



## Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib discusses social welfare of BISP beneficiaries in Gilgit Baltistan

Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib, Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) had a meeting with delegation of Ministers from Gilgit Baltistan including Minister for Tourism, Minister of Finance, Minister of Food, Chief Secretary and Addl. Secretary Gilgit Baltistan. (Details on Page 8)



## Culture Caravan' best way to explore rich regional history: Wasi Shah

Minister of State for Tourism, Wasi Shah has said that the 'Culture Caravan' was arranged to explore the rich history of the region and engage with experts to provide insight into the significance of Gandhara heritage. Pakistan is rich with religious and cultural tourism, and safe for international tourists, he said while addressing a Cultural Caravan on World Tourism Day 2023 at Taxila, organized here by PTDC... (Details on Page 3)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

## Women Empowerment

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir Address to respectable women of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) during 'KP Women Symposium - 2023'.



# COAS encourages women to participate in progress of KP, NMDs

### Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir on Wednesday visited Peshawar and had an interactive session with the respectable women of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) during 'KP Women Symposium - 2023'. The Army Chief encouraged the women to take part in the progress and develop-

ment of KP and Newly Merged Districts (NMDs), an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

The COAS also attended a meeting of the Provincial Apex Committee along with Caretaker Chief Minister KP, Muhammad Azam Khan. While addressing the participants of the women symposium, the COAS said that women have played a positive and an

important role in the progress of the country throughout the history of Pakistan. He highlighted that women's role in Pakistan's progress and development was quintessential and most important.

COAS remarked that the women of KP have continued to face multi-faceted challenges due to the prolonged fight against terrorism, however, they have proven their resilience, commit-

ment and bravery at the face of all odds. During the Apex Committee meeting, the Army Chief was briefed about the overall security situation including initiatives against smuggling, hoarding and drug trafficking.

The participants of the meeting affirmed that state institutions and people are united for the protection of life and property of citizens. They also paid rich

tribute to the Shuhada and their families. COAS concluded, "We have to synergise our efforts for the peace and prosperity of our beloved country. Pakistan Army will continue to play its role in ensuring peace and stability in KP to provide a secure environment for economic development." Earlier upon arrival, the COAS was received by Commander Peshawar Corps.

## ECP issues list of new delimitations ahead of general elections

### City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has issued preliminary list of new delimitations ahead of general polls.

The chief election commissioner (CEC) and ECP members approved the preliminary list of new delimitations under the 2023 digital census data.

After CEC's approval, the commission issued the initial list of the delimitations on its website. Yesterday, the delimitation process of for the national and provincial assemblies entered its final phase and the ECP decided to approve initial delimitations.

For the National Assembly (NA), the voter quota for Punjab province was fixed at 905,595, 913,000 for Sindh, 907,913 for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), 930,900 for Balochistan and 787,954 for Islamabad.

The voter quota for the Punjab Assembly will be 429,929, 428,431 for the Sindh Assembly, 355,270 for the KP Assembly and 292,047 for the Balochistan Assembly.

## Dr. Shamshad Akhtar held a meeting with the Provincial Finance Ministers

### Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Minister of Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs Division Dr. Shamshad Akhtar held a meeting with the Provincial Finance Ministers at the Finance Division, today.

The meeting was held in a hybrid format, where-in the respective Provincial Ministers joined through the video link. The meeting was attended by the Chief Minister Sindh, Finance Ministers of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and Balochistan, besides the Federal and provincial Finance Secretaries, Federal Secretary Planning, as well as senior government officials.

The meeting was aimed at reviewing the spending patterns of PSDP, controlling prices of



essential commodities, enhancing quality of services in education and health sectors and providing relief to the general public by strengthening the social safety nets.

The Finance Minister emphasized that the provinces are the interface with the public and have a major role to play in improving the social services as well as ensuring food security and stabilizing prices by minimizing the gap between

the whole-sale & retail prices of the essential commodities. She added that policy and fiscal coordination between the federal and provincial governments is pivotal for the economic prosperity and sustainable growth.

Dr Shamshad Akhtar underscored that there is a huge potential for rationalizing the public expenditure arrangements between the federal and provincial governments for promoting efficiency and

effectiveness of public expenditure, as well as prioritization for speedy and smooth implementation of the projects under public sector development programs, with emphasis on social protection. She underlined that the corrective measures in this regard would not only result in substantive savings but would also contribute in improving the effectiveness and implementation of the project in the priority sectors of education and health.

While sensitizing the provincial finance Ministers regarding the expenditure and revenue targets in the current budget of the FY 2023-24, Dr. Akhtar encouraged the provincial governments to ensure achieving these targets, so that the primary budget deficit targets can be achieved.

## West 'over-obsessed' to contain Pakistan's 'all-weather friend' China: PM

### Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar has said that Pakistan was focusing on its own interests without choosing sides in the great power competition, and that the West was "over-obsessed" with efforts to contain China.

The prime minister, in an interview with Washington Post during his visit to New York to attend the 78th United Nations General Assembly session published on Wednesday, said Pakistan intended to stay "neutral" on Russia's war with Ukraine and saw China as its "all-weather friend" and "strategic partner."

"It's not a Cold War. There is no Iron Curtain here. It's not



that opaque. Everybody sees what is happening," the prime minister said. He said that the West was "over-obsessed" with efforts to contain China.

He told the interviewer that Pakistan was charting a path, designed to avoid getting caught up in the competition between the West and Russia and China. He said Pakistan had no intention of committing to either camp in the growing US-China rivalry.

Continued on Page 8

## Chief of the Naval Staff message on the occasion of World Maritime Day-2023



the duty we all hold to protect the lifeblood of our planet. As we reflect on the journey, the statistics remain alarming; marine pollution's ripple effects on ecosystems, economies, and livelihoods of coastal communities urge us to take more concerted actions.

Pakistan Navy stands at the forefront to conserve the maritime environment. In alignment with MARPOL principles, we have instituted measures to curtail emissions, enhance energy efficiency and, in earnest, implement pollution prevention strategies. Our ongoing efforts against marine pollution bear testimony to our unwavering commitment.

On this World Maritime Day, as we look back to our shared maritime heritage and achievements, let us also look ahead with determination, commitment, and resolve to align our national objectives with the ongoing global shift towards sustainable and green marine practices. I urge all the stakeholders to embrace these evolving paradigms. Particularly, I reiterate Pakistan Navy's resolve to ensure maritime safety and uphold environmental mandates.

In this stride, let us recommit to the principles of maritime safety and marine conservation and reaffirm our solemn pledge to the maritime world that our commitment goes on, both in spirit and in action. I look forward to a profound and cumulative response by all stakeholders.

### News Desk

ISLAMABAD: World Maritime Day, a significant reminder of maritime safety, security, and environmental conservation, is marked annually, urging nations to work together for sustainable maritime practices. Under the aegis of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), this year holds special significance as we commemorate the 50th anniversary of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL). Accordingly, this year's theme 'MARPOL at 50 - Our Commitment Goes On' is intended to pay tribute to our efforts under IMO's long history of protecting the environment from pollution through the impact of shipping via a robust regulatory framework and emphasis on its ongoing commitment to prevention of our oceans from pollution.

MARPOL's legacy stretches over five decades, symbolizing our collective efforts against marine pollution emphasizing

## UNGA meeting Wednesday for update on 2022 resolution urging support for flood-hit Pakistan

### News Desk

UNITED NATIONS: The U. N. General Assembly is holding an informal meeting Wednesday afternoon to review the implementation of its last year's resolution calling on the world community to increase aid and keep up the political will to support the country's recovery long-term. That resolution also expressed solidarity with the government and people of Pakistan in dealing with the aftermath of the devastation left behind the climate-induced flooding. UN Secretary-General Anto-

nio Guterres, who saw some of the damage for himself during a visit to Pakistan in the wake of August floods, will be the keynote speaker at the meeting to be held in the Trusteeship Council Chamber. The President of the 193-member Assembly, Dennis Francis, will open the meeting, followed by senior representatives from the U. N. System (United Nations Development Programme Administrator, United Nations Children's Fund Executive Director, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Assistant Secretary-General).

## Schools to remain closed today

### Bureau Report

LAHORE: Government and private schools across Punjab will remain closed today (Thursday) amid rising cases of Pink Eye infection in the province, ARY News reported.

The directions to keep schools

closed in the province were passed by the Punjab caretaker CM Mohsin Naqvi.

The teachers have been directed to check the students at the main entrance of the schools from Monday to prevent the spread of the eye infection.

The number of conjunctiv-

tis cases, commonly known as Pink Eye are increasing sharply in Punjab and other parts of the country.

The Punjab Health Department officials reported 85 new cases of conjunctivitis, commonly known as Pink Eye, within the past 24 hours.

Patients have been directed to use prescribed eye drops and tissues for eye cleansing, with the option of using cold water for temporary relief. The provincial government health department stressed the need to use hand sanitizers and cautioned against touching one's eyes with-

out washing hands thoroughly.

The health department advised against sharing items with those suffering from eye infections, including pillows, clothes, medicine, and bedding, which should be kept separate. Additionally, patients were urged not to reuse facial items.

## Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Second session of 5th Executive Committee meeting of SIFC held on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

# IAEA launches publication highlighting Pakistan's role in promoting peaceful Nuclear Technology Cooperation

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Director General of the IAEA, Rafael Mariano Grossi has launched a publication 'Pakistan: Partnering with International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for Strengthening South-South Cooperation to highlight the role of Pakistan in strengthening South-South Cooperation through the Promotion of peaceful uses of Nuclear Technology.

At a side event, hosted by Pakistan, to highlight its contributions to South-South cooperation in collaboration with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The event was organised on the sidelines of the 67th Session of the General Conference, currently ongoing in Vienna, Austria, and covered the ongoing partnerships of Pakistan with the IAEA under its Technical Cooperation Department for the promotion and transfer of nuclear technology for socio-



economic progress in developing countries.

It was attended by senior-level officials including from the Ghana Nuclear Regulatory Authority which is collaborating with the Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA), according to a news release received here on Wednesday.

During his opening remarks, the Chairman Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC),

Raja Ali Raza Anwar, highlighted the great importance Pakistan accorded to the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme due to which significant contributions to developmental gains in diverse fields had been achieved in the country.

These included food, agriculture, human health, nuclear power, water resource management, industry and education.

He pointed out that the

objective of the side event was to highlight the expertise and facilities which Pakistan has developed in cooperation with the IAEA and remains willing to share with other interested developing countries. He also took note of the ongoing collaboration between Pakistan and Ghana in the area of nuclear regulatory frameworks.

Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Pakistan, Aftab Ahmad Khokher,

also addressed the gathering, and shared that Pakistan had a highly developed and multifaceted civil nuclear programme.

He added that the country had made strides in harnessing nuclear science and technology in various fields and appreciated the decades-long productive and mutually beneficial collaborative relationship that existed with the IAEA.

He also highlighted that, in a significant development, Pakistan had been successful in producing coloured cotton and was currently planning its large-scale production.

During the event, remarks were also delivered by senior-level officials from PAEC and PNRA. From the IAEA, the Deputy Director General of the Technical Cooperation Department as well as the Director, of Technical Cooperation Asia Pacific (TCAP) and Director, of Technical Cooperation Africa (TCAP) also addressed the participants.

# Finance Minister, BMGF discuss financing of Raast-Pakistan Instant Payment System

## Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Caretaker Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar met the Country Lead (Pak), Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), Syed Ali Mahmood, and CEO, Karandaaz, Mr Waqas ul Hasan.

The meeting was aimed at reviewing the implementation status of Raast-Pakistan Instant Payment System support provided by the BMGF, integrated social safety net program and BMGF's offer for assistance on the Digital Pakistan Stack. Other potential areas of collaboration includ-



ing climate finance and up scaling conditional cash transfers to integrated social payments also came under discussion.

The Finance Minister highlighted government's commitment to fostering inclusive economic growth, attracting investments, and addressing

socio-economic challenges in the country. She emphasized the importance of public-private partnerships in achieving sustainable development goals and inclusive growth and welcomed the contributions of the BMGF and Karandaaz in this regard.

Mr. Waqas ul Hasan, CEO Karandaaz briefed the Minister on Raast-Pakistan Instant Payment System support provided by the BMGF through Karandaaz and outlined the key features of the Digital Pakistan Stack i.e. next generation of Raast supported Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) which Pakistan can introduce with Foundation's help. An amount of over PKR 4 trillion has already been transacted through Raast which has over 33 million unique IDs now, he added.

The design of integrated social safety net programme for improved immunization, nutrition, women economic empowerment, financial inclusion by

the BMGF's was also discussed.

The Minister thanked the BMGF for its assistance on Raast and the integrated social safety net program and welcomed the idea of signing a Memorandum of Understanding to formalize the future support on Digital Pakistan Stack.

It was agreed that the MoU for BMGF's assistance through Karandaaz will be signed on the sidelines of the World Bank meetings at Morocco in October 2023. The National Financial Inclusion Council, chaired by the Federal Minister for Finance, will oversee the implementation of the Digital Pakistan Stack.

Govt to invest in development of eco-friendly tourism destinations across Sindh: CM Baqar

## Bureau Report

KARACHI: Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice (rt'd) Maqbol Baqar Wednesday said that the government would invest in the development of eco-friendly tourism destinations across the province while prioritizing conservation, low-impact infrastructure and community involvement. The caretaker CM while addressing an event organized by Culture and Tourism Department here at Mohatta Palace to mark World Tourism Day, vowed "Together, we can make Sindh a beacon of eco-friendly tourism, setting an example for the world." Our core objectives were to ensure the preservation of the natural beauty for generations to come, he said and urged all stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society, and our citizens, to join hands in the journey toward sustainable tourism.

# Huawei: Advancing a flourishing AI ecosystem together

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Corporate Senior Vice President and President of ICT Strategy and Marketing of Huawei, discussed the company's vision for building a flourishing AI ecosystem over the next five years. Titled "Advancing a Flourishing AI Ecosystem Together," the speech highlighted the pivotal role of foundational technologies and ecosystems in propelling innovation and productivity. During the speech at Huawei Connect 2023, he discussed how to build a flourishing AI ecosystem, and outlined Huawei's goals for ecosystem building over the next five years. Throughout history, breakthroughs



in foundational technologies have always given rise to new industries and new ecosystems.

Foundational technologies and their ecosystems reinforce each other and drive a surge in productivity. AI is already changing the way people work and live by

enabling new applications like automatic code generation, dubbing, and video generation, while also facilitating more efficient creative planning and story creation. According to the Intelligent World 2030 reports, the total size of the global AI market will exceed US\$2.8 trillion

by 2030.

Peng said, "we believe that every country and enterprise deserves access to computing power for further development. As a computing and cloud service provider, we will work alongside server partners, basic software partners, application software partners, consulting and integration service providers, cloud partners, and all manner of developers, to share the huge opportunity presented by the computing ecosystem and drive a surge in productivity." To foster a new AI ecosystem, Huawei has made many AI-related foundational software and hardware technologies open source or available to partners and developers.

# President announces 90-day special remission in prisoners' punishment on Eid Milad un Nabi

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday announced a special remission of 90 days in sentence of prisoners on the eve of Eid Milad un Nabi. The remission will be applicable for male prisoners above 65 years of age and women inmates over 60 years, who have completed one-third of their imprisonment. The persons under 18 years who have served their one-third sentence will also get the benefit of remission. President Alvi approved the remission for prisoners in accordance with Article 45 of the Constitution, the President's Office said.

The reduction in sentence will not apply to the prisoners involved in murder, espionage, and anti-



State activities. The other categories without remission include convicts of adultery, theft, dacoity, kidnapping, and terrorism. Also, the remission will not be applicable on those involved in financial crimes and the ones who incurred losses to the national exchequer.

# PM Kakar arrives in Madinah Munawwarah



## News Desk

MADINAH MUNAWWARAH: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar arrived here on Wednesday on his private visit to Saudi Arabia.

Upon arrival, he was warmly

received by Governor Madinah Faisal Bin Salman along with other senior officials of the Pakistani Embassy and Jeddah Consulate General at the Madinah Airport.

The prime minister will leave for Makkah Al-Mukarramah tomorrow to perform Umrah.

# Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib discusses social welfare of BISP beneficiaries in Gilgit Baltistan



## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib, Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) had a meeting with delegation of Ministers from Gilgit Baltistan including Minister for Tourism, Minister of Finance, Minister of Food, Chief Secretary and Addl. Secretary Gilgit Baltistan. Secretary BISP, Mr. Amer Ali Ahmed, was also present in the meeting.

During the meeting, the delegation congratulated Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib on assuming charge of Chairperson in BISP. A comprehensive discussion was held on the well-being and welfare of BISP beneficiaries in Gilgit Baltistan. The

participants also delved into various aspects of BISP and its wide array of initiatives, which encompass programs such as Benazir Kafalat, Benazir Taleem Wazaif, Benazir Nashounuma, Dynamic Registry of NSER, Benazir Social Protection Accounts, and more.

Furthermore, the delegation was briefed on the facilitative measures in place for the disbursement of payments and the registration process for BISP beneficiaries in Gilgit Baltistan. Chairperson BISP said that these initiatives are playing a pivotal role in extending crucial support to disadvantaged individuals and families, enabling them to access essential resources and opportunities for personal and socio-economic development.

# West 'over-obsessed' to contain Pakistan's 'all-weather friend' China: PM

Continued from Page 1

By siding with the West against the Soviets and again after 9/11, Pakistan paid a high price, Kakar said. "Pakistan in the last 30 years, has been treated unfairly by the West," he told the interviewer.

"Every nation for itself... Why should we be worried about this competition? It's between two great powers, two great civilizations, and the implications [affect] 150-plus countries. And Pakistan is just one of them," PM Kakar remarked.

Mentioning Pakistan's "neutral" stance on Ukraine, the prime minister said: "This crisis is creating challenges and at the same time it is creating opportunities also within the region, and we are looking at it both ways."

Prime Minister Kakar flatly denied

the allegations in a media report of Pakistan moving any munitions to Ukraine saying, "We have not gone for any sale which was directly intended for the Ukraine, not any sort of transactions, even through a third party."

Regarding the arrest of workers of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, the prime minister denied the alleged abuses and compared Pakistan's actions to the arrests in the United States of those who attacked the US Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021.

"Arrests are being made for unlawful actions, somebody who's involved in arson or vandalism," he said. "This is not the kind of behavior which is promoted or vindicated by any liberal democracy. So why is it being even expected of Pakistan that we should condone such behaviors?"

# Jammu and Kashmir PM hails former President for his 'proud legacy'

**Bureau Report**

RAWALAKOT: Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that former President Ghazi e Millat Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan has left behind a proud legacy that will continue to inspire the coming generations. The AJK premier said this while visiting the deceased leader's Mausoleum here today. Prime Minister Haq, who was accompanied by senior Minister Colonel (Retd) Waqar Ahmad Noor, Mir Akbar Khan, Sardar Hassan Ibrahim Khan and others, laid a wreath at the grave of Ghazi Millat and offered Fatiha for the departed soul. Whereas a smartly turned out contingent of Azad Kashmir police presented a salute. Speaking on the occasion, the PM said that the former President and his colleagues had played a significant role in the freedom movement. Terming Azad Kashmir as the land of martyrs, he said, that region was

liberated after a great struggle and sacrifices rendered by our ancestors. He said that it was now our mutual responsibility to protect this land and its sovereignty. The PM also praised Sardar Khalid Ibrahim for his principled politics, contribution and selfless service to the people of Azad Kashmir.

He said that promoting the Kashmir cause both at national and international level was the top priority of the incumbent coalition government. "Accession to Pakistan is our goal and our struggle will continue until this goal is achieved", he said, adding that the struggle to fulfill the mission of our ancestors would continue despite all odds. He said that a strong and prosperous Pakistan was a guarantor for the freedom of occupied Kashmir. He said that any misadventure by India on the Line of Control would be responded to with full force. The function was attended and addressed by former Prime Minister and President Sardar Yaqoob Khan, Senior



Minister, Finance Minister Colonel (Rtd) Waqar Ahmad Noor, Sardar Muhammad Hussain, Sardazia Qamar, Sardar Amir Altaf, Sardar Mir Akbar Khan, acting President Sidhan Educational Conference Sardar Shazeb Rawalakot (PID AJK) 27 September 2023

Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq said that promoting the Kashmir cause both at national and international level was the top priority of the incumbent coal-

ition government. "Accession to Pakistan is our goal and our struggle will continue until this goal is achieved", he said, adding that the struggle to fulfill the mission of our ancestors would continue despite all odds. He said that a strong and prosperous Pakistan was a guarantor for the freedom of occupied Kashmir. He said that any misadventure by India on the Line of Control would be responded to with full force. The function was attended and addressed by former Prime Minister and President Sardar Yaqoob Khan, Senior Minister, Finance Minister Colonel (Rtd) Waqar Ahmad Noor, Sardar Muhammad Hussain, Sardazia Qamar, Sardar Amir Altaf, Sardar Mir Akbar Khan, acting President Sidhan Educational Conference Sardar Shazeb Rawalakot (PID AJK) 27 September 2023. Chairperson Ms. Aniqah and Sardar Javed Ayub Khan also addressed the ceremony. Shabbir, Chairperson Ms. Aniqah and Sardar Javed Ayub Khan also addressed the ceremony.



UK politicians call for end of Indian rule in occupied Kashmir

## Kashmiri, Pakistan diaspora protest in front of UN office in New York



**Bureau Report**

NEW YORK: Kashmiri diaspora community settled in the United States staged a strong protest in front of the UN office in New York to register their protest against India's belligerent military occupation of Kashmir and widespread human rights violations being committed by the Indian occupation forces in the territory. Pertinently, the protest demonstration was held on the occasion of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address to the UN General Assembly. On this occasion, the protesters raising banners inscribed with anti-India and pro-freedom slogans called for holding referendum in Kashmir as per the UNSC resolutions. Besides the members of Kashmiri and Pakistani diaspora community, the protest was attended by the representatives of the Sikh community. Despite the heavy rain and cold weather, people from all over the United States thronged to the city square to join the protest demonstration. On this occasion, President Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry addressed the protest through a video link from Islamabad. He said that India has unleashed a reign of terror in Occupied Kashmir. He said that the occupation forces deployed in length and breadth of the territory have broken all records of barbarism and brutality. He said that since August 5, 2019, Indian has intensified its efforts to change the region's demography. He said that over the past couple of years fake domiciles were issued to more than four million non state subjects. He said that besides altering the region's demography Indian government was changed the political landscape of Kashmir through a fake delimitation process.

## Women, transgender and disabled make demands for betterment of their lives in Sindh

**Qayoom Sarohi**

HYDERABAD: In Sindh, women, transgender and disabled sufferers have presented a charter of demand, increasing the quota in the jobs of the disabled to 5%, implementing the quota for transgenders, including starting an ambulance service at the government level for pregnant women demands were made. Under the Fame Power Pakistan project of the social organization shirkat Gah, a session was held in a local hotel in Hyderabad on the creation of a charter of demand for the problems of women, transgenders and the disabled in 12 districts of Sindh. After which Shazia Abbasi from Sukkur, Khanzadi from Tharparkar, transgender Alisha, Labna Lashari from Shikarpur and Nabila Mughal, a disabled woman from Hyderabad, said in a media briefing that UC level higher secondary schools should be opened for the education of girls in Sindh. So that poor girls can get education above primary level in their area. While a special desk for women should be set up in NADRA, the women belonging to rural areas are deprived of the assistance of the Benazir Income Support Program due to the lack of identity cards. They said that the access of pregnant women to hospitals is a big problem, for which there is a need to start a free ambulance service. They said that a special desk should be created for transgenders in NADRA to make identity cards and separate beds should be appointed for transgenders in hospitals, where they can get treatment.

## Dera police seized cores rupees non-customs paid goods in one month

**Adam Khan Wazir**

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: In light of the orders of Inspector General of Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Akhtar Hayat Khan and under the command of Regional Police Officer Dera Ismail Khan Nasir Mehmood Sati, the crackdown against the menace of drugs and smuggling is ongoing in Dera region like the entire province.

In order to completely rid Dera Range of the scourge of drugs, there has been an unrelenting crackdown on drug peddlers, especially those involved in the nefarious trade of office within the confines of educational institutions, during the last one month. Police spokesperson said, During the same crackdown, Dera Range Police recovered 97 Kg of hashish, 13 Kg of heroin, 02 Kg of opium, 29 Kg of fofice and 08 bottles of liquor and registered cases against 286 drug dealers and arrested them.

Officials said, In the same way, strict checks have been continued by establishing effective patrols and blockades while dealing with smugglers who undermine the foundations of the country's economy.

## World Tourism Day

MUZAFFERABAD: Secretary Tourism Department Khalid Mehmood Chohan leads the rally along with students to mark the World Tourism Day in the Capital of AJK.



Photo: Online

# Malaysian CG Herman Hardynata Ahmed calls for enhancing Pak-Malaysia trade ties

**News Desk**

KARACHI: The annual dinner reception of Pakistan Soap Manufacturers Association was held at a local hotel in Karachi in which the Consul General of Malaysia, Herman Hardynata Ahmed was honored as Chief Guest, Dr. June Kuncoro Hadinigrat, Consul General of Indonesia and Cyril Negrello, Head of Perfumery Firmenich UEA were the Guests of Honor. PSMA Chairman Syed Anwer Suhail Razvi welcomed said Malaysia and Indonesia are countries from where raw materials of soap making are imported. Taking advantage of the presence of the CGs of Malaysia & Indonesia, first of all he made a brief introduction to his association and

highlighted some of the problems specially faced during the past year financial crises due to L/C & retirement of documents. He also presented manufacturing data of washing soap, toilet soap, detergent powder, value additions and revenue figures which government gets from the soap industry. Dr. June Kuncoro Hadinigrat, CG of Indonesia was greeted Chairman of PSMA and told we all know that Indonesia and Pakistan have been brotherly countries and diplomatic ties between them have always been very strong and cordial. He added that Pakistan and Indonesia are world's third largest democracy and a country where Islam and modernity coexist and deliver to bring economic progress. I know that some core materials



of soap production are made from palm oil. Palm Stearin and soap Noodles, for example, by products of palm oil and are used as the main raw material for manufacturing of soap and in some staple food products. Pakistan imports of Palm Oil and its fractions from Indonesia amounting to

USD 3.5 billion in 2022. Of this, the bulk of import is the palm oil reaching USD 1.4 billion, and other, such as the Palm Stearin product reaches USD 165 million. Consul General of Malaysia, Herman Hardynata Ahmed hoped to enhance the existing trade ties and definitely create better

situation for both countries. He further said that the soap industry of Pakistan was looking forward to boost imports of raw materials from Malaysia which has to be facilitated by providing better opportunities and Pakistan has emerged as a good trading partner for Malaysian suppliers.

Mr Herman said that Malaysia has been exporting Palm Bye Products to Soap Industry of Pakistan since 1880, he assured that they are trying to resolve all the issues and provides best possible services to the Soap Industry in Pakistan whereas more products and commodities have to be incorporated. Later, PSMA Convener Custom Committee Usman Ahmed thanked the honorable guests and PSMA members.

# Bank of Punjab (BOP) launches Merchant Acquiring Business

**Commerce Desk**

LAHORE: The Bank of Punjab (BOP), recognized as one of the nation's premier commercial banks, has embarked on a pioneering journey by unveiling its cutting-edge Point of Sale (POS) payment solutions and online payment gateway services. BOP is the 7th Bank offering this service out of the total of 41 commercial and specialized banks in the country. This strategic move reinforces BOP's commitment to enriching its digital retail offerings and expediting the evolution of the nation's digital ecosystem.

In pursuit of this ambitious endeavor, the Bank of Punjab (BOP) has forged a strategic alli-

ance with PayNet Private Limited, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Omega IT Solutions United Arab Emirates renowned for its expertise in Digital Payment business solutions. This collaboration signifies a pivotal milestone in BOP's mission to introduce Point-of-Sale (POS) payment services to the market, with plans to expand its reach through additional Independent Sales Organizations (ISOs) for comprehensive nationwide coverage.

The Bank will act as a link between merchants, issuers and payment networks by offering them state-of-the-art POS machines and make cashless transactions available over the counters, enabling retailers to benefit from the adoption of digi-

tal payments. The POS machines support acceptance of all types of cards.

To commemorate this momentous occasion, a ceremony was held at a prominent local hotel in Lahore. The event served as a platform to recognize the invaluable contributions of key individuals who played pivotal roles in this project. Dignitaries present at the ceremony included Mr. Zafar Masud, President & CEO of BOP, and other esteemed members of the senior management team.

Speaking on this occasion, Mr. Zafar Masud remarked, "The Bank of Punjab is diligently spearheading the modernization of retail services within the country by enhancing our

digital offerings and promoting economic documentation. We are already committed to providing top-notch services to SMEs, corporate entities, and government sectors. With the launch of our Merchant Acquiring business, we aim to fortify these strategic partnerships, empowering BOP to deliver innovative and industry-leading payment solutions to customers nationwide."

As the Bank of Punjab embraces the future with its Merchant Acquiring Business, it underscores its dedication to fostering a digitally advanced and financially inclusive landscape in Pakistan. The bank's unwavering commitment to excellence and innovation promises a brighter and more accessible future for all.





Islamabad  
15° - 23° Clear

## SERVICES

## Namaz Timings

Fajr	4:36 am
Zohr	11:59 am
Asr	4:16 pm
Maghrib	5:58 pm
Isha	7:21 pm

## EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police)	15
Bomb Disposal	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad	1122 & 1122 & 1122
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## SECP issues standardized constitutive documents for registration of Private Funds

## Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has issued standardized formats of documents, along with step-by-step guidance, for the registration of private fund as a notified entity.

The standardized documentation, available at SECP's website in editable formats, will promote consistency, encourage harmonized disclosures, and reduce the turnaround time required for the registration of a private fund. The documents include, Trust Deed and Private Placement Memorandum (for registration of a fund in trust structure), Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) Agreement, Custodian Agreement and Private Placement Memorandum (for registration of private fund in LLP structure).

Notable interest has been observed in the registration of private funds over the last couple of years; however, constitutive documents containing varying disclosures being used by private fund management companies were the cause of the delay in registration and subsequent launch of funds. Soft copies of the documents are available for download at SECP's website at: <https://www.secp.gov.pk/laws/others/>

# 'Culture Caravan' best way to explore rich regional history: Wasi Shah

## Spokesman Report

TAXILA: Minister of State for Tourism, Wasi Shah has said that the 'Culture Caravan' was arranged to explore the rich history of the region and engage with experts to provide insight into the significance of Gandhara heritage.

Pakistan is rich with religious and cultural tourism, and safe for international tourists, he said while addressing a Cultural Caravan on World Tourism Day 2023 at Taxila, organized here by Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) in collaboration with its partners.

State Minister for Tourism Wasi Shah, who is also Chairman of PTDC said, World Tourism Day is celebrated every year on September 27 under the auspices of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) to create awareness of and importance of tourism in the international community.

He said the Day would promote tourism and the social and cultural values besides its effects on political and economic aspects should be kept in mind as well.

Visiting Taxila Museum and Julian, he said the place we are standing today is the 22-hundred-year-old Taxila University, which is considered one of the first universi-



ties in the region and the oldest in the world.

He said, "I have decided to celebrate World Tourism Day at this place this year so that our friends in the country and abroad should get the message that civilization that Pakistanis are inheritors has been the beacon of knowledge since 2200 years ago." The other purpose of celebrating World Tourism Day in Taxila was to convey the message that Pakistan is also the inheritor of Harappa civilization about 5,000 years old and Mehrgarh about 5,000 years old.

Wasi Shah lauded the role of PTDC and all stakeholders for organizing a successful culture caravan.

Addressing the cultural caravan, Managing Director PTDC Aftab Rehman Rana

thanked all the guests, Regional Director Small Industries Khurram Dar, Zaidar Ahsan Shah, President Reimaging Gandhara and especially the sponsor President Alan Research Centre Owais Ali.

The event was attended by Minister of State for Tourism Wasi Shah, Balochistan Minister for Education and Tourism Dr Qadir Bakhsh Baloch, Ambassadors of different countries, diplomats, media persons, stakeholders of the tourism industry and various scholars.

Besides the Taxila Museum, the delegation was also given a tour of the archaeological sites there, the 2200-year-old University Taxila, Julian and the Gandhara Art and Craft Village Taxila.

## Managing Editor meets with Saudi Arabian Ambassador on Saudi Arabia's National Day

## Zain Ul Abdeen

MULTAN: On the occasion of Saudi Arabia's National Day, the Managing Editor Naveed Ahmad Khan had the honor of meeting with the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia. This meeting marked a significant moment of celebration and diplomatic camaraderie.

Cultural Celebration: The event served as an opportunity to celebrate the rich culture, heritage, and history of Saudi Arabia. The Managing Editor and the Ambassador discussed the importance of cultural exchange in fostering understanding and strengthening international relations.

Bilateral Relations: The Managing Editor and the Ambassador discussed the bilateral relations between their respective countries. They emphasized the importance of diplomacy, trade, and cooperation in various fields to enhance the ties between Saudi Arabia and the host country.

Saudi Arabia's Achievements: The Ambassador high-



lighted Saudi Arabia's remarkable achievements in recent years, including economic diversification, social reforms, and infrastructure development. The Managing Editor acknowledged these accomplishments and their positive impact on the region.

Media Collaboration: During the meeting, there

were discussions about the role of media in promoting cross-cultural understanding. Both the Managing Editor and the Ambassador agreed on the significance of media collaboration to showcase Saudi Arabia's culture and achievements to a global audience.

National Day Celebrations: The Managing Editor

expressed best wishes to the Ambassador and the people of Saudi Arabia on their National Day. They discussed the various festivities and events planned to commemorate this special occasion.

Future Collaboration: The meeting concluded with a commitment to foster future collaborations between the media outlet represented by the Managing Editor and Saudi Arabia's diplomatic mission. These collaborations could include cultural exchange programs, interviews, and features that promote a better understanding of Saudi Arabia.

In short, the meeting between the Managing Editor and the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia on Saudi Arabia's National Day was a testament to the importance of diplomacy, cultural exchange, and media collaboration in strengthening international relations. It showcased a shared commitment to building bridges of understanding between nations and celebrating the achievements and heritage of Saudi Arabia.

## World Pharmacist Day Celebrated at Multan Institute of Kidney Diseases

## Kiran Asim

MULTAN: World Pharmacist Day was celebrated at Multan Institute of Kidney Diseases like all over the world. On this day, patients were informed about the correct use of medicines and various departments including professors of academia, Director Drug Testing Laboratory Multan

and pharmacists of various hospitals, drug inspectors of the district administration participated and expressed their views. Dr. Syed Nisar Hussain Shah and Dr. Muhammad Uzair, Dean Pharmacy of University of Lahore, Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan, Multan University of Science and Technology expressed their views and

appreciated the role of pharmacist in every field.

Dr. Syed Ali Imran Zaidi Executive Director Multan Institute of Kidney Diseases, while addressing the event, said that the role of the pharmacist in health promotion cannot be forgotten. Various departments in the hospital are playing their role in the health system and pharmacy. The department has

a key role in strengthening this health system.

In this program, the organizer Dr. Ramisha Jalil HOD Pharmacy MIKD expressed her thoughts and gave a presentation.

In the organizer committee, Dr. Sahar Jabeen, Farooq Haider and other pharmacists MIC Dey played their important role.



ly concerning our youth. These products have been sanctioned without conducting a thorough cost-benefit or risk assessment, making it easier for children and young people to adopt them. HTPs are not only highly habit-forming but also expose users, including our children, to a hazardous

mix of harmful chemicals and carcinogens.

Dr. Ziauddin Islam, Former Technical Head of the Tobacco Control Cell at the Ministry of Health, emphasized the critical importance of making decisions based on evidence, stating, "The evidence is crystal clear: HTPs are not

a safer alternative to traditional cigarettes. Their consumption leads to addiction and a wide range of severe health issues, including respiratory and cardiovascular problems. As responsible guardians of public health, it is essential that we act in the best interests of our population's health.

Khalil Ahmed Dogar, Program Manager, emphasized the importance of protecting the rights and health of children. He stated, "We call upon the government to reconsider this decision, as it could have severe consequences for the well-being of our youth." Khalil urged the Health Minister to engage in comprehensive discussions with public health experts, civil society organizations, and concerned citizens to ensure that any regulatory measures prioritize the health and well-being of the people of Pakistan.

## World Tourism Day marked with awareness walk at Mega City GK



## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: World Tourism Day was marked across the world including Pakistan. An awareness walk was held in Mega City Gujjar Khan led by Head of Operations Shahab Elahi. The purpose of the event was to foster the importance of tourism and its social, cultural, political and economic values of Pakistan. On this occasion, the Head of Operations addressed the participants and said that celebrating this day is promotion of tourism, the search for new tourist destinations, the preservation of archaeology, the protection of tourists and the provision of maximum facilities in tourist areas. Shahab tells participants that mega city has always played an effective role in promoting tourism and to become Pakistan prominent on the international tourism map. The real purpose of tourism is to bring the beautiful face of our beloved country Pakistan to the world so that the world can be told that Pakistan is a peaceful region. In the end, he pledges to save the natural beauty of our motherland and create facilities for tourists.

## PTCL Group collaborates with ConnectHear to conduct sign language training



## Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's largest telecommunication operator, PTCL Group (PTCL & Ufone 4G) collaborated with ConnectHear, a social enterprise working to empower persons with hearing impairment, to organize a sign language training session for its Customer Service Center (Joint Shops) representatives from the North region. Coinciding with the International Day of Sign Languages, the training aimed to promote inclusivity and enhance the accessibility of PTCL and Ufone 4G services for customers with hearing impairment.

CEO/Co-founder ConnectHear, Ms. Azima Dhanjee led the engaging and interactive training session that included a variety of activities and real-life case studies designed to sensitize the PTCL Group customer service staff to the unique needs of Deaf customers.

Commenting during the session, Group Director, Public Relations, Media, CSR & Corporate Communications, PTCL & Ufone 4G, Amir Pasha, said, "Inclusivity is a major driver of socioeconomic change, therefore it is the foundation of PTCL Group's CSR program. We believe every customer should have equal access to our services, regardless of their abilities. I am positive that the Deaf sensitization training for our customer-facing teams will improve customer experience."

CEO/Co-founder of ConnectHear, Azima Dhanjee, said, "It is heartening to see PTCL Group playing a significant role and actively participating in Deaf sensitization in Pakistan's telecom industry. Our partnership, particularly this initiative, sets a commendable example for other organizations to follow suit to help bring about a more diverse, inclusive and compassionate society in the country."

PTCL Group's initiative serves as a beacon for other public and private organizations looking to foster diversity and inclusion within their ranks.

## A Talk on 'Society, State and Nationhood in 21st Century' Held at IIUI



## City Desk

ISLAMABAD:- A lecture titled "Society, State, and Nationhood in the 21st Century" was organized by the Students Advisor Office at the male Campus of the International Islamic University, Islamabad. The event featured a thought-provoking presentation delivered by Brigadier (Retired) Tahir Mehmood, a distinguished figure renowned for his contributions as an author, former editor, and freelance contributor to the national print media. Brigadier Tahir Mehmood, with a rich background of three decades of service in the Pakistan Army and his role as Director Publications and Chief Editor of four distinct monthly magazines within the Inter Services Public Relations Directorate, graced the occasion. His noteworthy achievements also include the launch of two new magazines, including one specifically catered to women's interests.

The lecture was graced by Prof. Dr. N. B. Jumani, Acting President as chief guest. Dr. Hafiz Ghufuran Ahmed Students Advisor (male), former students' advisors Dr. Rizwan Aftab, Dr. Tauqeer Sargana, Deputy Students Advisor Dr. Masood ur Rehman Khat-tak, senior faculty members and students also joined the ceremony. During his captivating discourse, Brigadier (Retired) Mehmood shed light on the relationship between society, the state, and the concept of nationhood within the context of Pakistan.

Brigadier (Retired) Mehmood also addressed the evolving challenges of the 21st century, encompassing globalization, technological advancements, and the evolving dynamics of international relations, and their profound impact on the concept of nationhood.

On the occasion, in his address Prof. Dr. N. B. Jumani thanked the speaker for his precious time and prudent thoughts. He shed light on the vision of IIUI and opined that youth is the ultimate solution to the prevailing challenges.

on the occasion, Dr. Hafiz Ghufuran Ahmed thanked the speaker, IIUI leadership and students for participation in the event. He vowed that He will be eager to work for such more activities of dialogue and counselling as well. He also shared her success story addressing a question about the brain drain challenge.

This event, thoughtfully hosted by IIUI, provided a platform for scholars, academicians, and students to partake in meaningful dialogue on this pertinent topic. Brigadier (Retired) Tahir Mehmood's expertise and profound insights left the audience inspired and instilled in them a renewed commitment to address the multifaceted challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in the 21st century.

## Increased risk of nicotine addiction in children following premature regularization of heated tobacco products

## Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Health advocates have expressed their deep apprehension regarding the premature decision made by the former Cabinet to legitimize Heated Tobacco Products (HTPs) through a Statutory Regulatory Order (SRO). In an official statement released by the Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC), these health advocates are urgently calling on the Minister of Health to investigate the alarming situation of HTPs now being readily available for sale across Pakistan.

Malik Imran Ahmed, Country Head of the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, underscored the seriousness of the matter, declaring, "The move to legitimize HTPs poses a significant threat to our public health objectives, particularly

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# ‘China’s Ascent: The CPEC Connection’ - I

China’s astounding economic ascent over the past three decades has left the world in awe. It stands as the global epicenter for mega factories and corporate giants, with leading companies establishing manufacturing hubs within its borders. Boasting a staggering GDP surpassing US\$17 trillion, China ranks among the world’s fastest-growing major economies. Its remarkable 5.5% GDP growth in the first half of 2023 positions it on track to meet the government’s annual target of approximately 5%. Anchored by a high savings rate exceeding 40% and an investment rate to match, China wields abundant resources for infrastructure development and growth-oriented ventures. As a dominant exporter of goods and services, spanning electronics, machinery, textiles, and more, China’s economic prowess knows no bounds. With a burgeoning domestic market of over 1.4 billion individuals, Chinese companies enjoy an expansive and ever-expanding customer base that further cements its status as an economic superpower.

rapid economic ascent. These companies span diverse sectors, from energy and finance to technology and manufacturing. As the world’s largest manufacturing economy and top exporter, China wields unrivaled influence. Simultaneously, it has evolved into the planet’s fastest-growing consumer market and second-largest importer. The Shanghai and Shenzhen Stock Exchanges rank among the globe’s largest, while Shenzhen earns the moniker of the world’s next Silicon Valley, emblematic of its meteoric technological rise. China’s economic transformation is nothing short of astonishing. From contributing a mere 3% to global manufacturing output in 1990, it has surged to a dominant 27.7% by 2022. This meteoric rise has propelled China to the forefront of several industries, with it now proudly holding the titles of the world’s largest producer of air conditioners, mobile phones, solar cells, shoes, coal, ships, and steel.

trillion, securing its status as the world’s premier exporter. This remarkable transformation is a testament to China’s strategic reforms and relentless pursuit of economic prosperity, a stark departure from its relatively humble economic standing in comparison to many African and Asian nations until 1975. It’s a testament to the nation’s resilience and vision in navigating a remarkable journey from economic underdog to global economic superpower, even outpacing countries like India, which held a stronger position in per capita income until 1990.

through subjugation but by pioneering win-win scenarios that mutually benefit China and its partner nations. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) had its genesis in two pivotal speeches delivered by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013. The concept’s inaugural presentation occurred during his visit to Kazakhstan, where he unveiled the Silk Road Economic Belt. Subsequently, in Indonesia, he introduced the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. These foundational speeches laid the groundwork for what would evolve into the comprehensive Belt and Road Initiative.

In 2023, China shines as a global economic powerhouse, boasting the second-highest number of billionaires worldwide according to Forbes, with an astounding 495 individuals amassing a combined wealth of \$1.67 trillion. A remarkable 145 Chinese companies secure spots on the prestigious Fortune Global 500 list, a significant rise from previous years, underscoring China’s

world-class infrastructure emerges as a pivotal catalyst. Robust infrastructure serves as a foundational cornerstone for fostering a manufacturing hub, encompassing China’s expansive network of highways, roads, ports, airports, and intricately woven supply chains. In 2013, a transformative vision was conceived by Chinese leadership—the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), of which the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a significant component. These visionary endeavors were crafted with a specific purpose in mind: to extend China’s reach to vital markets and resources essential for fueling its ever-expanding economy. Importantly, this was to be achieved not

Among the myriad factors contributing to China’s astounding progress and prosperity, the development of

The overarching aim of the BRI is to foster economic connectivity, trade, and infrastructure development spanning the vast expanse of Asia, Europe, and Africa. This ambitious initiative seeks to bolster collaboration among nations by constructing an intricate web of roads, railways, ports, and diverse infrastructure projects. Beyond physical connectivity, it encompasses financial cooperation, cultural exchanges, and the nurturing of people-to-people relationships.

China’s motivation for championing the BRI is multifaceted. It encompasses the pursuit of fresh markets for its goods and services, addressing overcapacity in sectors such as construction and steel production, and augmenting its geopolitical influence on the global stage. Concurrently, it endeavors to stimulate economic growth in less-developed regions within China while championing the global expansion of Chinese enterprises.

*To be Continued*



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

## Pakistan highlights pharmaceutical collaboration with SCO countries

The 2nd SCO Pharmaceutical Cooperation Development Conference has demonstrated the commitment of member states to foster international cooperation in the pharmaceutical industry. Through this platform, SCO member states aim to promote mutual benefits, strengthen regulatory frameworks, encourage research and development collaboration, and expand market access,” highlighted Asim Rauf, CEO of Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP). Asim Rauf, who attended the conference in Suzhou as a VIP guest, delivered a keynote address highlighting Pakistan’s commitment to promoting pharmaceutical development and regulation. In his address, he stressed the significance of cooperation among SCO member states in ensuring drug safety and advancing research and development in the pharmaceutical sector. With the world facing unprecedented challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for collaboration and partnership in the pharmaceutical sector has become even more critical. Pakistan and other SCO members are committed to working together to ensure the availability of essential medicines, strengthen health systems and improve the overall well-being of their populations.

The CEO took the opportunity to share Pakistan’s achievements in pharmaceutical regulation, highlighting the steps taken by DRAP to streamline the drug approval process, enhance quality control measures and promote transparency in the pharmaceutical industry. In an interview with China Economic Net, Asim Rauf touched on many potential areas of collaboration and partnership between Pakistan and other SCO member states in the pharma sector, the most important of which is clinical trials at present. Pakistan has various products from China including manufactured goods, high-tech products, cancer medicines, active pharmaceutical ingredients and medical devices.

The CEO said there were many pending applications for clinical trials of Chinese medicines in Pakistan. He added that “we have generated a conducive environment where we have specifically invited Chinese companies to bring their products to Pakistan and import them.” In addition to attending the conference, Asim Rauf held bilateral meetings with representatives from other SCO member states to explore opportunities for collaboration in the pharmaceutical sector. He noted that “the conference provided a platform where we can individually sign bilateral MoUs and agreements with all other member countries so that we can bind each other and share knowledge on those global issues that may affect public safety and people’s health.”

These meetings aimed to foster closer ties and facilitate the exchange of knowledge and expertise in areas such as drug regulation, quality control, and capacity building. The conference provided a platform for participants to exchange best practices, discuss regulatory challenges and explore avenues for future collaboration. Experts from SCO member countries shared their experiences and insights on topics such as drug registration, pharmacovigilance and pharmaceutical research and development. The conference concluded with the Suzhou Initiative, injecting new and strong impetus into the building of an even closer SCO community of shared future. The health and pharmaceutical regulatory authorities, relevant institutions and industries of the participating countries attach great importance to cooperation in the field of medicine and health among the SCO member states, observer states and dialogue partners, and will actively play the role of the SCO mechanism as a platform.



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

## Need to immediately Privatize Loss Making Companies - I

Privatization, the transfer of government-owned assets and services into the hands of private entities, has been a subject of intense debate and discussion for decades. It is a policy approach that has been implemented worldwide, with varying degrees of success and controversy.

One of the primary reasons for privatization is to enhance economic efficiency. Government-owned enterprises often suffer from inefficiencies, bureaucracy, and lack of competition. When these assets are privatized, they typically become more competitive and responsive to market forces. Private companies are driven by profit motives, which incentivize them to cut costs, improve productivity, and innovate to meet consumer demands. This increased efficiency can lead to lower prices, higher quality products and services, and ultimately, economic growth. Governments often face budgetary constraints and limited resources. Privatization can help alleviate these fiscal burdens. When the private sector takes over the responsibility for running and maintaining certain assets or services, the government can redirect funds to other pressing needs such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure. Privatization can also reduce the need for government subsidies and bailouts for struggling state-owned enterprises, contributing to long-term fiscal stability. Competition is a cornerstone of market-driven economies, and privatization promotes competition in various sectors. As private companies enter markets previously dominated by state-owned enterprises, they bring fresh ideas, technologies, and innovations. Competition encourages business-

es to continuously improve their products and services, leading to increased consumer choice and satisfaction. Moreover, privatization fosters a dynamic business environment that rewards innovation and drives economic growth.

Privatization often results in improved service quality for consumers. Private companies are motivated to provide excellent customer service and meet consumer expectations to retain and attract customers. This contrasts with many government-owned enterprises, where customer service may not be a top priority. In privatized industries like telecommunications, transportation, and healthcare, consumers often experience better service, shorter wait times, and access to cutting-edge technologies. Privatization can also contribute to job creation and economic growth. As private companies expand their operations and invest in new ventures, they create job opportunities and stimulate economic activity. The increased efficiency and competitiveness of privatized enterprises can drive economic growth and prosperity for communities and regions. Government-owned enterprises can sometimes become financial liabilities. Privatization allows governments to transfer the financial risks associated with these enterprises to private investors. When businesses operate under the discipline of profit and loss, they are more likely to manage risks prudently, reducing the potential for taxpayer-funded bailouts. Privatization is a policy approach that offers numerous benefits to economies, industries, and society. By enhancing economic efficiency, promoting innovation and competition, improving service quality, and contributing to job creation and economic growth, privatization can lead to

positive outcomes for both governments and citizens. However, it is essential to approach privatization with careful planning, oversight, and consideration of the specific circumstances of each case. When executed thoughtfully, privatization can play a pivotal role in driving economic development and improving the overall well-being of a nation’s citizens.

Corruption has been a pervasive issue in Pakistan’s government departments for many years, hindering progress, eroding public trust, and impeding socio-economic development. Despite numerous efforts to combat corruption, it continues to plague various sectors of the government.

Corruption in Pakistan’s government departments is not a new phenomenon. It manifests itself in various forms, including bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, and misappropriation of funds. It affects every facet of public life, from law enforcement agencies to healthcare and education systems. Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index consistently ranks Pakistan among the countries with high levels of corruption.

Several factors contribute to the persistence of corruption in Pakistan’s government departments: Many government employees, particularly those in lower-level positions, receive meager salaries that do not align with the cost of living. This financial strain can lead to a susceptibility to bribery and kickbacks as a means of supplementing income. Weak accountability mechanisms and a culture of impunity have allowed corrupt officials to operate with relative impunity. The absence of stringent consequences for corrupt practices has emboldened wrongdoers. Pakistan’s bureaucratic structures are often complex, leading to excessive red tape and opportunities for corruption.

*To be Continued*

## World Heart Disease Day

Today, World Heart Disease Prevention Day is being celebrated all over the world to prevent the harmful effects of these diseases.

Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH) has been working for the last 4 years to protect its countrymen from heart and related diseases. 406,870 people lose their lives due to heart diseases in Pakistan every year i.e. one person every one and a half minutes. Similarly, according to the 2021 report of the Diabetes Federation, 3.3 million people are living with diabetes in Pakistan, and Pakistan has become the third largest country in the world in terms of people suffering from diabetes, and the rate at which this disease is increasing is increasing in Pakistan worldwide. I have come first. The annual cost of diabetes alone is estimated at more than 2.6 billion US dollars. The same is the case with blood pressure, kidney diseases and other diseases. That is, the heart and its related diseases have become a serious challenge for our health as well as our economy. One of the major causes of these diseases is our diet. Our attitudes in food choices are careless. Excessive consumption of fried foods, salt and sweets are leading to heart, diabetes, kidney and many types of cancers. A major cause of sugar consumption is sugary drinks, which contain 7 to 9 teaspoons of sugar in a small glass. Fried foods and sweets are major causes of obesity and obesity is called the mother of all diseases. By avoiding them, we can not only avoid these diseases including the heart, but also save the revenue of the country that is wasted on it.

Due to the harmful health effects of fried foods, salt and sugary drinks around the world, very effective policy measures are being taken in the world to reduce their consumption. These measures include increasing taxes on them, front of pack labeling and warning signs, school food policy and ban on their marketing. More than 106 countries or states in the world have increased taxes on sugary drinks to reduce their consumption due to the health damage they cause. Similarly, various countries are placing

warning signs on fried foods and sugary drinks to help people make healthier food choices and reduce the consumption of unhealthy foods.

In Pakistan, the Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH) has taken the lead in this work, which has been providing awareness to its countrymen for the past 40 years to avoid these diseases by adopting a simple lifestyle, eating more fried things, Avoid excessive consumption of salt and sugar. Make walking more frequent, avoid tension, avoid smoking, keep obesity, blood pressure and sugar under control. If one life can be saved by policy, thousands of lives can be saved by policy. With this in mind, the shelter is working with policy makers to develop policies that can help reduce these diseases.

Much work has been done on policies related to tobacco and sugar-sweetened beverages since asylum efforts. In the recent budget, taxes on all sugary drinks and tobacco were increased, reducing their consumption, as who says that if something is taxed at 01%, consumption will decrease by 8% and is expected. It is said that there will be a significant reduction in these diseases, but there is still a lot to be done. For this, Panah is launching a huge campaign against ultra-processed foods in the country, which will involve public awareness as well as working on all the policy options that can reduce their consumption, one by one. There will be a situation. Diseases will be less, people’s sufferings will be less and the expenses incurred on them will also be less, which will improve the health as well as the economy.

Shelter message:

1. Eat a balanced diet
2. Do proper exercise
3. Avoid smoking
4. Stay away from mental stress.
5. Complete treatment for diabetes and blood pressure

So that the heart is strong

Writer is Secretary General & Director Operations of Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH).



Analysis

Sanaullah Ghumman



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

# Azerbaijan marks Day of Remembrance

Three years past the start of Patriotic War



**Naveed Ahmad Khan**

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Azerbaijan in Islamabad observed "Remembrance Day" to honor the soldiers and officers who valiantly fought in the Patriotic War, reclaimed Azerbaijani territories, and made the ultimate sacrifice for the territorial integrity of their country, on the occasion book presentation ceremony titled "The History of Patriotic War - Personality Factor" also hold.

Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairman, Senate Defence Committee was the chief guest on the occasion, Sena-

tor Muhammad Talha Mehmood, Dr. Mehmet Paçacı, Ambassador of Türkiye, H. E. Mr. Atadjan Movlamov, Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan and Dean of Diplomatic Corps, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director-General ISSI, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman, ISSI, Lt Col Khalid Taimur Akram Defense Analyst and media person also present on the occasion.

Ambassador Farhadov further elaborated on the pivotal moment that occurred on September 27, 2020, when Azerbaijan launched a counter-offensive in response to Armenia's large-scale military attack

on Azerbaijani Army positions and civilian settlements.

Under the leadership of President Ilham Aliyev, the Azerbaijani Armed Forces successfully liberated Azerbaijani territories from Armenian occupation, ultimately leading to Armenia's capitulation. In remembrance of the brave martyrs who fought for their nation's territorial integrity, September 27th is now observed as Remembrance Day in Azerbaijan every year.

Local anti-terror measures were initiated to ensure compliance with the Trilateral Statement, disarm and withdraw Armenia's armed forces from Azerbaijani territories, and secure the safety of civilians and military personnel. These measures strictly targeted legitimate military objectives, with an emphasis on protecting the civilian population.

Following intense negotiations, the armed forces of Armenia and illegal armed groups surrendered after 23 hours and 53 minutes.

However, Azerbaijan mourned the loss of martyrs not only during the 44-day Patriotic War but also during anti-terror measures and Armenian provocations in subsequent years.

Ambassador Farhadov expressed gratitude to Pakistan for its unwavering moral and political support throughout the conflict and during the local anti-terror measures.

He noted that Pakistan's support had been highly appreciated by the Government and people of Azerbaijan.

The Ambassador highlighted Azerbaijan's commitment to reconstruction and restoration efforts in the liberated areas, allocating billions of dollars to this

endeavor.

Many former internally displaced persons (IDPs) have already returned to revitalized regions such as Fuzuli, Zangilan, and Lachin, with plans for additional families to relocate to their homeland.

Notably, Fuzuli and Zangilan International Airports have been constructed, and work on Lachin International Airport is underway.

Azerbaijan's cultural capital, Shusha, and Aghdam have become venues for international events, symbolizing the resurgence of these regions.

Even the "Pakistan Colors" group performed the "Bhangra" dance at the 5th "Kharibulbul" International Folklore Festival held in Shusha in May 2022.

Ambassador Farhadov extended his appreciation to Pakistani media representatives for their support in raising aware-

ness of Azerbaijan's realities among the Pakistani public and on the international stage.

Ambassador Farhadov discussed the Western Azerbaijan Community, which was established in 1989 to protect the rights of Azerbaijanis expelled from their ancestral homeland, now known as Armenia.

He highlighted the historical injustices suffered by Azerbaijanis, including ethnic cleansing, violence, and mass deportations.

The Ambassador emphasized the urgent need for a legally binding international agreement to enable the return of Azerbaijanis expelled from Armenia to their homes and to ensure their individual and collective rights, as this is essential for lasting peace in the region.

Photos by Raja Farid

# UK politicians call for end of Indian rule in occupied Kashmir

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

MUZAFFARABAD: Speakers including some prominent members of the British Parliament while shedding light on various dimensions of the Kashmir dispute has called for an immediate cessation of human rights violations by Indian troops in illegally Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Organized jointly by the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Kashmir (UAJK) and the UK-based Rights to Self-Determination Movement (International), the speakers strongly condemned the grave human rights abuses in occupied Kashmir and pledged

support for the Kashmiri people's fundamental rights and their right to self-determination. Special Assistant to the Prime Minister of Pakistan and Minister of State for Human Rights, Mushaal Hussein Mullick, addressed the audience and highlighted that occupied Kashmir represents the world's largest military concentration. Andrew Gwynne, a member of the British Parliament, emphasized the British Parliament's strong commitment to supporting the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination and addressing human rights violations in the disputed region. He highlighted the efforts of both the All-Party Parliamentary Group on

Kashmir and Friends of Kashmir from the Labour Party in advocating for Kashmiris' rights and the protection of human rights. Gwynne stated that he pledged to be a voice for those who are voiceless, both within and outside the British Parliament, after hearing about the atrocities in occupied Kashmir during his constituency visits.

This commitment has guided his actions for several years. Naz Shah, another British Parliament member representing the Labour Party, emphasized her unwavering support for the oppressed Kashmiri people. Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. Muhammad Kaleem

Abbasi expressed his gratitude for the valuable insights shared by the esteemed speakers and their commitment to raising awareness about the human rights violations in occupied Kashmir. He reiterated the university's dedication to providing a platform for intellectual discourse and discussions on pressing global issues including conflict of Jammu and Kashmir. Chairman of the Right to Self-Determination Movement (Global), Raja Najabat Hussain (Stara-I-Pakistan), expressed his appreciation for the university's support in highlighting the Kashmiri people's human rights and their right to self-determination.

# Modi govt can judicially murder Yasin for political mileage: Mushaal

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussain Mallick expressed her alarm that the fascist Indian government could judicially murder her husband Yasin Malik under a notorious plan to gain support of extremist Hindus to win forthcoming general elections.

Speaking on the topic of "Human Rights Violations in Occupied Kashmir and Responsibility of International Community" organised by Azad Jammu and Kashmir University, SAPM on HR and Women Empowerment said that Narendra Modi's government could judicially kill incarcerated Hurriyat leader Yasin Malik for political mileage to secure victory in the next elections.

Mushaal said that the occupied Kashmir was turned into the world's largest military concentration area,



where occupation forces had been committing war crimes and state terrorism for the last over seven-decades.

She lamented that Kashmir was the only region in the world where sexual

violence against women, children and even men was being used as a weapon of war.

Mushaal warned that the RSS-inspired BJP government would not even hesitate to use nuclear weapons

to further its fascist hindutva agenda; hence the world should take cognizant of the rising fascist tendency of India and Hindutva ideology were posing a threat for the world peace.

She revealed that Yasin Malik was not even being given the right to legal defense in false, frivolous and politically motivated cases, which was against the all principles and ethics of justice in the world.

SAPM on HR and women Empowerment said that Syed Ali Gelani, who died during detention, Syed Shabir Shah, Asia Andrabi and other leaders have been locked up in jails for years to prevent the peaceful struggle of Kashmiris.

She went on to say that Indians who have a different opinion from the fascism of India are not safe even in any country in the world and the killing of Khalistan Movement leader Harjit Singh Najjar by Indian agents in Canada was its clear testimony.

# World Tourism Day: Green investments in tourist destinations urged

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Speakers at a seminar urged the authorities and the tourism management companies to prioritize green investments on services and infrastructure at the tourist destinations across the country. Using non-timber fuel, alternate energy, water conservation, solid waste management and environment friendly practices shall be promoted to ensure sustainable eco-tourism.

The seminar was organized by the Devcom-Pakistan, ICLC and National Skills University (NSU) here on Wednesday to mark the World Tourism Day, themed on "Tourism and Green Investments".

The managing director Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) Aftab ur Rehman Rana was the chief guest. The guest speakers included Vice Chancellor NSU Prof. Dr. Muhammad Mukhtar, President Rural Development Foundation (RDF) Brig. Retd Muhammad Khan, Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed, Secretary ICLC Sibtain Raza, CEO Apex Adnan Saeed, Sumera Raza and Rana Tariq Javed.

The managing director Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) Aftab ur Rehman Rana said that Pakistan's tourism and hospitality industry contributes 3.5 percent to the country's GDP. Most of which is contributed by the domestic tourism that has flourished in recent years. About 6.5 million people are directly or indirectly engaged in the industry. This is quite unfortunate that only a few know or are willing to invest in the green practices.

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Mukhtar urged the youth to travel across the heavenly land of Pakistan that is full of diverse culture and landscape. Outdoor is an open book that makes the travelers learn about the cultural and heritage assets of the country.

Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed urged the authorities to control the damage to the green cover that is being done by the environment, unfriendly structures, housing societies, timber mafia, littering and unmanaged solid waste. Local communities are the main stakeholder of the tourist destinations. They shall come up to form their associations to raise voice against the exploitation of their homelands.

Munir Ahmed said Pakistan has immense potential to spread the hospitality and tourism industry to 50-70 percent of the GDP. It would create a mess if the full potential is realized without any green investments and nature conservation.

Brig. Retd Muhammad Aslam supported the idea of community-based tourism in their own locally managed houses. So that the visitors could learn about the life they live, hardships and their culture. It would add more to the livelihood of the locals without compromising the natural resources.

# Intolerance in Society

Unfortunately, tolerance has gradually given way to the growing threat of intolerance across a range of human pursuits over the years.

Intolerance, a longstanding problem that has afflicted societies throughout history, remains prevalent in different manifestations worldwide. Despite the efforts of many societies to promote inclusivity and acceptance, intolerance remains a significant impediment to social advancement. In this article, we will examine the adverse impacts of intolerance on both individuals and society at large and explore potential remedies to address this deeply ingrained issue.

Intolerance can be described as the absence of acknowledgment or reverence for individuals who possess dissimilarities from us, whether these disparities involve race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or any other distinguishing trait. It can manifest through various means, such as discrimination, hate speech, violence, and bias. Intolerance within a society can have multiple origins, encompassing social, political, and economic influences.

**Impact on Individuals:** Psychological and Emotional Strain: Intolerance imposes significant psychological distress on its victims. Discrimination and bias can result in heightened anxiety, depression, and even post-traumatic stress disorder, leaving enduring emotional wounds.

**Isolation from Society:** Intolerance frequently leads to the marginalized groups' exclusion from vital social, economic, and political avenues, exacerbating existing inequalities.

**Undermining Self-Confidence:** Continual exposure to intolerance can undermine an individual's self-confidence and self-value, resulting in a weakened sense of belonging and self-identity.

**Impacts on Society:** Fragmentation: Intolerance nurtures division within society, cultivating an "us versus them" mindset that impedes social unity and collaboration.

**Escalation of Violence and Conflict:** In severe instances,

intolerance can escalate into acts of violence and conflict, fracturing communities and nations.

**Inhibited Advancement:** Societies that cultivate intolerance constrain their capacity for advancement by stifling creativity, innovation, and cooperation among diverse segments.

**Economic Ramifications:** Intolerance can lead to detrimental economic consequences, as it constrains the full utilization of a society's human resources, thereby impeding its economic development.

Intolerance continues to be a widespread problem in society, resulting in significant harm to individuals and impeding the advancement of nations. To construct more inclusive and



cohesive societies, it is essential for individuals, communities, and governments to collaborate in the

fight against intolerance, employing education, legislation, empathy, and dialogue as effective tools.

One strategy involves championing diversity and inclusivity across various spheres of society, including education, employment, and media portrayal. This can serve to introduce people to a wide range of viewpoints and foster a more tolerant and embracing societal environment. It is only through these concerted efforts that we can aspire to unveil and eliminate the toxic influence of intolerance from our society, thereby forging a more promising and equitable future for everyone.

This article is jointly authored by member of United Nations for Economic and Social Council and President of Pakistan Department of Peace Ali Muhammad Khan and Rida Anjum.

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

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
46,365.04	46,277.65
Day's High	Day's Low
46,448.33	46,238.12
Index Value	Change
5,580,271,328	+87.39
Percentage	Time
+0.19%	27 Sept, 2023 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,593.22	-32.50
Percentage	Time
-0.43%	27 Sept, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
33,346.97	-271.91
Percentage	Time
-0.81%	27 Sept, 1:34 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
32,371.90	+56.85
Percentage	Time
+0.18%	27 Sept, 3:15 pm GMT+9

**Open Market Forex Rates**

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	190	192
Bahrain Dinar	778.84	786.84
Canadian Dollar	220	222.20
China Yuan	40.24	40.64
Danish Krone	41.83	42.23
Euro	308	311
Hong Kong Dollar	37.93	38.28
Indian Rupee	3.57	3.68
Japanese Yen	1.78	1.86
Kuwaiti Dinar	945.27	954.27
Malaysian Ringgit	62.62	63.22
New Zealand \$	174.58	176.58
Norwegians Krone	27.87	28.17
Omani Riyal	762.31	770.31
Qatari Riyal	80.69	81.39
Saudi Riyal	76.6	77.3
Singapore Dollar	208	210
Swedish Korona	26.62	26.92
Swiss Franc	323.01	325.51
Thai Bhat	8.12	8.27
U.A.E Dirham	81	81.8
UK Pound Sterling	356.4	360
US Dollar	286.95	290.05

**Mastercard SME Confidence Index**  
**72% of SMEs in MENA project similar or increased revenue in 2023**

**News Desk**

KARACHI: From surviving to thriving in the post-COVID world, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) are optimistic about 2023 revenue projections. These are the findings of the second edition of the Mastercard Eastern Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EEMEA) SME Confidence Index.

The 2021 inaugural SME Confidence Index delved into the impact of the pandemic on SMEs across sectors, products, and services, and how they are embracing a digital future. As a continuation, the second edition of the survey reveals that while SMEs across the EEMEA region are confident about business growth, digitization remains the biggest opportunity.

As companies recover from the pandemic and return to the growth phase, the research shows that 72% of SMEs in MENA project similar or increased revenue in the next 12 months. This trend is the strongest in Qatar with 88% of SMEs expecting revenues to either grow or hold steady, followed by 85% in Saudi Arabia and 80% in the UAE.

SMEs in Saudi Arabia are the most optimistic in MENA about the year ahead, followed by Qatar and the UAE.

In MENA, over 7 out of 10 SMEs are confident about business growth in the next 12 months compared to 2022. Leading the region, 93% of SMEs in Saudi Arabia are optimistic about 2023, followed by Qatar at 82% and the UAE at 74%.

The survey highlights top three areas for support required by SMEs in MENA - training and upskilling staff (93%), access to a wider range of financial services (92%) and better telco infrastructure (91%).

Adoption of digital payment solutions is on the rise in MENA, with 85% of consumers in the region having used at least one emerging payment method in the last year.

# The decision to further discourage imports is laudable, says Mian Zahid Hussain

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Wednesday that the economy is recovering slowly as a result of the actions of the government and the army.

The prices of many things, including food items, are coming down across the country, which is appreciable as it is reducing the burden on the people, he said.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the decision to discourage unnecessary imports through taxation is a good move, which will save a lot of foreign exchange.

Speaking to the business community, the veteran business leader said the country seems

to be coming out of a quagmire of problems due to the complete focus on the economy, but it will take time for the situation to return to normal.

The caretaker Prime Minister has also mentioned the benefits of investing in Pakistan to UK-based Pakistani and British investors while expressing his commitment that the government will reduce expenditure and increase revenue so that the country's economy can grow.

The PM wants the situation to improve and the sufferings of the people to decrease, he said, adding that the economic indicators and foreign exchange reserves have started to improve, and it is hoped that there will be improvement in the industry, agriculture, trade, and services sectors.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that for continued improvement, it is necessary to put the economy before everything, including politics.

He said that it is necessary to hold the elec-



tion as soon as possible for the sake of political stability. According to the Election Commission, the elections will be held in January, but no

political party has started the election campaign yet, he observed.

The business leader said that the sooner the elections are held, the better, so as to end the uncertainty. He further said that it has become necessary to give relief to the public and the business community, which should be started by reducing the price of electricity, while it has also become necessary to reduce the price of gas, petrol, and diesel.

Inflation has risen sharply due to the rise in electricity, gas, and fuel prices, which is somewhat reduced by the depreciation of the dollar, but it has become necessary to reduce business costs for cheaper production and exports, without which relief cannot be given to the public.

Mian Zahid Hussain further said that the government should make a plan to give relief to the people, industrialists, and traders as soon as the crisis situation is over.

**Mora**

RAWALPINDI: A skilled man is making traditional stool (Mora) at his working area along the G.T Road in City.



Photo: Online

## ICCI for enhancing role of pharmacists in the economic development of Pakistan

**Tariq Khattak**

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) in collaboration with the Pakistan Pharmacists Association (PPA) organized a ceremony to celebrate the World Pharmacist Day. Kamran Rehman Khan, Additional Secretary, Ministry of National Health Services Regulations and Coordination Islamabad was the chief guest. The event was attended by the members of PPA, ICCI and other dignitaries.

Speaking on the occasion, Kamran Rehman Khan Additional Secretary, Ministry of National Health Services Regulations and Coordination said that pharmacists are playing a key role in manufacturing of quality medicines and Pakistan can earn billions of dollars by enhancing the exports of pharmaceutical products to the world, especially to the African countries.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, ICCI said that this day reminds us to recognize the useful contributions of pharmacists in our healthcare system. He said that pharmacists are an integral part of the health industry and they should realize their important role in enhancing the exports of pharmaceuticals products by manufacturing high quality medicines that would help revive the economy.



Sardar Shabbir Ahmed, President, Pakistan Pharmacists Association highlighted the role of pharmacists in the healthcare system. He pointed out that medication errors were causing around 7000 to 9000 deaths in the United States and adding a liability of around US\$ 40 billion each year to the national exchequer of the USA.

Zafar Bakhtawari Former President ICCI and Secretary General UBG said that pharmacists are now becoming entrepreneurs by opening pharmacies and creating jobs for

others. He said that the government should create a conducive environment for youth to stop the brain drain and promote young entrepreneurs so that they could play a more effective role in the economic development of the country.

Prof. Shehzad Ali Khan Vice Chancellor Health Services Academy, Islamabad and Fakharuddin Aamir Director Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan also spoke on the occasion and recognized the contributions of pharmacists.

## TikTok's initiative to showcase Pakistan tourism amasses 2.3 billion views

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: TikTok's #GhoomoPakistan initiative, launched to showcase Pakistan's hidden treasures, rich culture and stunning landscapes, has concluded with resounding success, amassing a staggering 2.3 billion video views during the two-month long campaign.

The campaign enthralled audiences with exciting content that highlighted travel experiences from all provinces of Pakistan. As the campaign concludes today on World Tourism Day, TikTok not only achieved exceptional engagement but also played its part in showcasing Pakistan as a compelling destination for global travelers.

TikTok recognized the immense potential in local talent and partnered with four top creators, providing them the opportunity to explore Pakistan's most

enchanting regions. Rana Hamza Saif embarked on a journey encompassing Islamabad, Skardu, and Hunza. Zenith, known as "The Motorbike Girl," ventured through Islamabad, Neelum Valley, and Arang Kel, while Zernab Shastri and Minahil Malik delved into the beauty of Swat, Malam Jabba, and Kalam. These creators brought to life diverse stories from different terrains, capturing breathtaking landscapes along the way.

Saif Mujahid, Head of Content Operations and Marketing for Pakistan at TikTok, said: "TikTok has fast become the home of entertainment in Pakistan with content comprising various categories. Travel remains a very popular vertical and we're excited to see the impact we have been able to create through our #GhoomoPakistan campaign."

## FPCCI Efforts Have Resulted in Direct Flights & Banking Channel with Kazakhstan

**Tariq Khattak**

KARACHI: Mr. Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI, has informed that FPCCI's sustained efforts; from the platform of its high-profile Pakistan - Kazakhstan Business Council; have been fruitful on various counts:

(i) direct flights have started between Pakistan & Kazakhstan (ii) commercial banking channel has been established between the two countries (iii) land-based cargo services have commenced under TIR.

Shabbir Mansha, VP FPCCI, Shaikat Omeron, VP FPCCI, Mehmood Ul Hassan Awan, Chairman of FPCCI's Pakistan - Kazakhstan Business Council, highlighted that FPCCI has done the pioneering work

through its assistance to both the governments in creating awareness and consultative processes; and, facilitating direct flights, commercial banking channel through a Pakistani bank and employing TIR convention- entailed benefits.

H. E. Yerzhan Kistafin, Ambassador of Kazakhstan in Pakistan, stated that he has been meeting heads of many relevant organizations in Pakistan; like banks, ministries and logistics; to enable both the countries to fully realize their trade potential. Transit trade is another area where both the countries should strive to tap the available potential as it can result in economic development and prosperity for both the countries, he added.

## CCP & ICAP to Hold Specialised training on Competition Law for ICAP Members

**Commerce Desk**

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (ICAP) will jointly have Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes on Competition Law. The Directors' Training Programme under the auspicious of ICAP will also include a Module on Competition Law. The programme is part of the advocacy strategy of CCP and is aimed to strengthen the proficiency of ICAP members in Competition Law.

A delegation from ICAP visited CCP to discuss the potential areas of collaboration. The meeting

was attended by Mr. Salman Amin, Member (OFT, Exemption & Advocacy) CCP, Mr. Shahzad Hussain, DG CCP, Mr. M. Ali Latif, President ICAP, Mr. Arslan Khalid, Vice President ICAP, Mr. Asad Feroze, Vice President ICAP and Mr. Ashfaq Tola, Former President ICAP.

In the meeting, Mr. Salman Amin expressed that the CCP is committed to ensuring a free and fair competitive environment in all spheres of the economy and commercial activities. CCP considers it important also to create awareness on the same. Since ICAP members are serving in different sectors, it is imperative for them to have a better understanding of competition law. The meeting

explored collaboration in areas such as forensic auditing, advanced cost auditing techniques, and addressing deceptive marketing on digital platforms.

It was agreed that as part of the CPD programme, a series of training courses covering specialized modules on Competition Law will be held. Initially, three CPD training modules will be conducted in Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad. The Directors Training Programmes held under the auspicious of ICAP will also include modules on Competition Law. The speakers from CCP will deliver sessions on competition law. These will empower participants with a better understanding of the provisions of competition law on decep-



tive marketing, prohibited agreements, abuse of dominant position, and approval of mergers and exemptions procedures.

# Palestinian official has high hopes following Hangzhou Asiad opening ceremony

Xinhua

GAZA: A Palestinian official spoke highly of the opening ceremony of the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou, hoping it would be "a golden chance" for the Palestinians to strengthen their relations with China.

The eagerly awaited Hangzhou Asian Games kicked off on Saturday, with the opening ceremony drawing global attention. The Games run through October 8.

During the opening ceremony, an unprecedented digital cauldron-lighting ceremony was held, in which millions of torchbearers transformed the digital flames into a digital human figure on the Qiantang River before igniting the cauldron together with swimming Olympic champion Wang Shun, the last of six athletes who relayed the actual flame within the stadium.

"The opening ceremony was very impressive and combined authenticity, history, and technological development in lighting the digital flame," said Mohammed al-Amsi, assistant secretary-general of the Palestinian Olympic Committee.

In an exclusive interview with Xinhua, Al-Amsi said, "The lighting of the flame



and the opening ceremony were extremely successful, establishing a very high level of wonderful and tremendous organization, which comes for the third time after Beijing and Guangzhou."

The official stated that Palestinians "are so proud to be part of such an important international event, which is being

held for the third time in China, a country that strongly embraces Palestine."

"More than 100 Palestinian athletes are now in China, and it would be a golden opportunity for us to strengthen our relations with China, which holds a special status in Palestine," Al-Amsi added.

According to Al-Amsi, over the years, China has provided financial and logistical support to Palestinian sports by adopting sports projects aimed at improving the athletes' skills and developing local stadiums in the Palestinian territories.

Al-Amsi, who had visited China as the head of the Palestinian delegation during the Guangzhou Asian Games in 2010, explained that the warm reception and high spirits with which the Palestinian delegation was met in the sessions organized by China indicate the strength of Palestinian-Chinese relations.

He pointed out that officials in the Palestinian Olympic Committee are continuously in communication with the delegation present in Hangzhou. "There is a significant number of them visiting China for the first time, and they have experienced the level of development, performance, and high organization to which we are accustomed."

Al-Amsi said that the delegation members were "happy to be in the wonderful city of Hangzhou, where they witnessed an unparalleled reception."

Palestinian athletes aspire to win many medals and make a clear mark in this tournament, he said.

## Pak-China Friendly Cricket Match

Sports Desk

LAHORE: On the occasion of the 74th Independence day Pak-China Friendly Cricket Match that took place here at the LCCA Ground on Wednesday and after a good competition, Pak-China Green outplayed Pak-China Red by 9 wickets.

The 1st Pak-China Friendship Cricket Match 2023 marked a new dimension of Sino-Pak relations spanning over 72 years in the backdrop of the return of cricket in Hangzhou Asian Games underway in China. Taking everybody by storm, Pak-China Friendship Cricket Match, that enthused cricketing fans particularly Lahori cricket-lovers, was organized in collaboration with Chinese Consulate Lahore and Institute of International Relations and Media Research (IIRMR). Pak-China Cricket Team Red was captained by Luo Jianxue and Pak-China Cricket Team Green was led by Yasir Habib Khan.

The momentous event was graced by PCB Management Committee Zaka Ashraf as chief guest from the Pakistan side while Chinese Acting Consul General Lahore Cao Ke was chief guest from the Chinese side. Other dignitaries present on the occasion were Lahore



Qalandars owners Atif Rana and Sameen Rana, former cricketers Misbah ul Haq, Nadeem Khan, Junaid Zia, LRCA President Khawaja Nadeem Ahmed, Moazzam Klair, Fakhar Shah, IIRMR Chairman Muhammad Mehdi and President Yasir Habib Khan, Vice President Muhammad Faisal, PCJCCI President Moazzam Ghurki and Secretary General Salahuddin and others.

Speaking on the occasion, PCB Management Committee Chairman Zaka Ashraf said that this is a great initiative taken by Institute of International Relations and Media Research (IIRMR) to engage the Chinese nationals

in a healthy cricket event. "Chinese have started taking keen interest in cricket and we are ready to provide every facility their national cricket team needs.

Chinese Acting Consul General Lahore Cao Ke in his speech said that one of the unique aspects that unites China and Pakistan is our shared love for cricket. "Let's wish the Pakistan cricket team to be the final winner of Asian Games," he added.

"While as we all know, though there's a 3 billion population in the world who are fans of this sport, cricket is not traditionally associated with China, but we know the passion for this sport runs deeply in

Pakistan's culture, we want cricket to be a bridge between our people. Just as Pakistanis play table tennis and Chinese play cricket, this newfound bond is a beautiful illustration of how sports can transcend borders and bring our people and our heart together," he added.

Moreover, in order to provide the best possible conditions for cricketers in Asian Games, China developed brand new cricket infrastructure. For example, the organizer of Hangzhou Asian Games looked around all over China to find the perfect soil for the cricket playing field. It's clear that China is committed to not only welcoming the sport back to the show but also offering best opportunities for international teams to play and grow.

He said that let us celebrate China's National Day and the ongoing Asian Games, let us also celebrate the enduring friendship between Pakistan and China.

IIRMR Chairman Muhammad Mehdi said that institute of International Relations and Media Research (IIRMR) is dedicated to bolster Pak-China relations and 1st Pak-China friendly Cricket match has tugged the strings of all hearts infused by new flavor of congenial delicacy between both brethren countries.

## Pakistan team steps foot in India for ICC World Cup 2023

Sports Desk

HYDERABAD: Pakistan men's cricket team landed in India on Wednesday evening to participate in the ICC World Cup 2023, which will be played from October 5 to November 19.

Upon their arrival here, the Pakistan contingent, consisting of 18 players and 13-player support personnel, will be commuted to the team hotel under tight security. The Green Shirts departed from Lahore airport in the wee hours on Wednesday and after a brief layover in Dubai, reached here, where they will take on New Zealand in their first ICC World Cup 2023 warm-up fixture on Friday, which will be played behind closed doors due to security concerns.

Pakistan will then take on Australia on October 3rd in their second warm-up fixture before kicking off their World Cup campaign against the Netherlands on October 6.

For the unversed, Pakistan cricket team players and officials received their Indian



visas for the ICC World Cup 2023, after experiencing a lengthy delay.

This delay prompted the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) to record its protest by writing a letter to the International Cricket Council (ICC).

According to the details, the PCB sent a stern letter to the cricket governing body

and raised concerns over the ongoing visa debacle and reminded the regulatory body about the Host-Member agreement.

Pakistan squad for ICC World Cup 2023

Babar Azam (c), Abdullah Shafique, Fakhar Zaman, Imam-ul-Haq, Iftikhar Ahmed, Mohammad Rizwan (wk),

Shadab Khan, Mohammad Nawaz, Usama Mir, Harris Rauf, M Wasim Jnr, Hasan Ali, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Saud Shakeel, Salman Ali Agha.

Travelling reserves: Mohammad Haris, Abrar Ahmed, Zaman Khan

**Pakistan's warm-up matches schedule:**

September 29 — vs New Zealand in Hyderabad

October 3 — vs Australia in Hyderabad

Pakistan's schedule for the ICC World Cup 2023:

October 6 — vs Netherlands in Hyderabad

October 10 — vs Sri Lanka in Hyderabad

October 14 — vs India in Ahmedabad

October 20 — vs Australia in Bengaluru

October 23 — vs Afghanistan in Chennai

October 27 — vs South Africa in Chennai

October 31 — vs Bangladesh in Kolkata

November 4 — vs New Zealand Bengaluru (Day match)

November 11 — vs England in Kolkata

The day matches will start at 10:00 am Pakistan Standard Time (PST) while all other matches will be day-night fixtures, starting at 01:30 pm (PST).

## Two matches decided in A. S. Natural Stone U-16 Inter Zonal Cricket



Sports Desk

KARACHI: Two matches decided on the first day of 2nd Phase of RCA Karachi Talent Hunt Programme A. S. Natural Stone Under-16 Inter Zonal Cricket Tournament at various cricket grounds.

The Tournament is being organized by the Regional Cricket Association Karachi Sponsored by A. S. Natural Stone.

Summarized Scores:

Zone-I Whites beat Zone-III Blues by 9 Wickets at Young Fighter Ground. Zone-III Whites 59 all out in 21.3 overs. Ahmed Ameen 15, Danish Khan (lmf) 3/18, Hussain Haider (lcm) 2/4, Sufyan Haider (sla) 2/10.

Zone-I Whites 59/1 in 9.1 overs. Muhammad Ali 18 not out, Zargham Mehmood 14 not out.

Zone-VII Blues beat Zone-V Whites by 8 Wickets at Landhi Gymkhana Ground. Zone-V Whites 48 all out in 17 overs. Najab Ali 10, Muhammad Razi (rlb) 4/15, Rehan Khan (mf) 2/16.

Zone-VII Blues 60/2 in 9 overs. Riaz Ahmed 21, Wajeh Ullah 16 not out, Najab Ali 2/16.

Fixture Thursday 28th September.

1) Zone-III Whites vs Zone-I Blues at Young Fighter Ground.  
2) Zone-IV Blues vs Zone-V Blues at Landhi Gymkhana Ground.

## Pakistan reach SAFF U19 Championship semi-final with Maldives stalemate



A Sports

KATHMANDU: Pakistan edged Bhutan 6-5 on the penalty shoot-out at the Dashrath Rangasala Stadium to qualify for the SAFF U19 Championship 2023 final after their nailbiting semi-final finished goalless at the end of extra time.

Pakistan's goalkeeper Sahil Gul's sensational save in the penalty shoot-out propelled the green shirts to clinch a narrow 6-5 victory over spirited Bhutan.

Pakistan will now lock horns with arch-rivals India in the final of the ongoing SAFF U19 Championship 2023 on Saturday at the same venue.

Pakistan booked their spot in the final four of the ongoing tournament by holding Maldives for a 1-1 stalemate.

The Green Shirts started their second SAFF U19 Championship 2023 fixture on a high as they dominated the possession for a notable period but failed to convert into a goal.

Pakistan's error in conversion allowed the Maldives to capitalize on the situation and they successfully netted the opener in the 39th minute, courtesy of a brilliant outside-of-the-box finish.

Maldives went into the break with a 1-0 lead over Pakistan.

In the second half, Pakistan made numerous efforts but were denied the equalizer by the strong Maldives defence.

Pakistan, however, finally got luck in their favour when Shah Jahan netted the equalizer late into the game before pulling off an animated celebration.

Pakistan scripted a triumphant start to their SAFF U19 Championship 2023 campaign with a thrilling 1-0 victory over hosts Nepal.

Pakistan and Nepal went hard at each other in their SAFF U19 Championship fixture and showcased thrilling skills and tenacity before the former prevailed.

With a thrilling victory over Nepal, Pakistan ended a 12-year-long victory drought in an international match.

Pakistan's U19 team last secured a victory on the international stage in 2011, when they defeated India's U19 team.

The ongoing SAFF U19 Championship 2023 is being held at the Dashrath Stadium here from September 21 to 30.

For the unversed, this is the fifth edition of the SAFF U19 Championship, a highly competitive international football tournament for men's under-19 national sides, organised by the SAFF.

India are the defending champions, having won their second title in 2022 by defeating Bangladesh in the final.

**Pakistan Squad for SAFF U19 Championship 2023**

Goalkeepers: Sahil Gul, Mohsin Khan and Muhammad Abdullah

Defenders: Muhammad Sadam, Muhammad Adeel, Asad Nasir, Ans Amin, Khurshid Alam, Muhammad Raheel, Shayan Ali, Kamil Ahmad Khan, Abid Ali, Hannan Naveed and Najeeb Ullah

Midfielders: Ali Zafar, Muhammad Azan and Awais Khan

## Australia end losing streak with consolation win over India

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Glenn Maxwell returned career-best figures of 4-40 to end Australia's five-match losing streak with a consolation 66-run win over India in the third one-day international on Wednesday.

Mitchell Marsh led the batting onslaught with his 96 as Australia posted 352-7, a total their bowlers defended by bowling out India for 286 in Rajkot.

The hosts took the three-match series 2-1 but Australia finish on a high ahead of the ODI World Cup starting Octo-

ber 5 in India.

Maxwell, who returned to the team alongside Mitchell Starc after the two players recovered from their injuries, scored just five with the bat but made an impact with his impressive off-spin.

Glenn Maxwell got the first three wickets including skipper Rohit Sharma, for 81, and star batsman Virat Kohli, for 56, after a brisk start by India.

Rohit raised his fifty in 31 balls and seemed to have the chase in control but Maxwell got the captain with a stunning caught and bowled in his

second over.

He then sent back Kohli soon after the former captain's 66th ODI fifty and, despite a fighting 48 by Shreyas Iyer, the Indian batting folded in 49.4 overs.

Pace bowler Josh Hazlewood took two wickets as Australia ended the losing streak which started in South Africa earlier this month.

Batsmen set up victory after Marsh tore into the Indian bowlers in attacking partnerships that included a second-wicket stand of 137 with Steve Smith, who hit 74.

The top four batsmen stood

out with Marsh, David Warner (56), Smith and Marnus Labuschagne (72) all contributing to a mammoth total that looked like going beyond 400 before India hit back.

Indian pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah took three wickets while left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav took two.

Marsh took on Bumrah with three boundaries and a six in the paceman's first two overs and the left-handed Warner soon joined in the charge.

Warner hammered Prasad Krishna for three fours and a six in the seventh over and raced to



his fifty in 32 balls in the next with another hit over the fence.

Marsh reached his half-ton in 45 balls but was denied a century when he casually slipped Kuldeep straight to cover. His 84-ball knock included 13 fours and three sixes.

Smith, Alex Carey and Maxwell fell at regular intervals, slowing the tourists down before Labuschagne took control until he was undone by Bumrah's slower ball in the penultimate over.

The two teams now head into the World Cup warm-ups before they meet in the 50-over show-piece tournament on October 8 in Chennai.