



Shamshad says govt determined to take country out of economic crisis

Caretaker Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs Shamshad Akhtar said that the caretaker government was determined to take the country out of the economic crisis. She said this while talking to Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori at Governor House in Karachi. (Details on Page 8)



Federal Minister assures retailers of full support to set up outlets chain abroad

The Federal Minister of Industries & Production Gohar Ejaz, in a meeting with the delegation of Chainstore Association of Pakistan, has reiterated the government pledge of continuing its consultation process with the organized retail sector and Chainstore Association to facilitate the formal sector and enhance its exports. (Details on Page 6)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Eid Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH)

RAWALPINDI: An illuminated view of buildings and road decorated with colorful lights at Chungi Number 4, in the city, in connection with Eid Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH) celebrations.



Photo: Online

Eid Miladun Nabi to be celebrated with splendor in federal capital

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: As the month of Rabi-ul-Awwal dawned, Pakistan has come alive with vibrant celebrations in honor of Eid Miladun Nabi, the birthday of the Holy Prophet Muhammad Peace Be Upon Him, slated for September 29.

The devout across the country have embarked on adorning mosques, homes, and businesses with resplendent lights, creating a captivating atmosphere. In the bustling Industrial Area, Sector I-9, industrialists have not only adorned their business establishments but also illuminated the roadsides with an array of colorful lights, lending a picturesque charm to the surroundings.

Government buildings, following an annual tradition, have been aglow with radiant lights in preparation for the 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal, the date observed for this revered occasion.

In recognition of the significance of Eid Miladun Nabi, both the federal and provincial governments have officially declared September 29 as a public holiday, marking it as a day of traditional and religious reverence. In anticipation of the festivities, the

Islamabad Capital Territory administration, Islamabad Police, and Islamabad Traffic Police have devised stringent security and traffic plans to ensure the smooth progress of rallies in the federal capital and its adjacent areas during the celebration of Eid Miladun Nabi.

This proactive approach would maintain peace and security throughout the commemorations. Speaking to APP, Muhammad Amir Attari, a Public Relations Officer of Dawat-e-Islami in Islamabad, shared details of the grand celebrations planned for this auspicious occasion. He disclosed that numerous rallies would be organized, commencing from various sectors and suburban areas of the federal capital, as a tribute to the Holy Prophet Muhammad Peace Be Upon Him. The main march, orchestrated by Dawat-e-Islami in the federal capital, would commence from Jamea Masjid Faizan-e-Madina, Sector G-11 Markaz, following Friday Prayer. It would culminate at the same venue with Magrib Prayer, accompanied by supplications for Pakistan's peace, progress, prosperity, security, and sovereignty.

UNGA Session; Caretaker PM vociferously spells out Pakistan's views on regional, global perspectives, generating wider

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Karkar has emphatically conveyed Pakistan's views on key regional and global issues, during his recently concluded five-day visit to New York, where he addressed the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, besides holding sidelines meetings with the world leaders.

Contrary to the impression created by a section of media regarding the prime minister's visit, the successfully marked visit drew immense interest among the world leaders and governments representatives who harken to the prime minister's forthright viewpoints which were broadly highlighted by the international media. The visit was also marked with prominence amidst Canadian prime minister announcing Indi-



an state's role behind a gruesome murder of Khalistan Sikh leader in Canada.

In New York, PM Kakar told the world leaders about 'India's rogue behaviour' which vindicated Pakistan's persistent stance about alarming rise of extremists ruling saffron junta of RSS-inspired BJP whose religious fanatics are not only hell bent upon persecuting the minorities in India, but also

the growing Hindu supremacist trend poses an existential threat to the regional and global peace.

The prime minister's views were acknowledged by his diverse audience as the Western countries voiced their concerns over the Indian state sponsored murder of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a Sikh leader and Canadian citizen after the irrefutable evidences keep emerging.

The prime minister mentioned Kashmir, Islamophobia, financial inequality, Covid triggered inflation, climate change, peace in Afghanistan, UN role and reforms, and terrorism issues, in his address to the UNGA session.

Being the first interim prime minister to represent Pakistan at the world body, Kakar held important discussions with Iranian President, UN Secretary General, Chinese Vice President, President of Uzbekistan and heads of different financial institutions on the sidelines of the UNGA 78.

In a bilateral meeting with President of Iran Ebrahim Raisi, the caretaker prime minister reaffirmed Pakistan's strong commitment to further strengthen and deepen ties with the brotherly country.

Caretaker PM Kakar and Chinese Vice President Han Zheng, on the sidelines of the

UNGA session, expressed their firm commitment to continue working together to realize CPEC's shared objectives.

The prime minister and President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, in the bilateral discussions, reiterated their commitment to promote regional economic integration and resolved to play an active role for inter-regional connectivity.

He also met United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and briefed him on India's ongoing human rights violations in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

In a meeting with International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva, the prime minister apprised her of various measures taken by the Government of Pakistan to stabilize and revive the country's economy.

Parents appealed to vaccinate children against diseases: Dr. Nadeem Jan

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for Health Dr. Nadeem Jan on Sunday appealed to parents to get their children vaccinated against various deadly diseases. In a video message about immunization of children, the minister said that effective measures are being taken to ensure 100% immunization coverage. He said that the ministry of Health is determined to ensure universal health coverage. Dr Nadeem Jan said, "Innocent children are our future and they need regular medical care particularly their safety against various diseases through regular vaccination."

Mushaal lauds PM for raising voice for oppressed Kashmiris at UNGA

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussain-Mallick on Sunday extolled the caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar for raising voicing for the oppressed Kashmiris in his address at the UN General Assembly session.

The SAPM, while addressing the award ceremony arranged by Bright Future Society, said "I am grateful to the PM for highlighting the state terrorism in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir at global stage".

Mushaal said that PM's address in the General Assembly not only helped exposed the Indian fascist and notorious face before the world but it would also encourage the Kashmiri brothers and sisters that Pakistan never missed the chance to bring to lime light the brutalities of the Indian brutal forces before



the world.

She pointed out that the PM as the ambassador and advocate of Kashmiris highlighted the worst human rights violations in the occupied valley before the international community.

Mushaal vowed that Pakistan will continue to expose India's Hindu fascist regime at every forum globally.

SAPM said that the oppressed Kashmiris see Pakistan as the center of their hopes for achieving their right to self-determination as India fascist Narendra Modi led government turned the scenic Kash-

mir valley into a killing field. She said that all top Hurriyat leaders including her husband Yasin Malik was in Indian Illegally and unlawful incarceration as they were detained in fake, fabricated and politically motivated cases to silence their just voices.

Moreover, she said that Hindutva regime even subject other minorities to worst state oppression.

Mushaal said Indian government was not only involved in state terrorism in IIOJK but its notorious agency carried out terrorist activities across the world.

She stated that the recent killing of Sikh separatist leader in Canada exposed the ugly face of Hindutva regime before the world.

She urged the international community and UN bodies to take immediate steps for resolving the Kashmir issue and releasing detained Kashmir leaders and other freedom fighters because the regional peace would remain elusive with-

Iran says it defused 30 bombs in Tehran, detained 28 people

Reuters

IRAN: Authorities in Iran have neutralised 30 bombs meant to go off simultaneously in Tehran and detained 28 terrorists linked to Islamic State, Iran's Tasnim news agency reported on Sunday, citing the intelligence ministry.

"Some of the members are of Islamic State (IS) and the perpetrators have a history of being affiliated with Takfiri groups in Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Kurdistan region of Iraq," Iran's intelligence ministry added in a statement. The militant group has claimed several attacks in the country, including deadly twin bombings in 2017.

Noor Mukadam, Sara Inam's fathers call for speedy justice

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Noor Mukadam and Sara Inam's fathers on Sunday demanded the courts for speedy trial of the murder cases to dispense justice and penalise the culprits.

Shaukat Mukadam and Inamur Rahim - the fathers of two slain women including Noor Mukadam and Sara Inam - conducted a press conference today along with members of the civil society.

Shaukat Mukadam said that Sara Inam had been murdered in a brutal way. "I and my wife went to Inam's home following the incident as we knew the pain Sara's family was going through."

"We approached courts to get justice and a long trial was conducted. We were told that it was an open-and-shut case and we were promised a fair trial." "The [Noor Mukadam



murder] case was later heard by the high court and her murderer [Zahir Jaffer] was awarded the death penalty on two counts by Islamabad High Court (IHC) Chief Justice Aamer Farooq. The murder case of my daughter is now being heard by the Supreme Court." Shaukat demanded early hearing of the case, otherwise, the people would lose confidence in the courts due to the delay in justice.

Inamur Rahim said that her daughter was murdered a year ago. He said that he knew about [Shahnawaz Amir's] mistreatment with Sara through her friends. We don't know anything about the [Shahnawaz's] family other than Ayaz Amir."

Group Photo

Minister of National Defence Türkiye, Defence Minister of Pakistan Lt Gen (Retd) Anwar Ali Hyder and Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi in a group photo along with commissioning crew onboard newly commissioned PNS Babur.



Pakistan Navy commissions first MILGEM Ship PNS BABUR

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Navy has commissioned the first MILGEM Ship PNS BABUR at the commissioning ceremony held at Istanbul Naval Shipyard, Türkiye.

The event was graced by the Minister of National Defence Türkiye Yasar Güler and Defence Minister of Pakistan Lieutenant General (R) Anwar Ali Hyder as chief guests flanked by Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi, a Pakistan Navy news release said on Sunday.

Addressing on the occasion, Turkish Defence Minister termed the brotherly Pakistan-Türkiye relations as exemplary and acknowledged the potential for further collaboration in the field of defence production.

He lauded the efforts and remarkable work done by Istanbul Naval Shipyard and ASFAT (Turkish Firm).

He also thanked the Government of Pakistan and Pakistan Navy for exceptional support during the recent devastating earthquakes at Türkiye.

During his address, the Defence Minister of Pakistan admired the collaboration of the Ministry of Defence Production Pakistan, Ministry of National Defence of Türkiye, ASFAT and Pakistan Navy for the synergized efforts to make the project a success and congratulated all teams on the successful commissioning of 1st MILGEM Ship.

He added that the relationship between Pakistan and Türkiye is unique because of deep rooted historical ties between the two brother-

ly countries, hence cooperation shall continue in future as well.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi underlined that PN MILGEM Ships fitted with state-of-the-art weapons and sensors will play a key role in maintaining peace and stability in the region.

He expressed his gratitude for enhanced collaboration in defence production especially in Maritime domain between the two countries.

The Admiral stated that in line with the government policies, Pakistan Navy has adopted indigenization of platforms and hence it is very satisfying to see modern warships being built in collaboration with brotherly country Türkiye.

PN MILGEM Class ships are the most technologically advanced and state-of-the-art surface platforms being constructed for Pakistan Navy.

The ships will be fitted with latest Command and Control Systems including modern weapons and sensors.

The Contract for construction of four MILGEM Class ships for Pakistan was signed between Ministry of Defence Production, Pakistan and ASFAT in 2018.

Under the project, two ships are under construction at Istanbul Naval Shipyard, while the other two are being constructed at Karachi Shipyard & Engineering Works.

The ceremony was attended by high leveled civil and military dignitaries from Türkiye and Pakistan and officials of Istanbul Naval Shipyard.

Shamshad says govt determined to take country out of economic crisis

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Caretaker Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs Shamshad Akhtar said that the caretaker government was determined to take the country out of the economic crisis.

She said this while talking to Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori at Governor House in Karachi this morning.

Caretaker finance minister said remissions are offered to the investors to increase invest-

ment in the country.

The Sindh governor, on the occasion, lauded the steps being taken by the government for the deal with economic challenges confronted to the nation.

Dr Shamshad Akhtar, the Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue on Friday said that the securities market can play a vital role in the development of debt market through the listing of Government debt securities on Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX).

Speaking at the inaugura-



tion ceremony of the Centralized Gateway Portal, Dr Akhtar said that the issuance securities through public auctions at

stan, said a press release issued by SECP here.

The SECP, PSX and other stakeholders need to extend concerted efforts to enable efficient implementation of these reforms, the state news agency reported.

The Minister formally inaugurated the Centralized Gateway Portal, a unique financial initiative that simultaneously onboard investors and customers in the securities market, the NBFC sector, and the insurance industry.

Five Eyes intelligence informed Trudeau's India allegation: CTV

Reuters

U. S. Ambassador to Canada David Cohen confirmed that "shared intelligence among Five Eyes partners" had informed Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of the possible involvement of Indian agents in the murder of a Canadian citizen in June, CTV News reported.

Intelligence-sharing network Five Eyes includes the U. S., Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Trudeau said on Monday that Ottawa had credible intelligence linking Indian agents to the murder of Sikh separatist leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Vancouver, prompting an angry reaction from New Delhi, which denies the



allegation. "I will say this was a matter of shared intelligence information. There was a lot of commu-

nication between Canada and the United States about this, and I think that's as far as I'm comfortable going," Cohen told CTV News in an interview to be aired on Sunday.

A sign asking for an investigation on India's role in the killing of Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar is seen at the Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara temple, in Surrey

The Canadian government amassed intelligence from both human and electronic sources in a months-long investigation into the murder, CBC News reported separately on Thursday.

Cohen did not comment to

CTV News on the type of intelligence that had informed the Canadian government.

The U. S. made clear on Friday that it expected the Indian government to work with Canada on efforts to investigate the possible involvement of New Delhi agents in Nijjar's murder.

"We are deeply concerned about the allegations that Prime Minister Trudeau has raised," U. S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken told reporters in a press briefing.

"It would be important that India work with the Canadians on this investigation. We want to see accountability."

Islamabad Int'l Airport main runway unavailable in specific hours: CAA

CAA

ISLAMABAD, SEP 24 (APP): The main runway of Islamabad International Airport will be unavailable from September 25 to 30 during early morning and specific night hours. According to the spokesperson Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), the runway will be unavailable due to the routine cleaning of rubber at Islamabad International Airport's main runway. He said that in the morning rubber cleaning will take place from 05:30 to 08:30 hrs. The cleaning time of the main runway at night will be from 10:30 to 13:00 (till 1 am). Flight operations will continue uninterrupted while the rubber is being cleaned from the main runway, he added. He said that a secondary runway would be available for flight operations at all times.

JI to stage sit-in outside Balochistan Governor House today

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Jamaat-e-Islami will stage a sit-in outside Balochistan Governor House today (Sunday) to record a protest against the rise in prices of electricity and petroleum products as well as back-breaking inflation.

The JI decided to speed up the anti-inflation movement in the country and in this regard, JI will stage a sit-in outside the Balochistan Governor House. JI Chief Sirajul Haq is also reaching Quetta, the party's spokesperson said.

Sirajul Haq will reveal the future course of strategy in the sit-in, the spokesperson said.

Meanwhile, the spokesperson also said that a sit-in will also be staged outside Sindh Governor House on October 6.

Earlier, the JI chief said his party will challenge overpriced agreements with the IPPs in the Supreme Court, next week, he said. "A white paper will also be issued on the energy sector," Sirajul Haq said.

SNGPL disconnects 7,187 illegal gas connections in Punjab, KP

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: In an effort to curb gas theft, Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) continues its crackdown.

The SNGPL has disconnected a total of 7,187 illegal gas connections in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad.

According to the details, Sui Northern - as part of its crackdown - disconnected over 7,000 connections and slapped a fine of over Rs406 million to the violators.

SNGPL spokesperson said in Peshawar fine of Rs190,000 was imposed on the violators and Rs110,000 in Rawalpindi.

In Mardan fine of Rs529,000 was slapped over gas thieves and Rs178,000 in Gujranwala.

Earlier, in twin cities of Pakistan, the crackdown led to the disconnection of 23 illegal gas connections, while in Sialkot and Sargodha, 17 connections were met a similar fate.

Furthermore, the spokesperson for SNGPL reported that 75 gas connections were disconnected in Gujranwala, Lahore, Sheikhpura, and Sahiwal.

Second Ukraine wheat shipment reaches Turkey: tracking sites

News Desk

ISTANBUL: A second shipment of Ukrainian wheat reached Turkey via the Black Sea on Sunday, according to maritime traffic monitoring sites, despite Russian threats to attack boats heading to or from its neighbour and enemy.

The Palau-flagged bulk carrier Aroyat - laden with 17,600 tonnes of wheat - left the port city of Chornomorsk on Friday bound for Egypt.

Ukraine is testing a new sea route that avoids using international waters and follows those controlled by NATO members Bulgaria and Romania, following Russia's withdrawal from a UN-backed grain export deal.

According to the websites Marine Traffic and Vessel Finder, the Aroyat was at the southern exit of the Bosphorus Strait at 0300 GMT on Sunday.

It was to head towards the Dardanelles Strait to reach the Mediterranean.

A first ship loaded with 3,000 tonnes of wheat, and also flying the flag of Palau, left Chornomorsk without incident on Tuesday and arrived in Istanbul on Thursday.

Russia and Ukraine are two major agricultural powers whose supplies are crucial for global food security.

News Desk

RAWALPINDI: The funeral prayers of, Shaheed, Sepoy Shakeel Shafiq who embraced martyrdom a day earlier during an intelligence-based operation against the terrorists in Mir Ali area of North Waziristan, were offered on Sunday in his native village Kabirwala of Khanewal district. The martyr was buried with full military honours, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said. Mir Ali Operation



martyr laid to rest with full military honours Military and civil officials, relatives of the martyr and people from different walks of life attended the funeral prayer, it said.

Govt launches probe into vision loss through local injection

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Punjab government has formed a committee to probe the loss of eyesight among dozens of patients allegedly after being administered locally manufactured injection.

The eyesight of as many as 40 diabetes patients was affected due to substandard injections in Lahore. Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Chaudhry Manzoor revealed that his brother and a friend's eyesight was affected when they received the shot inside their eyes.

Punjab Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare Dr Jamal Nasir took notice of the eye infec-

tion incidents and constituted a five-member committee.

According to the notification, the committee will submit its report within three days.

The committee was led by King Edward Medical University Dr. Asad Aslam Khan as convener while other members included Director General Drugs Control Muhammad Sohail, Mayo Hospital's Dr. Muhammad Moin, Lahore General Hospital's Dr. Tayyaba and Services Hospital's Prof Dr. Mohsin.

According to reports, diabetic patients in Lahore, Kasur, and Jhang districts were administered Avastin injections to address retinal damage.

Interim CM urges Federal govt to start work on Hyderabad-Sukkur Motorway

Zainab Hyder

KARACHI: Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice Maqbool Baqar has urged the federal government to start work on the Hyderabad-Sukkur Motorways (M-6) at least on those portions where land acquisition issues have been resolved.

"I know the construction of M-6 was stopped when the scandal of land acquisition was unearthed but now the land acquisition process has been completed by the committee under Commissioner through a joint digital survey the work should be started," he said.

This he issued on Saturday while presiding over a meeting of the Hyderabad Divisional administration at the camp of DC Jamsjoro at Sehwan. The meeting was attended by Minister Irrigation Ishwar Lal, Chief Secretary Dr Fakhre Alam, Commissioner Karachi Khalid Hyder Shah, Secretary Irrigation Niaz Abbasi, Secretary



Works Nawaz Sohoo, DIG Hyderabad Tariq Dharejo, CEO Peoples Housing for Flood affected people and other concerned.

Commissioner Hyderabad Khalid Hyder Shah briefing the chief minister about the progress of under-construction of Hyderabad-Sukkur Motorway

(M-6) said that it has a length of 396 km, including 105 km in Hyderabad Division. He added that the total land required in Hyderabad Division was 2,428 acres.

The CM was told that the land acquisition process of M-9 was stopped temporarily due to the embezzlement

of funds. The process started afresh after key rectifications. A Committee under Commissioner Hyderabad has completed joint surveys / Fresh Demarcations with digital coordinates.

The commissioner said that only a portion of Matyari was yet to be completed. At this, the CM directed the chief secretary to talk to the federal government and get the suspended work resumed on M-6.

The CM directed the divisional administration to focus on facilitating general elections and strengthening the drive against electricity theft drive and price control operations against hoarders and illegal profiteers.

The CM directed the divisional administration to ensure the smooth completion of all the projects involving Land Acquisition and resolving traffic Congestion – parking problems In Urban Centers and improvement of Infrastructure, particularly Parks and playground

He also urged the administration to

support and ensure to carrying out of routine Immunization Programs and Polio Eradication as Per the National Emergency Action Plan.

Law & Order: DIG Hyderabad Tariq Dharejo briefing the CM on overall law & order said that there were nine districts in his Range which has 42 police subdivisions and 156 police stations. The total strength of the police force, including 10 SSPs is 18529.

Talking about registered Crimes, the DIG told the CM that 2761 cases of crime against persons were registered in which 1883 accused were challaned, of them 33 were convicted, 331 were acquitted, and 1482 cases were under trial.

The CM was told that during 2023 1908 cases of crime against property were registered, of which 1124 were challaned. The courts convicted 21, acquitted 186, and 916 cases were still under trial. Similarly, 5675 cases of local and Special Law were regis-

tered, of which 5454 were challenged – out of them 259 were convicted, 1356 were acquitted, and 3636 cases were under trial.

The CM directed the police to evolve a comprehensive strategy to eliminate the menace of Gutka and Maipuri in the entire Hyderabad Division. The DIG said that he has shown zero tolerance for drug trafficking. He added that 2701 cases have been registered under the law of Gutka Mainpuri Act 2019 in the year 2023 and 3924 accused were arrested. Approximately Rs. 2793 million recoveries has been made.

Irrigation: Chief Engineer Irrigation Sardar Shah briefing the CM said that there were 361 drains, including 361 each in Sukkur Barrage Command Area, and Kotri Barrage Command, 110 Sukkur & Kotri Barrage Command (LBOD) and five Guddu Barrage Command with a total length of 4970 miles. RBOD-II 2773 km of RBOD-II are under-construction.

Work

CHINIOT: A farmer is preparing land for next crop in field, in the city.



Photo: Online

GUD test conducted at Wensam College for MPhil & Ph. D Students admission

Adam Khan Wazir

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Test was conducted at University Wensam College for students enrolled in MPhil and Ph. D programs in various departments of (GUD) Gomal University dera Ismail Khan.

The test was conducted by the Director of Admission Riaz Ahmed Bettani and his team.

On this occasion, Controller of Examinations Dr. Liaqat Hussain, Director Admin Muhammad Usman and other administrative officers, teachers, security sections were also present.

In the test, there were a large number of candidates from different regions, areas and cities of Pakistan to take admission in MPhil and Ph. D in different departments of Gomal University.



Speaking on this occasion, Director Admission Riaz Ahmed Bettani said, that MPhil and Ph. D tests in Gomal University are being conducted under the rules

issued by Higher Education Commission Islamabad.

He further said that under the leadership of Vice Chancellor Gomal University Professor Dr. Shakibullah,

provision of a peaceful educational environment is continuing in Gomal University.

While that is the reason Gomal University is thriving today, more than 1500

students are participating in the MPhil and Ph. D test in Gomal University, which is the main reason for the confidence of students and their parents in Gomal University.

Riyaz Ahmad Bettani further said that I am grateful to Gomal University administration, teachers, staff, especially district administration, police department and traffic police for their full support for conducting the best test.

This is also worth mentioning, that strict security arrangements were made on this occasion, while the facility of stand-by generator was also provided for the students taking the test in case of failure in electricity supply including water.

It should be noted that the test results will be published on the Gomal University website www.gu.edu.pk

Exhibition based on the works of prisoners at the Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi



City Desk

KARACHI: Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi and Central Jail jointly organized art and crafts exhibition based on the artworks of prisoners, seeing the great interest of the public, the exhibition will continue till Monday, September 25 at Ahmed Parvaiz Art Gallery, President Arts Council Muhammad Ahmed Shah said that the prisoners who created the masterpieces on display on Monday will be among us so that they can share the skill with which they have performed their art. It should be noted that prominent political and social figures of Pakistan participated in the opening of the exhibition, including Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori, Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi, Speaker Sindh Assembly Agha Siraj Durrani, Caretaker Provincial Interior Minister Brigadier* Haris Nawaz, Superintendent of Jail Hassan Sehito, PP leader Nasir Hussain Shah, caretaker provincial culture minister Junaid Ali Shah and others are included.

World should act against Indian RAW's globalized terrorism: Sardar Attique

Abdul Majeed Tahir

RAWALPINDI: Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, ex-Premier AJK, President Muslim Conference, has urged for serious action by the world leaders and human rights organizations to counter Indian terror agency RAW from going global in its widespread terror and killings activities. Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar's targeted murder in Canada is now being condemned by western democracies as a diabolic act of Indian RAW. This heinous secret is open now worldwide, Sardar Attique Khan said in his media statement Friday here.

He has drawn the attention of the world community to the repeated calls by him and by other Kashmiri leaders that India has launched dozens of her human killers agencies who are busy in group murders of Kashmiri youth and leaders and serial abductions of women in India-held part of Jammu and Kashmir state. Murder of Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Canada has once again confirmed the truth of our frequent calls to international community and it is time to oust India from its UN membership as it is a shocking slur to keep Indian terror country in the UN fold, Sardar Attique added.

The Kashmiri leader reminded that Indian agencies have been carrying out all sorts of anti-human killer activities in Azad Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan and in Baluchistan. RAW is proxy killer in Afghanistan also. RAW agent Kulbubhushan Jadhav is still under investigation in Pakistan, he reminded.

Sardar Attique Khan said that all world countries should shut the presence of RAW in their national lands to prevent effectively repeat of Canada killer episode.

Seven arrested in Rangers, Police operation in Katcha Area

City Desk

KARACHI: The Rangers and Police in a joint operation in interior of Sindh, arrested seven accused, citing a spokesperson.

"The accused were facilitators to bandit gangs in katcha area, a spokesperson of Rangers said here.

The law enforcement agencies recovered three SMGs, seven SMG magazines and two 30 bore pistols from them, spokesman stated. "A knife, two mobile phones, eight motorbikes and drugs were also recovered from the accused," spokesman said.

Moreover, rounds of different arms and 20,560 rupees were also recovered from their possession.

Rangers spokesman stated that the arrested suspects were linked with criminal gangs of Laloo Jamro, Lalan Jan and Qadeer Jamro.

The operations were conducted at Gul Mohammad Jamro Goth and Thull Kotdiji in Khairpur district, spokesman said.

The accused have been identified as Shaaban, Jamshed Ali, Banho, Nazeer Ahmed, Khan Mohammad, Amjad and Abdul Ghaffar.

The Sindh government has decided to launch a law enforcement operation in katcha areas (riverine forests) along the Indus River in upper Sindh districts to curb bandit gangs and other outlaws involved in rampant kidnapping for ransom and other crimes in the region.

Why not to celebrate Cultural Days in University...?

Culture can be summed up as "the way of life is called culture." However, if that is made clear, the full definition will be: "The human-created pattern of behaviour. Along with tangible goods like traditional attire, resources, construction sites, works of art, memorials, and techniques for transportation, culture also consists of intangible elements like values, beliefs, conventions, language, and the unique idea.

As a way to commemorate these events, each culture has designated a special day, which is celebrated by its members by donning traditional attire, such as pagri and shoes, and by participating in dances and musical

performances.

Every university student in Pakistan, whether they attend a high-ranking institution (such as Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad, LUMS, GCU Lahore, or BZU) or a low-ranking institution (such as Kohat University of Science and Technology, Hazara University, etc.), is free to celebrate Cultural Day with the proper preparations and freedom, including staff and other students.

Because on this day, people from that culture—whether it be Punjabi, Pakhtoon, Baloch, Saraiki, Sindhi, or

Mehran—spread love, respect, happiness, honour, prosperity, and peace, all of which contribute to their happiness at university.

Cultural Day essentially encourages the sharing of that particular culture's way of life with other cultures.

We don't know what the problem is with the administration of the University of Sargodha because they can't allow student unions in the university while the Chief Justice, Qazi Faiz Isa, held a meeting with a syndicate of Quaid-e-Azam University on 22nd of September, 2023, just to tell

them that student unions are the basic thing on the university premises. All of these top-ranked universities are permitted by HEC and the Supreme Court to celebrate Cultural Days.

The administration of the University of Sargodha suspends students who dress traditionally on the day designated for that culture's culture and attempt to promote that culture. Why...? Are the Higher Education Commission's and the Supreme Court's guidelines not applicable to the University of Sargodha? Why don't we, the University of Sargodha students, celebrate the cultural day like the rest of the university students do?

(Writer is Student of Law College, University of Sargodha)



Zakaria Khan

Islamabad
15° - 23° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	4:34 am
Zohr	12:00 pm
Asr	4:19 pm
Maghrib	6:03 pm
Isha	7:26 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance	115
PIA Flight Info	114
PIA Cargo	9280979
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Pilgrims from Pakistan to get additional facilities in 2024: Aneeq Ahmed

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The intending pilgrims from Pakistan, which will perform Haj in 2024 will get additional facilities as compared to the past years.

This was stated by Caretaker Federal Minister for Religious Affairs, Aneeq Ahmed, as he held a meeting with Saudi Arab's Minister for Haj and Umrah, Dr. Tawfiq Al-Rabiah, in Riyadh. The meeting was held to finalise the arrangements for pilgrims. The meeting was also attended by Pakistani Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Ahmed Farooq.

The Caretaker Federal Minister said that arrangements would soon be finalised for the lodging, messing, and travelling facilities of the intending pilgrims. He said the flight schedule for the intending pilgrims from Pakistan would soon be finalised. The accommodation facilities for the Pakistani pilgrims will be located near the holiest sites in Saudi Arabia. The Road-to-Makkah project will be launched from other cities of Pakistan apart from Islamabad. He expressed gratitude to the Saudi Arab rulers for providing patron-



age to the Saudi Ministry for Haj and Umrah for providing the best facilities to the pilgrims.

The Saudi Minister for Haj and Umrah said that his government would extend maximum cooperation to the pilgrims from Pakistan. He said that new steps had been taken by the Saudi government to facilitate the pilgrims. He said that an unlimited number of private tour operators from 80 countries of the world could

now send people to Saudi Arabia.

He said the Saudi government had been thinking about the option of including Karachi and Lahore in the Road-to-Makkah project.

The Saudi Haj and Umrah Minister informed the Pakistani delegation that the Road-to-Makkah project was gradually being expanded. He said that he had recently visited Pakistan to finalise Haj arrangements beforehand.



LAHORE: "Chairman Urban Developers Mian Tahir Javed received shield from Almarah foundation Chairperson Sobia Waraich along with Mehboob Aslam Lila DIG Commandant PTC Chung on ground breaking ceremony

LUMS faculty showcases Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation-funded Project at the 78th UN General Assembly

SDG 3: Good Health & Well-Being
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Dr. Trevor Mundel, President of Global Health
Dr. Maryam Mustafa, Assistant Professor of Computer Science
Lahore University of Management Sciences (Pakistan)

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Maryam Mustafa, Director, Saida Waheed Gender Initiative and Assistant Professor of Computer Science at LUMS, recently presented her project, 'Awaaz-e-Sehat: Empowering Maternal Healthcare with Voice-Enabled Electronic Record Management' at the 78th United Nations General Assembly. She was part of the session on 'Artificial Intelligence for Accelerating Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals: Addressing Society's Greatest Challenges'.

Dr. Mustafa's project won a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation out of over 1,300 global proposals for its Grand Challenges Catalysing Equitable Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use award. Her co-researchers on the project are Dr. Hassan Mohy Ud Din (Project Co-PI, LUMS), Dr. Beena Ahmed (Project Co-PI, UNSW) and Dr. Fozia Umer (Project Co-PI, Shalamar Hospital).

As a nation struggling with subpar pregnancy outcomes, the absence of documented medical records for expectant women seeking care poses a significant challenge for healthcare professionals. This lack of information hampers doctors' ability to offer precise diagnoses and tailored care that takes into account socio-economic and lifestyle factors. These factors also play a vital role in maternal health outcomes. Dr. Mustafa and her team are building a voice-enabled, mobile phone-based, conversational AI assistant, Awaaz-e-Sehat to enable maternal healthcare workers in Pakistan to create and keep track of detailed electronic medical records.

Awaaz-e-Sehat will record audio responses in different languages following specific prompts through a proof-of-concept system comprising an intuitive user interface speech recognition module and a text recognition module. The system will then convert responses into text and populate a template electronic medical record in Urdu. It will be evaluated by maternal healthcare workers at Shalamar Hospital in Lahore for its ability to collect records from 500 patients.

Improving maternal health outcomes in Pakistan was the primary motivation behind Dr. Mustafa's research proposal. "Our country has among the poorest pregnancy outcomes worldwide, significantly worse than many other low-income countries with a maternal mortality ratio of 186 deaths per 100,000 live births, as compared to the developed-country average of just 12 deaths per 100,000. The maternal healthcare system in Pakistan is severely under-resourced with no available tools to support electronic record keeping," she shared.

She added that her ultimate objective is to roll out Awaaz-e-Sehat across maternal healthcare facilities in Pakistan. "It has the potential to significantly improve not just patient treatment but also create datasets

Faisal Fayyaz to Inspire and Represent at IYC8, New York, USA

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The International Youth Conference (IYC) is thrilled to announce Gymnast Faisal Fayyaz as the International Youth Ambassador, scheduled to take place in New York, USA. Faisal Fayyaz, a rising star in the world of computer science, information technology, gymnastics, physical education, sports sciences, & project management will be a source of inspiration and empowerment for young people around the globe.

Faisal Fayyaz has already achieved remarkable feats in the field of computer & gymnastics, becoming a beacon of hope for aspiring athletes & IT professionals. Known for his dedication, skill, and charismatic presence, Faisal embodies the spirit of resilience and determination that the IYC seeks to foster in its participants.

As the International Youth Ambassador, Faisal Fayyaz will participate in various conference activities, sharing his personal journey and insights on pursuing one's passions, overcoming challenges, and achieving excellence. His story of rising from humble beginnings to becoming a recognized IT Guru & gymnastics sensation will undoubtedly motivate young attendees to strive for their own goals.

"We are honored to have Faisal Fayyaz join us as the International Youth Ambassador for IYC8. His accomplishments are truly remarkable, and his dedication to his sport and his community align perfectly with the values of the conference," said IYC SPOKESPERSON, Director of IYC.

Faisal Fayyaz shared his excitement about the role, saying, "QUOTE FROM FAISAL ABOUT HIS ROLE AS AMBASSADOR AND HIS GOALS FOR THE CONFERENCE." The IYC's promises to be an unforgettable experience, with Faisal Fayyaz's presence adding an extra layer of inspiration and motivation. Participants can look forward to engaging discussions, thought-provoking sessions, and networking opportunities that will help shape their futures.

Faisal Fayyaz is the 1st Pakistani to represent Pakistan as an International Grand Award Judge of Computer Science/Embedded System/System Software in ISEF 2023, Dallas, Texas, USA as well as the 1st Pakistani Researcher & Symposium Presenter at World Congress Center in ISEF 2022 Atlanta, Georgia, USA. The Innovative Luminary Award is presented to Faisal Fayyaz in recognition of his outstanding achievements in the fields of Computer Science, Information Technology, Project Management, Gymnastics, Event & Quality Management, and Physical Education & Sports Sciences.

Seminar on 'Human Rights in the Light of Prophet's Biography' held at PAC



City Desk

RAWALPINDI: A seminar titled "Human Rights in the Light of Prophet's Biography" was organized in Punjab Arts Council on the occasion of EidMilad-ul-Nabi (S. A. W) in collaboration with International Qiraat Research Academy. The event was presided over by world-renowned reciter Muhammad ZeeshanHaider, founder and chairman of the International Recitation Research Academy. QariZeeshanHaider said in his address that Iqra International is spreading the teachings of the Quran in the whole world. Our main mission and objective is to equip the next generation with the teachings of the Holy Quran so that the youth can avoid becoming a victim of misbehavior. This mission of ours goes beyond all superficial thinking to serve the religion and nation. On this occasion, Dr. Zaheer Abbas Qadri said that the arrival of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is the reason for the creation of the universe. Allah himself said that, O my beloved, if I had not created you, this mountain, bird, and river would not even have shown them. Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmed said on this occasion that Islam is the leader of human rights in the world.

Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Caretaker Health Minister Dr Nadeem Jan and Provincial Caretaker Primary And Secondary Health Care Minister Dr Jamal Nasir meeting on Sunday.



Photo: PID

22nd YLC celebrates the Transformative Power of Art, Culture, and Society on its 3rd Day

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The 22nd Young Leaders Conference (YLC) continued to inspire and enlighten its participants on its third day, focusing on the profound impact of art, culture, and society in fostering inclusivity and driving positive societal transformations.

EBM who has been a prestigious partner to YLC for 22 years sponsored this day and it was all about being "SOOPER". For the past 22 years EBM and SoL combined have translated



the dream into reality with multiple youth organizations coming under formation and the development being the

most sought-after need of the society. Be it women getting empowered to be respected as an equal individual in the society or the youngsters venturing into new ideas bringing technological advancements in the country, YLC has played a pivotal role in this transformation and without dedicated support from Peek Freans this would have never been achieved. They have been playing a vital role in developing

Day immersed with an enlightening briefing by Waleed Anwar, setting the tone for discussions on the transformative power of art, culture, and society.

Renowned Yoga and medi-

Parachute Entries in Pakistan's Civil Bureaucracy

The question of entrance into respectful professions, such as becoming a judge or a doctor, often hinges on rigorous academic and professional requirements. For instance, to ascend to the judiciary, one must typically navigate the demanding LLB examination, while the medical profession demands the successful completion of the MBBS degree, both serving as bastions of excellence and qualification. Yet, a unique situation arises when contemplating the civil bureaucracy of Pakistan, where the coveted CSS examination serves as the gateway for many aspiring individuals. This examination stands as a formidable challenge, attracting the nation's finest talents, and only a fortunate few are able to surmount its rigorous hurdles to join the esteemed civil bureaucracy. However, a matter of concern emerges, casting a shadow over the integ-

ty of this process. A practice persists, a clandestine passage, where annually, a small cohort of officers from the Pakistan Armed Forces gain entry into the civil bureaucracy without the necessity of passing the CSS examination. These officers find themselves swiftly integrated into prestigious cadres like the Pakistan Administrative Service PAS, Police Service of Pakistan PSP, and Foreign Service of Pakistan FSP, while other cadres like Postal, Income Tax, Accounts, OMG, Railways, Secretariat, or Customs Service are relegated to the periphery. The ramifications of this practice ripple through the bureaucracy, particularly affecting career officers who have diligently endeavored through the CSS examination. It beckons the query: can

an officer who has surmounted the CSS examination be inducted into the Pakistan Armed Forces without traversing the crucible of the ISSB examination? The glaring incongruity warrants scrutiny. In the bureaucratic echelons, officers from marginalized cadres like Postal, Income Tax, Customs, Railways, Accounts, and OMG often languish, their aspirations confined to securing deputations to consequential posts or foreign assignments. Some officers persevere, attempting the CSS examination repeatedly, a testament to their commitment. They even steer their spouses and progeny towards coveted cadres such as PSP, Foreign Service, or PAS, creating a cycle of inequality. Moreover, civil service officers from the Pakistan

Armed Forces face barriers in ascending to high-ranking positions within the bureaucracy, encountering resistance even when aspiring to reach the exalted grades of 21 or 22. The paucity of retired army officers appointed as IG Police or Chief Secretary in Pakistan is conspicuous, with many grappling against adversarial forces throughout their journey. This is an issue that demands contemplation and rectification. In summation, it is imperative to consider a permanent prohibition on such parachute entrants into the CSS cadre. In doing so, Pakistan's civil bureaucracy can evolve towards a more equitable and meritocratic system, wherein all officers, regardless of their entry point, have equal opportunities to contribute to the nation's progress. Write some shortest headlines of above message.

The writer is a senior journalist. He reached @SyedfawadAli303



Syed Fawad Ali Shah

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PTI Propaganda Machines V/s National Interest - I

In today's interconnected world, the internet and social media platforms have provided a powerful medium for the dissemination of information, ideas, and opinions. While this has undoubtedly expanded the scope of free speech and democracy, it has also given rise to a concerning phenomenon: anti-state propaganda.

Anti-state propaganda can be broadly defined as the dissemination of information, often false or misleading, with the intent to undermine the legitimacy and stability of a government or state authority. It may take various forms, including written articles, videos, social media posts, or public speeches. Anti-state propaganda often seeks to foment dissent, incite violence, or promote an alternative political agenda, posing a significant challenge to governments around the world.

Anti-state propaganda can fuel civil unrest and even incite violence. By spreading false information or stoking existing grievances, it has the potential to destabilize regions and escalate conflicts. In some cases, this propaganda can lead to acts of terrorism or rebellion, posing a direct threat to national security. When citizens are exposed to persistent anti-state propaganda, it can erode trust in government institutions and sow discord among different segments of society. This erosion of trust can hinder the government's ability to effectively govern and implement policies for the benefit of its citizens. Anti-state propaganda often relies on disinformation and manipulation to shape public opinion. False narratives and misinformation can mislead citizens, making it difficult for them to make informed decisions and participate in the democratic process effectively.

From last few months, Pakistani nation has witnessed widespread Anti-State propaganda from PTI leadership and its so called media influencers. Recently, the news of the death of the eight-year-old son of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf activist and ticket holder Ibad Farooq, Ammar Farooq, saddened everyone across the country as no one should be happy on deaths. But PTI propaganda machines started using this death for their political gains while saying that Ammar was died due to separation from his father which is totally wrong. PTI claimed on social media that Ammar fell ill due to mental shock and grief due to the arrest of his father, mother and grandfather by the Punjab Police. While reportedly some family members said that Ammar was suffering from a rare brain disease called Sebaceous Sclerosing Panencephalitis (SSPE).

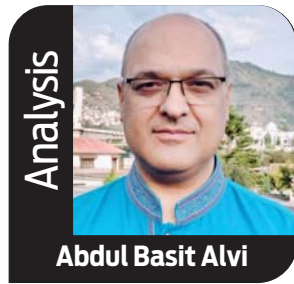
It should be noted that Subacute Sclerosing Panencephalitis (SSPE) is a rare but severe neurological disorder that primarily affects children and young adults. This devastating condition is a delayed complication of a previous measles infection, making it essential to highlight the importance of measles vaccination and the potential consequences of measles in the absence of vaccination.

SSPE is caused by a slow and persistent infection of the brain with the measles virus (also known as rubeola). Measles is a highly contagious viral illness that can be prevented through vaccination. When a person is infected

with measles, the virus initially targets the respiratory system. However, in rare cases, the virus can enter the central nervous system, leading to SSPE. The exact reasons why some individuals develop SSPE after measles infection while others do not remain unclear, but it is believed to be related to a combination of genetic, viral, and immune factors. The initial symptoms of SSPE may be subtle and can often go unnoticed. Over time, these symptoms progress and become more severe. Common symptoms of SSPE include: Behavioral changes, including irritability and mood swings, Decline in school performance and cognitive abilities, Muscle stiffness and spasms, Seizures, Blindness, Inability to walk or control body movements, Coma, Death (typically within one to three years after symptom onset). Diagnosing SSPE can be challenging, as its symptoms can resemble those of other neurological conditions. Medical professionals typically use a combination of clinical observations, neurological examinations, and diagnostic tests to reach a diagnosis. Key diagnostic tools include: Electroencephalogram (EEG) to assess brain activity, Brain imaging (MRI or CT scans) to visualize brain abnormalities, Measuring elevated levels of measles antibodies in cerebrospinal fluid, History of a previous measles infection or vaccination etc. Unfortunately, there is no cure for SSPE. Treatment primarily focuses on managing symptoms and providing supportive care. Medications such as anticonvulsants may help control seizures, while physi-

cal and occupational therapy can address muscle stiffness and other mobility issues. Patients with SSPE often require specialized care and attention to address their unique needs, and hospice care may be necessary as the disease progresses. The most effective way to prevent SSPE is to prevent measles itself. This can be achieved through vaccination with the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine. The MMR vaccine is safe and highly effective, providing long-lasting immunity against measles and its complications. Widespread vaccination not only protects individuals from measles but also contributes to community immunity, reducing the risk of outbreaks. In recent years, there has been a concerning resurgence of measles in some regions due to vaccine hesitancy and misinformation. It is crucial to promote accurate information about the safety and importance of vaccines and to encourage vaccination for all eligible individuals. By achieving high vaccination rates, we can significantly reduce the incidence of measles and, consequently, the risk of SSPE. Subacute Sclerosing Panencephalitis (SSPE) is a tragic and largely preventable consequence of measles infection. It serves as a stark reminder of the importance of vaccination in protecting public health and preventing devastating diseases. While there is no cure for SSPE, widespread measles vaccination remains the most effective means of preventing both measles and its severe complications, including SSPE. Public health efforts should continue to promote vaccination to reduce the incidence of measles and spare individuals and families from the devastating effects of SSPE.

To be Continued

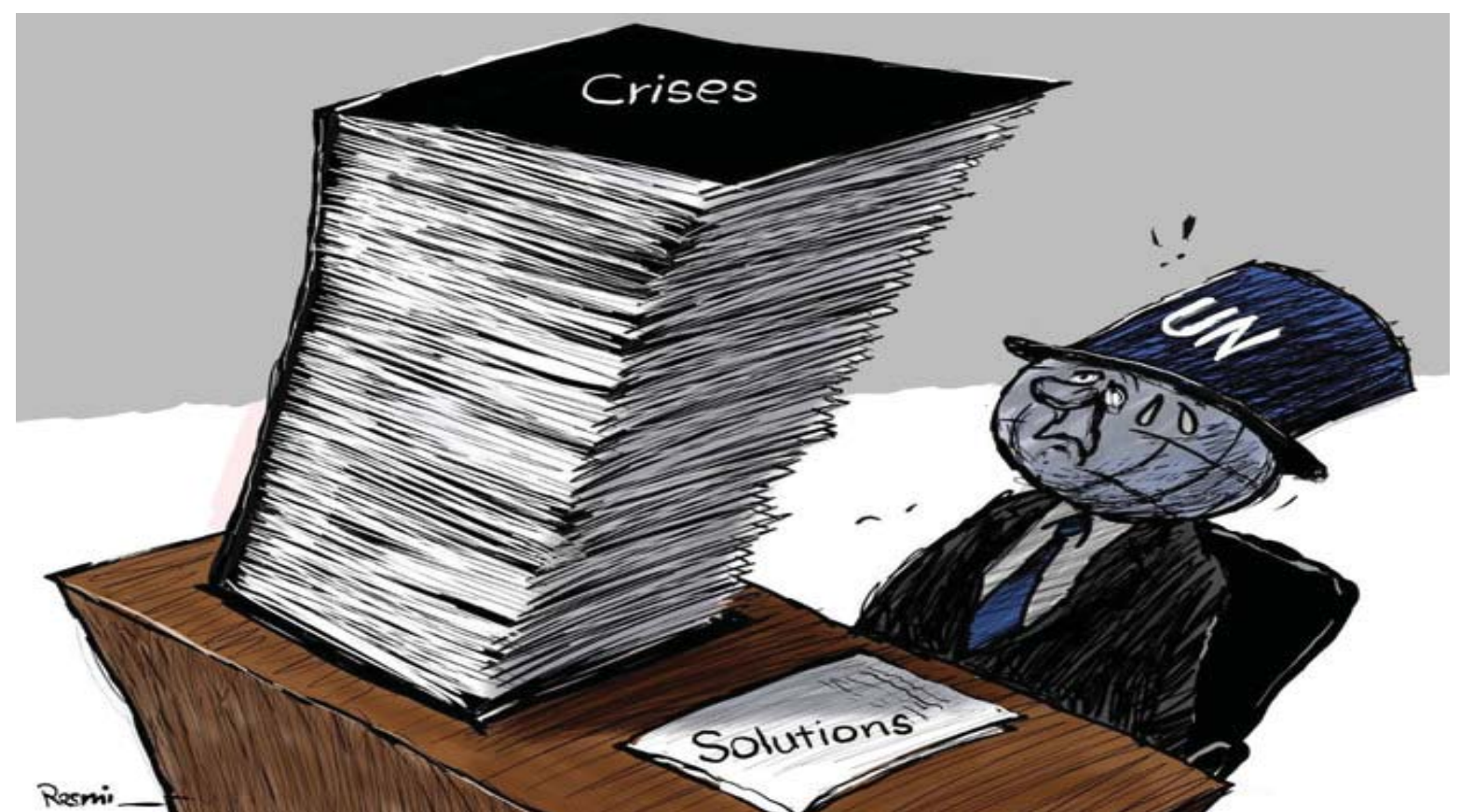


Abdul Basit Alvi

Pakistani researcher opens new horizons of next generation

With its ability to overcome the limitations of traditional CCD devices, the gateless image sensor developed by researchers of China's Zhejiang University offers superior performance with a high signal-to-noise ratio, dynamic range, and exceptional responsivity across the UV, visible, and IR spectrum. This breakthrough discovery has the potential to disrupt the image sensor market and redefine the future of imaging technology. As the industry seeks to meet the ever-increasing demands for high-quality, low-noise imaging solutions, Zhejiang University's gateless image sensor technology, pioneered by Prof. Xu Mingsheng and Dr. Ali Imran, holds the promise of revolutionizing the field and finding extensive applications in various aspects of life, from consumer electronics to industrial and medical imaging systems. In his interview with Hanzhou Global Technology and Innovation Center, Dr. Ali Imran mentioned that they have a plan to design the complete product based on this research to let the consumer enjoy the highly efficient features of this new technology development. Dr. Ali Imran is a senior researcher in Optoelectronics devices which include, Photosensors, Photodetectors, Phototransistors, and Solar Cells and is also working on the fabrication of synaptic vision sensors through the complex integration of 2D/3D materials, high-k dielectrics, and Ferroelectrics. He is the recipient of the Distinguished International Researcher Award from the Beijing Institute of Technology. From 2018-2020, he was a postdoctoral fellow at the State Key Lab of Micro and Mesoscopic Physics, School of Physics, Peking University. Dr. Ali Imran joined the School of Micro and Nano Electronics, at Zhejiang University, China in 2021. Currently, he is also working jointly with Zhejiang University Hangzhou Global Innovation and Technology Center, Hangzhou. He is also a consultant as an R&D expert for IC FAB and Foundries and has published 32 research articles with 8 as first author, 1 patent, and 1 book on the design and fabrication of semiconductor materials and electronic devices, such as field effect transistors, phototransistors, memristors, photodetectors, and photovoltaic devices. Dr. Ali Imran is an expert in device fabrication and characterization techniques and has publications in reputed journals and conferences, which include Applied Physics Letter, Small, Applied Sciences, Journal of Semiconductor Physics, Composites Science and Technology and Journal of Computational Electronics, Advanced Functional Materials, Advanced Materials Interfaces, Surfaces and Interfaces, Advanced Optical Materials, Materials Today Nano. He likes to cooperate in scientific and research activities to share his experience and exchange innovative ideas and feels happy to support and supervise active researchers, especially from Pakistan working in his research field.

Dr. Ali Imran said that he is very happy to work with Chinese Scientists to discover and develop new technologies to facilitate humanity for future technology demands. He feels thankful to the Chinese community for giving him a chance to make his future career and absorb him in their society. Dr. Ali Imran is also in communication with Chinese high-tech electronic companies to help Pakistan build up the Pakistani-owned Semiconductor industry. He hopes that his expertise will also help his nation to find a good solution for energy crises through cost-effective solar cell fabrication in local industries. The Chinese as being long-term traditional friends are always ready to support to solve energy-related issues. Dr. Ali Imran also hopes that the Pakistani Government will organize their talent to make a strong, powerful pool of young scientists and to focus them toward the solution to current challenges faced by their homeland. He showed his determination that he will continue his efforts to make China China-Pakistan friendship longer and stronger in all fields of life, especially in Science and Technology



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

Causes of democracy failure in Pakistan

Aqsa Maqbool Khan

In the 76-year history of Pakistan, the number of democratically elected prime ministers is 23, but none of them has completed their constitutional term. Sometimes they are removed by honorable judges; sometimes the president removes them; and sometimes the army removes them. After all, which is the most high-profile seat in Pakistan, and the most power has been given to the prime minister in the constitution when he is not saved, what will be the importance of democracy?

The democracy in Pakistan is very amateur. You can imagine that India got free with us, and India's democracy is called the world's biggest democracy.

In the 2022 Democracy Index survey, according to which 80% of people in Pakistan want democracy and 52% of these say that Pakistan democracy is amateur, it also falls in the same category.

But what are the factors that make Pakistan's democracy so amateurish?

The first reason is dynamic politics. We see that the first grandfather is the father, and then the son, leadership is continuous in the family. Bankruptcy in Sri Lanka is also one of the reasons for dynastic politics.

The second is institution intervention. We see that organizations are intervening against each other, which means that civilians take advantage of the army for their own benefit, and then the army takes advantage of the civilians for their own benefit.

The regimes that changed in the nineties had shared benefits; some had an advantage, and some civilians had an advantage. Due to the inter-

vention of institutions, democracy is weak. Because in a democracy, decisions are made based on the opinions of the people and for their own interests, institutions make self-interested decisions to achieve their goals. Accountability crises are the third reason.

When did you hear that a high-profile criminal is punished in Pakistan? We see that politicians are arrested in corruption or any other case, then the case continues for five or ten years, and then the governments change and those who have cases come to power. As an example, there were some cases going on against the Sharif family. They passed an ordinance in NAB that if there is corruption less than 40 crores, NAB will not catch it.

The fourth reason is military intervention. The constitution of Pakistan says that the military will never interfere in other institutions, but civilians always blame that the military intervenes in politics, the army also intervenes judges, and the military intervenes in every institution.

The next reason is dependence on the West.

What do you think of the policies in your country made by your leaders?

No, that policy is being made in America; it is being made in Israel; it is being made in Saudi Arabia; we just execute it.

Next is weak foreign policy. We don't have any foreign policy; our policy is to demand things from other countries.

Now the one who is asking will have his own foreign policy, like the former prime minister Imran Khan, who wanted to have an independent foreign policy, but what happened? He was removed. Now it is such that if there is a person in the leadership

of Pakistan who makes foreign policy according to the interests of Pakistan, then it cannot last long.

Next is weak opposition.

Democracy means to talk for the benefit of the people. We see that most of the 2-3 main parties are working; there are two oppositions, and one comes to power, and then they make deals with each other for their political interests. And it is not their job to raise their voice, for the rest of the people are flooded by them.

The next reason is the blame game. What is the issue in Pakistan now that when it comes to the government, it keeps blaming the previous governments in every issue, and if they are asked what they did during their government, they say that the previous governments had created havoc. What could we have done in these conditions?

Next is passive public participation.

Now our people know that inflation is happening and corruption is happening, but no one is ready to come to the streets for this; they are just sitting at home and condemning on social media. As a result, the government is acting arbitrarily, and people's participation is not like that of living nations.

The next reason is a religious card. Sometimes it happens that our rulers play the religious card. We think they are working for the sake of Islam, but they have their own motive behind it.

Also, due to many such reasons, democracy is not working in Pakistan, and as long as it continues, the situation in Pakistan will remain as it is, just by writing, speaking, and discussing these reasons. Rather, practical steps have to be taken.

Writer is student of law at university of Sargodha

Digital Banking System in Pakistan

In the first week of January 2022, news emerged that the State Bank of Pakistan had introduced a framework for the complete implementation of digital banking licenses in the country. These digital banks, like regular banks, will provide all kinds of banking services to consumers, and there will be no need for consumers to visit a bank branch.

As of September 2023, this framework has been put into action. Under this framework, the State Bank will issue two types of digital banking licenses: Digital Retail Bank (DRB) and Digital Full Bank (DFB). DRBs will specifically cater to retail consumers, while DFBs will be able to serve both retail consumers and business entities.

The State Bank of Pakistan has granted formal approval for the establishment of five digital retail banks as part of its initiative to promote innovation and financial inclusion, offering affordable digital financial services to the public. These banks include HUGO Bank Limited, KT Pakistan Bank Limited, Mashriq Bank Pakistan Limited, Raqme Islamic Digital Bank Limited, and Telenor Microfinance Bank Limited. It should be noted that the State Bank had issued five successful applications for the establishment of digital banks in Pakistan in January 2023, after fulfilling necessary conditions.

After completing essential requirements, these institutions have been granted formal approval to prepare themselves practically for the launch of digital financial services. State Bank Governor Jameel Ahmed provided formal approval to the five licensed digital retail banks during a memorable ceremony held at the State Bank Museum Building on Wednesday. The ceremony was attended by sponsors of licensed digital retail banks, their CEOs, Payment System Operators (PSOs) / Payment System Providers (PSPs), Electronic Money Institutions (EMIs), and senior management of the State Bank.

In his keynote address, Governor State Bank highlighted the significance of introducing digital retail banks in the country, acknowledging the tremendous benefits and important challenges that such financial institutions have to tackle. He also mentioned other crucial regulatory measures aimed at shaping the digital financial landscape. He expressed confidence that State Bank is fully prepared to

collaborate with various stakeholders in Pakistan to usher in a bright and innovative future for digital banking in the country.

Welcoming the historical initiative of the State Bank, sponsors of licensed digital retail banks highlighted that State Bank's framework for digital banks had provided comprehensive guidance throughout the entire process of establishing digital banks in Pakistan. They stated that Pakistan offers countless investment opportunities with challenges, under which digital banks will provide a fast, affordable, and efficient solution to meet the financial needs of marginalized and underprivileged classes of society. They expressed confidence that digital banks would become an integral part of the financial ecosystem, improve market efficiency, provide widespread access to financial services, and thus contribute to the broader agenda of financial inclusion in Pakistan. It is worth mentioning that earlier this year, the State Bank had issued no-objection certificates (NOCs) to these digital retail banks, allowing them to be incorporated as public limited companies under the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP).

These institutions, after rigorous assessments based on a comprehensive and rigorous evaluation framework, including capabilities and preparedness, experience and financial strength, business plans, income plans, funding and capital plans, IT and cyber security capabilities, practical wisdom, and outsourcing arrangements, will be required to obtain approval from the State Bank to commence their operations once they are operationally prepared.

In Pakistan, just like in developed countries around the world, a digital banking system has been introduced. Digital banking is a new and innovative concept in banking services that allows you to easily perform transactions using your mobile phone from the comfort of your home or office. This is similar to services like JazzCash and Easypaisa. However, its scope and range are extensive, where account holders of these banks can conduct banking transactions, including bank drafts and pay orders, right from their smartphones, and even apply for loans when needed. This digital banking system helps safeguard against counterfeit currency and requires a smartphone for opening an account. This is a milestone in Pakistani banking.



Zain-ul-Abideen Abid

Saudi Orchestra bids farewell to guests of World Heritage in Riyadh

Spokesman Report

RIYADH: Saudi National Commission for Education, Culture and Science held a ceremony in honor of the parties participating in hosting the work of the World Heritage Committee in its 45th expanded session held in Riyadh, in the presence of a large crowd of UNESCO guests and officials in the cultural and media sectors.

The ceremony revealed the story of the tournament's logo, which bore the symbols of Saudi tangible and intangible heritage classified by UNESCO, such as the stone, Diriyah, Al-Ahsa Oasis, and the Asiri cat, before the participants in the organization were honored, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Information, the National Museum, the Heritage Authority, and the Theatrical and Performing Arts Authority, King Abdulaziz House, Sdaya, and other various governmental and private sectors in the Kingdom, which participated with the Ministry of Culture and



the National Committee in providing appropriate hospitality to delegations coming from all countries of the world.

During the ceremony, the Saudi Orchestra presented a musical performance that delighted the audience, as the performance included a mixture of folkloric and traditional tunes, with the participation of the orchestra and the National Choir, which had just returned from New York after an extensive tour in Mexico, London and Paris, the Union of OIC News Agency

(UNA) reported.

The event was aimed at introducing the masterpieces of Saudi music and performing arts, to enhance international cultural exchange, which is one of the strategic goals that the Ministry of Culture seeks to achieve, in implementation of Saudi Vision 2030 and its ambitious programmes.

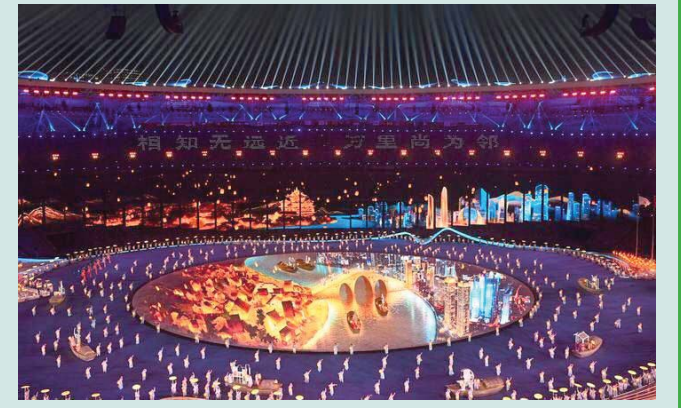
The band showcased a group of performing and popular arts, such as the art of Al-Samari, Al-Dana, Al-Rabash, Al-Yanbaawi, and a number of Eastern and Saudi instruments and

rhythms.

The Committee, during its expanded session in the Kingdom, included 47 cultural and natural sites on the UNESCO World Heritage List, and also witnessed the inclusion of heritage sites on the list of endangered sites, in addition to several consultations and discussions regarding World Heritage and its future in all countries.

According to the UNA report, many participants praised the ceremony and the hosting of the session, as the Director General of the Jordanian Department of Public Antiquities, Dr. Fadi Balawi, confirmed that the Kingdom made great and professional efforts in providing work and cooperation with all participants, while Burkinabe official Fabien Emh Liam Nezen explained that the Kingdom won the bet by the wonderful organization of the course, by harnessing its energies at the logistical, cognitive and administrative levels, in addition to the good reception and generous hospitality.

Hangzhou Asian Games to unite Asia through power of sports — S. Korean vice minister



Xinhua

SEOUL: The Hangzhou Asian Games will unite Asian countries through the power of sports and revitalize the entire sports world, said a senior South Korean official.

Jang Mi-ran, South Korean second vice minister of culture, sports and tourism, told Xinhua in a recent interview that international competitions, such as the Olympics and the Asian Games, have brought people together beyond nationality, race, disability and religion.

"With the power of integration of sports, Asian countries can be connected to each other and lead the global sports at this (Hangzhou) Asian Games, I hope," said Jang, a winner of the 2008 Olympic gold in the women's +75 kilogram category of weightlifting.

Jang said she was able to grow more powerful as a weightlifter through competition with Chinese players, and the Hangzhou Asian Games, a mega sports event after China optimized its COVID-19 response measures, will boost the entire sports world, which had shrunk due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I hope this Asian Games will be a celebration for Asians," she said. Such events will boost sports exchanges among Asian countries, including joint training of athletes and the exchanges of excellent coaches, leading to greater improvement of athletes in performance, the vice minister said.

Jang expressed her hope that the South Korean team would perform without mistakes, injuries and regret, and that all the participants in the Asian Games, where every player is a protagonist, can honestly compete as much as they sweat, accept the results and create beautiful dramas.

"I'll cheer for the players," she said.

The 19th Asian Games kicked off on Saturday in Hangzhou, capital of east China's Zhejiang Province.

Xi meets Nepalese PM

HANGZHOU: Chinese President Xi Jinping on Saturday met with Nepalese Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda in Hangzhou, capital city of east China's Zhejiang Province.



Photo: Xinhua

Israel kills two Palestinians in West Bank despite 'normalising' ties with Islamic nations

Israeli forces conducted a pre-dawn raid in the West Bank, resulting in the deaths of two Palestinians, according to the Palestinian health ministry.

The Israeli army claimed that it had dismantled a militant "operational command centre" during the operation. The violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has intensified since early last year, with the West Bank witnessing a surge in clashes and incursions.

The Palestinian health ministry identified the two Palestinians killed in the raid as Osaid Abu Ali, 21, and Abd al-Rahman Abu Daghsh, 32. The town of Tulkarem, where the incident occurred, saw the Palestinians fatally shot by live Israeli bullets to the head. An Israeli soldier was also injured during clashes in Nur Shams refugee camp near Tulkarem.

During the raid, the Israeli army claimed to have discovered observation devices, computers, and technological devices inside a building used as an alleged "operational command centre".

Khalistan Referendum to Continue Despite 'Assassinations and Seizures': Pannun

News Desk

LONDON: Pro-Khalistan Sikhs For Justice (SFJ) leader, Gurbatwint Singh Pannun has asserted that India's attempts to silence and coerce him through asset seizures in Indian Punjab and false cases would not deter the Khalistan Referendum movement, which continued despite challenges.

He spoke after India's federal anti-terror agency said it has confiscated the properties of Pannun whom it accuses of terror activities in India — following Canadian PM Justin Trudeau's public and shocking accusation that India was behind the assassination of pro-Khalistan Canadian leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar who was a friend and ally of Pannun.

The seizure of a house and land owned by Gurbatwint Singh Pannun in India's northern state of Punjab "comes as a big boost to the country's crackdown on the terror and secessionist network being operated from various countries, including Canada," a statement issued by the Indian National Investigation Agency (NIA) said.

SFJ General Counsel Pannun said India was desperate and in a state of shock over the success of Khalistan Referendum campaign which has mobilized tens of thousands of Sikhs in UK, Canada, Europe and America through Khalistan Referendum voting.

On the seizure of his property in Punjab by the NIA, Gurbatwint Singh Pannun said, "The issue at the heart of the conflict with India is not the properties of an individual — Pannun. The issue is about the land of the Sikh people — Punjab — that is forcefully occupied by India and the resources of the indigenous people of Punjab that are being plundered by Delhi.

Khalistan Referendum 2025 loaded with millions of 'votes' is going to



be 'Sikhs' Surgical Strike' against India that will liberate Punjab to create Democratic Republic of Khalistan (DRK) where people of all religions are going to have equal status, rights and freedoms." In 2020, India asked Interpol to issue a Red Corner Notice (RCN) against Pannun, alleging him to be a terrorist but.

After review of the case, Interpol rejected India's request on the grounds that India has failed to produce any evidence linking Pannun with any act of violence or terrorism anywhere in the world including India.

Interpol further held that India is seeking RCN against Pannun because of his human rights activism and his political campaign — the Khalistan Referendum.

Over the last few years, India has asked the USA and Canada to take action against Pannun but these govts took no action due to lack of evidence and failure of India to back up its claims.

Tensions between India and Canada have escalated after Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Canada had credible intelligence linking Indian government agents to the murder in Canada in June of Nijjar who was President of Khalistan Referendum chapter in Canada, under the banner of Sikhs For Justice which has been spearheading the voting campaign.

This isn't the first time India has acted against Pannun.

He has faced several cases in India over the last several years.

According to Indian media reports, the New York based lawyer faces over 25 criminal cases in India.

The NIA, in its latest action, seized properties of Pannun in Chandigarh, and Amritsar.

Last week, Pannun called on the Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to immediately expel India's High Commissioner to Canada Sanjay Verma from Canada after the Canadian prime minister confirmed that the

Indian government was behind Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar's assassination in Vancouver around three months ago.

Trudeau said: "Over the past number of weeks, Canadian security agencies have been actively pursuing credible allegations of a potential link between agents of the government of India and the killing of a Canadian citizen Hardeep Singh Nijjar," Trudeau said, addressing the House of Commons about an "extremely serious matter," after informing the opposition party leaders.

Canadian Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly said the head of Indian intelligence in Canada Pavan Kumar Rai has been expelled as a consequence.

"If proven true this would be a great violation of our sovereignty and of the most basic rule of how countries deal with each other," Joly said.

"As a consequence we have expelled a top Indian diplomat," Gurbatwint Singh Pannun had said: "Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's statement in the Parliament corroborates SFJ's stance on Nijjar's assassination.

SFJ has been saying since the day of assassination of Nijjar that this is handy work of Indian agencies and Indian agents active on Canadian soil.

Nijjar has been assassinated by India for leading the Canadian Chapter of Khalistan Referendum.

That is why SFJ has given a call for holding 'Shaheed Nijjar Referendum' on October 29 in Surrey BC.

We ask PM Trudeau to declare Sanjay Verma Indian High Commissioner to Canada as persona non grata and expel him from Canada with immediate effect.

SFJ has been writing to PM Trudeau voting him about Indian intervention since 2022 when we had first voted for the Khalistan Referendum in Toronto September 18, 2022.

After Nijjar's assassination we again wrote to the Prime Minister.

It's now urgent that the Indian diplomats are held accountable."

Two Chinese cities named sister cities to Sahiwal, Bahawalpur

Spokesman Report

BEIJING: China and Punjab province signed Letters of Intent (LoI) to establish sister-city relations between Sahiwal and Wuzhong as well as Bahawalpur and Zhongwei to strengthen the bond of friendship between China and Pakistan.

Zhou Yihe Deputy Mayor of Wuzhong City and Kang Jun Jie Deputy Mayor of Zhongwei represented their cities in the signing ceremony.

S. M. Tanvir, Minister of Agriculture and Industrial Development, Government of Punjab signed the two agreements from the Pakistani side, according Pakistan Embassy Beijing.

The signing of letters of intent for friendly cooperation between the two sides was held during Chief Minister of Punjab, Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi, visit to Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region China, from Sept 18 to 21 to attend the Third Ningxia International Sister Cities Forum and Sixth China-Arab Expo held in Yinchuan, Ningxia.

The chief minister was accompanied by a 15-member delegation comprising provincial ministers and high-ranking officials.

During the visit, the chief minister Punjab met with the provincial leadership of Ningxia and exchanged views on the avenues to enhance cooperation between the two sister provinces, Ningxia and Punjab.

Wuzhong is the second most populous city of the region, specializing in dairy, smart agriculture, and food processing.

Zhongwei, predominantly a desert city, has been developed as a centre of renewable energy including solar and wind farming, and also as a model base in the region's drive for oasisification in desert areas.

The friendship agreements entail cooperation in a range of areas, especially agriculture, education, healthcare, economy and trade, science and technology, and tourism.

The latest agreements seek to further promote people-to-people exchanges, which have grown significantly, including due to the establishment of over 40 sister province and sister city relationships between various cities and regions of China and Pakistan.

Dubai's investment potential beckons Pakistani Investors



News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Amidst the ongoing global economic uncertainties, Dubai stands out as a beacon of opportunity and growth as Pakistani investors are increasingly turning their attention towards the emirate's thriving economy and burgeoning sectors.

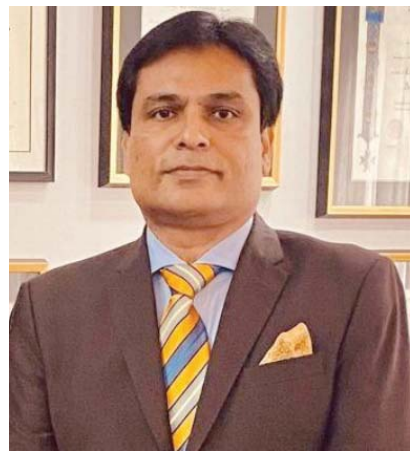
In this regard an event held here on Saturday successfully showcased the wealth of investment opportunities that Dubai offers to Pakistani investors. The event was a significant milestone in strengthening economic ties between Pakistan and Dubai and empowering investors to explore new horizons, a news release said.

The event attracted a diverse and engaged audience, including Pakistani business leaders, entrepreneurs, government officials, and potential investors. Attendees were provided with valuable insights into Dubai's dynamic economy and emerging sectors, fostering an atmosphere of collaboration and knowledge sharing.

Delegate from Azizi Developers a prominent name in the Dubai business community, expressed optimism about the prospects of Pakistani investors in Dubai. They highlighted Dubai's investor-friendly environment, multicultural society, and stable regulatory framework, which make it an attractive destination for international investments.

Reflecting on the event's success, spokesperson for the event organizer, said, "We are delighted with the overwhelming response to 'Investing in Dubai.' This event has not only deepened economic ties between Pakistan and Dubai but has also opened doors to a new era of collaboration and investment."

High cost of doing business discourages investment, disastrous for economy: APBF



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The All Pakistan Business Forum has said that the high cost of doing business has proved to be dangerous for Pakistan's economy, discouraging investment both in capacity and capability, calling for lessening the burden of heavy taxes on energy sector.

APBF President Syed Maaz Mahmood said that the industry has been overburdened due to recent increase in electricity tariffs which is aggravated by the extraordinary upsurge in petroleum prices, triggering severe anxiety not only amongst the masses but also the business and industrial community.

He urged the government to shut down all costly oil-fired power plants in order to ensure consumers had access to cheaper energy. He lamented that the previous administration did not prioritize the rehabilitation and maintenance of older power plants, resulting in multiple system constraints and significant losses.

He observed that the government's inability, ill planning and financial woes had multiplied the miseries of businesses which were facing unscheduled power outages across the country. At the same time, the industry was already paying heavy electricity bills of up to Rs50 per unit, including surcharges and other taxes, he added.

Shocked by the unprecedented fourth consecutive jump in petroleum product prices, he said the move would worsen the economic crisis, multiplying cost of production and intensifying miseries for the trade and industry.

Meher Kashif highlights benefits of prioritizing renewable energy in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) Meher Kashif Younis on Sunday said by prioritising renewable energy, Pakistan can not only meet its electricity demands but also reduce its reliance on fossil fuels, and lower greenhouse gas emissions. Speaking at a seminar on "Impact of Renewable Energy on Economy" held under the aegis of Gold Ring Economic Forum, a strategic think tank, he said moreover, embracing clean energy will enhance our country's image on the global stage, attracting investments and fostering sustainable economic growth, said a news release issued here. He said Pakistan faces the challenge of meeting the ever-increasing demand for affordable electricity while simultaneously striving to compete effectively in the global markets. He said he firmly believed that embracing renewable energy is the key to addressing these challenges. He said Pakistan is endowed with abundant renewable energy resources, including solar, wind, and hydropower. Harnessing these resources not only offers a sustainable solution to our energy needs but also presents numerous economic and environmental benefits. He urged the government to implement policies and incentives that encourage investment in renewable energy projects with tax holidays, subsidies, and feed-in tariffs that can attract private and foreign investments in the sector.

Federal Minister assures retailers of full support to set up outlets chain abroad

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Minister of Industries & Production Gohar Ejaz, in a meeting with the delegation of Chainstore Association of Pakistan, has reiterated the government pledge of continuing its consultation process with the organized retail sector and Chainstore Association to facilitate the formal sector and enhance its exports.

The Minister's comprehensive discussion with CAP team, which took place on Thursday, regarding the strategies and initiatives aimed at bolstering domestic commerce in order for it to foster export-led growth and enhance the overall business environment in Pakistan in close consultation with the private sector. Dr. Gohar Ejaz has assured the government's full commitment, providing them maximum policy support, as the retail sector has announced to play its role to boost the country's exports through e-commerce and by setting up their outlets abroad.

Federal Minister Dr. Gohar Ejaz was accompanied by Commerce Secretary Suleh Ahmad Faruqi, Additional Secretary Industries Asad Rehman Gilani, Special Secretary Commerce Sarah Saeed and Secretary Board of Investment Sohail Rajput while the CAP delegation consisted of its top leadership, including, CAP Vice Chairman Asad Shafi, CAP Co-Founder Asfandyar Farrukh, Shamoan Sultan, S. M. Nabeel, Ahmed Hussain, Nabeel Abdullah, Altaf Hashwani, Kamran Saleem, Wasif Butt, Wahaj Tariq, Shehryar Buksh, Junaid Dandia and Huzai-fa Siddiqui, representing the leading chainstores of the country.



The Minister expressed his unwavering commitment to sustained economic growth and facilitating trade. He called on the leadership of CAP and organized retail to strive for higher export volumes through exceptional value-addition of branded products and 'Made in Pakistan'.

In the meeting, the Minister asked the Chainstore Association's office-bearers to strive for higher exports volumes. He assured the retailers of the government's full support in the endeavor of revitalizing the organized retail sector and expanding the country's access to the global markets.

Gohar Ejaz also reaffirmed the government's commitment to combating smuggling activities, bolstering domestic manufacturing and ensuring a level-playing field for legitimate businesses.

To facilitate Pakistani entrepreneurs on the international stage, he directed relevant authorities to ensure comprehensive assis-

stance through the ministry's trade and investment officers posted in missions abroad.

With the support of the business community and strategic government initiatives, this ambitious endeavor holds the promise of bolstering the nation's economic prowess and global trade stature.

The CAP delegation, on this occasion, felicitated the minister to assume the charges, as he was a seasoned entrepreneur, dedicated philanthropist, and prominent stalwart in Pakistan's industrial landscape.

The CAP proposed its recommendations to tackle crucial challenges and capitalize on potential opportunities in the country's economic sphere. They highlighted various measures to address the prevailing issues in Pakistan's economic landscape and assured their role in achieving bold objectives.

The Chainstore Association's delegation pointed out that the government's decision of early closure of markets will be detrimental and prove to be highly counterproductive, proposing alternative measures to ensure balanced energy conservation, as the reduction in retail peak hours will substantially reduce revenues and adversely impact the domestic value chain, especially the tax compliant segment which is reeling under a lop-sided burden of taxes.

Achievement

ISLAMABAD: IGP Islamabad Akbar Khan giving away a shield to FPCCI's Presidential Candidate Atif Ikram Sheikh. His younger son Rahim Ikram is also seen in the picture. The function was held in connection with Martyr's Day.



Spokesman Photo by Raja Farid

Industrialists demand single digit policy interest rate to boost industrialization



Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Islamabad Industrial Association (IIA) led by its President Muhammad Ahmed Waheed visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) to congratulate Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari President ICCI for one year extension in his tenure and called upon the government to reduce 22 percent policy interest rate to single digit level that would help boost industrialization, enhance exports, create jobs and revive the economy.

Addressing the delegation, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that 22% central bank's interest in Pakistan was highest in the whole Asia as interest rate in Japan is -0.1%, Taiwan 1.88%, Thailand 2.25, Malaysia 3%, China was 3.4 %, Vietnam 4.5%, and Indonesia & Hongkong 5.75%, Bangladesh and India 6.5%. He said that the high interest rate has made our industry uncompetitive in the national market due to which our exports are also suffering. He said that the best way to revive the economy is to focus on export-led growth of the economy for which single digit interest rate is the key requirement.

Muhammad Ahmed

Waheed, President, Islamabad Industrial Association said that it has become almost impossible for industry to get credit from banks at such high interest rate due to which expansion of industries has halted. He said that the high interest rate was also a major hurdle in promoting new investment in Pakistan and stressed that the government should look into this serious issue to facilitate the growth of business and investment in the country.

Faad Waheed Senior Vice President and Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI, said that the economy of Pakistan is facing multiple challenges and the government should focus on promoting investment and industrialization that would help revive the economy and overcome economic problems of the country.

Khalid Iqbal Malik, ICCI Group Leader said that many investors are keen to set up industries in the Islamabad region but due to absence of a new industrial zone, they are unable to make new investments. He emphasized that the government should extend full cooperation to ICCI for the establishment of a new industrial estate in the region as this important project would yield multiple benefits for the economy.

Energy affordability must for growth as Rs3/unit more hike to cost Rs136b

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) has assailed the NEPRA to approve another electricity rate hike of up to Rs3.5 per unit under quarterly adjustments, leading to an additional burden of Rs136 billion on power consumers, as energy affordability for industry is critical to boost economic growth in the country.

FPCCI former president and Businessmen Panel (BMP) Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar, calling for charting out a viable way forward to promote renewable energy trans-



sition under worsening global and domestic energy inflation for sustainable economic development and providing relief to the industry from external price shocks, he said that until now, consumers were paying an additional Rs1.25 per unit due to ongoing quarterly adjustments. He added that out

of the total increase, the new Rs1.25 per unit will remain, while an additional Rs2.03 per unit will be imposed for the next six months.

The BMP chairman remarked that the energy sector's success depended on reliability, affordability and accessibility. Mian Anjum Nisar said that the increase in electricity tariffs will have varying impacts on different categories of consumers as for households consuming between 1-100 and 101-200 units, there will be a tariff increase of Rs3.2814 per unit. This rate will continue for households consuming 201-700 units, while those using more than 700 units will face an additional charge of Rs3.2814 per unit.

Partnership for Shared Futures in Food Security

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: LTEC International Agriculture Development Co., Ltd. (LTEC) and Organic Pakistan (LLP) have officially inked a significant Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to advance the chili farming industry in Pakistan.

LTEC, a well-established chili farming company operating under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and Organic Pakistan (LLP), Pakistan's leading company dedicated to sustainable solutions in agriculture, food, health, and environmental security, have joined forces to foster greater collaboration in the agriculture sector.

Agreement signed by Mr. Chen Liyang, Director LTEC and Mr. Muhammad Nadeem Iqbal, Managing Director of Organic Pakistan (LLP). Witnessed by Mr. Chen Changwei, Chairman LTEC, and Peter Huang, commercial head. The agreement

represents a shared commitment to further develop the chili farming sector in Pakistan. LTEC has been actively engaged in promoting contract-based chili farming in Pakistan, employing advanced production technology under the guidance of Chinese agriculture technicians since 2016. Organic Pakistan (LLP) brings its extensive experience in research and development to pioneer sustainable solutions in agriculture.

Under the terms of the MOU, both parties will collaborate to promote and develop the chili industry in Pakistan by engaging Pakistani farmers in contract-based chili farming, utilizing advanced production technology supervised by Chinese agriculture experts. This initiative aims to enhance the well-being and livelihoods of Pakistani farmers while bolstering the chili farming sector.

Organic Pakistan (LLP) will serve

as the Country Representative for LTEC in Pakistan, actively engaging with Pakistani farmers to encourage them to participate in chili farming contracts, adhering to the specified terms and conditions. Moreover, Organic Pakistan (LLP) will play a pivotal role in negotiating and facilitating contracts between LTEC and the farmers/growers, with LTEC making direct payments to the respective farmers/growers.

The agreement also involves knowledge sharing between the two parties, exploring joint ventures in downstream processing and packaging, and a commitment to leveraging media platforms for public diplomacy. This media engagement seeks to portray the positive aspects of China and Pakistan while highlighting segments of society contributing to mutual understanding and cooperation in the fields of agriculture and agro technologies.



Responsibilities of Organic Pakistan (LLP) include promoting the concept of LTEC contract farming among Pakistani farmers nationwide, expanding

chili farming by adding large cultivation acres of land in the first year through various farmers, and providing technical assistance and periodic supervision by qualified personnel for chili crops grown under contract, along with submitting progress reports to LTEC.

LTEC's responsibilities encompass offering technical expertise and advanced production technologies for chili cultivation under the supervision of Chinese agriculture experts, arranging for the necessary advanced machinery, tools, and equipment, either at subsidized or discounted prices from China, and supplying farmers/growers with suitable seeds tailored to local conditions and requirements.

This historic agreement symbolizes the commitment of both LTEC and Organic Pakistan (LLP) to promote sustainable agriculture in Pakistan and enhance bilateral cooperation between China and Pakistan.

