profits of the sugar mills, wholesalers, and retailers, the price of sugar should not be more than one hundred rupees per kg.

However, the people are being charged sixty rupees more per kg, which has no justification, he observed.

The sugar mafia has stored hundreds of thousands of tonnes of sugar in warehouses for profit, and if a crackdown is launched, its price will drop to one hundred rupees per kg in a day.

He said that the price of steel bars has also been increased up to Rs. 10,000 per tonne, and now it is selling at Rs. 280,000 to Rs. 290,000 per tonne in cities and up to Rs. 300,000 per tonne in rural areas.

The construction activities will be badly affected by this decision; therefore, something needs to be done in this regard, he demanded.

He said that the first two days of the caretaker government have been very heavy on the people as their cost of living has jumped significantly.



**Stand alert**

ISLAMABAD: Police personnel stand guard outside Church at Sector G-7 to counter any unexpected situation in Federal Capital.

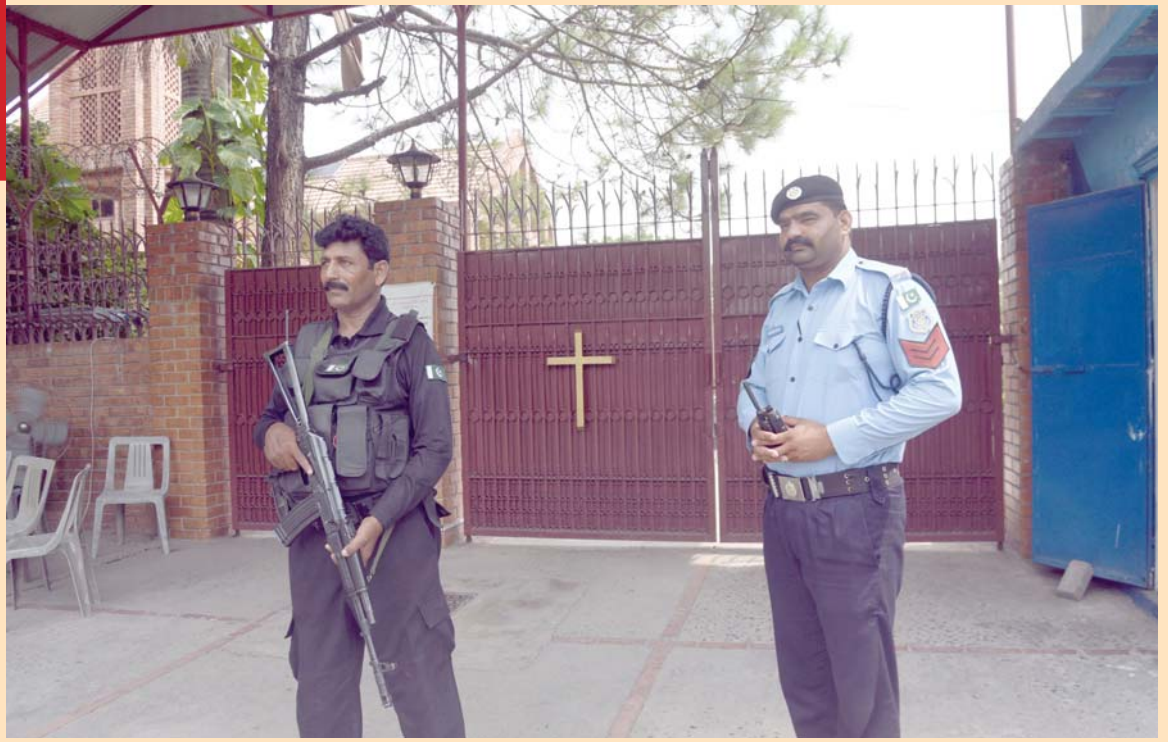


Photo: Online by Raja Farid

**AIOU to disseminate video clips of Seerat books on social media: VC**

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The annual meeting of the Board of Management and Review & Publishing Committee for Seerat un-Nabi Chair was held at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) yesterday. The meeting was presided over by the Head Seerat chair, Prof Dr Sahibzada Sajid Ur Rahman. The meeting presented the review report of the activities organized last year, books and manuscripts for publication and monographs and projects regarding Seerat un-Nabi was also presented. Board also discussed the issues related to the holding of the National Seerat Conference for Rabi-ul-Awwal.

Vice Chancellor AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood was the chief guest of the meeting. He



said that keeping in view the popularity of social media, there is a need to record short clips of Seerat books and disseminate them on social media to connect the young generation with the teachings of Rasool Kareem (SAWW) for reformation of the society. The Vice Chancellor also directed the Management Board of Seerat Chair to instruct the writers to submit a summary or introductory note of the book before writing the book. The committee unanimously approved to

present the manuscripts of 2 out of 9 books to the committee for review.

Dr Sahibzada Sajid ur Rahman said that the mission of the Seerat Chair is to promote the teachings of the Prophet (PBUH) for the guidance of the young generation. He said that one year and five months ago, this Seerat Chair was established in AIOU, and has achieved the set goals very successfully. He said we ensure that the topic for extended lectures, seminars, and conferences

is in accordance with social needs. Muhammad Rafiq Tahir suggested a national Seerat conference be held in Rabiul Awwal. Seerat writers should be invited to respond to those spreading anarchy and unrest like the Jaranwala incident. Qibla Ayaz proposed the topic of Islamophobia for the National Seerat Conference, which was agreed upon.

Other members of the board included Prof. Fateh Muhammad Malik, Prof. Dr Qibla Ayaz, Prof. Dr Shah Mohyuddin Hashmi, Prof. Dr Shah Moinuddin Hashmi, Prof. Dr Muhammad Ilyas, Dr Muhammad Sajjad, Dr Tanveer Anjum, Dr Noor Ahmed Shabtaaz, Dr Syed Azizur Rehman and Dr. while Pirzada Bakhtiar Ahmed, participated online from United Kingdom.

**SECP seeks public consultation on proposed amendments to Listed Companies Regulations**

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), has notified draft amendments to the Listed Companies (Substantial Acquisition of Voting Shares and Takeovers) Regulations, 2017 soliciting public comments.



The proposed amendments are focused on creating a conducive environment for takeover transactions through the acquisition of shares of listed companies in a fair, transparent and competitive manner. As part of SECP's progressive review of regulatory requirements, the subject amendments also address key observations emanating from feedback provided by various stakeholders in relation to prevalent takeover regulatory regime.

The subject amendments provide greater flexibility to the minority shareholders of the target company in exercising their rights, whereby option is being inserted for consideration to such shareholders to be paid either wholly in cash; or if consideration is being offered in the form of securities, the same to be accompanied with a wholly cash alternative. Criteria for securities that can be offered as consideration is being improved, whereby only shares of listed companies, listed debt instruments, and government securities with remaining maturity of maximum 364 days can be offered as consideration during the public offer. The mechanism for valuing the securities to be offered as consideration is also being improved. Moreover, only highly liquid securities would be admissible as security to be furnished to the manager to the offer by the acquirer for performance of obligations under the public offer. Efforts have also been made to ensure that terms already used in the regulations but not previously defined, are properly codified in the definitions section for clarity and to enable consistent interpretation throughout the regulations.

A consultation paper explaining the key considerations in drafting the proposed amendments inclusive of notification of draft amendments to subject regulations has been placed on the SECP website at <https://www.secp.gov.pk/document/consultation-paper-draft-amendments-to-the-listed-companies-substantial-acquisition-of-voting-shares-takeovers-regulations-2017/?vpdmdl=48882&refresh=64df383c84db91692350524>.

Comments can be submitted to the SECP within a period of fourteen days from the date of the notification by emailing at [takeoverfeedback@secp.gov.pk](mailto:takeoverfeedback@secp.gov.pk).

**Delegation of Green Pakistan Party met Javed Intizar**

**PPA**

ISLAMABAD: The delegation of Green Pakistan Party from Balochistan met former independent candidate National Assembly Javed Intizar. Chairman Green Pakistan Party Advocate Abdul Hadi Khan announced the full support of Javed Intizar in the elections. The delegation included Vice Chairman Green Party Dr. Izzatullah Sultan and Prof. Iqbal Khan was also present. In the meeting, the country's economic and political issues of mutual interest were discussed in detail. Thanking him for his support, Javed Intizar said that there was harmony in our thinking and ideology. Is. Choosing the leadership of the poor and middle class in the elections is the best option. Advocate Abdul Hadi Khan said that the Green Pakistan Party wants to bring a soft revolution in the country.

**Business Leaders demand 10-Year Economic Policy to promote business**

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Muhammad Ilyas Khan, Chairman, Sardar Group of Companies and owner of Centaurus Mall Islamabad, said that continuity of economic policies is key for the development of business and investment in any country as it gives confidence to investors and enables business community to make future business plans for expansion, so he demanded that the government should announce at least a 10-year economic policy to promote business and investment activities in Pakistan, which should not be disturbed with the change of a government. He said this while addressing a ceremony organized by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce in his honour to present him as a role model for youth. All the important members of the Sardar family, representatives of market associations, university teachers & students and a large number of the business community

attended the ceremony. Sardar Muhammad Ilyas Khan said that Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan provided free electricity to SMEs for 3 years and issued diplomatic passports to the exporters who made exports of 10 billion, which showed his business-friendly approach. If the business class in Pakistan is given importance in the same manner, the country can soon get off its debt burden and stand on its own feet while the economy can achieve sustainable growth. He said that the LCs issue, high electricity tariff and high interest rate of 22% are the major obstacles in the way of business and investment in Pakistan, so these issues should be addressed soon. He said that doing business in Pakistan in the current circumstances is a jihad, so the government should promote ease of doing business and provide one window facility to investors. He shared his life achievements with the audience and stressed that the youth should work

hard with dedication and honesty to excel in life instead of looking for shortcuts.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, paid rich tribute to Sardar Muhammad Ilyas Khan for his key role in the Pakistan's economy and welfare services. He said that Sardar Muhammad Ilyas Khan was conferred with Sitara-e-Pakistan award by the government, but heroes like him need to be conferred with more honours. He said that Sardar Muhammad Ilyas Khan brought billions of rupees from abroad to invest in Pakistan, which shows his love for the country. He set a new trend by building the Centaurus Mall, which is the icon of Pakistan. He also provided jobs to thousands of Pakistanis in Saudi Arabia who are now sending remittances worth billions of rupees to Pakistan. He urged the youth to take investors like Sardar Muhammad Ilyas Khan as their role model and get full benefit of



his experiences to advance in the field of business.

Mirza Muhammad Afridi, Deputy Chairman Senate, said that Sardar Group of Companies is currently playing an important role in the economy

of Pakistan, which is commendable. He said that the proposals presented by the business community for the improvement of business and investment in today's event will be conveyed to the relevant authorities of the government

for their consideration and implementation.

Faad Waheed, Senior Vice President ICCI, lauded the services of Chairman Sardar Group for promoting businesses and creating jobs in Pakistan and added that such role models should be recognized at the government level that will help attract more FDI.

ICCI Group Leader Khalid Iqbal Malik also paid tribute to Sardar Group's valuable services to the country and demanded that the government formulate all economic policies in consultation with the business community, which would promote industry, trade and investment in the country.

Zafar Bakhtawari, Former President ICCI and Secretary General UBG said that ICCI has organized a ceremony to promote Sardar Muhammad Ilyas Khan as a role model and ICCI would organize more such events to recognize the contribution of eminent businessmen of Pakistan to the economy.

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almas Ayoub Sabir**  
 Vice Chairman: **Asim Nazir Ahmad**  
 Managing Editor: **Naveed Ahmad Khan**  
 Head Editorial Advisory Board: **Amjad Mehmood**  
 Bureau Chief Karachi: **Saleem Zaman Khan.**  
 (mszk786@gmail.com)  
 Bureau Chief Lahore: **Syed Afraz Ali Nazish**  
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)

Islamabad Office: Rose Plaza, I-8 Markaz.  
 Karachi office: Flat No. C.3. A. One Comfort, Block No 11.  
 Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Main Rashid Minhas Road.  
 Lahore Office: 7-E, Samanberh, Johar Town.  
 Email: [spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com](mailto:spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com)  
 Whatsapp: 0346-5008408

# The New Federal Ministers that I know personally-I

In a significant development for Pakistan, a caretaker Cabinet has been sworn in by the President. This diverse assembly, composed of 16 ministers and three advisors, marks a departure from conventional political structures, instead favoring a blend of technocrats, retired bureaucrats, IT experts, business figures, a select few politicians, and eminent individuals. With a prominent mandate to uplift the nation's economic and financial landscape, enhance business appeal, attract trade and investment, and pave the way for forthcoming free and fair elections, this Cabinet's formation heralds a pivotal chapter in Pakistan's journey toward stability and progress.

Mr. Murtaza Solangi, the newly appointed federal minister for the Ministry of Information and Broadcastings, brings a wealth of experience and dedication to his role. A close friend of the former president and co-chairman of the Pakistan People's Party Mr. Asif Ali Zardari, his deep-rooted association with the party underscores his commitment.

With a seasoned background in media, he has proven himself as a diligent worker and held the esteemed position of Director General Pakistan Radio (Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation) in the previous PPP government. I was working at that time as Director media and had frequent interactions with him. I found him a thorough gentleman, an intellectual and the one who has a greater understanding of the country's political

landscape and its complexities. His efforts to enhance the radio's standing were well-received by employees, reflecting his dedication to progress. Serving as an advisor on Media Affairs to the former President and a prominent anchorperson on a national TV network, his analytical insights have earned him recognition as a commentator on both national and international issues.

Mr. Solangi's profound understanding of the media landscape instills optimism that his leadership will yield positive outcomes for the Ministry of Information, broadcasting, and the broader media landscape.

Mr. Jamal Shah, a distinguished artist, sculptor, educationist, and intellectual, has been rightfully appointed as a member of the newly sworn-in cabinet. His deep passion for art and culture in the country has been a driving force throughout his remarkable journey. I had the privilege of a personal connection. He is my city fellow. I was a student in the University of Balochistan in 1983-85 when in collaboration with his former wife, Faryal Gohar, he established an art section at the University.

His elder brother was my colleague when I was news producer in PTV from 1986 to 1991 until I joined superior services of Pakistan. During this peri-

od, Jamal Shah was at the peak of his artistic career.

His serious and contemplative nature, evident even then, has carried forward to his role as Director General of the Pakistan National Council of Arts, where he made significant strides in elevating the arts community which further exemplifies his commitment to nurturing artistic talent.

Later, I witnessed his artistic growth when he was sponsored by the French embassy to explore art and culture in Paris, France—an experience that enriched both his perspective and my own. During my tenure as part of the Pakistan embassy in France, our interactions were frequent, and we even travel together and me as a driver.

He fostered artists of diverse genres, establishing an art gallery in the heart of F9 Park that attracts a steady stream of visitors who revel in the showcased paintings and sculptures.

His altruistic spirit shines as he actively engages in philanthropy, raising funds to aid those affected by both human-made and natural crises. Mr. Jamal Shah's stellar reputation as an artist was solidified through his lead roles in numerous dramas and serials, contributing to their success.

This appointment is a commendation

choice, and I am optimistic that his visionary efforts will bring Pakistan's art and culture onto the international stage with resounding success.

Mr. Saif's appointment as the Federal Minister of Information Technology appears to be a fitting choice, given his impressive track record. His notable contributions in establishing various IT institutions across Punjab, along with his leadership in government process automation, have been revolutionary.

From enhancing sectors like education, agriculture, health, taxation, to innovating land management systems and public services, his initiatives have significantly benefited the public.

His instrumental role in introducing Punjab and Islamabad city applications for mobile and desktop platforms, offering a wide range of services online, showcases his commitment to modernizing citizen services.

Moreover, his success in establishing IT incubation centers and assembling a proficient team of experts has undoubtedly elevated service quality.

My first interaction with Mr. Saif was him as a teacher and me as a student. He conducted a workshop during our training as Senior Management Course in Lahore where we got the chance to interact with this legend personally. During the short workshop he taught the trainees to develop applications on the smartphones and on desktops which further highlight his prowess.

*To be Continued*



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

## Electric rickshaw

In a development for Pakistan's transportation sector, a joint venture between Chinese and Pakistani companies is set to commence production of electric two-wheelers and three-wheelers, commonly known as rickshaws in the country. The collaboration is expected to bring about positive changes in the local market, reducing carbon emissions and promoting eco-friendly transportation options. The joint venture was formed in April by Chinese electric vehicle manufacturer Benling Group, Chinese battery manufacturer Dongjin Group and Pakistani auto company Crown Group to leverage their expertise to introduce cutting-edge electric mobility solutions to the Pakistani market. Two-wheelers and three-wheelers are widely used in Pakistan for public transportation and are a vital part of the country's mobility ecosystem.

By electrifying this segment, the vehicles to be produced here are expected to address the growing demand for efficient and environmentally friendly transportation options in densely populated urban areas, where traffic congestion and air pollution have become major concerns. In a recent interview with China Economic Net, Hu Ge, General Manager of Dongjin Pakistan noted that "it is expected that the first batch of materials, batteries and equipment for the production of electric two-wheelers and three-wheelers will arrive in Pakistan after customs clearance next week. We are excited about the launch of the first batch of electric two-wheelers and three-wheelers manufactured by our joint venture late this month or in early September." With the production facility located in an industrial zone near Karachi, the joint venture partners are committed to ensuring that the electric vehicles produced in Pakistan meet international quality standards.

Batteries are a key component of electric two-wheelers and three-wheelers, affecting their range, performance, environmental impact and overall usability. One of the most important reasons for holding back the development of electric two-wheelers and three-wheelers in Pakistan is the limited technology of local batteries. In this regard, the joint venture has specially designed a battery for Pakistan that is higher than the standard of Chinese electric two-wheelers and three-wheelers to cope with Pakistan's actual road conditions and can achieve a two-year service life. Furthermore, the joint venture aims to create employment opportunities for local communities through the establishment of a supply chain and after-sales service network.

Hu said that "in the process of cooperation, we will continue to transfer the manufacturing technology of electric two-wheeled and three-wheeled vehicles to Pakistan, and gradually realize localized production and expand cooperation with auto-parts companies in the park." "We believe that as the production facility gears up for operations, Pakistani consumers can look forward to a new era of clean, efficient, and affordable transportation options. More and more Sino-Pak joint ventures are set to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of urban mobility in Pakistan and setting a positive example for sustainable transportation globally," concluded Hu.

## Creating Happiness: Art as a Pathway to inner contentment

The definition of happiness is discrete for different people in many facets. We saw many people daily saying that the joy of happiness comes from being wealthy. Young people say that they will be very happy after achieving their dreams or finding their favorite girls while children enjoy their lives by playing games. These are all secondary and changeable sources of happiness. Happiness is an art like a skill of an artist. One's state of mind plays a greater role in determining happiness than external events do. It depends on how we perceive situations. The state of happiness relies on the assertion of satisfaction on what we have in our life.

People claim that they are passing through a lot of suffering. So how can they feel happy in a life full of tensions? It's the game of mind. It depends upon our thinking. There are many kinds of sufferings while some are self-created, natural and so on. We know that many sufferings are inevitable but some are self-created. Humans have three kinds of requisites in their life. The first contains food and shelter and the other is what is expected beyond our primary needs. The third one is what we have learned from our society like running behind marks blindly, having strong feelings of jealousy towards others in all facets etc., which are the kinds of anxiety that are damaging us from our inner selves. We often think about what we will do if this happens or that happens. Supra contemplations are chiefly negative thoughts. In a nutshell, these are the sufferings that we have created with our own hands.

Inevitable natural sufferings are those for which we can do nothing except keep patience. For example, if a child has died and his mother is suffering from intense pain and asking people to help her save her child at any cost, a wise man asked her to help her if she gives him the beans of a plant from a house where no man, woman, child, or servant has died. She ran from house to house but she didn't find a house where no one has died. In a nutshell, everyone has to die. This is a natural process. So remain calm and in your senses to lead a happier life.

Anxiety/nervousness is another evil that kills our happiness many times. Sometimes we feel worried about any uncertain thing that will not even happen in the future or something which is not real. It depends upon how honest we are with ourselves and our abilities. Honesty designs our confident attitude. Motivation with compassion is an antidote to anxiety.

Many students remain worried about the results despite doing hard work. It's the nature of a human. So, don't be worried. Instead of worrying, we should feel good about our

efforts regardless of the outcomes because we have done the best we can. A famous saying that watering the plant is the work of a human and then Allah Almighty will flourish the flowers. Then why should we feel sad? Dalai Lama explains two kinds of remedies: "Firstly, if we have a solution for a problem, there is no need to worry & secondly, if there is no solution there is no sense in worrying either." Instead of worrying, if we stay calm then we shall think more about solving the problem. By using the method of Henry Kissinger for solving the problem, we will find the solution and in a nutshell, happiness because avoidance of problems is not a solution. We should evolve a preventative approach.

Anger and rage are commonly vicious acts that destroy our pleasure. They affect our cardiovascular system badly and cause high blood pressure and damage cholesterol levels. In summary, we should eradicate all negative states of mind. Hatred is like an escalating disease. People have strange feelings of hatred towards each other. Sometimes we hate anyone due to his/her annoying behavior. But how will you feel if you remain calm? Let's find a solution to this problem. Imagine that your best mate/friend is annoying you due to any reason. You will see the negative effects of such behavior not only on yourself but also on him too. Such supra inner feelings of hatred will affect you badly. Now, you will understand what you will lose if you do not remain calm. And by adopting this behavior continuously, you will feel pleasure and happiness in the end.

Training of the mind is an essential key tool for compassion and intimacy. Trying to remain calm in every critical and difficult situation is the basic fundamental rule of this technique. This technique helps us unanimously to achieve the rapture of happiness but it needs incessant replication of this technique. It will be effective when you become more regular with it. In brief, the happiness of life depends on our thinking. It depends on what we think which is either positive or negative.

Let's explain it with a common example like a glass half filled with water and we are thinking that OMG! Why is it half-filled? I have nothing. Basically, it is the negative thinking that makes us sad every day. Now, if we think that I am gifted by Allah Almighty who has bestowed this blessing on me. The glass is half-filled and not empty. I am very happy & almost lucky about this. A famous saying is that "A man is troubled by his thoughts and not by circumstances." Moreover, Allah says in Quran "If you thank me, I will give you more."

*The Writer is student at law college 9th semester, University of Sargodha.*



Analysis

Muhammad Kamran Danish

## Pakistan's great shift to minerals: The gold in our dust

The world's axis has shifted, a geological event that warrants worry – beckoning humanity to contribute towards the stability of the planet. Within that vein, three significant changes in Pakistan have brought in a much-needed shift – a formative approach to enable this country of 240 million people to move towards prosperity.

These changes have come about as empowered initiatives for the development of trust in the country's potential. All three have come silently and herald good times for Pakistan.

The first is the establishment of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) and its role as a one window of facilitation for investors. They have proactively galvanized dormant projects and have initiated many new ventures. They seem well-positioned to bring Pakistan back on the map as a strong potential hub for Middle East and Chinese business interests.

The second event is the Pakistan Minerals Summit in Islamabad, held earlier this month. Mining is part of the five areas of development on SIFC's agenda and the Summit proved to be a great start to turning 'dust to development', with a focus on Reko Diq as it possesses almost \$6 trillion worth of potential.

SIFC's vision is clear and fast paced. The proactive and focused contribution of army chief General Asim Munir has enhanced investment opportunities. However, I have two primary concerns; one for the civil elected leadership to become competent partners in the overall investment climate, and the second for the downstream industries for minerals, so that we can look at a future where we may hold onto our gold dust and trade in finished products, for a bigger profit margin and stronger control of our resources.

The third event, is the appointment of Senator Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar as Pakistan's caretaker Prime Minister. He is well-educated, humble and a true visionary, representing the golden sands of the largest province of Pakistan. With Senator Kakar at the helm of affairs as the interim Prime Minister, Balochistan's prospects could get translated into expedited development via support for investors in mining and minerals.

Balochistan represents almost 44% of Pakistan's land. As part of the rich Tethyan Metallogenic Belt (TMB), it literally holds gold in its dust. This rich mineral reserve stretches all the way to the North before entering China, endowing Pakistan with trillions of dollars' worth of minerals.

The Pakistan Minerals Summit constitutes a consolidated step towards translating Pakistan's mining potential into actionable strategies. It brings the much-awaited collaboration of Barrick (Barrick Gold Corporation) and the Saudi govern-

ment with the Pakistan government. And with the caretaker Prime Minister Kakar in office, we can look at Balochistan becoming a major conduit for Pakistan's success.

Mark Bristow, CEO at Barrick Gold, in frank conversation, has acknowledged the rich prospects of Balochistan, quoting Lewis Carol's 'If you don't know where you are going, any road will do' as a wake-up call to realize our mining potential and the need for socio-political dynamics to synchronize with the development requirements of the mining industry.

As Minister of State and Chairman Board of Investment, I had many meetings with the honorable Khalid Al-Falih, Minister of Investment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). We are fortunate to count him as one of the most ardent friends of Pakistan. Time and again, I was honored to communicate his keen interest for partnership with Barrick in Reko Diq to all stakeholders in Pakistan, and played a strong role in the developing landscape of FDI.

Engineer Khalid bin Saleh Al-Mudaifer, Vice-Minister of Mining Affairs, Ministry of Industry & Mineral Resources,

KSA, was at the Pakistan Minerals Summit earlier this month, representing Saudi interests as collaborators for the Reko Diq mining project and I felt grateful to see the idea come to fruition. Jacques Van Tonder, Chief Development Officer, Rio Tinto, mirrored my thoughts when he referred to his life in South Africa and mining dust being in his veins. He referred to the Oyu Tolgoi in the South Gobi region of Mongolia as one of the largest known copper and gold deposits in the world and compared Reko Diq as an equally powerful medium to change the prospects of Pakistan.

With good examples like that of Thar Coal, and the signed deal for the ARAMCO Project, we are witnessing how rising concerns over investments vs. imports are spurring investments to help bring the world to sustainable dynamics. We are, as yet, not strongly positioned in this equation of transition, but we can be.

The shift has given me hope. Pakistan, in the last few months, faced the most critical of hours with default on the horizon and instability across the landscape. Devaluation was not just of the currency; it was of the morale of the nation.

Now, the stakeholders must ensure that no repeat of judicial intervention occurs as it did in the past, costing Pakistan billions of dollars. At the end of the day, money can be made again, but lost years of probable happiness and growth can never be compensated. The cost that Pakistan paid was worth more than its weight in any gold scattered in its dust.

*The writer is a former Minister of State and Chairman Board of Investment. He can be reached at @MAzfar-Ah-san (Courtesy Arab News)*

# Xi encourages faculty, students to contribute to China-South Africa friendship, cooperation

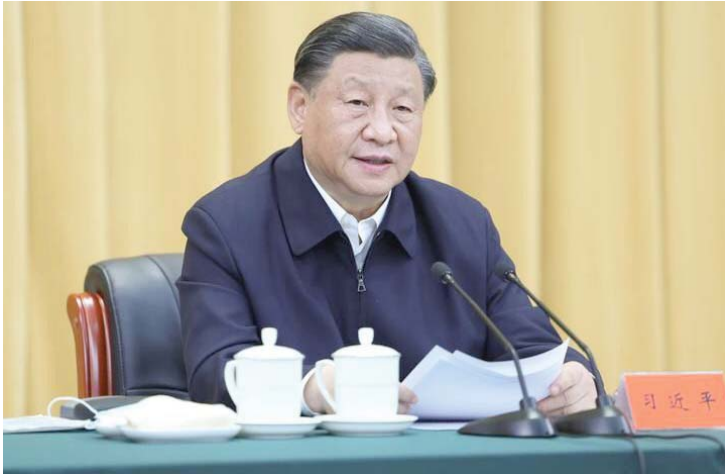
Xinhua

**BELJING:** In reply to a letter from the faculty and students of the Confucius Institute at Durban University of Technology in South Africa, Chinese President Xi Jinping encouraged them to learn the Chinese language well and contribute to carrying forward the China-South Africa friendship and promoting friendly cooperation between the two countries.

In his letter, Xi said that he witnessed the establishment of the Confucius institute 10 years ago and was pleased to see that, through the joint efforts of both sides, the educational and cultural exchanges between the two countries have yielded fruitful results.

A multitude of South African youths have got a glimpse of China's history and culture, increased their career options, and realized their dreams by learning Chinese, he said.

Both important developing countries, China and South Africa have



forged a special comradely fraternal friendship. Learning and understanding each other's language and culture contributes to facilitating mutual understanding and cultivating ever-lasting friendship between the people of the two countries, said the

Chinese president.

While having a good command of the Chinese language, the teachers and students are welcome to visit China more often and have a deeper understanding of China, share a true, multi-dimensional and panoramic

view of China with more friends, and strive to be envoys for inheriting and developing the friendship between the two countries, so as to contribute to promoting China-Africa friendship and cooperation and building a community with a shared future for mankind, Xi said.

During his visit to South Africa in March 2013, Xi witnessed the signing of an agreement on the joint establishment of the Confucius Institute at Durban University of Technology between China and South Africa.

Since its establishment 10 years ago, the institute has trained nearly 10,000 students. Fifty teachers and students of the institute have lately written a joint letter to Xi, sharing their experience, harvest and feelings in learning Chinese, thanking Xi and the Chinese government for providing more opportunities for African youths to pursue their dreams, and, with eager anticipation, looking forward to Xi's visit to South Africa again.

*IRC reflects urgent need and action to safeguard vulnerable people*



PPA

**ISLAMABAD:** On the occasion of World Humanitarian Day, Shabnam Baloch, the dedicated Country Director of the International Rescue Committee (IRC), sheds light on the organization's profound commitment to global humanitarian endeavors.

In commemoration of World Humanitarian Day's significance, Shabnam Baloch emphasized her aspiration to honor the unwavering dedication of aid workers who persevere through even the most challenging circumstances in the world's harshest areas, exhibiting unparalleled commitment.

With a global legacy spanning 90 years and a steadfast presence in Pakistan for four decades, IRC has stood resilient in the face of numerous challenges, including the 2005 earthquake, the floods of 2011 and 2012, the intermittent heatwaves, and the overarching Afghan refugee crisis. Throughout these trials, IRC's steadfast dedication has remained resolute.

Highlighting the paramount importance of female aid workers, Shabnam Baloch addressed the obstacles they encounter. Given the substantial impact of natural disasters on women and children, she stressed the indispensable role of female aid workers who surmount various hurdles to reach those in need.

Among IRC's emotionally resonant projects, one that is particularly close to Ms. Baloch's heart is the protection of Afghan refugee women. Their plight underscores the organization's ongoing commitment to safeguarding the most vulnerable.

Ms. Shabnam Baloch's message to the world is compelling: "Every World Humanitarian Day, IRC renews its vow to shield and support those affected by adversity. However, the escalating statistics each year underscore the urgent need for collective action. It's imperative that we unite, fortify our efforts, and stand as unwavering pillars of support for those in dire need."

## Caretaker Finance Minister Chairs A Meeting to Review Revenue Collection Performance of FBR



Spokesman Report

**ISLAMABAD:** Newly appointed Caretaker Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Shamshad Akhtar visited the Federal Board of Revenue Headquarters today and held a meeting with Chairman FBR Malik Amjed Zubair Tiwana and Members of the Board to review revenue collection performance of FBR. Secretary Finance Mr. Imdad Ullah Bosal and senior officers from FBR and Finance Ministry were also present.

During the meeting, Chairman FBR gave a detailed presentation to the Minister about the revenue collection performance of FBR including the assigned targets for the current financial year 2023-24 and the strategy to achieve them. He informed that FBR was able to collect Rs. 7169 Billion against a target of Rs. 7200 Billion in the previous financial year. The Chairman further apprised that all efforts will be made to meet this year's collection target of Rs. 9415 Billion.

Chairman FBR also informed the caretaker Minister about the procedural improvements being made to simplify the process of paying taxes in order to facilitate the taxpayers. He also gave an update on important initiatives of FBR including Broadening of Tax Base, Track and Trace System and Point of Sale System whereby efforts are afoot to further enhance revenue generation.

The caretaker Finance Minister emphasized on devising strategies to further enhance tax-to-GDP ratio and broaden the tax base to maximize revenue collection. She also called for finding innovative ways to tax the untaxed sectors. The Minister stressed on making all-out efforts to achieve the ongoing year's revenue collection target.

## Pak-UK friendship

**ISLAMABAD:** UK HC Jane Marriott called on FM Jalil Abbas Jilani today. The Minister of Foreign Affairs welcomed her to Pakistan. They discussed ways to enhance bilateral cooperation in trade, investment, climate change & people-to-people contacts to further deepen Pak-UK friendship.



## Ahsan Mughal met to president of Punjab Pardical Party in Jail



Sohail Anjum Malik

**LAHORE:** According to the details, today a three-member delegation of the National Union of Journalists met Muhammad Arshad Butt, president of District Jail Lahore, Punjab Paramedical Staff Association. A case was registered against him under other charges including benami property, after which, while rejecting the request of physical remand on behalf of anti-corruption, Muhammad Arshad Butt was transferred to District Jail Lahore on judicial remand by the Court. According to further details, today a three-member delegation led by National Union of Journalists Central Chairman Muhammad Ahsan Mughal met Muhammad Arshad Butt in District Jail Lahore.

# Khurrum Ashfaq appointed CEO of Telenor Pakistan

PPA

**ISLAMABAD:** The Board of Directors of Telenor Pakistan has appointed Khurrum Ashfaq as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the company. He will succeed Irfan Wahab Khan, who will take a new role as Senior Vice President (SVP) in Telenor Asia. Irfan will continue as Chair of the Board of Directors in Telenor Microfinance Bank (TMB). The appointment is effective from 15 September 2023.

Khurrum comes from the position of Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Telenor Pakistan. He has been with the company for 17 years and has played a key role in repositioning Telenor Pakistan as



a strong and efficient company geared for the future.

"I am pleased to see Khurrum stepping up and take the CEO role. His understanding of the company and the Pakistani telecom market is unmatched, and I am confident that he will continue the company's momentum



and bring perspectives that drive operational excellence, empower the organisation and deliver value to customers. I welcome Irfan to the Telenor Asia leadership team in Singapore and am pleased that Telenor will continue to gain from his vast leadership experience," says Jorgen A. Rostrup, Head

of Telenor Asia and Chair of the Board of Telenor Pakistan. "It's an honour to take on the role of CEO of Telenor Pakistan. Irfan leaves behind a legacy of innovation and growth, and I am committed to building upon that foundation. As we navigate the evolving telecommunications landscape, my focus will be on empowering our customers and driving digital transformation. Together with our dedicated team, I am confident that we will continue to deliver exceptional services and contribute to Pakistan's digital future," says Khurrum Ashfaq, appointed CEO of Telenor Pakistan.

Commenting on the transition, Irfan Wahab Khan

shared, "It has been an incredible journey leading Telenor Pakistan, one marked by dedication, innovation, and the unwavering commitment of our exceptional team. As I move on from this role, I am filled with a profound sense of gratitude. Telenor Pakistan, its people, and the communities we serve will forever hold a special place in my heart. I wish Khurrum the best in his new role and am assured that under his leadership our teams will continue to empower the communities, drive positive change and impact lives. I am excited and looking forward to contribute to Telenor's broader regional ambitions with my experiences and insights."

# Sri Lankan expert cultivates mushroom passion in Yunnan

Xinhua

**KUNMING:** Surrounded by a sprawling forested expanse at Qujing Normal University in southwest China's Yunnan Province, Samantha Chandranath Karunarathna, accompanied by his group of research students, crouched to gather wild mushrooms.

Karunarathna, a professor in the school of biological resources and food engineering at the university, hails from Kandy, the second-largest city in Sri Lanka. His early fascination with the myriad mushrooms thriving at the Peradeniya Royal Botanic Gardens in his hometown nurtured his dream of becoming a mushroom expert.

Following his passion, Karunarathna came to the wild

mushroom paradise of Yunnan in 2012. The province boasts a diversity of approximately 900 wild edible mushroom species, constituting about 90 percent of China's total wild edible mushroom varieties.

After spending over a decade in Yunnan, Karunarathna playfully describes himself as "a mushroom born in Sri Lanka and grown in Yunnan."

Karunarathna's journey to Yunnan began when he undertook his postdoctoral research at the Kunming Institute of Botany, Chinese Academy of Sciences. His research primarily delved into the classification, evolutionary biology, and domestication of edible fungi.

In a bid to further understand Yunnan's wild mushrooms, he once ventured into Xishuangbanna,

spending three consecutive months traversing its mountains and forests, gathering wild mushrooms for research purposes.

"Those were unforgettable times that made me determined to stay in Yunnan for fungal research," Karunarathna said, adding that his knowledge of wild mushrooms has substantially enriched since his arrival in Yunnan.

Before assuming his role at Qujing Normal University, Karunarathna had never visited Qujing. However, he soon adapted thanks to the abundant biodiversity he found on campus.

"Both toxic and edible mushrooms thrive here on campus, and it's very satisfying to see that," Karunarathna said. This diversity augments fungal research, as identifying various species

lays the foundation for comprehensive analyses in subsequent studies.

At the university, he leads expeditions accompanied by students to classify, study, and photograph these fungal treasures. Expedition members also conduct microscopic examinations to unveil the fungi's intricate structures, followed by DNA extraction for phylogenetic analysis. These observations ultimately determine whether a new species has been unearthed.

"Local residents have been incredibly friendly, and I've learned a great deal from them," Karunarathna said. For example, he learned from the locals to line baskets with leaves to maintain the freshness of harvested mushrooms. This practice hinders rapid moisture evaporation,



preserving the mushrooms' quality.

Karunarathna's enthusiasm goes beyond research. He also aspires to publish a comprehen-

sive wild mushroom guidebook. With Yunnan's locals often falling prey to toxic varieties, the Sri Lankan expert aims to reduce the number of poisoning incidents by

educating the public about safe consumption.

Having integrated into Yunnan's way of life, Karunarathna perceives the province's cultural diversity as being as rich and intricate as its mushroom species. Yunnan's wild mushroom culinary culture has also captivated him.

During mushroom harvesting season, Karunarathna and his students often unwind by dining at local wild mushroom restaurants near the university after a day of intensive work. Karunarathna's personal favorite is wild mushroom hotpot.

"There's no place on earth more suited for my fungal research than Yunnan," Karunarathna said, acknowledging the province's unrivaled richness in mushroom varieties.

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

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
48,218.49	48,325.84
Day's High	Day's Low:
48,615.14	48,196.18
Index Value	Change
8,813,173,373	-107.35
Percentage	Time
-0.22%	18 Aug, 2023 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,262.43	-47.78
Percentage	Time
-0.65%	18 Aug, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
34,495.02	+20.19
Percentage	Time
+0.059%	18 Aug, 2:05 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
31,450.76	-175.24
Percentage	Time
-0.55%	18 Aug, 3:15 pm GMT+9

**Open Market Forex Rates**

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	200	202
Bahrain Dinar	784.55	792.55
Canadian Dollar	224.8	227
China Yuan	39.83	40.23
Danish Krone	42.5	42.9
Euro	327.5	330.5
Hong Kong Dollar	37.67	38.02
Indian Rupee	3.48	3.59
Japanese Yen	2.02	2.1
Kuwaiti Dinar	958.62	967.62
Malaysian Ringgit	63.71	64.31
New Zealand \$	173.22	175.22
Norwegians Krone	27.61	27.91
Omani Riyal	752.76	760.76
Qatari Riyal	79.62	80.32
Saudi Riyal	80.1	80.9
Singapore Dollar	215	217
Swedish Korona	26.74	27.04
Swiss Franc	335.71	338.21
Thai Bhat	8.19	8.34
U. A.E Dirham	83.1	83.9
UK Pound Sterling	382	385.8
US Dollar	301.5	303.8

# Mian Zahid Hussain hails caretaker cabinet, says it will bring about needed reforms

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Friday welcomed the caretaker federal cabinet and said that the cabinet consists of reputed and capable people.

Finance Minister Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, who is a world-renowned economist, will be dealing with the IMF, resolving debt problems, trying to keep the exchange rate in balance, reducing interest rates, and taming inflation, which will be a challenge, he said.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that due to the sharp increase in fuel prices and the devaluation of the rupee, inflation is increasing instead of decreasing. Without reducing inflation, it is impossible to cut interest rates.

Talking to the business community, the veter-

an business leader said that interest rates are being heavily relied upon to reduce inflation while administrative and other measures are being ignored, due to which these efforts are not succeeding.

Inflation can be reduced by administrative measures, after which it will be possible to reduce the interest rate, which will improve the condition of the economy and allow the government to pay less interest on the payment of local debts, he said.

The business leader said that the government will benefit from the expertise of Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Dr. Waqar Masood, who is a seasoned and well-known practising economist.

He said that the price of oil in the international market is increasing because of the reduction in production by OPEC, due to which the government also has to increase the price of oil, which is increasing inflation.



To remedy this, Pakistan will have to increase the share of renewable energy in its energy mix while giving more concessions to electric automobiles. On the other hand, the tax collection system is also very weak; except for the salaried and the industrial sector, no one is ready to pay taxes. In Pakistan, 4000 billion rupees of tax is

evaded annually, therefore, the government has to collect indirect tax, which affects the poor.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the caretaker Finance Minister will have to immediately manage a huge amount of foreign exchange so that there is no obstacle in the payment of loans and interest, while caretaker Commerce Minister Dr. Gohra Ijaz, who is a popular figure in the business community, must attract domestic and foreign investors to invest in Pakistan.

He is facing tasks like increasing production, exports, investment, improving investment laws and climate, and reducing business costs.

In this regard, the Special Investment Facilitation Council can prove to be a game-changer. Apart from this, there should be meaningful reforms in the power sector, and the government should get rid of state-run companies that are wasting one trillion rupees annually as all efforts to improve their performance in the last several decades have failed.

## Welcome

Secretary/Chairman Railways is welcoming the caretaker Federal Minister for Railways, Capitan (R) Shahid Ashraf Tarar at Ministry of Railways on Friday.



## Aftab Engineering Services achieves significant success in UAE as it weathers tough times



**Spokesman Report**

KAACHI: Syed Muhammad Masood COO said Aftab Engineering Services, with over 40 years of experience in designing, developing, and manufacturing sheet metal parts for the automotive and consumer electronics industries, has faced its most challenging period over the past 16 months. The business has encountered significant difficulties due to various geopolitical and economic factors. To weather this adversity, we strategically expanded our marketing efforts into the international market.

Our perseverance has yielded positive results, highlighted by a significant achievement. We recently secured an order for 6 customized Hydraulic Punching and Clinching Machines from the UAE. Our dedicated engineering team worked tirelessly to fulfill this order, and we are pleased to announce that the machines were successfully shipped last week. This achievement stands as a pivotal moment amidst the otherwise uncertain business landscape. We are optimistic that this success will pave the way for further similar orders in the near future.

## Board of Revenue Balochistan selects PTCL Smart Cloud for E-Stamping Project

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) and Board of Revenue Balochistan have signed an agreement for provisioning of IaaS Smart Cloud Services at PTCL's Tier-III Data Center for Land Record Management System (LRMS) and Fiber Optic Connectivity at Facilitation Centers at different districts of the province.

Zarrar Hasham Khan, Group Chief Business Solutions Officer, PTCL and Roshan Ali Sheikh Senior Member, Board of Revenue Balochistan signed the agreement at a special ceremony of "Balochistan E-Stamping Project (Energized by PTCL Smart Cloud) and Revenue Sahooleyat Center Quetta (Board of Revenue Balochistan); recently held at Quetta Club, Quetta Cantt Balochistan.

Bank of Punjab as a collection agent partner and Systems Limited as Technology Partner were also present at the ceremony.

While addressing to the ceremony Zarrar Hasham Khan,



Group Chief Business Solutions Officer, said "Today is an important day for the people of Balochistan. PTCL is proud to be the important pillar of this digital transformation and Modern technology adaptation by providing Smart Cloud solution in PTCL's Tier III Data Center facility and fastest Internet and data connectivity through its Fiber Optic network in Gwadar, Quetta and far-flung areas across the province. He further added that This project will be the largest database of Balochistan. With the support of Balochistan government, this project will be expanded across the province. PTCL Will continue to play role in the development and better of Balochistan."

Senior Member Board of Revenue, Roshan Ali Sheikh, said, "Inauguration of Balochistan E-Stamping Project and

Facility Center Quetta is a historic initiative of government. The launch of e-stamping will be a big success, a substantial boost to revenue. Digital technology will stop tax collection leakages and ease the public. These projects will create transparency, accountability and maximum level of paperless environment. Effective revenue collection from e-stamping will generate 2 billion revenues. Now in just 15 minutes land record will be available with scan code. With the implementation of Land Record Information Management System, the Revenue Department is on the path of development."

The ceremony was attended by several dignities from different departments and institutions such as Brig. Rafique. Mr. Hamza Shafiqat - Secretary Information. Dr. Khalid Hafeez - VC Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences. Syed Zafar Ali Bukhari - Secretary Excise and Taxation Balochistan. Brig. Wajahat. Farid Khan - BOP. Mr. Khalid Saeed - CEO R2V, etc.

## NBP Pilot Launch of BISP Social Protection Accounts to Empower Women in Pakistan

**Spokesman Report**

KARACHI: The National Bank of Pakistan is dedicated to promoting social and economic progress and is proud to contribute to the pilot launch of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Social Protection Account Opening initiative. The "Benazir Social Protection Account" was recently launched by the Prime Minister of Pakistan, enabling beneficiary women to receive payments directly in their accounts. It is designed to empower women throughout Pakistan by providing them greater access to banking services and promoting financial inclusion. By part-

nering with SBP and BISP, NBP is committed to revolutionizing how women can access financial resources, contributing to their overall empowerment and success.

NBP is leading the pilot initiative and reached a significant milestone in its ongoing efforts to establish a digital financial ecosystem and promote gender equality by launching a pilot phase initiative. This initiative aims to eliminate the challenges faced by women in remote areas and provide them with opportunities to become financially self-sufficient and actively participate in the formal economy.

The BISP Social Protection Accounts pilot phase has commenced in select regions, and its success will



determine its nationwide expansion. To facilitate the program's seamless implementation, the SEVP GC Operations, GC Digital Banking, GC IT, and GC Compliance are collaborating with BISP executives to visit NBP

branches and meet beneficiaries. Through this effort, NBP demonstrates its commitment to promoting financial inclusion, empowering women, and supporting the government's developmental objectives.

Commenting on the pilot launch, Mr. Imran Farooqui, SEVP/Group Chief Operations, stated, "We are thrilled to partner with SBP and BISP in launching the Social Protection Account initiative, which aims to equip women with the tools and resources they need to secure their financial futures. Leveraging cutting-edge technology, financial education, and targeted support, we are committed to empowering women and fostering sustainable development in the communities we serve. Our focus on reducing gender inequality in financial services aligns with the vision of SBP and BISP, and we are proud to support their efforts to drive positive change."

## Progressive Group for Energy Reforms

**News Desk**

LAHORE: The Progressive Group has called for the immediate introduction of reforms in the energy sector to make it available for domestic, commercial and industrial usage at affordable rates and its production in the required amount.

It said that expensive energy and POL prices were not only making life miserable for domestic consumers but it was also rendering our manufacturing sector incompatible with the international market by increasing its input cost.

Progressive Group's central leader and LCCI Executive Committee member Muhammad Ejaz Tanveer in a statement issued here Friday said that all the political parties should make the introduction of reforms in the energy sector as part of their election manifesto and a top agenda of their list of preferences. Similarly, he said that the present interim government should also pay attention towards it.

Ejaz Tanveer suggested that the government should work on the promotion of renewable energy on a war footing to produce electricity according to domestic and commercial requirements. He advocated for extending incentives to the private sector and making it easier for it to set up solar or wind power electricity production plants.

Ejaz also voiced for review of the IPP policy and also revision of the old contracts to bring down the energy prices thus making life easier for the domestic, commercial and industrial sectors. He said cheaper electricity was also of utmost essential for the agricultural tube wells.

He asked for encouraging domestic consumers to get solar installed on their houses. For this purpose, he suggested legislation and facilitating the citizen to get green meters and solar panels etc. He also suggested promoting pre-paid meters and giving the electricity distribution system in private-public partnerships to control the pilferage as well as recovery of the dues from all the consumers.

# Punjab government assures PCB of infallible arrangements for Asia Cup

Sports Desk

LAHORE: The Chief Secretary and Ministers of the caretaker Punjab government, on Friday, assured the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) representatives of infallible arrangements for the upcoming Asia Cup matches in Lahore and Multan.

PCB management committee chairman Zaka Ashraf along with PCB officials met the representatives of Punjab's caretaker government including the adviser to caretaker CM Punjab, Wahab Riaz, at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Lahore.

During the meeting, both parties assured to provide the best facilities to the cricket fans during ACC Asia Cup matches to be held in Multan and Lahore.

Punjab government as well as PCB expressed their commitment to provide the fans with the best yet smooth security arrangements so that they can enjoy the game at their best.

The meeting took place in an excellent environment and both sides ensured to resolve all the past issues amicably. It was also decided that a new mechanism should be formed to make sure that future affairs must be conducted smoothly.



Notably, during Najam Sethi's tenure earlier in the year, a deadlock emerged between the PCB and the caretaker Punjab government over the Pakistan Super League (PSL) season eight's Lahore and Rawalpindi leg security

expenditures. The Punjab government demanded PCB pay off PKR 500m to make security arrangements for the second leg of the ongoing extravaganza. At the same time, the cricket board was adamant about not paying the stipulated sum. This year's Asia Cup will kick off with host Pakistan taking on Nepal in the

curtain raiser on August 30 in Multan.

Pakistan will host a total of four matches including a Super 4s fixture.

India's group stage matches including the anticipated clash against Pakistan, scheduled on September 2, will be held in Kandy while the rest of the Super 4s matches, including the final will be played in Colombo.

The arch-rivals Pakistan and India will come face to face again on September 10 in Colombo if both manage to qualify for the Super 4s.

The upcoming edition of the Asia Cup features six teams, divided into two groups, the top two teams from each group will then qualify for the Super 4s. The continental event will run from August 31 to September 17.

Hosts Pakistan are placed in the same group as arch-rivals India and Nepal while the other group includes defending champions and co-hosts Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

The Asia Cup 2023 will be played in the ODI format and will serve as an opportunity for the Asian teams to bolster their preparations for the upcoming ICC Men's World Cup.

## Nahida Khan appointed as a Manager for Pakistan Women's Cricket Team: PCB



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Former international cricketer Nahida Khan has been appointed as the manager of Pakistan women's team for the forthcoming South Africa women's series, which is set to commence in Karachi from 1 September. Nahida has been appointed for the South Africa series only, while Ayesha Ashhar will return as the team manager for Asian Games.

36-year-old Nahida, who represented Pakistan in 120 matches, scored 2,014 runs and took one wicket, retired from international cricket in June this year. In a brief coaching stint, Nahida worked as the assistant coach of Blasters in the Pakistan Cup Women's Cricket Tournament held in Karachi from 19 May to 4 June. Previously, she deputised head coach Taufiq Umar's Amazons side, which won the Women's League exhibition matches 2-1 against Super Women in March.

In the team management, Nahida will be joined by another former international cricketer Kamran Hussain, who will replace Saleem Jaffar as bowling coach. Mauhthashim Rashid, who had previously worked as head coach of the women's team, is named interim head coach of the national side for South Africa and Asian Games after Mark Coles resigned from the post last week.

Player support personnel: Nahida Khan (manager), Mauhthashim Rashid (interim head coach), Kamran Hussain (bowling coach), Taufiq Umar (batting coach), Muhammad Asfand Yar (strength and conditioning coach), Zubair Ahmed (analyst), Rifat Asghar Gill (physiotherapist).

## Abdullah, Nauman, Ahmad move in Asian Jr Squash C'ship semis

A Sports

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Abdullah Nawaz, Nauman Khan and Ahmad Khalil have moved to the semifinals of the Asian Junior Individual Squash Championship, 2023 at Dalian, China. In the quarterfinal played on Friday, in Under 17, Abdullah Nawaz (Pakistan) beat Xia Ding Jun (Hong Kong) by 11/3, 10/12, 8/11, 11/6, 12/10. In Under 13, Nauman Khan defeated Yelvanthan (Malaysian) by 11/4, 11/6, and 11/3 while Ahmad Khalil outplayed Aryaman Singh (India) by 4/11, 11/8, 11/2, and 11/5. However, in Under 15, Ibrahim Zeb (Pakistan) lost to Aryavan deevan (India) by 8/11, 10/12, 9/11.

## Hasan Ali undergoes finger surgery during LPL

A Sports

Right-arm pacer Hasan Ali, underwent surgery on his finger after he suffered an injury while playing for Dambulla Aura in the Lanka Premier League (LPL) playoff game against Galle Titans.



Hasan Ali managed to bowl three overs and pick a solitary wicket of Tabraiz Shamsi while nursing a finger injury.

However, the injury brought an end to Hasan Ali's journey in the ongoing edition of LPL, as he won't be able to participate in the final of LPL.

Hasan shared the news on his official account on the social media platform X (formerly known as Twitter).

"Saddened to share that I suffered a finger injury during our qualifier yesterday and had to go through a surgery for it. A pretty unfortunate end to a great tournament for me personally however will like to look at the positives and thank my team management and medical staff for looking after me. Big thank you to all the fans for supporting me and would now request you all to pray for my recovery," he posted.

Hasan Ali picked up eight wickets at an astonishing average of 16.12 in the five games he played this season.

His team Dambulla Aura thumped Galle Titans in the first playoff game by seven wickets, thanks to Kusal Perera's half-century and Hayden Kerr's three-for, to qualify for the final against the winners of Qualifier 2, to be played tomorrow.

Qualifier 2 will see B-Love Kandy square off against Galle Titans to secure a spot in the final against Dambulla Aura.

B-Love Kandy thrashed defending LPL champions Jaffna Kings in the Eliminator yesterday, as captain Wanindu Hasaranga spun the web around Jaffna King's batting line to return with match-winning figures of 6-9.

He claimed the first five-wicket haul in this year's LPL and the best-ever bowling figures in the league's history.

## Sports Board Punjab will continue to support exciting games

Tahir Amin Malik

Director General Sports Punjab Dr Asif Tufail said that the game of pentathlon is getting rapid acceptance among the younger generation of the country and Sports Board Punjab will continue to support exciting games like pentathlon.

Director General Sports Punjab Dr Asif Tufail expressed these views while addressing the prize distribution ceremony of Global Laser Run City Tour 2023 competitions organized by Pakistan Modern Pentathlon Federation (PMPF) in collaboration with Sports Board Punjab (SBP) at Punjab Stadium on Thursday night.

Former Commissioner Lahore and Chairman PMPF Zulfiqar Ghuman,

Deputy Secretary Sports Liaqat Ali, Assistant Director Kamal Ahmed, Vice-President PMPF Tariq Rashid, Finance Secretary PMPF Amir Shah, Amir Khan, SBP Sports Consultant Hafeez Bhatti were also present on this occasion.

Director General Sports Punjab Dr Asif Tufail also witnessed the thrilling running and shooting competitions. He was the chief guest at the prize distribution ceremony where he along with Former Commissioner Lahore and Chairman PMPF Zulfiqar Ghuman and Vice-President PMPF Tariq Rashid distributed prizes among the top performers of running and shooting competitions.

As many as 290 boys and girls from different schools and colleges participated in

the Global Laser Run City Tour running and shooting competitions.

Director General Sports Punjab Dr Asif Tufail said that it is quite heartening to see wonderful performances of young boys and girls in running and shooting events. Pentathlon is a modern sport and Sports Board Punjab is utilising all resources to promote this game among the young generation of Pakistan. "We are quite upbeat to find several talented male and female players through Global Laser Run City Tour running and shooting competitions," he added.

Following are results:  
U-8 girls:  
1st. Mariam Hussain, 2nd. Sania, 3rd. Sehar Bano  
U-9 boys:  
1st. Atta, 2nd. Arif Ali,

3rd. Mehboob  
U-10 boys:  
1st. Shahzaib, 2nd. Shahzad, 3rd. Munir  
U-12 boys:  
1st. M Subhan Zahoor, 2nd. M Hussain, 3rd. Asim Inam

U-14 boys:  
1st. Shakir Ali, 2nd. Arslan Nawaz, 3rd. M Ehsan  
U-14 girls:  
1st. Abida, 2nd. Hadia, 3rd. Minahal

U-15 boys:  
1st. Fahad Amir, 2nd. M Afnan Zahoor, 3rd. Imran Raza

U-15 girls:  
1st. Moosa, 2nd. Safdar, 3rd. Zeeshan Mushtaq

U-16 boys:  
1st. Asad Hayat, 2nd. M Ali, 3rd. Bilal

U-16 girls:  
1st. Sameen, 2nd. Amina Asghar, 3rd. Mehwish.

## Lionel Messi describes experience with Miami 'opposite' of PSG

Argentinian forward Lionel Messi was very happy with his decision about joining Inter Miami as he is enjoying the people, the city, and the new ways around him, after leaving Paris Saint-Germain where he was feeling the opposite.

While speaking with the local media since he arrived in the US and started playing Major League Soccer, he said he did not want to depart from Barcelona and move to a completely different place.

Lionel Messi has scored nine goals while appearing six times on the field after leaving the French club where he played for two years. He appeared positive and happy as he spent his time in South Florida compared to Paris where things got rough at the end. "As I said at the time, my departure to Paris was not something I wanted, it was not something I wanted to leave Barcelona and, so to speak, it was from one day to the next," Messi said. The 36-year-old was associated with Barcelona from the age of 13 when he moved from Argentina to join the Spanish giants and his move — after years of success — was primarily the result of financial difficulties at the club.

## South Africa name women's squad for Pakistan tour

A Sports

Cricket South Africa (CSA) on Friday, named a 12-member white-ball squad for their historic tour to Pakistan, scheduled in September.

The squad features an almost similar group of players who were part of their historic T20 World Cup campaign.

The Proteas women will not be led by Sune Luus as the CSA is likely to name a new captain in the coming days.

Chloe Tryon was not named in the 12-member squad upon her request for leave while Annerie Derckson also missed out on the selection as she is nursing a finger injury.

Uncapped wicketkeeper batter Mieke de Ridder is likely to make her international debut against Pakistan while all-rounder Nondumiso Shangase returned to the squad, having played her last match in 2021.

Notably, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has already announced separate T20I and ODI squads for the historic



home series against South Africa.

The T20I squad featured 18-year-old Shawaal Zulfiqar, who has also been included in Pakistan women's squad for next month's Asian Games while Diana Baig returned to both Pakistan women's

squads after recovering from a finger injury that kept her out from the game for more than six months.

South Africa squad for ODIs and T20Is:  
Anneke Bosch, Tazmin Brits, Nadine

de Klerk, Mieke de Ridder, Lara Goodall, Sinalo Jafta, Marizanne Kapp, Ayabonga Khaka, Masabata Klaas, Sune Luus, Nonkululeko Mlaba, Tumi Sekhukhune, Nondumiso Shangase, Delmi Tucker, Laura Wolvaardt.

**Pakistan T20I squad:**

Nida Dar (c), Aliya Riaz, Bismah Maroof, Diana Baig, Fatima Sana, Muneeba Ali, Najiha Alvi (wk), Nashra Sundhu, Natalia Parvaiz, Sadaf Shamas, Sadia Iqbal, Shawaal Zulfiqar, Sidra Amin, Syeda Aroob Shah and Umm-e-Hani

Reserves – Anoosha Nasir, Omaira Sohail and Waheeda Akhtar

**Pakistan ODI squad:**

Nida Dar (c), Aliya Riaz, Bismah Maroof, Diana Baig, Fatima Sana, Ghulam Fatima, Muneeba Ali, Nashra Sundhu, Omaira Sohail, Sadaf Shamas, Sadia Iqbal, Sidra Amin, Sidra Nawaz (wk), Umm-e-Hani and Waheeda Akhtar

Reserves – Najiha Alvi, Natalia Parvaiz and Tuba Hassan

## Sevilla goalkeeper Yassine Bounou joins Saudi club Al-Hilal

A Sports

Sevilla's Moroccan goalkeeper Yassine Bounou has become the latest big name to quit Europe for the riches of Saudi Arabia, signing for Al-Hilal of the two teams announced on Friday.

Bounou, who featured in this week's UEFA Super Cup match against Manchester City, is the second big signing for Al-Hilal this week, following the transfer of Neymar from Paris Saint-Germain.

"FC Sevilla and Al-Hilal have reached an agreement for the transfer of goalkeeper Bounou to the Asian team," said Sevilla in a statement, while Al-Hilal released a video on X (formerly

Twitter) in which the player spoke in Arabic.

The value of the deal was not made public by either club, although the Spanish press put it at 20 million euros (\$21.7 million).

Yassine Bounou — or "Bono" as the name on his shirt reads — joined Sevilla from Girona four years ago and had been linked with a move this season to Real Madrid as cover for the injured Thibaut Courtois before they opted instead for Kepa Arrizabalaga.

The 32-year-old was also a key member of the Morocco team that reached the semi-finals of the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

Yassine Bounou is the latest in

a growing line of players who are leaving Europe for Saudi Arabia, including Sadio Mane, who has signed for Cristiano Ronaldo's Al-Nassr, Karim Benzema (Al-Ittihad) and Kalidou Koulibaly who will be their teammate at Al-Hilal.

Earlier this week, Brazilian striker Neymar bid farewell to French champions Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) after six years as he signed a two-year deal with Saudi Arabian club Al-Hilal.

Al-Hilal has roped in Neymar until 2025, and will reportedly pay PSG €90 million as a transfer fee for the star forward.

Saudi Professional League (SPL) club Al-Hilal announced Neymar's signing with a video on

the team's social media accounts.

Neymar can be seen in the video saying, "I am here in Saudi Arabia, I am Hilali."

After signing the contract, the star Brazilian expressed his excitement to embark on a new adventure and test himself with 'new challenges and opportunities in new places.'

"I have achieved a lot in Europe and enjoyed special times, but I have always wanted to be a global player and test myself with new challenges and opportunities in new places," Neymar said.

"I want to write new sporting history, and the Saudi Pro League has tremendous energy and quality players at the moment," he further added.

