



## Group photo

NEW YORK: A delegation of US-Pakistan Business Council calls on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on the sidelines of the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly on Friday.



Photo: Online

## No change in Nawaz Sharif's return plan: Shehbaz

## Spokesman Report

LONDON: Former prime minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday claimed that there was 'no change' in the return plan of his brother and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif as the latter is set to land in Pakistan on October 21.

Shehbaz Sharif rushed back to London merely hours after he returned to the country from the UK, a development that gave way to rumours regarding a possible change in travel plans of Nawaz Sharif.

The former premier left London earlier in the week after spending several weeks here, but upon reaching Lahore, made a sudden plan to return in order to meet with his elder brother, party supremo Nawaz Sharif.

Sources told that a consul-

tion meeting was held in London which was attended by PML-N bigwigs including Maryam Nawaz, Ishaq Dar, Abid Sher Ali, Mian Javed Latif, Talal Chaudhry, Burjees Tahir, and Sheikh Rohail Asghar.

Speaking on the occasion, the PML-N supremo said that Pakistan - a prospering nation - was brought to the brink of destruction under a conspiracy in 2017.

"Qamar Bajwa, Faiz Hameed, Saqib Nisar and Azmat Saeed are criminals of 22-crore people", he alleged.

"The country will not be able to move forward until the characters involved in the conspiracy are brought to justice," he said.

Meanwhile, Shehbaz Sharif - while talking to journalists - said that he returned to London on directions of



Nawaz Sharif. "No change was made in return plan of PML-N supremo," he added.

In response to a question, Shehbaz said he never visited Gujranwala and did not hold a meeting.

Former prime minister Shehbaz Sharif had earlier announced Nawaz Sharif's return to Pakistan on October 21. "The PML-N supremo will

be given a splendid welcome on his arrival in Pakistan", he added.

He said that his brother was removed from power through a conspiracy and the rigging in the 2018 general elections left Pakistan behind in the region.

"We held consultations with the senior leadership of the party and decided that the PML-N supremo will return to

Pakistan in October and lead the election campaign," Shehbaz Sharif said while talking to journalists in London.

The PML-N president also said that his brother would come to Pakistan and face the law and "there are no two opinions on it".

Earlier, former finance minister Ishaq Dar said that there are no hurdles in PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif's participation in elections.

Ishaq Dar said that article 62 (1) (f) which decreased the disqualification sentence to five years was passed by the parliament and also approved by the president.

He said that after the approval of article 62 (1) (f) former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) head Jahangir Tareen are now eligible to participate in elections.

## Stefan Dercon along with Jane Marriott called on Dr Shamshad

## Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Stefan Dercon, Professor of Economic Policy at Economics Department of Oxford University and former Chief Economist DFID along with the British High Commissioner to Pakistan Jane Marriott called on Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs Dr Shamshad Akhtar.

During the meeting, the Finance Minister shared policy actions to enhance Pakistan's economic resilience in the face of global challenges, with a focus on sustainable develop-



ment and inclusive growth, according to a press release issued here Friday.

Dercon affirmed its continued commitment to support

Pakistan's economic development and applauded the country's efforts in actively pursuing a reform agenda to enhance economic stability.

The British High Commissioner Jane Marriott commended the longstanding relationship between the United Kingdom and Pakistan and

pledged to explore avenues for increased economic cooperation and investment between the two countries.

The Finance Minister appreciated the collaboration and expressed gratitude for the support provided by the World Bank and the United Kingdom.

She expressed the desire to further foster bilateral relations in various fields.

The meeting concluded with a sense of optimism and shared commitment to work together to address the economic challenges facing Pakistan and to promote sustainable development and cooperation.

## PPP suspends membership of Khosa

## Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan People's Party Secretary General Syed Nayyar Hussain Bukhari has suspended the Central Executive Committee membership of Sardar Latif Khosa.

According to PPP sources on Friday, the move follows a show cause notice issued to Khosa by the PPP secretary general a week ago, which went unanswered, leading to the suspension of his membership. Additionally, Bukhari has instructed the PPP provincial presidents to provide their recommendations for candidates in the upcoming elections within 15 days.

## Only one bidder left for Pakistan Steel Mills privatisation

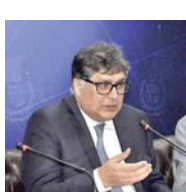
## News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Three out of four parties from China that showed interest in acquiring Pakistan Steel Mills (PSM) are no longer interested in the transaction.

In a press conference, Federal Minister for Privatisation Fawad Hassan Fawad said out of the four Chinese companies group, only one is still showing interest in the privatisation of the mill.

He further said that the privatisation commission would continue discussion on the PSM in the light of recommendations of the financial advisor who were appointed in 2020.

The minister further clarified that the caretaker government would only



continue the process of operation of the PSM and would not deal with the land of the PSM.

Yesterday, the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) authorized Finance Division to approve the payment of projected net salary for the first six months of the Financial Year 2023-24 to be disbursed according to the salary demand of Pakistan Steel Mill (PSM) for every month from already approved budgetary allocation of Rs. 10 billion.

The ECC considered a summary of Ministry of Industries & Production regarding "Approval for Disbursement of Salary of Pakistan Steel Mill (PSM) Employees for the Financial Year 2023-24".

## Controversial tweet: Journalist Khalid Jamil in FIA custody for two days

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: A district and sessions court in Islamabad on Friday remanded journalist Muhammad Khalid Jamil in the custody of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) for two days following his arrest over a 'controversial tweet'.

The journalist was presented in an Islamabad district and sessions court today after he was arrested last night in Cyber Crime Act.

During the hearing, the FIA demanded a 10-day physical remand of Khalid Jamil, which was strongly opposed by the journalist's lawyers.

Jamil's Lawyer Naveed Malik said that every citizen has the right to freedom of expression in Pakistan, noting that the agency has violated the decision of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) by arresting the journalist.



After hearing arguments from both side, Judicial Magistrate Shabbir Bhatti approved denied FIA's request and granted a two-day physical remand of journalist Khalid Jamil.

## Implementation of UNSC resolutions on J&K vital to ensure region's peace: FM

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani on Friday said the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir was vital to ensuring regional peace and ending the unnecessary arms race between Pakistan and India.

Talking to Al Jazeera, the foreign minister said the non-implementation of these resolutions were directly impacting the peace of the region besides hampering development of both Pakistan and India and also the progress of SAARC (South Asian Association of Regional Countries).

Jilani said Kashmir is the most important and the core issue between Pakistan and India in the context of the UNSC resolutions that call for holding an impartial plebiscite in accordance with the aspirations of the Kashmiris.

He regretted that resolutions faced non-implementation despite their passage over 70 years ago.

He pointed out that Kashmir was under siege with 7,000 Indian troops deployed in the valley, experiencing a worst-ever violation of human rights.

Terming Kashmir a human prison, he said the people were being denied their just rights and the leaders were put under detention by India.

Pakistan and India have fought wars on this dispute and it is a source of constant tension, he added.

The foreign minister said it was the responsibility of the UNSC to ensure the implementation of its resolutions lingering on for a long time.

Asked if Kashmir's ordeal could be



compared with Palestine, he said both faced the denial of justice.

He mentioned attending the meeting of the OIC Contact Group on Palestine in New York on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session, where he expressed Pakistan's complete solidarity with the people of Palestine.

He stressed early implementation of the resolutions whether they relate to Kashmir or Palestine.

Speaking about the devastating impact of climate change, he said it was a huge challenge for Pakistan, as it was among the 10 most negatively affected countries by the phenomenon.

He recalled the huge loss suffered by the country last year in which 30 million people were affected, besides the loss incurred to crops, livestock, and infrastructure.

He mentioned that the UN Secretary General played an extremely helpful role following the climate catastrophe and thanked him for holding a conference in Geneva for Pakistan.

## Ashrafi advocates Islamic unity for resolving Palestine, Kashmir issues, combating Islamophobia

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Ulama Council Chairman, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, on Friday emphasized that unity among Islamic countries was the key to addressing issues such as Palestine, Kashmir, Islamophobia and other challenging concerns.

Speaking to the media, he said leaders of Turkey, Qatar, and Iran raised their voices against the desecration of the Holy Quran during the

United Nations General Assembly, highlighting the need to protect global peace, considering the emotions of over two billion Muslims worldwide.

Ashrafi said Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's recent interview had made it clear that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia had not been oblivious to the Palestine issue in the past, and it remained committed to playing a role in resolving both the Kashmir and Palestine issues as the head of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

## Caretaker Minister for Energy Muhammad Ali chairs meetings of five departments

## Bureau Report

LAHORE: Caretaker Federal Minister for Energy, Power and Petroleum Muhammad Ali on Friday chaired separate meetings of five departments including LESCO, PITC, NTDC, WAPDA and NESPAK, here at WAPDA House.

The minister was briefed by the relevant officers about the working of their respective departments.

Lahore Electric Supply Company Chief Executive Engineer Shahid Haider, in a presentation on LESCO, briefed the minister about the performance and issues facing the company. He also informed the minister about ongoing power theft crackdown, saying it was producing good results.

National Transmission and Despatch Company Limited (NTDC) Managing Director Engineer Dr Rana Abdul Jabbar Khan highlighted company's profile, future expansion plan, major achievements and issues being faced by the company. The minister emphasised strengthening transmission system for enhancing efficiency of the NTDC.

Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) Chairman Lt Gen (ret) Sajjad Ghani and members of the authority briefed the caretaker minister about WAPDA projects and activities. The chairman also highlighted WAPDA's role in efficient and sustainable management of water and power resources in Pakistan.

## Mutation deed of FBR land handed over to buyers

## Commerce Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Privatisation Fawad Hassan Fawad on Friday met Sohail Ilahi, CEO Kiran Builders & Developers (Pvt) Limited and handed over the mutation deed of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) land situated in Faisalabad. The land measuring 15 Kanals was auctioned by Privatisation Commission in September 2020, on behalf of the Federal Board of Revenue (Custom Department), while the full payment was made in February 2021, said a press release. The transaction faced legal issues from Government of Punjab

and land could not be transferred to the successful buyer. Privatisation Commission made persistent efforts to resolve the bottlenecks and obtain necessary No Objection Certificates (NoCs) from the Board of Revenue Punjab. Due to the personal efforts of the Minister for Privatisation, the land was successfully mutated on September 20, 2023, it added. The buyer expressed his gratitude to the Privatisation Commission, particularly to the Federal Minister and the Secretary, for their personal efforts. He further said that such proactive measures by the Privatisation Commission enhanced the confidence.

# Govt focused on strengthening capital market to bolster economy: Gohar Ejaz

**Bureau Report**

KARACHI: Caretaker Federal Minister for Commerce, Industries and Production, Dr Gohar Ejaz, on Friday, said that the government was focused and keen to strengthen the capital markets with the aim of bolstering the economy.

The minister reiterated the commitment while chairing a meeting of board of directors of Pakistan Stock Exchange during his visit to the PSX Karachi.

PSX directors including Javed Kureshi, Ahmed Chinoy and Nadeem Naqvi; securities brokers and capital market representatives were present at the occasion.

Dr Gohar Ejaz said that the caretaker



government was taking comprehensive and integrated measures in different sectors of the economy which would lead to stabilise and strengthen the national economy.

MD and CEO PSX, Farrukh Khan, gave an overview of the capital market

through the digital online platform and briefed about the potential for growth of the capital market, market capitalization to GDP ratio and other relevant matters and also presented suggestions for enhancing its role to benefit the economy.

He said that at present PSX capitalization to GDP ratio was one of the lowest in the region and that the market needed the support of the government along with the able guidance of the SECP to augment the market in this respect.

He termed minister's visit and meeting with capital market stakeholders as a sign of encouragement for the capital market participants and entities

including leading brokerage houses and market fraternity.

Other market participants including securities brokers and capital market representatives apprised the minister on the challenges faced in the path to realization of full potential and growth of the capital market.

The Minister keenly listened to all the participants and informed them that government had sector specific plans to address the issues and boost the economy through the capital market.

Later, PSX Board members presented a memento to caretaker Federal Minister for Commerce, Industries and Production, Dr. Gohar Ejaz.

*Guru Nanak's life teaches world to live with peace and prosperity. Khalil George*



**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Human Rights, Khalil George on Friday said that Guru Nanak's taught the world to live with peace for prosperous world.

The minister expressed the views during his visit to shrine of Guru Nanak Devji.

There was an urgent need to create relationships of mutual respect and love among all communities, he added.

The minister urged the political leaders to pay attention to the message of peace, adding "We need leaders who can become role models for the youth."

## Welfare work

LAHORE: A large number of the people gather surround the patrol pump to refill bike's tanks free of cost, under the banner of prominent Pakistan's Welfare Organization, in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

## Employees face difficulties in payment of salaries

**Adam Khan Wazir**

WANA: PTI previous government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had announced to establish two districts of South Waziristan one district was named Lower and the other as Upper.

However, due to the slowness of the process of bifurcation, further problems started to arise, and due to which the District Accountant Officer is not ready to work in his district.

While, unfortunately, the District Accountant Officer of Lower South Waziristan Israr Khan is preferring to work in Tank District, 160 km away, instead of Wana, and where he is dealing with treasury and office affairs along with their staff.

On the one hand, other government employees including the police are facing serious difficulties due to the District Accountant Officer sitting away in the tank District.

On the other hand, contractors and common people have also faced difficulties.

While on the one hand, the police or any other government officer is forced to travel 160 km to district tanks to carry out their work, and they will have to spend thousands

of rupees.

In this regard, when this question was put before the District Accountant Officer Israr Khan, why are you sitting in Tank district instead of your district Lower South Waziristan?

Where you are dealing with the office affairs of government employees and other people in another district.

So, in reply, he said that due to the slowness of the bifurcation process, we have not received the proper provision of the Social Action Program (SAP) from the office of Accountant General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said, the reason why we are sitting here is because we are dealing with office affairs from another tank district.

He also said that for us there is a big problem with leak-up staff, and we don't have an editor to sign and seal on a check.

He further said that until the provision of the Social Action Program (SAP) comes from the AG office, we will continue to run office affairs from here.

He said, We will go to Lower Waziristan only when our SAP issue is resolved

On the other hand, Awami National Party senior leader Ayaz

Wazir said while talking to the media, that after the establishment of a separate district of Lower South Waziristan of the provincial government, there is no justification for the District Accountant Officer to sit in another district tank.

Ayaz Wazir said that it is the biggest regret that the accountant officer of one district is sitting in another district to deal with office affairs, and so why doesn't it come here? The caretaker provincial government is treating us like a stepmother.

He strongly demanded Accountant General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and provincial government, that our District Accountant Officer of Lower South Waziristan Israr Khan be immediately shifted to their own district, and orders to deal with office affairs should be issued in Wana.

Ayaz Wazir said that if the demand is not accepted, we will be forced to protest strongly.

Therefore, Accountant General KPK, Finance Department and Provincial Government should take measures on an emergency basis in this regard, so that government employees including common people do not have to go to other district tanks for their works.

## APPA urges Governor State Bank to timely conduct biometrics

**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: All Pakistan Pensioners Association (APPA) General Secretary Aurangzeb Tanuli Friday appealed to the Governor State Bank of Pakistan to oblige the management of all banks to conduct timely biometrics of all pensioners in March and September as per the policy. In a statement here, the Association General Secretary said it was not possible for pensioners to submit biometrics along with life and no marriage certificate together, which was against the policy. Tanuli said blocking the pension account of a pensioner on this basis was illegal and this issue should be resolved immediately so that the problems of the pensioners could be resolved. The general secretary pointed out the important issue and said that there were clear orders from the State Bank and the Finance Minister that all pensioners were required to get their biometrics done in March and September every year. "And if for any reason, if the biometric is not obtained, then the pensioner will have to submit the life certificate. Similarly, if a widow is a pensioner, then she will also be required to undergo biometrics and submit a no marriage certificate. After the age of 60 years, the requirement to submit a no marriage certificate will also cease to fulfill all these strict conditions," he added. He further mentioned that all male and female pensioners start visiting their respective banks in March and September, but every time they were turned away by the bank management asking them to come next time or month.

## Sardar Attique urges UNGA for intel Kashmir dispute resolution commission

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**



RAWALPINDI: Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan former Premier of A.J.K, President Muslim Conference, has appealed to the presidents, prime ministers, foreign ministers and delegates of countries participating in ongoing UN General Assembly session in New York to help implement UN Security Councils resolutions on Kashmir dispute pending for past 75 years. By virtue of those approved resolutions solution of Kashmir dispute has become an international institutional liability of the United Nations General Assembly, he reminded.

Presiding a meeting of the Core Committee of his party in Mujahid Manzil here Thursday he reminded the world leaders that non-settlement of Kashmir dispute has landed 150 million Kashmiris in unending travails let loose by Indian forces occupying larger part of Jammu and Kashmir state. After August 5, 2019 India has handed over its held part of Jammu and Kashmir to over one million armed forces busy grabbing Kashmiris' properties, homes and hearths and plains. Leaders of all principal Kashmiri political and religious parties are languishing in Indian jails, Kashmiri youth being tortured in secret torture cells, hundreds of women have been abducted under pretext of houses searches, he pointed out.

Indian forces are master terrorists gagging the civilized voices demanding implementation of human rights and UN Kashmir rulings. Even teenagers are suffering in torture cells set up by the occupying Indian forces across Kashmir, he indicated in his party's Core Committee's meeting. The meeting was attended by a number of senior party cadres. He urged government of Pakistan to distribute in the ongoing UN GA session texts of all approved resolutions of the UN Security Council on Kashmir dispute.

He appealed to the President of the UN General Assembly to form an International UN Kashmir Resolutions Implementation Commission. Kashmir solution shall bring a new dawn of South Asian peace, prosperity and harmony. Kashmiris are ready to extend all out cooperation if the proposed Commission is set up, he assured.

## Human rights minister visits Kot Lakhpat jail

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Human Rights Khalil George commended the Kot Lakhpat jail administration during his visit to jail on Friday.

He expressed appreciation for their efforts to enhance prisoners' rehabilitation. He noted that the prison was conducting various training programmes aimed at developing skills of inmates, with the goal of reintegrating them as positive members of society upon completing their sentences.

Furthermore, he mentioned that prisoners had conveyed their contentment with the overall environment and food quality in jail. The minister emphasised that the time spent in prison serves as an opportunity for inmates to learn and grow, ultimately preparing them to become responsible citizens upon their release.

During his visit, Khalil George interacted with prisoners and inquired about their living conditions. Additionally, he conducted a thorough review of the prison facilities, including the kitchen, hospital, women's wards, and PCO, expressing his satisfaction with the arrangements.

## Army, Rangers to launch joint operation against dacoits in Sindh's 'katcha area'

KARACHI: Sindh Caretaker Chief Minister Justice (retd) Maqbool Baqar on Friday greenlighted the Pakistan Army and Sindh Rangers' comprehensive joint operation against dacoits in the province's Katcha (riverine) area.

Chairing the 28th meeting of the provincial APEX committee in Karachi, the interim CM approved a joint comprehensive operation against dacoits in the area of Sukkur and Larkana divisions.

During the meeting Justice (retd) Baqar expressed dismay over authorities' failure to neutralise and tackle a handful of outlaws in the Katcha area bringing the construction of the Ghotki-Kashmore bridge to a halt.

The huddle was attended by provincial ministers and security officials including Caretaker Sindh Home Minister Brigadier (retd) Haris Nawaz, Corps Commander Karachi Lieutenant (Lt) General Babar Iftikhar, Sindh Inspector General Police (IGP) Riffat Mukhtar, Director General (DG) Sindh Rangers Major General Azhar Waqas, Chief Secretary Dr Fakhre Alam and others.

Briefing the session on the situation in the riverine area, IGP Mukhtar apprised that around 50 to 60 dacoits were operating in the Katcha area whereas the rest were their tribesmen living there.

## Nestlé Pakistan inaugurates 7th clean, safe drinking water facility in Islamabad I-10/4

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Committed to be a force for good, Nestlé Pakistan inaugurated a facility to provide clean and safe drinking water to more than 12,000 people in Islamabad's Sector I-10/4 in partnership with Capital Development Authority (CDA).

During the inauguration, Jason Avanceña, Chief Executive Officer, Nestlé Pakistan said, "We are committed to Creating Shared Value (CSV) throughout our value chain for communities and inauguration of this seventh

clean safe drinking water facility is a testament to our commitment to making a positive impact for families, communities and the planet."

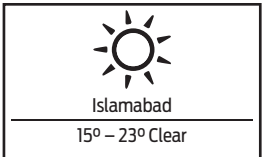
"The impact we make is only possible because of the efforts of our employees, partners, and stakeholders across our value chain. I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to CDA for their support."

Nestlé Pakistan has already developed and currently managing six clean and safe drinking water facilities around its manufacturing sites in Sheikhpura and Kabirwala. With the inauguration of

this facility in Islamabad, approximately 72,000 people will have access to clean and safe drinking water daily around the company's manufacturing sites.

Speaking on the occasion, Sheikh Waqar Ahmad, Head of Corporate Affairs & Sustainability, Nestlé Pakistan said, "Nestlé Pakistan has an active and effective Community Engagement Program for the communities where we operate, and these clean and safe water drinking facility that are in line with United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 6, are helping us prioritize the community's needs."

The facility will use ultra filtration water treatment technology with capacity to supply up to 3000 liters per hour of clean and safe drinking water. It will utilize a multi-stage filtration process, including sediment filtration and activated carbon adsorption to remove impurities, contaminants, and microorganisms. Monitoring systems guarantee consistent quality with a UV disinfection unit providing an extra layer of protection. The plant is also equipped with energy-efficient pumps and utilizes sustainable practices to minimize its environmental footprint.



**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 4:32 am  
Zohr ..... 12:01 pm  
Asr ..... 4:21 pm  
Maghrib ..... 6:05 pm  
Isha ..... 7:29 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

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

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

CMH ..... 561111  
MH ..... 561116  
MH ..... 561116  
Cantt Hospital ..... 9270907-11  
DHO ..... 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  
Wasa Water Tank  
Rawalpindi ..... 0331-5022125

*Pakistan and Bangladesh should find new ways to promote mutual trade: Bangladeshi HC*

**City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The founder chairman of Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry, Khurshheed Barlas, along with the delegation including Fahad Barlas, convenor Exhibition, Amin-ur-Rahman, Shamriz Iqbal, EC members, along with Ruhul Alam Siddique, High Commissioner of Bangladesh posted in Pakistan, at the embassy. In the meeting, Chairman Khurshheed Barlas briefed the Ambassador of Bangladesh about "Third Pakistan International Property Housing and Construction Exhibition 17-19 November 2023" Pakistan China Friendship Center Islamabad.

A large number of various business community associated with bank projects and tourism industry including prominent builders, developers, allied construction industry from across the country will participate in the three-day exhibition. During the conversation, Bangladesh Ambassador Ruhul Alam Siddique said that SAARC member countries should work together to promote trade. He said that Pakistan has expertise in the field of food processing.

Bangladesh can benefit from Pakistan in this sector. The two countries should find new avenues to promote mutual trade. He said that for investors in Bangladesh, Pakistan should invest in various sectors including tourism, agriculture, value-added textiles, construction sector and energy sector, especially renewable energy. There are immense investment opportunities in Pakistan. Promotion of bilateral trade and economic relations between Pakistan and Bangladesh can be a milestone in regional and global trade integration and linkages. Chairman of Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry Khurshid Barlas, highlighting the exhibition, said that the Expo is a trade fair.

# Finance Minister launches 'Centralized Gateway Platform'

**Commerce Desk**

KARACHI: As a unique initiative in Pakistan's financial landscape, "The Centralized Gateway Portal" has been formally inaugurated by the Federal Minister for Finance—Dr. Shamshad Akhtar and Honorable Chairman SECP—Mr. Akif Saeed in a launch ceremony at CDC House, Karachi, on the 21st of September 2023. The solution has been implemented by CDC with the support of other entities, including PSX, NCCPL, MUFAP, IAP and PSBA.

The platform is envisioned to greatly help financial institutions by reducing the costs and complexities associated with onboarding their clients. CGP's features include state-of-the-art tools for KYC/CDD and a uniform, synchronized and latest KYC and AML framework with AI based algorithms. It will provide financial service providers with the indicative risk rating to help them in making informed

decisions. The CGP will function as a centralized repository for all data and documents, and eliminate the requirement for Financial Institutions to retain the documents with them, thereby reducing their storage requirements.

While officiating the event, Honorable Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue—Dr. Shamshad Akhtar said, "The Centralized Gateway Platform, which has been implemented as a centralized investor on-boarding platform, is a very important and timely initiative by SECP and very well executed by CDC. It is very important for our economy that we should introduce such novel concepts which will promote the investment culture in Pakistan and provide an easy and standardized platform to enable the investors to make hassle-free on-boarding in their respective investment journeys, while eliminating cumbersome and repetitive processes."

While addressing the occasion,

Mr. Akif Saeed—Chairman SECP said, "It is indeed a very important milestone for the Pakistan's financial landscape to have a consolidated on-boarding platform. The solution is a technology-based enabler that, along with investor education and awareness and independent securities advisors, should increase the depth and breadth of our market. Once successfully implemented, it can be expanded to the entire financial sector. Capital market infrastructure institutions like CDC, NCCPL & PSX need to focus on initiatives that make our market transparent, vibrant and robust."

Mr. Moin Fudda, Chairman of CDC's Board of Directors, welcomed the guests. At the occasion, while describing the objectives of the platform, Mr. Badiuddin Akber—CEO CDC said, "In line with international best practices, the Centralized Gateway Platform has been developed by CDC with the vision to effect ease



of doing business and promote the investment culture by leveraging a centralized source of information, screening and subsequent profile updates. CDC will continue to play its role as an ENABLER and is committed towards providing innovative tech-based platforms to Pakistan's financial landscape, through which all stakeholders can leverage CDC's technological

edge to scale their efficiency and outreach."

The event was also attended by significant stakeholders of Pakistan's financial eco-system, all of whom lauded CDC's efforts in undertaking this initiative and playing its role for market development.

With the objective of making investment easier and more access-

sible for investors in multiple types of assets, CDC has successfully implemented a Centralized Gateway Platform (CGP) under the regulatory impetus of the Securities Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP).

The CGP solution will help investors in on-boarding for diverse investment avenues (such as stocks, mutual funds, insurance products, etc.) using a centralized platform wherein they can maintain a standardized profile, KYC/AML procedures and leverage the platform to proceed for investment in diverse asset classes without having to undergo repetitive on-boarding processes with each financial institution.

Even for any subsequent updates, investors will only update their CGP profile, and CGP will accordingly update all relevant Financial Institutions, thus minimizing investor's efforts while ensuring synchronization of information in a seamless manner.

## Wind storm

ISLAMABAD: A view of the fallen tree after speedy winds storm during rain early in the morning in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

## CM visits Ningxia Medical University



**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited Ningxia Medical University in Yangchuan capital of Ningxia province of China where he was briefed about the education and research facilities by the vice chancellor at senior faculty members.

During the visit, the CM visited different sections including research and development facilities and held meetings with faculty members as well as the Pakistani students enrolled in the university, said a handout issued here on Friday.

The CM appreciated the innovative approach with regard to medical education, saying that innovation is need of the hour. A wonderful work was been done with regard to medical research and the Punjab government would also raise the standard of medical education in the province in partnership with Ningxia Medical University, he added. Visiting China is not a routine visit but the bilateral cooperation would be exploited to better serve the people, he said.

Chief Secretary Zahid Akhtar Zaman, Pakistan embassy officials and senior officials of the Ningxia government were also present.

## Charge d'Affaires in Russia holds online Khuli Kuchehri



**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Charge d'Affaires (CDA) Rana Summar Javed held online Khuli Kuchehri at the Embassy of Pakistan Moscow on Friday.

The online Kuchehri was attended by officials of the Consular and Diplomatic Wings of the Embassy of Pakistan.

The Pakistanis living in the Russian Federation took part in the online meeting, according to a press release received here.

The participants raised the issue about the delays in passport renewal due to their late arrival from Pakistan via courier services, as well as payment problems, which Pakistani students studying in Russia have been facing recently.

Rana Summar Javed explained that delays occur as the courier services, in the current circumstances, require additional time for delivery to Russia.

He also informed the participants about the steps being taken by the Embassy to resolve this issues and ensure smooth and timely delivery of documents.

The CDA also informed that application for character certificates can be submitted online, which makes the process easier and faster.

As for payments, Rana Summar Javed reassured that despite the situation in the region, the Embassy is working at various levels to resolve the problem.

The CDA admitted that holding E-Kuchehri has become a valuable source of interaction between the Embassy and the Pakistani community, which not only saves time but also provides an opportunity to take part in the meeting from any part of Russia.

He encouraged the participants to take benefits of the Government of Pakistan schemes for the overseas Pakistanis and take part in the country's development.

In his closing remarks, Rana Summar Javed reiterated the resolve of the Embassy's staff to provide maximum facilitation to the Pakistani citizens in Russia and reminded about the need to abide by the laws and rules of the host country.

# Work on Pak-Iran gas pipeline initiated: Minister Muhammad Ali

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Caretaker Federal Minister for Energy, Power and Petroleum Muhammad Ali said on Friday that work on Pak-Iran gas pipeline has been initiated.

He was talking to the media after inaugurating Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) first Model Customer Service Centre here at its Regional Office on Guruman-gat Road.

The minister said that 20 per cent natural gas has been decreased as compared to last year, while the government would try to manage gas load-shedding in winter; however, he added the government could not provide gas on cheaper rates, after purchasing at higher rates. People would have to use the natural fuel wisely, he added.



Muhammad Ali, responding to a query about Russian oil, said that only one cargo had arrived on trial basis, but the problem was to refine it.

Only the Pakistan Oil Refinery was refining 46,000 tons of oil monthly, while demand was many times higher.

The government was trying to engage private refineries to meet the demand, he added.

The government is working on importing more Russian oil,

resolving the refinery issues, and making efforts to provide maximum relief to people.

The minister said that taxpayers are feeding only 9 per cent to GDP of Pakistan, which is one of the lowest in the world; people would get relief only if tax collection improves.

As many as 14 counters have been set up at the Model Customer Service Centre, which included applications for new connection, change of owner-

ship, re-connection, business development counter, billing counter, violation checking counter, billing office counter, accounts/treasury counter, business development process counter, distribution counter, operation counter, maintenance counter, billing industrial & commercial counter, reconnection process counter and inquiry office.

Citizen will also be able to get duplicate payment slip, security refund and bill correction facilities while a help desk has also been established to provide guidance about energy conservation and safety measures, he said.

Managing Director SNGPL Amir Tufail, Deputy MD Saqib Arbab, Senior General Manager Distribution Qaiser Masood and other officers were also present.

## Mental illness

Depression is a mental illness characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and a lack of interest in activities that were previously enjoyable. Depression can lead to suicidal thoughts or behaviors if left untreated. According to a study published in the Journal of Pakistan Medical Association, the prevalence of depression in Lahore was found to be around 34%.

Depression and suicide are significant issues in Lahore, Pakistan. Lahore is one of the largest cities in Pakistan and has a population of over 12 million people. While there are no exact statistics on the prevalence of depression and suicide in Lahore, it is estimated that there is a high incidence of both.

The study also found that depression was more common

among women than men, with around 37% of women experiencing depression compared to 30% of men. Additionally, the study found that depression was more prevalent among people who were divorced or widowed, had low levels of education, and lived in low-income areas.

Suicide is a major public health concern in Lahore as well. According to data from the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, there were 2,554 suicide cases reported in Punjab province, where Lahore is located, in 2020. While suicide rates are difficult to accurately estimate while suicide rates are difficult to accurately estimate in Pakistan due to a lack of reporting and data collection,

it is believed that the actual number of suicides is much higher.

(Reasons for Suicide)

The reasons for suicide in Lahore are complex and multifaceted, with factors such as poverty, unemployment, social isolation, and mental illness playing a role. The stigma surrounding mental illness and suicide also makes it difficult for people to seek help and support.

(Do you think, suicide is a permanent solution to temporary problems?)

(Government Response's)

The Punjab Mental Health Authority has established several mental health facilities in Lahore, including the



Analysis

Rabia Kabir Ahmad

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# Terrorism from Afghan Soil - I

In a recent national TV interview, Pakistan's Prime Minister showcased a remarkable blend of clarity and professionalism while addressing a host of critical issues facing the nation. His articulate and persuasive style left no room for ambiguity, shedding light on the complexities of Pakistan's evolving relationship with its neighbor, Afghanistan. He provided insights, with a particular focus on Pakistan's stance on Tehrik-e-Taliban and the challenges posed by illegal Afghan immigrants.

The Prime Minister's candid discussion on the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) issue was both enlightening and pragmatic. He refrained from making any rash decisions regarding pursuing TTP terrorists into Afghan territory but affirmed Pakistan's unwavering commitment to defending its own territory. To understand this nuanced approach, we must acknowledge the deep-rooted historical and cultural ties that TTP has with its Afghan counterparts.

The Prime Minister astutely pointed out that the Afghan government remains in an interim and arguably illegitimate state, with rudimentary governance structures and communication mechanisms. This informality in governance has led to various local commanders and tribal chieftains exercising significant autonomy, sometimes sheltering TTP terrorists and aiding their nefarious activities within Pakistan. Pakistan's response to these challenges requires careful consideration of these factors.

The Prime Minister himself, being of Pathan heritage, possesses an innate understanding of the Afghan, TTP, and similar groups. He is well aware of their attitudinal, psychological makeup, and their unwavering commitment to certain ideologies. Pathans, when committed to an idea or philosophy, are notoriously difficult to dissuade by kinetic force. Their resilience, adaptability, and determination make them formidable adversaries.

Moreover, Pathans can endure the harshest conditions with minimal resources, rendering them highly resilient. The adherents of the TTP, typically impoverished, have little to lose, which makes them more willing to engage in violence. They possess a deep-seated commitment to their cause, making it challenging to disassociate them through force.

Adding to the complexity, the TTP now possesses state-of-the-art weaponry left behind by the departing Allied

forces in Afghanistan. The United States, during its 2021 withdrawal, left approximately \$7 billion worth of military equipment and weapons, including firearms, communications gear, and armored vehicles. The Taliban seized this arsenal after the fall of the Western-backed Afghan government, significantly bolstering their military capabilities.

Regrettably, some of this American military gear and weaponry have found their way into neighboring Pakistan, where they are utilized by armed groups, including the TTP. This influx of U. S. weapons has enhanced the TTP's capacity and emboldened ethnic Baluch separatist groups in Pakistan, leading to a surge in violence.

The United States Institute of Peace has noted a "robust and growing black market" for U. S. weapons in Pakistan, with armed groups obtaining advanced U. S. weaponry and equipment like M16 machine guns, M4 assault rifles, night-vision goggles, and military communication gear. These sophisticated weapons have had a "terrifying" impact, especially on the under-equipped Pakistani police force.

The wake of acquiring advanced weaponry, TTP's attacks in Pakistan have escalated since the Taliban seized power in Afghanistan. According to the Pakistan Institute of Peace Studies (PIPS), terrorist attacks in Pakistan increased by 27 percent last year compared to 2021. These attacks claimed the lives of at least 419 people and left 734 injured in 262

incidents. TTP's use of sniper rifles with thermal scopes has given them a distinct advantage, enabling pinpoint accuracy even in the dark.

These enhanced night vision goggles and weaponry have enabled the militants to carry out sophisticated attacks, particularly on security checkpoints along Pakistan's western border with Afghanistan. The situation poses a serious threat, especially in areas that were previously relatively peaceful and less prone to violence.

The Pentagon has conveyed to the U. S. government that retrieving the material left in Afghanistan is currently unrealistic, given that the United States does not recognize the Taliban as a legitimate government. The Taliban, however, denies supplying U. S. weapons to TTP fighters and instead blames former members of Afghanistan's security forces for selling arms on the black market after the fall of the internationally recognized government in Kabul.

In Pakistan, the black market has become inundated with U. S. weapons since the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan. These weapons are known for their excellent quality and lethality, attracting buyers from various quarters. A U. S.-made M4 assault rifle in good condition can be purchased for approximately \$1,400, while military communication gear like Harris Engineering Falcon Three Radios is available for around \$3,500. Some of these weapons have also fallen into the hands of criminals, giving them an edge over civilian law enforcement agencies, which are equipped with outdated and less lethal weaponry.

*To be continued*

TTP and Afghan Taliban share a common history, having fought together against the Russian invasion and later against Allied forces. TTP and similar groups adhere to an extremist interpretation of Islam and seek to establish a strict Islamic state, often using violence to achieve these goals. Their shared philosophy, ethnicity, language, and cultural bonds have forged a strong connection.

Recognizing these intricacies is crucial when developing a response to either the TTP or the Afghan Government in light of the Doha Agreement. Pakistan rightly demands that Afghanistan adheres to its commitment to prevent terrorists from using Afghan soil to attack other



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

## China-Arab States Expo

The Pakistani exhibitors are eagerly looking forward to exploring new opportunities at the Sixth China-Arab States Expo, which kicked off in Yinchuan, capital city of China's north-west autonomous region of Ningxia.

The event serves as a platform for businesses from China and Arab countries to come together and foster economic cooperation with the world, said Muhammad Irfan, Commercial Counselor at the Guangzhou Consulate of Pakistan.

Muhammad Irfan told China Economic Net (CEN) that Pakistan, being a key player in the region, recognizes the importance of strengthening its ties with China in terms of trade and investments.

The participation of Pakistani exhibitors at this event signifies their commitment to expanding bilateral trade relations and tapping into potential business prospects.

"China's Belt and Road Initiative has already paved the way for increased trade and infrastructure development between the two countries.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a prime example of this collaboration, with major projects underway in sectors such as energy, transportation, and infrastructure," he added.

The Commercial Counselor said more than 25 Pakistani exhibitors are showcasing their products at the four-day expo and they are very excited to participate and meet Chinese visitors, whereas more than 300 square meters of area is fixed for Pakistan.

Shahzad Chadyala, a Pakistani exhibitor, showcased his wooden handicrafts and furniture and hand-made carved products to visitors at the China-Arab States Expo.

He said that this expo provides a platform for Pakistani businesses to engage with Chinese counterparts, explore new trade opportunities, and forge strategic partnerships.

"Pakistan handicrafts are very famous around the globe.

As one of the closest allies of China in the region, Pakistan can leverage this platform to strengthen its economic cooperation and attract Chinese investments," he added.

Five sessions of the Expo have been held in Yinchuan, Ningxia since 2013 with "Friendship, Cooperation and Win-win Development" as the principle.

According to the organisers, the previous five Expos have attracted 24 Chinese and foreign dignitaries, 318 Chinese and foreign ministerial-level officials, and over 6,000 domestic and foreign enterprises from 112 countries and regions.



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

## Deosai – The Roof of Earth

Tooba Khan

Amidst tall peaks and lush green valleys, lies down the Deosai plain, yet another jewel in the crown of Gilgit-Baltistan, adding to the memorable beauty of Northern Areas.

Also known as the Deosai National Park, it is a high-altitude plateau situated in Gilgit Baltistan region of Pakistan within the western Himalayan range, not far from the Central Karakoram Range and east of the mighty Nanga Parbat Peak.

Embracing exceptional beauty and ecological value, the plateau is situated at an altitude of 3500 to 5200 meters with an area of 358,400 hectare of flat but undulating plains broken by gently rolling hills and surrounded on all sides by mountains.

It forms a stark contrast to much of the adjacent landscape made up of narrow valleys between steep mountains.

Surrounded by the valleys of Skardu, Khar-mang, Astore and Gultari, this beautiful place is administratively divided between Skardu, Astore and Khar-mang districts of Gilgit Baltistan.

The name "Deosai" itself tells a fascinating story. It's a combination of "Deo" (meaning giant) and "Sai" (meaning shadow). This moniker reflects the fear people had in the past of venturing into the unknown, often attributing the mysterious to the supernatural.

Deosai, therefore, translates to "the shadow of a giant," earning it the nickname "the land of the Giants." Another fitting name for this plateau is the "Roof of the Earth," as it stands as the world's second-highest plateau, towering at approximately 4,114 meters (13,497 ft) above sea level. For much of the year, lasting around eight months, Deosai is blanketed in snow.

However, the remaining months grace the

plateau with pleasant weather, showcasing a vibrant array of flowers in a multitude of colors.

Deosai is dotted with several lakes, including the stunning Sheosar Lake, located at an elevation of around 4,142 meters (13,589 ft) and widely known for its crystal-clear waters and picturesque surroundings. It is home to fresh trout, providing sustenance for bears and locals alike.

Imagine standing amidst this breathtaking landscape, with towering peaks in the background and clouds so close that you could easily touch them.

"I was always passionate about nature and adventure. By visiting Deosai another dream of my life comes true. Its memories would continue to spark in my mind for years," said Sarah who all the way came from Karachi to see the natural beauty of Deosai plain.

"The moment I set foot on the plateau, I was awestruck by the sheer vastness of the landscape.

It was like being on top of the world," she said depicting the beauty.

"The summer wildflowers painted the plateau in a riot of colors and the clarity of Sheosar Lake was unbelievable.

It is a paradise for nature enthusiasts." Beyond its natural beauty, Deosai holds great watershed value as it is the source of three vital river systems – Kala Pani, Bara Pani and Shatung Nala – that join together to form the Shigar River, a significant tributary of the mighty Indus River.

Being a sanctuary for variety of unique wildlife species, the Pakistan Government declared it as Deosai National Park in 1993, primarily to protect the Himalayan Brown Bear.

Otherwise, it is also a home to Himalayan wildlife like Himalayan Ibex, Snow Cock, Snow Leopard, Ladakh Uril, Kashmir Musk Deer, Himalayan Wolf, Himalayan Marmot, vultures and a diverse range of over 124 resident and migratory bird species.

It is a birdwatcher's paradise, boasting Bird Life International's Western Himalaya Endemic Bird Area and serving as a resting spot for countless avian travelers.

"The park offers a rare opportunity to connect with wildlife in a pristine setting," remarked Farman Karim, a known wildlife photographer.

"The chance to capture the elusive Himalayan Brown Bear and other unique species in their natural habitat is unparalleled." Farman who used to spend lot of time for a real image capturing of the rare species explains, "I spent weeks here, observing their behavior and waiting for the perfect shot.

It was itself a unique experience that left indelible imprints on my mind." Deosai is accessible from June to September as in winter it receives heavy snowfall.

From Skardu city, it takes one to two hour to Deosai National Park via Sadpara.

Visitors can travel via Car, Jeep and other vehicles but mostly jeeps and four-wheelers are recommended for travelling.

It is also accessible via Chilim, Astore Valley.

After a long journey from Islamabad to Astore, one can reach Chilim Valley on way to Sheosar Lake.

"I have seen visitors coming here from all over the world and mesmerizing by grandeur and unmatched beauty of Deosai plain," remarked Ayesha, a local guide.

"Deosai is not just a place; it is an experience and I take pride in showing them the wonders of Deosai." Conscious of protection of the ecosystem, Ayesha says, "while I brief them about incredible landscapes and unique flora and fauna of Deosai, I always encourage them to respect and preserve this delicate ecosystem." Just to say, Deosai plateau is gem of Pakistan's tourism landscape, a place of unparalleled beauty and ecological significance.

The Land of Giant is always there to sway the nature and adventure loving people with its enchanting beauty.

## Bullying by Traffic Police

On Wednesday, I watched a video on social media in which Islamabad Traffic Police officers forcibly stopped a civilian. When he inquired about it, because Saad, was stopped without any apparent reason. In response to his question, the traffic policeman became enraged and tortured him at road in front of his family women members and forcibly grabbed Saad and put him in a Dolphin Police car. This scene was filmed; the behavior of the capital city traffic police was seen all over the world. This incident that occurred within the jurisdiction of Kohsar Police Station Islamabad.

No doubt, the presence of law and order in our country is questionable, as person in uniform often violate human rights on various fronts. This lawlessness persists because there is no accountability system in place for the police, including the traffic police. Those wielding police power seem to believe they have the right to use violence against the public. When this incident came to light, we remembered that the Lahore High Court has issued a non-bail able warrant against the IG of the city where this incident took place. The question arises why the traffic officer of constable of this district will obey the law.

A standing order No. 8/2023 is kept before me August 25th, wherein the Inspector General of Police Islamabad limited the powers of the Deputy Inspector General (Operations), transferring the responsibilities of SHOs from DIG Operations to SSP Operations. IG Islamabad, Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, issued a memorandum to all DIGs and SSPs regarding this matter. IG is not paying attention to the real issues and problems, only the preferred officers are being rewarded. The IG, who is currently facing non-bail able arrest warrants from Lahore High Court and does not prioritize court orders, seems inclined to grant more authority to his preferred officers, making accountability in the city quite challenging, if not impossible.

The persistence of hooliganism within the ranks

of the Islamabad Traffic Police raises a pressing concern, leaving society to wonder when this troubling behavior will finally cease. The repercussions of such misconduct ripple through the community, affecting citizens and tarnishing the image of law enforcement. Hooliganism, characterized by unruly and aggressive behavior, is certainly not what one would expect from a group entrusted with ensuring road safety and regulating traffic flow.

Instead of providing a sense of security and discipline on the roads, reports of misconduct, abuse of power, and harassment by some traffic police officers have become disturbingly common in Islamabad.

The role of traffic police is fundamental in maintaining order on the roads and ensuring the safety of all citizens. It is essential that these officers carry out their duties professionally and responsibly, upholding the law without resorting to violence as a means of asserting their authority. Unfortunately, in some instances, the behavior of traffic police may leave much to be desired, giving rise to concerns about their conduct.

One of the paradoxes often observed is that traffic police officers are generally well-educated and trained in traffic management and law enforcement. They possess the necessary knowledge and skills to manage traffic flows, enforce regulations, and educate the public on road safety. However, their behavior on the field occasionally paints a different picture altogether, suggesting a lack of professionalism and, at times, an alarming level of illiteracy in terms of interpersonal skills.

To address this issue, it is essential for law enforcement agencies to take immediate and transparent actions against officers involved in hooliganism. Training programs that emphasize professionalism, ethical conduct, and the importance of community engagement should be prioritized within the traffic police force. Resorting to violence not only damages their own reputation but also under mines the essential role they play in ensuring a safe and orderly traffic environment.

Analysis

Zain-ul-Abideen Abid

# Indian Hindutva expansionist designs extremely dangerous for global peace: PM Kakar

Spokesman Report

NEW YORK: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Friday said the Indian government's Hindutva expansionist designs were extremely dangerous for the regional and the global peace and security. Referring to the murdering of a Sikh leader on Canadian soil by the India as a state, the prime minister said Pakistan had been directly affected by the Indian designs for long time but the recent wave of Hindutva had alarmed the Western capitals as well. He said Pakistan would keep on highlighting such a big issue and it also had presented this issue to the United Nations General Secretary with respect to the Indian designs and its targeted killing in Canada.

He said capturing of Indian spy Kulbhushan Yadav in Balochistan area was a clear proof of Indian direct intervention in Pakistan. In an interview with PTV here on the side lines



of United Nations General Assembly, the prime minister said Pakistan had enough capability to tackle the challenge of terrorism. "We are proud of our military that has developed the capability of eliminating the terrorism," he said adding Pakistan was in close coordination with the regional countries including Afghanistan in this regard. He said the whole region was deeply concerned and worried about the resurgence of terrorism.

Responding to a question regarding relations with China, the prime minister said Pakistan was a sovereign and independent country as "We have enjoy

deep rooted and all weather friendship with China and it will remain intact in future". "If anybody think that we will develop relations with any country on China's cost, he or she cannot understand the legitimate interest of Pakistan with respect to China." He said Pakistan had also friendly relations with the US and other Western countries in diverse field. A huge number of effective Pakistani community is living in the US that is playing key role in furthering bilateral relations.

Speaking about his recent meeting with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Chief, PM Kakar said that the IMF chief expressed her pleasure over knowing about the Pakistan government's strict actions against the smugglers and currency hoarders in the country. He highlighted that IMF only wanted that the country's economic situation should get better and they desire to get assurance that the fund it was giving to the country

was in safe hands. The prime minister informed that the Pakistan government's economic revival plan included tax reforms, enhancing tax net, measures to increase revenue generation, smooth running of privatization process and reforms in power sector.

He said all the multilateral financial institutions had expressed satisfaction over the Pakistan's economic revival plan. He expressed the hope that due to the government's crackdown against the electricity theft, the utility bills would gradually reduce in the coming days. He said power sector reforms were extremely necessary as without it, the overall economic structure could not be improved. With respect to the pledges made in last year's donor conference held in Geneva for reconstruction and rehabilitation of the flood affected areas of Pakistan, PM Kakar said pledges of almost \$10 billion were made by various countries and financial institutions.

## Xi inspects Shaoxing in east China's Zhejiang Province



Xinhua

HANGZHOU: Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, inspected the city of Shaoxing in east China's Zhejiang Province on Wednesday afternoon.

Xi visited an exhibition hall featuring the "Fengqiao model" for promoting community-level governance to review the evolution of the dispute resolution mechanism and learn about its innovative development in the new era.

Xi also went to a canal culture park to learn about the history of ancient canals, the preservation of the Grand Canal, and the construction progress of a national cultural park featuring the Grand Canal.

## 'If sportswashing is going to increase GDP, we'll continue sportswashing'

News Desk

JEDDAH: Saudi Arabia Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman said he does not care about allegations of "sportswashing" against the kingdom and that he will continue funding sport if it adds to the country's gross domestic product (GDP).



The allegation of "sportswashing" is levelled at countries perceived to be using sport to improve their tarnished image abroad.

"If sportswashing (is) going to increase my GDP by 1%, then we'll continue doing sportswashing," the crown prince told Fox News.

Saudi Arabia has made massive investments in soccer, golf Formula One, boxing and tennis in recent years through its Public Wealth Fund, which is chaired by the crown prince, the kingdom's de facto ruler since 2015.

Critics accuse the country of using its sovereign wealth fund to engage in "sportswashing" in the face of heavy criticism of Saudi Arabia's human rights record.

Saudi Arabia denies accusations of human rights abuses and says it protects its national security through its laws.

When asked specifically about the term "sportswashing," the crown prince said: "I don't care. I have 1% GDP growth from sports and I'm aiming for another 1.5%. Call it whatever you want - we're going to get that other 1.5%."

PIF owns an 80% stake in Premier League club Newcastle United and funded LIV Golf, which recruited high-profile players from the PGA Tour and Europe's DP World Tour before announcing an agreement to merge and form one unified commercial entity.

It also took a majority ownership stake in four of the country's top soccer clubs in June before teams in the Saudi Pro League spent nearly \$1 billion in the transfer window which closed on Sept. 7.

Saudi Arabia has been hosting a Formula One Grand Prix since 2021 and has also held boxing world title fights. It will stage a professional tennis event for the first time this year.

## International reporters speak highly of Hangzhou Asiad preparations



Xinhua

HANGZHOU: Numerous international reporters have praised the China's preparation efforts ahead of the Hangzhou Asian Games set to kick off here on Saturday evening.

For Pakistani journalist Muhammad Yousaf, this is his third Asian Games to cover. However, the Express News reporter told Xinhua that the Hangzhou Asian Games was one of the most memorable events he has witnessed.

"The facilities are excellent and many of our athletes give me good remarks. I believe this will be one of the best ever Asian Games," said Yousaf.

He plans to focus on the cricket event, which is popular in his country. Moreover, he mentioned that there are some Pakistani talents in table tennis and shooting.

"We bagged four medals in 2018 Asian Games. I hope we can bring more medals home this time," Yousaf said.

Heather Dewar, who is working on the information system for the upcoming event, shared her impressions of Hangzhou. Even though she lived in Hong Kong, China for several years, many aspects of Hangzhou have left a lasting impression on her.

"I think China has done a great job...they want this Games to be about smart, green, ethical, and doing a lot with the environment," she said.

"And everywhere I see the electric vehicles around and all the bicycles. I expect them to be very well run," Dewar added.

Having covered major events like the Olympic Games and the Commonwealth Games, Dewar finds the Asian Games uniquely captivating, which drew her to Hangzhou for the first time.

"I wrote a lot of football stories in Scotland, but I have never seen Mongolian play football. So I covered the Mongolia and Vietnam in the football. It's very interesting," she said.

"I think it's a really good opportunity for lots of athletes to shine in their own sports. I'm going to cover a sport like dragon boat racing in the next few days."

Abdulaziz Yousef, representing beIN Sports of Qatar, commended Hangzhou's preparations.

## 2024 Hajj

RIYADH: Saudi Minister for Hajj and Umrah Dr. Tawfiq Al-Rabiah called on Minister for Religious Affairs Aneeq Ahmad during the meeting Dr. Tawfiq said we will provide best facilities to the Pakistani pilgrimage in 2024 Hajj



Photo: Online

## AlHuda CIBE is committed to strengthen the Islamic Finance Industry in Zimbabwe

Spokesman Report

DUBAI, UAE: AlHuda Center of Islamic Banking & Economics (CIBE) and the Zimbabwe Association of Microfinance Institutions (ZAMFI) are pleased to announce their collaboration in hosting a specialized two-day training workshop on "Islamic Banking, Finance & Islamic Microfinance." The training is scheduled to take place on October 10th and 11th 2023, in Harare, Zimbabwe. This unique training opportunity aims to equip professionals, practitioners, and regulators with the knowledge and skills needed to harness the benefits of Islamic finance in the microfinance sector.

This program is designed to provide a profound understanding of various facets of Islamic finance, catering to a wide spectrum of topics. Participants will

delve into critical subjects, including the prohibition of Riba (interest), gaining insights into the Islamic banking and finance industry, exploring trade-based modes such as Murabahah, examining partnership-based modes like Mudarabah and Musharakah, and understanding rental-based modes. Furthermore, the program will offer a dedicated exploration of Islamic microfinance.

One of the primary objectives of this initiative is to equip participants with practical implementation skills, enabling them to effectively apply Islamic finance principles within microfinance institutions. As the demand for Islamic finance solutions continues to grow, this program will serve as a cornerstone for enhancing expertise and fostering the adoption

of ethical financial practices.

Mr. Muhammad Zubair, the CEO of AlHuda Center of Islamic Banking and Economics (AlHuda CIBE), has expressed his belief in the growing demand for Islamic

banking and finance within Zimbabwe. He views the training program as a valuable opportunity to equip participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to excel in the rapidly evolving microfinance sector of the country.

In his statement, Mr. Zubair highlights the importance of Islamic microfinance in promoting financial inclusion and alleviating poverty. He recognizes that Islamic microfinance serves as a powerful tool for extending financial services to low-income and marginalized communities. This means that individuals who may have previously

been excluded from traditional financial systems can now access essential financial resources, fostering economic empowerment and stability.

Mr. Godfrey C. Chitambo, the executive director of the Zimbabwe Association of Microfinance Institutions (ZAMFI), shares Mr. Zubair's enthusiasm for this training program. He sees it as a valuable opportunity for Zimbabweans to gain knowledge about Islamic banking, finance, and Islamic microfinance.

Mr. Godfrey C. Chitambo is confident that this training will contribute significantly to the development of Islamic finance within Zimbabwe. By providing participants with insights into Islamic financial principles and practices, he believes that the program will help raise awareness and build expertise in this growing sector.

## TMB receives IPA to establish digital retail bank

ISLAMABAD: Telenor Microfinance Bank (TMB), the operator of Pakistan's leading digital financial services platform, easypaisa, has received In-Principle Approval (IPA) for Digital Retail Bank (DRB) license from the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) under the Licensing and Regulatory Framework for Digital Banks.

This remarkable achievement has positioned TMB as a digital bank poised to offer a wide array of exciting financial services primarily through digital channels, revolutionizing the digital banking experience for millions of Pakistanis, said a press release issued here on Friday.

The SBP hosted a ceremony in Karachi to officially grant In-Principle Approval to five

banks, including TMB.

The event saw the presence of sponsors of other DRBs, incumbent bank CEOs, financial institutions, fintechs, SBP's top management, as well as TMB's senior management and shareholders, including Kashif Ahmed, Acting CEO, Amna Abbas, CLO, Solomon Jamin, Vice President, Investment Management, Telenor Asia, and Douglas Feagin, Senior Vice President, Global Strategic Partnerships and Investments, Ant Group.

In January 2022, SBP introduced a Licensing and Regulatory Framework for Digital Banks and planned to issue up to five digital banks' licenses.

Earlier this year, 5 applicants including TMB were

selected after a rigorous assessment process as per the requirements of the framework and were awarded a No Objection Certificate (NOC) to set up a digital bank.

Commenting on the development, Irfan Wahab Khan, Chairman, Telenor Microfinance Bank, said "This is a great milestone for us and a testament of our efforts towards enabling financial inclusion in Pakistan."

TMB & easypaisa has emerged as one of the most trusted financial platforms during the last 13 years.

On behalf of the Board and Management, I would like to thank the State Bank of Pakistan for believing in us and giving us the In-Principle approval to set up a digital bank in Pakistan.

Kudos to the entire team for working with full zeal and commitment for this achievement.

Through this revolutionary step, we are now one more step closer to our vision of a financially inclusive, Digital Pakistan." Sharing his thoughts, Kashif Ahmed, Acting CEO, Telenor Microfinance Bank said, "This monumental achievement validates our unwavering commitment to our digital-first business model, a strategic pivot we made to advance our mission of a financially inclusive Pakistan."

Our success is indebted to the trust of our millions of customers who have made us a household name.

The steadfast support from our esteemed sharehold-

ers, Telenor Group and Ant Group, has been instrumental in steering our organization in the right direction.

It also stands as a testament to the extraordinary dedication of our entire team.

My gratitude to the State Bank of Pakistan for giving us this opportunity.

We eagerly embrace the role of being the regulator's partner in the journey towards greater financial inclusion and innovation." Telenor Microfinance Bank is now prioritizing its operational preparedness in accordance with SBP's framework for digital banks.

With this In-Principle approval, the Bank is poised to redefine the banking landscape in Pakistan, ushering in an era of financial inclusion, convenience, and empower-

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

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
46,421.15	46,202.12
Day's High	Day's Low
46,500.45	46,181.99
Index Value	Change
4,936,829,125	+219.03
Percentage	Time
+0.47%	22 Sept, 2023 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,683.91	+5.29
Percentage	Time
+0.069%	22 Sept, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
34,118.52	+48.10
Percentage	Time
+0.14%	22 Sept, 12:22 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
32,402.41	-168.62
Percentage	Time
-0.52%	22 Sept, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	198	200
Bahrain Dinar	781.13	789.13
Canadian Dollar	220	222.20
China Yuan	40.22	40.62
Danish Krone	42.35	42.75
Euro	317	320
Hong Kong Dollar	37.93	38.28
Indian Rupee	3.57	3.68
Japanese Yen	1.92	1.99
Kuwaiti Dinar	951.03	960.03
Malaysian Ringgit	62.62	63.22
New Zealand \$	174.23	176.23
Norwegians Krone	27.87	28.17
Omani Riyal	762.72	770.72
Qatari Riyal	80.69	81.39
Saudi Riyal	78.55	79.3
Singapore Dollar	217	219
Swedish Korona	26.62	26.92
Swiss Franc	325.12	327.62
Thai Bhat	8.31	8.46
U.A.E Dirham	81.5	82.3
UK Pound Sterling	372.5	376
US Dollar	292.1	295

**Business Community strongly condemns Anjum Nisar for unprofessional behavior**

**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: In a recent unpleasant situation at the hands of Anjum Nisar with Federal Minister for Commerce, Gohar Ejaz, a significant number of esteemed members of the business community, including Sohail Malik, EC Member, Karim Aziz, Former Vice President, Samina Fazil, Atif Ikram former vice presidents of FPCCI, Haji Nawaz Madoori former vice President FPCCI, Syed Jawad Kazmi president Khyber Chamber and others expressed their vehement condemnation of Anjum Nisar's behavior and attitude. Sohail Malik stated that the entire business community strongly criticized Mr. Nisar for his unwarranted allegations against the Directorate General of Trade Organizations (DGTO). They emphasized that the honorable Federal Minister had graciously accepted an invitation from the Lahore Chamber to discuss critical economic matters of Pakistan. Regrettably, Mr. Nisar's actions intentionally derailed this meeting, leaving the members unable to address their concerns with the Federal Minister.

Furthermore, Sohail Malik highlighted concerns about the management of the apex body, which, according to him, has assumed its position through questionable means and is a subject of discussion within the business community.

Sohail Malik pointed out that the present management of FPCCI is under significant scrutiny due to allegations of substantial embezzlement in FPCCI's accounts, which has severely impacted its financial stability.

Mr. Malik also commended Mr. Gohar Ejaz, acknowledging him as a visionary leader and highly respected figure in business circles, known for his loyalty, patriotism, and integrity.

The incident of the walkout from the meeting staged by Anjum Nisar underscores the importance of professionalism, transparency, and open dialogue within business associations. These are qualities that the business community believes should be upheld at all times.

# Dr. Shamshad Akhtar inaugurates the Centralized Gateway Portal

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, the Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue said that the securities market can play a vital role in the development of debt market through the listing of Government debt securities on PSX.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the Centralized Gateway Portal, Dr Akhtar said that the issuance securities through public auctions at PSX will facilitate retail participation, provide greater transparency, channelize savings and promote debt market in Pakistan. The SECP, PSX and other stakeholders need to extend concerted efforts to enable efficient implementation of these reforms.

The Minister formally inaugurated the Centralized Gateway Portal, a unique financial initiative simultaneously onboard investors and customers in the securities market, the NBFC sector, and the insurance industry. The CGP also offers standardized, one-time KYC requirements across different asset classes. The SECP Chairman, Akif Saeed and Badiuddin Akber, Chief Executive Officer at CDC also spoke to the launching ceremony.



din Akber, Chief Executive Officer at CDC also spoke to the launching ceremony.

She highlighted that one of the key issues undermining the growth of capital markets is the lack of liquidity which is directly attributable to the small number of investors. She believes that the Centralized Gateway Portal can provide the impetus for the much-needed growth of our investor base.

Dr Shamshad appreciated that the CGP provide immense opportunities to investors and great convenience to market intermediaries

by removing duplications and streamlining the customer onboarding process. She appreciated SECP for its efforts and constructive reforms for facilitating investors' onboarding, with having the potential of transforming the landscape of Pakistan's capital markets.

However, Shamshad said the successful launch of the CGP should not be deemed the end of this project. Having developed this promising digital platform, we are now faced with the critical part of realizing the potential it offers. This requires focused marketing efforts and promotion on the part of the PSX and other stakeholders like brokers, insurance companies and AMCs, she added.

Attracting new investors in the capital market should be one of our primary objectives going forward, which requires coordinated efforts from all Capital Market Infrastructure Institutions (CMIIs), as well as the market intermediaries, especially the brokerage houses, under the guidance of SECP.

In addition to the demand-side aspects linked to market liquidity, she suggested to concen-

trate on the supply side simultaneously. In this regard, it is vital to channel efforts towards increasing the number of Initial Public Offerings (IPOs) on Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX). A greater supply of securities in the market shall enhance liquidity, enabling the generation of higher trade volumes. She asked the SECP and PSX to work aggressively for creating awareness, making the listing process efficient and facilitating businesses in utilizing the stock exchange for capital formation. PSX should maintain an IPO pipeline to ensure maximum results and again targets should be assigned in consultation with the CTIs.

Dr Shamshad asked the SECP and Capital market institutions to collectively review the costs of investing in the capital market, particularly to ensure that maintaining an account is not expensive enough to disincentivize small investors. She emphasized on keeping digitalization with international trends. She said it is important to attract entrants in the newly created sub-category of online-only brokers, with the aim to drive greater competition in the industry.

## Group Photo

ISLAMABAD: FPCCI's Presidential Candidate Atif Ikram Sheikh presenting the bouquet to President ICCI Ahsan Zafar Bakhtwari.



Photo: Raja Farid

## Failed SOEs should be privatized to reduce government expenditure

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Friday that failed State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) should be sold without delay to reduce the expenditure of the government.

It seems that instead of reducing expenditure on the part of the government, consensus is being reached on statements, while there is no concrete plan to privatize failed government institutions, he said.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the people have reduced their expenditure as much as possible to survive, and there is no room for further reduction.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that people are being frugal in their consumption of fuel and electricity while they are forced to subsist on substandard food items, but the situation is still not under their control.

He said that immediate steps should be taken to eliminate the losses of government institutions and give immediate relief to the public.



The business leader said that the political instability that has been going on for the last six years has caused a lot of damage to the people and the economy. IMF conditions and the continuous increase in the price of gas, electricity, and fuel have left people drained. The country has not been brought to this state by the people, but failed government institutions, tax, electricity, and gas thieves are responsible for it, he added.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the condition of the people is getting worse; millions are becoming poor, and due to desperation,

an unexpected reaction can come from them at any time.

He further said that stopping the smuggling of petrol and diesel from the border areas is welcome, which will stabilize the value of the rupee and will also increase the revenue of the government.

There has been a shortage of many commodities in the country, notably the raw materials of the pharma industry, leading to a shortage of life-saving drugs, he said, adding that due to the ongoing political and economic crisis in the country, everyone is being badly affected except the rich and very wealthy class.

Some people have shifted their capital abroad, and the situation in Pakistan cannot affect them. The solution to Pakistan's problems lies in the privatization of failed government institutions, an increase in the tax base, foreign investment, import substitution, and an increase in exports.

It is no longer possible to manage situations by avoiding problems instead of solving them. For many decades, Pakistan has been using shortcuts to solve all kinds of corruption, mismanagement, and incompetence through borrowing instead of governance and reforms, and this will not be possible in the future, he warned.

## SBP launches 'Diamond' category of Sohni Dharti Remittance Program

KARACHI: In a bid to further encourage remittances through formal channels, the State Bank of Pakistan, Friday, launched a new 'Diamond' category of the Sohni Dharti Remittance Program (SDRP) that offers enhanced points and additional benefits to remitters.

The category will be effective from September 22, 2023, in addition to existing three- Green, Gold and Platinum- categories of SDRP that is a point-based loyalty program in which remitters accumulate reward points by sending remittances through formal channels of SBP regulated entities, said a statement issued here.

Former Finance Minister Ishaq Dar in his budget speech for FY24 had announced the

addition of Diamond category with enhanced reward points and provision of other benefits like arms license of non-prohibited bore, preferential treatment at Pakistan embassies and airports and gratis passport to the Diamond Category holders.

Reward points can be redeemed by remitter and their beneficiary for availing free of cost products and services including Emigrant Registration fee at Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment; duty payment of imported mobile sets and vehicles to Federal Board of Revenue; School fee by Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF); and renewal fee of passports at Directorate General of Immigration and Passports, said the statement.

## SECP notifies amendments to NBFC Rules 2003

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), with the approval of the federal government, has notified amendments to the Non-Banking Finance Companies (Establishment & Regulations) Rules, 2003.

The amendments, which have been introduced after a comprehensive stakeholder consultation process, aim to revitalise growth in the non-banking finance sector and facilitate establishing a contemporary and conducive regulatory framework.

Ease of doing business has been provided by eliminating redundancies and requirements such as submission of certified copies of the memorandum, articles of association, and certificate of incorporation, providing reasons for select-



ing the proposed place of business, statistical data, and additional facts in support of the application, etc. Additionally, directors and chief executive officers are no longer required to submit affidavits with respect to the correctness of information and instead can only submit a declaration to this effect. Moreover, the term "investment company" has been deleted from the rules as the structure no longer exists.

The SECP believes that introducing measures for ease of doing business and streamlining licencing requirements is critical to the long-term sustainability of the NBFC sector in Pakistan.

## World Bank launches 'Reforms for a Brighter Future'

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The World Bank has launched a new program to foster debate on the critical development policy issues facing Pakistan. 'Reforms for a Brighter Future: Time to Decide' is intended to engage in discussions with a broad range of stakeholders on what fundamental policy shifts are most needed to durably steer the economy towards stronger, more climate-resilient and sustainable growth and development. This consultation program includes the publication, today, of a series of draft Discussion Notes.

These will be progressively enriched by feedback received from a broad range of stakeholders. The Notes, which draw on international experience as well as a large body of evidence on Pakistan, propose fundamental policy shifts that are needed to move away from the current low-growth, anti-development status quo;

From underfunded, inefficient, and fragmented service delivery and social protection systems towards coordinated, efficient, and adequately financed service delivery, targeting the most vulnerable—in particular to reduce abnormally high child stunting rates and to increase learning outcomes for all children, especially for girls.

From wasteful and rigid public expenditures benefiting a few, towards tightly prioritized spending on public services, infrastructure, and investments in climate adaptation, benefiting populations most in need.

From a narrow, distortive, and inequitable tax system towards one that is broad-based, efficient, progressive, and equitable—generating sufficient revenues to significantly increase public investment in human development, infrastructure, and climate adaptation.

From a protected, stagnant, and unproductive economy with a large state presence towards a dynamic open

economy driven by private investment and exports.

From agriculture sector policies that lock farmers into a low-value, low-productivity farming towards a more market-driven, productive agricultural system, including value chains that are resilient to climate change impacts and water scarcity.

From energy sector policies that drive high energy costs, environmental harms, and unsustainable accumulation of debt, towards efficient, sustainable, and resilient generation and distribution, based on accurate price signals, increased competition and private participation, and a cleaner energy mix.

From a public sector that is inefficient, often ineffective, and vulnerable to capture by vested interests towards accountable, efficient, and transparent government, including at the local level.

"Pakistan has been facing numerous economic hardships includ-

ing inflation, rising electricity prices, severe climate shocks, and insufficient public resources to finance development and climate adaptation—when the country is among the most vulnerable to climate change impacts. It is also facing a "silent" human capital crisis: abnormally high child stunting rates, low learning outcomes, and high child mortality," said Najy Benhassine, Country Director for the World Bank in Pakistan.

"These discussion notes contribute to debates on long standing policy issues that are muting Pakistan's high economic and development potential. There is reasonable consensus on priorities and challenges. Determining specific solutions requires open debates on concrete, fundamental policy decisions. We hope this program of discussions will help build a consensus around a path towards inclusive, sustainable, and climate-resilient development."

As part of the 'Reforms for a Brighter Future' engagement program, the World Bank together with the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, conducted extensive consultations across the country to seek inputs and feedback on the recommendations included in the draft Discussion Notes. These have included discussions with students across 21 universities and provincial roundtables with thinkers from academia, and the public and private sectors. Participants in all four provinces have shared insights and perspectives that have helped shaped the understanding of what it would take to put Pakistan back on a path towards sustainable, climate-resilient, and inclusive growth. The 'Reforms for a Brighter Future' program will continue over the following months both online and at in-person events across the country, including the national conversation that will take place in Islamabad today and tomorrow.

# Pakistan unveil World Cup squad

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Pakistan have named their 15-player squad for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup, which will be held in October and November in India. Consistency and confidence in the current bunch were the keys to the selection as the Inzamam-ul-Haq-led national men's selection committee made only one change – that was also forced – from the squad that played the recent Men's ODI Asia Cup 2023.

Fast bowler Naseem Shah has been replaced with Hasan Ali. He had suffered a shoulder injury during Asia Cup in a match against India on 11 September and was ruled out of the tournament. Following thorough medical examinations and consultations with leading medical experts, Naseem has been advised to undergo surgery. He is expected to recover in three to four months.

Pakistan squad: Babar Azam (captain), Shadab Khan (vice-captain), Abdullah Shafique, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Hasan Ali, Ifthikhar Ahmed, Imam-ul-Haq, Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Mohammad Wasim Jnr, Salman Ali Agha, Saud Shakeel, Shaheen Shah Afridi and Usama Mir.



The selectors have also named three traveling reserves in wicketkeeper-batter Mohammad Haris, mystery spinner Abrar Ahmed and fast bowler Zaman Khan.

Chief selector Inzamam-ul-Haq said: "World Cup is the most important event in any cricketer's life and I want to congratulate all the cricketers who have made it to the squad through their impressive performances. This team has

performed wonderfully well over the last couple of years and that is why we have shown faith in the same bunch.

"We were forced to make one change because of an unfortunate injury to Naseem Shah. We had a few injury scares in the recent Asia Cup, but I am glad to share that all the players are fully fit and are eager to perform for their country in the all-important tournament. I have received encouraging reports from our

medical panel about Haris Rauf. He has started to (shadow) bowl at the National Cricket Academy and will be available for selection.

"I have a firm belief that this squad can bring the World Cup trophy to Pakistan and make the whole nation proud with their incredible performances. It is time to get behind our team and provide them with the backing and support that they need."

Pakistan will play two warm-ups – against New Zealand on 29 September and Australia on 3 October – before their tournament opener against the Netherlands on 6 October.

Babar Azam's side enters the mega-event as the number one ranked side and enjoys the best win/loss ratio of 2.400 in this World Cup cycle for any side that has played the One-Day International format.

Pakistan missed out on a semi-final spot in the 2019 iteration of the event because of a lower net run-rate to New Zealand, who ended up as runners-up. The team's best performance came in the 1992 edition when they lifted the trophy at the MCG after defeating England. Pakistan featured in the final of the 1999 edition and reached semi-finals in 1979, 1983, 1987, and 2011.

# New York, Dallas and Florida confirmed as host venues for T20 World Cup 2024

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Dallas, Florida and New York have been named as venues for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in 2024 when the United States hosts the event for the first time, according to American media reports.

The tournament, to be co-hosted by West Indies, will be played on the soil of a country where cricket is not a major sport, but millions of immigrants live in the US from cricket-playing countries.

Cricket enthusiasts welcomed the news that the biggest tournament in history, with 20 teams competing, will be played here.

A 34,000-seat modular stadium will be built at Eisenhower Park in Nassau County, New



York, subject to a permit. Existing venues at Grand Prairie, Dallas, and Broward County in Florida will be increased in size.

The ICC Board awarded the hosting of the event to the West Indies and the USA in November 2021.

"The USA is a strategic-

ly important market and these venues give us an excellent opportunity to make a statement in the world's biggest sport market," International Cricket Council (ICC) chief executive Geoff Allardice said.

"We explored a number of potential venue options in the country and we were hugely

encouraged by the enthusiasm the event generated in prospective hosts, reinforcing the growing awareness around cricket's massive fanbase and its power to unite diverse communities." Major League Cricket, the inaugural T20 franchise tournament in the United States, was held for the first time in July.

The World Cup will be held in North America for the first time in June 2024 – and the USA, who have not qualified for a major ICC tournament since 2004, and West Indies have been granted automatic qualification as hosts.

The ICC said it would utilize modular stadium infrastructure to develop "a world-class state-of-the-art" purpose-built stadium in New York, with two

to three months of work scheduled to commence in late January 2024.

"We are very excited about the opportunity to use modular stadium technology to present world-class cricket in a location that has not previously hosted an ICC global event, giving USA cricket fans the chance to watch the world's best on their doorstep," Allardice said.

"This technology has been used at previous ICC events to increase venue capacity and it's routinely used in other major sports around the world.

"In the USA, it will give us the opportunity to increase the size of the venues in both Dallas and Florida and create what is going to be a stunning venue in New York."

# 'Doors are open for Sarfaraz, Amir, Imad,' says Inzamam

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Chief Selector of Pakistan's men's cricket team Inzamam-ul-Haq on Friday, clarified that Sarfaraz Ahmed, Imad Wasim and Mohammad Amir can be considered for selection when needed for the team.

Inzamam-ul-Haq announced a 15-member Pakistan squad for the upcoming ICC World Cup 2023 in India with the only major change being pace bowler Hasan Ali replacing injured Naseem Shah.

While many fans hoped to see Sarfaraz Ahmed, Imad Wasim and Mohammad Amir in the touring party for the World Cup, Inzamam-ul-Haq stated the clear criteria for selection.

"The doors of the Pakistan team are open for everyone, be it Sarfaraz Ahmed, Imad Wasim, Mohammad Amir or even Shan Masood, they are all good players and have performed for Pakistan," said Inzamam-ul-Haq.



"However, the criteria for selection is our domestic cricket, whoever wants to get selected needs to perform in domestic cricket to be in contention," he further added.

"Mohammad Amir is a good cricketer but he is currently retired, but just like everyone else, doors are open for him," he concluded. The 15-member Paki-

stan team will kick off their World Cup campaign against the Netherlands on October 6 at Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium in Hyderabad. Prior to that, they will play two warm-up matches against New Zealand and Australia on September 29 and October 3 respectively.

Pakistan ICC World Cup 2023 squad

Babar Azam (c), Abdullah Shafiq, Fakhar Zaman, Imam-ul-Haq, Iftikhar Ahmed, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Shadab Khan, Mohammad Nawaz, Usama Mir, Haris Rauf, M Wasim Jnr, Hasan Ali, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Saud Shakeel, Salman Ali Agha.

Travelling Reserves: Zaman Khan, Mohammad Haris, Abrar Ahmed

# ICC CWC 2023 prize money announced

Sports Desk

LAHORE: The 13th edition of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup would see the winners of the 10-team tournament earn US\$4 million, along with the trophy that they will lift on November 19.

The runners-up would receive US\$2 million, while the losing semi-finalists will get \$800,000 each from the total prize pot of US\$10 million. The 48-match event would be played across 10 venues from October 5, said a press release.

The biggest Cricket World Cup ever would see prizes for each league match won. Teams would play each other once in a round-robin format, with the top four making it to the semifinals.

The winners of each match in the group stage would receive US\$40,000 and the six teams that do not qualify for the semi-finals will receive a payment of US\$100,000. The breakdown of prize money allocations was as follows: Winner US\$ 4,000,000; Runner-up US\$ 2,000,000, Losing Semi-Finalist (2) US\$ 1,600,000, Teams eliminated after group stage (6) US\$ 600,000 & Winner of each group stage match (45) US\$ 1,800,000.



# AHC empowering girls' through cricket



Sports Desk

LAHORE: The Australian High Commission (AHC) supported a girls' cricket clinic and tournament in Karachi in collaboration with the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), Jalaluddin Cricket Academy (JCA), and Karachi City Cricket Association (KCCA).

Australia aims to promote gender equality and empower girls through enabling them to participate in one of Pakistan's favourite sports – cricket.

"The Australian High Commission has been sponsoring girls' cricket in Pakistan since 2016," High Commissioner Neil Hawkins said in a statement issued here.

"We began with a single annual tournament in Islamabad but then expanded to Lahore and in Karachi." "Our countries share a passion for cricket, and a key interest of Australia in Pakistan is to support gender equality so we're very pleased to support this event," he said.

"Cricket and other sports can help tear down barriers and stereotypes.

Every time these girls hit a boundary or make a catch, they are taking a step towards greater equality." The girls attended a four-day coaching clinic in the lead-up to the competition.

We are very pleased to have the participation of first-class cricket coaches as well as the players of the visiting Australian Over 40s Cricket team, who helped to build confidence, foster team spirit, and encourage the girls," the High Commissioner said.

He thanked the schools – Nasra Public School, Alpha Girls School, Ismail Academy and The Future Academy – for joining the event and paid tribute to the contribution made by JCA, PCB and KCCA.

Leading coach Jalal Uddin, a former national player and now JCA Chairman, congratulated the Australian High Commission on the initiative.

"As a pioneer in cricket coaching, we always support grassroots cricket development.

We hope this initiative with the Australian High Commission for the Girls Cricket Cup will go a long way in developing women's cricket in Pakistan," Jalal Uddin said.

# Sri Lanka, Bangladesh Women's team qualify for the semi-final of Asian Games



Sports Desk

HANGZHOU: Sri Lanka swept aside Thailand on Friday in a rain-affected women's cricket quarter-final at the Asian Games and Bangladesh joined them in the last four after their clash with Hong Kong was washed out.

Sri Lanka easily chased down their target of 79 in 15 overs of a rain-affected quarter-final match of the Asian Games at the Zhejiang University of Technology Pingfeng Cricket Field in Hangzhou.

Thailand had earlier fought back from 37-6 to post 78-7 in their 15 overs, largely due to a battling 31 off 24 balls from Chanida Suthiruang batting at number seven.

"Today we didn't get enough runs," said Chanida. "We thought that we could win the game, but we maybe needed 30 to 40 more runs. Even if we had 20 more runs, I think we could have defended it."

The Sri Lankans cruised past their target with 25 balls to spare, Harshitha Samaravickrama hitting a six to end the contest as they finished on 84-2.

Sri Lanka will face Pakistan on Sunday in the second semi-final of the Asian Games with India playing Bangladesh, who progressed on a higher world ranking after their quarter-final with Hong Kong was washed out later on Friday.

"We want the gold medal," said Sri Lanka coach Rumesh Joseph Ratnayake, whose team are in confident mood having just won a T20 series in England 2-1 earlier this month.

"We will take it match-by-match, we'll break it into over-by-over, even ball-by-ball.

"So winning those important moments will be our focus and let's hope that can be executed as we want it to."

# Prime Ministers talent hunt badminton trials

Sports Desk

LAHORE: The Prime Minister Talent Hunt Youth Sports League for Men & Women in Badminton unveiled a new generation of rising stars on Friday at the GCU Faisalabad.

Ammara Rubab, chief organiser of the event, said here that in a remarkable event young athletes aged 15 to 25, under the watchful eyes of Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore, and the University of Sargodha, showcased their extraordinary talents during the trials.

"The Prime Minister Talent Hunt Youth Sports League is dedicated to providing a platform for these budding athletes to display their exceptional skills on the court, fostering a spirit of healthy competition among the nation's youth," said Ammara, head of



sports Kinnaird College for Women. She said "as we move forward, we anticipate an exciting season

filled with dedication, passion, and outstanding sporting accomplishments."

# Pak volleyball team move in Asian Games quarterfinals

Sports Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan volleyball team downed Korea by 3-0 in the round of last 12 of the 19th Asian Games 2023 at China and qualified for the quarterfinals.

According to details, Pakistan achieved a remarkable 3-0 win, with set scores of 25-19, 25-22, and 25-21.

This impressive triumph marks the third consecutive win for the Pakistan team in the 19th Asian Games 2023, further solidifying their position as a formidable force in the tournament.

Chairman of the Pakistan Volleyball Federation, Ch Muhammad Yaqoob, lauded the team and coaching staff, recognizing their dedication and hard work.

The team manager, a former Captain of the Pakistan team, said the team was



determined to continue their winning streak in the quarterfinals and secure a spot in the semifinals.

Pakistan team's victory against Korea was a testament to their skills, resilience, and commitment to excellence. Their outstanding performance has

garnered attention and admiration from fans and spectators alike.

As they progress to the quarterfinals, the team carries the hopes and aspirations of the nation, aiming to bring home the coveted title in the 19th Asian Games 2023.