

# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ سے بھائیوں سے ملنے سے پہلے کیا کہہ کر بن عباس نے خبر دی، انہیں ابو حنیفہ نے، انہیں ابو صالح نے، انہیں ابو ہریرہ نے، اللہ عز و جل سے ہی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا اور قیامت ان دو کی طرف سے ہی ہے۔ آپ کی مراد اور انہیوں سے ہی ہے۔ ابو ہریرہ نے عیاش کے ساتھ اس حدیث کو اسرائیل سے بھی ابو حنیفہ سے روایت کیا ہے۔

Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited



## PM condemns terrorist attack on labourers in Turbat, grieved over loss of lives

Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Saturday while condemning the heinous terrorist attack on labourers in Turbat, expressed his deep grief over the loss of lives. He also conveyed his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families.

DAYS REMAINING

16

## Only 16 days left for illegal immigrants to leave Pakistan

Foreign citizens residing illegally in Pakistan now have only 16 days to leave the country or face deportation. Foreigners living illegally must leave Pakistan by October 31 or law enforcement agencies will ensure their arrest and deportation. In the recent meeting of the Apex Committee of the National Action Plan, it had been decided to take strict action against the illegal immigrants living in Pakistan and the trade and properties of illegal immigrants

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## We stand with Palestine

ISLAMABAD: Young girls participate in a rally while thousands of people protest across the country against Israel's siege and fierce bombing on the Gaza Strip in retaliation to Hamas attacks.



## Security forces kill six terrorists in North Waziristan

Adam Khan Wazir

NORTH WAZIRISTAN: On 14 October 2023, security forces conducted an intelligence based operation in general area Mir Ali, North Waziristan District on reported presence of terrorists.

During the conduct of operation, intense fire exchange took place between own troops and terrorists as a result of which six terrorists were sent to hell, while eight terrorists got injured.

Weapons and ammunition were also recovered from killed terrorists who remained actively involved in terrorist activities against security forces and target killing of innocent civilians.

However, during intense exchange of fire, Sepoy Abdul Hakem (age 33 years, resi-



dent of District Naseerabad) having fought gallantly, embraced Shahadat.

Sanitization of the area is being carried out to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area. Locals of the area appreciated the operation and expressed their full support to eliminate the menace of terrorism.

## Information Minister Solangi calls on CM Punjab



Bureau Report

LAHORE: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi met Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi here on Saturday.

Matters pertaining to mutual interest, resolution of media industry problems and steps being taken for the well-being of journalists were discussed during the meeting, said a handout issued here on Saturday.

CM Naqvi said that an endowment fund to the tune of Rs 1 billion had been established for welfare of journalists community for the first time. "We are also endeavour-

ing to solve other problems being faced by the journalists community," he added.

Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Murtaza Solangi lauded the steps being taken for the completion of public welfare projects under the able leadership of CM Mohsin Naqvi. Murtaza Solangi remarked that CM Mohsin Naqvi is spending day and night in order to provide maximum relief to the people. "Mo-hsin Speed" is proving to be beneficial in the completion of public welfare projects.

Provincial Information Minister Amir Mir and Secretary Information Ali Nawaz Malik were also present on the occasion.

## Pakistan's Karakoram Highway poised for a world-class: PM

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: In a historic collaboration to reshape the landscape of international trade and connectivity, Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar is all set to visit China and this momentous occasion is teeming with promise for the future of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and, in particular, the dramatic acceleration of the Thakot-Raikot section of Karakoram Highway.

As Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar prepares for his significant visit to China, the Karakoram Highway looms as a prominent highlight of this historic partnership. It signifies more than just a road; it's a symbol of friendship, cooperation, and a shared vision for a brighter, more interconnected future. The Karakoram Highway is indeed poised to become a world-class marvel, ensuring top-notch travel throughout the Karakoram Highway and the broader CPEC

network. The Thakot-Raikot section, a linchpin in the Karakoram Highway (KKH), is on the brink of a substantial transformation that will have far-reaching implications on mutual connectivity.

This crucial route, linking Thakot and Raikot, holds a central role within the broader KKH and the expansive CPEC infrastructure network, forging an indispensable link between Pakistan and China's burgeoning trade and commerce sphere.

The Karakoram Highway, affectionately known as the Friendship Highway in China, stands as an enduring testament to the profound partnership between Pakistan and the People's Republic of China. Spanning an awe-inspiring 1,300 kilometers, with 806 kilometers traversing Pakistan's majestic landscapes, it was a remarkable feat of engineering that took 16 years to construct, from 1962 to 1978.

Fast forward to 2005, Paki-



stan and China embarked on an ambitious journey to upgrade this iconic highway. The completion of Phase-1 of the Karakoram Highway upgrade, from Raikot to Khunjerab, a staggering 335 kilometers in length, in November 2013 marked a significant milestone in its transformation.

The launch of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in 2013 breathed new life into the vision for the Karakoram Highway.

It ceased to be just a road; it was poised for a comprehensive makeover into a world-class thoroughfare, characterized by heightened safety standards, improved road geometry, and a myriad of modern features.

This revitalized KKH introduced significant improvements, including tunnels, high-level bridges, stable slopes, and bypasses around congested towns. These enhancements aligned it with inter-

national road standards, providing travelers with a safe and extraordinary journey through the heart of the mountains, extending from Mansehra to Thakot.

The second phase of CPEC witnessed the transformation of the E-35 section from Havelian to Thakot, covering roughly 120 kilometers. This redevelopment introduced a motorway section that links Havelian to Mansehra, streamlining travel and serving as an emblem of both nations' commitment to efficient transportation infrastructure.

The continuous development of the Karakoram Highway symbolizes the enduring bond between Pakistan and China, epitomizing their shared commitment to cooperation, development, and prosperity. This iconic road, a testament to the unwavering friendship between the two nations, opens up new horizons for travelers, cargo transporters, and economic development.

## More than 600 children killed in Gaza: health ministry

Agencies

GAZA: Israeli strikes on Gaza since Hamas's deadly cross-border attack have killed at least 1,900 people, including 614 children, the territory's health ministry said Friday.

Some 370 women were among those killed in the seven days of air strikes, the Hamas-run health ministry said. It added that 7,696 people have been wounded. "Where to go?" asked Umm Hossam, 29, who was among the thousands fleeing.

"How long will the strikes and death last? We have no homes left, every area of Gaza is under threat," said the 29-year-old, her face streaked with tears.

Hamas took about 150 Israeli, foreign and dual



national hostages back to Gaza in the initial attack, Israel has said.

Thousands of Palestinians fled to southern Gaza in search of refuge on Friday after Israel called for over a million of them to evacuate the north of the blockaded enclave before an expected ground offensive.

It comes amid continued strikes on the strip in retaliation for a surprise weekend attack by Hamas, the deadliest in Israel's history.

Saudi Arabia on Friday denounced the displacement of Palestinians from Gaza and attacks on "defenceless civilians," its

strongest language criticizing Israel since the war broke out.

Riyadh "affirms its categorical rejection of calls for the forced displacement of the Palestinian people from Gaza, and its condemnation of the continued targeting of defenceless civilians there," the foreign ministry said in a statement.

Tensions have risen across the Middle East and beyond, with angry protests in support of the Palestinians, while Israel faces the threat of a separate confrontation with Hezbollah in Lebanon.

A Reuters video journalist was killed and six other reporters — from AFP, Reuters and Al Jazeera — were injured in southern Lebanon close to Israel, caught up in cross-border shelling.

## At UN, Russia calls for ceasefire in Israeli-Palestinian conflict, 'unimpeded' aid to besieged Gaza

News Desk

UNITED NATIONS: Russia has proposed a draft UN Security Council resolution on the Israel-Palestinian conflict that calls for a ceasefire, and an "unimpeded" provision and distribution of humanitarian assistance to embattled Gaza.

The draft, which was circulated on Friday evening at a closed-door meeting of the 15-member Council on the conflict, also condemns violence against civilians and all acts of terrorism, according to a draft.

The move comes after several countries urged Israel to hold off attacking northern Gaza, where more than a million civilians largely defied an Israeli order to evacuate before



its occupation forces carry out their announced plans to completely destroy the Hamas movement. Diplomats emerging from the meeting declined comments on draft resolution, saying they have to study it closely and would respond by Saturday afternoon. But experts see very little chance of its adoption by the Council, as the United States, Israel's closest ally, has declared its opposition to any call for a ceasefire and demanded that the Council explicitly condemn Hamas, which is not mentioned in the text. The one-page draft reso-

lution strongly condemns all violence and acts of terrorism, "in particular the resulting heavy civilian casualties; and emphasizing that the Israeli and Palestinian civilian population must be protected". It states that a "lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can only be achieved by peaceful means" on the basis of UN resolutions.

The text also calls for the secure release of all hostages. Russia's UN Ambassador Vasily Nebenzya told reporters after the meeting that the escalation of the situation on the ground was extremely worrying and appalling, warning that the region is on the brink of a full-scale war and unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe.

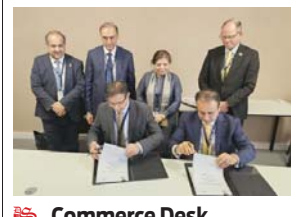
## FM Jilani, UAE FM Sheikh Abdullah discuss escalating situation in Gaza



City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani and Foreign Minister of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed on Saturday discussed the escalating situation in Gaza, Palestine and the urgent need for cessation of hostilities and protection of civilians. During a telephonic conversation, they also stressed upon the coordinated response. The caretaker foreign minister posted on X, "Received a call from HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed, Foreign Minister of UAE. We discussed escalating situation in Gaza, the urgent need for cessation of hostilities and protection of civilians. A coordinated response was emphasised."

## CEO BGM meets Finance Minister



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Chief Executive Officer of Global Growth & Opportunity Division, Bill & Melinda Gates (BMG) Foundation, Mr. Mark Suzman, met the Caretaker Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar. The meeting was held on the sidelines of annual meeting of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), said a press release issued by the Ministry of Finance. Building on previous discussions in Pakistan, the meeting centered on Pakistan Digital Stack like next generation of Raast supported Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) which Pakistan can introduce with BMG Foundation's help.

## Called on

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister for Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussein Mullick called on Ambassador of Palestine H.E. Ahmed Rabei on Saturday.



Photo: PID

## Saudi Vision 2030: Saudi Arabia urged to intake 1mn Pakistanis annually

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Overseas Pakistanis Jawad Sohrab Malik held a meeting with Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) to partake in the emerging manpower opportunities for the Saudi Vision 2030.

During the meeting, the special assistant requested Saudi Arabia to employ a significant number of workforce from Pakistan for the completion of the Saudi Vision 2030.

"Currently, about 5 million Pakistanis proceed to Saudi Arabia annually. There is a real prospect of this figure rising to over 1 million," he continued. According to him, this mix of skilled, semi-skilled, and



unskilled manpower from Pakistan has enabled Saudi Arabia to meet its diverse workforce needs effectively.

Malik underlined Pakistan's capacity to provide over 1 million persons having varied skills to be

employed under the job opportunities created by Saudi Vision 2030, according to which the Saudi economy is diversifying and embracing further areas.

He apprised the Saudis of how our government is building

a skilled Labour Force Pool in order to tap the huge potential of our bulging youth in areas of digitization, services, and tourism.

The Saudi Ambassador expressed support for the

proposal forwarded by Jawad Sohrab Malik on enhancing the share of Pakistan's manpower resources.

Appreciating the dynamism and visionary leadership of the Kingdom, Jawad Sohrab Malik expressed his gratitude to His Royal Highness, the Crown Prince, Muhammad Bin Salman for extending his consistent and resolute support for Pakistan on various economic, strategic and bilateral issues.

Both sides agreed to launch further deliberations on the prospects of new employment opportunities for Pakistanis in KSA through a forthcoming meeting of SAPM on OP&HRD, Jawad Sohrab Malik, scheduled to be held in Saudi Arabia with the Labour Minister and other high-ranking officials of the Kingdom.

## Arab states say Palestinians must stay on their land

## News Desk

AMMAN/BEIRUT: Calls for a humanitarian corridor or an escape route for Palestinians from Gaza as a conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas has escalated have drawn a blunt reaction from Arab neighbours.

Egypt, the only Arab state to share a border with Gaza, and Jordan, which is next to the Israeli-occupied West Bank, have both warned against Palestinians being forced off their land.

It reflects deep-rooted

Arab fears that Israel's latest war with Hamas in Gaza could spark a new wave of permanent displacement from land where Palestinians want to build a future state.

"This is the cause of all causes, the cause of all Arabs," Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi said on Thursday. "It is important that the (Palestinian) people remain steadfast and present on their land."

For Palestinians, the idea of leaving or being forced out of land where they want to forge a state carries echoes of the "Nakba", or "catastrophe",



when many Palestinians fled their homes during the 1948 war that accompanied Israel's creation.

Some 700,000 Palestinians, half the Arab population

of what was British-ruled Palestine, fled or were driven from their homes, many spilling into neighbouring Arab states where they or many of their descendants

remain. Many still live in refugee camps.

Israel contests the assertion it drove Palestinians out, pointing out it was attacked by five Arab states the day after its creation.

Since Israel launched its intense bombardment of Gaza after a devastating attack by Hamas militants on Oct. 7, hundreds of thousands of Gaza's 2.3 million residents have fled their homes, while still staying inside Gaza, a small, slither of land wedged between Israel, Egypt and the Mediterranean Sea.

## Israel readies next stage of operations, as Palestinian death toll nears 2,300

## Reuters/AFP

JERUSALEM: The Israeli military said on Saturday it had seen a "significant movement" south of Palestinian civilians, a day after ordering Gaza City residents to flee, as Israel's prime minister promised further retaliation for Hamas' rampage last week.

Palestinian health ministry said at least 2,269 Palestinians had been killed and 9,814 others wounded due to Israeli attacks in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The death toll included 2,215 dead from Gaza with 8,714 injured. The other 54 dead and 1,100 wounded were from the West Bank, the report added.

U. S. President Joe Biden said consultations were under way with regional governments on the humanitarian crisis in Gaza as trapped Palestinians endured a power blackout and shortages of food and water amid fierce Israeli bombing.



Israel has vowed to annihilate Hamas for the attack a week ago, in which its fighters killed 1,300 Israelis, mainly civilians, and seized scores of hostages.

Israel has since put the Hamas-run Gaza Strip, home to 2.3 million Palestinians, under a total siege and bombarded it with unprecedented air strikes. Gaza authorities say 1,900 people have died.

On Friday, more than a million residents of northern Gaza had received a notice from Israel to flee south within 24 hours, a deadline that expired at 5 a.m. (0200 GMT).

"We have seen a significant move-

ment of Palestinian civilians towards the south," Israeli military spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Conricus told a video briefing early on Saturday.

He did not mention the deadline and did not take questions.

"Around the Gaza Strip, Israeli reserve soldiers in formation (are) getting ready for the next stage of operations," he added.

"They are all around the Gaza Strip, in the north, in the centre and in the south, and they are preparing themselves for whatever target they get, whatever task."

"The end state of this war is that we will dismantle Hamas and its military capability and fundamentally change the situation so that Hamas never again has the ability to inflict any damage on Israeli civilians or soldiers."

Hamas vowed to fight to the last drop of blood and told residents to stay.

The Israeli military said on Friday tank-backed troops had mounted raids to hit Palestinian rocket crews and gather information on the location of hostages, the first official account of ground troops in Gaza since the crisis began.

An Israeli drone killed a number of militants who tried to infiltrate Israel from Lebanon, it added on Saturday.

"We are striking our enemies with unprecedented might," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a rare statement televised after the Jewish Sabbath began on Friday. "I emphasise that this is only the beginning."

Tens of thousands of Palestinians were estimated to have headed south from northern Gaza after the Israeli order, according to the United Nations, which said more than 400,000 Palestinians had been internally displaced due to hostilities before the directive.

## Mushaal condemns Israel bloodbath, genocide of Palestinians

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussain Mallick strongly condemned the bloodbath and genocide of Palestinians by the fascist and criminal Israeli forces.

The SAPM on HR and Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussain Mallick wife of Kashmiri Jailed Hurriyat Leader Mohammad Yasin Malik on Saturday called on Ambassador of Palestine in Pakistan Ambassador Rabaie Ahmed to express solidarity with the Palestinian people in this testing time.

She condemned in the strongest terms the unabated Israel's atrocities, oppression and siege of the Gaza Strip, resulting in a grave humanitarian tragedy.

The SAPM said that people of

Pakistan and Kashmir expressed their unwavering support for the people of Palestine. "We demand an immediate cessation of indiscriminate bombings, immediate lifting of siege in Gaza, and an adherence to International laws and Geneva conventions in order to ensure protection of civilians especially in conflict zones."

She also called upon international community to acknowledge the critical human rights violation in Gaza and advocate for the establishment of an immediate Humanitarian Corridor to ensure essential medical and food supplies to reach those in dire need in Gaza, emphasising the importance of global intervention and collaboration in reaching an immediate ceasefire and last solution to the Palestinian issue as per the already agreed formula of two state solution.

## World Bank loan for flood relief not in jeopardy, says Pakistan

## Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives on Saturday asserted that the World Bank loan amounting to \$400 million for flood relief in Pakistan is not in jeopardy and that pledges made by donors exceed the requirement.

In a statement issued today, the planning ministry clarified that as per the financing agreement agreed in the 4RF (Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Framework), the external financing required is US\$8.15 billion for three years.

The Ministry of Planning Development & Special Initiatives (PDSI) of Pakistan has issued a statement informing the public that the World Bank loan amounting to US\$400 million for flood relief is not in jeopardy and that pledges made by donors exceed the requirement.

Against that requirement, Pakistan has successfully obtained pledges worth \$10.9 billion, which is US\$2.70 billion in excess of the requirement, the statement added.

The ministry further stated that it has so far approved 13 projects from CDWP/ECNEC worth \$3 billion, which is way ahead of the yearly target. Moreover, project identification against committed projects commitments by the donors is complete.

"The PDSI is committed to the timely and effective implementation of the 4RF to ensure that the flood-affected people are rehabilitated and reconstructed as early as possible," read the statement.

The ministry claimed it has also established a robust mechanism for the implementation and monitoring of the 4RF.

In addition to this, a dashboard has also been prepared for the flood-related projects in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) that will be functional by the end of this month and will provide real-time information on the progress and implementation of the projects.

"It will ensure transparency by making physical and financial progress accessible to all stakeholders," said the planning ministry.

## Senior army officers inducted into NAB to deal with high workload

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: As many as four senior army officers were inducted in the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to deal with the added workload of anti-graft watchdog.

According to a notification issued by the Establishment Division, Brig Mohammad Khalid (Infantry) has been appointed as director (BS-20), Lt Col Nadeem Muzaffar (Intelligence Staff College) has been made additional director (BS-19), Maj Waleed Khalid (Military Intelligence) as a deputy director (BS-18) and Maj Qais Kamran Syed (MI) as a deputy director (BS-18) on secondment basis.

All these serving army officers will remain in NAB till further orders, said the notification.

According to reports, more army



officers will be inducted in the NAB in the days to come.

More than 1,800 cases were reopened after the Supreme Court struck down the amendments made by the previous PDM government to the NAB laws.

The NAB was facing difficulty in dealing with the added workload as more than 30 senior NAB officers were sent back to their parent departments by the PDM government after clipping the powers of the anti-graft watchdog.

## Repatriation of undocumented Afghan nationals to their homeland continues

## City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The repatriation of undocumented Afghan nationals to their homeland from different parts of Pakistan continues.

According to the Afghan Commissionerate, more than fifty families consisting of seventeen trucks have been sent back to Afghanistan at Torkham border.

The Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees has made appropriate arrangements at Torkham border



to facilitate the repatriation of illegal Afghan nationals.

During the last eight days more than six hundred Afghan families have been repatriated to their native land Afghanistan via Pak-Afghan border at Torkham.

# President says Kashmiris in UK keep Kashmir issue alive at international level

**Bureau Report**

ISLAMABAD: President Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry has said that Kashmiris settled in the UK have always kept the Kashmir issue alive at the international level.

He expressed these views while talking to British MP of Kashmiri origin Mirza Khalid Mahmood, who called on him here today.

Speaking on the occasion, Barrister Chaudhry said that in view of the worsening situation in the Indian occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir there was a dire need to raise the issue of Kashmir vociferously at the international level.

He said that the political and human rights situation in the region has deteri-



ated since 5th August 2019. "India has crossed all the limits of barbarism and

brutality in Occupied Kashmir", he said.

He, however, maintained that India cannot suppress the freedom spirit of the Kashmiri people by the dint of force. He said that it was high time that the Kashmiri expatriate community should come forward in a big way to expose the war crimes being committed by the Indian occupation forces against Kashmiris.

Referring to the BJP's track record of using communal divide as a tool to strengthen its vote bank, the president said that as the date for the next general election in India was getting nearer there was a fear of escalating violence and bloodshed in Kashmir.

The AJK President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry also appreciated Mr. Mahmood for his selfless service and struggle for the Kashmir cause.

## Former VC of Home Economics University, Lahore to mark International Teachers' Day



**News Desk**

ISLAMABAD: In order to pay tribute to the teachers on the International Teachers' Day, a grand ceremony was organized in the main Campus Township of the University of Education, Lahore on October 12, 2023. The chief guest of the ceremony was Former Vice Chancellor of Home Economics University, Lahore and renowned Educationist Prof. Dr. Kanwal Amin (T. I.) while Vice Chancellor University of Education, Lahore Prof. Dr. Talat Naseer Pasha (H. I., S. I.) presided over the program. Director Division of Education Prof. Dr. Ayaz Muhammad Khan, Principals/Directors and a large number of students were also present on this occasion.

Addressing the ceremony, the Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Talat Naseer Pasha (H. I., S. I.) said that no doubt, teachers are the nation builders, so teachers should be respectable at all levels. And the purpose of celebrating this day is also to recognize the constructive role of teachers in the society. Teachers are the most important component of our society, as they determine the future of the society. The role of teachers and their importance in the betterment of the society cannot be neglected in any way. On this occasion, former Vice Chancellor of Home Economics University and Educationist Professor Dr. Kanwal Amin (T. I.) said that although no one can deny the greatness and importance of teachers but it is also important for a teacher to pay the right to this distinction by words and actions because the teacher is not only for the students but also the ideal figure for the entire society.

## Huge crowds voice solidarity with Palestine in Attock

**Raza Naqvi**

ATTOCK: Scores of protesters belongs to different walks of life packed the Kutcheri chowk in Attock to express solidarity with the people of Palestine, voice Israel's atrocities against them and the illegal occupation of their areas on Friday. Waving Palestinian flags, and chanting slogans "Labaik ya Aqsa", and "Down with Israel", the marchers rallied at different roads road and concluded at Kutcheri chowk where local leaders from different religious and political parties have addressed the participants. The rally was attended by people from all walks of life; students, activists, traders, lawyers and workers all marched together demanding an end to the illegal occupation of Palestine. The speakers also drew the attention of the world community towards grave human rights violations and barbaric attacks against innocent Palestinians by the Israeli forces.

The Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) and Jamaat Islami separately organized two different rallies to express solidarity with besieged people of Palestine in Gaza, facing aerial attacks from Israeli forces. The JUI-F local leaders while addressing the participants of the rally at Kutcheri chowk criticized the US and European countries for supporting Israel in its oppression of Palestinians.

While in his address to the participants of the rally, JI General Secretary North Punjab Iqbal Khan demanded that Muslim countries should come together for the Palestinian cause. They said that the United States had sent its naval fleet for defence of Israel, saying that Muslim countries should extend more diplomatic and political support to Palestine.

## Biometric system of revenue in Multan to be implemented: Commissioner

**Kiran Asim**

MULTAN: Commissioner Multan Division Engineer Aamir Khattak while directing the implementation of biometric system in the offices said that the biometric system will be linked to the account department and the salary will be released.



He directed to stabilize the revenue system and said that Patwari diary should be prepared and sent to the concerned assistant commissioner from the DC office and the daily station report should be sent to the commissioner office. Commissioner Aamir Khattak gave a warning and said that if any Patwari or concerned officer is unable to report the incident, departmental action will be taken against him. In case of any emergency, it will be notified in addition to the application form. He said that the revenue officers should fulfill their primary responsibility.

Don't ignore revenue matters that are entangled in other tasks. The improvement of revenue matters will not only help in achieving the tax goals but also in identifying and solving the grass root level problems, citizens' demand, policy making and correct, systematic and fast information system can be restored. A formal notification in this regard has also been issued by the Commissioner's Office. Later, Commissioner Aamir Khattak was briefed on anti-smog, dengue, and anti-trading. Additional Commissioner Abdul Jabbar, Arshad Gopang, concerned officers while Deputy Commissioners were present on the video link.

## Aamir Khattak visited Nishtar Hospital and reviewed the construction work

**Quratul Ain Asim**

MULTAN: He said that the Punjab government is providing funds to the health sector on a priority basis. go The construction work should be completed soon and facilities should be provided to the patients and relatives. Axion Building Hyder Ali while giving a briefing said that the upgradation of Nishtar will cost 936.56 million rupees. Ward No. 4, 13, 17, 20, 26, 12 are being upgraded.

Upgradation of M&R Department, Physiotherapy Department is also in progress. Upgradation of Nishtar Hospital will be completed by January 31, 2024. Vice Chancellor Nishtar University Professor Dr. Rana Altaf said that dengue patients have been admitted in ward number 27. At present, the capacity of 50. I have 30 patients under treatment. 4 beds have been allocated for dengue patients in intensive care unit. Director Development Rubina Kausar, Assistant Commissioner City Simal Mushtaq MS Nishtar Hospital Dr. Rao Amjad, Dr. Ali Mehdi and other officers were also present.

## Solidarity with Palestinians

RAWALPINDI: People are shouting slogans during protest rally to show solidarity with the oppressed Muslims of the Palestine, in City.



Photo: Online

## PM AJK lauds OIC for support of Kashmiris' just struggle

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

ISLAMABAD: While appreciating the OIC's continued support for the Kashmiris' just struggle, Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq has said that given the precarious situation in the restive region there was an urgent need that the member states of the organization (OIC) should come forward in a big way to help resolve the Kashmir dispute peacefully in accordance with the UNSC resolutions.

The PM Haq made these assertions while talking to OIC's special envoy on Kashmir, Ambassador Yousef M. Al-Dobeay, who called on him here today.

Terming unresolved Kashmir dispute as the main cause and consequence of bloodshed and violence in the region, the AJK premier said that the Muslim body, which has stood by the Kashmiris through every thick and thin, should use its political and diplomatic clout to seek an early settlement of the lingering dispute.

The PM said that the Muslim body's consistent support to Kashmiris' legit-



imate struggle has been a source of great strength for the people of Kashmir.

Praising the OIC for adopting a bold stance on the issue of Kashmir after India revoked the special status of Kashmir on August 5 2019, the

PM said that the Muslim body should galvanize world support in favour of the Kashmiri people and mount pressure on India to reverse the unilateral steps it had taken on Kashmir on and after 5th August 2019.

The Prime Minister said that the

time had come that the OIC countries should review their economic relations with India.

He said that it was incumbent upon the international community, especially the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), to play its due role to stop the ongoing Indian atrocities in Occupied Kashmir and resolve the lingering dispute peacefully in line with the United Nations resolutions.

On this occasion, Ambassador Yousef M. Al-Dobeay, the special representative of the Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) while reiterating the OIC's principled stance on the issue of Kashmir said that the OIC strongly supports the right of self-determination of the Kashmiri people and would continue to support Kashmiris in the future.

Ambassador Hasan Ali Hasan, Director of Legal Affairs of the Islamic Cooperation Organization, Bilal Akram Shah, Rida Zahra, Biruddin Gamaruddin and government ministers including Chaudhry Qasim Majeed and Chaudhry Yasir Sultan were present at the meeting.

## Labaik Ya Aqsa March to protest Israeli aggression on Gaza

**Quratul Ain Asim**

MULTAN: Labaik Ya Aqsa March was organized by Tehreek Labaik Pakistan Multan. The march was taken out from Daulat Gate to Chowk Kacheri. Rizvi said that the oppressed Muslims of Gaza are being brutally killed, the occupying Israel has crossed all limits of inhumanity, Muslim countries should go ahead and rein in Israel and release the supplies of medicines, food and water to Gaza. Maulana Qari Muhammad Younas Qadri said that Israel is the biggest terrorist group whose

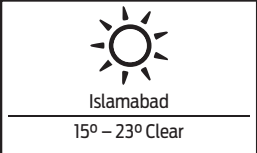


brutality the whole world has seen, bombing the oppressed citizens of Gaza and using phosphorous bombs is a serious war crime.

Muslim countries must go ahead and stop Israeli terrorism. On this occasion, Divisional Nazim Chaudhry Bilal Noor Rizvi, Patron District

Multan Ghazi Afzal Naqshbandi, Pir Matiullah Naqshbandi, Mufti Muhammad Mazhar Hussain Chishti, Malik Altaf Hussain Khokhar,

Malik Raheel Shahzad Awan, Advocate Muhammad Hussain Babar, Qari Abdul Latif Mehravi, Qari Muhammad Khalil Qadri, Ali Raza Jat, Sheikh Muhammad Wasim Qureshi, Muhammad Ali Rizvi, Chaudhry Zahid Hameed Gujjar, Malik Azhar Ahmad Sandila, Qari Asif Mehravi, Hafiz Islam Amir, Hafiz Furqan, Rana Shoaib, Muhammad Amir Rizvi and other organizers attended the special rally attended by a large number of people who carried placards and banners bearing the slogans of Al-Jihad Al-Jihad and Free Palestine.



**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 4:49 am  
Zohr ..... 11:54 am  
Asr ..... 3:56 pm  
Maghrib ..... 5:36 pm  
Isha ..... 6:59 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

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

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

CMH ..... 561111  
MH ..... 561116

# NHMP launches CE category driving license for public, paving way for employment opportunities abroad

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The National Highway Motorway Police (NHMP) has issued a (CE) category driving license for the general public, enabling drivers to operate trailers. This is a significant development, as it will open up new employment opportunities for Pakistanis in the Middle East, Canada, and Europe, where there is a high demand for CE category drivers, a public relations officer said on Saturday. The launch of the CE category license was inaugurated by Federal Minister for Communications and Information Technology Shahid Ashraf Tarar, who emphasized the importance of providing maxi-

um employment opportunities to the youth in the shortest possible time.

He also highlighted the potential of this license to increase foreign exchange reserves in Pakistan. IG Motorway Police Sultan Ali Khawaja expressed his gratitude to the Federal Minister for his support and assured that the Motorway Police is committed to issuing 3,000 to 5,000 CE category driving licenses by next year. He also emphasized the importance of a transparent and strict examination process to ensure that only qualified drivers are issued with this license.

The launch of the CE category driving license is a commendable step by the Motorway



Police, and it is hoped that it will help to reduce traffic accidents and make the roads safer. It is also a positive development for the Pakistani economy, as it will open up new employ-

ment opportunities for Pakistanis abroad and contribute to increased foreign exchange reserves. The CE category driving license is currently being issued from the HTV Test Center Sangjani, Islamabad.

The fee for the license is Rs 5,000, and to be eligible for the CE category driving license, applicants must have a valid LTV driving license for at least one year.

The aspiring applicants must also pass a theoretical and practical test conducted by the Motorway Police.

The launch of the CE category driving license is a welcome step that will benefit both Pakistani drivers and the economy as a whole.

## CBD Punjab embarks on proactive measures to combat smog and air pollution

City Desk

LAHORE: Saturday, October 14, 2023. In compliance with the directive from the Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi, CEO CBD Punjab, Imran Amin, reviewed initiatives of the authority to curb smog and air pollution. Imran Amin, accompanied by a distinguished team, embarked on a thorough inspection of various sites, including CBD Punjab Quaid District, Ghora Chowk Flyover, and Walton Railway Crossing.

The collaborative effort included the esteemed presence of CBD Punjab's Chairman of the Board, Fazeel Asif Jah, along with the Executive Director Commercial CBD Punjab, Mohammed Omer, Executive Director Technical CBD Punjab, Riaz Hussain, Director Project Management CBD Punjab, Asif Iqbal, Director Construction CBD Punjab, Asif Babar, and Director Architecture CBD Punjab, Sameer Aftab. CBD Punjab Technical Team, Nespak representatives, and the official contractor actively participated during the visit.

One of the notable measures observed during the inspection was the efficient utilization of rain-water harvested from the tank at Saint Mary Park for sprinkling water on construction sites, which is helpful in curbing dust pollution, actively participating towards controlling smog and showcasing CBD Punjab's commitment to water conservation.

Furthermore, in a bid to enhance the region's green cover, CBD Punjab has initiated a large-scale plantation drive, contributing to the overall environmental sustainability efforts in the area.

## Group Photo

ISLAMABAD: Chief guest of the event famous Poet of Pakistan Anwar Masood posing for a group photograph along with others after " Mehfil-e-Sukhan" at local hotel on 13 October in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Raja Farid

## ADC inaugurates optical fiber Wi-Fi cable in Dabkot village

Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: On Saturday ADC Kashmir Khan formally inaugurated optical fiber Wi-Fi cable in Dabkot area of Tehsil Wana of District Lower South Waziristan.

A large number of local people participated in the inauguration ceremony besides Vice Chairman Abid Khan Wazir, Maulana Abdul Qadir and District Press Club Wana Chairman Adam Khan Wazir.

After inaugurating, Additional Deputy Commissioner Finance and Planning South Waziristan Kashmir Khan said, that the district administration has always endeavored to provide the basic amenities of people's lives at their doorsteps.

He said that our doors are always open for solving public



problems and legitimate demands.

On this occasion, the people of Dabkot warmly welcomed the guests and expressed their happiness on the start of Wi-Fi cable connection.

Locals said that activation of Wi-Fi cable will solve many of our problems, and which will not only improve our business and educational activities but now we will be able to easily communicate with our dear relatives away from our country.

On the other hand, the local people of Dabkot thanked Vice Chairman Abid Khan Wazir and applauded him for activating Wi-Fi connection.

The local people further said that bringing such development projects in the area is not only a welcome thing but also a matter of pride for us.

## AKU's Brain and Mind Institute joins hands with Synapse

News Desk

KARACHI: To tackle mental health challenges and empower the youth of Pakistan, Synapse Pakistan Neuroscience Institute, the National Academy of Performing Arts, the British Asian Trust, and AKU's Brain and Mind Institute joined hands to create a positive and enriching experience for all to celebrate mental health and prioritize wellbeing through positive behaviours, self-care, understanding mental health as a basic human right, its impact on our holistic health and wellbeing through panel discussions, poem segments, policy dialogues, fireside chats with fun and recreational activities that included art therapy, meditation, informative short films, storytelling and creative expression walls.

Jashn e Nur: Celebrating the Light Within, is a one-of-its-kind event dedicated to promoting mental wellness and advocating mental health as a universal human right for all, regardless of age, gender, socio-economic status, culture, ethnicity, and religion.

In her opening remarks, Ms Falak Madhani, Implementation Scientist at BMI, said, "If the right to mental health is universal, it is the responsibility of the scientific community in Pakistan to develop locally meaningful and acceptable models of building wellness and resilience to prevent poor mental health. We have spent too long adopting Western models that may not suit the diverse cultural nuances of Pakistan's population."

Ms Madhani also moderated the Design to Impact: Climate Change, storytelling and Mental Health Panel discussion that consisted of experienced professionals, namely Ms Namra Khalid, Mr Ahmed, Mian, Ms Nusser Sayeed, and Dr Sana Siddiqui.

Mr Junaid Zuberi shared the vision of NAPA and its commitment to incorporate wellness in the design of society, followed by Ms Rabia Nizami, who was the keynote speaker who shared her insights on Youth Mental Health from a human rights perspective, with a fireside chat thereafter by Mr Adeel Azhar. The Youth Circle of Synapse presented a Slam Poetry section, and Dr Ayesha Mian moderated the segment of A Story of Small Changes that featured Ms Tahera Hasan, Mr Omar Shahid Hamid, Ms Rumana Husain and Ms Shaiyenne Malik.

## Kharian bar association election 2024- 2025



Correspondent

KHARIAN: Professional Group have unanimously and whole heartedly nominated Ch. Sajid Mehmood Advocate for Presidential Seat in today's meeting

We members of Haqiqi Professional Group offer our gracious thanks to all learned members and alliance groups to afford us an opportunity to nominate Presidential Candidate for KBA ELECTION session 2024-2025. All the members of Haqiqi Professional Group have unanimously and whole heartedly nominated Ch. Sajid Mehmood Advocate for Presidential Seat in today's meeting and same will be formally announced in the joint meeting of alliance groups.

## Sui Northern Gas Company unveils 11-hour winter gas supply for Lahore

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: The Sui Northern Gas Company (SNGC) has announced the decision to extend gas supply for 11 hours daily in the Lahore region, reported 24NewsHd TV channel.

The move is aimed at providing residents with increased comfort during the colder months and ensuring uninterrupted access to gas for essential activities.

Under the new schedule, gas will be available during breakfast hours, from 5:30 AM to 9:00 AM, allowing households to start their day with warmth and convenience. Additionally, a midday supply window has been established, with gas available with pressure from 11:30 AM to 2:00 PM. In the evening, residents can rely on gas provision from 5:30 PM to 10:00 PM, ensuring comfort during dinner and nighttime activities.

To ensure the smooth implementation of this extended gas supply, dedicated teams have been formed, emphasizing the commitment of Sui Northern to providing consistent service during the winter season.

While gas is currently being supplied throughout the day to most areas of the city, strict adherence to the newly established schedule is set to begin next month, as confirmed by Sui Northern officials. The decision to enhance gas availability aligns with the company's commitment to meeting the increased energy demands of residents during the colder months.

## Special children are an important part of our society: Yousuf Vohra

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Today, special children have proved that they are no less than normal children. CTO Maqsood Ahmed Lone

Division level organization of Children Sports Gala encourages these children to engage in healthy activities like normal children. Former MPA Dr. Najma Afzal

Faisalabad: () Sports gala for special children was organized for special children from across the division at Saeed Ajmal Cricket Academy organized by Special Education Department Division Faisalabad. Alhaj Naseer Yousuf Vohra, Central President of Cloth Board Ethihad Group Pakistan was the chief guest. While the guest of honor was former MPA Dr Najma Afzal and Chief Traffic Police Maqsood Ahmed Lone. Rana Muhammad Abid made wonderful arrangements on this occa-



sion. Special children excelled in their respective sports. Naseer Yousuf Vohra has said in his address that special children are an important part of our society and deserve special loving attention. The top administration of Faisalabad should take concrete measures for sports at the division level and such healthy activities should be continued.

Chief Traffic Officer Maqsood Ahmad Lone, former MPA Dr. Najma Afzal, Deputy DO Education Madam Saima, Saad Naseer Yousuf Vohra, Principal Madam Nazia Jabin, and others also spoke on this occasion. While Principal Government Degree College Muhammad Imran, Rana Muhammad Abid, Principal Nadeem Anjum, Riaz Gujjar,

Principal Tandalianwala Madam Neelma Saeed, In-charge Shahid Rasool, a large number of students were present. Gold medals, cash prizes and suits were also distributed among the participants. There was excellent provision of food. Finally, prayers were also offered for the Pakistan Army and the country of Pakistan.

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# Belt and Road Forum, Reinforcing Pak-China ties - I

Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar's upcoming visit to China is of significant importance, as he has received a special invitation from President Xi Jinping to participate in the 'Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation' scheduled to take place in Beijing from October 17-18.

Launched in 2013, the Belt and Road Forum (BRF) was established to promote high-quality cooperation within the BRI, a global development strategy initiated by the Chinese government with the aim of investing in infrastructure and enhancing trade and economic collaboration along the historic Silk Road trade routes.

The overarching aim of the BRI is to foster economic connectivity, trade, and infrastructure development spanning the vast expanse of Asia, Europe, and Africa, 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.

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. The visit of the Pakistan Prime Minister is notable because the China-Pakistan bilateral relationship is among the strongest globally. This relationship is often described as an "all-weather strategic cooperative partnership" and with phrases like "Higher than the Himalayas, deeper than the ocean, sweeter than honey, and stronger than steel. It is characterized by a high level of trust and cooperation, and encompasses diverse areas of shared interests, including trade, security, and regional cooperation.

China values Pakistan's strategic location, which bridges South Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East, making it crucial for China's efforts to expand its influence in these regions. Pakistan's large and growing economy, coupled with its youthful population, presents an attractive market for Chinese goods and services. Additionally, both countries share common interests in regional security, including countering terrorism and extremism. This reinforces the multifaceted importance of the China-Pakistan relationship in the current global context.

China is indeed Pakistan's largest trading partner. In the fiscal year 2020-2021, the bilateral trade volume between China and Pakistan reached approximately \$17.5 billion. China has consistently ranked as Pakistan's top source of imports.

China has historically supported Pakistan on international issues, particularly concerning the Kashmir dispute. Pakistan, in return, has supported China's positions on sensitive matters such as Xinjiang, Tibet, and Taiwan. This mutual support enhances the countries' influence on the global stage.

The two nations have fostered strong people-to-people ties. An increasing number of Pakistani students study in China, facilitated by Chinese scholarships and training for Pakistani teachers. Additionally, a growing Chinese community in Pakistan further cements these connections.

China shares its technological expertise with Pakistan in critical fields, including artificial intelligence, renewable energy, and space technology. This collaboration contributes to Pakistan's technological development and industrial growth.

As members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), they work together to promote regional security and cooperation in Central Asia. They also cooperate within the G77, a forum for developing countries to advocate their common interests on a wide array of international issues. Pakistan and China collaborate and support each other's posi-

tions within the OIC. The upcoming visit of the Prime Minister holds great significance, as the Prime Minister will be interacting with other world leaders attending the forum to pursue both bilateral, multilateral and international cooperations. This includes engaging with various global leaders to articulate Pakistan's perspective on international issues and conflicts, such as the Russia-Ukraine War, Hamas-Israel conflict and Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

More importantly, it will allow Pakistan to showcase the success of CPEC, a flagship project of China's Belt and Road Initiative, and a cornerstone of China's broader vision of expanding its economic and strategic influence on the global stage. This could potentially encourage other participating countries to follow a similar path.

CPEC offers numerous advantages to both China and Pakistan. Specifically, it provides China with a more efficient route to the Arabian Sea, significantly enhancing its connectivity and trade options. Meanwhile, Pakistan stands to gain substantial economic growth and development through CPEC.

CPEC addresses critical issues, such as energy shortages, trade facilitation, and regional connectivity. By doing so, it holds the promise of generating employment, promoting industrialization, and fostering economic collaboration in Pakistan.

*To be continued*



Analysis

Qamar Bashir



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

## UN has responsibility to play due role on Palestine issue

China believes that the United Nations (UN) has the responsibility and obligation to play its due role on the Palestinian issue, a Cheng Xizhong, a distinguished professor at China's Southwest University of Political Science and Law said on Saturday.

China supports the UN Security Council in holding an emergency meeting on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

He said after the outbreak of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, China, as a global power and a permanent member of the UN Security Council, has been working with the international community to make unremitting efforts for a ceasefire and an end to the war.

Since the outbreak of the conflict, the Chinese Foreign Minister and special envoy have had frequent phone calls with their counterparts and senior diplomats of the countries concerned to promote ceasefire and cessation of fighting and to state the position of the Chinese government.

Cheng Xizhong stressed that China opposes the harming of civilians and condemns practices that violate international law. We believe that the top priority is to ensure the safety of civilians, open rescue passages and avoid a serious humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

The Chinese side has clearly pointed out that the Palestinian issue is the core of the Middle East issue, and the crux is that justice has not been done to the Palestinian people. What is justice? Justice is for the Palestinian people to have their own independent state. The Palestinian people have the right to establish an independent State and the right to existence and development. A

This is the basic human right of the Palestinian people and must be fully respected and effectively guaranteed.

The solution to the Palestinian issue lies in resuming genuine peace talks as soon as possible and realizing the legitimate rights of the Palestinian nation, Cheng said.

China calls for an international peace conference with more authority and influence to be convened as soon as possible, so as to promote the international community to reach broader consensus on the basis of the two-state solution and formulate a timetable and road map to this end, he added.

## Women Empowerment in Pakistan: A popular slogan of 2022

The changing global dynamics, unpredictable geo-political situations, economic downturn and shaky domestic situation has gained traction in recent times by grabbing the focus away from the most important topic of women's position in Pakistan. We have hardly seen a few columns and rare talk shows highlighting the intensity of the issue and urgency to revive it for gaining some glory in every aspect of life. Women has become a very silent topic in the prevailing year, despite World's major forums showing high level intensity, in their recent reports, over women discomfort in Pakistan. But, successfully we turned a deaf ear to the issue owing to other much needed business to handle. Indeed, we direly need to get nearer to the benchmark of women equality in every field of life ranging from socio-economic to political area.

Women, in Pakistan, lag behind men in every socio-economic area to political arenas. Most organisations showed a gloomy picture of women parity in Pakistan. The country currently ranks among the worst countries in the globe in terms of gender parity, only performing better than Afghanistan, Iran, Chad and Algeria by securing "142 out of 146" on global gender Gap report 2023. Further, Pakistan stands at 7th in South Asia, only doing better than Afghanistan. It is performing worst in the gender segment. Earlier we saw women protest for gaining parity but unfortunately this year is passing voiceless. If we put a Sight on the indicators of a few areas, a wide gap is present denting the countries outlook on women parity. In the political spectrum, the country has had a female head of state for just 4.7 years in its last 50 years. Just one-fifth of the Parliament is women handling the 33 percent of jobs in Parliament. This is visible discrimination with them at the country's central stage despite praising performance. On the economic path the country is on a similar stage. Pakistan was put second in last for economic participation and opportunities. Although women produce 49 percent of the human capital of the country, they are provided with fewer opportunities to ensure their participation in economic growth. Income gap is widely observed, she is being paid less for the same work. Also, where she is provided with a job, there she faces a lot of problems just like internal environment feasibility and frequent harassment cases. The dark story does not end here. She is subjugated to

many social issues because she is considered a doll to decorate the house. According to a recent report of United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) "only 8.6 million girls are enrolled at primary level. The number further drops to 2.8 million at secondary level." Pakistan was ranked at 130 out of 146 countries in Education for All index (EDI). This shows the vulnerability of the country in gender areas. They are confronting myriad other social constraints and domestic impediments that hampers their development in Pakistan. Over the vast period, we saw snail pace amelioration in women conditions. According to the World Economic Forum "The overall score changed from 68.1 percent to 68.4 percent, an improvement of 0.3 percentage points compared to last year's edition and 4.6 percent since the first edition in 2006." Some robust measures are needed for speedy Reforms in this area.

Addressing the issue has become urgent. The contemporary 21st century has proved the efficiency of a woman is no less than man. Women have become an essential part of society. The nations who have disenfranchised their women from working are deprived of blessings of development. We have an example of Bangladesh, she developed herself by realising the necessity of women in all areas of life. We have arrested development by keeping women out of the game in every field of life. Now we need robust measures to end the gap. It can be easily filled by ensuring educational and skill development of women. Further, friendly workplaces, parental leave, removing legal impediments will help in normalising the situation. Reforms to build welcoming society and the state's role will be crucial in this regard. Indeed, we are missing the most needed thing. The country needs to generate some legal remedies and step further in policy making to avert the gap.

Women are confronting a lot of issues. Earlier we saw few movements for the cause to fill the gap but this year is passing silently, despite international reminders. This has become a need of time to take women side by side with men in every sphere of life.

"I am not free while any woman is unfree, even when her shackles are very different from my own." - Audre Lorde

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### Syed Mahnoor Fatima

which are taking monetary loans from America and running their countries, can stand against Israel as America is supporting Israel? Now, moving on from these important questions, I am sharing some ways to help Palestine: Demand an end to the blockade. It's past time for Congress to demand an immediate, complete, and unconditional end to the Gaza blockade. The blockade has been in place for more than 15 years, with increasingly devastating impacts on the human rights, health, well-being, and livelihoods of Palestinians in Gaza. The U. S. must shift its policy toward Gaza and call for an end to the blockade. End military aid to Israel: Every year, Israel is guaranteed at least \$3.3 billion in U. S. military financing under a memorandum of understanding between the two countries. This funding is often supplemented with additional military aid. Israel uses this funding to buy weapons and military resources to enforce its occupation of the Palestinian territory, keep Gaza under blockade, and violate Palestinians' rights. By continuing to provide Israel with military aid at U. S. taxpayer expense—without demanding accountability for human rights violations—the United States is deeply complicit in Israel's ongoing and systematic human rights violations. And we know the US is ready to give aid to Israel. Tell media outlets what you think about their coverage of Gaza. Encourage them to challenge the narratives that ignore Palestinian rights—or give praise to coverage when they get it right. For decades, the Palestinian people have faced Israeli occupation and systematic human rights abuses that constitute apartheid. AFSC stands in solidarity with the Palestinian people and their call for full and equal rights. We invite Quaker meetings, congregations, and other communities of conscience to join us in our new Apartheid-Free initiative to work toward an apartheid-free world. View the list of companies that profit from the blockade and the Israeli occupation. Compiled by AFSC's Economic Activism Program, the list includes companies that supply weapons and surveillance technology to Israel. Ensure your money is not contributing to human rights violations—and call on these companies to end their complicity in apartheid and war crimes. Visit Investigate to learn more about companies involved in the occupation and how you can join efforts to divest or boycott them. Make a gift, Support AFSC's advocacy for Palestinian rights. Your donation will help fund our work with communities across the U. S. to bring about peace, justice, and human dignity for all people. Make a donation to help Palestinian elders in Gaza meet their essential needs to live in comfort and with basic dignity. AFSC supplies elders in Gaza with wheelchairs, walkers, supportive mattresses, adult diapers, and hygiene items. AFSC has a long history of providing humanitarian assistance to Palestinians in Gaza as they advocate to end the blockade. Over the past three years, they have delivered food, face masks, hygiene items, and other essentials to hundreds of elderly Palestinians. Stand with Palestine. Stand with humanity.

Writer is Student of Law College at University of Sargodha

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# Kazakhstan's Digital Bridge can play role model for Pakistan's IT industry

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Kazakhstan has touched yet another historic milestone by a big success of their annual Information Technology and Artificial Intelligence event, organized by the Astana Hub on October 12-13 this year. Over twenty thousand participants from Kazakhstan, neighbouring countries and companies from the digitally developed world took keen interest in the two-day Digital Bridge 2023, said Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed in a media brief after returning from the event.

Munir Ahmed said the forum focused on the importance of "Artificial and Human Intelligence: The Right Balance" with the participation of remarkable personalities from different countries, founders and top managers of technology giants, entrepreneurial startup founders, scientists and students, striving to make the world a better place unitedly through

dialogue and to inspire each other. Over 250 speakers and more than 300 startups and 100 plus venture capital investors from fifteen countries made the forum an unprecedented success. The leading Information Technology (IT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) industry experts featured the Digital Bridge 2023 included the Venture Investor and co-founder of The Draper Fisher Jurvetson, and founder of the Draper University in Draper, the ICPC (International Collegiate Programming Contest) President Bill Poucher, Director of Barrat Media and an author James Barrat, TIKTOK CEO Shou Chew, film director, producer, screenwriter and tech entrepreneur Timur Bekmambetov. Some Kazakh national leading groups were also featured including CEO and the co-founder kaspikz Mikhail Lomtadze, Freedom Holding Corporation CEO imur Turlov, chairman of the board of Halyk Bank Umut Shayakhmeto-



va, Meta Security Engineer Renato Lima, Kazakhstan minister of digital development, innovation and aerospace industry Bagdat Mussin, founder of the Youtube project d'billions Ernest Umetaliev, managing partner Quest Ventures James Tan, the Micro-

soft vice president of global market development, worldwide public sector Antonio de Palmas, the Kazakhtelecom chairman of the board Kuanyshbek Esekuev, venture partner Big Sky Capitals Julie Davila, the Draper University president Asra Nadeem, Kazpost JSC chairman of the board Assel Zhanassova, the Draper Associates partner Andrew Tang, Kazakhstan President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev inaugurated the Digital Bridge 2023 with his futuristic approach to make his country a digital hub in true sense for the Central Asia region in particular, said the Devcom Executive Director.

In his speech, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev highlighted the significant growth of the Digital Bridge Forum over the last five years. It has evolved into the largest platform in Central Asia for discussing the latest trends and prospects in the IT industry. This strong turnout demonstrates Kazakhstan's leading position as a digital and fintech hub in Eurasia. According to the President, the forum's theme is particularly relevant. Artificial intelligence is no longer science fiction but a reality. A new era is starting right before our eyes. This revolutionary technology holds transformative

power comparable to the impact of electricity and the Internet in their respective epochs. It has the potential to reshape lifestyles, automate work processes, and generate substantial economic value. Experts project that artificial intelligence could contribute an economic influence equivalent to a quarter of the global GDP, making its widespread adoption a pivotal catalyst for Kazakhstan's progressive development, said the Kazakh President.

Munir Ahmed said Pakistan has the right potential to replicate the Digital Bridge model to attract venture capital investments for the rapid growth IT and AI hubs in Pakistan, that consequently jump increase the Pakistan's export of IT and AI products. We also need to integrate the sector for accumulated growth and performance. Pakistan's political will, and the experts shared vision and collective efforts can make Pakistan enter the new era of IT and AI technology, Munir Ahmed concluded.

## Important to avoid Hezbollah's intervention in Israel-Hamas conflict—German Chancellor

**Reuters**

BERLIN: German Chancellor Olaf Scholz agreed in a phone call on Saturday with Israel's prime minister that it was important to avoid a wider Middle East war as well as Hezbollah's intervention in the Israel-Hamas conflict, a spokesperson for the Chancellery said.

"Chancellor Scholz renewed Germany's full solidarity with the people of Israel in these difficult times and emphasized that Germany stands unwaveringly at Israel's side," the spokesperson added in a statement.

Earlier on Saturday, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said Berlin was discussing with the United Nations and other partners how to deploy humanitarian aid to Gaza via the Rafah cross-



ing with Egypt, and Berlin is working with Egypt and Israel to find solutions for German citizens stranded there.

Baerbock, who arrived on Saturday morning in

Cairo for discussion with her Turkish and Egyptian counterparts, said Israel's fight against Hamas must be carried out with consideration for the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

"The fight against Hamas must be carried out with the greatest possible consideration for the humanitarian situation... This is a huge dilemma that is difficult to resolve," she said.

## OIC announces holding of an 'open-ended extraordinary emergency meeting on the situation in Palestine'

**Noorulhassan Gujjar**

JADDA: The Organization of Islamic Cooperation has announced the convening of an 'Open-Ended' in-person Extraordinary Emergency Meeting of the OIC Executive Committee at the level of the Foreign Ministers on Wednesday, 18th October 2023 at 1300 hrs at the OIC General Secretariat in Jeddah.

The Extraordinary Emergency Meeting will discuss the ongoing Israeli military aggression against the Palestinian people.

The OIC Executive Committee includes the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Republic of Türkiye, Republic of The Gambia, Islamic Republic of Mauritania and the Republic of Cameroon, as Members.

All OIC Member States have been invited to participate in the Open Ended Emergency Meeting.

## China's Foreign Minister calls US Secretary of State on crisis in Israel and Gaza



**News Desk**

BEIJING: China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi spoke with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken by phone on Saturday on the crisis in Israel and Gaza, a statement from his ministry said.

"China calls for the convening of an international peace conference as soon as possible," the statement read, while warning that "the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is escalating and risks getting out of control".

Wang told Blinken that "China opposes all acts that harm civilians and condemns practices that violate international law".

The two also touched on U.S.-China relations, the statement said, which Wang said were showing signs of stabilising.

## Israel's Gaza operation has proven to be a costly mistake: Israeli analyst



**News Desk**

GAZA: "Even if we disown Gaza from its very existence, we have been losing this battle from the very beginning. The only thing we have gained is a government coalition. A group of young people in Gaza inflicts financial losses, casualties, and injuries on us by the thousands. They impose curfews, close airports, and kidnap prisoners with ease as if they were on a trip. They infiltrate as if they are playing a video game. They know the streets better than their inhabitants. Where is the money paid to the soldiers? Why do they receive high salaries? Where are the advanced weapons and technology? It is better to leave them prisoners in Gaza. They are a shame for our army. From the establishment of Israel until today, we have not faced a defeat like this. The rockets increase, and the number of casualties among our forces increases every day. How did they manage to reach the Negev and Ashdod on motorcycles? Where is the Gaza Brigade? Where are the elite soldiers? How did they land by parachute without being detected? How did they penetrate the security system and hack the codes? We should be ashamed of ourselves. Killing civilians will not bring victory. The residents of the south will leave, and these young men, whose families were devastated in previous wars, will liberate their homeland. They have come today for revenge, and we must pay the price. We are defeated even if all the countries in the world support us because these Palestinian fighters love death as much as we love life."

## At UN, Pakistan calls Israel's fierce actions against Palestinians in Gaza 'war crimes'

**News Desk**

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan has called "unacceptable" the collective punishment of Gaza's entire Palestinian population by Israeli Occupation forces, saying it amounts to "war crimes and crimes against humanity".

"Major crimes against humanity are being committed even as we speak, in Palestine, in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and in other situations of oppression, occupation and violence," Pakistani delegate Rabia Ijaz told the General Assembly's Sixth (legal) Committee.

Ms. Ijaz, a second secretary at the Pakistan Mission to the UN, was speaking in a debate



on Crimes against Humanity in which speakers spotlighted the need for a universal instrument on preventing and punishing those crimes in the midst of geopolitical confrontations, including the recent Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Pakistan, she said, was deeply concerned by the rapidly

deteriorating and dire humanitarian situation in Gaza due to the indiscriminate aerial bombardment, including of civilian and even protected UN targets." In addition to those actions, the Pakistani delegate said that the "inhumane blockade of food, fuel and medicines, as collective punishment of the

entire Palestinian population of Gaza by Israeli Occupation forces, were unacceptable".

"The current cycle of aggression and violence is a sad reminder and a direct consequence of over seven decades of illegal Israeli occupation, aggression, and disrespect for international law, including UNSC (Un Security Council) resolutions that recognize the inalienable right to self-determination of the Palestinian people," Ms. Ijaz said.

"The international community must work together for a just, comprehensive and lasting two-state solution with a viable, sovereign and contiguous State of Palestine on the basis of pre-1967 borders, with Al Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

"Peace in the Middle East will remain elusive in the absence of such a solution," the Pakistani delegate added.

In her remarks, Ms. Ijaz also underscored the necessity for global cooperation to eradicate impunity for culprits and to ascertain justice for victims.

While the International Law Commission's draft articles serve as "an instrumental kick-off point" on this issue, she emphasized that it is too soon to establish any solid conclusions regarding their essence and layout.

Discussions on their content — like those held during the April resumed session — are valuable but show that a certain degree of disparity between viewpoints remains.

## US advises its citizens in Gaza to move closer to Egypt's Rafah crossing

**Reuters**

ABU DHABI: The U.S. government on Saturday advised its citizens in Gaza to move south toward the Rafah border crossing with Egypt to be ready for its possible reopening amid the humanitarian crisis in the coastal enclave after a Hamas attack in Israel drew Israeli military retaliation.

Washington has been working with Egypt, Israel and Qatar to open the Rafah crossing on Saturday afternoon to allow Palestinian-Americans to leave, a senior State Department official said earlier.

"We have been trying to facilitate access for it to be open from 12 to five today. The Egyptians, the Israelis and the Qataris have been working with us on that," the official told reporters travel-

ling with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

Washington had been in contact with Palestinian-Americans inside Gaza, some of whom expressed a wish to leave via Rafah, but it was unclear whether Palestinian Islamist group Hamas would allow access to the crossing, the official said.

As the window for the crossing to open was about to expire, U.S. officials were unable to confirm whether any U.S. citizens were able to exit, the official added later.

"We have informed U.S. citizens in Gaza with whom we are in contact that if they assess it to be safe, they may wish to move closer to the Rafah border crossing," a U.S. State Department spokesperson said. "There may be very little notice if the crossing opens and it may only open for a limited time."

The number of dual-citizen

Pakistani-Americans in Gaza has been estimated at several hundred among the strip's population of 2.3 million, and Washington hopes to get many of its nationals out of harm's way.

On the third day of his most extensive trip yet to the Middle East, Blinken met with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal Bin Farhan in Riyadh as the top American diplomat works with regional U.S. allies to prevent the war between Israel and Hamas from spiralling into a bigger conflict, and help secure the release of hostages kidnapped by the Islamist group.

Blinken also spoke by phone with China's foreign minister, Wang Yi, and asked him to help keep the conflict from spreading, State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said. It was the first high-level contact between

Washington and Beijing since the Hamas attack and came amid heightened tensions between the two rival powers on a range of issues.

Speaking before the meeting in Riyadh, Blinken said protecting civilians on both sides of the conflict was "vitaly important".

"And we're working together to do exactly that, in particular working on establishing safe areas in Gaza, working on establishing corridors so that humanitarian assistance can reach people who need it.

"None of us want to see suffering by civilians on any side, whether it's in Israel, whether it's in Gaza, whether it's anywhere else. And we're working together to do our best to protect them," Blinken said.

In remarks published by the U.S. State Department, the Saudi



foreign minister said "the priority now needs to be to stop further civilian suffering".

"I have to emphasize that the humanitarian situation in Gaza is

very, very difficult, and we need to work together to make sure that access for humanitarian relief and humanitarian goods is allowed," he said.

After his meeting in Riyadh, Blinken travelled to the United Arab Emirates and will meet with President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

**FFC awarded Certificate of Excellence by MAP in Fertilizer Sector**

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited (FFC) was conferred with "Certificate of Excellence" in Fertilizer Sector at 38th Corporate Excellence Awards Ceremony organized at Karachi by the Management Association of Pakistan (MAP).

FFC was represented by Brig Irfan Khan, Company Secretary and Syed Imran Rizvi, Manager Corporate Affairs. The Company Secretary received the award on behalf of FFC. This award is an acknowledgement of Best Management Practices, distinguished Corporate Governance, Industrial Laurels and Shareholders' Value that FFC has been maintaining since its inception.

**CCP Approved Coca Cola ICECEK (Turkey) Acquisition of Coca Cola (Pakistan) In A Transaction Worth \$300 Million**

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has granted approval to the acquisition of Coca Cola (Pakistan) under phase-1 review of the Competition Act, 2010, and the Competi-ti, 14 OCTOBER 2023; on (Merger Control) Regulations, 2016.

Coca-Cola İcecek (Turkey) acquired 49.67 percent shareholding of Coca Cola (Pakistan) through CCI International Holand (one of its subsidiaries) from Atlantic Industries. The transaction involves total consideration of USD 300 million.

After this transaction, Coca Cola Turkey will own majority of shareholding in Coca Cola (Pakistan) with management. This is significant vote of confidence that Pakistani economy has great potential for above-average returns on their capital for international investors.

The Chairman and Mergers team has streamlined, merger system and process to expedite mergers/acquisitions applications to facilitate international investors.

**Honesty and truthfulness in business stressed**

News Desk

FAISALABAD: Maulana Abdul Habib Attari, Naib Ameer Dawate Islami, has said that honesty and truthfulness are imperative in the current complex business environment.

Delivering a lecture on "Guiding principles for trade in the light of Quran and Sunnah" in the Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI), he said that trading was not contradictory to Sharia.

"Hazrat Mohammad (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and all other Prophets (Peace be upon them) remained engaged in trading", he said and particularly mentioned Prophet Shoaib (Peace be upon him) who was sent for two Ummahs. "The prophet stressed them to observe fairness in weights and measures but they were eliminated from the face of earth as they refused to follow his advice."

Hajji Abdul Habib said that earning profit through businesses was not prohibited but for it, we must observe honesty in our deals. Quoting a companion of the Prophet (Peace be upon him), Attari said that the Sahabi asked the Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him), how his all prayers could be accepted by Allah Almighty (Mustajab-ul-Dua). The reply of Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him) was a one liner "keep your earning pure".

Attari further said that a true businessman would be resurrected on the day of judgement along with the honest and martyrs (Siddiqains and Suhda). He said that these examples clearly indicated the importance of weights and measures in businesses.

He said that Allah Almighty is "pak" and accepts charity from only pure earnings. "We must shun the tendency to give charity from "haram" income and consider ourselves free from the religious obligation", he added.

Earlier, Senior Vice President FCCI Dr. Sajjad Arshad said that our minds and souls had been rusted as we become un-practicing Muslims by deviating from the teachings of the Holy Quran.

He said, "We must organize such religious events with regular periodicity to realign our lives according to the Islamic principles."

He welcomed Maulana Abdul Habib Attari and hoped that religious scholars would continue to deliver such thought-provoking lectures in future.

He also introduced the FCCI to him and said that it had 9,000 members who hail from 118 sectors and subsectors. He said, "Muslims are being humiliated all over the world as we have deviated from the teachings of the Holy Quran and Sunnah."

He said that as a nation we must pledge to bring a qualitative improvement in our

**Dr. Gohar Ejaz embarks on pivotal China visit for 3rd Belt and Road Forum**

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Minister for Commerce and Industries & Production, Dr. Gohar Ejaz is scheduled to visit China in connection with 3rd Belt and Road Forum, scheduled to be held on 17-18 October, 2023, marking 10 years of the Chinese flagship global infrastructure development scheme known as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

The forum is expected to be a pivotal platform for fostering international cooperation. The forum will be attended by the Heads of the

Government / States as well as representatives of many International Organizations.

During his visit, the Minister will hold meetings with leading heads of Chinese enterprises, president of EXIM bank and other leaders to discuss avenues for enhancing mutual trade and business engagement. The Minister will participate and address two business networking forums with many Chinese companies expected to be in attendance.

The focus of the visit is enhance Pakistan's exports to China in food and agriculture, textiles, mining and value added mining prod-



ucts, new technology, new electric vehicles, solar panels and E-Commerce.

The Minister will also attend a meeting with the President of COFCO, the food processing giant. The Minister will also have several individual meetings with representatives from different sectors. A number of Chinese companies have already shown keen interest in the scheduled meetings.

The Minister will communicate the potential for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Pakistan and will inform Chinese companies about the opportunities for investment especially in relocating labour intensive sectors and new technology industries.

**APBF for passing on full relief of global oil rates cut to consumers**

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The All Pakistan Business Forum (APBF) has called for passing on the full relief of cut in petroleum products in the international market to the local consumers for the second fortnight of October, instead of taking any kind of adjustment in taxes, as the inflation is going up due to continuous jump in oil prices.

APBF President Syed Maaz Mahmood, in a statement issued here today, asked the government to bring down price of petrol by almost Rs35 per litre in line with fluctuations in global oil prices and appreciation of the rupee against the US dollar, effective from Oct 16, 2023.

He said that instead of hiking the power tariffs, the government should focus on controlling the transmission and distribution losses and power theft besides improving the performance of power companies to save the consumers from further burden.

APBF president was of the view that the government could mobilize the required



resources through increasing the number of taxpayers, reducing line losses and power theft, and ending exemptions to narrow the fiscal deficit instead of increasing the power tariff.

He said the last increase in power tariff left the industrial sector, particularly the

export industry like textile, uncompetitive in comparison to regional competitors. This may lead to the loss of more export orders and render many more people jobless.

Despite the tariff surge, he said, power companies would not be able to recover the targeted revenue loss of around 28-30%. At the same time, it will force many consumers to stop paying their bills, which have become unbearable. He asked the government to undertake fundamental reforms in the power sector to make electricity affordable. Besides, the government should launch a crackdown on the habitual power bill defaulters like putting them behind bars.

At present, the government is charging Rs50 per litre as petroleum levy on HSD with room for a further increase of Rs10. However, the levy on petrol is already at the maximum level of Rs60 per litre. He said that the prices of petroleum products on the Platts index have dropped drastically and also the rupee has strengthened versus the dollar. Average gains for the rupee are calculated at Rs7.50 for the past 13 days.

**Making the IMF supported programs work**

Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue, and Economic Affairs, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, attended a significant event on the theme of "Making the IMF supported programs work" during the annual meetings of WB/IMF in Marrakech. Based on her extensive experience in financial matters and her leadership in economic affairs, Dr. Akhtar shared her invaluable insights and perspectives for ensuring effective collaboration between governments and international financial institutions. She underscored the need for customizing the IMF programmes according to the unique economic contexts of the partnering countries.



Photo: PID

**Industrialists demand cut in policy interest rate to boost industrialization**

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Islamabad Industrial Association (IIA) led by its President Muhammad Ahmed Waheed visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) and congratulated Faad Waheed on assuming charge as the Acting President ICCI. Khalid Iqbal Malik Group Leader, Khalid Javed, Mian Akram Farid, Tariq Sadiq, Mian Shaukat Masud, Nasir Khan, Karim Aziz Malik, Nasir Qureshi, Ch. Waheed ud Din, Zafar Bakhtawari, Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi, Iftikhar Anwar Sethi, Ch. Mukhtar, Usman Khalid, Dr. Muhammad Usman, Mirza Muhammad Ali, Shaukat Ali, Malik Sohail Hussain, Ashfaq Chatha, Khalid Chaudhry and others were in the delegation.

Addressing the delegation, Faad Waheed, Acting President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that the 22 percent policy interest rate is a major hurdle in promoting industrial activities and stressed that the government should bring it down to single digit level that would help boost industrialization,



promote investment, enhance exports, create jobs and revive the economy. He said that the industry in Pakistan is facing the highest interest rate in the whole Asia as the interest rate in Japan is -0.1%, Taiwan 1.88%, Thailand 2.5, Malaysia 3%, China 3.4 %, Vietnam 4.5%, and Indonesia & Hongkong 5.75%, Bangladesh and India 6.5%.

Muhammad Ahmed, President, Islamabad Industrial Association said that the private sector is the engine of growth for the economy, but the bank's net lending to the private sector in Pakistan has plunged

90 percent during the first 10 months of the current fiscal year, due to which the industry has experienced negative growth in many sectors.

Engr. Azhar ul Islam Vice President ICCI said that many investors are keen to set up industries in the federal capital but due to absence of a new industrial zone, they are unable to make new investments. He stressed that the government should extend full cooperation to ICCI for the establishment of a new industrial estate in the region that would produce multiple benefits for the economy.

**High cost of doing business hurting trade and industry: FPCCI presidential candidate**

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Presidential candidate of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industries (FPCCI) upcoming election for 2024 Muhammad Ali Sheikh has said that high cost of doing business has proved to be dangerous for businesses, as ever-increasing cost of production is the real threat to the economy amidst frequent upward revisions in policy rate and continuous fluctuations in rupee against dollar.

Muhammad Ali Sheikh, who is nominated for the presidential post of the traders' apex body's election by the BMP, said that the government liquidity and external vulnerability risks are elevated and there remain considerable risks around to secure required financing to fully meet its needs for the next few years. He said that constant hike in power tariff has pushed the electricity prices higher and added to the already soaring cost of trade and industry. He asked the government to shut down all expensive oil-based power plants to ensure availability of cheaper energy for consumers. He condemned the government for shifting power distribution companies' inefficiencies' burden to the consumers by jacking up the tariff under the guise of Fuel Charges Adjustment.

He observed that the aggressive economic measures, high borrowing rates, inflation, oppressive taxation and unstable currency have been negatively affecting running businesses.

With a view to deal with fiscal challenges he asked the economic managers to work on the three-way strategy by implementing short-



term goals that will help to keep generating resources for smooth fiscal operations, medium-term goals where they should focus on financial inclusion, documenting the economy by designing a system where all businesses can be registered and properly document their income including collection of sales tax, initiating the process of privatization as well as improving governance by introducing reforms in each sector. As a long-term goal, the country must focus on improving its human capital, and revamping IT sectors by extending facilities and providing all the requisite supports. In the same way, we also need to work on designing a comprehensive and proactive strategy to tackle challenges related to strengthening border security and implementing effective and comprehensive Anti-Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing measures holding accountable and taking to task all those who are involved in illegitimate activities, undermining both our economy and national interests.

The FPCCI presidential candidate of the BMP stated that the significant jump in electricity prices and hike in gas tariffs to meet the IMF condition will put additional burden of billions of rupee on consumers. He observed that it is unfortunate that the authorities in all governments

**PSHRM & Engage Consulting Honor Top Workplaces in Pakistan at BPTW Awards 2023**

City Desk

KARACHI: The Pakistan Society of Human Resource Management (PSHRM) and Engage Consulting recently hosted the 'Best Place to Work Awards Gala 2023' at Beach Luxury Hotel, marking 15 years of celebrating workplace excellence in Pakistan. With over 140 participating companies, this event underscored the importance of fostering exceptional workplace cultures.

The awards were based on anonymous survey data evaluating employee experiences in areas such as belonging, alignment, growth, commitment, and overcoming challenges. Mr. Paul Keijzer, CEO of Engage Consulting, emphasized the survey's credibility and the significance of data-driven approaches in shaping future workplaces.

Among the 52 awards distributed, 'Allied Bank' received the prestigious 'Best of the Best Company 2023' award, while DHL Express was honored with the 'Best Place to Work Pakistan Hall of Fame' award for winning the top prize five consecutive times.

Interloop served as the Platinum Sponsor, while EBM, Pakistan State Oil (PSO), Samsons Group of Companies were Gold Sponsors. Novo Nordisk, Allied Bank, and The Talent Games acted as Silver Sponsors, with Syngenta, Bank Alfalah, Engro Fertilizers, Jubilee Life Insurance, S&P Global, and Mashreq Global as Bronze sponsors.

Mr. Ehsan Ali Malik, CEO of Pakistan Business Council, delivered an insightful keynote speech on creating conducive work environments, followed by Mr. Jamal Nasir, President of PSHRM, reflecting on the legacy of the awards since their inception in 2008.

# India proves too good for sloppy Pakistan in marquee World Cup match

## Sports Desk

AHMEDABAD: A special innings by skipper Rohit Sharma and disciplined bowling performance helped India secure a dominant win by seven wickets over Pakistan in a group stage match of the World Cup 2023 in Ahmedabad on Saturday.

Team Blue achieved the target of 191 runs in 30.3 overs with Sharma smashing 86. After Shubman Gill and Virat Kohli could not extend support to the skipper in pursuing the small total, Shreyas Iyer led the campaign and ensured India's victory with a knock.

Shaheen Afridi claimed two wickets while Hasan Ali dismissed one Indian player but the bowling lineup overall could not slow down India's chase.

Earlier, a stunning bowling performance helped India restrict Pakistan to 191 runs. Abdullah Shafique and Imamul Haq started in a positive style. While they were watchful against the disciplined Jasprit Bumrah, they took their chances against any loose delivery from Mohammed Siraj.

Siraj got one to jog in and trapped Shafique leg before wicket in the eighth over. When Imam and Babar tried to build a healthy scoring rate, the former went for an expansive drive and ended up edging a Pandya delivery to KL Rahul.

Babar Azam was dismissed by Siraj for 50, pulling the match back to India. After his removal, Mohammad Rizwan was removed for 49.

At this point, Pakistan suffered back-to-back blows as Iftikhar Ahmed, Shadab Khan and Saud Shakeel could not perform before skillful bowling by Indian bowlers.

The tail order also tumbled as Hasan Ali and Nawaz were sent to pavilion for 12 and 4, respectively.

For India, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, Hardik Pandya, Kuldeep Yadav and Ravindra Jadeja took two wickets each.

### Earlier coverage

The wait is over. The play gets under way.

Moments earlier, India won the toss and elected to bowl first against Pakistan in the high-voltage match.

Pakistan's skipper Babar Azam said they would try to post a big total and gift the nation a victory. He said he would have taken the same decision of bowling first had he won the toss.

Abdullah Shafiq and Imamul Haq have opened the innings for Pakistan.

Pakistan and India are clashing in the blockbuster World Cup game in Ahmedabad. Both Pakistan and India will be out to make a statement against their close rivals when the two undefeated teams meet at the Narendra

Modi Stadium.

The arch-rivals share a rich cricketing history. While Pakistan outright dominates India head-to-head in the ODI format, with 73 wins to their name as compared to 56 losses, India have an enviable record in the Cricket world cup.

Ever since their first-ever World Cup encounter in 1992, India haven't lost a single World Cup game against them.

The stakes have climbed even higher in the much-anticipated group stage match between India and Pakistan after both teams surged through their opening two matches of the tournament.

Babar Azam's side made light work of the Netherlands to kickstart their own campaign, then impressed with the bat while sealing the highest successful chase ever in cricket world cup.

The usually-reliable Babar and Imamul Haq have both missed out so far at the tournament and will be keen to make an impact against India, but Abdullah Shafique and Mohammad Rizwan have already shown strong form with centuries against Sri Lanka.

India impressed in their first outing at the event as their spinners tore through the Australia batting line-up that was ultimately skittled for a paltry 199 runs.

The hosts had to overcome an early scare at the hands of the Australia



pacers, but then cruised to the target after Virat Kohli (85) and KL Rahul (97\*) took control of the contest.

India chased down Afghanistan's target of 273 with eight wickets and 15 overs to spare in their next match, but can expect a tougher test against Pakistan.

The rivals have only completed one ODI match since the Cricket World

Cup 2019, at the Asia Cup last month when centuries to Kohli and Rahul led India to an emphatic 228-run victory.

### Squads

Pakistan: Babar Azam (c), Shadab Khan, Fakhar Zaman, Imam-ul-Haq, Abdullah Shafique, Mohammad Rizwan, Saud Shakeel, Iftikhar Ahmed, Salman Ali Agha, Mohammad Nawaz, Usama Mir, Haris Rauf,

Hasan Ali, Shaheen Afridi, Mohammad Wasim.

India: Rohit Sharma (c), Hardik Pandya (vc), Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul, Ravindra Jadeja, Shardul Thakur, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Shami, Ravichandran Ashwin, Ishan Kishan, Suryakumar Yadav.

## Malaysia National Sports Day 2023

### Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Malaysian High Commission in Islamabad organized a Sports Day at the premises of the High Commission. The event was held in conjunction with the National Sports Day of Malaysia. His Excellency Ambassador Mohammad Azhar Mazlan, Malaysian High Commissioner to Pakistan officiated the event at 0800 hours. In his remarks, the High Commissioner underscored the importance of a balance healthy lifestyle. He also iterated the role of sports diplomacy in fostering closer relations between Malaysia-Pakistan. Present were the enthusiastic Malaysian and Pakistani staff members of the High Commission and their family as well as Malaysian diaspora living in Islamabad and surrounding areas. The National Sports Day was being organized not only



throughout Malaysia but also at its embassies abroad every year on the second Saturday in October. The main objective was to promote and instill the spirit of healthy lifestyle among Malaysians young and old emphasizing on the importance of regular exercise as well as to unite Malaysians from all

walks of life through sports. A number of games were played at the compound of the High Commission such as aerobics, badminton, netball, table tennis and volleyball. A new game "sepak takraw" was introduced this year. To their delight, those present had the opportunity to play the popular Southeast Asian

traditional game where the player kicks and balances a rattan woven ball on the air before passing it to another player. The event ended with a community luncheon at 1300 hours.

"MAJULAH SUKAN UNTUK NEGARA (ADVANCING SPORTS FOR THE NATION)"

## Pakistan Rugby appoints Roelof Kotze as Men's 7s Coach

### Sports Desk

LAHORE: Pakistan Rugby Union is pleased to appoint Mr. Roelof Kotze as the Men's National 7s teams Head Coach ahead of upcoming Asia Rugby Trophy being held in Doha, Qatar from 3rd to 4th November, 2023.

Roelof, who hails from South Africa, brings with him vast experience in rugby management and coaching, being involved for over 11 years with the Sharks academy Durban, where his roles include Rugby program manager and Head coach.

His involvement with high-performance rugby includes being the head coach for the UAE National side.

Talking to the media Secretary Pakistan rugby Salman Shaikh said we intend to benefit from his rugby experience in system setup and structure building to help rugby move forward in the right direction.



## Hockey to be promoted at grassroots level: DG Sports

### Sports Desk

LAHORE: Aiming to promote hockey at grassroots level, DG Sports Punjab Dr Asif Tufail chaired a meeting of all divisional and district sports officers on Zoom Link at National Hockey Stadium.

Director Sports Yasmeen Akhtar, Director Admin Ejaz Munir, Divisional Sports Officer Lahore Tariq Khanzada, and DSO Lahore Tanveer Shah attended the meeting in person. The status and utilization of hockey turfs of the province was discussed in detail during the meeting.

Addressing the meeting, DG Sports Punjab said



that hockey is our national game and Sports Board Punjab will utilize all available resources for regaining lost glory in hockey. He directed all DSOs to involve the younger generation in hockey events by launching maximum number of hockey

clubs and academies in their respective areas.

He enquired from all DSOs about the existing hockey turfs and other relevant facilities in their respective areas and said that every hurdle will be removed for the promotion of hockey.

The meeting was told that there are 14 hockey turfs and five mini hockey turfs which are operational in different cities of the province. The meeting was informed that there are five on-going hockey turfs which will be completed in ADP 2023-24. These ADP schemes are under-progress in Faisalabad, Rahimyar Khan, Murree, Sialkot and Sargodha.

Dr Asif Tufail directed the officers concerned to complete these ADP schemes as early as possible. "The game of hockey will get a great boost after the completion of these ADP schemes," he added

## 'Not good for us,' Babar Azam on defeat against India

Pakistan's skipper Babar Azam, opening up on the seven-wicket World Cup 2023 defeat against India, acknowledged that the Green Shirts were not up to the mark and the loss was not good for the national side.

Speaking at the post-match ceremony, Azam admitted that the team's total of 191 runs was below par and the batting collapse cost them.

The captain's remarks come after India sailed through Pakistan's 192-run target at Ahmedabad's Narendra Modi Stadium to secure an easy win after the Green Shirts witnessed a spectacular batting collapse and went from 155-2 to be all out for 191 in the 43rd over.

India carried on to their fantastic form and recorded a seven-wicket win while chasing 192. Rohit Sharma showcased his batting skills once again and top-scored for the winning side with 86 off 63 balls. His rapid knock included 12 boundaries.

## Sri Lanka captain Dasun Shanaka ruled out of World Cup 2023

### Sports Desk

DELHI: The Sri Lanka cricket team has suffered a major blow as captain Dasun Shanaka will miss the remainder of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 due to injury.

Dasun Shanaka picked up a quad injury during Sri Lanka's World Cup clash against Pakistan on Tuesday and scans have since revealed that the hard-hitting all-rounder will be

sidelined for a minimum of three weeks.

Sri Lanka have opted to replace Shanaka in their squad with fellow all-rounder Chamika Karunaratne, with the move approved by the International Cricket Council's (ICC) Event Technical Committee on Saturday.

Karunaratne is already in India and has been travelling with the team as their reserve player and could come into conten-

tion to play Sri Lanka's next match against Australia in Lucknow on Monday.

The 27-year-old hasn't played for Sri Lanka since he appeared in a T20I against New Zealand at the start of April, but has made more than 60 appearances for his country in all three formats.

In-form batter Kusal Mendis is the vice-captain of Sri Lanka's squad and is expected to step up and take the captaincy reins in the



absence of Dasun Shanaka.

Earlier in the World Cup 2023, Pakistan beat Sri Lanka in a record-breaking 345-run chase at Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi Stadium.

Pakistan made it two wins from two World Cup matches as batsmen Mohammad Rizwan

and Abdullah Shafique hit centuries in a record run-chase to set up a six-wicket victory over Sri Lanka in Hyderabad on Tuesday.

Chasing a daunting 345 after Kusal Mendis and Sadeera Samarawickrama smashed tons to put Sri Lanka in a commanding

position, the 1992 champions got over the line in 48.2 overs thanks to Rizwan's 131 not out and Abdullah's 113.

Ireland had held the previous record for the highest run chase in World Cups with 329 against England in the 2011 edition.

## Ahmedabad stadium glows with presence of stars



### Sports Desk

AHMEDABAD: The cricket lovers in the stadium enjoyed a colourful ceremony ahead of the high-voltage match between Pakistan and India.

The ceremony was organised before the high-powered Pakistan and India clash today (Saturday).

The fanciers were eager to know that who would perform in this ceremony. Amitabh Bachchan, Rajinikanth, Sachin Tendulkar, Arijit Singh and other film stars graced the event in Ahmedabad.

To make your day amid this glittering event, the organisers also planned a light show, fireworks display and dance performances.

Speaking to media earlier, Anil Patel, secretary of Gujarat Cricket Association, said the ceremony would take place at 12pm and 20 to 25 Pakistani journalists and some officials of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) would join the gathering. He said arrangements for the event had been finalised.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) decided to organise the ceremony ahead of the India-Pakistan fixture at the Narendra Modi Stadium, the world's largest cricket ground. No launch ceremony of this mega event was organised.

## IND vs PAK: Gautam Gambhir angry with Ahmedabad crowd

### Sports Desk

LAHORE: Former cricketer Gautam Gambhir, known for making controversial statements, voiced his displeasure at the Ahmedabad crowd ahead of the lopsided India-Pakistan ICC Cricket World Cup 2023 fixture.

The heated moment took place during the coin toss. The crowd in the 132,000-seater Narendra Modi Stadium started booing and jeering Pakistan captain Babar Azam when he was to speak after the coin.

Gautam Gambhir, one of the commentators for Star Sports, found the crowd's behaviour in bad taste. The former cricketer reportedly said fans should learn to respect players from other countries as they are guests who have come to play the ICC Cricket World Cup 2023.

"Support your team but don't misbehave with your visitors, after all, they are your guests," he said. "We have to remember they are the visitors and here to play the World Cup," he said.

India steamrollered Pakistan by seven wickets in a lopsided blockbuster match at a heaving Narendra Modi Stadium on Saturday to maintain their unblemished 50-overs World Cup record against their arch-rivals.

The western Indian city had been in the grip of cricket fever ahead of the tournament's most anticipated match, and India got themselves in the driving seat early by bundling out their opponents for 191 inside 43 overs.

## Zone-III Blues beat Zone-V Green in A. S. Natural Stone U-16 Inter Zonal Cricket

### Sports Desk

KARACHI: Zone-III Blues defeated Zone-V Green by 2 Wickets in the A. S. Natural Stone Under-16 Inter Zonal Cricket Tournament at Student Cricket Ground Liaquatabad. The Tournament is being organized by Regional Cricket Association Karachi and Sponsors by A. S. Natural Stone.

### Scores in brief:

Zone-V Green: 137 all out in 27.4 overs. Anwar Ali 32, Rana Muhammad Hasan 23. Hasan Asif Pae (rls) 4/32, Saad Asif Pae (rls) 3/24. Zone-III Blues 140/8 in 22.3 overs. Asnad Afridi scored 55 with the help of 10 fours and 1 six, Nael Ali 24. Laarib 2/16, Fareedullah Khan 2/32.