



Foreign Minister stresses safe, secure environment for UN peacekeepers

Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani on Thursday said ensuring a safe and secure environment for United Nations peacekeepers who tirelessly maintain peace around the globe should be the foremost priority. (Details on Page 8)



Caretakers jack up petrol price by over Rs14 to take it past 300-mark

Price of petrol and diesel has increased under the fortnightly review policy the government follows. As the nation grapples with high electricity bills, the caretaker government late Thursday jacked up the petrol and diesel prices by over Rs14. The Finance Division said the hike was due to the "increasing trend of petroleum prices in the international market and exchange rate variations".

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chaired a meeting on Pakistan's economy on Thursday.



Photo: PID

Govt to come up with solution for inflated electricity bills: PM

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Anwaar-Haq Kakar Thursday said the government minutely looked into the problem of inflated electricity bills and would come up with a solution within next 48 hours.

Talking to senior journalists and news anchors here on the current challenging economic conditions, he said the government was considering various options to provide relief to the people.

The people had protested against increased electricity bills and the government realized their problems, he added. To a question, he clarified that the Pakistan army, navy and air force were not using a single free unit of electricity and their bills were paid from the allocated financial budget.

While employees of WAPDA were using free electricity units and their usage would be rationalized, especially of the

higher grade officers some of them were getting huge quantity of free electricity, he added. He said perception should not be that the government would take any strict measures causing difficulties for the people. He pointed out that the power sector had been a very challenging issue since the 1990s and the governments of that time signed agreements with independent power producers to overcome loadshedding which proved costly for consumers.

Over the years, he said, the generation and transmission system of electricity was flawed and the government had to deal with serious issues of line losses, power theft, high circular debt, use of expensive imported fuel and capacity payments to electricity companies. "These issues cannot be ignored by just closing eyes. We need to diagnose treatment for the disease." He made it clear that the government would fulfill its agreements with the international finan-



cial institutions. He lamented that the country was faced with economic stagnation and there was less investment in sectors like manufacturing, real estate and stock exchange, and the trend was

to only take up profit from certain businesses.

He said the caretaker government was formed for the continuity of constitutional order, and was dealing with economic and security challenges. The prime minister said Pakistan had security concerns on its western borders. The abrupt withdrawal of the United States from Afghanistan was not responsible as it created problems and now the weapons and equipment left behind there were being used by terrorists and non-state actors in Pakistan, he added.

He was of the view that according to current legal status, the Election Commission had to decide about the date of elections. He said recently formed Special Investment Facilitation Council had huge potential to attract investment in sectors of information technology, defence production, mining and agriculture, and Pakistan had a bright future due to such initiatives.

Nine soldiers embraced martyrdom after suicide bomber targeted military convoy in Bannu

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Nine soldiers of Pakistan Army on Thursday embraced martyrdom after a motorcycle-borne suicide bomber exploded himself while targeting a military convoy in general area Jani Khel of Bannu District in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Among the nine soldiers Naib Subedar Sanobar Ali also embraced shahadat (martyrdom), while five soldiers were injured, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said. The area was cordoned by the security forces and sanitization was being carried out to eliminate any terrorists found in the area. "Security forces of Pakistan are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices



of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve," the ISPR said.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar Thursday said he was heartbroken by the loss of nine valiant soldiers in Bannu Division. In a post on his X handle, he said, "Heartbroken by the loss of 9 valiant soldiers in Bannu Division, KPK, to a cowardly terrorist act that injured many. Such acts are utterly reprehensible. My thoughts are with the families of the martyred and injured. Pakistan stands resolute against such terror."

Interior Minister seeks briefing to cope smuggling of goods



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti on the directions of Prime Minister Anwar ul Haq Kakar on Thursday sought a briefing from provincial governments on the stoppage of smuggling of goods.

The minister was chairing a meeting regarding anti-smuggling measures here. Secretary Interior Abdullah Khan Sumbul, Director General Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Mohsin Hassan Butt and officials from the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), ministries and provincial offices participated in the

meeting. Minister Bugti stressed the need to make a comprehensive plan to curb the smuggling of fertilizers and sugar from the country.

The smuggling of necessary items including sugar and fertilizers from the country is burdening the economy, said the minister adding that the price hike due to the smuggling of goods is creating troubles for the common man.

He said cross-border smuggling of basic items of necessity will not be tolerated, adding that action may be initiated against those involved in illegal smuggling and their facilitators.

SC dismisses ECP plea seeking review of Punjab polls verdict



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) on Thursday dismissed the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) petition asking the apex court to review its order on holding Punjab elections on May 14.

The Supreme Court - in its April 4 order - declared the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) decision to postpone elections to the Punjab Assembly till October 8 "unconstitutional" and fixed May 14 as a new date.

A three-member SC bench comprising Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandia, Justice Ijazul Ahsan and Justice Muneeb Akhtar heard the case today.

At the outset of the hearing, the ECP lawyer sought one more week for preparation. "I need more time to prepare additional grounds in the case," the lawyer responded.

After amendments to Sections 57 and 58 of the Elections Act 2017, the power now rests with the ECP, the lawyer argued.

"The court will intervene whenever there is a Constitutional violation," Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial remarked during the hearing of the case.

"No one can violate or deviate from the Constitu-

CEC says 'provinces unwilling to conduct elections'

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) said that provinces are unwilling to conduct general elections.

The ECP issued an official statement issued after a separate consultative meeting with Tehreek-e-Labbalk Pakistan (TLP) and Pakistan Muslim League Quaid (PML-Q).

The TLP spokesperson told ECP that the government increased the number of UCs from 50 to 125 in Islamabad LG polls as they did not want to hold the LG polls in Islamabad.

TLP also demanded ECP to hold elections within 90 days and if the completion of the delimitation process is not possible in 90 days then the commission should increase the number of staff.

CEC remarked that the ECP is bound to hold LG polls on provincial LG laws. He said that the ECP will monitor the funding and expenses of the election campaigns.

The PML-Q consultative committee supported the ECP's decision to hold general elections on the census 2023. The ECP said that the election schedule will be announced soon after the completion of delimitation process and upcoming elections will be held according to the constitution.

It is pertinent to mention here that the ECP decided to hold general elections in the second week of February 2024. Sources privy to the development told ARY News that the election commission is likely to issue general elections schedule after December 2023. "The election schedule will be issued 54 days after the completion of the delimitation process," said sources with ECP.

Cypher case record handed over to PTI chief's counsel



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The record of cypher case has been handed over to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief's legal team.

As per details, the record of cypher case and the details of remand of PTI chief were handed over to the former prime minister's legal team.

The counsel of PTI premiere had moved the court for the record of cypher case. The court accepted the plea and the record was given to legal team which PTI chief's lawyer Khalid Yousaf confirmed later.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) earlier rejected the transfer of cypher case hearing against the former prime minister to Attock jail. The party spokesperson said that PTI urged the Supreme Court to take notice of the human rights violation.

The hearing of cypher case against the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief was shifted to the Attock jail. The notification issued by the law ministry stated that the ministry permitted the hearing of cypher case against the former prime minister in Attock jail.

It is pertinent to mention here that a special court in Islamabad ordered Attock Jail authorities - where the former premier is incarcerated - to keep the PTI chairman in judicial lockup in

PTI chairman allowed to speak to his sons on phone



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: A special court on Thursday granted permission to former prime minister to talk to his sons on phone.

Former premier Imran Khan, who is in judicial custody till September 13 in cypher case, has been incarcerated in Attock prison since his arrest on August 05.

The PTI chief, through his lawyers Umair Niaz and Shiraz Ahmed approached special court seeking permission to talk to his sons Qasim and Sulaiman

on the telephone.

"I want to talk to my sons Qasim and Sulaiman Khan on the telephone or WhatsApp," he pleaded, which was approved by the court.

A special court on Wednesday extended the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman's judicial remand till September 13 in the cypher case. Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain, who heard the case at the Attock District Jail under Official Secrets Act 2023, issued the decision in the case of the missing cypher, a classified state document.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi chaired the 23rd meeting of the Board of Governors of the National School of Public Policy, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Thursday.



Photo: PID

Foreign Minister stresses safe, secure environment for UN peacekeepers

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani on Thursday said ensuring a safe and secure environment for United Nations peacekeepers who tirelessly maintain peace around the globe should be the foremost priority. Addressing the 2023 UN Peacekeeping Ministerial Preparatory Meeting on "Safety and Security of Peacekeepers" here, the foreign minister said Pakistan's participation in UN peacekeeping, spanning over six decades, was a tangible manifestation of its contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security, in line with the UN Charter.

He said legal frameworks and adequate accountability mechanisms were paramount for peacekeeper safety. "We must stand firm in holding accountable the perpetrators – individuals and groups that harm or threaten UN peacekeepers." Medical care for peacekeepers is also essential, he said adding "our peacekeepers

deserve the best care including mental health support. Standardized training, first aid provisions, and enhanced medical facilities are crucial for that". The FM maintained that addressing challenges, including language barriers and administrative obstacles, should also be one of our top priorities. He said the spectre of threat posed by Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) to peacekeepers' security needs a commensurate response. "We must intensify pre-deployment training; equip our peacekeepers with cutting-edge technology; and augment their capabilities for countering the IED threat." The minister highlighted that leveraging technology was vital to ensure the safety and security of peacekeepers.

The Strategy for the Digital Transformation of UN Peacekeeping underscores the need to enhance situational awareness, counter disinformation, and optimise the use of technology. By doing so, we empower our peacekeepers to make



informed decisions and fulfil their mandates more effectively." Jalil Abbas Jilani said while Pakistan was proudly contributing over 4,000 troops to various ongoing UN peacekeeping missions, the attention should also be focused on the realm of peacebuilding. "Just as we have established a state-of-the-art facility for the training of peacekeepers – the Centre of International Peace and Stability (CIPS), where we are gathered for this meeting – we also hope to collaborate with the UN Secretariat and our international partners to create an Institute for Peacebuilding," he

remarked.

He also urged the finance contributing partners to embrace a more equitable distribution of the burdens associated with peacekeeping missions. The challenges faced by peacekeepers, he said were universal in their impact, and it was imperative that the financial responsibilities reflected this shared endeavour for global peace and security. "Open and constructive dialogue between TCCs and FCCs is essential to harmonize our efforts, ensuring that resources are allocated efficiently and fairly. Transparency in financial commitments

and decision-making processes is key to building trust and enhancing mission efficacy," he added. Emphasizing the significance of the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), a pioneering peacekeeping mission established in 1949, the foreign minister said it held a distinctive place in peacekeeping history as one of the earliest initiatives to monitor and investigate ceasefire violations in the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

"UNMOGIP personnel encounter unprecedented adversities due to the non-cooperation of one party. We must proactively address the safety and security gaps, as identified in the recent report on UNMOGIP by the UN's Office of Internal Oversight Services, he added. He also acknowledged the indispensable and rightful role of women peacekeepers saying Pakistan was constantly endeavouring to further enhance the presence of female peacekeepers in its contingents.

President emphasizes special focus on breast cancer, population and mental health

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for National Health Services Regulations and Coordination, Dr Nadeem Jan called on President Dr Arif Alvi here on Thursday and discussed matters relating to national health in the country.

The president emphasized special focus on issues of breast cancer, growing population and mental health in the country.

President Alvi and the minister discussed the proposals regarding nutrition, rehabilitation of differently

abled persons, and mental and physical weakness among the children.

The president stressed the need to provide consultation facilities to improve mental health in the country.

He said the basic treatment of mental health could be provided with the help of modern technology, Artificial Intelligence and Chatbot.

The minister commended the president's special focus and guidance for eradication of polio in the country.

President Alvi appreciated the overall services of the Dr Nadeem Jan in the health sector.

PM AJK says he won't hesitate to quit his job if he fails to address Azad Kashmir's power issues

Abdul Majeed Tahir

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar Ul Haq, has said that he won't hesitate to quit his job provided he fails to solve the inflated electricity bills and hydel-power generation related issues in Azad Kashmir. "I will not allow any kind of tax to be imposed on the people", the PM said while speaking to a private news channel here on Thursday.

The PM expressed the hope that there would be a big breakthrough in coming months and these issues would be sorted out in the wider interests of the people of the region. Brushing away the impression that Azad Kashmir was a burden on the federal government, the PM said that it needed to be realized that the AJK contributes significantly to Pakistan's economy. On power usage rights, he said, "It happens to be the first right of those people in whose area elec-



tricity is generated". The PM said that he was fighting the case of the people of Poonch, Muzaffarabad and Mangla Dam affectees. Regarding the increase in electricity prices, he said that the increase in the electricity charges took place in accordance with the Mangla Dam Agreement of 1967. The AJK government, he said, has no role in it.

"When there is a surge in electricity charges in Pakistan, it is also applied in Azad Kashmir in the same proportion", he said. He said that it was for the first time that we have suspended the additional taxes on electricity and are charging citizens the bill according to last year's tariff regime.

NEECA, PEECA hold national stakeholder consultation on energy efficiency



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority and Punjab Energy Efficiency in Conservation Agency with the support of the UNDP have organized a national stakeholder consultation which was attended by the Punjab government's different departments universities and researchers across the province. NEECA representatives presented the national action plan, Energy Conservation Building, and Energy Appliances Labeling Regime for five appliances.

MD PEECA expressed his perspective on Energy Efficiency and Conservation as a key pillar for economic growth and sustainable development. He highlighted that rising energy prices demand a quick and appropriate response to address energy issues from the demand side. He mentioned that the focus has always been on energy

generation, but demand-side energy management has never been addressed in the past. He appreciated NEECA's effort in preparing the documents of strategic importance as well as approval from the Cabinet.

MD NEECA Dr. Sardar Mohazzam in his closing remarks appreciated the overwhelming participation of all relevant provincial government departments, industry, the private sector, and academia. He explained that NEECA has been revitalized through institutionalization, and then operationalized. He further mentioned that at this stage, NEECA initiatives are in the implementation stage. He reiterated the role of the National Action Plan on Energy Efficiency and Conservation 2023-30, Energy Conservation Building Code 2023, and Energy Appliances Regulations for Electric Appliances. The participants were actively involved and asked numerous questions on different topics.

H. E. Ambassador Jemal Beker Receives National Peace Award

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The National Peace and Justice Council (NPJC) honored Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, H. E. Jemal Beker Abdula, with the esteemed National Peace Award.

This recognition was bestowed upon Ambassador Jemal Beker for his dedicated efforts in laying foundation and fostering closer ties between the two brotherly nations.

The award ceremony took place during the National Peace Seminar which held at the Islamabad Club.

NPJC Chairman Mian Abdul Waheed presented the award to Ambassador Jemal



Beker, lauding his commitment to strengthening the bilateral relations between the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) and Pakistan by bridging the gap and bringing people to people, institutions, and business communities closer. He said, indeed Ambassador Jemal Beker play a crucial role in

advancing fraternity and brotherhood between the two heirs of civilizations.

Addressing the ceremony, H. E. Ambassador Jemal Beker extended gratitude to the NPJC for acknowledging his endeavors to enhance friendship and partnership between the two countries.

He emphasized peace as shared values between Ethiopia and Pakistan while highlighting their significant role as major contributors to the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission to ensure peace, stability and prosperity across the globe. Both nations, he noted, played pivotal roles in preserving global peace and security, with their people working hand in hand to save lives worldwide.

The ambassador took a moment to pay tribute to Pakistan's brave sacrifices in the pursuit of international peace and security, stating that the nation's unwavering commitment to this cause would forever be remembered.

He also noted Ethiopia's own contributions, with a considerable number of Ethiopian soldiers sacrificing their

lives for international peace and security under blue helmet of UN peacekeeping missions in different countries.

H. E. Jemal Beker underlined the historical importance of Ethiopia as a land of justice, referring the teachings of the Holy Prophet (SAW) in this regard, as well as the refuge provided by King Nejashei to Muslims in the past.

Stressing the significance of peace for human prosperity and development, he emphasized that in the fast changing global landscape, peace and security were more crucial than ever.

He called for sustained efforts toward achieving peace through constructive dialogue, negotiation, and countering the spread of misinformation and disinformation.

OIP: Non-Aligned Movement optimal role for global peace and security urged

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The ongoing international Online Internship Program co-organized by the Indonesian Embassy and the Bahria University, Islamabad, held its Session 12 on August 29, 2023. Dr. Connie Rahakundini Bakrie, Executive Director of Institute of Defense and Security Studies was the speaker at the session who shared her insight with the participants on the topic of Indonesia & Non-Aligned Movement: is it still relevant in today's global politics?

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) has become the largest grouping of states worldwide after the United Nations; however, with hanging global politics, its relevance has been widely debated.

The importance of NAM as a political power in the current international scenario is being frequently questioned.

The speaker highlighted the significant transition in global geopolitics following the collapse of communism in the USSR and Eastern Europe, which was supposed to end the cold war. She emphasized the ongoing Cold War, which is increasingly becoming ultra-cold

Commenting on the situation between Russia and Ukraine she stated that "the Cold War is still present and becoming increasingly ultra-cold".

In the context of NAM Jakarta conference in 1992, the speaker stressed that despite the end of the cold war, the NAM struggle must continue. She reminded that in resolving



Russia Ukraine armed conflict, UN Multilateral crisis management has not been successful and the UN agencies were unable to prevent and provide solutions such as peace

accords, ceasefires and new appeasements.

Dr. Connie said that in the current global scenario NAM should more proactive role and cited "the NAM 'RE-NEW' Declaration that advocates for equality, sovereignty, friendly relations, peaceful resolution of international disputes, opposes force and weapon of mass destruction and aims to protect the entire human race".

She stressed that NAM should oppose military alliances, call for a world power balance, opposes Cold War models and advocate for dispute resolution through negotiation and diplomatic means.

She made special reference to Indonesian President Soekarno's famous 1960 United Nations speech, "To Build the World A New," that emphasized the importance of a

fair World Order Conception.

"Indonesia's President Jokowi has proposed building the country as the nexus of international maritime and airspace, as it is at the heart of strategic sea line communication" she explained when sharing Indonesia's response to the emerging situation.

She concluded that NAM should continue maintain its influence on the world peace and should campaign for a new international and regional economic order based on political and economic equality and continue to contribute its support in strengthening the UN organization.

The next session on Commitment to Islam as "Rahmatan Lil 'Alamiin" will host Dicky Sofjan, Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies on August 31, 2023.

Hamdard Shura condemns Jaranwala tragedy, demands urgent action on extremism

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: The members of Shura Hamdard Karachi have strongly condemned the Jaranwala tragedy and urged the government to take decisive actions against those who were involved in this incident. Also, the members raised deep concerns regarding the recent escalating religious tensions in Gilgit-Baltistan. The monthly meeting of Karachi chapter convened yesterday at the Hamdard Corporate Head Office. Chaired by Speaker General (r) Moinuddin Haider, the meeting centered on the theme of "Respect of Law and Justice". Ms. Sadia Rashid, President of Hamdard Foundation Pakistan, also attended the meeting.

The guest speaker, Justice (r) Rukhsana Ahmed, explained that the idea of the rule of law and the authority of justice shape the order within a country. It involves giving fair treatment to all citizens of the state according to the rule of law, without any bias based on race, color, language, religion, gender, caste, political stance, economic and social position, or geographic location. This is a fundamental duty of a state.

The Jaranwala tragedy represents a severe kind of prevalent violent extremism, which continues to grow in our society completely unchecked. Such a phenomenon necessitates a comprehensive strategy to stop such incidents from happening again. She also pointed out that sectarian-religious politics in Gilgit-Baltistan has



caused tension among communities and if not promptly curtailed, the repercussions could be severe. At the moment the situation in Gilgit-Baltistan is critical and in dire need of immediate government intervention.

Dr. Amir Jafri mentioned that the frequent incidents of people committing physical violence against domestic helpers, particularly children serve as an embodiment of social abnormality. Numerous instances of such abuse have been reported to the authorities,

and legal action has been taken. But still, this cycle of violence shows no sign of stopping. In Islam, there are well-defined principles of honourable conduct toward people of different faiths.

Dr. Amir Taseen said that it is incorrect to solely associate the concept of law with just the courts or law enforcement. The genuine understanding of respecting the law is intertwined with every aspect of any society. We must also uphold our responsibilities

as family members, neighbours, and active participants in our community.

Colonel (r) Mukhtar Ahmed Butt said that while laws and regulations are in place, their execution is lacking. Lawlessness and disregarding established rules are becoming more prevalent with each passing day. This trend has led to the downfall of societal harmony, merit, and social justice within our society.

Naushaba Khalil Sattar said that the uncontrolled desire for wealth has fueled corruption which has led to societal disorder. Those who burnt down the churches and assaulted the Christian community should not be granted any leniency. Upholding the law is achievable only through its resolute implementation.

Senator Abdul Haseeb Khan emphasized that ensuring fairness and transparency in both creating and enforcing laws is a need of the hour. Even in the present day, if the government operates in accordance with regulations and law enforcement, the potential exists to establish justice and merit within society. This, in turn, could foster sentiments of unity, faith and discipline among individuals.

During the meeting, Huma Baig, Dr. AbuBakr Shaikh, Engineer Ibnul Hasan Rizvi, Musrat Akram, Sheikh Usman Damohi, Professor Dr. Shaheen Habib, and Nusrat Sarfaraz also shared their opinions. They all underscored the significance of advancing inter-faith harmony and ensuring the rule of law.

Jan Mohammad Mahar murder case probe handed over to CTD

Spokesman Report

SUKKUR: The Sindh Home Department has handed over the responsibility of probe into senior journalist Jan Mohammad Mahar's murder case to the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) Sukkur.

The Sindh Home Department issued a notification to withdraw the responsibility of probe into the journalist Jan Mohammad Mahar's murder case from the Deputy Superintendent Police (DSP) City and handed it over to the CTD's DSP Abdul Quddus.

The department ordered the authorities to expedite the investigation for the arrest of the culprits and provide foolproof security to the slain journalist's family.

'Culprits hiding in katcha area'

The police department has so far failed to arrest the murderers of journalist Jan Mohammad Mahar.

The police have so far arrested three facilitators booked in the murder case and got their physical remand for six days from court.

"The accused involved in journalist Mahar's killing, have got refuge in the katcha area," police sources said. The forest area of Alif Kutcho has been the hideout of bandits and a 'no-go area' for police," sources said.

Police officials assured that a strategy has been devised and the killers will be arrested soon.

Senior journalist and Kawish Television Network (KTN) Sukkur bureau chief had been murdered by unidentified assailants on August 13.

The attackers on a motorcycle had opened fire at Mahar inside his vehicle after he left his office at 9:00 am in Sukkur.

Sindh Law Minister seeks action on Sindh high court judges' appointments



Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: Sindh Law Minister Barrister Umar Soomro has said that Bandial Sahib has appointed certain judges, it is hoped that the next Chief Justice Qazi Faiz Isa will play a role in bringing the country out of a serious crisis. Sindh law minister Reached Hyderabad on day trip, where

The caretaker provincial minister attended the reception given by district Bar Association. Sindh Bar Council member Naeem Qureshi, Imdad Ali unar, Ayaz Tunio, KB Laghari, Faisal Mughal, Imran Arain, Abdul Wahab Munshi and others were present on the occasion. Law Minister Barrister Umar Soomro said that the 4 judges who are sitting in the Supreme Court are unconstitutional, come forward to bring such a resolution, the morale of the entire judiciary is low. The cases of violence should be given their budget, if they spend it, they will be audited. There are complaints in the courts but they are not heard. It is said that the lawyers are not coming and the people are traveling because of this. Online monitoring should be done, if there is online live streaming you can show your students the lecture program etc. He further said that I will request the Chief Justice Sindh High Court to accept our request. It will be fulfilled, I approved 40 crores for the Sindh High Court, he said that 2 to 3 hundred yards of land should be given every Sindh bar, 2 hundred acres of land has been leased, with CM Sindh about the grant of solar panels. I will talk.

PDM government agreement to IMF has started to have disastrous results: Rana Shahbaz

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: President of Anjuman Tajran Rana Shehbaz has said that the PDM government's agreement to get 1 billion dollars from the IMF has started to have disastrous results, which is why the first prices of petroleum products were increased wisely and the prices of petroleum products are expected to increase tonight. On the other hand, the price per unit of electricity is increased after every 15 days. And along with the increase in electricity prices, various types of taxes have also been put in the public's account.

He said that the government should immediately abolish taxes in electricity bills so that the poor people can live a peaceful life, otherwise the caretaker government has no idea of the power of the people. People of Multan will not pay electricity bills under any circumstances. He expressed these views while addressing the protestors at Masoom Shah Road Bihar Chowk on illegal taxes in electricity bills.

Newly appointed RPO DI Khan visited Police Line Dera

Adam Khan Wazir

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: The newly posted Regional Police Officer Dera Ismail Khan Division Nasir Mehmood Satti visited Ejaz Shaheed Police Lines Dera yesterday after assuming his new duties.

Where he attended the martyrs' memorial and offered flowers at the martyrs' memorial.

Regional Police Officer Dera along with a well-armed police team saluted the martyrs and prayed for the elevation of the martyrs.

RPO Dera started Green Pakistan plantation drive by planting saplings in police lines.

On this occasion, he also visited the District Police Office, Dera, where he inspected the Martyrs Disk.



Meanwhile, he gave instructions to the in-charge martyrs and said that once a week, the families of the martyrs should contact each other and find out

about their problems and solve them immediately, because these martyrs have given their lives for the survival of the country and nation.

Police martyrs are the pride of our department whose sacrifices are irreplaceable, the whole nation is indebted to them.

Meanwhile, he visited the command and control center established in DPO office, on this occasion DPO Dera while giving a briefing to RPO said that 287 installed secret cameras are monitoring the entrance, exit and sensitive places of the district.

RPO Dera expressed satisfaction over the newly established modern security system by Dera Police.

Later, the RPO presided over a high-level introductory meeting at the Police Club, Dera, in which DPO Dera, SP Investigation, SP Elite, DSP Headquarters, SDPOs and all SHOs participated in the meeting.

COMSTECH and Indonesia launch fellowships in Virology and Vaccine Technologies

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Ten fellowships have been awarded to scholars from eight OIC member states: Egypt, Malaysia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Uganda, Iran, Jordan and Kazakhstan. In the field of virology and vaccine technology. The fellowships award ceremony was held on Thursday, at Ministry of Health, in Jakarta, Indonesia.

These fellowships have been awarded under the COMSTECH Fellowships Program for Research and Advanced Training in Virology and Vaccine Technologies. The program is a collaborative effort of Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Indonesia, Bio-Pharma, Universitas Padjadjaran (UNPAD) and



Universitas Airlangga (UNAIR), and the Embassy of Indonesia in Pakistan.

The award ceremony was addressed by H. E. Ambassador, Askar Mussinov, Assistant Secretary General (S&T) OIC, Coordinator General COMSTECH, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Director General for Multilateral Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Indone-

sia, Director General for Pharmaceutical and Medical Devices, Ministry of Health, Republic of Indonesia.

The Coordinator General COMSTECH, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary welcomed the participants of the ceremony and said that I am happy to see this program up and running for two consecutive years.

Prof. Choudhary said that this program is a collaborative effort of Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, of Indonesia, Bio-Pharma, UNPAD and UNAIR, and the Embassy of Indonesia in Pakistan. Prof. Choudhary extended profound gratitude to MoH, Indonesia, for organizing this major initiative in key areas of viral disease surveillance and epidemic/pandemic preparedness, and to H. E. Adam Tugio, the Ambassador of Indonesia in Pakistan for his tireless efforts to make this program possible.

The ceremony was attended by H. E. Amb. Mr. Adam Tugio, the Ambassadors of OIC member states and the representatives of UNPAD, UNAIR and BioPharma.

ICCI calls for focusing on agriculture sector to boost its exports to over USD 10 billion

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) said that despite being an agricultural country, Pakistan has to import agricultural commodities worth over USD 5 billion per annum. However, by focusing on better development of the agriculture sector, Pakistan can increase the exports of the agricultural sector by over USD 10 billion per annum, which will help revive the economy. He said that the Fruits & Vegetable Market of Islamabad is located at an important place as it supplies fruits & vegetables to twin cities, KPK, Azad Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan and many other areas. Therefore, this market should be developed on modern lines that would help promote business activities and exports of this sector. He



said this while talking to a delegation of the Market Committee of I-11/4 Fruits and Vegetables Market that visited ICCI led by its Chairman Sajid Abbasi. Sajid Siddique Vice Chairman, Naeem Azam Khan, Agha Siraj Durrani, Ch. Ilyas, Sohail Chaudhry and others were in the

delegation.

Ahsan Bakhtawari briefed the Chairman Market Committee about the key issues of the traders of Fruits & Vegetable Market, I-11/4, Islamabad and stressed for their early solution.

Speaking on the occasion, Sajid Abba-

si, Chairman, Market Committee, Fruits & Vegetables Market, I-11/4, Islamabad said that he is a public representative and the Market Committee will be used in the best interests of the people and the traders. He said that all possible efforts would be made for the better development of the fruits & vegetable market. He said that encroachment of sabzi mandi would be removed soon and the sanitation system would also be further improved. He said that providing fruits and vegetables and other commodities to the citizens of Islamabad at reasonable prices is a key priority for him. He said that for the convenience of the citizens, he will try to arrange fruit, vegetable and meat shops in every market of the Capital on the pattern of flower shops in collaboration with ICCI. He said that he will solve the problems of the sabzi mandi in collaboration with ICCI.

Tank Mamrez Jamal bridge construction couldn't be completed

Adam Khan Wazir

TANK: Mamrez Jamal bridge in Tank district could not be constructed despite decades, according to sources, the only Mamrez Jamal bridge connecting village Mamrez, village Jamal, village Shada and village Matakoto to other areas is still waiting for construction.

According to the sources, construction of Mamrez Jamal Bridge was approved in 2009, but its construction started after almost a decade.

Sources said, after the construction, it was revealed that only the floor of the bridge has been laid and the two sides have not been bothered to be built.

Afzal Khan, a local resident of Mamrez village of Tank district while talking to media persons said that whenever there are rains, the flood water washes away the soil on both sides.

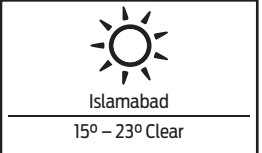
Due to which the bridge poses serious risks, however, several hundreds of yards of soil is flooded due to which the local residents have to face severe difficulties in reaching their respective areas.

He said that hundreds of people come on this bridge every day and



have to face immense difficulties.

The residents of the area have immediately demanded the Commissioner Dera Ismail Khan, Deputy Commissioner Tank, Secretary C&W and XEN C&W Tank to take immediate steps in this regard.



SERVICES
Namaz Timings

Fajr 4:14 am
Zohr 12:08 pm
Asr 4:45 pm
Maghrib 6:35 pm
Isha 8:02 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

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

COMPLAINTS
Water Tanker Service
E-7, F-10 & F-11 9204654
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8 9203883
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8 9266316
Wapda Islamabad 9217579-80
Sui Gas Complaint 119, 9272249

AJK Govt: demands federal govt to stop additional taxes on electricity bills

Abdul Majeed Tahir

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq, while raising the issue of inflated electricity bills vociferously in the recent Senate Standing Committee meeting, has demanded the federal government to withdraw additional charges imposed on bills of power consumers in Azad Kashmir.

During the meeting, which was held under the chairmanship of Senator Saleem Mandviwala, the AJK premier said that the additional taxes on electricity bills in Azad Kashmir should be abolished forthwith.

Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister said that the IMF was not our issue. "The federal government is not paying us our due share and hydro profit".

The Prime Minister said that it was very unfortunate that each year electricity distribution companies levy extra charges on Azad Kashmir in the name of line losses.

Referring to Kashmiris' love for Pakistan, the PM said that the federal government should not put such a burden on the people of the region that may cause harm to this relationship in future.

The federal government, he said, had deducted 61 billion rupees from the AJK's budget on account of payment in arrears but it did not bother to pay a share of 400 billion rupee out of net hydel profits. Mr. Haq said that a hydel profit sharing agreement was present in the case of one dam but it was missing in the case of the second dam.

The PM said that power consumers in Azad Kashmir

should be provided electricity at the rate at which the electricity was being generated from the Mangla Dam.

"We do not seek any additional relief", the PM said, adding that the production cost per unit of Mangla Dam was 3 to 4 rupees while the Neelum Jhelum project was 8 to 9 rupees per unit. Additional taxes, he said, have made the life of consumers miserable.

Referring to the 2003 agreement, the PM said, "We happily agreed to vacate our homes to build dams but despite all this, additional burden is being put on us". The Prime Minister made it clear that an out-of-box solution was required to tackle the issue of inflated electricity bills across the country.

The PM said that the caretaker government must pay heed to the voice of the people of Azad Kash-



and come up with a solid plan of action to resolve this issue without further delay.

Preparations

ISLAMABAD: Vendors are busy in preparation at their pavilions in Weekly Friday Market at Sector H-9 in Federal Capital. **ONLINE PHOTO**



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

APNEA demands the caretaker govt to never end free units

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: General Secretary of All Pakistan NTDC Engineers Association (APNEA) Engineer Malik Tariq Raza Kalro has said that if the caretaker government tries to eliminate the free units included in our salary package, then it will be a disaster and our grade will be 17. Engineers of power sector from 21 to 21 will come on the streets and protest in full. Our power sector is the only organization that is providing electricity to its customers in extreme heat and cold and hundreds of workers have laid down their lives.

And innumerable engineers and laborers have been disabled with hands, feet and other parts of the body. The government should abolish the taxes included in the electricity bills and end our free honities to provide facilities to the people. He expressed these views yesterday. Like the whole of Pakistan, WAPDA addressed the silent protestors at the NTDC office and said that all the engineers from grade 17 to 21 of (Apnea) are united and demand the caretaker government to never end free units. It should be done, which is our right. Today we have recorded a silent protest all over Pakistan.

Jhelum Valley leaders laud successful shutdown, wheel jam strike in Muzaffarabad

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Representative of Public Action Committee and President of Central Traders Association Shaukat Nawaz Mir has said that people, traders, civil society, lawyers, Mayor Municipal Corporation Muzaffarabad, councilors, chairman of district councils and councilors, transporters on the successful shutdown and wheel jam strike in Muzaffarabad division. Students and all ideologies are grateful to the leadership of political, social and religious parties, who have given a message to the government by killing their ego, ideology, political affiliation, profession, tribe, and community.

The Charter of Demand will not back down under any circumstances. I am extremely grateful to all the leaders of Jhelum Valley, Neelum Valley.



On September 5, consultations are going on for the statewide protest in consultation with the leadership of Mirpur and Poonch divisions. People should be ready for the next plan of action.

After the successful shutdown and wheel jam strike on Thursday evening, Shaukat Nawaz Mir led the public action committee Raja Nasir Latif, Mahmood Baig Advocate, Raja

Amir Zafar, Raja Saqib Majeed, Raja Liaquat, Raja Sahib Javed, Khawaja Azam Rasool, Atiq Ahmed Kayani, Anjum Zaman Awan, Shahid Zaman Awan, Faisal Jameel Kashmiri, Khawaja Amir Zargar Saraf, Syed Naveed Shah, Khawaja Zeeshan and others while holding a press conference said that they reject the Prime Minister's statement.

The Prime Minister has a

double standard. One of them says that they cannot give free electricity, death can be given for free, which they condemn. At two o'clock in the night, the members of the assembly put aside all the laws and the constitution and sold the ideology and the party and elected the Prime Minister today.

He is talking about giving death to the people. By keeping such a big cabinet, the people are being told that they cannot be given subsidized flour. They cannot get cheap electricity, billions of rupees are being spent only on the government and its employees.

Now the people have woken up. Whatever the Prime Minister says. But now they are not sure. He said that Thursday's strike was wonderful and successful.

People of every ideology, every party, every party, every organization participated.

Pakistan is suffering from a very high percentage of non-communicable diseases by using Tran's fatty acids



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: In Islamabad held A training workshop for journalists on "Understanding TFAs, Policy, Human Health, and Reporting", which was organized by the Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI) with the support of Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHAII).

The training was conducted by prominent health experts and journalists including Mr. Munawar Hussain from GHAII, Dr. Khawaja Masood, National Coordinator, Food Fortification Alliance, Mr. Zeeshan Haider, and Mr. Waqar Bhatti. They informed the participants about the major dietary risk factors such as high percentage of trans fatty acids (TFAs), sugar, and sodium in the food supply and dietary practices. For example, Pakistan's TFA intake is estimated to be the 2nd highest in the WHO's EMRO (Eastern Mediterranean) region, as it is about 6% of daily energy intake. The experts shared findings of numerous research studies, which highlight that the consumption of industrially produced trans-fatty acids (ITFAs) significantly contributes to the incidence of Non communication disease, s It was also highlighted that inappropriate and unhealthy dietary practices, including higher consumption of TFAs, are responsible for increasing rates of NCDs such as diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, cancers, and other chronic diseases in Pakistani population.

The participants were informed that the Government of Pakistan has recently taken steps to regulate production and supply of certain types of unhealthy food. For example, the Government has notified that the limit of TFAs cannot be more than 2g per 100g of fat in Vanaspati, shortenings, bakery fats, bakery ware, rusk, and breads. It is a significant step forward, although certain gaps remain, as all types of food are still not covered by this regulation. It is also yet to be seen if the notified standard will be effectively implemented across Pakistan without any delay. More effective regulations and policy measures are also needed to reduce the consumption of sodium and sugar.

Mr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ali, Executive Director of CPDI emphasized the importance of more media attention to unprecedented health related challenges being faced by the people of Pakistan.

Sightsavers committed to ensure inclusive eye health for all



City Desk

LAHORE: In order to ensure eye health for all, Sightsavers in collaboration with the College of Ophthalmology & Allied Vision Sciences (COAVS), Mayo Hospital Lahore, and District Health Authority Khanewal has initiated the Pakistan Inclusive Eye Health (PIEH) Project in district Khanewal, Punjab to ensure that quality eye care services are accessible to all special persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups.

A launch ceremony in this regard was held in district Khanewal where Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Mehar, Director General Health Services, South Punjab was the chief guest, while Professor Dr. Muhammad Moin, Principal College of Ophthalmology & Allied Vision Sciences Lahore, Professor Dr. Rashid Qamar Rao, Principal Nishter Medical College Multan, Dr. Abdul Majeed Bhatti, Chief Executive Officer, District Health Authority Khanewal, Mr. Itfaq Khaliq Khan, Senior Program Manager, Sightsavers and representatives from health department, Social Welfare department, CHIP, LRBT, Civil Society Organizations, Person with disabilities and local media also attended the event.

Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Mehar, Director General Health Services South Punjab said that PIEH Project is addressing one of the most required needs of eye care at the primary level.

Mr. Itfaq Khaliq Khan, Senior Program Manager Sightsavers explained that this five-year PIEH project will reach over a million people with eye health screening services at the primary health care level while providing above 200,000 people with refractive error and optical services.

On the occasion, Professor Dr. Muhammad Moin, Principal College of Ophthalmology & Allied Vision Sciences (COAVS) Lahore said that Sightsavers and COAVS are working together to establish and strengthen the eye care services in Punjab province.

Walee Partners Beta Launch With Waliya Najib

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: WALEE, Pakistan's first influencer marketing platform is on the mission to unify the creator economy. Walee has established a reputation as a strong MarTech players with its use of data and AI to help advertisers in Influencer marketing. And now, Walee is taking the same technology and aiming to help Creators with their "Walee Partners" program. The AI-powered program aims to provide creators with advanced insights, inspirations, predictive analytics. With the launch of this groundbreaking program, WALEE takes a giant leap towards realizing the vision to identify how creators can tap into new technology, data, and AI and be able to provide a product that adds value to their 'creator careers' by teaming up with none other than one



of Pakistan's biggest creators, Waliya Najib.

Waliya has taken on the role of Creator partner on this project. Her first hand experience as a creator with over 1.4 million followers, provides WALEE with valuable insights and perspective to help further develop technol-

ogy that will benefit fellow creators in the creator economy. The product is slated to contain exciting features such as: Smart Profiling; match with similar interests, and niches, Data-Driven Insights; Walee's proprietary Influencer Insights Report with over 70, data points helps Creators produce better,

more impactful content, Personal Creative Assistant: AI-tailored recommendations and insights to inspire their creative journey, fostering growth,4) Performance & ROI Predictions: Empowering creators with the foresight for maximum reach and engagement with predictive outcomes,5) Streamlined Partnerships: Seamless workflows for influencers and brands to, enhance efficiency in their content creation journey. The collaboration with Waliya Najib is a testament to WALEE's commitment to fostering, innovation and continuing to generate revolutionary change within the influencer, ecosystem. This collaboration is set to elevate the landscape, serving as a trailblazing, example of how AI and creativity can fuse together to redefine how content is created, and consumed tomorrow.

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Email: spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com
Whatsapp: 0346-5008408

Mashal - A Torch of Hope

Aini Hali

Association was formed in Islamabad by Mrs. Shahida Azim and a group of ladies in 1986. It was officially recognized and registered as a social welfare association working for the empowerment of women in the rural area around Islamabad through economic, cultural, health, education and environment improvement by training and creating greater awareness among the underprivileged sections of society.

It is a non-political, non-sectarian voluntary social welfare organization. The charitable association has an approved Constitution with a Mission Statement of bringing a meaningful change in the lives of girls and women in the community - through education, employability and entrepreneur skills. Mashal Association comprises fifty-five volunteer ladies, who are octogenarians, septuagenarians or sexagenarians out of whom fifteen members are elected through a transparent, free and fair election for a period of three years to form a core committee to take executive decisions through consensus.

An elected duo of treasurers manages the finances and accounts of the donations and endowments, which are regularly audited by an independent group of chartered accountants.

Education Department operates the school, which has a capacity of 300 students and imparts education to the girls up to Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSC) level, provides

uniforms, books and even pick-and-drop to the students to encourage the lower income strata to send their daughters to the school.

The curriculum taught is that of the Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Islamabad.

The Principal and teachers are paid staff but are helped by some voluntary members having a background in education, who also undertake Teachers' Training to improve the skill level of the instruction staff. The members also provide student counselling for any problem solving when required.

The students are encouraged to take part in different activities and are also taken for field trips.

Sponsorship programs enable benevolent donors to bequeath funds to manage the tuition fees, cost of books, uniforms for the students and even the salary of the teachers. No government organization provides any funding.

The capital for Mashal comes through donations from the members and endowments from "Friends of Mashal." Recently, generous Friends of Mashal provided a new school van to replace one of the aging vehicles in the "Transport for Education" scheme, while another member donated 150 uniforms for the students and yet another provided computers and furniture for the computer lab.

A Montessori section for thirty-five students has been set up by a donor while a Library has been added.

It is heartening that the 2023 Matric result of Mashal School was 100 percent.

Medical Department addresses the health issues of the community.



The Vocational Center offers Diplomas and courses in different disciplines with a view to making the enrolled women capable of sustaining themselves financially.

The handicrafts section develops different products in home linen which are sold at exhibitions and the Bazaars organized by Mashal itself.

Besides regular courses, special camps are held during the summer vacations to impart skills in stitching, embroidery, knitting and sewing to girls which would make them financially independent.

A thrift shop aptly named "Meherban Dukan" offers household items and apparel donated by members and friends of Mashal at reasonable prices to the members of the community.

Computer courses, baking, cooking, catering and grooming classes equip the students to earn a livelihood, find placement in the job market or supplement their income for leading a better life.

Mashal Association does not rely solely on the donations by members or Friends of Mashal but also organizes fund raising events, which generate funds for the operation of Mashal Association.

During every calamity, Mashal Association members have not demurred from coming to the aid of the affected.

In short, Mashal Association is not just a benevolent organization for the less fortunate members of the society but a stamp of confidence for those who are willing to carry the torch of hope forward.

The Author is Director Communications of Mashal Association.

'Atrocious crime'

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres marked Wednesday's International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearance by condemning the "atrocious crime" and urging all member states to hold those who perpetrate it accountable.

Enforced disappearance has regularly been used as a tool for instilling fear and exert control over a population, the UN chief pointed out.

"The feeling of insecurity it generates is not limited to close relatives of the disappeared, but also their communities and society as a whole." In a tweet on social media platform X, the UN chief said enforced disappearance was "a serious human rights violation that has frequently been used to spread terror...I call on countries to help put an end to this atrocious crime".

According to the UN human rights office (OHCHR), enforced disappearance can be defined as the arrest, detention, or abduction of an individual by the state or group acting with the authorization of the state, followed by concealment of the whereabouts of the disappeared person.

It is a crime under International Human Rights Law. Victims are frequently subjected to torture and live in perpetual fear for their lives. Their families, ignorant of the fate of their loved ones, are left wondering and waiting for news that may never come. According to the UN, hundreds of thousands of people have vanished during conflicts or periods of repression in at least 85 countries around the world.

"For the families & friends of the disappeared, every day is a fight to know the fate & whereabouts of their loved ones.

Truth & justice are essential," said High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Turk, in a tweet on Wednesday.

"I call on states to guarantee protection, accountability, transparency & redress for all victims of enforced disappearances," he added.

Enforced disappearance, once largely the product of military dictatorships, has become a global problem and is not restricted to a specific region of the world. It has been used frequently as a means of political repression.

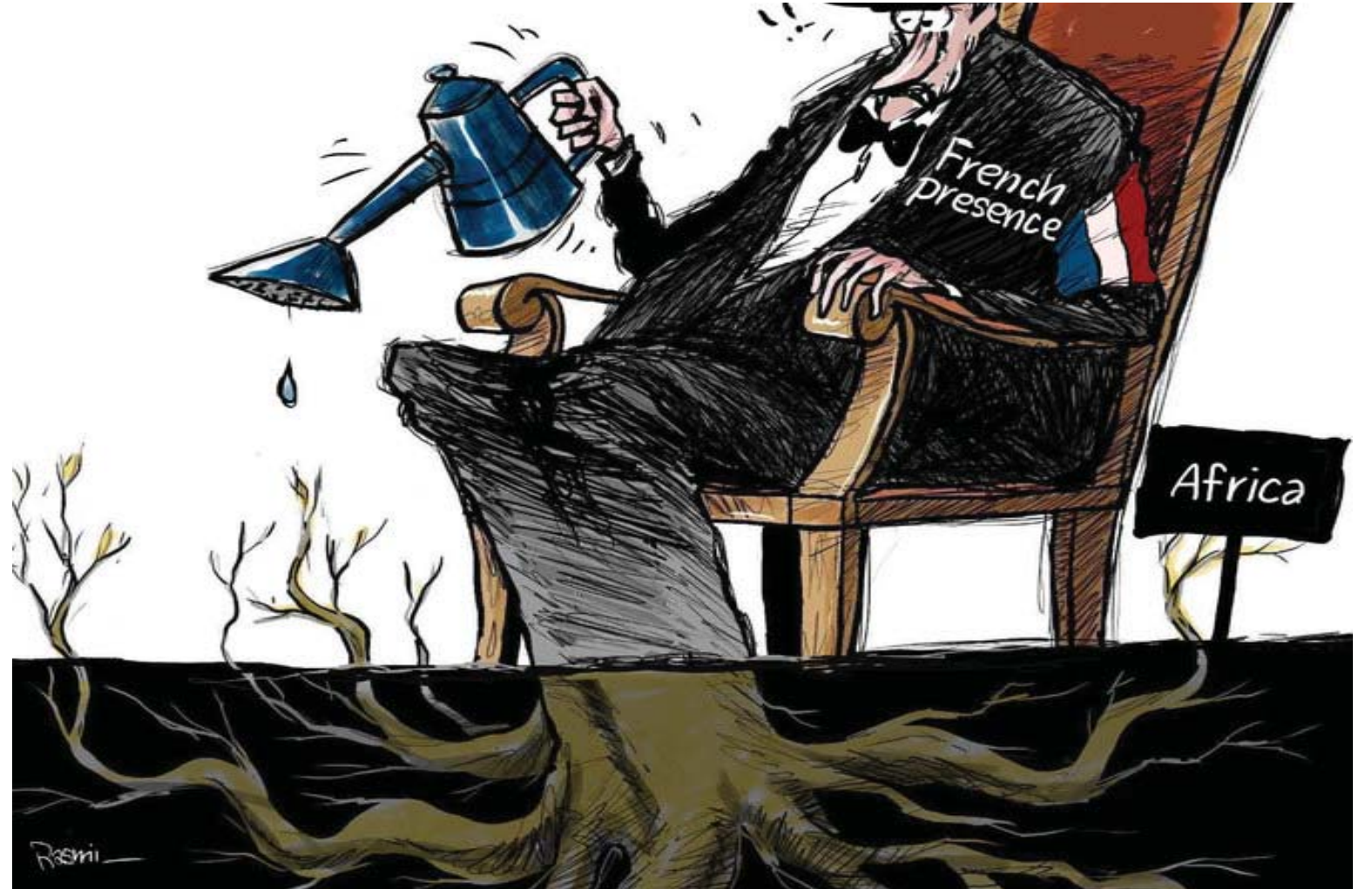
At the same time as the UN General Assembly sanctioned the international day in December 2010, the same resolution adopted the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and declared August 30 the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, beginning in 2011.

OHCHR officials and a large group of UN-appointed regional human rights experts urged States to provide effective access to justice for victims who have suffered harm as the direct result of enforced disappearance, in a statement delivered on Tuesday.

They warned that ensuring adequate access to justice and proper accountability for perpetrators at all levels was critical.

"Access to justice must not be merely theoretical but guaranteed in practice through concrete measures that promote and fully value the genuine and meaningful participation of victims and their representatives throughout the process," the experts said.

In the context of the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, OHCHR officials and the group of UN-appointed human rights experts jointly called on all member states to make pledges to promote justice for all victims of enforced disappearances without delay, and to ratify international and regional instruments on enforced disappearances.



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmī. (Courtesy of Ashfaq Al-Azcat)

Nation is hopeful from capabilities of Current Technocrat Govt - II

Singapore, often hailed for its remarkable economic growth and efficient governance, has a long-standing tradition of including technocrat ministers in its cabinets. The city-state's unique approach blends technocratic competence with democratic governance. Eminent examples include ministers like Goh Keng Swee, an economist who played a pivotal role in Singapore's economic transformation, and Lee Kuan Yew, the country's founding father with a vision to build a modern, efficient nation. Singapore's technocrat ministers have contributed to policies spanning urban planning, education, healthcare, and economic diversification. Their expertise-driven approach has enabled the nation to anticipate and address challenges effectively, leading to sustained economic development and a high quality of life for citizens.

In the realm of technology and innovation, Finland has capitalized on its pool of experts to drive policy formulation. The country's emphasis on education and research has produced a wealth of talent in fields such as technology, science, and education. This expertise has been harnessed by appointing technocrat ministers who champion digitalization, innovation, and sustainable development. By having technocratic leaders at the helm of ministries responsible for technology and innovation, Finland has positioned itself as a global leader in areas like education technology, clean energy solutions, and digital governance. These ministers bring to the table not only an understanding of the latest technological trends but also a vision for incorporating these advancements into societal frameworks.

The examples of Italy, Singapore, and Finland provide vivid illustrations of the impact of technocrat ministers on governance. These individuals, chosen for their expertise, bring invaluable insights and data-driven approaches to tackle challenges that are often intricate and multidimensional. Their contributions extend beyond political affiliations, focusing on evidence-based solutions that yield tangible results.

Recently, the caretaker federal cabinet assumed charge to run Pakistan's day-to-day affairs, the spotlight turns to the individuals comprising the cabinet of the interim govern-

ment. This caretaker cabinet is tasked with ensuring free and fair elections in the country. It is very interesting to see a team of competent technocrat ministers who got remarkable achievements in their fields. Let us look at a brief introduction of the recent cabinet members of Pakistan:

Anwar ul Haq Kakar is a well educated and prominent Pakistani political figure known for his involvement in public service and his contributions to political discourse in the country. He hails from Balochistan, a province in southwestern Pakistan, and has been an active voice in advocating for the rights and development of the region. His role in articulating the concerns of Balochistan and engaging in national-level discussions on various issues has garnered attention and recognition both within the province and beyond.

As a respected figure in Pakistani politics, Anwar ul Haq Kakar has played a role in shaping conversations related to governance, regional development, and the overall political landscape of the country. Having a Caretaker Prime Minister from Baluchistan is itself a good step and resembles as a goodwill gesture for the people of Balochistan. Madad Ali Sindhi, the Interim Education Minister, is a seasoned journalist and accomplished author. With a deep passion for arts and writing, he has dedicated over three decades to literature and culture. He is also the prolific writer of numerous Sindhi books. Mohammad Ali, the interim Federal Minister, previously held the position of Chairman at the Security Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP). He contributed to the PTI government as he led a task force on energy matters. With a journalism background, Murtaza Solangi boasts over 30 years of experience, holding key positions with renowned media organisations. Wasi Shah, the incumbent Caretaker Minister for Tourism, stands as a distinguished writer and prominent television personality. An accomplished poet, Shah's literary repertoire encompasses a multitude of poetry books that delve into various facets of life. From heartfelt nazams and soulful ghazals to resonant romantic and love shayari (poetry), his poetic creations have captured the hearts of readers far and wide.

To be continued

Diverts attention electricity rates, 'Saraiki Soba conference's Deception' - II

National politics is definitely affected by the regional politics. In Pakistan, the issue of provincial rights, individual problems, hardships and violation of basic rights are the main factors behind the prevailing discontent which encouraged the language movements and made a few of them to reach the point of separation. The leadership crisis continues and integrationists, if they exist, are becoming weaker day by day. Although a political gimmick, it has exposed the national leadership who went under the influence of the regional agenda, while the national cause has been overlooked. It testifies to an utter collapse of the political leadership of Pakistan. Consequently, when national leadership collapsed, it encouraged the emergence of regional, sectarian and factional leadership and the main drawback of such leadership is that they, neither represent the nation, nor are acceptable for many within the specific faction or region.

The Saraiki Soba movement was initiated and Multan became the host of the first All-Pakistan Saraiki Conference. The PPP Sindh Chief Minister supported it and several Sindhi scholars including Rasul Bukhsh Palejo joined this event. Many authors have written on the construction of Saraiki identity. Nevertheless, all agree that the Saraiki Soba bases their claim on the following issues:

1. Saraiki as an independent language, separate culture, history and ethnic background.
2. It expects to solve their poverty and other problems.
3. People of the south districts face problems as the capital of Punjab is Lahore and these areas are located at far-flung distance.
4. The south generates many resources but allocation of funds goes to Lahore and the south Punjab is vehemently ignored.

Faisal Awan share feelings "One of the justifications given by the adherents of this cause is solely linguistic based and claims that Saraiki speaking people should have their own province. So are we planning to start dividing Punjab and Pakistan on linguistic basis? Saraiki is a dialect of Punjabi and if we are to start creating lingo-based provinces then

the claims for a Hindko, Pothohari and Majhi province will soon surface and chain of uncontrollable movements for a separate province can take birth. It is a can of worms which if opened will defile minds across Pakistan." In this regard general masses views are that the demand to create the Saraiki Soba suits the feudality in maintaining their rule over the south districts during the coming centuries.

The Saraiki movement has been successful in sensitizing the rest of the population the Saraiki language and culture instead of a movement for a separate province. The desire to have a separate province is a hard task because of the prevailing constitutional, social and political hindrances.

Saraiki language is yet to be recognized as a separate language by the linguists under the accepted methodology and even if this happens having a separate language, ethnicity or culture does not justify the ownership of an independent geographical area as shown before. The Saraiki Soba leadership does not enjoy popular support as demonstrated by the fact that it was 13 unable to win any seat in the electoral history of the Punjab. As it has been seen, the Saraiki Soba seems more like a fairy tale dream than a solution for the poverty issues of the Saraiki speaking population.

Instead of demanding a new Soba, efforts should be made to improve the standard of living and promote a change in mindset among the people here. The Saraiki areas within Punjab can be made an administrative unit with maximum administrative and financial powers which will eliminate the prevailing deprivations as highlighted in the main text. Local languages and literature may be promoted properly for awareness and this will enable the masses to differentiate between convenient and not so much so43 and raise the literacy rate of the people of the area.

Only good governance can suffocate all the ills and hardships of the people of these areas not new Saraiki Soba therefore, the governments ought to introduce policies to ensure prosperity of the masses. The focus on best infrastructure, just sharing of resources, rule of law, implementation of government will in the decision-making and merit can bring a positive change.

Concluded



Abdul Basit Alvi



Zain-ul-Abideen Abid

Türkiye Embassy celebrates Turkish Victory Day

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Turkish Embassy in Pakistan here on Wednesday celebrated the Turkish Victory Day. Lt. General Muhammad Ali Quarter Master General (QMG) Pakistan Army was the chief guest while Senators, former members of the Parliament and civil and military high ranking officers attended the reception.

The Ambassador of Türkiye in Pakistan Dr. Mehmet Paçacı, on the occasion, readout the message of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The president in his message said, "We reach the 101st anniversary of the Great Victory, I would like to congratulate the August 30 Victory Day of our honourable nation, of the Turkish Cypriots, and of more than 7 million Turkish citizens living all across the world." The August 30 Battle of the Commander-in-Chief is one of the most critical milestones in our nation's centuries-long struggle for survival, he added.

The president said, in the words of Ghazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the Great Victory is "a great achievement that once again exemplified in history the enormous might and heroism of the Turkish Army, Turkish Officers and Command Staff". The president in his message said, "With this victory, which is the "immortal monument of the Turkish Nation's idea of freedom and independence", our nation declared to the whole world that it would not let it will be subjugated and its independence and future compromised."



He said, the love of freedom, which is the most distinguished characteristic of Turkey nation, still exists very strongly today.

He said, "The epic resistances, first and foremost, against the July 15 betrayal and the response of our nation to the attacks on our survival in recent years have repeatedly demonstrated how our will remains alive and strong."

The same unwavering will is behind our determination to build the Century of Türkiye, which we announced at a time when the world was shaken by deep crises.

He said, "We created the infrastructure towards this end with the initiatives we brought to life in every field in the last 21 years, and provided our country with every capacity for this great ascent."

The president said, "With the elections of May 14 and May 28, which were a full celebration of democracy, we passed another critical threshold



on the path towards our goal." He said, in a result of the elections, where Türkiye once again witnessed the strong support of nation, the country

expedited policy to provide more services and achievements.

"We will make Türkiye more powerful and raise it above the level

of contemporary civilizations with the new steps we will be taking in the upcoming period. We will definitely turn our vision of the Century

of Türkiye into reality. And we will achieve this as 85 million people coming together hand in hand and heart to heart" he added.

Tunisian companies advised about openings in Pakistan

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador designate of Pakistan to Tunisia, Javed Ahmed Umrani hosted a lunch for the business community of Tunisia at the chancery.

It was attended by renowned businessmen of Tunisia, including presidents, vice presidents, and executive heads of different business chambers, including the Tunisian Union of Industry, Commerce, and Handicraft (UTICA), Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Tunis (TCCI) and the Tunisian Union of Agriculture and Fisheries (UTAP).

The heads of the Textile Federation, Electricity Federation, Hotel Federation, Vocational Training Federation, Garments Federation, and Chemicals Federation also attended the function.

Ambassador of Tunisia to Pakistan Borhene Kamal, Honorary Consul General of Tunisia to Pakistan (for Peshawar region) Mr. Ammad Rashied and Honorary Consul of Pakistan to Tunisia (for Sfax region) Anwar Triki

were also present at the event.

Ambassador designate Javed Ahmed Umrani informed participants about Pakistan's Engage Africa policy with the opening of five new diplomatic missions on the African continent and two new African missions in Pakistan.

He also informed that about the opportunities available in Pakistan for foreign investment under various CPEC projects. He gave a brief overview of Tunisia-Pakistan bilateral trade relations, their trade volume, and important sectors of trade for both countries.

The ambassador also highlighted ways to increase bilateral trade between both countries, which include frequent exchange of trade delegations, the arrangement of single-country exhibitions, and the signing of a Preferential Agreement between the two countries.

The Ambassador stressed that the holding of the upcoming 10th Joint Commission on Economic, Trade, and Technical Matters between Pakistan and Tunisia will ensure the signing of a number of MoUs and the holding of meetings between Joint Working



Groups (JWG) revived by Ministries of both sides in sectors such as olive cultivation, industries, energy, and mining.

He explicitly mentioned that Pakistan, with its 241 million population and 60% youth, is a huge consumer market and a great exporter of skilled labor. His remarks were followed by short addresses by both countries honorary consuls,

who promised to work to enhance trade on both sides, working diligently under the given mandate.

Among many areas of cooperation, textiles, agriculture, electrical industries, automobiles, pharmaceuticals, and surgery were key areas that came under discussion. The Tunisian Ambassador highlighted that Tunisian businessmen need to learn more about Pakistan's markets, especially in the textile sector, as Pakistan has very low tariff rates, cheap labour, and raw materials and processing units that Tunisia needs to import.

He offered that Pakistan may benefit from Tunisia's free trade agreements with the European Union and European countries and also from the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement that was ratified by Tunisia in July 2020.

Pakistan can benefit from this agreement by reaching out to African markets as part of a triangular trade and investment cooperation agreement with Tunisian firms and companies, he added.

The meeting ended with the presentation of mementos to honorary consuls of Tunisia in Pakistan and vice versa.



Ali Raza applauds an EU's statement on Kashmir's situation



EU's VP Josep Borrell and Chair of KC-EU Ali Raza Syed

Sohail Anjum Malik

BRUSSELS: Chairman Kashmir Council Europe (KC-EU) Ali Raza Syed has applauded the recent statement of Josep Borrell, the High Representative and Vice President of European Union on current situation in Jammu and Kashmir.

In a letter in response to a joint letter of a group of Members of European Parliament (MEPs) concerning current situation of human rights in Jammu and Kashmir, Mr. Josep Borrell Fontelles shared his and President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen concerns on the situation.

The letter of EU's vice president said, "We share your concerns about the human rights situation in the territory, and raise them on opportune occasions with our Indian counterparts both in New Delhi and Brussels, as well as at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva."

Giving detail of various occasions, the EU VP's letter said, even individuals cases of human rights such as that of Khurram Parvez, Kashmiri human rights defender were raised during the dialogues on human rights with India.

About EU's participation in the upcoming G20 summit in New Delhi in second week of September, Josep Borrell said, although a delegation from EU will represent the EU in the G20 summit but the Union considers that any allegation of human rights abuse should be investigated thoroughly, promptly and transparently, in line with international human rights obligations.

He however said, "We continue to encourage India and Pakistan to find a lasting solution to the situation in Kashmir, through engaging in a positive dialogue, and by involving as far as possible the Kashmiri people on both sides of the Line of Control.

Resolving differences between India and Pakistan around Kashmir should have a major positive impact on peace and stability across the region.

The EU will also remain closely engaged in discussions with local stakeholders and advocacy groups.

ISSI Launches Book on 'Emerging Threats and Shifting Doctrines'

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: "India was feverishly indulged in unprecedented increase in its fissile material stockpile and acquisition of all kinds of weapon systems and technologies, posing great risk to this region and beyond," stated Lieutenant General (Retd) Sarfraz Sattar, former Director General, Strategic Plans Division (SPD), in his keynote address at the launch of a book titled Emerging Threats and Shifting Doctrines: Challenges to Strategic Stability in South Asia, edited by Malik Qasim Musfata. The event was hosted by the Arms Control & Disarmament Centre (ACDC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies (ISSI). Speakers on the occasion included: Major General (Retd) Ausaf Ali, Advisor, SPD; Dr. Ahmad Khan, Director ACDC-ISSI; Ms. Ghazala Yasmin Jalil, Research Fellow ACDC-ISSI; Dr. Aqeel Akhtar, ACDA, SPD; Dr. Ahmad Khan, ACDA, SPD; Ms. Aamna Rafiq, Research Associate, ACDC-ISSI; Air Commodore (Retd) Khalid

Banuri, former DG, ACDA, SPD; Dr. Adil Sultan, Dean, FASS, Air University, Islamabad.

Lt. Gen. (R) Sarfraz Sattar said that this book was a second breath of fresh air coming out of Pakistan's strategic community this year after Ambassador Zamir Akram's book on Pakistan's Nuclear Deterrence and Diplomacy. Topics covered in ACDC's book were contemporary in nature, arranged in a logical sequence, and related to the subject of strategic stability. He added that Pakistan needed to brace itself for future contingencies where it could see the application of such a course to gain ascendancy over a short span of time.

Earlier, in his welcome remarks, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General ISSI, said that it was no exaggeration to say that the world, today, was at a major inflection point. There was an intensification of geopolitics and the proliferation of old and new threats, both in traditional and non-traditional security domains. Majorpower competition; raging

military conflict in Europe; interlocking food, fuel, and financial crises; and long-standing unresolved disputes in different parts of the world, are serving to accentuate the existing faultlines and exacerbate tensions across regions.

It was important to view the developments in South Asia against this backdrop. Without a doubt, the transformation in South Asia's security environment had both global impulses and regional dynamics. The challenges that arose in its wake encompassed a wide range of issues—from doctrinal shifts and force postures to the development of Ballistic Missile Defence programs, military modernization, and conventional arms buildup. Equally, there was the emergence of threats in the cybersecurity domain, while the growth of emerging technologies and Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) presents new challenges, he added. Different chapters of this book has focused on these challenges and their impact on

strategic stability in South Asia.

Malik Qasim Musfata, Director ACDC-ISSI, and editor of the book, while giving his introductory remarks about the book, stated that each chapter of this book was unique in a way that each highlighted the impact of shifting doctrines and various emerging threats and when all are put together, it presented a bigger picture.

Given the rapid technological revolution at the global level and India-Pakistan conflictual relations, Major General (Retd) Ausaf Ali stressed the need to take timely actions to address the risks generated by LAWS. In her remarks, Ms. Ghazala Yasmin Jalil said that India's doctrinal transformation and precision strike weaponry eroded nuclear deterrence. In his remarks, Dr. Aqeel Akhtar said that the development of sea-based nuclear capabilities constitutes a significant component of India's nuclear modernization which raises the risks of arms race instability, aggressive nuclear posturing, command and



control related issues, and higher alert levels in the region. In his remarks, Dr. Ahmad Khan linked the Indian space ambitions with the changing South Asian strategic landscape. While identifying the consolidation trends of emerging military technologies and their integration into the Indian mili-

tary doctrine and nuclear posture, Ms. Aamna Rafiq said that such transformations would provide an entire spectrum of opportunities to India for the initiations of short, intense, and lethal crises under nuclear threshold against Pakistan.

In his comments, Air Commo-

dore (Retd) Khalid Banuri stated that this book brings out the issue of Pakistan's security dilemma. In his comments, Dr. Adil Sultan stated after the 2019 crisis, India has moved rapidly to make qualitative and quantitative improvements in its air power and in the process of integrating it with its past capabilities.

In his concluding remarks, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BoG ISSI, stated that strategic stability in South Asia was affected by extra-regional dynamics. A conventional asymmetry with India compelled Pakistan to go nuclear, making Pakistan a reluctant nuclear power in 1998. Ever since, the doctrines, postures, actions, and policies of India have eroded regional stability in the absence of any global oversight.

The launch was attended by academics, practitioners, former and serving Pakistani diplomats and officials, experts from think tanks, students, and members of the diplomatic corps in Islamabad.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
45,002.41	46,244.55
Day's High	Day's Low:
46,358.01	44,459.62
Index Value	Change
11,164,518,475	-1242.14
Percentage	Time
-2.69%	31 Aug, 2023 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,439.13	-34.54
Percentage	Time
-0.46%	31 Aug, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
34,861.84	-28.40
Percentage	Time
-0.081%	31 Aug, 1:39 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
32,619.34	+285.88
Percentage	Time
+0.88%	31 Aug, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	206	210
Bahrain Dinar	807.97	815.97
Canadian Dollar	235	240
China Yuan	41.75	42.15
Danish Krone	44.22	44.62
Euro	348	351
Hong Kong Dollar	38.72	39.07
Indian Rupee	3.63	3.74
Japanese Yen	2.3	2.38
Kuwaiti Dinar	985.36	994.36
Malaysian Ringgit	63.83	64.43
New Zealand \$	179.13	181.13
Norwegians Krone	28.04	28.34
Omani Riyal	789.03	797.03
Qatari Riyal	83.27	83.97
Saudi Riyal	86	86.8
Singapore Dollar	233	238
Swedish Korona	26.74	27.04
Swiss Franc	345.28	347.78
Thai Bhat	8.61	8.76
U.A.E Dirham	89.2	90
UK Pound Sterling	407	411
US Dollar	325	328

Inflation rising as a result of the rupee's continual depreciation

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Hanif Mughal, Senior Vice President of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) said on Thursday that inflation is increasing due to the continuous depreciation of the rupee.

The State Bank of Pakistan will have to increase the interest rate soon in an effort to stop the fall of the rupee, which will further affect the public and businesses, he said.

The rupee has gone down from the limit that was demanded by the IMF, the effects of which can be seen in every sector, including electricity bills, he added.

Dr. Hanif Mughal said in a statement issued here today that if the fall of the rupee is not stopped, businesses will suffer, inflation will



flood the country, and poverty will increase.

He said that the IMF wants to reduce the value of the rupee by 20% in 2024, but the situation is worsening beyond that, which is worrying.

The business community's confidence is currently at its lowest ebb, while negative statements from top officials are fueling the fire.

He noted that interest rates are already at record levels, which have tripled banks' profits. And if it is increased further, industry and trade will suffer tremendously.

This will increase unemployment, and the investment, which is already very low, will completely disappear.

Due to the depreciation of the rupee, people are buying dollars, which further increases

demand for US currency and has a negative impact on the overall situation.

Dr. Hanif Mughal said that electricity rates have been increased by 90% in four years, while people are now paying 32% of the bill as taxes, but no action is being taken against those who brought the country to this state.

At the moment, the government is reporting inflation up to 25%, but according to Steve H. Hanke, an American economist and professor of applied economics at Johns Hopkins University, it is actually 50%, which is increasing rapidly.

In these conditions, when the industrial sector is falling rapidly and other businesses are struggling to survive, increasing exports to eighty billion dollars is nothing but a political slogan.

SECP holds a Roundtable Discussion on Strategic Direction of Insurance Sector of Pakistan

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD/KARACHI: The SECP organized a roundtable discussion to firm up the strategic direction of Insurance Sector of Pakistan with the Chairpersons of the boards and CEOs of all insurance companies.

The session was titled "Journey to an insured Pakistan". The roundtable was a single day event, divided into two sessions i.e. one with the professionals of non-life industry and the other with the professionals of life industry. The aim of the roundtable was aimed at fostering an open and collaborative environment between stakeholders to work together for shaping the future of the insurance industry.

SECP Chairman, Mr. Akif Saeed in his welcome address highlighted the impor-

importance of the strategic plans to improve insurance penetration in Pakistan and cited international models where successful execution of long-term strategies steered the insurance sector's growth, adaptability, and responsiveness to evolving needs and market conditions. Furthermore, while underscoring the potential of insurance in Pakistan, he also pointed to the importance of creation of a shared strategic direction to overcoming the underlying challenges.

Finance Minister, Ms. Shamshad Akhtar, being chief guest at the event appreciated the efforts of the SECP in initiating the formulation of the five-year roadmap. She emphasized the importance and role of insurance in a Pakistan, a country prone to natural disasters and societal vulnerabilities. She also highlighted the role of the insurance sector to propel economic

growth by channeling funds into productive ventures, contributing to job creation, promoting long-term financial planning and supporting debt and capital markets.

The participants of the event expressed appreciation for this initiative of SECP and shared valuable insights on the draft strategic direction and affirmed their commitment to actively engage in shaping the strategic direction.

Mr. Aamir Khan, Commissioner Insurance in his concluding remarks appreciated the keen interest of industry participants in both the sessions. He informed the Minister that most of the recommendations of the Insurance Sector's Reforms Committee have been implemented by the SECP. Shamshad Akhtar was a member of the committee formed by the federal government.

Mobilink Bank forges Multiple Partnerships to facilitate Customers and Employees



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Mobilink Bank has entered a series of strategic partnerships to foster holistic well-being for its valued customers and dedicated employees. These partnerships underscore the Bank's commitment to advancing financial inclusivity and creating a positive social impact within the communities it serves.

In collaboration with Taqwa Tours and Travels Islamabad, Mobilink Bank has introduced an exclusive 10% discount for individuals seeking Hajj and Umrah packages. To benefit from the discount, both customers and employees can utilize the DOST App and Mobilink Bank debit card to make their

payments. Through this partnership, the Bank strives to elevate the spiritual experience for its customers and employees, simplifying the pilgrimage booking and payment process.

In alignment with its dedication to environmental sustainability, Mobilink Bank has signed an agreement with National Links Solar Company. Under this agreement, the Bank's customers and employees can avail of a 10% discount on bookings for solar system installation services. The partnership reflects the Bank's strong commitment to promoting eco-conscious practices, proactively addressing the urgent challenges posed by climate change, and aiming to mitigate high electricity expenses.

Group photo

ISLAMABAD: A group photo of Minister of Commerce, Dr. Gohar Ejaz with President EFP Malik Tahir Javaid, Former President Majyd Aziz and Board Director Mian Akram Farid after the meeting.



Photo by Raja Farid

easypaisa and foodpanda Transforming Food Orders with Seamless Digital Payment Integration



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: easypaisa and foodpanda have joined hands to introduce seamless payment options for customers. Users will now be able to pay for their orders directly through their easypaisa wallet.

This partnership empowers millions of easypaisa customers to conveniently order meals from the foodpanda app and make payments directly from their easypaisa mobile accounts. The integration of easypaisa's payment gateway ensures a secure and hassle-free user experience, eliminating any dependency on cash.

Commenting on the strategic collaboration, Farhan Hassan, Head of easypaisa Wallet Business, stated, "At easypaisa, we believe in leveraging the power of collaboration and technology to bring ease into the lives of millions of Pakistanis. Through our partnership with foodpanda, we are another step closer towards solidifying our resolve to develop a digital ecosystem that is beneficial for all, making digital payments convenient and accessible for everyone."

Director Finance, foodpanda Syed Maz Hashmi stated on the occasion, "At foodpanda, we value our customers' convenience and peace of mind at every step of the way. Now, thanks to this fruitful collaboration, users from all over the country can enjoy their favourite food without having to worry about keeping cash for payments at disposal.

The collaboration between easypaisa and foodpanda aims to redefine how payments are made digitally for ordering food and related items.

Infinix Unveils HOT 30: Your Ultimate Gaming Companion

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Infinix, the highest-selling smartphone brand, has today announced its new gaming champion, the Infinix HOT 30 with MediaTek Helio G88 processor available on Xpark and nationwide for Rs. 44,999. This smartphone is a gamer's dream come true, delivering the ultimate gaming experience and seamless performance. The Infinix HOT 30 is now available both online and offline, ensuring accessibility for all smartphone enthusiasts across Pakistan.

Powering the HOT 30 is the MediaTek Helio G88 processor, designed to provide

unparalleled gaming performance and seamless multitasking. Get ready to enjoy faster load times, smoother graphics, and an overall enhanced user experience. The device comes equipped with 33W fast charging technology, ensuring that your gaming sessions are uninterrupted. The massive 5000mAh battery keeps you immersed in your games without worrying about frequent recharges.

Mr. Simon, Head of Infinix Pakistan, stated, "The Infinix HOT 30 marks a significant step forward in providing our customers with a top-notch gaming and multimedia device.

Dr. Umar Saif unveils IT export plan of \$10 billion

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Dr. Umar Saif has unveiled the roadmap to achieve the target of \$10 billion in annual exports through four major dimensions.

Speaking as a chief guest at the 23rd ITCN Asia 2023 at Karachi "Declaring Pakistan The Regional ICT Hub," he stated the annual IT export could be increased to \$3.5 billion from the present level of \$2.6 billion by providing confidence to IT companies to retain their exports income in special accounts of Pakistan banks rather than offshore offices in different countries.

Special forex accounts and online banking platforms are necessary for IT companies to invest in the core infrastructure for purchasing essential software services and hardware equipment, he remarked.

The ministry, through a partnership with the private sector, will train 100,000 software developers to enhance the exports by \$2 billion per annum, which will translate the export values to \$5.5 billion.

In this regard, various training programs and boot camps will be organized to build the capacity of our university graduates in accordance with in-demand skills of the IT industry, he said and added. The training and development will also employ thousands of graduates in the country who will support themselves and their families. Presently, our higher educational institutes produce 35,000 to 40,000 graduates every year in different disciplines, and merely 10 percent are employable.

Dr Umar Saif added a special financing facility should be proposed for mobile phone manufacturers to enhance the production of

mobile phone handsets with enhanced qualities.

Deputy Governor State Bank of Pakistan Saleem Ullah, CEO NITB Babar Bhatti, CEO Tech Destination Pakistan Ali Raza, General Secretary PASHA Nadeem Malik, MD Ignite Asim Shahryar, CEO and MD Systems System Limited, Country Director Unifonic Khurram Rahat, Chairman Sparx Asif Khan, CEO Abacus Consulting Fatima Asad-Said and other dignitaries also spoke at the inaugural ceremony.

The 23rd edition of ITCN Asia, the flagship event of the IT and telecom sector, commenced on August 31 in Karachi at the Expo Center.

Tech Destination Pakistan was the title partner of this event for the first time. Google, P@SHA, and UNIFONIC were also leading partners. Over 450 organizations are participating in the



event, including 100 foreign delegates from eight countries: China, Singapore, Azerbaijan, UAE, KSA, USA, etc. The event hosts more than 400 booths showcasing global brands. Companies such as Special Communications Organization,

InoTech Solutions, Systems Limited, Abacus Consulting, Transworld, UNIFONIC, S. I Global Solutions, etc. are participating in the event. The event is supported by the Ministry of IT & Telecom, the Pakistan Telecommunications Authority (PTA), the

Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB) and Pakistan IT Industry Association (P@SHA). Besides the exhibition, various conferences are taking place on Cybersecurity, E-commerce, Fintech, Agile, Digital Education, Gaming, etc.

Busy international women's cricket Season 2023-24 begins today First September

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Nida Dar-led Pakistan women's team to take on Laura Wolvaardt's South Africa women's side in three T20Is starting 1 September

Both sides will also compete in the three ICC Women's Championship 2022-25 matches from 8 to 14 September at the National Bank Stadium

I am feeling really honoured to lead the Pakistan team as a full-time captain, and that too at home. The South Africa women's side is here for the first time, so it's going to be a great experience, and we are looking forward to the series," says Nida Dar

This is going to be a big series, a closely contested one. Pakistan is a very competitive side, and Nida is a very good captain. They have very talented young players on their side, so we are up for a very good series," says Laura Wolvaardt

PCB to provide match reports and action pics from six matches

Nida Dar will be aiming for a winning start as the captain of the Pakistan women's team when her side takes on the touring South Africa women's team in the first of the three-match T20I series starting 1 September at the historic National Bank Stadium in Karachi.

All-rounder Nida was appointed full-time captain of the side in April this year after Bismah Maroof stepped down from the captaincy following Pakistan's participation in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in South Africa in February.

After the T20I series (1, 3 and 4 September), Pakistan and South

Africa women's sides will feature in three ODIs, which are part of the ICC Women's Championship 2022-25 from 8 to 14 September.

All six matches will be broadcast live on PTV Sports/PTV National, while in Pakistan Region, they will be live-streamed on ARY ZAP. The T20Is will begin at 7:30pm, while the ODIs will start at 3:30pm.

Also, to encourage fans to come to the ground, affordable tickets prices have been fixed for the six matches. The tickets for the matches have been put on sale from Sunday, 27 August on <https://pcb.bookme.pk/>. Additionally, physical tickets will be made available to fans on match days at the stadium's box office.

All VIP enclosures of Fazal Mahmood, Hanif Mohammad and Javed Miandad will be open for spectators.

In one of the busiest international seasons for Pakistan women's team, they are all set to play 15 ODIs (part of ICC Women's Championship 2022-25), 17 T20Is, and participate in the 19th Asian Games from 1 September 2023 to 29 May 2024.

On the other hand, South Africa, who are embarking on their maiden tour to Pakistan will be led by Laura Wolvaardt. She was given the reins of the touring side recently after Suné Laus led South Africa women's team to the final of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup. Both Wolvaardt and Laus visited Pakistan before when they featured in women's exhibition matches in Rawalpindi in March this year.

In the T20I format, the hosts are ranked seventh in the ICC Rankings,



while South Africa are ranked fifth. On a head-to-head basis, Pakistan and South Africa have played a total of 18 T20Is, three of which include matches in ICC events. Out of the 15 T20Is part of bilateral series, South Africa have won eight, while the hosts have won seven. The last time both sides featured in a T20I match was in Durban in 2021, where Pakistan defeated South Africa by eight runs on DLS.

While talking to PCB Digital on the eve of the series, captain Nida Dar said: "I am feeling really honoured to lead the Pakistan team as a full-time captain, and that too at home. The South Africa women's side is here for the first time, so it's going to be a great experience, and

we are looking forward to the series.

There is definitely a lot of cricket happening in Pakistan, with the Men's Asia Cup also taking place. There's a lot of cricket for the fans to witness and enjoy.

The National Bank Stadium is a historic venue, and I have always dreamed of playing here against a very competitive side. I am very hopeful that the team will produce positive results here.

We are fully focused on the game. We haven't played international cricket in the recent past, but we kept ourselves fit through different skills camps and practice games. The team combination is really strong, and as a leader I am looking forward to achieving positive results for the team in the series.

We have a very busy season coming up, so we have prepared ourselves well. The Asian Games are scheduled after the South Africa series, so this series will help us prepare well in the Asian Games. I expect us to perform well in the series, and we are geared up for the busy year ahead.

"Cricket is one sport, whether it's men's or women's cricket, that is loved by fans across the country. I urge the fans to come to the stadium and support this game."

Laura Wolvaardt said: "I am very excited to be here again in Pakistan. I had a great time before when I was here for the exhibition match and now I am looking forward to a memorable time."

"It's our first-ever tour to Pakistan, so the training sessions ahead of the T20I series will be very important to help us understand the conditions here."

This is going to be a big series, a

close contested one. Pakistan is a very competitive side, and Nida is a very good captain. They have very talented young players on their side, so we are up for a very good series.

I will encourage the fans to come; it's going to be exciting cricket matches in the evening, and definitely, people should come and support."

Pakistan T20I squad:

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

Reserves - Aneesha Nasir, Omaira Sohail and Waheeda Akhtar

Player support personnel: Nahida Khan (manager), Maultashim 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) and Syed Nazir Ahmed (media manager)

1 September - First T20I. Faisal Afridi and Rashid Riaz (on-field umpires), Tariq Rasheed (third umpire), Afia Amin (reserve umpire); Muhammad Javed Malik (match referee)

3 September - Second T20I. Rashid Riaz and Tariq Rasheed (on-field umpires), Faisal Afridi (third umpire), Afia Amin (reserve umpire); Muhammad Javed Malik (match referee)

4 September - Third T20I. Faisal Afridi and Tariq Rasheed (on-field umpires), Rashid Riaz (third umpire), Afia Amin (reserve umpire); Muhammad Javed Malik (match referee)

Ample opportunity for Babar Azam to break more records by year end

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: With the Asia Cup just commenced and the 13th edition of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup just weeks away, Pakistani Skipper Babar would have ample opportunity to break more records by the end of the calendar year.

As records tumbled during Pakistan's dominant display in the Asia Cup opener, inspirational skipper Babar Azam confirmed his place among the list of all-time greats with a superb individual century against Nepal in the opening game of the Asia Cup in Multan on Wednesday.

Babar stroked a magnificent 151 from just 131 deliveries and in the process went past South Africa great Hashim Amla and became the quickest player in the history of the game to score 19 ODI centuries.

Babar reached the feat from just 102 ODI innings, with Amla holding the previous best mark in 104 innings.

Babar was at his brilliant best as he scored a superb century against New Zealand at the 2019 World Cup.

The world's No.1 ranked ODI batter hit 14 fours and four massive sixes during his entertaining innings and more records came tumbling as a result.

The 151 was the second highest score achieved at the Asia Cup, only bettered by Virat Kohli's 183 against Pakistan in 2012.

As records shared by the International Cricket Council (ICC), it was the first



time a captain has scored 150 or greater at an Asia Cup, beating the previous best from a skipper when Kohli compiled 136 against Bangladesh in 2014.

It was just the second time Babar has scored more than 150 in an ODI, with his innings of 158 against England at Birmingham in 2021 still his highest ODI score.

The knock sees Babar maintain his healthy lead as the No.1 ranked player

on the MRF Tyres ODI Batting Rankings.

The innings boosted Babar's ODI average to an astonishing 59.47, which is the fourth highest of all time in men's ODI cricket and the best of any player with a minimum of 2000 ODI runs. It was Babar's 31st international century, drawing him level with Pakistan legends Javed Miandad and Saeed Anwar with

Younis Khan (41), Mohammad

Yousuf (39) and Inzamam-ul-Haq (35) were the only players from the country in front of him. It also means Babar was now just one century away from equaling Anwar's record of 20 ODI centuries - the most by any player from the country. Pakistan were next in action at the Asia Cup on arch-rival India in Pallekele on Saturday, while their first clash at the World Cup this year comes against the Netherlands in Hyderabad on October 6.

50 to 60 players to be short-listed for U19, Emerging & Senior Teams: PCB Selector Marina Iqbal

Sports Desk

PESHAWAR: National selector Pakistan Cricket Board Marina Iqbal Thursday said that they would short-list 50 to 60 players from each of the Peshawar and Abbottabad Regions for the three forms of teams U19, Emerging and Senior Teams.

Talking to APP, Marina Iqbal said that they held trials in both Peshawar and Abbottabad Regions and the names of the short-listed 50 to 60 players for each region would be announced shortly by the Pakistan Cricket Board.

Pakistan's top Women Level-III Coach and Cricket Coordinator for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Hajra Sarwar, male coaches Imran and Rehmat Gul were also present.

She said open trials were conducted to select women cricketers in three different categories including U19, Emerging, and Senior.

Marina Iqbal, who herself represented Pakistan, said that good talented players are coming up in women cricket and hopefully some talented players would be part of the three different formats teams.

Marina Iqbal is a Pakistani cricket commentator and former cricketer, was a right-arm medium-fast bowler and right-handed batter.



She appeared in 36 One Day Internationals and 42 Twenty20 Internationals for Pakistan between 2009 and 2017.

She said it is golden opportunity for women cricketers to be part of the trials and do their efforts to select.

She said the Pakistan Cricket Board was now giving central contracts even at the District and Regional levels which would also boost women cricket in the country.

It is a good chance for the women cricketers to appear in the trials for the selection of U19 and Senior teams as well from Peshawar Region.

She said, the Pakistan Cricket Board,

as part of its continuous effort to unearth women cricketers at the grassroots level, held nationwide women cricket trials, across eight cricket academies from Aug 23 to 31.

These trials provide an exceptional platform for talented female cricketers from various age categories to showcase their skills and progress to the higher levels of the game, Marina Iqbal said.

The trials, she said, were conducted for three age groups including U19, in which players who were born on or after September 1, 2004 were eligible, an Emerging Team and Seniors categories respectively.

About the trials, she said, it would help identify talent and select squads for Pakistan Emerging and Pakistan U19 teams.

Pakistan Emerging side will compete against West Indies Emerging team at home in October this year, while Pakistan U19 will feature in a triangular event involving Bangladesh and Sri Lanka in Bangladesh in January 2024.

She disclosed that PCB had recently awarded first-ever domestic contracts to 74 women cricketers among them four players Mahnoor, Alveena, Zainab and Tehzeeb, players hailing from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, got the central contract.

With the nationwide trials, we are eagerly poised to bring in a new wave of talented individuals forward.

"We have a great and exciting amount of women's cricket events ahead, and these trials will help us identify splendid talent that the selectors can consider for the national teams' squads," Marina Iqbal said.

She said more than a hundred girls from Peshawar and 120 players from Abbottabad Region took part in the trials and showed their best talent.

"We are trying hard to bring forward the cricketers. It is expected that the girls of Pakhtunkhwa, like the male players, will also make themselves at the world level in cricket."

UN agency hails FIFA action against Spanish football federation chief

Sports Desk

UNITED NATIONS: UN Women, the world body's agency championing gender equality has underlined its strong stance against abuse or harassment of women taking part in sport.

The agency issued a statement hailing the decision by the global football organization FIFA to suspend Spanish soccer federation president Luis Rubiales for kissing star player Jennifer Hermoso on the lips without her consent, after the national team won the Women's World Cup earlier this month.

"UN Women, as a supporter of women's sport and partner of FIFA, welcomes FIFA's decisive action with regard to the actions of the Spanish football federation president and the launching of a full investigation after a clearly inappropriate act towards a sportswoman at the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup final," it said.

Spain defeated favourites England 1-0, scoring its first-ever victory at the competition, which takes place every four years.

This year's tournament was held in Australia and New Zealand.

The kiss occurred during the medal ceremony in Sydney on 20 August. Rubiales said he made a mistake and that the kiss was consensual, but Ms. Hermoso has stated emphatically that it was unsolicited and she felt violated.

Since then, there have been calls for Rubiales to resign and the winning squad has said it would not play for Spain until he is removed.

FIFA announced on Saturday that he has been suspended for 90 days while disciplinary proceedings are underway.

UN Women said it "joins all those asserting zero tolerance for any form of abuse or harassment, at anytime, anywhere in women's sports." "Women everywhere have the right to fully participate in sports without any form of abuse or harassment - be it behind closed doors, in locker rooms, on social media, or on the world stage," the statement said.

Furthermore, everyone involved in sports, at whatever level, has a duty to play their part.

"We must collectively commit that violence, harassment, and abuse in women's sport will not be tolerated and cannot continue, so that we can truly say it's over."

Pakistan secure top position in Asia Hockey5s World Cup Qualifiers

Pakistan hockey team, after its final pool match ended in a draw against Malaysia with a score of 5-5, has managed to secure the top spot in Asia Hockey5s World Cup Qualifiers.

Men in Green who have been unbeaten in the tournament so far, top the points table with 13 points, followed by India with 12 points.

In their final pool match against Malaysia, Rana Abdul Waheed scored three goals, whereas Mohammad Murtaza and Abdul Rehman scored one each for the Men in Green.

Meanwhile, Din Muhammad scored a brace and Mat Syarman, Anwar Akhimullah and Ishak Arif notched up one each for Malaysia.

Malaysia secured third position on the points table, followed by Bangladesh, Oman and Japan finished in fourth, fifth and sixth place, respectively.

A day earlier, Men in Green defeated arch-rivals India and Bangladesh 5-4 and 15-6, respectively.

The Pakistani team is accompanied by head coach Olympian Wasim Feroze and manager Major Muhammad Shahnawaz Khan.

India, Malaysia, Pakistan, Japan, Oman and Bangladesh are placed in the Elite pool. Hong Kong China, Indonesia, Afghanistan, Kazakhstan and Iran will compete in the Challenger pool.

After the teams complete their pool matches, the first crossover matches will be played amongst the bottom two teams of the elite pool and the top two teams in the challenger pool. The winners of these two contests will play in the second phase of crossover matches, against the teams in third and fourth place of the elite pool.

The two top finishers of the elite pool will take on the winners of the second crossovers in the semi-finals.

The losing semi-finalists will play in the bronze medal match, where the winner, along with the two finalists will qualify for the inaugural FIH Hockey5s World Cup Oman 2024.